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**Highlights**

**HHS Announces Final Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Regulations!**

The Office of Child Care (OCC), Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services released the final rule that makes the necessary regulatory changes to the CCDBG in light of the 2014 reauthorization changes. As the federal notice highlights, "these changes strengthen requirements to protect the health and safety of children in child care; help parents make informed consumer choices and access information to support child development; provide equal access to stable, high-quality child care for low-income children; and enhance the quality of child care and the early childhood workforce." Read the final rule on the [Federal Register website](#). Other reauthorization resources from the OCC are located [here](#) including its Child Care Across America [map](#). Read more from [Center for Law and Social Policy](#) and [National Women's Law Center](#).

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**Federal Updates**

**Appropriations**

President Obama signed into law a [Continuing Resolution \(CR\)](#) that extends federal spending authority through December 9 and into the lame duck period. The CR includes \$1.1 billion in funding for responding to the Zika virus outbreak.

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**States Advisory Councils (SACs)**

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education released a [joint policy statement](#) on State Advisory Councils on Early Childhood Education and Care focusing on how to sustain the critical work of the councils. Read the joint statement, the 2015 final report summarizing activities, and more about [SACs](#).

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**Family Engagement**

The U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. announced Frances Frost would be the department's first Family Ambassador with the goal of increasing parent and family engagement in education policy through a grant from the Kellogg Foundation. Read the [press release](#) to learn more.

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### **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

The U.S. Department of Education released "[Non-Regulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act \(ESEA\), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#)" explaining how states and districts can spend Title III funds on English-language learners and immigrant students. Find this and other ESSA guidance and updates on the department's [website](#).

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### **Poverty**

Last month the United States Census Bureau released its annual data on income, poverty and health insurance for the [country, states and local areas](#) in 2015. Data from the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement indicated positive improvements in the three key indicators of well-being as there were decreases in the rate of the uninsured and people living in poverty, as well as, increases in income. Data from the American Community Survey indicated that many states saw a decrease in poverty and increase in income between 2014 and 2015.

Read commentary from:

- [White House Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors Jason Furman](#)
  - [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities' Robert Greenstein](#)
  - [Center for Law and Social Policy](#)
  - [National Women's Law Center](#)
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### **High-Quality Preschool**

The U.S. Department of Education put out a [statement](#) announcing that Obama Administration investments in early learning such as the Preschool Developments and Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge led to increased access and enrollment in high-quality preschool.

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### **Monitoring and Oversight**

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture issued a [joint policy statement](#) on Coordinated Efficiencies in Monitoring and Oversight of Early Care and Education programs. As the Office of Early Childhood Development notes, "the reauthorization of CCDBG, the new Head Start Performance Standards and final CCDF regulations offer an opportunity to review current monitoring systems to better align standards and promote greater efficiencies in a more effective, uniform, and cost-effective approach to monitoring" and the joint statement offers guidance upon implementation of the new CCDBG regulations.

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## **Policy Trends & Analysis**

### **Full-Day Kindergarten**

The Education Commission of the States released "[Full-Day Kindergarten: A look across the states](#)" a 50-state review that looks at how full-day and half-day kindergarten is funded across the country, in addition to the varying degree of requirements.

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## Federal Investments

First Focus' 10th annual analysis of federal spending and tax investments-"[Kids' Share 2016: Report on Federal Expenditures on Children Through 2015 and Future Projections](#)"-notes that only 2% of the federal budget goes to kids.

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## New Research

### Implicit Bias

Researchers at the Yale Child Study Center at the Yale School of Medicine conducted a study that suggests preschool teachers and staff show signs of implicit bias while administering discipline. Eye-tracking technology allowed researchers to note that preschool teachers "show a tendency to more closely observe blacks and especially black boys when challenging behaviors are expected." Read more about the [study](#).

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### Lead Levels

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a study in the American Journal of Public Health that finds an association between living in federally assisted housing and lower blood lead levels of low-income children. [Read the press release](#).

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### Infant-Toddler Care

The Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation within the Administration for Children and Families reviewed research on relationship-based care practices in its publication "[Including Relationship-Based Care Practices in Infant-Toddler Care: Implications for Practice and Policy](#)."

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## News and Resources

### Child Homelessness

The Administration for Children and Families posted on its [blog](#) about the EHS-CC Partnership grantee Maryland Family Network Visit (MFN) and its delegate agency PACT: Helping Children with Special Needs that are delivering services to children experiencing homelessness.

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### Polling

- The First Five Years Fund (FFYF) published a number of state polls that highlight how voters are united in support of quality early learning. For example, 84% of respondents in the Florida poll say making sure our children get a strong start in life through quality early childhood education is extremely or very important to them personally.
    - States with polls include: [Florida](#), [Ohio](#), [Colorado](#) and [North Carolina](#). These polls follow the summer release of FFYF's [annual poll](#).
  - Maria Teresa Kumar, the CEO and president of Voto Latino, penned an op-ed in [The Hill](#) about how Latino voters prioritize early childhood education in light of FFYF's polling.
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## Child Care

- The [National Women's Law Center](#) analyzed Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump's child care proposal, finding that it would benefit higher income families and not target the low-income families that struggle the most with affording the cost of child care.
- [The Economist](#) writes about the politics of child care and the two presidential nominee proposals.
- Anne Day Leong, part-time faculty member at Salem State University and member of the Scholars Strategy Network, writes in [The Hill](#) about the need to invest in quality early learning and not just make child care cheaper.

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## Mental Health

As part of its [NPR Ed series](#), Kavitha Cardoza interviewed a child psychologist from the Healthy Steps program at the Montefiore Comprehensive Health Care Center in the South Bronx about the need to screen children earlier for mental health reasons-catch the "pink flags" before they manifest into red ones.

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## Pay for Success (PFS)

- The Institute for Child Success released four [PFS feasibility studies](#) representing two states and two local-level governments-Connecticut; Washington; Spartanburg, S.C.; and Sonoma County, California-and the opportunities for using PFS to support investments in early childhood programs.
- The National Conference of State Legislatures published the LegisBrief "[Funding Social Programs with Social Impact Bonds.](#)"

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## Early Childhood Education

[The Atlantic](#) unpacks the linguistic shift of referring to early learning programs as "school."

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### News From The States

[CA](#) | [CO](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [KS](#) | [LA](#) | [ME](#) | [MI](#) | [NE](#) | [NM](#) | [NY](#) | [OR](#) | [WA](#) | [WI](#) |

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## California

- [The Santa Cruz Sentinel](#) highlights findings of improved kindergarten readiness from a recent University of California Berkeley study in the American Educational Research Association journal.

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## Colorado

- [Chalkbeat](#) reports on a semi-Pay for Success pilot to fund full-day prekindergarten at six classrooms in the Westminster Public Schools system.
- The Mental Health Center of Denver built a new community facility-the Dahlia Campus for Health and Well-Being-in northeast Denver that includes a preschool.

The Sewall Child Development Center includes children from the neighborhood, including those with challenging behaviors [reports Chalkbeat](#).

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## Illinois

- The Chicago Teachers Union gave its ten day notice for striking with October 11 as the potential date for shutting down the Chicago Public Schools if ongoing negotiations do not work out reports [The Chicago Tribune](#).
  - Social service agencies in Illinois are starting to receive payment owed from the year-long budget impasse reports [Illinois Public Radio](#).
  - [The State Journal-Register](#) notes the efforts happening in Illinois to rewrite suspension and expulsion rules to reduce racial disparities.
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## Indiana

- Pre-k advocates with [AllIN4PreK](#) spoke to legislators that are part of the "Interim Study Committee on Fiscal Policy" about details of the policy agenda for expanding access to high-quality pre-k during the next legislative session. Read more at [WISHTV.com](#).
  - The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration created a website - [ChildCareFinder.IN.gov](#) - to help parents identify and access high-quality child care reports [The INDY Channel](#).
  - [The Indy Star](#) highlights Republican gubernatorial candidate, Lt. Gov. Eric Holcomb's education plan.
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## Kansas

- [The Garden City Telegram](#) outlines the impact on children from Gov. Sam Brownback's proposed 5% budget cut.
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## Louisiana

- [The Shreveport Times](#) describes the struggles low- and middle-income Louisiana families have in affording and finding high-quality child care.
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## Maine

- [The Bangor Daily News Editorial Board](#) argues in support of investing in Maine's youngest children in response to the survey by the National Center for Children in Poverty highlighting need for supports for children with challenging behaviors conducted at the bequest of the Maine legislature. Read more about the survey and project in the [Bangor Daily News](#) and on the [Maine Children's Alliance blog](#).
  - An [op-ed](#) in the *Portland Press Herald* announced the creation of the Maine Children's Caucus led by state Sen. Rebecca Millett and state Rep. Matt Pouliot, R-Augusta
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## Michigan

- [MLive](#) reports on the voluntary guidance on early childhood suspension and expulsion that the Michigan Department of Education is developing and currently open for public comment before a vote in late November.
  - Michigan is taking part in a Pay for Success pilot through the Harvard University Government Performance Lab that will focus on improving birth and health outcomes for high-risk women in West Michigan reports a [press release](#) from Gov. Rick Snyder.
  - On behalf of the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Great Start, the public policy research firm Public Sector Consultants released a report about the state's gaps in child care access. Read the [release](#) and more from [Michigan Public Radio](#).
  - Michigan's Children CEO Matt Gillard published an op-ed in [The Detroit Free Press](#) about the fact Michigan could lose out on \$20 million in federal CCDBG money, referencing the recent Public Sector Consultants report about child care access.
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## Nebraska

- The Holland Children's Movement released "[Investing in Possibilities: The 2016 Nebraska Children's Budget](#)" stating that the state only spends 6% of its general fund on children's health and early learning reports *The Omaha World-Herald*.
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## New Mexico

- [The Santa Fe New Mexican](#) highlights efforts to include parents in discussions about early childhood education.
  - [The Albuquerque Journal](#) featured Sister Juanita Marie Gonzales in a guest column about the positive impacts of home visiting.
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## New York

- The Century Foundation put out a new report about how racially homogenous the new expanded prekindergarten classrooms were in the first year of the expansion. Read more from [The New York Times](#).
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## Oregon

- [The Statesman Journal](#) interviewed a 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher in a Salem-Keizer school about the impact of full-day kindergarten had on the newest class of 1<sup>st</sup> graders in which the teacher noted strong improvements.
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## Washington

- Tiny Trees preschool, a new outdoor early education offering in Seattle, is profiled in [The Seattle Times](#).

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## Wisconsin

- The Wisconsin Early Childhood Association released "[Wisconsin's Child Care Workforce: Wages, Benefits, Education and Turnover of the Professionals Working with Wisconsin's Youngest Children](#)" completed by Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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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](#).