



2012 Policy & Budget Positions

American Academy of Pediatrics, District II (NYS)

WORKING TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Nurse Family Partnership

We support including \$5 million in this year's budget to help bridge the support and expansion for this evidence based child and family support program. Until New York can attain its federal waiver which would allow Medicaid to help pay for expansion and support of this vital program, which supports Nurse's visiting, the state must fill the gap to assure that at risk young families have the supports they need to overcome significant barriers to health and well-being.

Early Intervention

We support the proposed reforms with caution. All reforms must include assurances that no child's access to needed early intervention services will be delayed or denied due to reforms. Economically and culturally challenged communities must be assured of continued access to quality services during the time of change. Independent evaluators, as described in the legislation, must be guaranteed their independence. As we insist on an arm's length relationship for evaluators from EI service agencies, so must we insist on protections for evaluators from the potential of undue pressure from insurers.

Children's Mental Health

We support continued training and consultation support for primary care pediatricians to provide treatment in office and clinic settings to children with mild to moderate mental health diagnoses. However, these services can only be continued if the state and the insurance industry agree to fair payment for pediatricians who are offering this cost effective and service effective option. Pediatricians can and will help fill the huge unmet need for children's mental health services, but they must be paid fairly and consistently for the work they do in children's mental health.

Child Welfare

We support an ongoing focus on and investment in preventive services. We also support additional resources for kinship care which allows children who cannot stay with their parents to be cared for by responsible relatives or very close family friends. For children who have to enter the foster care system and be separated from their families, the system must insist on high quality care and a laser like focus on attaining permanence for children.

Bright Future's NY Children's Medical Home: Children's Essential Benefits Package

Bright Futures NY is the high quality model for a child's medical home based on the AAP's Bright Futures algorithm. We encourage state leaders to adopt Bright Futures NY as the statewide model for a children's medical home in both Child Health Plus and the Children's Medicaid Program. We also urge the state to work with commercial insurance carriers to adopt the Bright Futures model as their medical home initiative.

As the state works toward designing and implementing its Essential Benefit Package, to meet the requirements of federal Health care reform, through ACA, it is imperative that all parties recognize that children are not just small adults. Children need and deserve a benefit package that can and will help them stay healthy and thrive. Adopting Bright Futures NY as the essential benefit package for children across all insurance products is the most equitable way to assure that all children and families can access the services they need and deserve to assure health and well-being.

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Child Care & Early Learning

We support:

- An additional investment of **\$20 million for Year One implementation of Quality Stars, NY**. The evidence is compelling; infants and toddlers who have positive engaging experiences in child care Pre-K have better educational outcomes than those who do not. Improving child care and strengthening quality is imperative if our goal is have school ready children.
- Exploring every federal and state option for **preserving existing and building additional subsidized child care slots** across the state. Families need access to quality child care if they are to fully participate in the workforce. We encourage the legislature and the Governor to agree to direct \$53 million from the competitive grant to Universal Prekindergarten.
- **Universal access to full day Kindergarten across the state.** Investments in school readiness of our youngest New Yorkers has been proven to provide very positive returns for the tax payer in reduced special education, remediation and behavior intervention services in elementary and secondary school.

Health Insurance Exchange

We support the passage of the Health Insurance Exchange enabling legislation this year.

Income Supports

Families need to be able to take care of their children. A parent who works full time should be able to “make a living.” We support increasing the Minimum Wage to return dignity to work.

We also support finally increasing the welfare grant so families in temporary crisis are not destitute. Income security is a children’s issue.

Juvenile Justice

We support:

- The proposed Closer to Home Initiative for NYC youngsters. Keeping young people who are not a danger to themselves or others close to family and social and educational supports, with the proper supervision and services, has the potential to speed and more firmly support a positive reintegration strategy. We are hopeful that other localities will explore the option for their own juveniles involved with Family Court.
- OCFS’s Facility Closure plan
- The Sanctuary and introduction of other Evidence Based Treatment Models into the juvenile justice residential and community based programs.
- Raising the age that a young person can be criminally charged and tried as an adult to at least 18. Recent studies of adolescent brain development demand this.

Education

We encourage the Governor and the legislature to work together to assure that every New York student, from the youngest New Yorker in early care to the graduating senior at our public colleges, has the opportunity to get a world class education that will ensure a competitive workforce for New York into the 22nd century. A property tax cap will not provide even one child with child care or a world class education. Targeted investments in proven educational programs will ensure NY’s future.

Environment

New York State must work to create and protect a healthy environment for all children. At home, in child care, in school, and in our communities we must work to reduce children’s exposure to lead, air pollution, second hand smoke, and toxic chemicals in toys and child focused products.

New York must fully examine the scientific evidence and potential risks presented by hydrofracking. The state must review all of the recent science and must make decisions that protect the environment that our children will inherit.

We must work harder to ensure that only environmentally safe products are used in schools, child care centers, playgrounds, sports fields and other places where children spend time.

