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Highlights

Early Childhood Education

The U.S. Department of Education released [non-regulatory guidance](#) on how districts can use federal funds in the Every Student Succeeds Act to support early learning. [Education Week](#) offers an overview of the guidance, which includes recommendations such as using funds for training early childhood teachers on how to support English Language Learners, updating and aligning teacher certification and training in the early grades and using funds to train teachers in the use of technology in classrooms. Read more from [First Five Years Fund](#) and [New America](#).

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Federal Updates

Technology

The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services released a [joint policy brief](#) providing promising practices on the appropriate use of technology in early learning environments.

Pay For Success

The U.S. Department of Education announced [two awards](#) to support pay for success (PFS) work. One of the awards supports a feasibility study looking at the potential of implementing the PFS model in school districts taking innovative approaches to dual language learners in early childhood programs.

Head Start

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently announced the release of new Head Start Performance Program Standards in [Spanish](#). Last month, HHS released [new standards](#), offering an extensive overhaul to align with current best practices.

Paid Leave

At the end of September, the U.S. Department of Labor announced a [rule change](#) that will provide federal contract employees on certain contracts access to paid sick leave. Once implemented, this rule change is expected provide paid leave to over one million federal contract workers - 600,000 of whom had no paid sick leave before.

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Child Care

- The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) released its annual review of state child care policies, "[Red Light Green Light: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2016.](#)"
 - A [recent poll](#) from *NPR*, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health finds that parents rate the quality of their child care they use more highly than the quality rating systems may rate a specific child care center. Eighty-eight percent of parents rated their child care as "very good" or "excellent" whereas only 10 % of child care settings are rated very highly.
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Data Systems

Education Commission of the State released "[50-State Comparison: Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems](#)" noting that 17 states plus Washington D.C. have a full P20W system-that is, a data system that connects early learning, K-12, postsecondary and workforce core agencies.

Child Welfare

A [new paper](#) from Harvard's Center on the Developing Child looks at applying the science behind child development to the child welfare system in order to strengthen the system and provide better outcomes for children and families.

Food Insecurity

Children's HealthWatch released a [new report](#) that analyzes how SNAP, WIC and the National School Lunch Program can be better utilized to further reduce food insecurity.

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New Research

Science, Technology, Education, and Math

MDRC released a new report, [Making Pre-K Count](#), which looks at the effects of increased math instruction in the New York City pre-kindergarten classrooms. The report finds that classrooms encouraged to focus more on math instruction did so; however, there were no observed effects on direct assessment of children's math competencies.

Early Childhood Development

A new study published by the [National Bureau of Economic Research](#) looks at long-term and intergenerational effects of a targeted high-quality preschool combined with health intervention in infancy in Denmark. The study finds lasting benefits at age 3 through 65 and positive effects that persist in educational attainment for the next generation.

Workforce Development

A [new study](#) in Early Childhood Research Quarterly looks at the effects of two professional development programs aimed at improving the interactions between children and teachers in early childhood programs. The researchers find that both programs were associated with marginally higher scores on measures of classroom and emotional support.

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Upcoming Events

November 3, 2016

Urban Institute is hosting an event "[Improving Outcomes for Children: Advice for the New Administration](#)" in Washington, D.C.

December 7-9, 2016

ZERO TO THREE is hosting its [annual conference](#), which this year is themed around "Building Powerful Connections" that are needed to support families and young children. The conference will take place in New Orleans.

March 5-7, 2016

The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) is hosting its [National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference](#) in Washington, D.C.

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News and Resources

Early Childhood Development

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released a [new statement](#) on children's media usage, lifting their recommended ban on no screens for children under age 2. AAP revised their policy, recommending that parents instead allow screen and technology engagement that is interactive and intentional.

Child Care

- [NPR](#) reports on how politics defeated a potential universal child care bill that had bipartisan support.
 - [U.S. News and World Report](#) writes on a recent study that dispels the link between non-parental child care and excess weight gain.
 - [Slate](#) discusses in detail the comprehensiveness and success of Patagonia's on-site approach to child care for its workers.
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Child Tax Credit

As part of Secretary Hilary Clinton's Presidential platform, she is calling for doubling the [Child Tax Credit](#) for low- and middle- income families with children up to the age of 4. The program is meant to allow families to take advantage of the tax credit even if they don't pay taxes.

Two-Generation Strategies

The National Governors Association and Center for Law and Social Policy announced the selection of five states (Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, New Jersey and Oregon) to participate in developing [two-generation programs](#). The initiative is meant to promote the success of both parents and children while making systems change improvements.

Social and Emotional Development

A new poll from [Sesame Workshop](#) reveals that parents put greater emphasis on teaching children politeness whereas teachers prioritize teaching empathy. Sesame Workshop encourages parents to place more emphasis on teaching empathy as well. Read more from [The Washington Post](#).

Kindergarten Readiness

The Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) offers [new resources](#) on using the Teaching Strategies assessment tools to measure kindergarten readiness.

Workforce Development

A piece in [U.S. News and World Report](#) discusses how degrees and credentialing won't raise salaries of early childhood professionals, but rather increases in per pupil spending are more likely to raise salaries.

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News From The States

[CA](#) | [CO](#) | [FL](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [ME](#) | [MI](#) | [NE](#) | [NM](#) | [OK](#) | [OR](#) | [WI](#) |

California

- Three California radio station, [89.3 KPCC](#), reports on a new report from Penn State that shows preschools around the U.S., and in California in particular, are "deeply segregated."
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Colorado

- A program in Colorado aims to provide Family, Friend, and Neighbor child care providers with additional [skills and training](#).
 - [The Durango Herald](#) reports on new rankings of the early education and child care of Southwest Colorado.
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Florida

- [The Pensacola News Journal](#) reports on the HIPPY home visiting program and the role it has playing in helping families in the state.
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Illinois

- The Illinois Department of Health is [partnering](#) with ZERO TO THREE to help address infant and early childhood mental health policy challenges.

Indiana

- Gerry Dick with [Inside Indiana Business](#) profiles the advocacy efforts around pre-k expansion in advance of the pending legislative session in his segment, (i) on Education.

Maine

- Maine's Children Alliance outlines its approach to creating a vision for the state's [early childhood systems](#).

Michigan

- The Michigan [State Board of Education](#) approved \$2.3 million to support early childhood education in Flint.
- The Southeast Michigan Early Childhood Funders Collaborative pledged \$6.2 million to the [Head Start Innovation Fund](#) . The funding will specifically go toward Detroit.
- A group of business and education leaders in Michigan recently met to discuss how business can [support increased investments](#) in early childhood in the state.

Nebraska

- [The Omaha World Herald](#) reports on state early learning leadership's goal of improving early childhood PR.

New Mexico

- As part of legislation signed into law by Governor Susanna Martinez to address New Mexico's budget shortfall, the Governor also [vetoed](#) a specific provision within the legislation that would have directed funding to home visiting services. Gov. Martinez cited that the legislation would have too narrowly limited the use of funds.

Oklahoma

- Oklahoma [shared lessons](#) from its pre-kindergarten program during a summit in New York City this past month.
- [The Upjohn Institute](#) released a benefit-cost analysis of the Tulsa prekindergarten program, finding that the benefits of the program exceeded the costs by 2 to 1.

Oregon

- In the Children's Institute first installment of its "[Early Link Podcast.](#)" CI president and CEO Swati Adarkar discusses Oregon's preschool landscape .

Wisconsin

- Amid increasing concerns about rising rents in downtown Madison, WI, a preschool [purchased a building](#) to house its early childhood care and education programs.
- The University of Wisconsin's Institute of Research on Poverty discusses a [new proposal](#) to address childhood poverty by offering families a child allowance. The proposal will be presented at a conference in New York City later in October.

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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](#).



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