



Liftoff WNY | E-News | November 2024

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## Welcome Megan Battista! Liftoff's Advocacy and Learning Coordinator



**Liftoff is excited to announce the expansion of our team, with new hire Megan Battista.** Megan joins the team with a wealth of experience in community advocacy and social justice. Megan holds a Master of Social Work from the University at Buffalo where she gained valuable field work experience at Partnership for the Public Good and Say Yes Buffalo. Megan started her career as an elementary school teacher and an instructional coach at a Title I school in Buffalo. We are excited to welcome Megan to the team as she will spearhead Liftoff's Advocacy and Learning Initiatives.

[Learn More About Megan Here](#)

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## Liftoff's Conference Corner

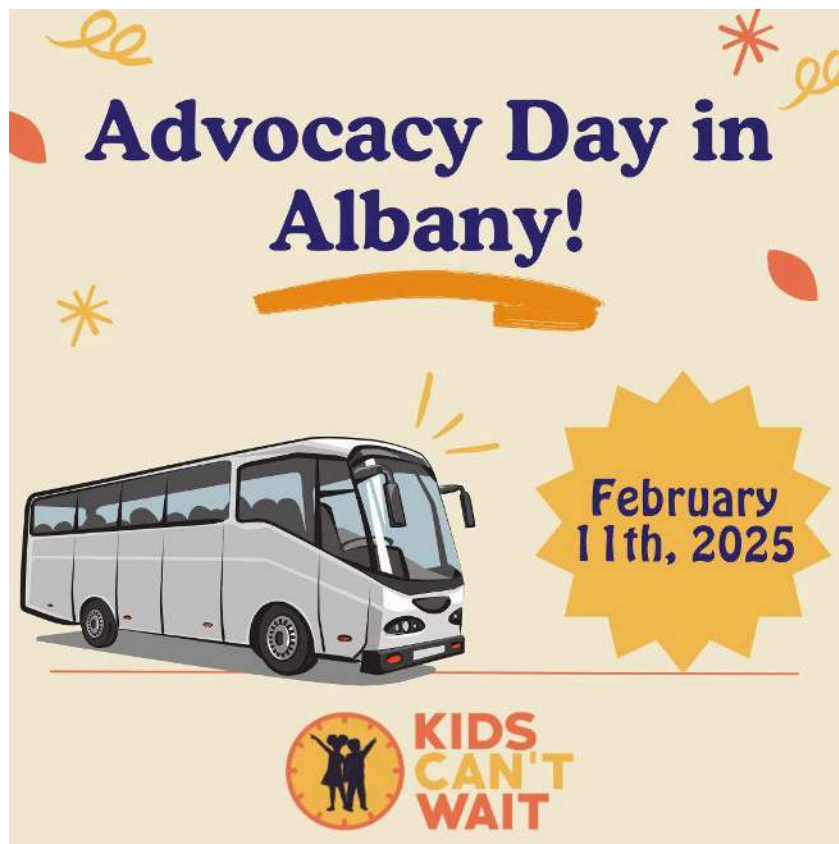


**This fall, Liftoff has been on the move! We've participated in three incredible conferences and convenings that have built our knowledge, fostered new connections, and explored innovations in advocacy for early childhood systems change.**

- **Help Me Grow NYS Summit "Rooted in Relationships", hosted by [Help Me Grow WNY](#):** This year's summit, emceed by Liftoff's Director, celebrated the power of meaningful connections among those dedicated to children's well-being. Attendees shared inspiring stories, innovative practices, and how these connections truly impact children's lives. The event promoted universal developmental screenings and brought together key organizations committed to early childhood development, creating a unique space for cross-group collaboration. Attendees left feeling informed, energized, and ready to help children thrive! (Liftoff's Director, Rachel Bonsignore pictured above)
- **[Early Childhood Funders Collaborative National Meeting: 'Resilient, Ready, and Rising: Shaping the Future of Young Children' in Washington DC](#):** This two-day convening focused on the latest innovations in economic opportunity, wealth building, and family support initiatives being funded by ECFC members that serve families with young children and early educators. The closing keynote discussion drew from themes in the book: [The Guarantee, Inside the Fight for America's Next Economy](#), by Natalie Foster, President and Co-Founder, Economic Security Project.
- **[Alliance for Early Success' and New England Early Childhood Funder Collaboratives Regional Early Childhood Advocate Convening in Springfield, MA](#):** The Alliance and New England funding partners held a dynamic two-day meeting that sparked cross-state collaboration. Advocates and funders from Maine to Rhode Island shared strategies, insights, and new opportunities, working together to inform advocacy and policy goals across state lines and effect meaningful change for young children and their families.

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**Kids Can't Wait 2025 Advocacy Day**



With the new legislative session approaching, the Kids Can't Wait Campaign has announced Albany Advocacy Day on February 11, 2025. This event offers a valuable opportunity to meet with policymakers and share our priorities as advocates for the 2025 legislative session.

**Ride the bus to Albany with Liftoff by reserving your seat today: [Click here](#)**

Kids Can't Wait 2025 Policy Priorities: [Click here](#)

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## **Be a Part of the Solution: Voice Your Support (AGAIN) for Early Intervention Reform in NYS**



**Young children across New York are not receiving timely and comprehensive early childhood developmental services.** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires services be delivered in a timely manner -- within 30 days for children who qualify for speech, occupation, physical and other therapies. **New York now ranks 50th out of US states in delivering timely Early Intervention (EI) services.**

**There is a path forward!** The Early Intervention reform bill (A.10175/S.1198-A), is now awaiting Governor Hochul's signature requiring the NYS Department of Health to study

how reimbursement rates are determined and assess what other changes are needed. The EI program was designed in the 1990s. Much has changed since then, including family life, diagnoses and evidence-based interventions. The bill passed with unanimous, bipartisan support. Now it's the Governor's turn to sign the bill.

Take Action



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Connect with Liftoff on socials or  
visit us at [liftoffwny.org](http://liftoffwny.org)



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