

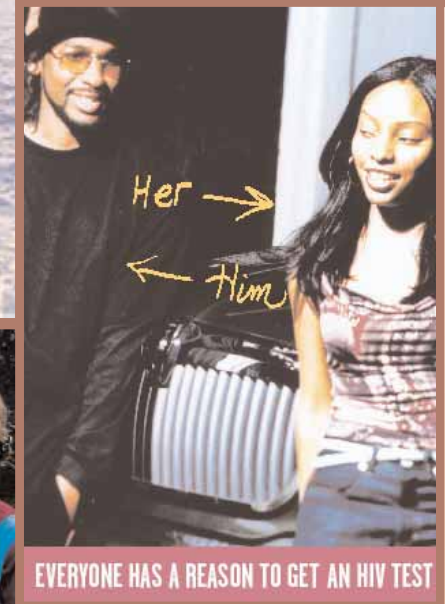


Andrew J. Spano, Westchester County Executive  
County Board of Legislators

# Westchester County Department of Health

Budget Report  
November 2007

Submitted to  
Westchester County Board of Legislators



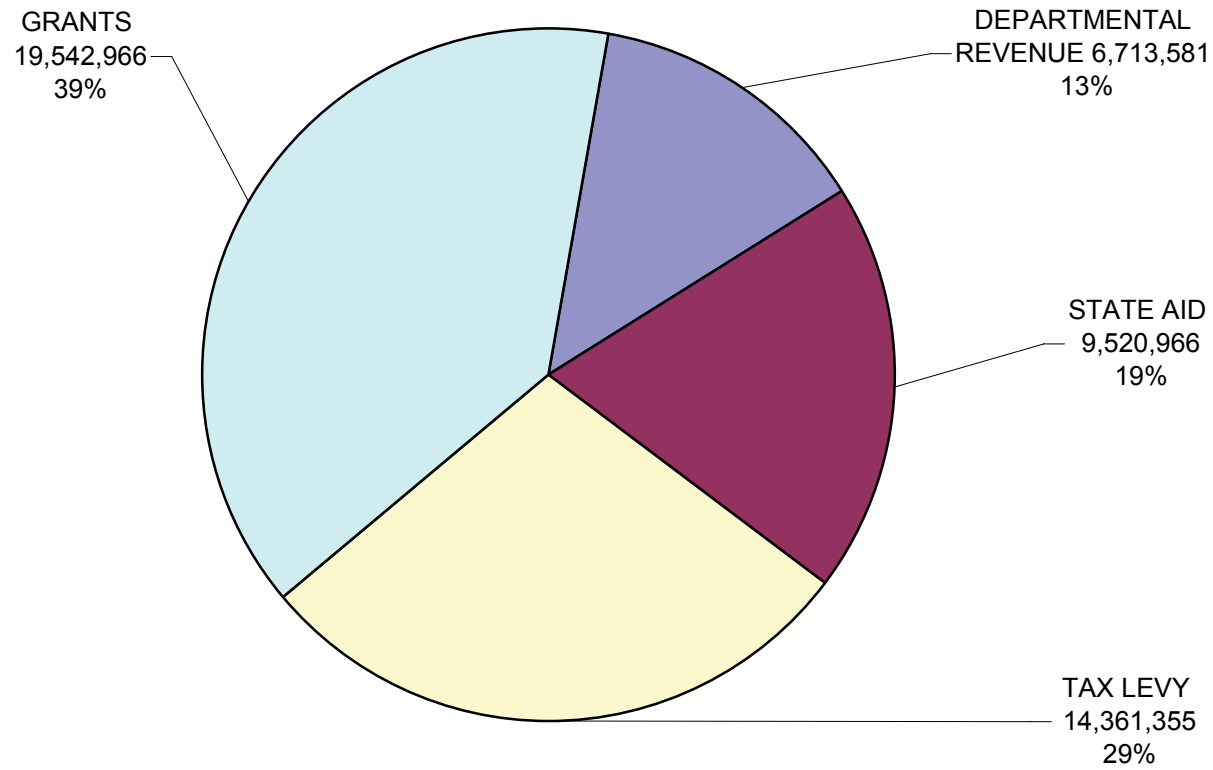
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Joshua Lipsman, M.D., J.D., M.P.H., Commissioner

# WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH MISSION STATEMENT

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- The mission of the Department of Health is to promote health, prevent disease and prolong meaningful life for Westchester residents.
- The Commissioner of Health is vested with all of the powers and duties necessary under the mandates of the New York State Public Health Law
  - to monitor and control the spread of communicable disease,
  - to monitor and regulate air and water quality,
  - to enforce the state and local sanitary codes,
  - to promote and ensure local public health activities and
  - to assure the availability of community health services.

# Westchester County Department of Health Proposed Budget - 2008



# NUTRITION & FITNESS

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*An estimated 65% of U.S. adults are overweight or obese and one-third of U.S. children and youth are obese or at risk of becoming obese. Westchester is addressing the obesity epidemic through multiple programs:*

## **Be Fit Westchester**

- Promotes healthy lifestyles at Department of Parks events, community health fairs, and school events.
- Nutrition Summit held on 11/8/07 for key stakeholders in the community to address the obesity epidemic.

## **Restaurants Pledge to Use Healthier Cooking Oils**

- Since July of 2006, over 650 restaurants, equating to 25% of Westchester's total number of food service establishments, have voluntarily pledged to use trans-fat free cooking oils. The Board of Health is considering a mandatory ban.

## **Fit Kids**

- Almost 60,000 children in 98 schools, representing 41.8% of students and 41.5% of schools, are engaging in activities from the Fit Kids Resource Guide.

## **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program**

- For fiscal year 2007, the WIC caseload was 8,445 and the program served 99.2% of its target.
- Generated approximately \$6 million into the local economy through the redemption of WIC checks.

## **Body Mass Index (BMI) Survey**

- To determine the extent of childhood overweight and obesity in Westchester County, the Health Department partnered with 19 school districts (41 schools) and obtained the height and weight measurements collected by schools for their K, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. Among the 8,600 children included in the study, more than one in three children (34%) was either overweight or at risk of overweight, which is greater than the national rate of 32.2%. The study represents 48% of Westchester's school districts, 29% of Westchester's elementary schools and 27% of Westchester's elementary school children in K, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades.

## **Chronic Disease Prevention Program**

- Provided interactive health education outreach for over 30 community agencies/events at settings such as health fairs, cultural events, housing projects and food pantry programs.

# CHRONIC DISEASES

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## Statistics

- In 2006, heart disease, stroke, and other diseases of the circulatory system were the number one reason for all hospitalizations for Westchester County residents, accounting for 17,946 hospitalizations.
- Cardiovascular disease was the leading cause of death among Westchester County residents, accounting for 39.4% of the total deaths.
- 16.7% of all hospitalizations among Westchester County residents had a diabetes-related diagnosis in 2004.

## Chronic Disease Prevention Initiatives

The Health Department, in collaboration with the County Departments of Communication, Senior Services, and Parks, is engaged in campaigns to reduce chronic disease. Efforts include:

- partnering with faith based organizations, the American Diabetes Association and the American Heart Association to help identify residents with these diseases and risk factors and get them into care;
- partnering with community based organizations to encourage healthy lifestyles, good nutrition and physical activity;
- partnering with municipal officials in the Mayor's and Supervisor's Challenge to develop activities and programs that promote healthy living in their communities; and
- partnering with the American Heart Association to develop and kick off the County's Walking Works Program which promotes physical activity through workplace walking programs.

# TOBACCO USE PREVENTION

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*"The adverse health effects from cigarette smoking account for 440,000 deaths, or nearly 1 of every 5 deaths, each year in the United States." (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)*

- ATUPA (Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act) - During 2006, a total of 3,658 tobacco enforcement checks resulted in 137 legal actions. During the first half of 2007, a total of 1,543 checks resulted in 38 legal actions. The compliance rate of tobacco vendors with the ATUPA law has gone from 52% in 1997 to 96% presently.
- A "Quit Smoking Blog" was developed by the Health Department to provide peer support to residents who wish to stop smoking. It also contains helpful tips and resources available to those who want to quit. From May through October of 2007, there have been 1,074 views of the "Quit Smoking Blog."
- The Health Department continues to enforce the County's worksite smoking law. To date in 2007, 64 complaints of smoking at bars, restaurants and other indoor workplaces were received and investigated. In 2006, the Department investigated 90 such complaints.
- The Chronic Disease Prevention Program has provided over 20 school presentations and education sessions for community agencies addressing the negative health effects of tobacco.
- Through a grant from the POW'R Against Tobacco Coalition, the Health Department visited over 400 households in low income neighborhoods of Yonkers and Mt. Vernon to educate residents about the negative health effects of second-hand smoke, to encourage residents to take the smoke-free home pledge and to encourage identified smokers to call the NYS Smokers' Quitline. 81 people signed the smoke-free home pledge and 24 people were referred to the NYS Quitline through this effort.

# HIV and AIDS PREVENTION & SERVICES

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*The AIDS epidemic continues to affect disproportionately certain geographic regions and high-risk segments of the population. Outside of New York City, Westchester is the New York State county with the most people living with AIDS and HIV (over 4,000).*

- In Westchester County, over 3,500 people are reported living with HIV and AIDS. It is also estimated that an additional 1,000 residents in Westchester are living with HIV and AIDS and are unaware of their status.
- Westchester's cases are increasingly middle-aged women of color infected through heterosexual transmission.

Westchester County Health Department is implementing new initiatives to prevent and treat new cases of HIV and AIDS:

- Rapid HIV testing is now offered at all of the Health Department's clinics, with test results in 20 minutes;
- The Health Department partners with community-based institutions like Project W.A.V.E. and W.O.W. for outreach and testing.
- The Health Department is raising awareness of getting tested for HIV through its "Everyone Has a Reason to Get an HIV Test" campaign. Over 70,000 postcards and other incentive items have been distributed in 13 municipalities throughout the county and bus posters featuring five different designs are being rotated on all Bee Line buses throughout the next 18 months. Outreach and rapid HIV testing at community sites and events has been expanded.

\$5.5 million in federal Ryan White Title I CARE Act funds are allocated for community-based health and supportive services for persons with AIDS in Westchester, Rockland and Putnam Counties.

# HEALTH DISPARITIES

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Based on the priorities in the County Executive's Blue Ribbon Task Force for the Elimination of Health Disparities among African Americans report, ***Health Disparities Among Blacks in Westchester: A Snapshot***:

- Westchester County provided \$120,000 in grant funds to community based and faith-based agencies for programs that address the priority areas outlined in the report:
  - Link more Black residents to needed health care through education, outreach, and referral;
  - Provide residents with assistance and information to navigate the health care system more effectively;
  - Increase the number of Black physicians working in Westchester County.
- Over 800 students have been involved in activities of the mentoring initiative. Approximately 30 black health professionals have participated as mentors, providing 14 students with one-on-one meeting opportunities.
- Over 1,000 African Americans have received free health screenings and health education in settings such as faith-based organizations, senior centers, substance abuse programs, health and cultural events, community agencies and laundromats. 41 new cases of diabetes have been identified and these individuals were provided assistance with accessing health services.



# HEALTHY LIVING PARTNERSHIP

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Many men and women in Westchester County frequently forgo having routine recommended cancer screening because they do not have health insurance.

- The Health Department's Healthy Living Partnership (HLP) oversees the delivery of a comprehensive breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening and diagnostic program for uninsured and underinsured county residents through a grant from the New York State Department of Health.
- The HLP consists of a partnership of primary and specialty care providers, women's health practitioners and community agencies.
- In 2006, the HLP provided approximately 5,000 clinical breast exams, 2,100 mammograms, 3,500 pap smears and 420 fecal occult blood tests, free of charge to uninsured and underinsured county residents.

# CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

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The exposure to lead through the ingestion of paint chips, inhalation of lead dust and other sources (toys, jewelry, and candy) continues to affect Westchester County's children.

The Health Department's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program provides:

- monitoring and surveillance of blood lead screening tests performed on children in the county (over 27,000 in 2006);
- medical and environmental case management for the county's children who are diagnosed as lead poisoned (32 in 2006);
- a partnership with the Department of Planning's Lead Safe Westchester program to assist property owners with the reduction of lead paint hazards to create a safer environment for the county's children;
- outreach education to the community to reduce the incidence of lead exposure in the county's children;
- outreach education to medical providers of children and pregnant women to ensure blood lead testing of at risk populations;
- assistance in the removal of recalled toys, jewelry and candy due to lead contamination from the store shelves in Westchester County; and
- primary prevention (before a child becomes poisoned) lead paint removal through a new state grant that focuses inspections and remediation of lead hazards in dwellings in the high risk lead area of Yonkers Zip Code 10701.

In response to the recent national toy recall, Environmental Health staff provided assistance in the removal of recalled toys from store shelves in Westchester County.

# PROTECTING THE FOOD SUPPLY

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- Nearly 12,000 inspections of 4,000 restaurants were made in 2006. Over 8,200 restaurant inspections have been made in the first three quarters of 2007 to protect Westchester's food.
- From January - October of 2007, 61 complaints of foodborne illness have been investigated. In 2006, 89 complaints of foodborne illness were investigated by Health Department sanitarians.
- A new food service establishment closure policy was adopted this year. Our staff, in addition to issuing a summons for an administrative hearing, health inspectors now also issue a printed closure warning notice if public health hazard violations are found on a re-inspection that were previously found on the original inspection. Continued recurrence of two or more such violations results in a closure order.

# WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

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- In the first three quarters of 2007, Health Department staff inspected 215 septic systems and approved plans for 180 new septic systems.
- 255 Septic System contractors currently maintain licenses through the Health Department Septic System Management Program to install and repair septic systems.
- Through inspection, sampling and plan review, the Health Department provides oversight of almost 60 sewage treatment plants, whose flows range up to 100 million gallons per day. This oversight ensures that all plants operate in accordance with their State (SPDES) and local operating permits and therefore protect the waters of the county.
- In 2007, Health Department staff were involved in the review, approval, and construction inspections of 10 sewage treatment plants located on the NYC watershed that were upgraded to meet the water quality standards of the NYC Watershed Rules and Regulations.
- Through inspection, sampling, and plan review, the Health Department provides oversight of almost 300 public water systems in the County to ensure that drinking water is safe.
- The new Private Well Water Testing Law, effective November 19, 2007, requires that private drinking water wells be tested for sanitary and aesthetic water quality upon the sale or lease of a property. Further, the law requires remediation, if necessary, to establish safe levels of contaminants in the well water supply.
- In 2005, in upstate Seneca Lake Park, over 4,000 people became ill from a spray ground that was contaminated with cryptosporidiosis. In order to avoid a similar situation in Westchester, a new sanitary code provision requires that warning signs be posted at existing pools with spray features and requires that new pools with spray features include UV treatment systems.

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## 2007 Highlights

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### **Drills & Exercises**

Drills and exercises allow Health Department staff to continually hone their skills in the event of a large-scale public health emergency. In collaboration with our community-based partners and members of the county's emergency volunteer reserves, the Department held a point-of-vaccination (POV) exercise during which influenza vaccine was administered to over 275 county employees. Staff also participated in a Pandemic Flu tabletop exercise as well as communication exercises.

### **Staff Development**

Staff participated in training activities throughout the year that addressed a wide variety of topics. These included teaching staff to identify and refer individuals who may be in need of psychological first aid; advanced epidemiology and disease surveillance techniques; and an exercise evaluation program developed by the Department of Homeland Security.

### **Strategic National Stockpile Plan:**

In cooperation with the Department of Emergency Services, a Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Plan has been developed to coordinate the management and distribution of an SNS deployment.

### **Continuity of Operations Plan:**

The Health Department developed a Continuity of Operations plan to enable the ongoing delivery of essential services in the event of a large scale emergency that disrupts normal operations.





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## Westchester County Department of Health



# Children with Special Needs

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Joshua Lipsman, M.D., J.D., M.P.H., Commissioner

# Children with Special Needs (CSN)

CSN includes two large program mandates that serve young children with developmental delays and disabilities:

Early Intervention – serves infants and toddlers from birth to 3 years of age

4410 Preschool Program – serves preschoolers 3 and 4 years of age



# Services

Services may include speech, occupational and/or physical therapy, special education, counseling and family training, and other supportive services.

In accordance with federal law, services are provided to the extent appropriate in a child's natural setting or the least restrictive setting. Between 1993 and 2007, the percentage of Westchester children served in a home/community setting increased:

- from 55% to 85% in the Early Intervention Program
- from 31% to 74% in the 4410 Preschool Program

# Program Growth

*It is projected that 10,428 children will receive services during SY07/08 at a cost of \$117 million. From SY97/98 to SY06/07, the number of children served and program costs increased as follows:*

## Early Intervention:

The number of children receiving services increased 89% from 2987 to 5647.

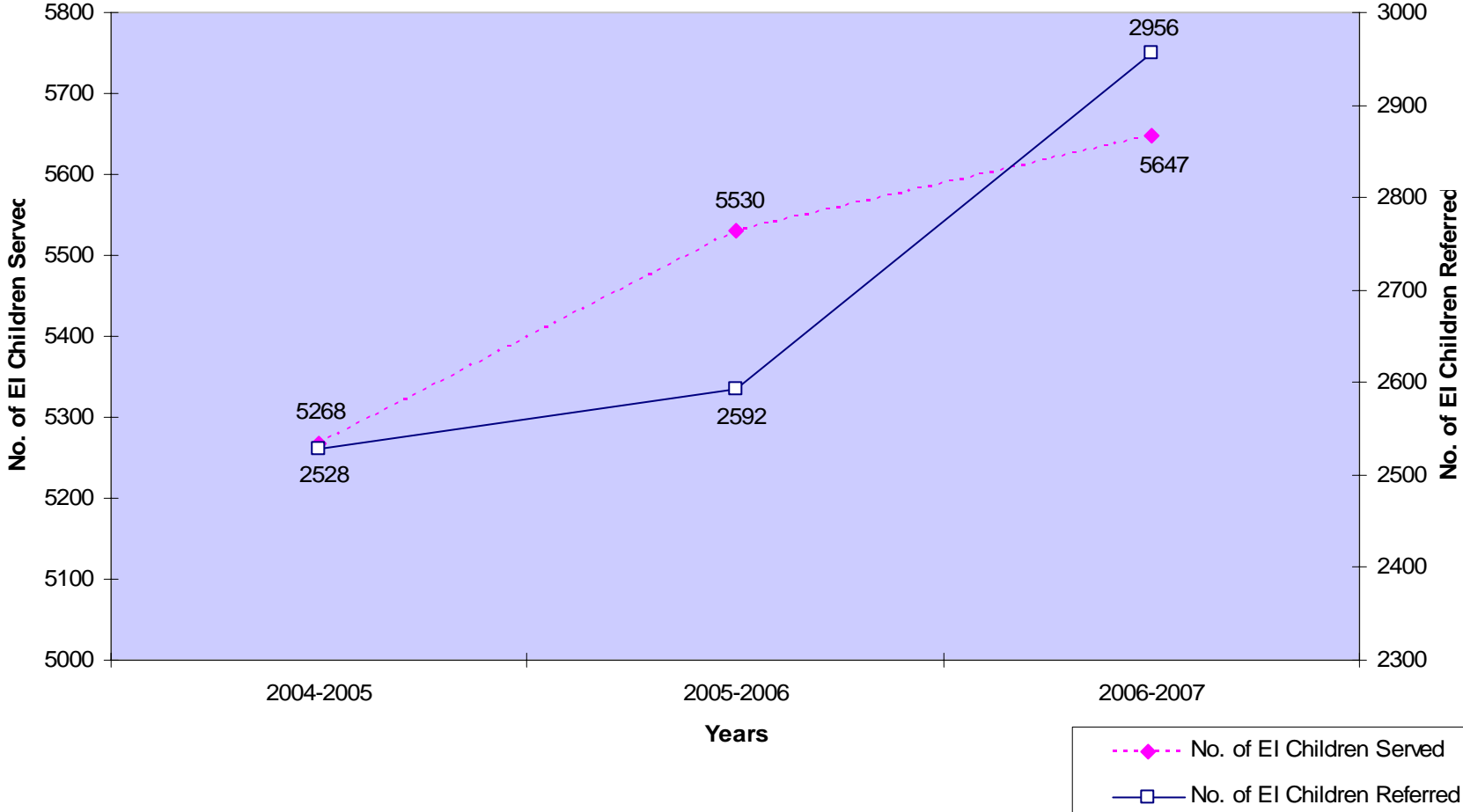
The cost of the program increased 109% from \$18,220,119 to \$38,119,950.

## 4410 Preschool Program:

The number of children receiving services increased 64% from 2523 to 4150.

The cost of the program increased 161% from \$27,882,639 to \$72,715,338.

**Westchester County EI Program Data**  
**Number of Children Referred and Eligible for Services**  
**Program Year: 2004-2005 to 2006-2007**



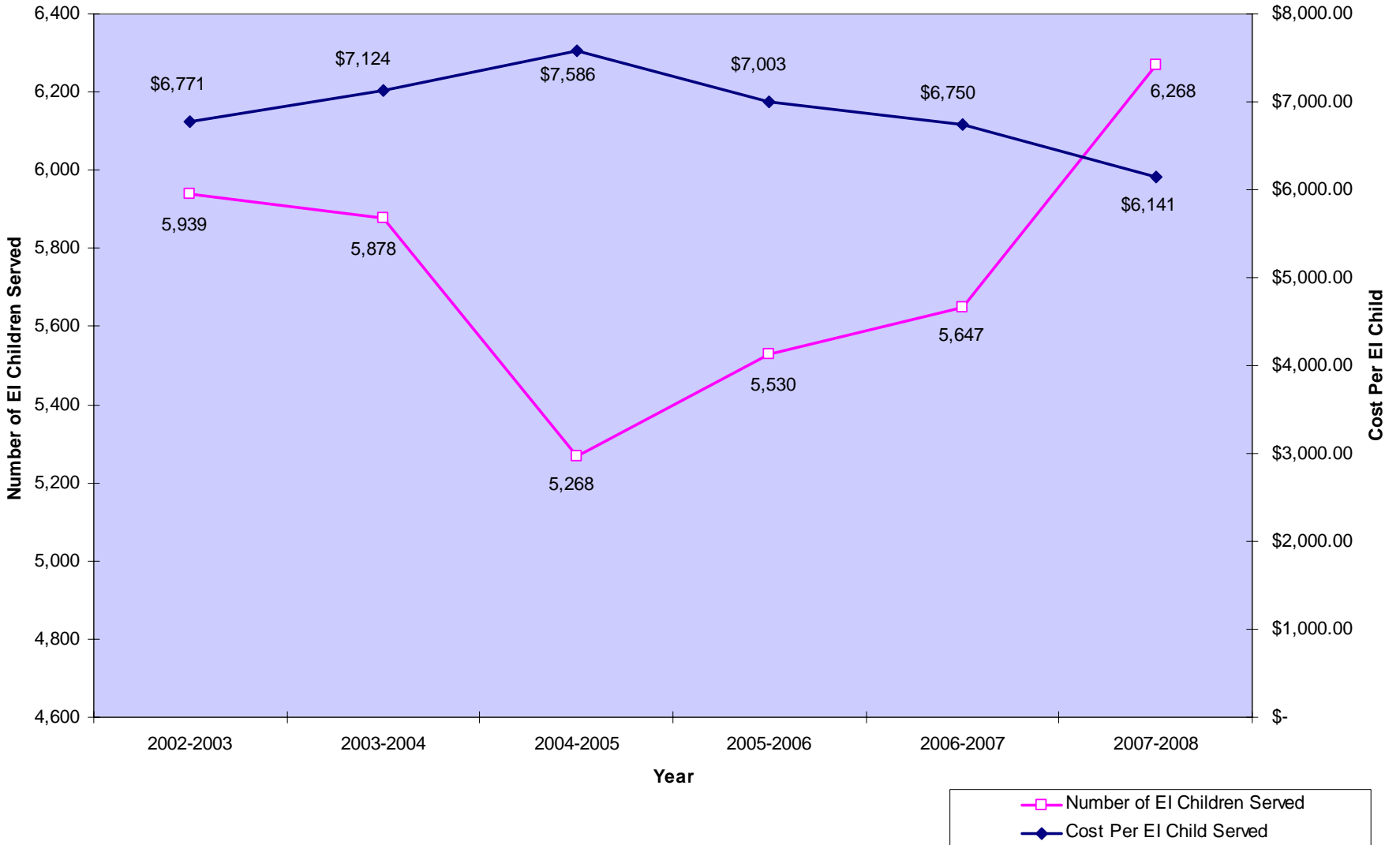
# Cost per child

The cost per child receiving services from Early Intervention continues to be less than 1/2 that of the 4410 Preschool Program.

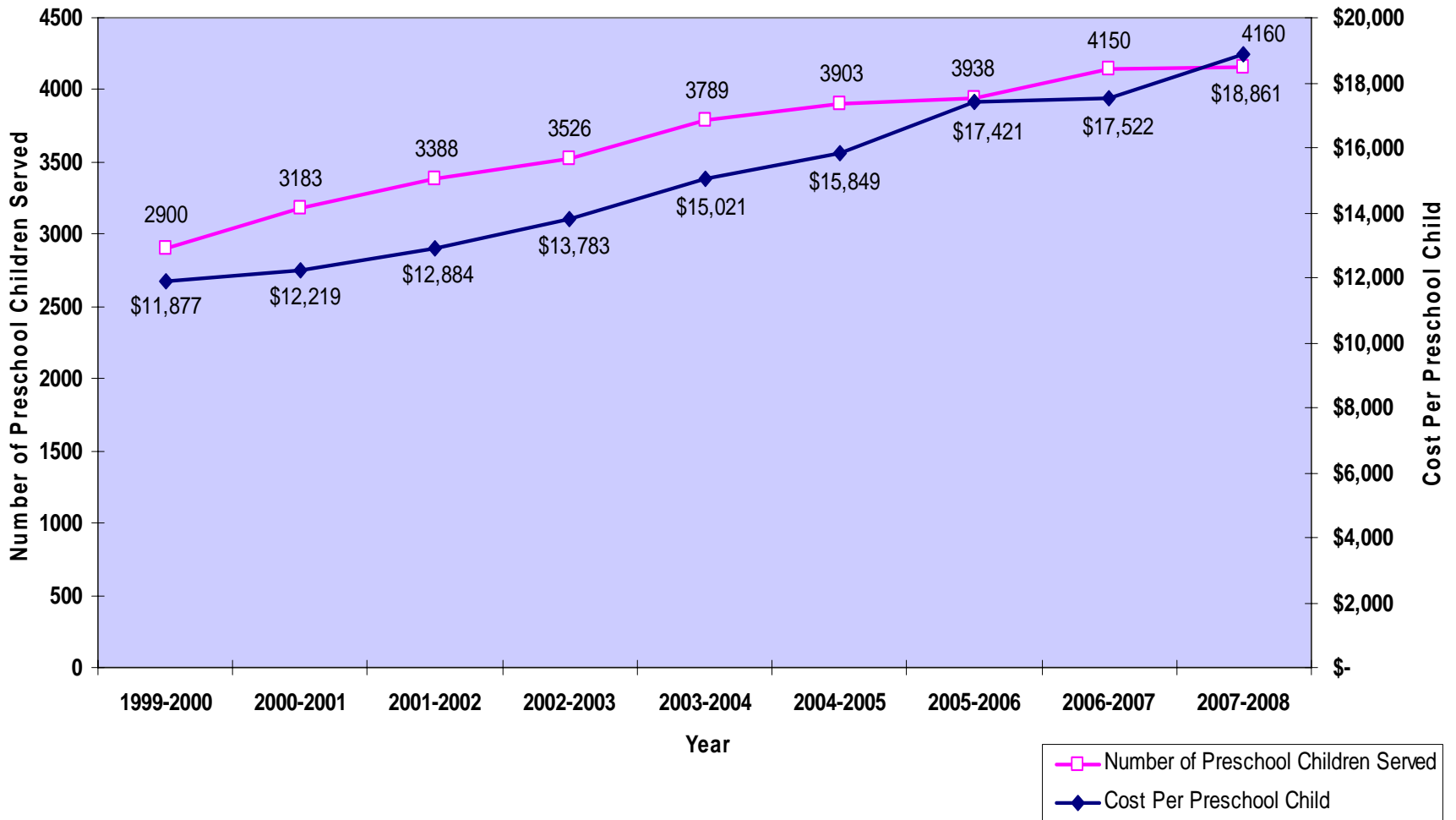
The County has the authority to make service decisions in EI but not in Preschool. Quality and satisfaction with services have not been compromised.

From SY97/98 to SY06/07, the cost per child in EI increased by 11% (from \$6100 per child to \$6750), while the cost per child in the 4410 Preschool Program increased by 59% (from \$11,051 to \$17,522 per child).

**Westchester County Early Intervention Program**  
**Program Year: 2002-2003 to 2007-2008**  
**Number of Children Served and Cost Per Child**



**Westchester County Preschool Program**  
**Program Year: 1999 - 2000 to 2007 - 2008**  
**Number of Children Served and Cost Per Child**



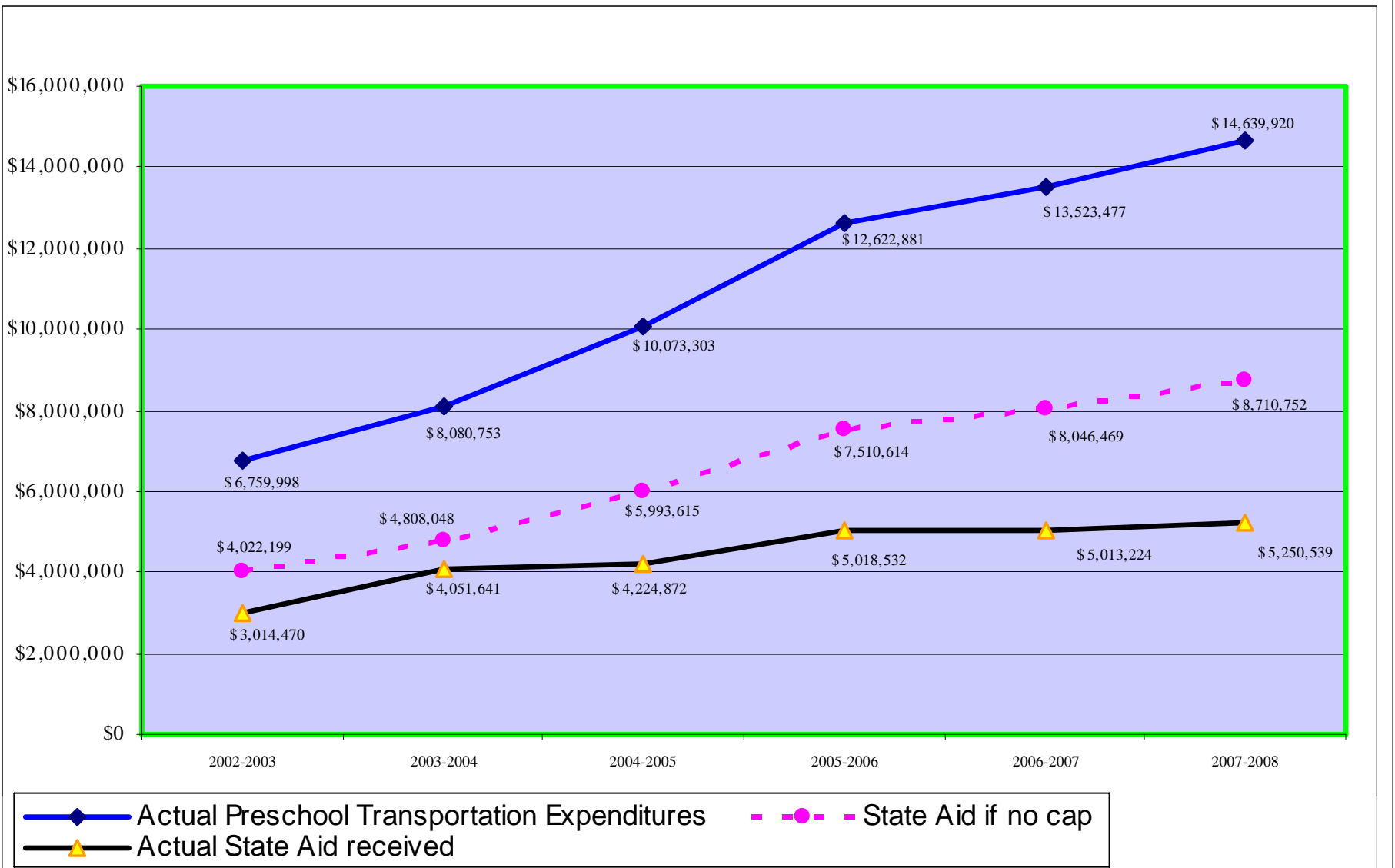
# Transportation Costs

The cost of transporting the 4410 Preschool population continues to increase due to rising fuel costs, insurance, personnel, and other costs. Overall, costs for a one way trip in SY 06/07 will be 72% higher than in SY02/03.

Due to the New York State Education Department's cap on state aid for transportation costs, Westchester's effective rate of reimbursement has decreased from 59.5%, the percentage prescribed in Chapter 705 of the Education Law, Section 4410 in 1994 to only 37% per round trip in SY06/07. In SY 07/08, this cap is expected to shift \$3.5 million to County tax levy share.

# Westchester County Preschool Transportation Costs

## Program Year: 2002-2003 to 2007-2008





# Quality Improvement Initiatives

Administrative initiatives to ensure quality of services, provider accountability, and contractual compliance among the 250 contracted providers include:

- Ongoing program and fiscal audits;
- Intensive reviews of evaluations and service plans to ensure ongoing program eligibility;
- Continuous staff supervision to ensure adherence to regulatory standards;
- Provider training, including dissemination of guidance memoranda, best practice guidelines, and hands-on training and observation.

# Children with Special Needs

## Number of Children Served and Total Program Expenditures

School Year <sup>1</sup>	Early Intervention			Preschool			Total
	<i>Number of Children</i>	<i>Program Expenditures</i>	<i>Cost Per Child</i>	<i>Number of Children</i>	<i>Program Expenditures</i>	<i>Cost Per Child</i>	<i>Program Expenditures</i>
1990 - 1991	265	\$4,233,857	\$15,977	955	\$14,318,302	\$14,993	\$18,552,159
1991 - 1992	255	\$4,737,916	\$18,580	1040	\$15,539,443	\$14,942	\$20,277,359
1992 - 1993	385	\$4,467,516	\$11,604	1356	\$16,666,396	\$12,291	\$21,133,912
1993 - 1994 <sup>2</sup>	894	\$5,110,862	\$5,717	1621	\$20,390,210	\$12,579	\$25,501,072
1994 - 1995	1571	\$7,813,635	\$4,974	1881	\$22,908,233	\$12,179	\$30,721,868
1995 - 1996	2002	\$9,758,357	\$4,874	1861	\$23,069,208	\$12,396	\$32,827,565
1996 - 1997	2453	\$14,028,003	\$5,719	2280	\$25,883,261	\$11,352	\$39,911,264
1997 - 1998	2987	\$18,220,119	\$6,100	2523	\$27,882,639	\$11,051	\$46,102,758
1998 - 1999	3512	\$22,556,602	\$6,423	2601	\$29,905,132	\$11,498	\$52,471,734
1999 - 2000	4261	\$28,095,867	\$6,594	2900	\$34,446,338	\$11,877	\$62,542,205
2000 - 2001	4915	\$31,648,910	\$6,439	3183	\$38,892,326	\$12,219	\$70,541,236
2001 - 2002	5509	\$36,246,422	\$6,579	3388	\$43,650,016	\$12,884	\$79,896,438
2002 - 2003	5939	\$40,213,419	\$6,771	3526	\$48,599,185	\$13,783	\$88,812,604
2003 -2004 <sup>3</sup>	5878	\$41,877,550	\$7,124	3789	\$56,915,858	\$15,021	\$98,793,408
2004 - 2005 <sup>3</sup>	5268	\$39,964,602	\$7,586	3903	\$61,858,536	\$15,849	\$101,823,138
2005 - 2006 <sup>4</sup>	5530	\$38,727,292	\$7,003	3938	\$68,603,731	\$17,421	\$107,331,023
2006 - 2007 <sup>4</sup>	5647	\$38,119,950	\$6,750	4150	\$72,715,338	\$17,522	\$110,835,288
2007 - 2008 <sup>4</sup>	6268	\$38,492,612	\$6,141	4160	\$78,461,785	\$18,861	\$116,954,397

<sup>1</sup> School year is July 1 through June 30 of the following year.

<sup>2</sup> Early Intervention Program became effective as of July 1, 1993 and took over the Family Court Program

<sup>3</sup> Updated 8/14/07

<sup>4</sup> Estimated

# **LEGISLATIVE REFORM PRIORITIES**

## Early Intervention Program

In 2007, supported A4399 and Article VII of the Governor's budget bill to close loopholes in current EI law that allow commercial insurers to circumvent requirements to reimburse counties for the cost of services provided to beneficiaries.

Statewide rates of reimbursement from insurers remained low.

Westchester County increased its rate of reimbursement on billable claims from insurance companies from 8% (\$876,606) in 2002 to 13% (\$1,402,052) in 2006.

In 2006, approximately 75% of EI children in Westchester were privately insured, for which 30% of the services were billable to insurance companies.

## **LEGISLATIVE REFORM PRIORITIES**

### **4410 Preschool Program**

Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2007 created a Temporary Task Force on Preschool Special Education consisting of 15 members representing school districts, providers, counties and State agencies. Westchester County has one of the three municipal seats on this Task Force.

Co-chaired by the Education Department and the Division of Budget, its charge is to provide a report by November 15, 2007 recommending reform to the Preschool Program including rate methodology, service delivery and transition/least restrictive environment.

Counties are advocating to transition out of the Preschool Program that will cost the state \$1.115 billion for Fiscal Year 2007-08; county share will be over \$452 million.