

Governor Kathy Hochul  
New York State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

11/12/2021

Dear Governor Hochul,

We write to introduce ourselves as the co-chairs of the New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council (the ECAC). We acknowledge your unprecedented commitment to young children, their families, and women in the workforce and your great strides with the Child Care Availability Taskforce and trust that the ECAC will serve your office to support systems and policies that prioritize our youngest New Yorkers.

In 2007, as a part of the Head Start Reauthorization, states were encouraged to establish State Advisory Councils focused on early childhood education. When ARRA federal funding became available it was used to establish the Early Childhood Advisory Council to provide strategic guidance and advice to the Governor and other key partners on matters related to young children, while helping to implement effective systems and innovative strategies. With three years of federal funding New York got right to work and established its ECAC, whose 50 members represent state agencies and community-based organizations from across the state, each appointed by the Governor's office. The ECAC was codified in 2017 and in 2019 was funded with 4 years of new competitive grant funds from the federal government. The ECAC has continued to strive toward its vision: ***All young children are healthy, learning, and thriving in families that are supported by a full complement of services and resources essential for successful development,*** and this work has inspired our third and current strategic plan.

Over the past 10 years the ECAC has taken big steps to innovate and advance New York's standing as a state that prioritizes its youngest children and families. Some examples include:

- Worked with partners to make sure NY has early childhood infrastructure that will enable the state to maximize opportunities when the Build Back Better plan is passed.
- Supported the development of a high-quality early childhood workforce system.
- Promoted the growth of QUALITYstarsNY to ensure equity throughout the early childhood field.
- Articulated a foundational design to inform a comprehensive early childhood data system for NY (inclusive of all funding streams, to best utilize all existing resources, and justify new investments in children birth – five).
- Connected all aspects of early childhood including family stability, health, mental health, community wellbeing and education to generate comprehensive and responsive systems.



Building Success for Children  
Ensuring Success for New York

[nysecac.org](http://nysecac.org)

Patricia E. Persell, Co-Chair  
NYS Council on Children  
& Families

Sherry M. Cleary, Co-Chair  
New York Early Childhood  
Professional Development Institute

The ECAC Strategic Plan has 10 goals and engages its members and individuals, including parents, throughout New York State in its many work activities. The ECAC Strategic Plan can be found [here](#). Moving New York to develop comprehensive systems that address health, mental health, housing and economic security, family stability and prosperity, and high-quality early learning for all children remains the hallmark of the ECAC's work.

In anticipation of increased federal infrastructure funding for states to support children birth through five, we have already begun to prioritize steps and components of a fully comprehensive equity-based mixed delivery early childhood system that embodies the ECAC vision and aligns to the recommendations of the Child Care Availability Task Force. We look forward to working together to support your office to ensure that all new federal resources work to strengthen agencies and organizations positioned to generate comprehensive innovation for a birth to five system in New York.

We are at your service to provide guidance as you consider policies that effect children birth through age 5. In the past, staff members of the Governor's Office have attended the quarterly meetings of the ECAC and we extend an open invitation to you to join us in consideration of making New York the best state to raise a child.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sherry M. Cleary".

Sherry M. Cleary  
Co-chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia E. Persell".

Patricia E. Persell  
Co-chair