



New York State Community Action Association
Helping People. Changing Lives.

July 2020

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CEO's Letter

Dear Friend,

New York State Community Action Agencies (CAA) are encountering challenges due to holdups in releasing funds and processing contracts by New York State. Suspending Articles 11-A and 11-B of the State Finance Law for prompt payment and contracting as directed on July 6th through Executive Order 202.48 has had a dire impact on the services provided by CAAs.

The network of forty-eight CAAs operate a number of vital and essential programs and services such as nutrition, childcare, housing, and employment to help and support families across New York State. CAAs are critical to the economies in their communities, providing jobs while serving and supporting vulnerable community members.

Late contracts and subsequent late payments has been a persistent problem for NY's not-for-profit organizations. In 2019, the State Comptroller issued a report that noted 50 percent of

contracts between not-for-profit organizations were executed after the contract start date, resulting in severe cash flow problems for organizations. In closing, the report noted:

“Sustained efforts are needed to improve the cash flow to New York’s NFPs. Ensuring on-time contracts is critical to the success of the sector, and to maintaining the vital services NFPs provide to State residents”

As the state responds to the COVID-19 pandemic, this statement could not be more true or critical to the mission of our agencies to protect low-income families. This continuing problem has created a situation where not-for-profit organizations across the state are struggling to keep their doors open at a time when their services are needed more than ever. Increased unemployment and reduced support services for individuals and families have put greater demand on the services and programs being provided by the Community Action network.

Without approved contracts and payments, CAAs across the state will be unable to provide critical services desperately needed during this pandemic and will be forced to lay-off employees and reduce services, adding to an already destabilized economy.

We urge the Governor to rescind the suspension of Articles 11-A and 11-B to support the non-profit network in serving vulnerable New Yorkers.

Best,



[Jackie Orr](#), NCRMT

Monthly Poverty Myth

“All children have equal opportunities to succeed.” - False!

Many people make the argument that even if a child is born into poverty, that child has the same opportunities in school as more wealthy children, and thus have at least some equal opportunity to succeed later in life. Unfortunately, the research demonstrates that the reality of the situation is quite the opposite.



22% of children who have lived in poverty do not graduate from high school, compared to 6% of children who have never lived in poverty, and shockingly 32% of children who spent more than half of their childhood in poverty do not graduate. These reduced rates of graduation for children in poverty cannot be explained by any one factor, however, there are some clear problems with the environment a child in poverty is raised in.

Whether the child is malnourished when he or she goes into school will determine the level at which that child will perform in school. Often schools in high poverty areas employ teachers with less experience and fewer advanced degrees, while the opposite is true in areas with less poverty.

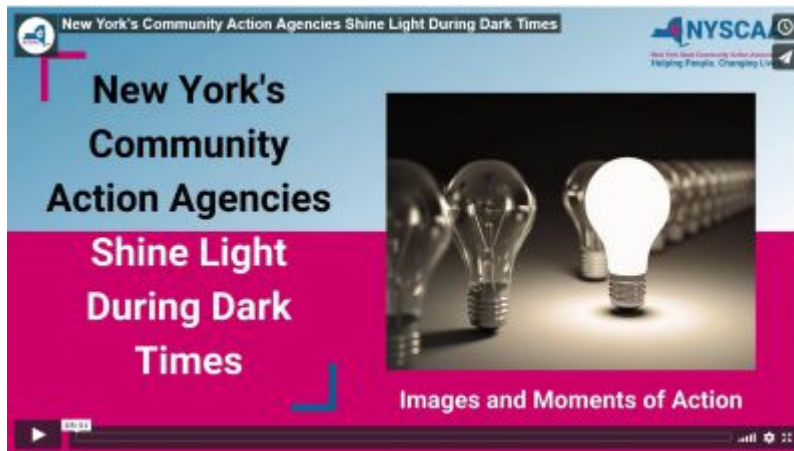
[Click here](#) to read more about common U.S. poverty myths.

NYSCAA News

Community Action Agencies Shine Light During Dark Times

As we all continue to work through the COVID-19 Pandemic and respond to community needs, we at NYSCAA would like to recognize the effort and hard work of Community Action Agencies across the state. We have compiled stories and accounts of the support Community Action Agencies are providing for their communities in these uncertain times. To read more about the work being done across the state, visit our [Community Action Agencies Shine Light During Dark Times](#) webpage.

We have also created a short video to showcase the amazing work Community Action Agencies in New York have been doing for their communities since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please check out the video below!



Reconnect and Recharge: NYSCAA & NYSWDA's Annual Conference

NYSCAA and NYSWDA's annual conference will be virtual. Save the dates on November 12, 17 & 19! Registration for the conference is temporarily closed.

NYSCAA is still looking for session ideas. Please visit the Call for Proposals [webpage](#) to submit a proposal for the conference.

NYSCAA will continue their partnership with outside resource providers. Click [here](#) to read more about the sponsorship opportunities available for the conference.

NYSCAA Resources on COVID-19

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have developed an online listing of resources to support you and your agency's important work. NYSCAA has compiled a number of [state and federal resources](#), as well as [tech resources](#) to help you during this challenging time.

Please visit the [NYSCAA website](#) as we continue to update and add to the resources listings.

Highlights from our Agencies

Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County

Community Action Angels Step Up During COVID-19

The staff at [Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County](#) embraced the hard work that the COVID-19 pandemic brought to their community as it swept across the state and country.

They partnered with the teachers and staff at the Watertown School District and their Community Action Angels volunteers to deliver meals for CAPC's Children's Meal Program. The spirit of that encompasses the Community Action Angels never faltered during the crisis. Continuing to deliver meals and making sure nutritious options were available for children were essential as families faced food insecurity during the state's shutdown.

Thank you to CAPC staff, the Community Action Angels volunteers, and the Watertown School District for their resolve and continuing the services for their communities!



Cattaraugus Community Action

Cattaraugus Community Action Serves Free Lunches Throughout the Community

Children in communities across Cattaraugus County began receiving nutritious lunches this week thanks to the [Cattaraugus Community Action](#) Summer Food Service Program.

The meals, which have been picked up by children at schools and venues in a number of communities, will continue through August 14. The program is a collaborative effort between Community Action and the New York State Education Department.



[Click here](#) to read more about Cattaraugus Community Action's Summer Food Service Program.

Census 2020

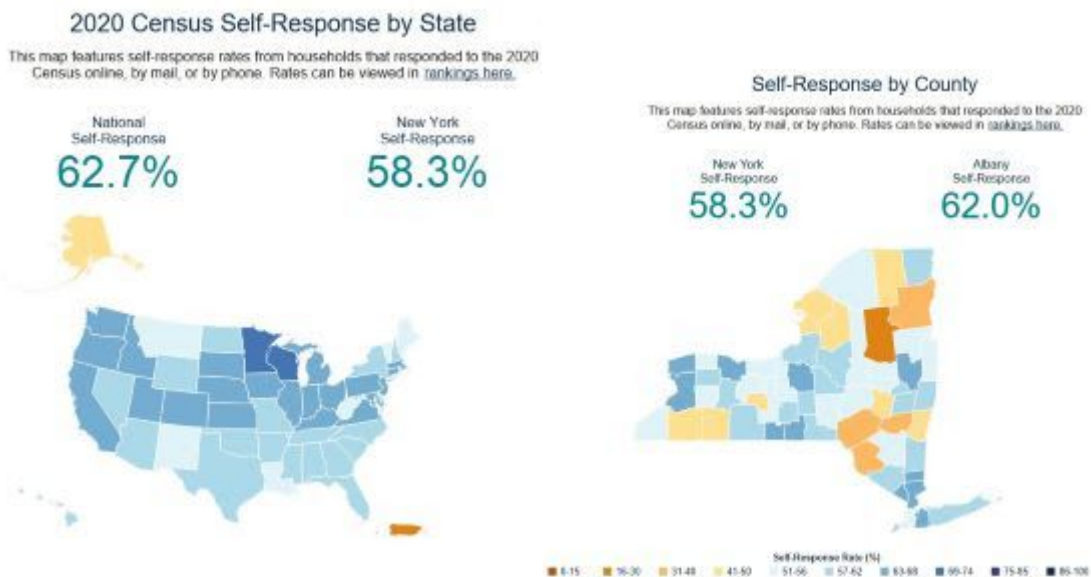
2020 Census Response Rate Map

The U.S. Census Bureau's [online map](#) shows the 2020 Census Response Rate Challenge — where state, local, and community leaders work together to promote a complete and accurate

count by increasing the self-response rate in their community. The map currently displays 2010 Census self-response rates as a reference point for states, counties, cities, and census tracts around the country. Users will be able to use the map to track their community's progress in responding to the 2020 Census.

As people respond to the 2020 Census online, by phone or by mail, the Census Bureau will update the map daily to reflect the percentage of households that self-respond online, by phone or by mail after being invited to do so. (The rate will be provided for the three modes combined and for online alone.)

[Click here](#) to read more.



Take the 2020 Census Now!

Everyone in your community can still complete the Census [online, by phone, or by mail](#) during the coronavirus pandemic!

To help reduce the coronavirus risk, the Census Bureau is providing resources and guidance for your local census efforts. [Click here](#) to learn how to promote Census engagement while managing risks related to the coronavirus.



Your response matters! The Census results help determine how billions of dollars in federal funding flow into states, and your response can shape many different aspects of your community. [See how your answers can shape the future!](#)

Community Action Counts!

Make sure to visit the [Community Action Partnership's \(CAP\) Census 2020 webpage](#) to stay up-to-date on the latest news and information about the upcoming 2020 Census. This once in a decade event is critical for Community Action and the families and communities we serve across the country, and it is essential that all people are counted.

[Click here](#) for additional Census resources from the Community Action Partnership.



CSBG National Partner Resources

National Partner Resources on COVID-19

In light of increasing concerns about a broader coronavirus outbreak and the impacts on normal business operations, the National Partners have compiled resources that are available to the Community Action network.

- [CAP's Coronavirus Resource Page](#)
- [CAPLAW's Coronavirus Resource Page](#)
- [NASCSP's Coronavirus Resource Page](#)

Community Action Partnership - New eCourse Available for Community Action Fiscal Staff

This past year, the Partnership Center of Excellence collaborated with Wipfli to create fiscal training videos for Community Action staff. The series of videos and some associated resources have now been formatted into an eCourse in Community Action Academy. This eCourse is especially beneficial for fiscal staff new to Community Action, but experienced fiscal staff have found them helpful as well through pilots and feedback. The topics range from fund accounting to cost allocation, regulations, internal controls, and budgets.



[Click here](#) to access the eCourse and to create a free account for the Community Action academy!

Community Action Partnership - Annual Convention Moving Virtual

The Community Action Partnership is moving full speed ahead with the 2020 Annual Convention. Attendee safety is of the utmost of importance. As such, the event will now be virtual only.



The Partnership will be reaching out to all those currently registered to assist in transferring on-site registrations to virtual ones and to provide refunds as requested.

[Click here](#) for more information on registration, pricing, and the cancellation policy. The partnership has also released their [Preliminary Program Book](#) for your reference.

Additional Resources

Hunger Solutions New York - Pandemic-EBT Outreach Toolkit

Hunger Solution's new [webpage & outreach toolkit](#) provide resources to inform families about the new Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (Pandemic-EBT/P-EBT)



program. The toolkit includes a flyer, letter template, social media posts, and infographics to help families learn about and use their P-EBT benefits. As trusted messengers, schools, community organizations, and other partners can use these resources to share information through their websites, robocalls/texts, social media, newsletters, and other communication channels.

Important highlights of Pandemic-EBT:

- **Each eligible child will receive \$420** in P-EBT food benefits.
- **P-EBT benefits can be used to buy food** at [SNAP-participating stores](#)
- **There is no application.** P-EBT benefits will be issued automatically between June and August. Families who receive SNAP, Public Assistance, or Medicaid will get benefits on their current EBT or Medicaid card. Others will receive a new EBT card in the mail.
- **Immigration status does not matter** for P-EBT. Using P-EBT does not affect a parent/guardian or child's immigration status. The public charge rule does not apply to P-EBT.
- **P-EBT is not SNAP, and does not replace other nutrition programs.** Families can still use other programs while using P-EBT. These include summer meals, SNAP, WIC, and "grab and go" or delivered meals from school.

Mental Health Association in New York State - Updated Trainings

[The Mental Health Association in New York State](#) (MHANYS) works to



HEALTHY MINDS FOR A HEALTHY NEW YORK

end the stigma against mental illness and promotes mental health wellness in New York State. MHANYS achieves this through training, education, advocacy and policy, community-based partnership programming, and by connecting individuals and families to help.

MHANYS is currently offering a number of trainings including:

- Mental Health & Wellness 101
- Mental Health & Wellness 101 in the Workplace
- Developing a Trauma-Informed Approach
- Creating a Wellness Mindset
- safeTALK
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
- CAREPATH Program: Shared Values
- Family Engagement
- The Immediate Crisis is Over: Now what?
- Inherited Family Trauma is not Destiny

[Click here](#) for more information on the training structures, cost, and duration.

NY State of Health - Special Enrollment Period Extended through 8/15

During these challenging times, NY State of Health, New York's official health plan Marketplace, remains committed to ensuring access to affordable, quality health insurance for all New Yorkers, so they can get the care they need.



NY State of Health is here to help New Yorkers who may have lost their health insurance coverage as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to find and enroll in affordable, comprehensive coverage. Many New Yorkers will qualify for Medicaid, Child Health Plus or the Essential Plan due to loss of income/employment or reduced wages. Those qualifying for these programs can enroll year-round. Individuals who lose job-based health insurance should apply within 60 days of losing that coverage.

To help New Yorkers access health coverage during this time, NY State of Health has extended the Special Enrollment Period through August 15, 2020. Find out more about this Special Enrollment Period for Qualified Health Plans and updates on insurance options during the coronavirus pandemic [here](#).

Thousands of assistors throughout the state are available to help consumers enroll by phone. Find a free enrollment assistor [here](#).

For more information, visit us at www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov, or call the NY State of Health customer service center at 1-855-355-5777. Let us help you find a health care plan that works for you.

Low Income Forum on Energy (LIFE) - Save the Date!

Please save the date for the inaugural LIFE 2020 Virtual Event, **Tuesday, October 27th through Friday, October 30th, 2020!**



Though the network is unable to meet in person this year, the LIFE Steering Committee is looking forward to providing the same high-quality knowledge sharing and discussion opportunities that have become synonymous with LIFE events.

The 2020 LIFE Virtual Event will include:

- Live-online panel presentations with Q&A opportunities - Learn about the New York State energy, climate change, and equity policy environment
- Live-online interactive workshops - Talk with others in the field who want to take a deeper dive into new energy frontiers
- On-demand pre-recorded presentations - At-your-own-pace learning opportunities related to the evolving low-income energy landscape
- Continuing legal education training hosted by Public Utility Law Project of NY and the NYS Department of Public Service - New York State Shared Meter Law and the New York State Public Service Commission Complaints and Appeals Process
- Resource repository - Information about programs and services to assist communities and individuals

Join in the live-online component of the LIFE 2020 Virtual Event. Mark the dates on your calendar so that you can learn, share, and connect about low-income energy. More details about the agenda and registration will be available soon. [Join the LIFE mailing list](#) to stay up-to-date.

Annie E. Casey Foundation - Kids Count Data Book: State Trends in Child Well-Being

The 31st edition of the [Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT Data Book](#) describes how children across the United States were faring before the coronavirus pandemic began.

This year's publication continues to deliver the Foundation's latest available data on child well-being. It also identifies multi-year trends — comparing statistics from 2010 to 2018. As always, policymakers, researchers and advocates can continue using this information to help shape their work and build a stronger future for children, families and communities.



The Foundation derives a composite index of overall child well-being for each state by combining data across four domains: (1) Economic Well-Being, (2) Education, (3) Health and (4) Family and Community. These composite scores are then translated into a state ranking for child well-being.

How to Build a Better Child Care System

This opinion piece offers concrete steps that can be taken on both the state and federal level to help improve America's childcare system in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"You can't reopen the economy without child care!" It's a widespread concern because it's obviously correct. Millions of Americans have been flailing since mid-March, juggling work and kids against a backdrop of growing exhaustion and anxiety.



[Click here](#) to read more.

National Professional Development Opportunities

National Community Action Partnership (NCAP)

2020 Annual Convention - Virtual Registration Only - August 26-28, 2020

[Click here](#) for more information.

National Community Action Foundation (NCAF)

2020 Annual Conference

November 15th, 2020 - Washington D.C.

Are you a staff or board member of a NY Community Action Agency? Check out [NYSCAA Learn](#) – free online learning for New York's Community Action Agencies!



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.



Our Agencies:

Click on Name of Agency to Visit Website: [Action for a Better Community, Inc.](#) * [Adirondack Community Action Programs, Inc.](#) * [Albany Community Action Partnership](#) * [ACCORD Corporation](#) * [CAPC of Jefferson County](#) * [Cattaraugus Community Action, Inc.](#) * [Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.](#) * [Chautauqua Opportunities Inc.](#) * [Columbia Opportunities, Inc.](#) * [Commission on Economic Opportunity for the Capital District Region, Inc.](#) * [Community Action Organization of Erie County, Inc.](#) * [Community Action of Greene County, Inc.](#) * [Community Action of Orleans & Genesee](#) * [Community Action Program for Madison County, Inc.](#) * [Cortland Community Action Program, Inc. \(CAPCO\)](#) * [Delaware Opportunities](#) * [Dutchess County Community Action Agency, Inc.](#) * [Economic Opportunity Program Inc. of Chemung County](#) * [EOC of Nassau County - Hempstead](#) * [EOC of Suffolk - Patchogue](#) * [Fulmont Community Action Agency, Inc.](#) * [JCEO of Clinton & Franklin Counties](#) * [Lewis County Opportunities, Inc.](#) * [Livingston County Planning Department](#) * [Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Inc.](#) * [NYC Department of Youth and Community Development](#) * [Niagara Community Action Program, Inc.](#) * [Opportunities for Broome, Inc.](#) * [Opportunities for Chenango, Inc.](#) * [Opportunities for Otsego, Inc.](#) * [Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.](#) * [Path Stone PEACE, Inc.](#) * [Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc.](#) * [RECAP](#) * [Saratoga County EOC, Inc.](#) * [Schenectady Community Action, Inc.](#) * [Schoharie County Community Action Program, Inc.](#) * [St. Lawrence County Community Development Program, Inc.](#) * [Tioga Opportunities, Inc.](#) * [Tompkins Community Action, Inc.](#) * [Ulster County Community Action Committee, Inc.](#) * [Warren/Hamilton Counties](#)

ACEO, Inc. * L.E.A.P. * WestCOP * Wayne County Community Action Program, Inc. * Wyoming County Community Action, Inc. * Yonkers Community Action Program, Inc.

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