

# The Promise of Community Action

*"Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other."*



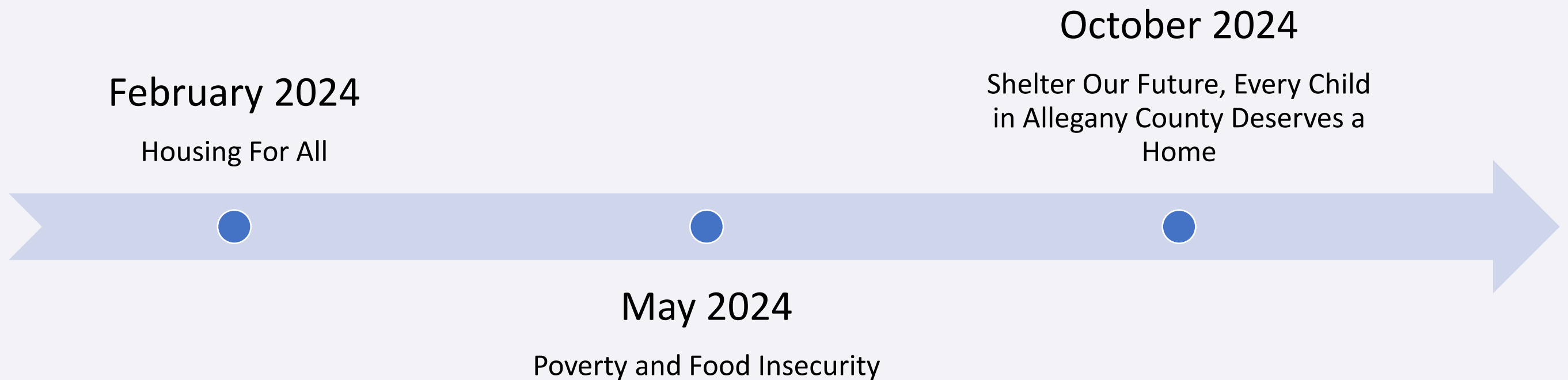
**ACCORD**

*A Community Action Agency*



# 2024 ACCORD Community Forum Series

Engaging in forums enables sharing vital information among community members, enhancing understanding of local issues faced by families and youth.



**More understanding means more  
commitment to finding solutions.**



# Child Poverty & Youth Homelessness Allegany County: 2024

# The Urgency of Lifting Children Out of Poverty



## Barriers to Development

Research shows that poverty presents serious barriers to healthy child development.



## Financial Hardships

Financial hardships faced by parents often result in less access to healthy food and quality medical care, as well as chronic stress in the family, impacting a child's cognitive development.



## Future Challenges

Poverty can negatively impact a child's future, making them more likely to experience homelessness, lower school readiness, developmental challenges, substance use challenges and crime.

**"These challenges are costly for both individuals and society."**

- Thomas P. DiNapoli, NYS Comptroller, May 2024

# Poverty Measurements



## Federal Poverty Guidelines (2024)

A family of four earning \$31,200 or less per year is considered to be living in poverty (compared to \$30,000 in 2023).



## Federal Minimum Wage

**\$7.25 per hour.**



## NYS Minimum Wage

**\$15.00 per hour.**



## U.S. Census Bureau

Federal Poverty Guidelines are issued annually by the U.S. Census Bureau.

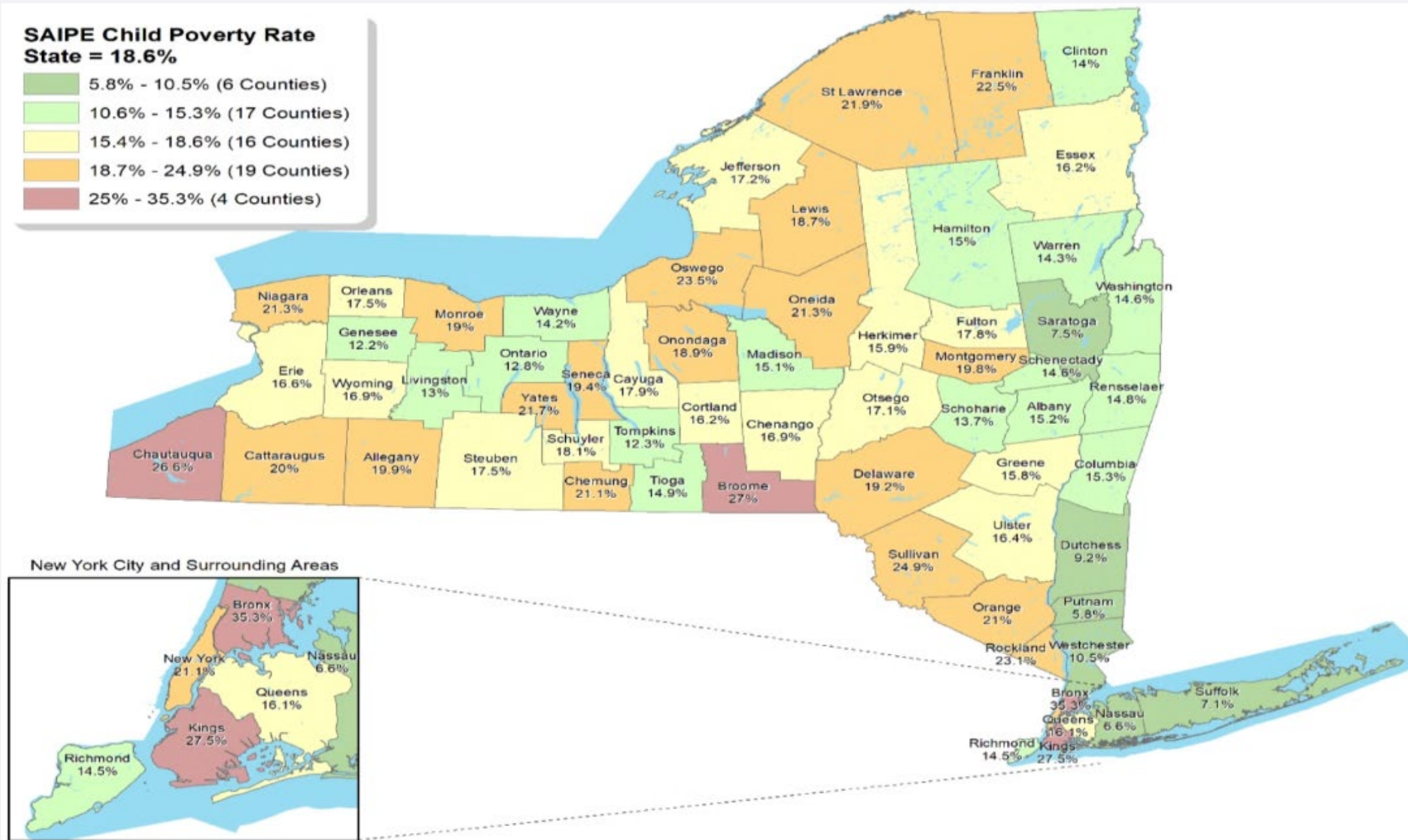
# ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained and Employed.

ALICE households are above the poverty line but still struggle to afford basic necessities.

1 Adult	\$2,272
2 Adults	\$3,363
1 Senior Adult	\$2,578 (Avg. SS: \$1,705.79)
2 Adults, 2 Children	\$5,609 (Children in school)
1 Adult, 1 Child	\$3,540
2 Adults, 2 Children	\$4,229 (Children in pre-K)



**ALICE**  
households



41

Rank

New York ranked 41st in the nation in 2022, with a higher rate than its bordering states.

6

Points Higher

The rate was at least 6 percentage points higher than states that border New York and was second-highest among its five peer states.

**New York State's Child Poverty Rate is One of the *Worst* in the Nation.**

The U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE), which combines survey data with other administrative data and produces single-year estimates with standard errors generally smaller than the ACS results for similar jurisdictions.



# Allegheny County's Economic Disparities

**\$58,725**

Allegheny County  
Median Household Income

**\$81,386**

New York State  
Median Household Income

**28%**

**LOWER THAN THE NEW YORK STATE MEDIAN**

-U.S. Census Bureau, 2024



# Allegheny County



## Child Poverty Rates

**23.3%** of children aged 0-5 live below the poverty line, significantly higher than the national average.



## Single-Parent Households

Approximately **40%** of children in poverty live in single-parent homes.



## Poverty Among Older Children

**19.5%** of children aged 6-17 live in poverty.

-US Census Bureau, 2024

# Allegany County



## High Housing Costs

Nearly **30%** of families spend over **30%** of their income on housing, exceeding affordability standards.



## Limited Resources

High housing costs limit resources for *essential needs like food, transportation, and healthcare.*



## Declining Housing Stock

Allegany County has seen a **10.28%** *decline* in housing units since 2013, creating a shortage of safe and affordable housing.



## Stress & Well - being

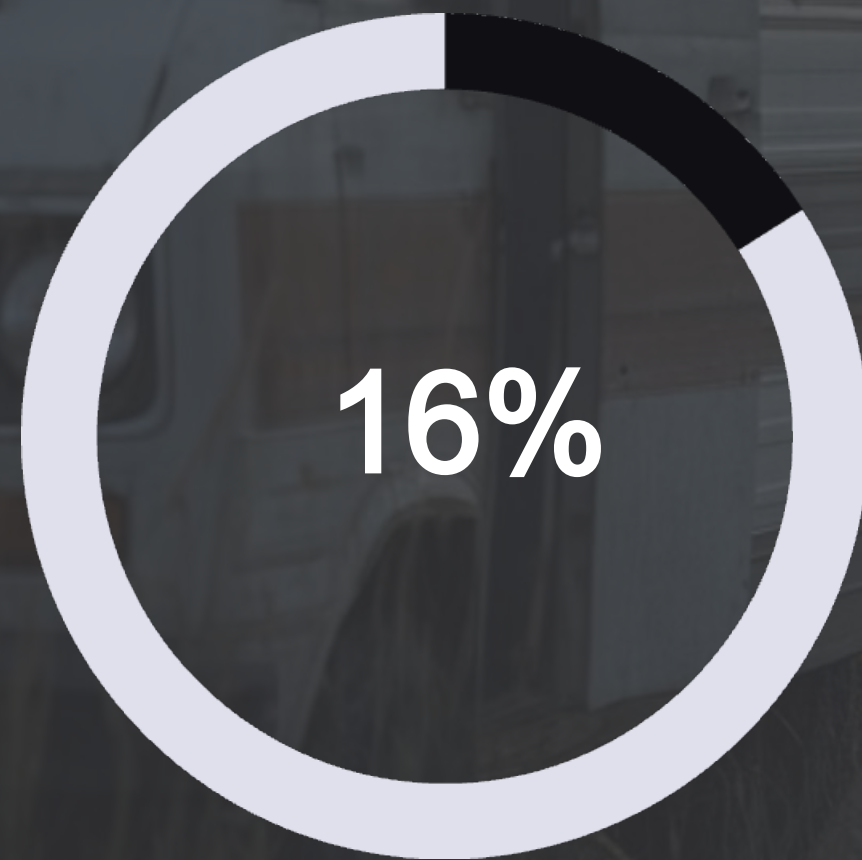
Financial stress from high housing costs negatively impacts children's well-being.



## Impact on Children

**13%** of Head Start children experienced homelessness, highlighting the impact of housing instability on young children.

# Homelessness on the Rise in Allegany County



## Significant Increase

The NY-501 Continuum of Care reported **594** individuals experiencing homelessness in Allegany County in 2023, a **16%** increase from the previous year.



## Youth Facing Housing Instability

20% of the homeless population in Allegany County are youth aged 18-24 (HUD, 2023).



# What That Looks Like

## Sheltered Homelessness

Individuals or families temporarily living in emergency shelters or transitional housing, without permanent housing solutions.

### Limited Safe Housing Options

Allegany County has only one 9-bed safe dwelling for domestic violence victims and a single transitional housing facility that can accommodate 8 families for a maximum of 24 months.

### Lack of Dedicated Shelters

Allegany County currently lacks emergency shelters for homeless individuals and has no dedicated facilities for homeless youth.

### Motel Accommodation for the Unhoused

Unhoused individuals in Allegany County, if eligible, are provided temporary shelter by the Department of Social Services (DSS) in local motels.

# It's Much More Than You See...



## Unsheltered Homelessness

Unsheltered homelessness refers to people living in places unfit for human habitation, often lacking basic resources. This dangerous situation exposes them to safety risks and limited access to essential services.



## Hidden homelessness

The living conditions of individuals experiencing hidden homelessness in Allegany County—marked by inadequate shelter and lack of basic necessities like heat, insulation, and plumbing—significantly affect their overall health and well-being, making them particularly vulnerable to harsh weather conditions and increasing their vulnerabilities related to access to healthcare, nutrition, and safety.

# The McKinney - Vento Act



## Educational Access

The **primary federal law** ensuring educational access for homeless youth.



## Funding

It **allocated \$92 million** to public school districts in 2019.



## Services

Funding is used to provide a variety of resources to homeless youth, including personal school supplies, transportation to school, and fees for class projects.



## Data Collection

The act also gathers data on student homelessness.

# How does the McKinney - Vento Act define homelessness?

*Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.*

Staying with Friends/Relatives Due to Economic Hardship

Living in hotels, motels, trailer parks, or camping grounds without a choice

Staying in emergency or transitional shelters

Living in public spaces such as parks or abandoned buildings

Migratory students

This wider definition helps more students get services like transportation and school supplies.

According to HUD, youth are only considered homeless if they will lose housing within 14 days, even when staying with relatives.



# The Reality Is Harder Than You Think...



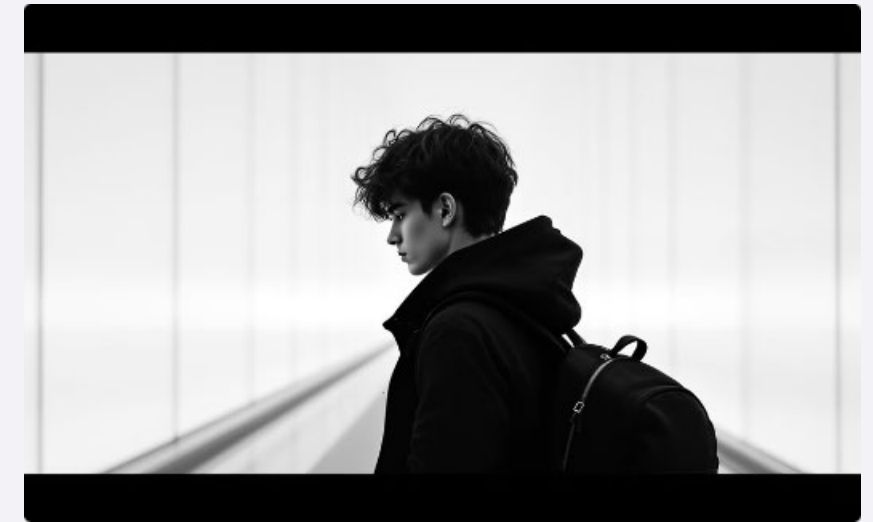
## Couch Surfing

Individuals who lack a permanent residence and rely on temporarily staying with friends, family, or acquaintances, often facing instability and insecurity.



## Overcrowding and Limited Resources

The strain of overcrowding and insufficient resources can lead to stress and tension within households.



## Transient Living

Allegheny County homeless youth frequently move from house to house, seeking temporary shelter before their welcome wears thin.



# The Impact...



## **Stressful Environment**

Families facing housing instability endure significant stress, complicating their ability to maintain employment and provide a secure environment for their children (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2023).



## **Academic and Social Challenges**

Children in unstable housing situations are more likely to struggle academically and socially.

# The Impact...

## *Vulnerability*

**1** in **3** teenagers on the streets are at risk of being lured into prostitution within **48 hours** of leaving home.

# The Impact...



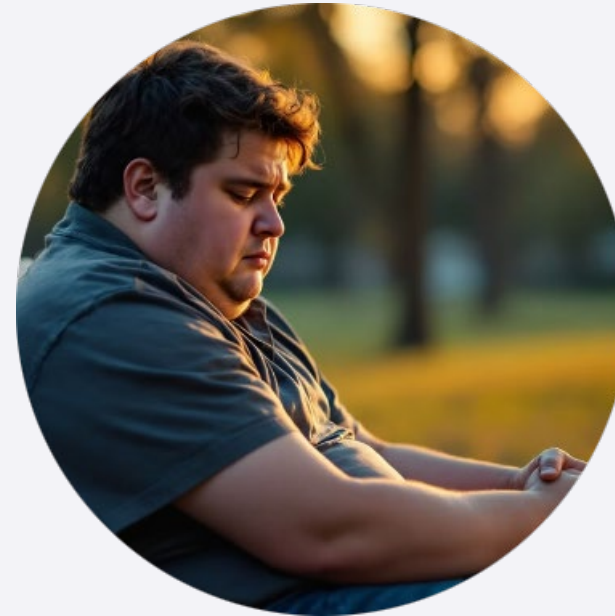
## Food Insecurity

**1 in 6** Allegany County children lack reliable access to nutritious food, impacting their well-being and development.



## Access to Healthcare

Children without health insurance often miss essential medical care, resulting in untreated conditions and long-term health problems.



## Higher Rates of Chronic Illness

Children in poverty are more likely to experience chronic illnesses like asthma and obesity, impacting their health and requiring ongoing medical attention.



## Mental Health Implications

The stress and instability of poverty and homelessness negatively impact the mental well-being of children and adults, burdening local mental health services and impacting the community as a whole.

# Investments in Our Future

Research indicates investments in the youngest low-income children are one of the most effective, highest-return social investments government can make.



## Economic Impact

A 2019 government-commissioned study found ***child poverty costs the US up to \$1 trillion annually*** through poorer child development, health, and education.



## Program Effectiveness


The report found many public assistance ***programs that provide income or basic needs help can improve child wellbeing*** by addressing poverty.



## Investing in Our Future

Research shows ***investing in young, low-income children is one of the most effective*** ways government can improve child wellbeing.

*-Taken from NYS Comptroller Report, The Urgency of Lifting Children Out of Poverty, 2024*



# What are we planning to do?

## Comparison to Other Countries

The NAS report found the **U.S. spends less** than countries like Canada, Australia, Ireland, and the UK on social safety net programs for children and families.

## Federal Investments in 2022

Urban Institute analysis shows federal investments in children were only **10%** of all federal outlays, totaling \$609 billion in 2022.

## Future Projections

Federal expenditures on children are **expected to decrease** over the next decade without policy changes.



# What Makes a Difference?

## Federal Resources

- McKinney-Vento Act
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- United States Dept. of Agriculture – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Medicaid
- TANF
- Head Start and Early Head Start
- Community Services Block Grant
- ChildCare Services Block Grant

## Federal Response during COVID

- The Child Tax Credit

*The Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child and Dependent Care tax Credit **reduced** the number of children in poverty by **7.8 million** in 2021.*

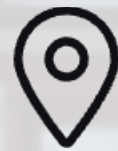
## NYS Policy

- December 2021 – NYS Child Poverty Reduction Act
- Tax credits
- Expanded access to subsidized housing
- Reforms to temporary assistance programs in the State

## More investments

- Increased availability of the State's Earned Income tax credit
- Increased investments in childcare subsidies
- Increases to state's minimum wage
- Reforms to temporary assistance eligibility requirements
- Medicaid

# What Makes a Difference?



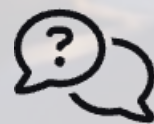
## Local Programs and Services

There are many local programs and services that can help families in need, and we'll be discussing some of these during our panel discussion.



## Panel Discussion

We'll be joined by local experts who will share their insights on effective programs and services that are making a difference in our community.



## Questions and Comments

This is a great opportunity for you to ask questions and share your own ideas about how we can address child poverty and youth homelessness.



## What else can we do?

Together, we can brainstorm solutions and develop new strategies to improve the lives of children and families in our community.



**ACCORD**

*A Community Action Agency*

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*585-268-7605*

**Scan. Connect. Empower.**



*Your Story Starts Here.*

*Find the Support You Need: Food, Personal Care Items,  
Household Goods, Housing, Child Care, Head Start,  
Domestic Violence Support, Small Business Assistance,  
and More.*

*Make an Impact by Volunteering, Donating, or Joining Our Team.*