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**Highlights**

**Dual Language Learners**

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education released a joint ["Policy Statement on Supporting the Development of Children Who Are Dual Language Learners in Early Childhood Programs"](#) and a corresponding [toolkit](#) with resources to support young children who are learning their home languages and English. Read more at [Education Week](#). The new DLL policy statement was released in conjunction with the White House, Too Small to Fail and the Invest in US campaign event at the United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education in Miami, FL highlighting current challenges and future actions necessary to improve the early learning experiences of dual language learners. First Five Years Fund (FFYF) created a [Storify](#) of the event.

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**Federal Updates**

**Mental Health**

[The Mental Health Reform Act \(S. 2680\)](#) with its provision for infant and early childhood mental health is expected to move to the Senate floor in June with legislation expected to be marked up in the House as well.

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**Child Nutrition**

Numerous advocacy organizations are speaking out against "Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act of 2016" (H.R. 5003), the House of Representative's child nutrition reauthorization bill because changes that would restrict the community eligibility. Read the opposition letter from 750 national, state and local organizations [here](#) and Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) Senior Fellow Jared Bernstein's comments in the [Washington Post](#).

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**ESSA**

At the end of May the US Department of Education published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking addressing Accountability and State Plans under ESSA with comments due August 1st. Read more online at the [Federal Register](#).

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## Policy Trends & Analysis

### Maternal Health

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) released "[Seizing New Policy Opportunities to Help Low-Income Mothers with Depression: Current Landscape, Innovations, and Next Steps](#)," noting that "untreated maternal depression can interfere with a parent's capacity to help a child develop, place children's safety and cognitive and emotional development at risk and stymie families' efforts to escape poverty."

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### Preschool

- The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) released its annual State of Preschool report "[The State of Preschool 2015](#)" which finds that the number of 3- and 4-year-olds in state-funded classrooms rose slightly during the 2014-15 school year.
  - The American Institutes for Research (AIR) published "[Ten Questions Local Policymakers Should Ask About Expanding Access to Preschool](#)."
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### Home Visiting

ZERO TO THREE and the Dalton Daley Group co-led a policy discussion about the next steps for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, "The Next Horizon for Home Visiting," and produced a [white paper](#) reflecting on the conversations and action steps identified.

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### Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- The First Five Years Fund (FFYF) released "[What Early Learning in ESSA Can Look like for States and Districts](#)" that details new opportunities to develop and expand access to quality early childhood education through ESSA.
  - Nearly 50 early childhood advocacy organizations signed a [joint letter](#) in response to the United States Department of Education's Request for Feedback on Guidance for ESSA and early childhood education.
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### Inclusion

The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) published "[Preschool Inclusion: Key Findings from Research and Implications for Policy](#)," that builds on the recent US Departments of Health and Human Services and Education policy statement on inclusion in early childhood programs.

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## New Research

## High Quality ECE

- ["Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education: A Review of the Literature"](#) is a new resource from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), Administration for Children and Families.
- The Learning Policy Institute released ["The Building Blocks of High-Quality Early Childhood Education Programs"](#) which summarizes the research on high quality early childhood programs and professional standards for early education.

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## Infant/Toddler Workforce

OPRE also published ["Describing the Preparation and Ongoing Professional Development of the Infant/Toddler Workforce: An Analysis of the National Survey for Early Care and Education Data"](#) that looks at NSECE data to help understand the strengths and needs of the infant/toddler workforce.

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## Upcoming Events

### June 28, 2016

The Work Support Strategies Initiative is hosting a public forum ["Improving Access to Work Support Benefits: Lessons from States and Next Steps"](#)

### June 29, 2016

The Education Commission of the States is holding its [National Forum on Education Policy](#) in Washington, D.C.

### 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.

### 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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## News and Resources

## Poverty

[Salon](#) interviews author Paul Tough about his new book "Helping Children Learn: What Works and Why" that includes discussion on the disconnect between early childhood and K-12 schooling.

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## Mental Health

ZERO TO THREE hosted a webinar and released a policy brief entitled "[Planting Seeds in Fertile Ground: Steps Every Policymaker Should Take to Advance Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health.](#)"

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## Inclusion

The Ounce of Prevention Fund and Division for Early Childhood (DEC) hosted a webinar called "[Inclusion for Young Children with Special Needs in Child Care: What the Field Needs to Know at Federal State and Local Level](#)" and posted slides and an archive of the [recording](#).

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## Maternal Depression

The U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released an Informational Bulletin (IB) "[Maternal Depression Screening and Treatment: A Critical Role for Medicaid in the Care of Mothers and Children.](#)" Read Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) [summary](#).

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## Home Visiting

Looking for professional development opportunities for home visitors and supervisors? Learn more about Achieve OnDemand™ - online training made by home visiting experts at the Ounce. Achieve OnDemand offers a wide breadth of directly relevant topics that address the field's most pressing concerns. Visit [www.theOunce.org/AchieveOnDemand](http://www.theOunce.org/AchieveOnDemand).

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## News From The States

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## California

- The Budget Conference Committee advanced a [budget deal](#) between Gov. Brown and legislative leadership that 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. After many attempts to cut it, transitional kindergarten remains in the budget to the thanks of many advocates.
- Earlier the California Assembly's Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance put forward an [early education plan](#) that calls for \$619 million 2016-17 investment (or a \$626 ongoing annualized investment) focused on rate increases and 12 month family eligibility for child care, and additional preschool and Alternative Payment Program slots. The Assembly also identified that Speaker Rendon will convene a Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Care and Education. Read more at *Capital Public Radio*.
- Previously California's Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee on Education also put forth a modest [proposal](#) of \$99 million (\$137 annualized) calling for additional discussion of meeting the unmet need during Conference Committee.

- Lake Research Partners completed a statewide [voter poll](#) for the California Coalition for Equity in Early Care and Education that affirms voter interest in increasing the state's commitment to early childhood. Read the [press release](#).
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## Colorado

- [The Denver Post](#) highlights new legislation (HB1227) that will exempt teenagers and domestic violence survivors from child support enforcement requirements when applying for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP).
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## Florida

- The White House hosted a regional summit on dual language learners at Miami's United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education earlier this month in which it released a federal policy statement and launched a new local public awareness campaign. Read more in the [Miami Herald](#).
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## Illinois

- Pay Now Illinois is a coalition of 82 human and social service agencies and companies that is [suing Gov. Bruce Rauner](#), Comptroller Leslie Munger and seven state agency department heads for breach of contract in requesting work to be performed without pay since the budget impasse began July 2015.
  - The City of Chicago launched its first online preschool application site at [chicagoearlylearning.org](#) reports [The Chicago Tribune](#).
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## Indiana

- [Inside Indiana Business](#) profiled the ramp up advocates in Indiana are doing to prepare for a legislative ask for preschool expansion during the 2017 Legislative session, including the 2016 Indiana Summit for Economic Development via Early Learning Coalitions held at the beginning of June in Muncie Indiana.
  - Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett wants to expand the Marion County pre-k pilot program to every family over the next five years given the high demand for early learning services reports [rtv6](#).
  - [Governing](#) highlighted the behavioral economics study the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) completed with Indiana's Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning to increase child care program renewals and parents' selection of high-quality child care programs.
  - Gov. Mike Pence sent a [letter](#) to HHS Secretary Sylvia Burwell about Indiana's desire to expand pre-k and interest in the new Preschool Development Program authorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Read more in [The Indy Star](#).
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## Kansas

- Early childhood programs are bracing the implementation of \$3.3 million funding reduction to the Kansas Children's Cabinet that is part of a larger \$97 million funding reduction Gov. Sam Brownback announced in May. Currently the cuts are not expected to be spread evenly across programs as those with federal matches were proposed to be exempted. Read more in [KCUR](#).
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## Maine

- The House and Senate voted to override Gov. LePage's veto of LD 1689-now [Public Law 2016, Chapter 497](#)-requiring criminal background checks to put Maine in compliance with the new Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) rules.
  - In addition, the Judiciary Committee initiated, and the House and Senate passed, a [Joint Study Order](#) to Establish a Working Group To Study Background Checks for Child Care Facilities and Providers.
  - The Legislature failed to enact LD 1267, "[An Act To Assist Working Families with Young Children](#)," that would have raised rates to providers in the child care assistance program and LD552, "[An Act To Provide Funding for Home Visiting Services](#)," that was held over from last session and would have increased funding to home visiting.
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## Michigan

- The Citizens Research Council of Michigan published "[Catalog of Early Childhood Funding in Michigan](#)" to help stakeholders navigate the early childhood landscape in the state.
  - Michigan's Children published a new "[Budget Basics](#)" about the state of play children and families are at with the state's FY17 budget.
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## New York

- Licensed child care centers in New York City will be required to post "performance summary cards" near the entrance of the facility that showcase the number of times the program has been suspended over the past three years, number of health code violations, number of children and more reports [The Associated Press](#).
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## Pennsylvania

- The City of Philadelphia is considering using revenue from a proposed soda tax to fund early childhood programs in the city reports [PBS](#).
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## Rhode Island

- The state legislature passed the Rhode Island Family Home Visiting Act with unanimous support from both chambers, codifying parts of the current system into law. It calls upon the Department of Health to operate a statewide system with evidence-based models through coordination with other state agencies, as well as,

requiring DOH to create a referral system for families and programs. Read the Act [here](#).

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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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