

Schuyler Center Source

September 14, 2017

A Focus on the First 1,000 Days

In August, New York's Medicaid agency kicked off an innovative "First 1,000 Days on Medicaid" initiative, focused on ensuring healthy development in the first three years of a child's life, with Schuyler Center's Kate Breslin serving in a leadership role. Kate notes: "the first 1,000 days of life present a crucial period of opportunity to support optimal development with lifelong consequences."

This early period of a child's life is important, not just for their physical health and development, but is also a critical period in terms of cognitive and emotional development. And interventions to help ensure healthy development and reduce childhood adversity in the early years have been shown to contribute to better physical and mental health. Taking an intentional focus to the early days (and weeks, months and years!) of a child's life gives New York the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of our children, with benefits that continue into youth and adulthood.

Read Kate's full message about this exciting new initiative [here](#).



What's Happening in Healthcare?

Interested in following federal action on health coverage and implications for states? For resources on Medicaid, CHIP and the ACA, bookmark these sites:

[Schuyler Center's Federal Health Reform page](#)

[From Obamacare to Trumpcare blog by Health Affairs](#)

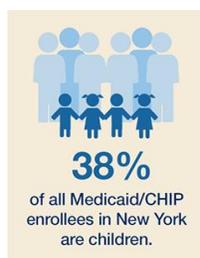
[Say Ahhh! A Health Policy Blog](#) by Georgetown Center for Children and Families

[Medicaid Matters NY](#)

[Families USA](#)

[Health Care for All New York](#)

Protecting Children's Health Coverage



Breaking (and good!) news – as of the date of this newsletter, we have learned there appears to be an agreement on a five-year extension of CHIP in the Senate Finance Committee.

Last month marked the 20th anniversary of the national Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) – known in New York as Child Health Plus (CHP). CHP covers over **344,000 New York children** and ensures that children ineligible for Medicaid because their family's income just exceeds the Medicaid level, receive high-quality, comprehensive coverage. Without CHP, many children in working families would go uninsured.

Federal CHIP funding is scheduled to expire at the end of September. This is critical because New York receives most of the money for Child Health Plus through its federal allotment. Child advocates from across New York State are urging Congress to extend funding for CHIP as soon as possible, well before it expires.

Specifically, advocates are asking Congress to:

1. Extend CHIP funding through 2022;
2. Extend the current maintenance of effort (MOE) provision (which establishes a specified level of stable state spending) for three additional years, through 2022 to ensure a stable source of health care coverage for children; and
3. Extend the current federal CHIP matching rate through 2022 while the MOE is in place.

Evidence affirms that children, families and communities benefit when children have health coverage that allows them to access needed care. Children with CHIP coverage are more likely to have a usual source of care, including dental care, and more likely to have had a well-child visit in the past year relative to children without insurance.

It is vitally important Congress extend CHIP funding now, so children are not left uncovered and state administrators have the time needed to ensure continuity of coverage. It is also essential the extension last for several years, and that Members of Congress do not destabilize families and states with the unpredictability of short-term extensions.

[Contact your Congressional office](#) and urge them to reauthorize CHIP before it runs out at the end of the month. For information on CHIP and Medicaid, please visit the health resources page on our [website](#).

Strengthen Families and Avoid Child Welfare Involvement

As New York turns an eye to the first 1,000 days of a child's life on Medicaid, we look to the many factors that impact a young child's health, well-being, and development. Family stability, including housing, parental employment, and access to food and nutritional supports all contribute to the healthy development of young children. If New York is serious about ensuring a strong start, through investments in the first 1,000 days of life, we should also invest in what the child welfare community refers to as *primary prevention*. These are the resources to help strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment; often focus on high-need communities; and are available to families before there is any involvement with the child welfare system.



New York City is set to open three new community-based Family Enrichment Centers – welcoming families regardless of child welfare involvement – which will focus on building family resilience and stability by providing an array of supports that reinforce economic mobility, parenting skills, positive relationships, housing, child development and education, community engagement and supportive advocacy. This demonstration project should serve as a model to the rest of the state of how we may work to strengthen families and communities, and prevent child abuse and neglect.

Child Care: A Critical Economic Development Investment



Critical to the well-being of the youngest New Yorkers is ensuring all families who need it have access to quality child care. In the months since funding for the state's already under-resourced child care subsidy program was slashed in the 2017-2018 Budget, Schuyler Center and dozens of other groups – advocates, providers, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, and unions – have been working together on a strategy to strengthen the state's child care systems, and expand access to all families who need child care. One long-term goal is to develop – with legislative partners -- a sustainable, scalable, dedicated funding stream to drive real, substantial new funding into child care to expand access, allow investment into the child care workforce, and make quality improvements to strengthen the entire early childhood care and learning infrastructure.

Shorter term, Schuyler Center and other partners are urging the State to make the logical link between economic development and child care, and invest economic development funds to expand access to quality child care, in addition to investing new general fund dollars into the state's child care system. Investment in child care is critical to economic development because it removes barriers to employment, and increases employee productivity and businesses' ability to recruit talent. And, high-quality early childhood programs bring considerable return on investment. Economists agree it is one of the most effective investments.

Read more about why investing in child care is critical to economic development [here](#).

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