

### Table of Contents

[Highlights](#) | [Federal Updates](#) | [Policy Trends & Analysis](#) | [New Research](#) | [Upcoming Events](#) | [News and Resources](#) | [News from the States](#) |

### Highlights

#### "Lack of Pay Parity Undermines Quality"

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children & Families (ACF), Office of Early Childhood Development, released the report "[High Quality Early Learning Settings Depend on a High Quality Workforce: Lack of Pay Parity Undermines Quality](#)," at the [United States of Women](#) connecting the research on early brain development and high-quality early learning settings with the compensation and other issues facing the early childhood workforce. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development Linda Smith noted in the release, "Wage parity across settings is critical to attracting and retaining a high-quality workforce, essential for a high-quality program."

[Back to Table of Contents](#) ^

### Federal Updates

#### Budget

The Senate Appropriations Committee finalized a bi-partisan markup for FY2017 that included measures to increase or sustain funding for early childhood programs. In particular, Head Start received a \$35 million increase over FY2016 bringing it to \$9.2 billion, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) received an increase of \$25 million over FY2016 rounding off at \$2.786 billion, and the preschool development grants were funded at \$250 million which is the same as 2016. Read more from [First Five Year's Fund \(FFYF\)](#).

#### Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CC)

The US Department of Health and Human Services posted the second [Funding Opportunity Announcements \(FOA\)](#) for the EHS Expansion and EHS-CC Partnerships.

#### Poverty

- The New York Time's [David M. Herszenhorn](#) interviews experts on social welfare policy in his article about Paul Ryan's recent anti-poverty proposal, in which some experts point out inconsistencies between claims in the proposal and the budgets put forward by Republicans, in addition to research on the success of poverty reduction efforts historically.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics put out a [statement](#) saying that Speaker Paul Ryan's new anti-poverty plan "represents an unfortunate, missed opportunity" as it cuts funding for well-documented programs and block grants many others.

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## Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- [Education Week](#) interviewed four of the key architects of the ESSA legislation including Rep. John Kline, Sen. Patty Murray, Rep. Robert "Bobby" Scott and Sen. Lamar Alexander.
- Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), ranking member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, and Congressman Bobby Scott (D-VA), ranking member of the House Education and Workforce Committee, wrote a [letter](#) to HHS Secretary Sylvia Matthews Burwell and Secretary of Education Dr. John King about the new Preschool Development Program created in ESSA.

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## Child Nutrition

Rep. Rosa DeLaura stated that she and her fellow Democrats would oppose [H.R. 5003](#), Rep. Rokita's recently introduced Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act of 2016.

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## Immigration

The Supreme Court split 4-4 on the case of U.S. v Texas that will leave in place a lower-court judge's decision that President Obama's 2014 executive actions-Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) and the expansion of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programs-cannot proceed for now. More information with the [National Immigration Law Center \(NILC\)](#) and [SCOTUSBlog](#).

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## Pay for Success

The Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education published a notice for "[Preschool Development Grants-Preschool Pay for Success Feasibility Pilot](#)" with a deadline for interested persons to submit comments on or before July 25, 2016.

[Back to Table of Contents](#) ^

## Policy Trends & Analysis

### Two Generation Approach

The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) released an action agenda, "[Set up for Success: Supporting Parents in Low-Wage Jobs and Their Children](#)" building on its January 2016 report "[Set Up to Fail: When Low-Wage Work Jeopardizes Parents' and Children's Success](#) ." The agenda pulls together discussions from stakeholders into five key areas: parents' income, fair workplace practices, access to high-quality early childhood care and education, parent access to paid sick days and medical leave, and parent access to education and training.

## Child Well-Being

The Annie E. Casey Foundation published "[The 2016 KIDS COUNT Data Book](#)," reporting on trends in child well-being across the states in the post-recession years.

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## Child Nutrition

The Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) released its annual "[Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation](#)" report about participation in Summer Nutrition programs, noting that it plateaued in summer 2015 after years of significant growth.

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## Dual Language Learners (DLL)

*New America's* senior researcher [Amaya Garcia](#) highlights the inclusion of DLL survey questions in NIEER's State of Preschool Report for the first time. Questions for states included (1) enrollment of DLLs in their pre-K program, (2) home languages of DLLs, (3) policies to support DLLs, (4) resources for DLL supports and, (5) early learning and development standards for DLLs.

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## Child Care

The Center for American Progress published "[Calculating the Hidden Cost of Interrupting a Career for Child Care](#)," and an interactive tool to help families calculate the financial costs of interrupting a career to care for a child.

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[Back to Table of Contents](#) ^

## New Research

### Workforce

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) published "[Some Assembly Required: Piecing together the preparation preschool teachers need](#)," that looked at 100 programs across 29 states and found many do not devote a course to teaching language development (41% do not) or teaching basic math concepts (60% do not). Additionally teachers were not always evaluated on ability to manage a classroom.

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[Back to Table of Contents](#) ^

## Upcoming Events

### July 7, 2016

First Focus is hosting its annual Children's Budget Summit "[Place, Race, and Economy: Closing the Gap for Kids](#)" in Washington, D.C. with New York Times columnist and CNN correspondent Charles Blow.

### July 11-13, 2016

ACF is hosting the National Research Conference on Early Childhood (formally the Head Start National Research Conference) in Washington, D.C. [Agenda](#) now available.

### July 12-14, 2016

The BUILD Initiative and the QRIS National Learning Network are hosting the [2016 QRIS National Meeting](#) in New Orleans, Louisiana.

### November 15-16, 2016

The Ounce of Prevention Fund is hosting the [Sixth National Summit on Quality in Home Visiting Programs](#) in Washington D.C.

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[Back to Table of Contents](#) ^

## News and Resources

### Workforce

- [Christina Samuels](#) at *Education Week* writes about the literacy skill gap between children in early childhood programs and the teachers in the programs.
  - [Bloomberg BNA](#) created a fictitious analysis of an overtime dispute at a child care center to illustrate the nuances in determining when and how workers might be paid overtime.
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### Suspensions and Expulsions

[The Washington Post](#), [NPR](#), and the [Los Angeles Times](#) covered the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights release of the Civil Rights Data Collection that highlighted the stark fact that racial disparities exist in early childhood suspension and expulsion data finding "black preschool children are 3.6 times as likely to receive one or more out-of-school suspensions as white preschool children."

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### Early Childhood Investment

- *FiveThirtyEight* reporters Farai Chideya and Andrew Flowers interviewed Heather Boushey, executive director and chief economist of the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, about the cost of child care for working parents as part of its [Kitchen Table podcast series](#).
  - [InsidePhilanthropy](#) highlights the increase of local foundation support in investing in early childhood education and services.
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### State Policy

The National Conference on State Legislatures (NCSL) published a [blog post](#) about its newest class of Early Learning Fellows.

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[Back to Table of Contents](#) ^

## News From The States

[CA](#) | [FL](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [KS](#) | [LA](#) | [ME](#) | [MI](#) | [MS](#) | [NH](#) | [NY](#) | [OR](#) | [WA](#) | [DC](#) |

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### California

- Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, who is also forming a new Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Care and Education, called the budget deal struck between Gov. Brown and legislative leadership, "a victory of California families." The new early learning investments start with an additional \$100 million in 2016-17, and will grow to approximately \$500 million annually in 2019-20. The final deal rejected

Governor Brown's original proposal to consolidate all of the early childhood programs into one funding stream and preserved the transitional kindergarten program. Instead it includes a multiyear investment in early learning to support increases in reimbursement rates for providers, to add program slots, to align federal quality dollars with QRIS efforts and to fund an innovative early childhood apprentice program. Read more at [KPCC](#), the [Los Angeles Times](#), and [KPCC](#).

- Sixteen organizations developed [recommendations](#) for California's ESSA state plan that promote the use of federal funds to improve outcomes for children through early learning.

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## Florida

- The Children's Movement of Florida-Space Coast sponsored a forum about issues impacting children birth to five, including the low reimbursement rate for the Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program reports [Florida Today](#).
- The City of Tallahassee hosted the second Community Summit on Children during its Family First Week as a part of the mayor's Family First initiative, which seeks to address early childhood education and development, reports [The Tallahassee Democrat](#).

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## Illinois

- Gov. Rauner signed a stopgap budget passed by the legislature right before the start of the new fiscal year that includes full FY2017 funding for education and decreased funding for human services, other state programs, and operations for all of FY2016 and the first half of FY2017 (through December 2016). Funding for Department of Human Services grant-funded programs is at 65% of the amount normally received over the 18th-month period for services in FY2016 and FY2017. Programs funded through court orders and consent decrees, such as early intervention, were not included in the budget but will continue through the same orders and decrees. Additionally there was a significant \$79 million increase to the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG), restoring the ECBG to just over its historically high funding level in FY2009. Read more in the [Chicago Tribune](#) and the [Responsible Budget Coalition](#).

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## Indiana

- Democratic Governor nominee John Gregg and state school superintendent Glenda Ritz unveiled a plan to expand preschool to a universal public/private Community Pre-K program by finding savings in the state's current K-12 voucher program and leveraging federal dollars. Read more in [Inside Business](#), [WIBC](#), [Indianapolis Business Journal](#).
- This plan was unveiled days after current Gov. Mike Pence wrote a [letter](#) to the Secretary of HHS announcing his interest in the new Preschool Development Grant program that was created under the Every Student Succeeds Act. and saying that he will expand the program regardless of whether he receives federal funding, the [Indy Star](#) reports.
- [The South Bend Tribune](#) wrote an opinion piece calling it "way past time to expand preschool in Indiana".
- The [Indiana Chamber](#) also discussed its support for the growing momentum around preschool and early childhood expansion in a blog post.

## Kansas

- [The Topeka Capital-Journal](#) reports that Gov. Brownback's decision to fund Parents as Teachers through federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars rather than state funds has implications for the population eligible for the home visiting services as TANF has more restrictive criteria.
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## Louisiana

- Louisiana's Regular Legislative Session ended earlier in June with a number of items still on the table, including the state budget, as members head into the Second Special Legislative Session. The governor did sign into law a number of new pieces of legislation pertaining to health and safety training (Act 81, formally House Bill 175) and unlicensed child care criminal penalties (Act 411, formally House Bill 197).
  - The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children (LIPC) and the Committee of 100 for Economic Development launched Louisiana's first Early Childhood Business Roundtable. Read more in [Biz New Orleans](#).
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## Maine

- The [Bangor Daily News](#) has been investigating the Maine Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) use of TANF funds, claiming that the state has been using them inappropriately to cover other services outside the scope of the block grant.
  - State Rep Teresa Pierce wrote an op-ed in The [Portland Press Herald](#) about the benefits of prioritizing early childhood education and creating a comprehensive system.
  - The [Kennebec Journal](#) editorial board wrote a piece calling for equal pay for preschool and other early childhood program teachers compared to their kindergarten counterparts.
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## Michigan

- [Wdet 101.9fm](#) interviewed Rip Rapson, president and CEO of The Kresge Foundation, and Joseph Scantlebury, vice president for program strategy with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation about their foundations' push for better preschool in Michigan.
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## Missouri

- Gov. Jay Nixon signed legislation that will repeal the state's ban on a quality rating system (QRS) that has been in place since 2012 reports [The St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#).
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## New Hampshire

- The [New Hampshire Public Radio](#) reports on the new legislation Gov. Hassan signed that will change and streamline the background check process for child care

staff and providers, making it more efficient for providers who change programs and brings the state into compliance with the new CCDF rules.

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## New York

- [New York Media Nonprofit](#) reports about the confusion the new US Department of Labor overtime regulations are causing for early childhood providers as teachers may sometimes fall under a "professional exemption" and other nonprofits may be exempted for other reasons as well.
  - The Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy released a new report, "[Home Is Where the Start Is: Expanding Home Visiting to Strengthen All of New York's Families](#)," which makes the case that evidence-based home visiting - currently funded to serve less than 5% of New York's 278,000 young children living in poverty - should be dramatically expanded to reach all of the New York families who could benefit.
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## Oregon

- Leadership from the Oregon Community Foundation penned an op-ed in [The Register Guard](#) about the connection between early childhood investments and the benefits it gives both to children and families.
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## Washington

- Susan Kelleher with [The Seattle Times](#) writes about the challenges facing the choice of when to return to work after having a child-balancing the high costs of child care and the difficulties of returning to the workforce after an extended absence.
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## Washington, D.C.

- The District of Columbia is appealing the U.S. District Court's May ruling in *D.L. v. District of Columbia* that finds the city not in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) by not finding enough preschool age children and providing them with special education and related services. Read more in the [Washington Post](#).
  - D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser hosted the "Mayor's Convening on Early Childhood" with early childhood leaders, parents, and administration members reports [AFRO](#).
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[Back to Table of Contents](#) ^

The [Ounce national policy team](#) partners with and supports early childhood leaders in states as they advance a comprehensive agenda for at-risk children and families. We do this by providing individualized strategy and policy consultation and resources; facilitating peer-to-

peer learning and networking across states; and supporting Educare Schools and the Educare Learning Network in the development of their policy and advocacy work.

The National Policy Digest is a bi-monthly newsletter that shares up-to-date and noteworthy developments in state and federal early childhood news, policy and funding changes, research, policy trends and analyses, upcoming events, etc. culled from diverse sources in the field. To subscribe, please visit our [website](#).



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