Highlights

Home Visiting

The House Ways and Means Committee debated and passed HR 2824 Increasing Opportunity through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act that would reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program for five years. Senators Grassley (IA) and Menendez (NJ) introduced S 1829 Strong Families Act of 2017 to reauthorize MIECHV for five years. Read more from First Five Years Fund.

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Federal Updates

2016 Census Data

The US Census Bureau released its 2016 annual data on income, poverty and health coverage indicating positive gains on the aggregate for all three measures-the first time these all improved for two years in a row. Read more from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Center for Law and Social Policy, and First Focus for coverage of what the data mean for children and families.

Child Care

Senator Murray and Representative Bobby Scott introduced the *Child Care for Working Families Act (CCWFA)* along with co-sponsors Senator Casey and Representative Polis. The CCWFA would create "a federal-state partnership to ensure families making less than 150% of their state's median income do not pay more than seven percent of their income on child care." Read more from *Politico* and Senator Murray's press release. Also read summaries from National Women's Law Center, CLASP, ZERO TO THREE and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Federal Budget

After returning from the August recess, Congress passed legislation that extends funding of the government for three months through a continuing resolution along with provisions for funding disaster relief and raising the debt ceiling. In the meantime, the House Budget Committee's adopted FY2018 budget resolution is yet to be called to the floor for a vote and the Senate Budget Committee is still drafting its version. Early childhood programs' funding held steady or was increased in the US Senate Appropriations Committee appropriations bill for Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies. Read more from First Five Years Fund.

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act

The United States Senate passed legislation to improve public health programs for early detection, diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss in newborns, infants and young children, also known as the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act, introduced by US Senators Rob Portman and Tim Kaine. A companion measure has also been previously introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Brett Guthrie and Rep. Doris Matsui.

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Leaders of the Senate Finance Committee, Senators Hatch and Wyden, announced that they reached an agreement to extend funding for CHIP. The Georgetown Center for Children and Families describes the agreement in its blog.

Health Care

Senators Cassidy and Graham revised their legislation aimed at repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in conjunction with Senators Heller and Johnson in an effort to pass something before the FY2017 reconciliation instruction expires at the end of September. Read coverage from *Politico* and *Vox News*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities analyzed how the changes would impact health coverage.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

On September 5, President Trump announced that his Administration would end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a program started by the Obama Administration that helped young undocumented immigrants work and study without fear of deportation. The Center on Law and Social Policy (CLASP) released a statement regarding the decision and its impact on children living in the United States, particularly those in marginalized communities. *Education Week* also reported on the verdict's bearing on undocumented immigrant children and schooling in the US.

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Preschool

- New America published "Indispensable Policies & Practices for High-Quality Pre-K," that synthesizes studies of pre-k programs and indicates a summary of "indispensable policies and practices."
- Urban Institute released an interactive data tool "10 Characteristics of Preschool-Age Childern: A State and Local Data Tool to Inform Policy and Action."

Workforce Development Tax Credits

A brief by the Committee for Economic Development "Pathways to High-Quality Child Care: The Workforce Investment Credit" summarizes evidence and recommends a first step towards addressing the widespread lack of return on investments made by the early care and education (ECE) workforce. The brief also examines in-depth the state of the ECE workforce and the high turnover rate in the field.

Child Care

- Center for American Progress' Katie Hamm and Make It Work Campaign's Julie Kashen published "A Blueprint for Child Care Reform: It's Time to Do Better for Children and Families," that outlines a vision for child care reform and proposes benchmarks to measure reform ideas.
- The Center for American Progress published "Mapping America's Child Care Deserts" that finds "approximately half of Americans across 22 states live in areas with an

undersupply of child care options."

Families Experiencing Homelessness

Ounce of Prevention Fund and the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (ACF) released "Self-Assessment Tool for Early Childhood Programs Serving Families Experiencing Homelessness." The tool is designed for child care, Head Start and Early Head Start, and public pre-k programs as a guide for welcoming and supporting families and children experiencing homelessness into these programs. This tool contains recommendations for making early childhood programs more responsive to the unique needs of infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families who experience homelessness in five areas: Identification and Support; Removal of Barriers; Responding to Family Needs; Engagement in Strategic Collaboration; and Improving Collection, Reporting and Utilization of Data. The tool includes additional resources to support programs.

Equitable Teacher Pay

A new report from The Brookings Institution argues that the firmness of teachers' salary schedules eliminates wage disparities when it comes to race, but fosters inequality based on education and age.

Education and the Arts

Education Trends reports on recent findings that participation in the arts reinforce development of deeper learning skills. Additionally, the full research article provides examples of programs that successfully increased access to the arts in education in public schools, and includes state- and local-level policy considerations.

Child and Adult Care Food Program

The Pew Charitable Trusts released findings on a health impact assessment for the Child and Adult Care Food Program's updated rules for meals and snacks. Results supported healthier nutrition standards benefitting child consumption.

New Research

Bilingual Infants

The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America published research demonstrating that bilingual infants, similar to bilingual adults, monitor and control their languages during real-time language listening.

Graduation Rates

According to new research by the University of Toronto, children who are older for their school grade are more likely to attend post-secondary school and graduate from an elite university than their peers. Additional findings, including college and juvenile detention outcomes, can be read in the full National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) working paper.

ECE'S STEM and Literacy Self-Efficiency

Early Education and Development published findings regarding comparisons of teachers' self-efficacy for literacy, math and science how domain-specific self-efficacy relates to teachers' practice in the area of science. Findings supported providing teachers with content and practice for science, rather than focusing solely on literacy.

News and Resources

Infant-Toddler
ZERO TO THREE released a [child care advocacy toolkit](#) that focuses on advocating on behalf of infants and toddlers.

Family Leave
David Elliot for the Coalition on Human Needs [published a blog post](#) regarding the importance on family leave for security and stability.

Food Insecurity
Coalition on Human Needs Lecia Imbery [summarizes findings](#) from United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) annual report on food insecurity in which over 15 million Americans were food insecure at some time during 2016.

Early Childhood Inclusion
The Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center [released a webinar](#) for professionals interested in fostering an inclusive environment by promoting participation in children with disabilities.

Federal Tax Reform
[Bloomberg View's](#) editorial board outlined its support for an expansion and update to the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit.

Technology

- [Linsday Tepe from *New America*](#) investigates why some schools aren't equipped with the tools to provide high-speed internet service.
- [David Hutchins in *Ed Tech*](#) writes on the barrier of high cost for childhood technology in education.

Resegregation in American Schools
[The Nation's](#) [Emmanuel Felton](#) chronicles the story of a secession movement with severe consequences for the education of black children.

News From The States

Arizona

- *[The Associated Press](#)* details opponents of Arizona's universal private school voucher program success in blocking the law.

California

- *[New America's](#)* [Sarah Jackso](#)n writes on a school district in San Jose that is developing professional trainings for teachers designed to build their skills in early literacy and socioemotional development.

Colorado

- *ZERO TO THREE* details revisions to Colorado's child care subsidy program and increasing investments.

Illinois

- *The Herald & Review's* Ryan Voles reports on Illinois state school funding payments.

Maine

- *The Maine Sun Journal* looks at different state politicians' responses to the ending of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

Michigan

- Ashely Daniels from *Michigan United* relays the story of one mother and recent legislative changes to Michigan child care that are changing her experience.

Nebraska

- *The North Platte Post* reports findings from the Nebraska Early Childhood Workforce Survey conducted by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska highlighting positive findings along with significant challenges for teachers and child care providers.

New York

- Bellwether Education Partners' Sara Mead writes in *US News & World Report* about New York City's '3-K for All' goal of addressing an important gap in preschool.
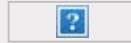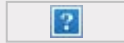
Texas

- *Think* explores San Antonio's pre-k program and its provision of free pre-kindergarten for disadvantaged 4 year olds.
- Hurricane Harvey's impact on child-care providers and Texas educators is reported on by Laura Isensee of University of Houston's *Houston Public Media*.
- Brooke Self from *Amarillo's 7 News* reports on the USDA's changing of guidelines for Texan SNAP benefits after Hurricane Harvey.

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](#).