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Highlights

2016 Election Results and Early Childhood Care and Education

Last week millions of Americans cast their ballot in local, state and federal elections. As the country continues to process and plan for administration transitions across the government continuum, organizations dedicated to improving the lives of children and families have underscored support for investments in early childhood programs and services, reducing child poverty, and ensuring that low-income children and children with the greatest needs are prioritized for service. Read statements from [First Five Years Fund](#), [Center for Law and Social Policy](#), [National Women's Law Center](#), [ZERO TO THREE](#), [Georgetown Center for Children and Families](#), [National Association for the Education of Young Children](#), the [National Center for Children and Poverty](#) and the [Coalition on Human Needs](#).

President Elect Donald Trump has provided some [guidance](#) on how he plans to address child care costs, but it is less clear how he might approach early childhood education and education issues more broadly. [Education Week](#) provides a summary of the changes the new president and his team might make.

Looking to the states in particular, **California** [voted to reinstate](#) bilingual and multilingual education. Tax increases to [fund preschool programs](#) passed in two **Ohio** cities, Cincinnati and Dayton, but failed to pass in **Missouri**. **Indiana** Governor Elect Eric Holcomb has come out [in favor of expanding prekindergarten programs](#) around the state.

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Federal Updates

Health Care

November marks the beginning of open enrollment for purchasing or making changes to current health insurance plans through the federal Marketplace. This period for enrollment ends January 31, 2017. Early childhood programs, like Head Start, are an important platform for helping connect families to health insurance and the Marketplace. Learn more about [open enrollment and eligibility](#).

Homelessness

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Education released a ["Joint Policy Statement on Meeting the Needs of Families with Young Children Experiencing and at Risk of Homelessness."](#) The statement offers recommendations for how early childhood and housing authorities at the local, and in some cases state, level can collaborate to offer young children and families who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness safe, stable and nurturing environments. Read more about the [statement](#) from *Education Week*.

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](#).

Head Start

A [series of videos](#), released by the Office of Head Start, offers examples of the power of storytelling for families. The videos focus on the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program and provide tips on how to help families tell their stories.

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Affordable Care Act

Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute, Center for Children and Families released a [50 state report](#) finding that health insurance rates for children reached a historic high of 95%. The number of uninsured children in the U.S. has been cut in half since 2008, a time period that experienced both the enactment of the Affordable Care Act and reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Child Care

Center for American Progress (CAP) released a report on [child care deserts](#), looking across 8 states that comprise 20% of the population of children under five. The report finds that 42% of these children live in areas that CAP categorizes as "child care deserts."

Diversity and Early Learning

New America released analysis of [New York state's approach](#) to dual language learners across the state. According to *New America's* analysis New York can serve as an example for other states on how to approach providing for the needs of dual language learners in the state's education system.

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New Research

Maternal Mental Health

In the recent *Maternal and Child Health Journal* researchers [published a study](#) looking at how mood disorders and the mental health of mothers with children under 3 years old participating

in Early Intervention programs. The study found that 44% of mothers reported a past depressive episode and 43% experience recurrent episodes.

Science, Technology, Education, and Math

A [new study](#) using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Class finds that gender gaps in mathematics and teacher perception continue. Gender gaps in math performance develop early on, and teachers consistently rate girls' mathematical proficiency lower than that of boys'.

Early Childhood Program Implementation

Proceedings from a workshop at the Forum for Investing in Young Children Globally entitled "[Moving from Evidence to Implementation of Early Childhood Programs](#)" were recently released. This report looks at the challenges of implementation at scale for early childhood programs and how to approach ensuring effective and sustainable service delivery.

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Upcoming Events

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.

December 12, 2016

[Applications](#) are now being accepted from states for participation in a virtual community of practice (CoP) focused on enhancing mental health capacity in home visiting. The community of practice will be convened by the ZERO TO THREE Policy Center through funding from the Alliance for Early Success.

March 5-7, 2016

FRAC is hosting its [National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference](#) in Washington, D.C.

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News and Resources

Child Care

- *New America* published [highlights](#) of the quality improvements that the Child Care Development Fund final rule outlines for child care programs.
 - Watch the webcast on *NPR* of the event, "[The Cost and Quality Conundrum of Child Care.](#)" which features a discussion among practitioners, researchers, and policymakers of the gap between parents view of what makes for quality child care and what specialists define as quality care.
 - San Francisco local public radio, [KALW](#), discusses the case of universal, quality child care with David Kirp, a professor at University of California, Berkeley, and Kris Perry, executive director of First Five Years Fund.
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Prekindergarten

- *New America* discusses trends in [state prekindergarten investment](#) in a recent blog post. It notes that of the five states currently not investing any state funding in prekindergarten all but one is located in the western U.S.
- *The Atlantic* published an [article](#) looking at the growth of state funded prekindergarten in states but questioning whether or not research supports policymakers in these significant investments.

Early Childhood Development

PBS announced that it is offering its first [digital tablet for kids](#). The device will allow parents to monitor their child's learning progress via an app.

Home Visiting

Child Trends recently [published a list](#) of five things that are important to know about home visiting. This list offers an overview of what is known about how home visiting and how programs vary.

Poverty

Urban Institute published a list and produced an [infographic](#) looking at the seven things you should know about childhood poverty. The post links to a variety of research and resources to learn more about childhood poverty in the U.S.

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News From The States

[AZ](#) | [CA](#) | [CO](#) | [FL](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [KS](#) | [LA](#) | [MI](#) | [NE](#) | [NM](#) | [NY](#) | [OK](#) | [OR](#) | [DC](#) |

Arizona

- *The Tucson Sentinel* writes on the challenges and opportunities that the new Head Start rules offer programs in Arizona.
- Business, political and education leaders are mounting support to [reinstate state funding](#) for full-day kindergarten in the state.

California

- California Governor Jerry Brown [vetoed a bill](#) that would have required small businesses to retain employees' jobs after they take parental leave.

Colorado

- *Chalkbeat* reports on parents, educators and school districts in Colorado who are voicing concerns about a recent state law that requires kindergarten readiness assessment data be reported in aggregate to the state legislature.

Florida

- Florida experienced a rise in children's health [insurance rates](#), an increase of 36% since before the passage of the Affordable Care Act. However, the state's rate of uninsured children (6.9%) is still higher than the national average (4.8%).
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Illinois

- The Governor's Children's Cabinet made tackling [lead poisoning a priority](#), noting that Illinois has one of the highest rates of lead exposure in children.
 - Head Start and Early Head Start programs in central and southern Illinois received \$2 million in [federal funding](#).
 - The Coalition for Human Needs, the Shriver Center and a number of other Illinois human services organizations partnered in the production and release of the report, [The High Cost of Being Poor in Illinois](#). The report looks at how the state's poverty rate has changed, the effectiveness of anti-poverty programs, and what more can be done to reduce poverty.
 - [The Chicago Tribune](#) reports that Chicago was recently identified as a "child care desert" with five out of six Chicago children under age 5 living in an area with no or few child care options.
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Indiana

- [The Indy Star](#) reports on a new website that provides parents with information on how to find child care providers in the state.
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Kansas

- Kansas' Kids Count report finds that [infant death rates vary](#) by county with some areas continuing to struggle with persistently high rates.
 - [The Kansas City Star](#) reports on how Kansas City's efforts to offer free, universal prekindergarten runs into political and financial roadblocks.
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Louisiana

- A [new report](#) outlines the top ten issues in education () in the state of Louisiana. The number one issue highlighted is expanding access and quality in early childhood.
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Michigan

- The Strong Beginnings program, created to help reduce infant deaths, is also helping support the whole family according to a profile from [M Live](#) .
 - Oakland Family Services in Michigan recently [received \\$50,000](#) to expand its early childhood initiatives.
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Nebraska

- The Buffett Early Childhood Institute [released a report](#) showing that over half of Nebraskans want early childhood educators to have better education and preparation.
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New Mexico

- [The Albuquerque Journal](#) reports on the need for diapers among low-income families with young children.
 - A little under half of New Mexico's youngest children, ages 0 to 4, receive [SNAP benefits](#). This is the highest percentage in any state for that particular age range.
 - [The Santa Fe New Mexican](#) reports that the state has changed its child care assistance certification process from 6 to 12 months, allowing families to stay on child care assistance for longer without having to reapply.
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New York

- In 2017 the New York State Legislature will work to pass a [series of bills](#) to make it easier for homeless families with young children to access prekindergarten programs.
 - Governor Andrew Cuomo announced \$1 million in funding to further [support home visiting programs](#) in the state.
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Oklahoma

- A new coalition ["25 by 25"](#) looks to engage 25 public and private organizations to help move Oklahoma into the top 25 states on a number of issues relating to child outcomes, including on child and medical care.
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Oregon

- An [interview](#) with the head of the Oregon Community Foundation looks at the importance of investing in early childhood initiatives in the state.
 - A [story from Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) looks at the discrepancy between how Oregon families rate their child care facilities and the quality ratings experts gives the facilities.
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Washington, D.C.

- A [post](#) from Georgetown University's Early Childhood Intervention Professional Development Center profiles the importance of play in alleviating toxic stress for homeless children, looking specifically at D.C.'s Homeless Children's Playtime Project.
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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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