



NYC
KiDS
RiSE™ | **Save for College
Program**

Questions and Answers for Parents/Guardians

WELCOME KIT VERSION

Semester 2

nyckidsrise.org

1. What is the NYC Kids RISE Save for College Program?

The NYC Kids RISE Save for College Program provides you, your family, and your community with a way to work together to save for your child's future. It's a scholarship and savings program designed to make college more accessible and achievable for your child. By giving upfront scholarships to every student and providing the tools and information for families to develop their own college savings plan, the Save for College Program empowers families to build a foundation for their child's future. The Save for College Program also engages the entire community to help our children realize their college dreams. The program is open to all kindergartners attending a District 30 public school—regardless of their family's income or immigration status.

2. How does the scholarship part of the Save for College Program work?

NYC Kids RISE automatically deposits \$100 into an NYC Scholarship Account for every participating kindergartner. As your child continues their education, NYC Kids RISE will offer opportunities for your family to earn additional money into this scholarship account. Other members of the community, including community organizations and businesses, can also add to the scholarship accounts to help your child reach their college goals.

The scholarship funds are invested in New York's 529 College Savings Program *Direct Plan*, a type of account specifically designed to help families save for school. Your child's NYC Scholarship Account can gain or lose money over time, depending on financial markets and the performance of the investment. That means the amount available in a child's NYC Scholarship Account when that child attends college may be more or less than the amounts originally deposited into the account.



Visit nykidsrise.org to take the next step and view your child's NYC Scholarship Account. Register to view the scholarship account by June 26, 2018, and your child will receive an extra \$25 from NYC Kids RISE.

3. How does the savings part of the Save for College Program work?

To build on the money invested in your child's scholarship account, you will have an opportunity to open your own college savings account. Parents/guardians, family members, and friends can contribute directly to this account. Depending on which option you choose, your family can track your savings balance alongside their child's NYC Scholarship Account through the NYC Kids RISE website. Visit nykidsrise.org/options or attend an upcoming Save for College Program workshop for more information about college savings options and how to open an account.



If you open your own college savings account by June 26, 2018, NYC Kids RISE will add another \$25 into their scholarship account.

4. How was my child enrolled in the Save for College Program?

All kindergarten students attending a participating school are automatically enrolled in the Save for College Program, unless their family chooses not to participate. If you received this document as part of your Save for College Program Welcome Kit, your child has been enrolled in the program. Your kindergartner was enrolled because:

- 1 Your kindergartner was enrolled in a District 30 public school by November 27, 2017, and remained enrolled through January 2018.
- 2 You did not sign and return an Opt Out Notice to your child's school during that time period.

If you believe that your child was enrolled in error, please call the NYC Kids RISE hotline at 833-KID-RISE (833-543-7473).

5. My child has been enrolled. What do I do next?

Education is a key part of every child's path to success, and your kindergartner is on the path to college with the Save for College Program. Taking the first step can be the hardest part. With the Save for College Program, we've already taken the first step together. NYC Kids RISE has opened an NYC Scholarship Account for your child and has deposited an initial \$100 into it.

Starting today, you can take three more steps with NYC Kids RISE before your child completes kindergarten. Think of these as the three building blocks of our partnership for your child's educational future:

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REGISTER ONLINE TO VIEW YOUR CHILD'S NYC SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT
- 

EXPLORE YOUR COLLEGE SAVINGS OPTIONS, OPEN YOUR OWN COLLEGE SAVINGS ACCOUNT, AND CONNECT IT TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT
- 

DEPOSIT AT LEAST \$5 INTO YOUR CONNECTED COLLEGE SAVINGS ACCOUNT

These are just the first steps in a long-term partnership with NYC Kids RISE, your child's school, and your community to save money together for your child's future. Visit nyckidsrise.org and click **View My Account** to get started.

6. Why was the NYC Kids RISE Save for College Program created?

It can be tough to save for college. For many parents, sending their children to college may seem out of reach. NYC Kids RISE, in partnership with the City of New York and the NYC Department of Education, started the Save for College Program to empower families to begin saving and planning for college from their child's very first days of school. Research shows that children with a college savings account of between \$1 and \$500 are three times more likely to enroll in college and more than four times more likely to graduate. Research also shows that children who attend college earn a significantly higher salary over their lifetimes and are less likely to be unemployed.

7. How much should I be saving for college on top of my child's scholarship account?

Every family's situation is different. College savings are one important piece of a family's overall financial health. Deciding how much to save for college or career training depends on your individual financial circumstances, including your income, assets, debt, regular expenses, public benefits, and credit. NYC Kids RISE encourages every family to start contributing at whatever amount makes sense for them. Getting started while your child is young can make a big difference, regardless of the amount.

For **free**, one-on-one support with fitting savings into your overall financial picture, consider visiting one of the NYC Financial Empowerment Centers located throughout the city. At the Financial Empowerment Centers, you can meet one-on-one with a professional financial counselor who can help you tackle debt, improve your credit, create a budget, open a bank account, save and plan for your future, and more. You can also get information about saving for your child's college education and making a plan to start saving.



To schedule an appointment at a Financial Empowerment Center near you, call 311 or visit nyc.gov/dca.

8. Does participating in the Save for College Program cost anything?

No, enrollment in the NYC Kids RISE Save for College Program is automatic and free of charge. Visit nykidsrise.org or attend a Save for College Program workshop to learn about low- and no-cost college savings options in addition to your child's NYC Scholarship Account.

9. How does immigration status affect my ability to participate?

Every child in District 30 can participate in the Save for College Program and receive an NYC Scholarship Account, regardless of the child's or their family's immigration status. All families, regardless of immigration status, can also open their own college savings account and begin saving alongside their child's scholarship account through the program. Visit nykidsrise.org/options or attend an upcoming Save for College Program workshop to learn more about college savings options that make sense for your family.

Please note that if you choose to open your own college savings account in the NY 529 *Direct Plan*, you must be a U.S. citizen or a resident alien with a verified permanent U.S. address.

10. What can the money in the NYC Scholarship Account be used for? Are there any restrictions on how it can be used?

Money in the NYC Scholarship Account is invested in the NY 529 *Direct Plan* and can be used only for higher education. This includes two-year and four-year colleges and other career training programs. The scholarship funds can be used for tuition, fees, equipment, some room-and-board expenses, and even things like textbooks, which are often not covered by other scholarships. The funds can be used at academic and vocational programs in New York and across the country, as well as at some schools abroad. Visit nysaves.org for a full list of qualifying higher education expenses.

Recent changes in federal tax laws allow certain elementary and secondary (K-12) education expenses to qualify under 529 plans. However, money in the NYC Scholarship Account cannot be used for any K-12 expenses.

11. What if a student in the Save for College Program doesn't go to college?

A student can only access the money in their NYC Scholarship Account if the student attends a qualifying institution, which includes most two- and four-year colleges as well as specialized training and certification programs. If the student does not claim these funds within 20 years after they complete kindergarten, then those funds will go back to NYC Kids RISE to support future Save for College Program students.

Families can keep any money they deposit into their own college savings account, regardless of whether their student attends a qualifying institution. Depending on the type of college savings account option the family chooses, they may have to pay a tax or penalty to use the money for other expenses besides qualified educational expenses. For more information, visit nykidsrise.org/options.

12. Who manages the Save for College Program?

NYC Kids RISE manages the Save for College Program in partnership with the NYC Department of Education and the City of New York. NYC Kids RISE is a nonprofit organization working to expand economic opportunity and equity by providing families, schools, and communities with a way to work together to save for their children's education. Building on the dreams and expectations that families have for their children's futures, NYC Kids RISE aims to make attending and graduating from college more achievable for all NYC public school students—regardless of where they come from or how much their families have in the bank. Learn more about us at nykidsrise.org.

13. Where can I find more information about the Save for College Program?



More information about the Save for College Program is available online at nykidsrise.org or by calling NYC Kids RISE at 833-KID-RISE (833-543-7473).

MORE QUESTIONS?

**IF YOU STILL HAVE QUESTIONS OR WANT ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT,
USE THE CONTACT INFORMATION BELOW.**

NYC KIDS RISE EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE KINDS OF QUESTIONS:

- When is the next Save for College Program workshop happening at my school?
- How can I contact NYC Kids RISE?
- Where can I get more information about college savings options?
- How do I know if my child is enrolled in the Save for College Program?
- If my child enrolled in school after the first opt-out wave, when is the next chance for my child to participate in the program?

YOU CAN...

- ➔ **Call** the Parent Coordinator or other designated College Savings Liaison at your child's school
- ➔ **Call** NYC Kids RISE at **833-KID-RISE (833-543-7473)**
 - Available Monday - Friday (10:00 am to 5:00 pm)
- ➔ **Visit** www.nyckidsrise.org
 - Materials are available in Arabic, Bangla, Chinese, English, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu

NYC SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNTS

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE KINDS OF QUESTIONS:

- Where can I see how much money is in my NYC Scholarship Account?
- What can the money in the account be used for, and is there a deadline for using it?
- How can my family earn additional scholarship funds?
- How will my child's and my personal information be used?
- What happens if we move or my child changes schools?
- Can I cancel my child's participation in the program?
- Can I re-enroll my child even if we have already opted-out?
- How will Save for College Program affect qualification for public benefits, and where can I get more information?
- Can I connect my existing 529 account to my child's NYC Scholarship Account?
- How can I change my account contact information?

YOU CAN...

- ➔ **Call** NYC Kids RISE at **833-KID-RISE (833-543-7473)**
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 - Support is available in multiple languages
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MORE QUESTIONS?

NY 529 DIRECT PLAN ACCOUNTS AND INVESTMENT OPTIONS

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE KINDS OF QUESTIONS:

- How can I complete Building Block #2 by opening a 529 account?
- How can I learn more about the NY 529 *Direct Plan* investment options?
- How can I make deposits into this account?
- How can I access the funds in this account?
- What happens to the funds if my child chooses not to go to college?
- What if I want to use the funds in this account for something else?
- How is a 529 savings account different from a savings account at a bank?

YOU CAN...

- ➔ **Call** the NY 529 *Direct Plan* at **(866) 734-4533** to speak with an education savings specialist
 - Available Monday - Friday (8:00 am - 9:00 pm)
- ➔ **Visit** www.nysaves.org

AMALGAMATED SAVE FOR COLLEGE BANK ACCOUNTS

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE KINDS OF QUESTIONS:

- How can I complete Building Block #2 by opening a bank account?
- Where can I go to open this account and make deposits?
- How can I access the funds in this account?
- What happens to the funds if my child chooses not to go to college?
- What if I want to use the money in this account for something else?

YOU CAN...

- ➔ **Visit** a local Amalgamated Bank branch. The closest branch to you may be:
 - 36-16/18 21st Street (between 36th Avenue and 37th Avenue), Long Island City, NY 11106
 - Available Monday - Thursday (9:00 am - 5:00 pm), Friday (9:00 am - 6:00 pm)
- ➔ **Call** **800-662-0860**
 - Available Monday - Friday (8:00 am - 8:00 pm), Saturday (9:00 am - 2:00 pm)
 - Spanish-language support may be available

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SETTING GOALS AND PLANS FOR SAVING

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE KINDS OF QUESTIONS:

- How does saving for college fit into my overall savings plan?
- How much should I start saving for college?
- What is a realistic weekly or monthly savings goal for me and my family?
- Where can I get help making a savings plan, budgeting, and managing debt?



YOU CAN...

➔ **Visit** a local NYC Financial Empowerment Center for free, confidential, one-on-one financial counseling. There are more than 20 Financial Empowerment Centers across the city. The three locations closest to School District 30 are listed below (days and hours of operation are subject to change):

- Urban Upbound

- 38-85 13th Street, Long Island City, NY 11101
Available Monday - Friday
(9:00 am - 6:00 pm), Thursday
(11:00 am - 7:00 pm)
- Languages: English, Spanish

- The Financial Clinic at Make the Road NY

- 92-10 Roosevelt Avenue, Jackson Heights, NY 11372
- Available Monday, Tuesday, and Friday (10:00 am. - 6:00 pm)
- Languages: English, Spanish

- Neighborhood Trust Financial Partners at Neighborhood Housing Services, Northern Queens

- 60-20 Woodside Avenue, 2nd Floor, Woodside, NY 11377
- Available Monday and Wednesday (9:00 am - 6:00 pm)
- Languages: English, Spanish

➔ **Call 311** to schedule an appointment at a Financial Empowerment Center

➔ **Visit nyc.gov/dca** to schedule an appointment at a Financial Empowerment Center

The NYC Kids RISE Save for College Program is a scholarship and savings program administered by NYC Kids RISE, Inc., a nonprofit, in partnership with the NYC Department of Education and the City of New York. NYC Kids RISE is neither affiliated with, nor an authorized distributor of, New York's 529 College Savings Program and does not solicit investments or provide investment advice. The City of New York and the NYC Department of Education offer no endorsement or recommendation about, and do not control, own or are affiliated with the program manager for New York's 529 College Savings Program and any particular college savings or other investment vehicle, including ones which families may learn about through the Save for College Program.



Invest in your child—save for college

FIND OUT HOW

nyckidsrise.org

833-KID-RISE (833-543-7473)

The **NYC Kids RISE Save for College Program** is a scholarship and savings program designed to make college more accessible and achievable for all NYC public school students—regardless of their family's income or immigration status. NYC Kids RISE, a nonprofit organization, manages the Save for College Program in partnership with the NYC Department of Education and the City of New York.

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