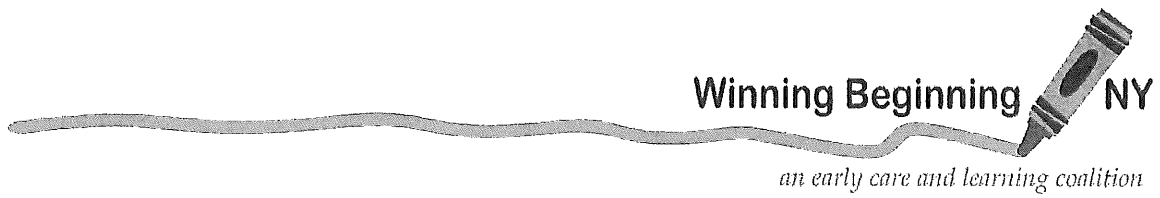


Submitting Testimony



Testimony
2016 Joint Legislative Hearing
Health Committee
Winning Beginning NY
January 25, 2016

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Thank you, Members of the Committee, for allowing the *Winning Beginning NY* coalition to submit testimony today.

Winning Beginning NY is the statewide early learning coalition, representing the interests of children from the prenatal period through age eight. Our priorities include high-quality programs such as: maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting; child care; Pre-K; afterschool; and Early Intervention (EI).

In today's testimony we will address home visiting and EI.

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting

Only one home visiting program—Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP)— falls under the Department of Health's purview. We are pleased that the Executive has proposed maintaining funding for NFP in its budget at \$3 million, but ask that you add \$2 million.

We also urge support from you—across budget tables—for the other three research-based programs operating in New York State: Healthy Families New York (HFNY), Parents as Teachers (PAT), and The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP), Inc. Only one of those—HFNY—is currently funded through the Office of Children and Family Services.

During the summer and fall of 2015, advocates and representatives from each program met jointly with policymakers and will continue to meet, as a team, throughout the budget process period. *Winning Beginning NY* feels strongly that New York State must invest in the

full continuum of available services, which means funding all four programs. We have attached a chart that demonstrates what that continuum looks like.

Because we support all four programs, our budget request is as follows:

Maintain \$27.3 million and invest an additional \$10.5 million in maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting to adequately fund a continuum of supports and services for families.

Healthy Families New York (HFNY):

- **Maintain \$23.3 million** in funding
- **Add \$4.5 million in new funding to:**
 - restore \$3.5 million to 2008 funding levels. This funding will cover increased capacity at existing sites, workforce development and local level service enhancements (mental health, fatherhood, community coordination).
 - \$700,000 to expand services in unserved areas (200 slots)
 - \$300,000 to support a site not currently funded.

Nurse Family Partnership (NFP): **Maintain \$3 million** for the NFP program for sustainability and add **\$2 million in new funding** for expansion in New York City and Upstate (\$500,000 in New York City to increase capacity by 75 slots; \$500,000 Upstate to increase capacity by 100-125 slots).

Parents as Teachers (PAT): Invest **\$3 million** in new funding to expand capacity to 1,000 families across the State.

Parent-Child Home Program, Inc. (PCHP): Invest **\$1.5 million** in new funding to expand capacity to 300 additional families across the State.

Early Intervention (EI)

As this year's budget process moves forward, we urge the Legislature to:

1. **Reject the Executive Budget proposal to restructure the referral, eligibility determination, screening, and evaluation process.** This proposal does not comport with federal requirements, would have a harmful impact on children, and may not yield any cost savings.
2. **Begin restoring reimbursement rates by increasing the current rates by at least 5% this year.** The Executive Budget proposal of a 1% increase for administrative costs only is insufficient.
3. Include in the final budget the Executive Budget proposal to **require health insurance companies to contribute to the cost of EI services** by prohibiting them from denying coverage for EI claims based on certain factors.
4. **Reinvest the savings from the proposed health insurance changes into the EI program** to support quality improvement efforts and recruitment and retention of high-quality professionals and to cover the burden of increased costs.

Both home visiting and EI deserve your consideration. We thank you for your time and your consideration.

Winning Beginning NY

Kristen Kerr and Jenn O'Connor, Co-chairs