



Leadership, voice and vision for child welfare in New York State

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

S.5326 BRISPORT / A.2807 HEVESI

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to increasing the state reimbursement rate for preventative child protective services

The Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA) urges New York's Legislature to include in the Enacted Budget language as described in S.5326/A.2807, to restore the state reimbursement rate for child welfare preventive, protective, independent living, adoption, and aftercare services from the current 62% to the original 75%.

Tens of thousands of New York children and families—disproportionately Black and brown—are reported to, investigated by, and provided preventive services from the child welfare system every year. Child welfare preventive services—like home visiting, housing assistance, child care, transportation, job training, and cash grants—are designed to prevent the profound trauma of separation.ⁱ These services have been credited with reducing the number of New York children placed in foster care over the past twenty years. Between 1995 and 2021, the number of children in foster care has dropped over 73% from 53,902 to 14,358ⁱⁱ while the number of reports has remained stable at over 100,000 a year.ⁱⁱⁱ As of December 31, 2021, 75,088 children and 37,516 families received preventive services.

Notwithstanding the historical improvements these services have secured, most New York children (61%) who are separated from their families and placed in foster care are removed from their homes before their family has received preventive services. Additionally, a recent federal law, the Family First Prevention Services Act, provides new funding to support states providing child welfare Prevention Services, family-based placements, reunification and aftercare support.

New York has an opportunity to access these available resources by proactively strengthening its child welfare services. Including S.5326/A.2807 in the Enacted Budget would restore the state share of New York's open-ended funding for child welfare preventive, protective, independent living, adoption, and aftercare services to the original 75% state share, taking another step toward redirecting the child welfare system to better prioritize supporting children and families.

COFCCA strongly supports S.5326/A.2807 to amend the Social Services Law (SSL) to restore the state share of funding for child welfare preventive, protective, independent living, adoption, and aftercare services from the current 62% to the 75% originally set when the funding was established in 1980.^{iv}

For more information please contact Michelle Newman, at mnewman@cofcca.org or (212) 929-2626.

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ⁱ Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. 2023. The State of New York's Children Data Book: January 2023.

<https://scaany.org/events/state-of-nys-children/>

ⁱⁱ New York State Office of Children and Family Services. 2021. Aggregate MAPS Children in Foster Care on 12-31 by District 1995-2021. <https://ocfs.ny.gov/reports/maps/aggregate.php>

ⁱⁱⁱ New York State Office of Children and Family Services. 2021. Aggregate MAPS CPS Reports Received by District 1995-2021. <https://ocfs.ny.gov/reports/maps/aggregate.php>

^{iv} New York State Department of Social Services. October 16, 1980. Administrative Directive: Funding for Preventive Services. <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/1980/ADMs/1980%20ADM-85%20Funding%20for%20Preventive%20Services.pdf>