



THE POUGHKEEPSIE
CHILDREN'S CABINET

EARLY CHILDHOOD

**REPORT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

20
22

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

Why We Need a Citywide Movement where Children, Youth and Families Come First

12

Numbers that Tell a Story: City of Poughkeepsie at a Glance

04

Why Early Childhood Matters

18

Our Citywide Opportunities

08

The Family-Workforce-Economic-Community Ecosystem

20

Early Childhood Working Group Findings

09

The Early Childhood Workforce: Living Wages and Benefits; Health, Professional Respect and the Pandemic

28

Early Childhood Working Group Recommendations

38

What Your Sector Can Do

WHAT ARE CHILDREN'S CABINETS?

Imagine if leaders of all of the agencies and organizations that serve children and youth in your community came together at one table to improve their collective ability to meet the needs of children. Picture your superintendent talking with your head of libraries, strategizing with your health commissioner, and collaborating with your summer and after school providers to create a civic ecosystem that enables all children to thrive. We call this a Children's Cabinet.

Across the nation, Children's Cabinets are "advancing a new paradigm for systems of support and opportunity for children and youth using coalition building and policy change. Children's Cabinets are collaborative action bodies composed of agencies inside and outside of government, with responsibilities and interests in seeing children thrive in school and in life."

A Children's Cabinet provides a space for government agencies and community stakeholders (such as your Children's Hospital, United Way, or Boys and Girls Club) to create a shared vision for kids in your community and then work together to make that vision a reality. By seamlessly coordinating the supports and services that your community provides, Children's Cabinets address young people's holistic needs as they grow and develop.

-Excerpt sourced from the Local Children's Cabinet Network: [Children's Cabinet Toolkit: A Roadmap for Getting Started in Your Community](#)

WHAT IS THE POUGHKEEPSIE CHILDREN'S CABINET?

The Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet (PCC) is a cross-sector coordinating body whose mission is to connect all members of the Poughkeepsie community who support children in order to create and coordinate a cradle-to-career system of services, supports and opportunities that ensures every child can thrive in Poughkeepsie regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, poverty or circumstance.

The PCC emerged as an outcome of the first-ever Poughkeepsie Summit at Harvard University in August of 2019, convening more than 20 local officials and nonprofit leaders to discuss community development opportunities related to the City of Poughkeepsie's future, with a focus on improving opportunities and shifting material conditions for young people in Poughkeepsie. This summit was the first of its kind and was organized by a group of young professionals with deep ties to the City of Poughkeepsie including Rob Watson Jr., James Watson and Kylynn Grier.

The PCC was established as a collaborative citywide initiative that seeks to ensure that children, youth, and families can thrive across all aspects of their lives inside and outside of school. It is co-chaired by Rob Rolison, Mayor of the City of Poughkeepsie, and Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, Superintendent of the Poughkeepsie City School District. Through a first-time partnership between the City of Poughkeepsie government, Poughkeepsie City School District and leading local anchor institutions, the PCC is dedicated to addressing intergenerational issues of inequity through systems change.

The PCC works to: i) Identify gaps in services and streamline service delivery, ii) Bolster strategies, policies and programs that work and, iii) Align resources to meet the holistic needs of young people. This innovative approach brings together cross-sector partners to break down silos and reimagine how decisions that impact children, youth, and families are made.

The Cabinet is composed of:

- An Executive Committee with leaders from the faith-based community; philanthropy and business; city and county government; nonprofits and community-based organizations; hospitals and health networks; elected and appointed officials; and, the Poughkeepsie City School District. The Cabinet also includes the presidents of 5 local higher education institutions: The Culinary Institute of America, Dutchess Community College, Marist College, SUNY New Paltz, and Vassar College.
- Two citywide working groups in i) Early Childhood and, ii) Out-of-School Enrichment and Learning that convene subject matter experts to develop programmatic and policy solutions for the Executive Committee and general public's consideration. The Cabinet will launch two additional working groups in 2022 focused on "College, Career and Civic Readiness" and "Integrated Health and Human Services."
- A Youth Engagement Program being implemented with the support of the Marist College Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership, Marist College Center for Social Justice Research, Vassar College Office of Community-Engaged Learning and the Forum for Youth Investment.
- A support team of staff, advisors and consultants that help operationalize and implement the Cabinet's cradle to career agenda.

The PCC is a member of the Local Children's Cabinet Network, a national initiative of the Harvard Graduate School of Education's (HGSE) Education Redesign (EdRedesign) Lab, The Forum for Youth Investment and the Children's Funding Project. The PCC is also a member of the By All Means Communities of Practice initiative of the HGSE's EdRedesign Lab. Through By All Means, Poughkeepsie joins a select group of communities that are reimaging systems of opportunity for children, youth and families, including: Chattanooga-Hamilton County, TN; Chelsea, MA; Louisville, KY; Oakland, CA; Partnership for Resilience - Chicago Southland and Southern Illinois; Providence, RI; and Somerville, MA.

THE POUGHKEEPSIE CHILDREN'S CABINET EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March of 2021, The Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet (PCC) launched two citywide Working Groups (Early Childhood; and Out-of-School Enrichment and Learning) geared towards the development of a comprehensive plan for children, youth and families from cradle to career in the City of Poughkeepsie. In the months prior to this launch, The Children's Cabinet held a community-wide call for applications where community members could nominate potential Working Group members and apply directly to be considered for each Working Group.

Working Group Chairs and Members were selected in consultation with Children's Cabinet Executive Committee members, staff, City of Poughkeepsie Mayor Rob Rolison and Poughkeepsie City School District Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser. To begin, Working Group Chairs were appointed to steer each Working Group's process. Dr. Julie Riess, Executive Director of DAY ONE Early Learning Community, chaired the Early Childhood Working Group. Mario Johnson, Director of Marist College Upward Bound, chaired the Out-of-School Enrichment and Learning Working Group. Approximately 10-15 community members of diverse backgrounds were recommended and invited to join each Working Group based on longstanding professional expertise and lived experience in the two Working Group topic areas. All Working Group Members signed on to serve in a volunteer capacity for an approximately six-month period. Within the Early Childhood Working Group, membership included representatives from child care providers; higher education institutions; the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam; Dutchess County Government; Poughkeepsie City School District; school district parents; nonprofits; and philanthropy.

Over approximately six months, Early Childhood Working Group members met virtually—twice a month for 90 minutes each meeting—to unpack structural barriers and opportunities related to whole child development for children ages 0-5 in the City of Poughkeepsie. Members were tasked with developing a report to submit to the Children's Cabinet Executive Committee with recommendations and guidance for advancing major structural changes in its area of focus. Throughout this process, Working Group members structured their discussions using a civic design framework that provided a phased approach to their discussions and exchanges. Members had meetings dedicated to: i) Introducing the topics of discussion and getting to know each other ii) Framing the issues of their sector to build consensus on what the central challenges are iii) Ideating solutions to pressing public problems iv) Developing a series of proposals that could serve as potential recommendations v) Prioritizing recommendations and, vi) Presenting a final set of recommendations to the public. Working Group members were also charged with drawing on their expertise of the local landscape alongside reviewing research, reports and national best practices in their respective sectors. Members also participated in national events and exchanged with leaders from communities across the country engaged in similar efforts.

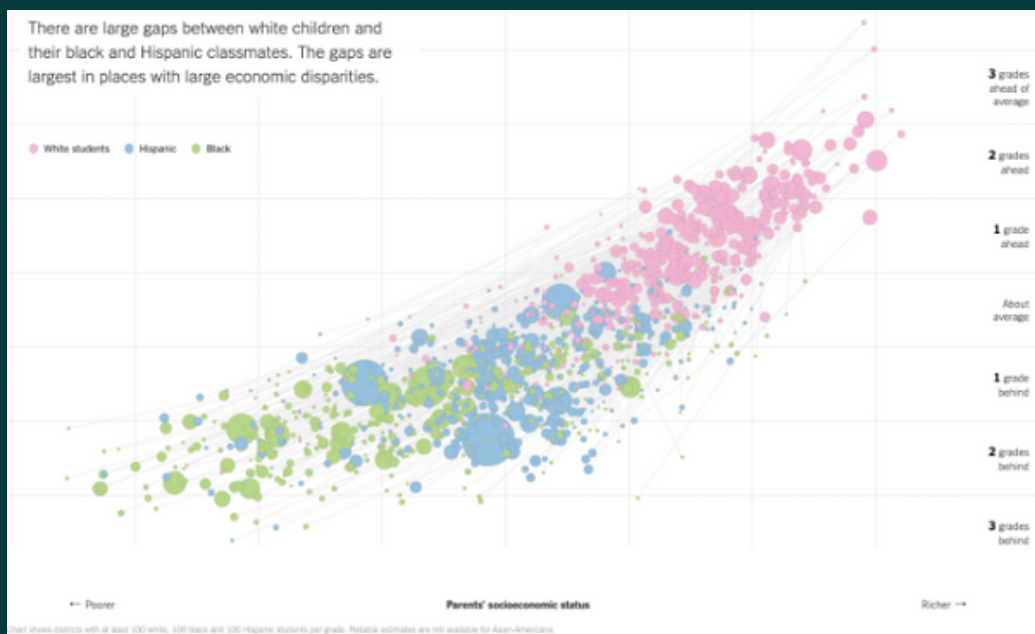
The following report presents recommendations for implementation in areas that include public policy, data collection, addressing coverage gaps, fiscal allocations, programmatic innovations and new approaches to family and community engagement. It is our hope that this report will serve as a roadmap for a new citywide agenda in child and youth development. While we are proud of the diverse voices that shaped this document, we recognize that more work needs to be done to elevate the knowledge, perspectives and experiences of the City of Poughkeepsie community-at-large.

We hope that this document contributes to the start of a new era in collaborative action for the Early Childhood sector and builds upon ongoing efforts by countless local leaders and organizations to make the City of Poughkeepsie a place where children, youth and families come first.

WHY WE NEED A CITYWIDE MOVEMENT WHERE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES COME FIRST

WHAT WE KNOW NATIONALLY

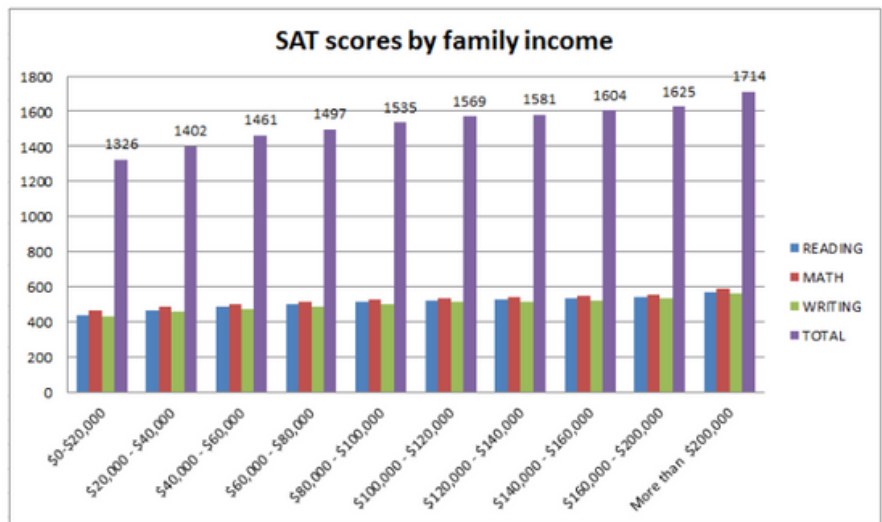
- Public education in the United States is not the great equalizer it was created to be. Race, zip code and socioeconomic status continue to be leading determinants of educational attainment, career success and intergenerational wealth in the United States and the City of Poughkeepsie.
- Incoming Poughkeepsie City School District 6th graders begin middle school two grades behind. This phenomenon reflects what national research shows us: students from poorer households consistently perform below grade level while students from higher income households perform above grade level.



WHAT WE KNOW NATIONALLY

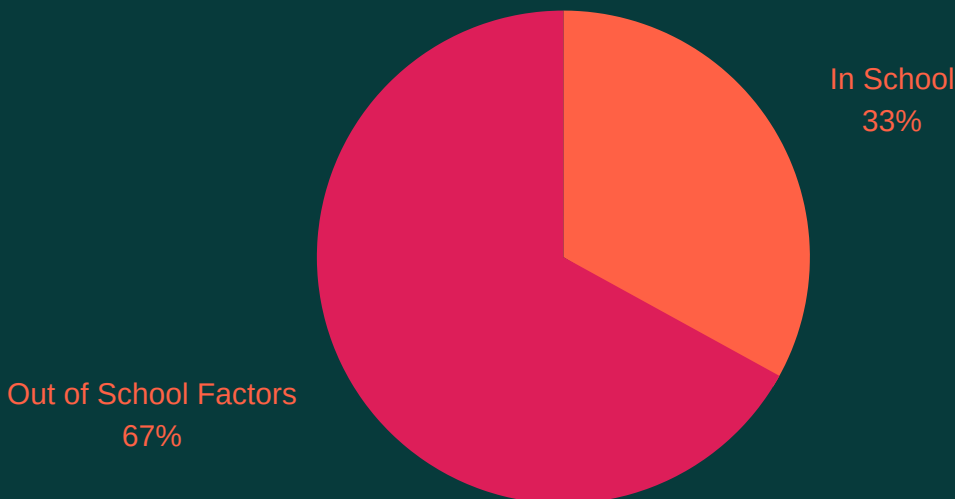
SAT Score by Family Income Level

High SAT scores are highly correlated with the wealth of a student's family.



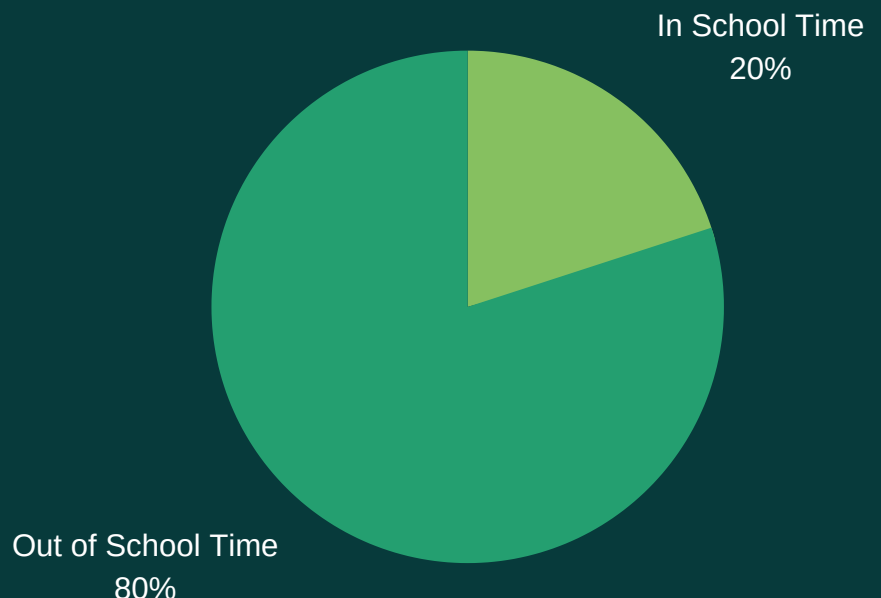
Student achievement in the classroom is largely shaped by what happens outside of school

Two-thirds of the variance in educational attainment amongst students in the United States is due to out-of-school factors such as poverty, home environment and community investment.



Children spend only 20% of their waking hours in School.

During their K-12 years, children and youth will spend only 20% of their waking hours in school. 80% of their time is spent outside of school.



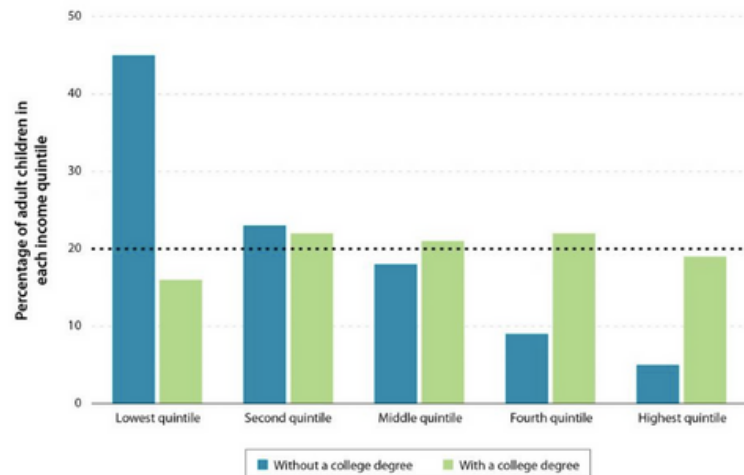
WHAT WE KNOW NATIONALLY

Income Distribution

“Without a college degree, a child born into a poor family has little chance of breaking into the upper end of the income distribution”

Income Quintile of Adults Born into Lowest-Quintile Families, by College Attainment

Without a college degree, a child born into a poor family has little chance of breaking into the upper end of the income distribution.

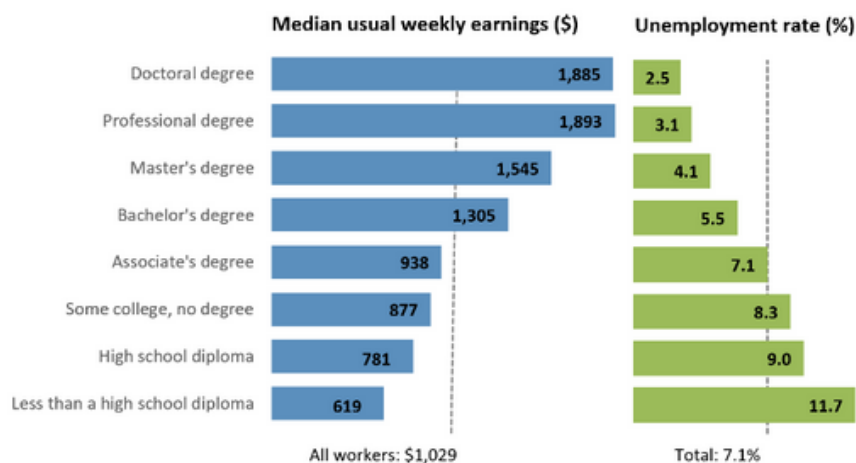


Source: Haskins (2008).

Note: Calculations are based on the PSID, which compares children's adult income at roughly age forty with that of their parents at about the same age.

THE HAMILTON PROJECT
BROOKINGS

Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment, 2020



Note: Data are for persons age 25 and over. Earnings are for full-time wage and salary workers.

Educational Attainment

Completing high school and obtaining post-secondary degrees leads to higher earnings and lower unemployment.

- In the City of Poughkeepsie where 80% of our public students come from economically disadvantaged households and only 60% complete high school, schools are critical to a child's success, but schools alone are not a sufficient intervention to address poverty and the out-of-school factors that impact learning, educational attainment and intergenerational wealth.
- We need a citywide movement that builds a cradle-to-career system of supports and opportunities to ensure that all children, youth, families and community members reach their full potential.

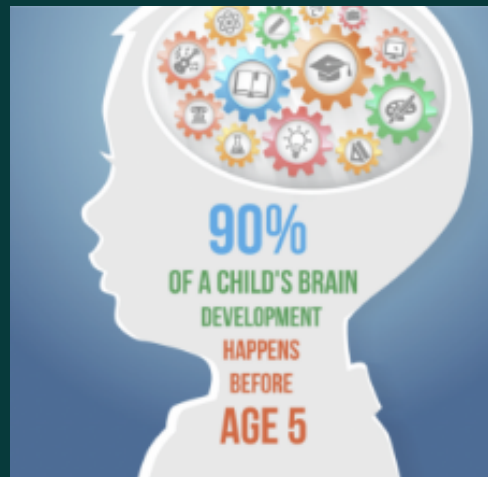


WHY EARLY CHILDHOOD MATTERS

WHAT WE KNOW NATIONALLY

Early brain development.

From prenatal development through a child's entry into kindergarten, the brain makes billions of connections between its neurons that set the foundation for learning for the rest of a child's life. Maximizing the opportunities to build a child's brain from the ages of 0 to 5 is critical to their lifelong learning, health and adult productivity.



90% of a child's brain growth takes place ages 0-5, before a child begins kindergarten.

Children with caring, nurturing and healthy relationships early in life have greater success in school and life.



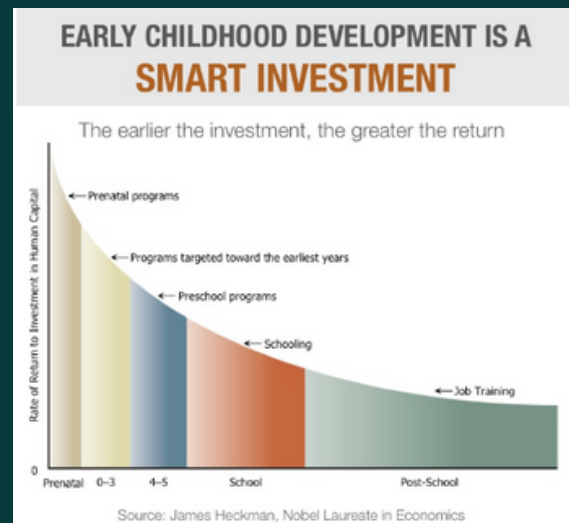
High quality early childhood education creates and strengthens early brain architecture

High quality early childhood education creates and strengthens early brain architecture. In turn, it increases a child's long-term outcomes for education and health and decreases negative outcomes such as unemployment and crime.

WHAT WE KNOW NATIONALLY

Early Childhood Education Investment Matters.

Of all the investments we can make in children, early childhood yields the greatest return. This goes hand-in-hand with the critical years of brain development.



For every \$1 invested in comprehensive high-quality early learning opportunities and support, there is a \$7-12 return on that investment to society. High-quality early learning programs have demonstrated the following outcomes:

- Increased academic performance in grades PreK-12 and beyond
- Increased high school graduation and postsecondary completion
- Increased long-run income earnings as an adult
- Increased government tax revenues to pay for public services for all community members
- Reduced likelihood of crime and incarceration
- Reduced chronic disease and healthcare system costs
- Reduced dependence on social services

Investing in a high quality early childhood system is one of the most powerful tools we have to promote upward mobility and community wealth creation. Strategic investments in early childhood can level the playing field and address the City of Poughkeepsie's intergenerational socioeconomic and racial inequities. Early investment in our children substantially increases the impact of other investments in our community.

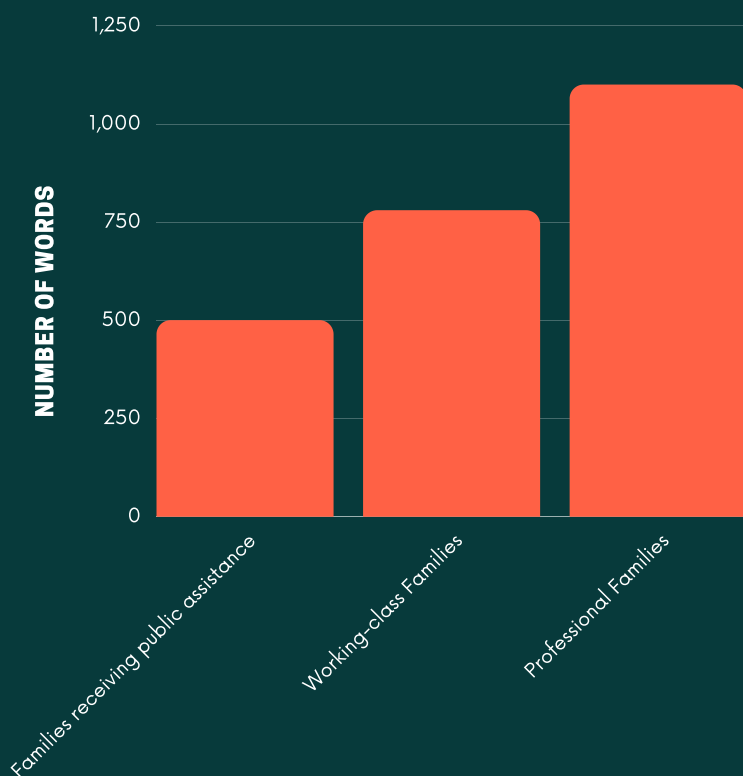
WHY EARLY CHILDHOOD MATTERS

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

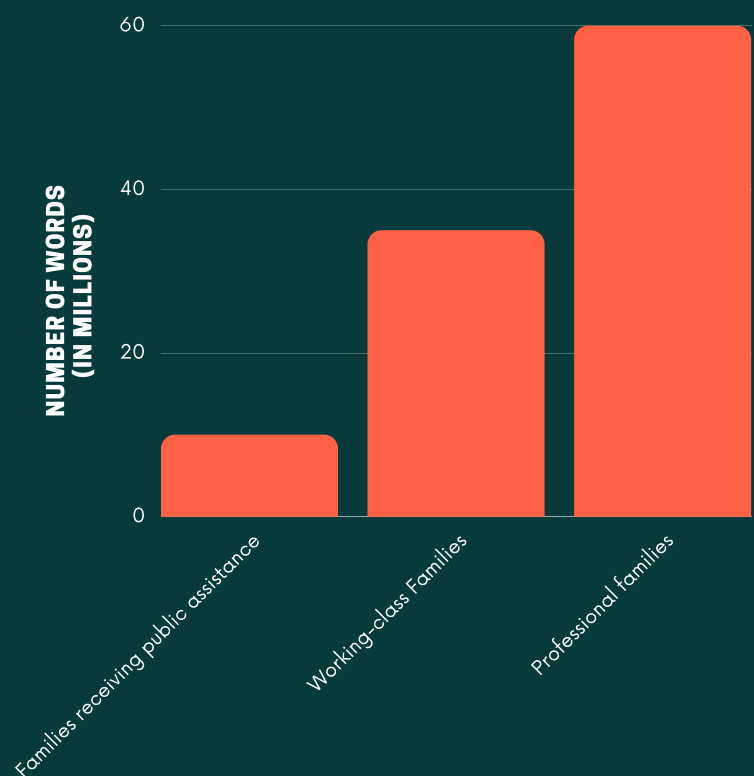
- **Kindergarten readiness contributes to lifelong success.** Children who begin kindergarten ready to learn — socially, emotionally, intellectually — are more likely to have positive pathways in early adulthood. When children begin kindergarten unprepared, they are at risk to struggle throughout their educational years. Kindergarten classroom engagement has been shown to influence a range of factors for young adulthood including: better high school grades, lower dropout rates, better school connectedness, lower substance abuse, and less obesity.
- **Words matter.** One of the most important things that adults can do to help wire a child's brain is simple: talk with them. In Dr. Dana Suskind's nearly two decades of work on the Thirty Million Word gap, she has helped to bring awareness to the importance of talking with children, and providing an environment full of spoken language.

The importance of daily language exposure is critical for a child's school readiness and long-term development. Studies have shown that "...children from lower-income households hear, on average, about thirty million words fewer than their peers from more affluent homes during this critical period of development, leaving them less likely to achieve academic success." Enriching a child's home environment with more daily spoken language is one of the best ways we can help children be ready to become lifelong learners.

VOCABULARY SIZE BY AGE 3



WORDS HEARD BY AGE 3

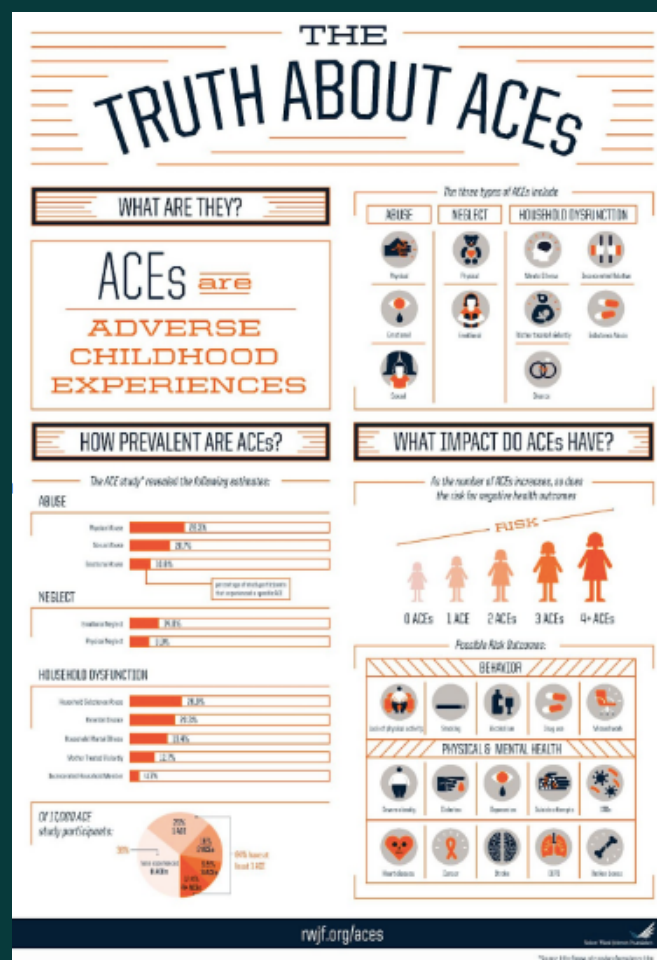


WHAT WE KNOW NATIONALLY

Toxic Stress and Brain Development

Toxic stress is stress that is prolonged and unrelenting, for which the child and often the family have no control (ex. lack of food and housing security, medical access, exposure to violence). Without significant, daily support, a young child experiencing toxic stress is at high risk of interrupting the development of a healthy foundation for brain development. **Put simply, toxic stress in early childhood kills brain cell connections at the critical time that the brain must create a foundation of connections for lifelong learning and adaptation.**

- In August 2021, The American Academy of Pediatrics released a policy statement that **safe, stable and nurturing relationships (SSNRs)"... are biological necessities** for all children because they mitigate childhood toxic stress responses and proactively build resilience by fostering the adaptive skills needed to cope with future adversity in a healthy manner."
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs** refers to the number of adverse experiences in a child's life before the age of 18. ACEs create a cumulative or even exponential impact: the more ACEs, the greater the negative impact on brain development and health. There are three overarching categories: abuse, neglect and household dysfunction (see chart below, upper right box). Within the first five years of life, children's ACEs scores get magnified in derailing healthy development because of the sensitive period of brain development. The featured infographic is 2015 - pre-pandemic.



THE FAMILY-WORKFORCE-ECONOMIC-COMMUNITY ECOSYSTEM

In 2000, T. Berry Brazelton and Stanley Greenspan published *The Irreducible Needs of Children: What Every Child Must Have to Grow, Learn and Flourish*. As we think about the ecosystem of early childhood educators, parents, families, our economy and our society, this list of seven irreducible needs is an essential roadmap:

- The need for ongoing nurturing relationships
- The need for physical protection, safety and regulation
- The need for experiences tailored to individual differences
- The need for developmentally appropriate experiences
- The need for limit-setting, structure and expectations
- The need for stable, supportive communities and cultural continuity
- The need to protect the future

Young children and the family-workforce-community ecosystem. The pandemic has made evident what families, educators and early childhood scientists have known for decades: access to affordable, high quality early childhood education is essential to the healthy ecosystem of the family, and in turn our communities and society. Without this access and knowledge that “my child is safe, learning and growing,” a parent’s ability to maximize workplace productivity, minimize absenteeism, and provide for basic needs of their family is greatly diminished or eliminated.

- Affordable child care allows mothers and caregivers to return to the workforce.
- When employees have consistent high quality care, absences drop by 20-30% and turnover by 37-60% (saving US businesses an estimated \$3 Billion annually).¹
- **“Child care centers allow parents — and especially mothers — to work.** In the U.S. 65 percent of mothers of young children are in the labor force; the labor force participation rate for all mothers with children 18 and under is close to 72 percent.”
- **“The child care sector contributes \$41.5 billion to the national economy each year and employs 1.57 million workers nationwide,** most of whom are female, according to a report by the Committee for Economic Development (CED), a Virginia-based nonpartisan public policy organization.

Currently, the US risks losing 49% of its child care supply. New York State is similar to the national numbers below.

TABLE 1 Without adequate federal support, nearly 4.5 million child care slots are at risk of disappearing Potential child care supply loss, by state, without adequate federal funding				
State	Percentage of child care supply that could be lost	Licensed child care slots that could be lost	Children per slot, pre-COVID-19	Estimated children per slot, post COVID-19
United States	49%	4,473,501	2.61	4.16

WHY has the pandemic continued to create a supply crisis of child care slots nationwide?

- 1.Reduction of slots per room due to COVID health regulations.
- 2.Cost increases for care providers and owners, including PPE, cleaning, and less income from slots for the same number of teachers required to cover those slots.
- 3.Child care businesses unable to stay economically viable — and closing.
- 4.A staffing shortage of child care workers, who can return to the workforce making more money in other sectors with less personal health risks and mental health demands.

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

LIVING WAGES & BENEFITS; HEALTH, PROFESSIONAL RESPECT AND THE PANDEMIC

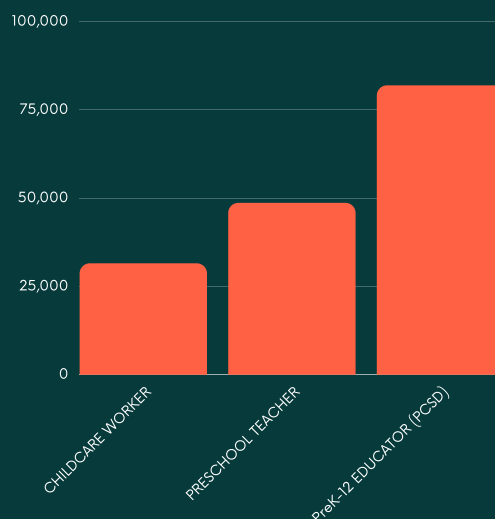
The Early Childhood Workforce

Early childhood educators need to be defined as a profession of teachers, not babysitters. Each day, they are wiring children's brains, building a foundation of lifelong learning and healthy development. Do the following statistics sound like the profession of brain architects of our youngest?

- 98% of all workers make more than child care workers: day-care workers earn so little they rank in the bottom 2 percent of all professions. On average, child care workers make, "...far less than they can earn working at Target, Starbucks or many fast food restaurants."
- Nationwide, 44% of the early childhood workforce is on at least one public assistance program.
- They tend to lack benefits such as health insurance, family leave and paid sick leave.
- "The median pay in the industry — \$25,460 a year, according to the Labor Department — is below the poverty line for a family of four."
- The state of the early childhood education workforce in our country is not just an economic issue: it is a moral and social justice issue.
- "The fact that society is 'expecting nurturing, responsive care,' from providers who don't have enough money to put food on the table, 'is really unconscionable'... 'As a society, we're overlooking our 'moral obligation' to these workers.'" - Professor Phil Fisher, University of Oregon and director of the RAPID-EC project.

Closer to home: The City of Poughkeepsie Wage Gap

MEDIAN INCOME
CHILDCARE WORKER (NY): \$31,500
PRESCHOOL TEACHER: \$48,630
PreK-12 EDUCATOR (PCSD): \$81,903



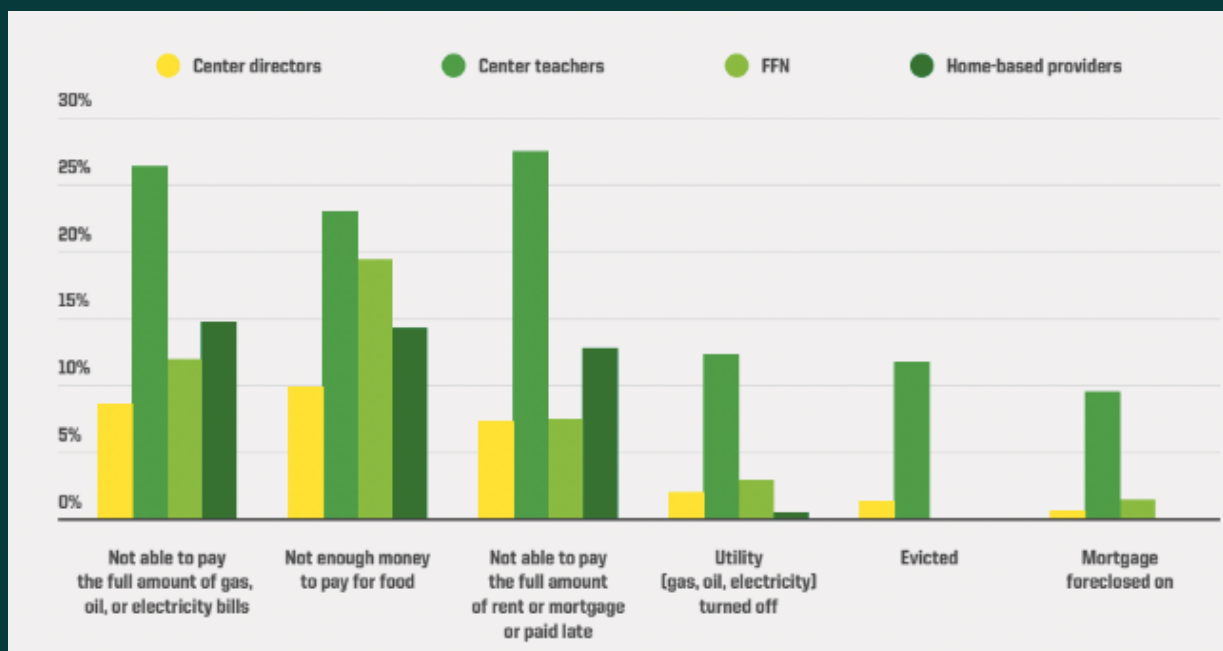
CLOSER TO HOME: THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE WAGE GAP

Our early childhood workforce is at a new level of crisis since the pandemic.

Setting the stage: The business of early childhood often has a razor thin margin of economic survival. The requirements of operation during COVID meant that class sizes were reduced, staff or children could not be combined across rooms, and the children were not eligible for vaccination. Staff worked longer hours to cover gaps of lower staffing in higher conditions of risk to their own health and that of their families. They often had to purchase their own PPE and extensive cleaning supplies.

The following is from a recently released report from “University of Oregon’s RAPID-EC project, a bi-weekly survey that has been tracking the experiences of caregivers and families with young children during the pandemic.”

- Food insecurity was an issue for 23 percent of child care providers pre-pandemic and 29% between February and January 2021
- 44% of teachers at child care centers reported experiencing hunger during the pandemic
- More than 10% of center-based teachers were evicted during the pandemic
- More than 25% said they could not fully pay their gas, oil or electricity bills
- Nearly 30% struggled to keep up with rent or mortgage payments.
- 25% reports having at least one other job to make ends meet
- 40% reported that their child care earnings were less than half of their total income



CLOSER TO HOME: THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE WAGE GAP

Provider Emotional Stress

Provider emotional stress, including anxiety, stress and depression... is related to low wages, lack of health benefits and whether they know their work schedule more than one week in advance. Consider what this means to a child's sense of routine, stability and reliability in their daily life.



An Early Childhood Staffing and Teaching crisis.

Child-care employment is still down more than 126,000 positions as workers leave for higher-paying positions as bank tellers, administrative assistants and retail clerks. Parents are struggling to return to work as day care and after-school programs dwindle.



POUGHKEEPSIE AT A GLANCE

The data below provides a snapshot of the City of Poughkeepsie community.

- **Population**

- 31,577 residents
- 46.9% White
- 36.8% Black or African-American
- 16.4% Hispanic or Latino/a
- 8.2% Two or More Races
- 1% Asian
- 0.6% American Indian and Alaska Native alone

- **Education Level**

- 23.2% with a Bachelor's or higher

- **Poverty**

- 19.5% of residents living in poverty vs. 8.6% in Dutchess County
- 25% of African-Americans
- 19% of Hispanics
- 14% of Whites

- **Child Poverty:** Over 1 in 4 City of Poughkeepsie children ages 0-18 living in poverty (26%) compared to 12% in Dutchess County

- **Income:** Median income of **\$43,794 vs. \$81,219** in Dutchess County and **\$71,345** in New York State

- **Black** or African American Median Income: \$36,144
- **Hispanic:** \$37,338
- **White:** \$52,030

- **Health:** 7.6% Low birthweight babies vs. 6.9% in Dutchess County

- **Food Security:** 26% of City of Poughkeepsie households experience food insecurity



POUGHKEEPSIE AT A GLANCE

The data below provides a snapshot of the City of Poughkeepsie community.

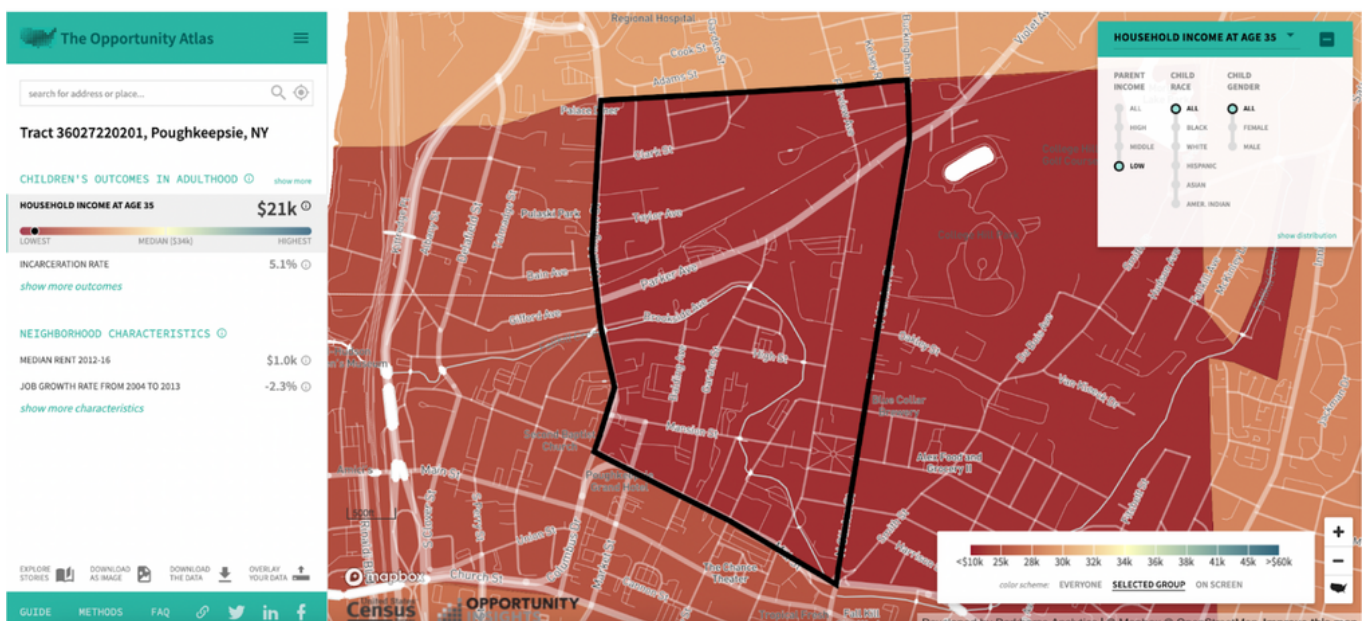
- **Household makeup:** 60% of children growing up in single parent families vs. 29% in Dutchess County and 32% in New York State
- **Upward Mobility:** Residents who grew up in the City of Poughkeepsie's poorest neighborhoods had a median household income of \$24,000 as an adult.
- **Homeownership:** 35% of City of Poughkeepsie families are homeowners vs. 69 % in Dutchess County and 70% in New York State
- **Rent as Percentage of Household Income:** 42% of City of Poughkeepsie renters' household income goes towards rent vs. 29% in New York State
- **Decline in Young Professionals:** between 2000 and 2017 the number of jobs held by 22-45 year olds declined by 9%. By sector, the number of jobs held by 22-45 year olds declined by 30% in Public Administration between 2000 and 2017
- **Violent Crime:** 77 reports of violent crimes per 10,000 residents in the City of Poughkeepsie vs. 19 per 10,000 in Dutchess County and 20 per 10,000 in New York State
- **Domestic Violence:** 91 reports of domestic violence per 10,000 residents in the City of Poughkeepsie vs. 31 per 10,000 in Dutchess County and 41 per 10,000 in New York State



NUMBERS THAT TELL A STORY

INTERGENERATIONAL ECONOMIC MOBILITY: POUGHKEEPSIE AT A GLANCE

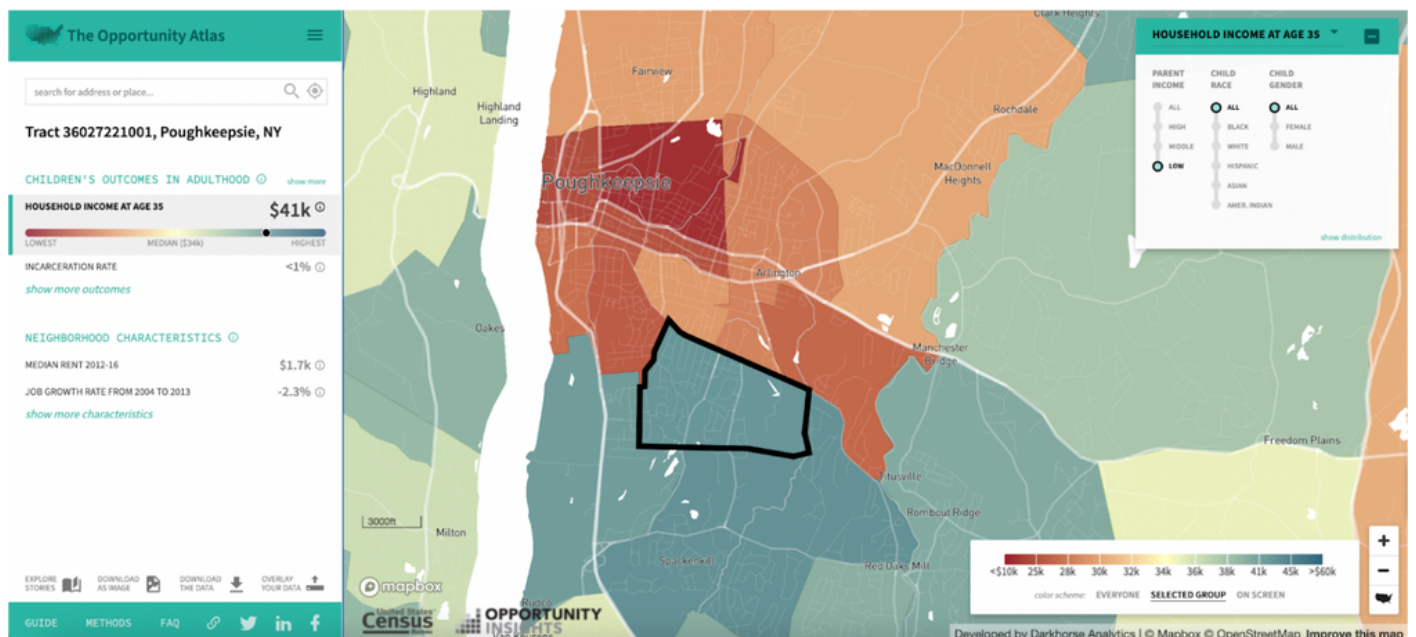
- **Intergenerational Economic Mobility:** Measures the extent to which an individual earns more or less income than their parents as an adult. This is typically considered a key aspect of the “American Dream.”
- **Data Source:** The Opportunity Atlas; Linked IRS records and Census data that cover more than 95% of all children who grew up in the US and were born between 1978-1983.
- **Intergenerational Economic Mobility in the City of Poughkeepsie:** Low-income individuals who grew up in the City of Poughkeepsie’s poorest neighborhoods—which are located on its northside—had a **median household income of \$21,000 as an adult**. This is on par with **some of the worst neighborhoods in the entire US** for intergenerational mobility for low-income individuals.



NUMBERS THAT TELL A STORY

INTERGENERATIONAL ECONOMIC MOBILITY: POUGHKEEPSIE AT A GLANCE

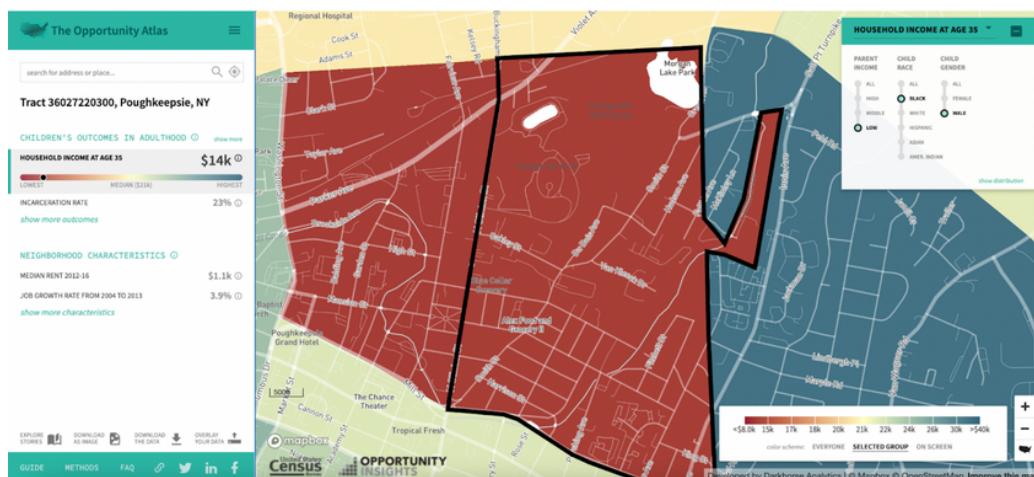
Low-income individuals who grew up in parts of the Town of Poughkeepsie had a median household income of \$41,000 as an adult. This is on par with some of the best neighborhoods in the entire US for intergenerational mobility for low-income individuals.



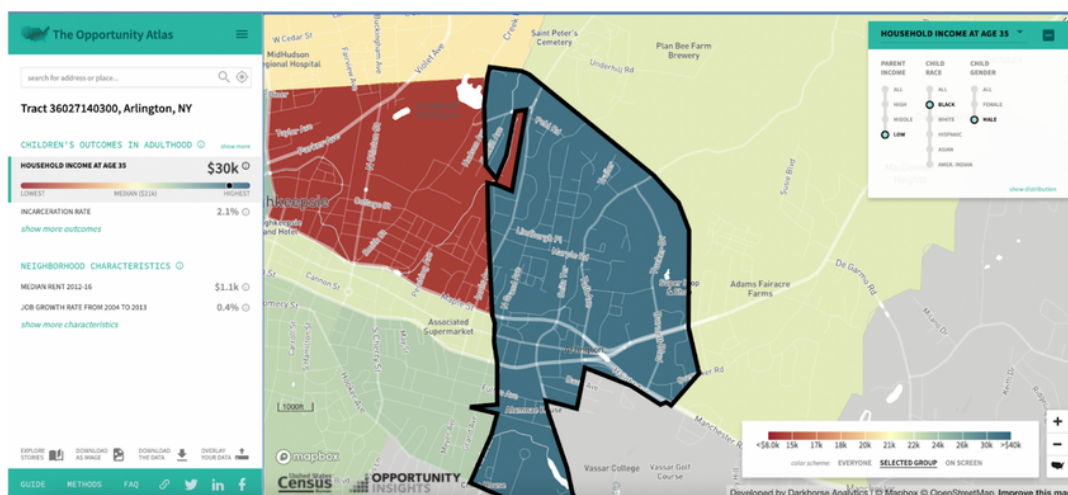
NUMBERS THAT TELL A STORY

OUTCOMES FOR CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE BLACK MALES WHO GROW UP IN LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

Low-income black males who grew up in the City of Poughkeepsie's poorest neighborhoods—which are located on its northside—had a **median household income of \$14,000 as an adult**. This is on par with **the worst neighborhoods in the entire US** for intergenerational mobility for low-income black males.



Low-income black males who grew up in nearby Arlington, New York (part of the Town of Poughkeepsie) had a **median household income of \$30,000 as an adult**. This is on par with some of the **best neighborhoods in the US** for intergenerational mobility for low-income black males.



POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

The data below provides a snapshot of the City of Poughkeepsie School District.

2019-20 Poughkeepsie City School District Student Demographics

- **4,185 students enrolled** in Poughkeepsie City School District
 - **48%** African-American
 - **37%** Hispanic or Latino/a
 - **6%** White
 - **7%** Multiracial
- **80%** economically disadvantaged compared to **40%** in Dutchess County and **57%** in New York State (More than 3 out of 4 PCSD students are economically disadvantaged)
- **19%** English Language Learners vs. **4%** in Dutchess County
- **19%** Students with Disabilities vs. **16%** in Dutchess County
- **4%** Homeless vs. **1%** in Dutchess County
- **16%** of Poughkeepsie City School District students grades 3-8 are proficient in math vs. **47%** in New York State
- **22%** of PCSD students grades 3-8 are proficient in English Language Arts vs. **45%** in New York State
- **60% 2020 High School Graduation Rate** for PCSD students compared to **85%** in Dutchess County and **85% New York State**
 - **17%** high school graduation rate for English Language Learners
 - **28%** high school graduation rate for students with disabilities



OUR CITYWIDE OPPORTUNITIES

Below are our community strengths and assets.



Higher Education Institutions

6 higher education institutions within a 30-40 minute drive of the City of Poughkeepsie.



A Multiracial Community

Multi-racial community (Diversity index of 77% in City of Poughkeepsie)

- **600,000+ visitors** annually to the Walkway over the Hudson
- **The Youth Opportunity Union (YOU)**: A new multi-million dollar investment in children and youth at 35 Montgomery Street (site of the former Dutchess YMCA) led by Dutchess County, in partnership with the City of Poughkeepsie and a local coalition of community organizations
- **Federal and State Aid** to Head Start, Dutchess County, City of Poughkeepsie, and Poughkeepsie City School District
- **Pre-K Expansion in Poughkeepsie City Schools**: An increase of 102 spots with \$1,391,076 in state funding to Poughkeepsie City School District
- **National 3-K Movement**: From New York City public schools to Multnomah County Oregon, there is a growing national movement to provide free Pre-K to all 3-year-olds in communities across the nation
- **Day One Early Learning Community**: An emerging organization in the local early childhood sector that aims to transform early childhood education in the City of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County region
- **The leadership, staffing and resources** of the Child Care Council of Dutchess County and Putnam Inc.

OUR CITYWIDE OPPORTUNITIES

Below are our community strengths and assets.



Strong Anchor Institutions



An Ideal Scale

A smaller, but powerful community where impact is feasible.



Community Based Organizations

- **Building a common agenda for kindergarten readiness** that considers key domains of whole child development
- **Engaging media and influencers** to position early childhood as a citywide cause
- **Partnering with the public health practitioners** (pediatricians, nurses etc.) to reach families during the early years
- **PCSD Community Schools:** A growing department within PCSD geared towards partnering with community organizations to support children, youth and families.
- **Dutchess County Path to Promise:** A county-wide initiative to support cradle to career programming and systems development in our region
- **The City of Poughkeepsie's Comprehensive Plan and Housing Study** that will unpack many issues of poverty, inequality and economic development
- **National reckoning around racial justice:** There is an opportunity to tie our work to national efforts geared towards racial equity and social justice
- **Reframing City of PK's revitalization** around an opportunity to invest in children, youth and families and not just infrastructure and real estate
- **Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Executive Committee and Working Groups:** The networks, energy, relationships and experience of Cabinet Executive Committee, Working Group members and their organizations

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP FINDINGS

In the pages that follow, we provide a snapshot of some of the major data points and findings on the current landscape of the early childhood sector in the City of Poughkeepsie. We also share a list of critical data points that are not currently available and should be explored through further research to inform local decision-making.

EARLY CHILDHOOD BY THE NUMBERS IN THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE

Population: In 2020 the City of Poughkeepsie population of children ages 0-5 was 2,565.

- Under a year: 450
- 1 year olds: 417
- 2 year olds: 424
- 3 year olds: 423
- 4 year olds: 445
- 5 year olds: 406

General Coverage:

- The data below speaks to coverage for early childhood programs and spots within the Poughkeepsie City School District limits
- There are a total of 455 registered early childhood spots available for children ages 0-5 within the Poughkeepsie City School District limits.
- This represents a capacity of 18% for the total 0-5 population of the City of Poughkeepsie (2,565)

KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS:

INFANTS	Ages birth to 18 months
TODDLERS	Ages 18 months to 36 months
PRESCHOOL	Ages 36-60 months
PRE-K & K	Regulated by New York State Department of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3-UPK or Preschool: Ages 36-48 months• UPK or Pre-K: Ages 48-60 months• Kindergarten: Ages 60-72 months

EARLY CHILDHOOD BY THE NUMBERS IN THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE CONTINUED:

INFANTS	TODDLERS	PRESCHOOL
Number of early childhood center infant slots within Poughkeepsie City School District limits: 52	Number of early childhood center toddler slots within Poughkeepsie City School District limits: 87	Number of preschool spaces within Poughkeepsie City School District limits: 316
Children aged 0-18 months in the City of Poughkeepsie: 658	Children ages 18-36 months in the City of Poughkeepsie: 632	Children ages 3-4 in the City of Poughkeepsie: 868
For every 13 infants in the City of Poughkeepsie, there is only 1 spot available in a licensed child care program.	For every 7 toddlers in the City of Poughkeepsie, there is only 1 spot available in a licensed child care program.	For every 3 preschoolers in the City of Poughkeepsie, there is only 1 spot available in a licensed child care program.
Infant Capacity: 7.9%	Toddler Capacity: 13.8%	Preschool Capacity: 36.4%
The City of Poughkeepsie has less infant capacity than 73% of municipalities in New York State	The City of Poughkeepsie has less toddler capacity than 66% of the towns in New York State	The City of Poughkeepsie has less preschool capacity than 79% of the towns in New York State.
The City of Poughkeepsie is in the 27th percentile of infant capacity for New York State	Poughkeepsie is in the 34th percentile of toddler capacity for New York State	Poughkeepsie is in the 21st percentile of toddler capacity for New York State

EARLY CHILDHOOD BY THE NUMBERS IN THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE CONTINUED:

POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT COVERAGE

- **An increase** in New York State Aid for the 2021-22 academic year has provided Poughkeepsie City School District with a **\$1,391,076** increase in funding towards universal Pre-K that will cover **102 full time spots**.
- **UPK/Pre-K Offerings: 119 total full-day Pre-K spots** offered by Poughkeepsie City School District in 2021 through the PCSD Early Learning Center and Community-based organization partnerships. This covers approximately **27% of the City of Poughkeepsie 4-year old population** that is of age to enroll in Pre-K.
- **Kindergarten:** 249 students enrolled in 2021-22. This covers approximately 61% of City of Poughkeepsie 5 year olds.

HEAD START

- **There is 1 center-based Head Start program** in the City of Poughkeepsie (Delafield Street) operated by Astor Services for Children and Families with 236 slots for ages 18 months to five years old .

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

- **Gaps in Early Childhood Educator Pay:** Median income of a child care worker in New York State is approximately **\$31,500** and, for a Preschool teacher, **\$48,630**. The median income for a PreK-12 educator in Poughkeepsie City School District is **\$81,903**.

COVID-19 IMPACTS ON CHILD CARE

- 90% of City of Poughkeepsie child care centers survived the pandemic (18/21); 10% (3/21) shut down during the pandemic
- During the pandemic, the City of Poughkeepsie lost approximately 6% of its registered spaces children ages birth to 5.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

"Programs and services for children have never received a down payment of the magnitude seen in the American Rescue Plan. The package includes more than **\$160 billion** designated for education and child care as well as an additional **\$350 billion** that states and localities can flexibly spend on children. The flexibility of these funds gives local leaders and advocates an opportunity to think boldly and creatively about child- and youth-focused services as well as the chance to create sustained and robust investments in our kids going forward." - Children's Funding Project

- Astor Services for Children and Families will receive **\$828,101** in American Rescue Plan Funding for local Head Start programming

EARLY CHILDHOOD BY THE NUMBERS IN THE CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE CONTINUED:

KEY DATA POINTS WE DO NOT KNOW:

- **City of Poughkeepsie Child Enrollment in Early Childhood Programs:** While we do know the number of early childhood program spots available with registered providers (i.e. capacity), as noted above, we lack the enrollment data from these programs to know what percentage of these program spots are being provided to City of Poughkeepsie children vs. children from other jurisdictions.
- The **current demand** of City of Poughkeepsie families for early childhood programs
- **Early Childhood Educator Credentials:** The percentage (%) of early childhood professionals that have a post-secondary credential (Associate's, Bachelor's or advanced degree)
- **Early Childhood Educator Credentials:** The percentage (%) of early childhood professionals that have a post-secondary credential (Associate's, Bachelor's or advanced degree)
- Information on the **quality of early learning programs** currently serving City of Poughkeepsie children and families.
 - The only public information about the quality of a program is whether a center-based program is accredited by an outside agency. While programs that have this accreditation are likely to be high quality, it does not necessarily mean that programs without the accreditation are lower quality; it just means that they did not apply for accreditation. There is no general public system for evaluating a program's quality.
- **Kindergarten Readiness:** The percentage (%) of Poughkeepsie City School District children entering kindergarten that are kindergarten ready. Currently, there is no publicly available measure of kindergarten readiness for Poughkeepsie City School District or Dutchess County students.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Below we provide a series of major findings on the current landscape of the early childhood sector in the City of Poughkeepsie.

The absence of a coordinated citywide early childhood system.

There is no coordinating entity with the resources and staffing dedicated exclusively to enhancing early childhood access, affordability, quality and systems change in the City of Poughkeepsie. Historically, local government has not played a substantive role in making strategic investments in early childhood development. This has created a situation where, as a city, we lack a comprehensive understanding of the well-being of City of Poughkeepsie children ages 0-5 before they ever reach Pre-K or kindergarten. The absence of a citywide strategy for early learning and childhood development sets the stage for the proliferation of many structural inequities that begin during pregnancy, become exacerbated between birth and kindergarten, and lead to lifelong racial and socioeconomic disparities in the years that follow.

In a city where the majority of our public school students hail from economically disadvantaged families and a significant number of students enter kindergarten and each grade that follows below grade level, our community needs a comprehensive approach to the early years. The current ecosystem of offerings for early childhood is not sufficient to disrupt intergenerational cycles of poverty, trauma and inequity.

Severe challenges in the provision of universally accessible child care to families:

There are a limited number of spots and affordable child care offerings available to City of Poughkeepsie families. Additionally, we need more information on the full universe of the 0-5 population in our community and family demand for high-quality affordable child care (in addition to requests that the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam receives). Additionally, there are limited incentives for existing early child care providers to scale up to support low-income families due to funding constraints and challenges in developing a sustainable business model.



KEY INSIGHTS FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Below we provide a series of major findings on the current landscape of the early childhood sector in the City of Poughkeepsie.

Early childhood professional recruitment, low pay and professional development:

The lack of a talent pipeline to early childhood careers is a major hurdle to ensuring quality and scaling access to early learning across our community. Low pay for early childhood professionals creates barriers to entry and makes it difficult to recruit top professionals to this field. Most of the early childhood workforce struggles to earn a living wage while Pre-K-12 educators in local school systems earn middle-class salaries. This devaluation of early childhood professions has severe consequences for the current workforce, our children and families.

Additionally, while there are a number of professional development opportunities offered countywide, there is a critical need to introduce professional development that focuses on high-quality developmental practices and the creation of learning communities for educators to exchange best practices in preparing children for kindergarten. Support to obtain high-quality professional development is key.

No single point of entry for children and families to access services and supports:

While the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam (CCCDP) provides referral services for families seeking child care, there is no “one-stop shop” that comprehensively visualizes and streamlines early childhood opportunities, case management, wraparound services (housing, nutrition, legal etc.) and enrichment opportunities for families. A case management approach far exceeds the staffing and resources of CCCDP.

Data sharing and referrals to services:

There are no formal data sharing agreements between early learning programs, child care providers, local government and Poughkeepsie City School District to improve knowledge sharing and facilitate referrals for students/families to different programs and social services.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Below we provide a series of major findings on the current landscape of the early childhood sector in the City of Poughkeepsie.

Quality and Evaluation

Early learning and child care providers in the City of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County region do not utilize shared systems of evaluation to determine which programs are particularly successful at preparing children to enter formal schooling. This lack of alignment around northstar goals and outcomes from prenatal to age 5 limits the progress that our community can make in achieving population-level change. Additionally, there are limited supports available to child care providers and early learning programs to improve the quality of their pedagogy and programming. This is all compounded by the fact that early childhood providers lack the resources, pay and infrastructure of other sectors to develop comprehensive approaches to quality and evaluation.

Informal vs. Registered Providers:

To ensure equitable outcomes for all children, we will need to engage the full range of child care providers. It is difficult to connect with informal providers of care who, oftentimes, disproportionately serve underresourced demographics in our community.

Historical silos between early learning programs, partner agencies and the Poughkeepsie City School District:

While coordination for the child care sector has taken place at the County level through the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam and its partners, historically, there has been minimal coordination with these entities and the Poughkeepsie City School District on issues such as kindergarten readiness, parent education and data sharing.

The absence of publicly available kindergarten readiness data

The absence of publicly available kindergarten readiness data for incoming Poughkeepsie City School District Kindergarten students: Unlike other states, the New York State Education Department does not publish publicly available data on kindergarten readiness that provides a baseline on the cognitive and developmental strengths and limitations of children as they begin formal schooling. The absence of this indicator inhibits our ability to know where we stand as a community and set annual goals for improvement.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Below we provide a series of major findings on the current landscape of the early childhood sector in the City of Poughkeepsie.

The lack of a citywide strategy for family and community engagement

Giving our children a strong early start to life requires comprehensive approaches to family and community engagement. As a city, we need to develop coordinated approaches to meet children and families where they are, gain a deeper understanding of household needs, build trust and gain insights that can inform. This work should begin with strategies to support families in the prenatal period and continue through the early years into elementary school. In building out a comprehensive strategy that spans prenatal-elementary school, it is critical that innovative partnerships be developed between public health and medical institutions and early childhood organizations.

Engaging groups living at the margins

In addition to general family and community engagement, it is essential that community leaders and institutions develop a coordinated approach to supporting the individuals and demographics in our community living at the margins that have been historically excluded from major social policies and decision-making. This includes but is not limited to:

- Students and families experiencing homelessness and/or living in poverty without access to basic material needs including transportation
- LGBTQ+
- Students and families with disabilities/exceptionalities
- English Language Learner students/families
- Teenage parents
- Racial and ethnic groups experiencing significant early childhood disparities

Limited availability of child care during non-traditional hours workers:

There are very limited child care offerings for families who work during non-traditional hours (late nights, weekends, holidays etc.); we need more information to fully understand this landscape and family demand for child care.

Engaging the Business Community

Historically, the business community has not been a major partner in advocating systems change in the early childhood ecosystem. Business can play a major role in making the case for high-quality early childhood programs as a vehicle for inclusive economic development and reinvigorating the role of the private sector to support its workers and their child care needs.

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

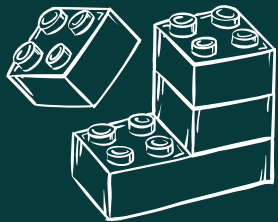


1. CREATE A CITYWIDE EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM THROUGH CROSS-SECTOR COORDINATION

1.1 Identify an entity committed to coordinating systems-level programming, partnerships and solutions for the early childhood sector (with a focus on children ages 0-5) in the City of Poughkeepsie.

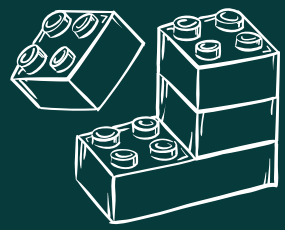
The City of Poughkeepsie needs an institution to quarterback a citywide early childhood system that establishes key strategies for children ages 0-5 and their families. This will require creating the necessary staffing to make coordination, alignment and systems change happen. A potential avenue could be embedding staffing in the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam; Dutchess County; City Government; or some other agency with the convening and institutional firepower to sustain the work.

The coordinating entity should spearhead the creation of **an early learning network or partnership** between Poughkeepsie City School District, Dutchess County, City of Poughkeepsie, nonprofits, early child providers and other key public/private stakeholders to advance systems change.



RELEVANT NATIONAL MODELS

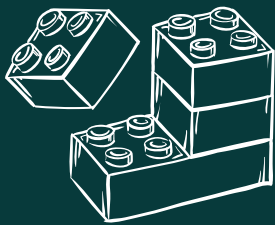
- **Chattanooga, TN - Early Matters Action Team of Chattanooga 2.0:** “Early Matters Chattanooga is a coalition made up of over 20 diverse organizations invested in early childhood, positively impacting the systems that ensure happy and healthy childhoods in Chattanooga-Hamilton County, TN. Working together, these organizations promote equitable access to early childhood programs and services through systems building and advocacy efforts.”



RELEVANT NATIONAL MODELS CONTINUED:

- **Oakland, CA - Oakland Starting Smart and Strong:** “Oakland Starting Smart and Strong is a broad, active and diverse collaboration with core leadership of parent advocacy groups, early care and education providers, city and county systems leaders and representatives of elected officials, community based organizations, philanthropy, and Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). Our collective vision of success is that: Every young child in Oakland has access to high quality early learning experiences; Every adult in that child’s life has the resources, tools and information necessary to support them; and Schools and communities are designed and operated to support the healthy development of every child, regardless of race or family income level.”
- **Guilford County, North Carolina - Ready for School, Ready for Life (Ready Ready):** “We want every child born in Guilford County from 2021 and beyond to enter kindergarten developmentally on track in five key areas: Physical; Language and communication; Social-emotional; Cognitive; Approaches to play and learning.

From the very beginning, we asked families in our area to help define our work and our voice. Family voice informs our work and we share our learning with residents and community stakeholders. We also work with more than 100 community partners in Guilford County and North Carolina to create this system of care. As a backbone organization, our goal is population-level change. We know it won’t be easy or quick, but we’re in it for the future of our county, our state, and our country.”
- **Onondaga County, NY- Early Childhood Alliance:** “The ECA was launched in 2015 after it was recommended in the 2013-2014 Onondaga Citizens League study entitled, Early Childhood and School Readiness, Creating a Community Where All Children Thrive by Five. The ECA is comprised of stakeholders from all levels of the early childhood system and is representative of the key areas of early childhood development (health, early learning, and family supports). The ECA will design and oversee a coordinated strategy to create an integrated local system of early childhood care and family support services.”



RELEVANT NATIONAL MODELS CONTINUED:

- **Tacoma, WA - Graduate Tacoma Early Learning and Reading Network:** "The Early Learning & Reading Network is dedicated to ensuring 100 percent enrollment in TPS preschools, meeting all six developmental skills entering kindergarten, and reading proficiently by the end of third grade."
- **First 10 Partnerships:** "First 10 partnerships bring together school districts, elementary schools, early childhood programs, and community agencies to improve the quality and coordination of education and care for young children and their families."
- **Somerville, MA: Somerville Partnership for Young Children:** Somerville Partnership for Young Children (SPYC) unifies Somerville early education providers in a coordinated system that offers access to high quality programs for children, supported by instructional and wrap-around supports that empower early educators and families in our city.

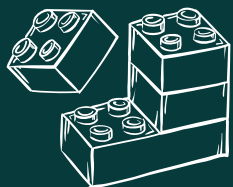


EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS



1.2 Develop a citywide single point of entry that streamlines information and individualized supports

Develop a citywide single point of entry that streamlines information and individualized supports through an accessible portal, phone number, website, and text services; ensure data sharing through an online platform, one-stop-shop, professional development, setting common goals for quality and evaluation etc.



RELEVANT NATIONAL MODELS

- **Louisville, KY: United Community Platform:** “United Community is a coordinated care network of health, education, and social care providers. Partners in the network are connected through a shared technology platform, Unite Us, which enables them to send and receive electronic referrals, address people’s social needs, and improve health, education, and financial wellbeing across communities. United Community is supported by lead sponsors CVS Health and Aetna Better Health of Kentucky and led by our strategic partner, Metro United Way with support from multiple local and national funding partners.

Joining the network is free of cost for community-based organizations and many organizations that are considered part of the safety net, like community health centers, tribal clinics, and mental health centers.”

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS



2. ENSURE INNOVATIVE FINANCING, ACCESS AND COVERAGE

2.1 Build a sustainable public and private early childhood funding infrastructure that considers:

- A range of innovative financing strategies (i.e. the creation of local dedicated funds, individual or business tax credits, community benefits agreements, payment in lieu of taxes - PILOTs etc.) to support a citywide early childhood system that:
 - Ensures affordability for all families
 - Increases pay for ECD professionals
 - Coordinates efforts with local funders to **connect the City of Poughkeepsie with national level technical assistance to build capacity in the local early childhood sector** and promote exchange with communities across the nation around best practices.
 - Note: The Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet and Poughkeepsie Alliance are currently supporting a partnership with the Children's Funding Project to create a fiscal map on public/private children and youth spending in our region. Fiscal maps have been used to demonstrate gaps in funding in key areas such as early childhood and to get a picture of the funding amount we'll need to reach a social equity goal (i.e. fully funding quality early childhood in our area)



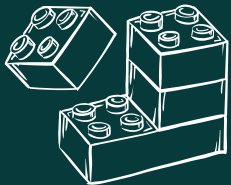
EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

2.2 Estimate the cost of a high-quality early childhood system for the City of Poughkeepsie

Currently, we do not have a clear picture of how much it will cost to create the ideal early childhood system in our city. Local institutions committed to strengthening the early childhood sector should commission a study to calculate the total cost of the ideal high-quality early childhood system and different approaches to generating the necessary revenues for its development. The Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet partnership with the Children's Funding Project (CFP) on the development of a fiscal map can lay the groundwork for future cost analyses within the early childhood sector.

2.3 Make the business case for investment in the early childhood sector.

Make the business case for investment in the early childhood sector to increase child care options for employees and families throughout the region. Key local champions in the early childhood sector must engage the business community and visualize the correlation between strong investment in early childhood and economic development. Local business networks and associations committed to community development should embrace early childhood as a central pillar of community economic development.

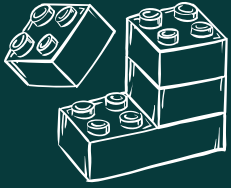


RELEVANT NATIONAL MODELS

- **US Chamber of Commerce Foundation**: "A world-class workforce begins with a world-class education system. The path to that education starts with a solid foundation constructed in the first years of life. Investments in high-quality early childhood education and care support our current workforce (working parents) and strengthen business today while building the workforce we'll depend on tomorrow and for decades to come."
- **Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education**: "70 Massachusetts CEOs and business leaders announced the launch of the Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education, a business coalition focused on early child care and education. Leading the coalition as Co-Chairs are: Jon Bernstein, Regional President of Boston for PNC Bank; Roger Crandall, Chairman, President, and CEO of MassMutual; Linda Henry, CEO of Boston Globe Media Partners; Bridget Long, Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education; and Bob Rivers, CEO and Chair of the Board of Eastern Bank.

The coalition will: advocate for policies and programs that make early child care and education more readily available to Massachusetts workers; identify opportunities to improve program access, affordability and quality; collaborate around employer best practices for supporting early childhood needs; and focus on advancing equitable child care solutions."

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS



RELEVANT NATIONAL MODELS CONTINUED

- **Multnomah County, OR:** “Multnomah County passed a progressive income tax on high-income earners to fund universal, tuition-free preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds by 2030. The tax will generate an estimated \$133 million next year (and \$202 million annually by 2026), and funds will be used to add 7,000 new slots by fall 2026 with fair wages for providers and high-quality, culturally responsive opportunities that meet children’s needs.” ([New York Times Article](#))
- **San Antonio TX:** Pre-K 4 “San Antonio renewed its ⅛ cent sales tax that generates \$38 million annually for Pre-K 4 SA. Pre-K 4 SA serves 2,000 four-year olds annually in its centers while supporting extended school days, increased access, and improved quality for thousands of children in other early childhood education settings. Multiple independent evaluations have shown that students who attend a Pre-K 4 SA program, particularly students who are economically disadvantaged or with limited English proficiency, end the year ahead of their peers in math and language.”
- **St. Louis, MO:** “St. Louis passed a 6 cent (0.6 mill) property tax increase to raise \$2.3 million for birth-to-five programs and services, administered by the St. Louis Mental Health Board’s Community Children’s Services Fund. The fund was originally established in 2004 and has a particular focus on children’s mental health, providing psychiatric treatment, substance use prevention, family counseling, and more.”



EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS



3. STRENGTHEN APPROACHES TO EQUITY, INCLUSION AND CIVIC CULTURE

3.1 Develop targeted strategies of family and community engagement for key phases of child development with families (pre-birth, post-partum, pediatrician visits etc.) This should include:

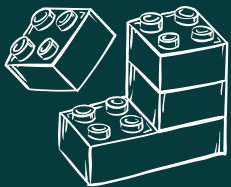
- Strengthening and scaling existing prenatal-five outreach programs that conduct home visits and/or work with specific populations that are historically at the margins.
- Coordinating with midwives, obstetrician-gynecologists (OB-GYN), pediatricians, public health professionals and related professionals/institutions who interact frequently with target populations to promote parent education, early learning and child care opportunities for expectant/new parents.
- Identifying priority groups living at the margins who often lack access to early childhood education and comprehensive supports. These groups include but are not limited to:
 - Residents experiencing homelessness,
 - Young/teenage parents
 - ELL+ immigrant,
 - Undocumented families,
 - Residents with disabilities,
 - LGBTQ+ etc.,
 - Low-income/limited transportation households



EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

3.2 Launch a citywide advocacy campaign to:

- Position early childhood as a key priority for the City of Poughkeepsie across issue areas such as education, economic development, health and wellness;
- Developing an issues platform that political candidates, elected officials and public and private institutions can sign onto.
- Promote innovative financing strategies that close coverage gaps, increase early childhood worker pay and improve program quality.
- Provide additional child care options for non-traditional hours through innovative public-private partnerships that target key industries with a large number of night shift and weekend workers.
- Convene a summit of local leaders to discuss the state of early childhood in the City of Poughkeepsie and invite leading national models from across the nation to share best practices and establish new partnerships.

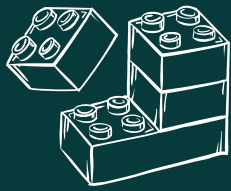


RELEVANT NATIONAL MODELS



- **Nurse-Family Partnership:** "Every year, 380,000 children are born to first-time mothers living below the federal poverty line who often lack adequate support during their child's critical early years, leading to long-term consequences for their children. Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is a national home visitation program that has achieved remarkable results. Backed by four decades of scientific research, NFP's approach has been shown to improve pregnancy outcomes, strengthen the economic self-sufficiency of mothers, and support the health and development of their children. At scale, NFP has the potential to combat the effects of poverty nationally by transforming the life prospects of these mothers and their children."
- **The Basics:** "A public health approach that raises awareness about early childhood development and builds capacity throughout the community for engaging families around The Basics Principles and other supports."

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS



RELEVANT NATIONAL MODELS CONTINUED

- **The Baby College:** Harlem Children's Zone: "At the Baby College, we see today's newborns as tomorrow's college graduates and community role models. Since a child's first years are crucial to his or her future health and success, we launched the Baby College to educate and support new and expectant parents and other caregivers through the ins and outs of early childhood development."
- **Healthy Steps:** "Children living in poverty are more likely to fall behind in social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development. While low-income children under age four can be difficult to reach in formal settings such as pre-kindergarten, 90% of them visit a pediatrician. HealthySteps, a program of ZERO TO THREE, is a national model of enhanced pediatric primary care that integrates a child development specialist into the primary care team to improve developmental outcomes with a particular emphasis on families living in low-income communities. Screening, advice and referrals give families the knowledge, support and resources they need to nurture their children's healthy development."



WHAT CAN YOUR SECTOR DO?

Below we provide additional recommendations on what major sectors in our community can do to advance many of the recommendations highlighted above.



01 — Businesses

- Establish an early childhood business network or coalition to educate private sector peers and the general public on the importance of early childhood
- Promote a policy agenda that positions early childhood policies as a critical issue for economic development
- Make philanthropic contributions to early childhood serving organizations
- Develop child care provisions for workers that set an example for other employers



02 — Poughkeepsie City School District

- Establish a citywide coordinated strategy with early childhood providers, local government, parent/family groups and community partners to ensure 100% of children entering elementary school are kindergarten ready
- Work with partners across sectors to advocate for increased funding for universal pre-k beginning at age 3.
- Develop child care provisions for workers that set an example for other employers



03 — Higher Education Institutions

- Establish faculty, student and institutional partnerships to support research that identifies effective practices in the early childhood sector.
- Expand opportunities for professional development and credentialing for early childhood educators
- Create leadership pipelines for the next generation of early childhood educators
- Develop child care provisions for workers that set an example for other employers

WHAT CAN YOUR SECTOR DO?

Below we provide additional recommendations on what major sectors in our community can do to advance many of the recommendations highlighted above.



04 — Philanthropy

- Invest in research that conducts a landscape analysis of the early childhood sector in the City of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County and calculates the cost of an optimal early childhood system rooted in principles of equity and inclusion and pathways for financing a new system
- Invest in innovative pilots and early childhood interventions with the potential to inform public policy and scale
- Invest in the development of evidence-based research to identify effective early childhood interventions for families and children with the potential to scale
- Invest in technical assistance that brings national level partnerships that build capacity in the City of Poughkeepsie early childhood sector
- Invest in the creation of a City of Poughkeepsie early learning network
- Develop child care provisions for workers that set an example for other employers



05 — Local Government (City and County)

- Invest in research that conducts a landscape analysis of the early childhood sector in the City of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County and calculates the cost of an optimal early childhood system rooted in principles of equity and inclusion and pathways for financing a new system
- Create a permanent local dedicated early childhood fund to address systems-level issues related to coverage, affordability, program quality and educator pay
- Invest in scalable evidence-based early childhood interventions
- Develop child care provisions for workers that set an example for other employers
- Invest in a city and/or countywide data system and adult navigator program that establishes a single point of entry for connecting children and families with wraparound services and enrichment programming.

WHAT CAN YOUR SECTOR DO?

Below we provide additional recommendations on what major sectors in our community can do to advance many of the recommendations highlighted above.



06 — Early Childhood Providers

- Enroll early childhood educators in professional development opportunities to improve their practice
- Partner with local government, Poughkeepsie City School District, parents/families and community partners on a common agenda for kindergarten readiness
- Participate in citywide data sharing efforts to streamline service delivery and supports for children and families



07 — Nonprofits and Community-based Organizations

- Spearhead advocacy efforts for public and private policies that strengthen the early childhood ecosystem in the City of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County
- Partner with local government, Poughkeepsie City School District, parents/families and community partners on a common agenda for kindergarten readiness
- Develop capacity-building resources for early childhood providers, government, school district and other community partners on the role they can play in strengthening early childhood

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Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Early Childhood Working Group Chair

- Dr. Julie Riess - DAY ONE Early Learning Community

Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Early Childhood Working Group Members

- Shirley A. Adams - Catharine Street Legacy and Family Support Program
- Ben Chant - School Administrator / Former Poughkeepsie Day School
- Kimberly Haight - The Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse
- Colleen Hardiman - Poughkeepsie City School District Early Learning Center
- Nancy Lenhert - Dutchess County Department of Community and Behavioral Health
- Nevill Smythe - Philanthropic Consultant / Former Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley
- Estefany Umbach - DAY ONE Early Learning Community
- Jeanne Wagner - Childcare Council of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc.
- Marguerite Woodcock - Dutchess Community College

Collaborators

- Christopher Grant - City of Poughkeepsie Parent
- Ronald Hicks - Dutchess County
- Sad'e Sharas - Black Excellence Community / Learning Treehouse Daycare
- Jessie Laguerre - Arlington Central School District
- Sabrina Jaar Marzouka - Dutchess County

Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Staff Team

- Cierra Cooper- Policy and Research Fellow, Education Redesign Lab at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Kristina Giangreco - Poughkeepsie City School District
- John Penney - City of Poughkeepsie
- Kylynn Grier - Co-founder & Consultant
- James Watson - Co-founder & Consultant
- Rob Watson Jr. - Co-founder & Advisor

Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet Co-Chairs

- Rob Rolison, Mayor of the City of Poughkeepsie
- Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, Superintendent of Schools, Poughkeepsie City School District

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**We thank you for
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Contact

Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet

pkchildrencabinet@gmail.com

www.pkchildrencabinet.com



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CHILDREN'S CABINET**

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