

Mission:

The Children's Agenda advocates for effective policies and drives evidence-based solutions for the health, education and success of children, especially those most vulnerable because of poverty, racism, health inequities and trauma.

TheChildren'sAgenda

Smart Choices. Bold Voices.



The goal of the Kids Can't Wait campaign is to successfully advocate for reform and improvement of New York's Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education systems, bringing them into compliance with federal law and ensuring that young children receive the services and therapy they need in a timely and equitable manner.

“[Providers] have to actually exist for her to get the services.”

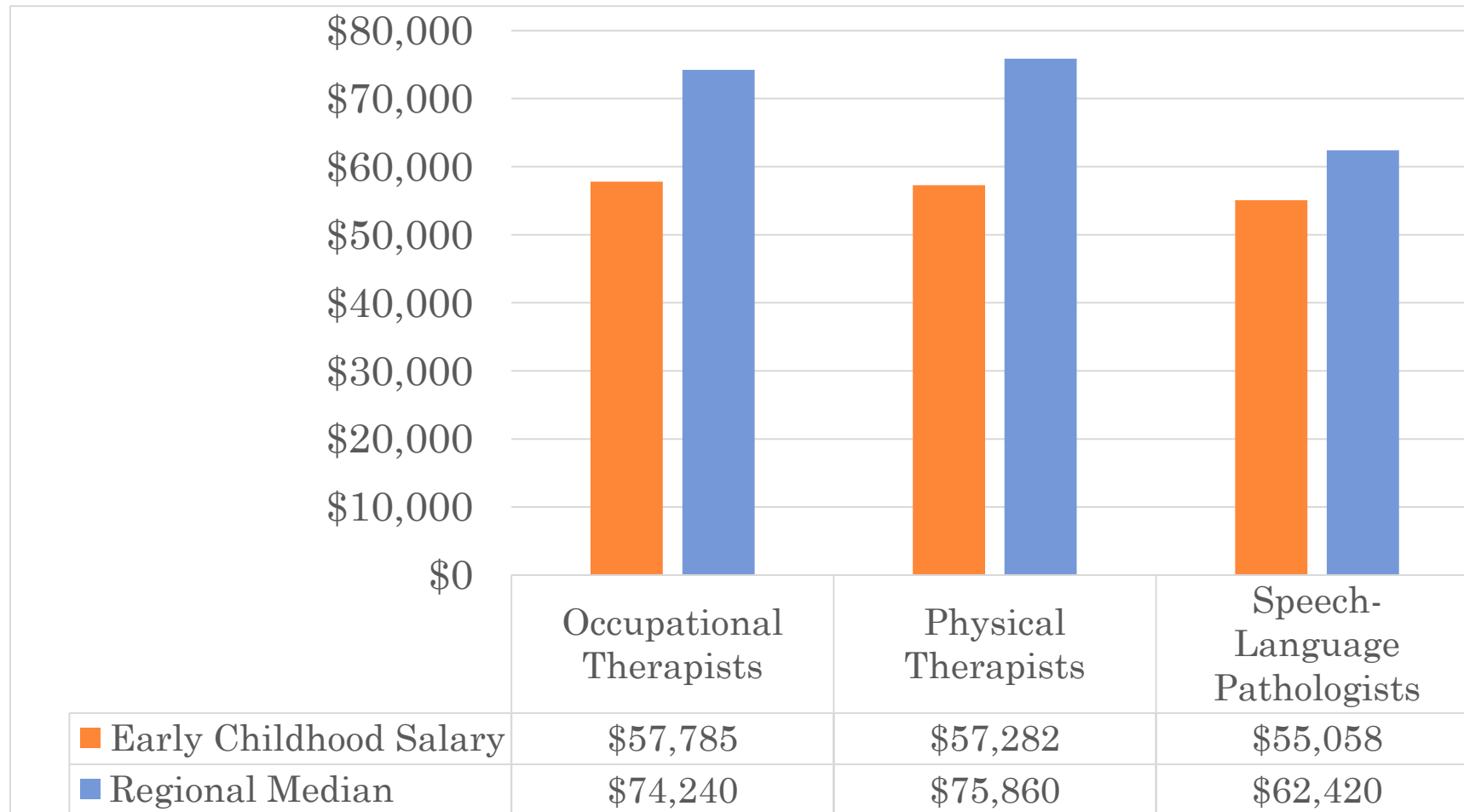
– Kim Dooher, mother to Vivian

When a child needs urgent help and the clock is ticking, what happens? Too often, they wait. And wait. And wait.

Starting at 5 months of age, Vivian received physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, a specialized teacher of the visually impaired, and a feeding specialist to help with swallowing issues. **In her first year of services (2019) she missed more than 20 speech therapy sessions because no provider was available.**



Early Childhood Pay vs. Regional Median (2018)



Pandemic impact



DELAYED INTERVENTIONS

Early Indicators of the Pandemic's Impact on Infants and Toddlers

In the first few years of life, children's brains are developing rapidly, setting the stage for all future learning. As such, when a child has a developmental delay or disability, these early years provide a critical window of opportunity to intervene and help ensure children reach their full potential. While the full consequences of a global pandemic coinciding with this period in a child's life remain unknown, there have already been alarming repercussions for the youngest New Yorkers: data from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) show a

There was a significant decline in the number of children participating in the Early Intervention (EI) program in New York City in 2020, coinciding with the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the 4-week period beginning March 22, an average of 135 children were referred to EI each week, an 82% decline from earlier in the year, when there were an average 748 referrals per week.

Due to COVID-19, an estimated 1,000...

KEY FINDINGS

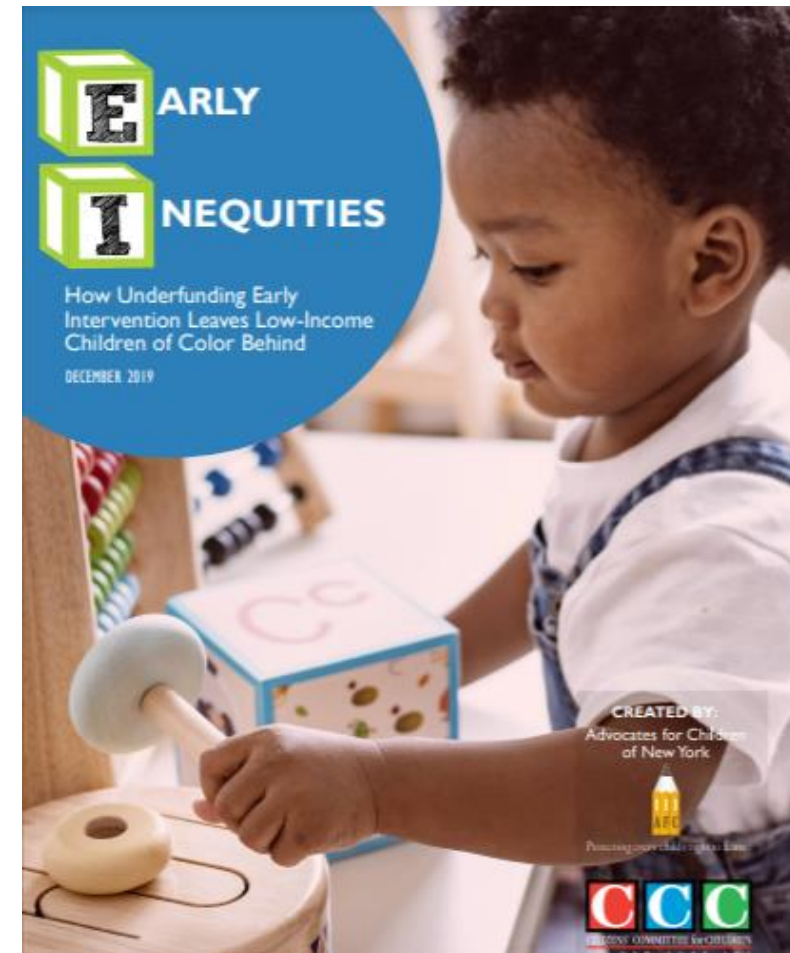
Nearly one in four families were not receiving ANY of their EI services*



* according to a telephone survey conducted by DOHMH, April - June

Developmental opportunities lost

- ❖ Monroe County EI waitlist stands at ~140
- ❖ In 2018 there were approximately 1300 billing providers in New York State, compared to 904 billing providers in early 2020, 852 in fall 2021.
- ❖ Between June 2019 and June 2021, New York lost 2,262 therapists, representing a 15% drop in a system that was already experiencing severe shortages.
- ❖ A Raising NY poll released in February 2021 found that 62% of New York parents (75% of Latinx parents) were concerned that their child had lost developmental and emotional skills during the pandemic. 73% were concerned about their child being educationally and socially prepared for preschool or Kindergarten.



Powerful parent voices!



Thursday
Dec. 9
6-7pm
On Zoom

CHILDREN'S VOICES ALLIANCE

Connect with Rochester families who care about young children with special needs

Advocate for teacher training, easier access to services, classroom inclusion, and other ways to make the system work for our children



Empowering Rochester parents to lead

Register at:

(585) 256-2620 x2605

www.thechildrensagenda.org/pag/

You will receive a Zoom link after you register.

Parents who participate will receive a

\$20 gift card

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2022-23 State Advocacy



Early Intervention

- 🕒 Use Covered Lives to raise EI rates by 11%
- 🕒 New rate-setting methodology
- 🕒 Collect and share EI data disaggregated by race
- 🕒 Expand access to child care for children with disabilities



Preschool special education

- 🕒 Enact 11% tuition rate increase
- 🕒 Adopt new rate-setting methodology



Questions?

