



Council on Children and Families

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

VANESSA THREATTE
Executive Director

UNDER EMBARGO Until June 9, 2025 at 12:01 a.m. ET

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2025 KIDS COUNT® DATA BOOK ON CHILD WELL-BEING

Unprecedented and targeted investments to improve outcomes for New York's children

ALBANY, NY – New York has continued to make steady progress and rank in the top tier among all states in the U.S. in health (7th) and education (8th), while maintaining the state's overall ranking (29th) among all states for the last two years. This ranking is based on the Annie E. Casey Foundation's *KIDS COUNT® Data Book*, which provides a clear, consistent national and 50-state overview of child well-being in four domains — economic well-being, education, health, and family and community factors. This annually published resource uses federal data collected by all states to track and rank states according to how children are faring.

Nationally, this year's trends paint a complex picture: steady progress in some areas, setbacks in others, and persistent opportunities to do better for kids and their families. Governor Kathy Hochul has taken significant action to support New York's families by providing significant financial support for parents during pregnancy and at birth, providing free diapers and other supplies to low-income families, expanding access to high-quality childcare and to nutritious food, and increasing New York's Child Tax Credit. At the same time, the state continues to focus on addressing economic insecurity and ethnic and racial disparities, so that all New York children have the opportunity to thrive. Key New York data findings that provide insights into where New York is doing well and where greater focus is still needed are as follows:

- New York continues to lead the country, ranking 3rd, in the 2019–2023 rate (59%) of young children (ages 3 and 4) in school, improving from 58% in 2018–2022. The racial and ethnic distribution in these young children was 59% for Non-Hispanic Black children, 55% for Hispanic children, and 61% for Non-Hispanic White children in 2019–23.
- The rate of New York children with health insurance in 2023 was 97% for Non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic children and 98% for Non-Hispanic White children, among the highest in the nation.
- The rate of New York fourth graders who scored at or above the proficient reading level in 2024 improved slightly from 2022, from 30% to 31%. Yet, tremendous room for improvement remains, as does the need to address stark racial and ethnic disparities, with only 17% of Non-Hispanic Black students scoring at or above proficient reading level, 22% of Hispanic students, and 37% of Non-Hispanic White students in 2024.
- The rate of New York eighth graders who scored at or above the proficient math level in 2024 decreased from 2022, from 28% to 26%, with racial and ethnic disparities persisting in 2024: 16% for Non-Hispanic Black students, 12% for Hispanic students, and 35% for Non-Hispanic White students.
- The rate of New York children living in high-poverty areas (census tracts with poverty rates \geq 30%). The racial and ethnic distribution of children living in high-poverty areas in 2019–23 was 27% for Non-Hispanic Black children, 20% for Hispanic children, and 7% for Non-Hispanic White children.
- The rate of New York children living in families with incomes below the federal poverty level has been 19% from 2021 to 2023, with 28% for Non-Hispanic Black children, 26% for Hispanic children, and 13% for Non-Hispanic White children in 2023.

To provide a further window into the systems and structures that have perpetuated disparities, the New York State Council on Children and Families (CCF) is publishing a [New York State County Data Book](#) that groups select child poverty and education indicators, broken down by race and ethnicity. As New York looks to the future, the intention is to remain grounded in data that informs sound policies and best supports the success of all children.

Leadership in Policy and Investment

Building on prior investments, the 2026 New York State budget dramatically increases support for children and families in New York. These investments include:

- New investments to help families meet the cost of daily necessities and services like childcare (with an additional \$400 million, for a total of more than \$7 billion over four years) and an historic increase in New York's Child Tax Credit (the largest in state history) to provide eligible families with a \$1,000 credit for kids younger than 4 years old and a \$500 credit for kids ages 4 to 16 years, effectively doubling the credit for the average family, which analysts estimate could reduce child poverty by up to 8.2%.
- \$340 million to ensure free breakfast and lunch for every kindergarten to 12 students in New York, saving families an average of \$1,600 per child per year.
- Record funding for schools (a \$1.7 billion increase in school aid) and for school-based mental health supports (\$10 million), ensure students thrive academically and emotionally.
- \$109 million to expand after-school programming—critical for academic enrichment, safety, and social development.
- \$500 million for Social Care Networks to address health-related social needs such as housing, nutrition, and transportation for Medicaid recipients.
- Investments in mentoring and leadership initiatives focused on equity and opportunity for children of color.
- \$8.5 million to provide the first statewide birth allowance in the nation — the New York State BABY (Birth Allowance for Beginning Year) Benefit — to low-income parents on public assistance when they have a new baby, increasing household income for thousands of New York's most under-resourced families at a most crucial time in their lives.
- \$9 million to provide an estimated 100,000 families with maternal health and newborn baby resources, educational materials, self-care products and diapers, and distribute millions more diapers to low-income families across the state, with the intent to grow that number each year.

Governor Hochul has repeatedly declared: "As New York's first mom governor, I'm committed to doing everything in my power to help kids across the state." New York's 2026 Budget builds on New York's record funding for education, ensures no student goes to school hungry, and restricts smartphone use in schools to create a distraction-free learning environment so that kids can focus on learning, not scrolling.

Given the current national landscape and threats to change, cut, and eliminate social safety net programs, it is especially critical to show that investments in children are not only the right thing to do but they yield immense returns. Children who grow up healthy, well-fed, and financially secure are more likely to stay in school, enter the workforce, and contribute to building a stronger society for everyone.

More detailed information about child well-being at the state and national level is provided in the *2025 KIDS COUNT® Data Book*.

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RELEASE INFORMATION

The *2025 KIDS COUNT® Data Book* will be available at www.aecf.org/databook. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs, and rankings in stories about the Data Book can use the KIDS COUNT Data Center at datacenter.aecf.org.

THE COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Council on Children and Families is authorized to coordinate the state health, education, and human services systems to provide more effective systems of care for children and families. For more information, visit <http://www.ccf.ny.gov>.

ABOUT THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation's young people by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity, and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work, and grow. For more information, visit www.aecf.org. KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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