



## Voting for Children Because Our Future Depends on It

Children thrive in stable, safe, supportive homes and communities. Children thrive when they have access to quality health care and education, including early education. Children thrive when they are spared the lasting trauma of poverty, food insecurity, and neglect. Government can't replace families or communities, but plays a critical role in leveling the playing field and filling in gaps for children, families,

and communities.

Today, our public systems are strained and our leaders distracted. As a result, the strains on children and families too often fall from the headlines and go unaddressed. Without the attention of lawmakers, systems that serve children and families in-need are vulnerable to devastating and cumulative budget cuts in tough fiscal times, and to implementation delays, inefficiencies, and mismanagement, even in good times.

New analysis of the Census reveals that even with rising wages, poverty among US children has stayed steady, remaining the highest for any age group. Very young children are the nation's poorest segment of society. Across the country, nearly one in six children live in poverty. And in New York State, that number is more than one in five. Think about that for a moment. Twenty-two percent of New York children miss meals, periodically live in their cars or on relatives' couches, and go without diapers, warm coats, or boots in the winter. And yet addressing child poverty is not even mentioned in most lawmakers' lists of priorities.

This must change. New York needs lawmakers who are vocal, dogged champions of children and families. We need lawmakers who will stand up and speak up for families and children.

This fall's elections mark an opportunity: to hold candidates and elected officials accountable for their policy priorities. One way to hold leaders accountable is to ask for their positions on issues that matter for children and families. Click [here](#) for questions that you can ask candidates and current policymakers about key issues.

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