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Highlights

Home Visiting

Despite bipartisan support and legislative movement in both the House and Senate, the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program expired at the end of the federal fiscal year this weekend leaving programs and children and families at risk. Last month the House passed [HR 2824 Increasing Opportunity through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act](#) and the Senate had introduced [S 1829 Strong Families Act of 2017](#). Both of which would reauthorize the program for five years and provide additional funding, although as [Education Week's](#) Christina Samuels highlights there were some discrepancies in the approach to funding the bill.

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Federal Updates

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Congress also failed to reauthorize CHIP before the end of the fiscal year which could impact up to 9 million children that currently receive insurance coverage through the program. As [Georgetown Center for Children and Families](#) notes, the fiscal impact on state programs varies with ten projecting that they will run out of funding before the end of 2017. Read more from [Governing](#) and [Business Insider](#) about the expiration. Looking forward, the Senate Finance Committee will also hold a markup of [S 1827 The Keep Kids' Insurance Dependable and Secure Act of 2017 \(KIDS Act\)](#) this week. In addition, the House Energy and Commerce Committee [announced](#) it will hold a markup of a bill to extend funding this week, but no time or legislation has been released.

Health Care

Early last week the latest effort to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act lost steam as Senate Republican leadership announced there would be no vote on the revised Graham-Cassidy plan given that it did not have enough votes. [Politico](#) and [Vox News](#) cover the story. Also read analyses from [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) and [Georgetown Center for Children and Families](#) on the impact the legislation would have had on children and families.

Universal Pre-K

Democratic members of the [US Congress Joint Economic Committee released](#) a report entitled [High-Quality Early Learning and Care Drives Lifelong Success](#). Findings indicate that half of children who are eligible for preschool are not enrolled in formal education,

stress the high cost of quality private programs as compared to family income, and outline the positive benefits of enrollment in high-quality care for children and families in further education and future earnings. Read [additional findings](#) from the Joint Economic Committee's ranking member, Senator Martin Heinrich.

Head Start

- The recently released [Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework \(ELOF\) Implementation Toolkit](#) assists Head Start program leaders and education staff through the process of aligning program and teaching practices with ELOF guidelines.
 - The US Department of Health and Human Services, through the offices of Head Start, also released a [memorandum](#) to address disaster recovery for Head Start programs affected by the weather, and guidelines for how to do so.
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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.

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Inclusion

The new resource "[Building Inclusive State Child Care Systems](#)" represents a joint effort by the Ounce of Prevention Fund, the Division for Early Childhood (DEC), and Child Care Aware® of America. It provides context for the current debate on inclusion, but largely focuses on discussing how states can maximize opportunities in the new CCDBG requirements to promote inclusion. For example, one of the new requirements is that states provide training and support to child care providers that is "appropriate for a population of children that includes children with disabilities." This resource then offers a suggestion about how states could financially support the requirement: through the use of CCDF quality set-aside funds, which are available for professional development and training.

Data and Youth Outcomes

The Council of Chief State School Officers' Rolf Grafwallner wrote for the [National Institute for Early Education Research's blog](#) about utilizing indicators discovered through data to advance outcomes for early learners. Additionally, the post details the significant role of ESSA in states taking action to advance early childhood opportunities.

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."
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Infants and Toddlers

ZERO TO THREE and CLASP are releasing the initial set of papers from a collaborative project, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, focused on federal and state policy

actions that comprehensively address the wellbeing of infants and toddlers and their families. ["Building Strong Foundations: Advancing Comprehensive Policies for Infants, Toddlers, and Families."](#) and ["From the Ground Up: Establishing Strong Core Policies for Infants, Toddlers, and Families"](#) outline the needs of infants and toddlers and describe the rationale for investing in programs supporting development from the earliest years.

Families

Generations United published ["The State of Grandfamilies in America: 2017"](#) outlining the role grandparents play in supporting children exposed to trauma.

Early Childhood Investment

ZERO TO THREE highlighted in a [new policy resource](#) how many state budgets included funding to support programs for infants, toddlers and their families.

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New Research

Medicaid in Early Childhood

A new multi-generational study's [working paper](#) from the National Bureau of Economic Research suggests that Medicaid access in early childhood has a profound impact on later life health. Additional findings show that Medicaid access later on had a lower return on investment, and does not lead to generational health effects. More from [Healthcare Dive's Meg Bryant](#).

WIC and Children's Health

The *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics* published [findings from a study](#) showing that developmental and behavioral issues in children are often found and raised by WIC staff. More details from [Jefferson Public Radio](#).

Soda Taxes

The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, in collaboration with *Politico*, released the [results of a poll](#) taken from a nationally representative sample of adults and conducted as part of a series on health and domestic policy issues. Contrary to findings of prior surveys, the report indicated a majority of participants support raising taxes on soda to fund children's health programs and preschool. Read more from [Politico](#).

Preschoolers' Social Skills

Results from [new research](#) in *The British Journal of Developmental Psychology* find that pragmatic skills may serve a protective function, particularly for shy children who have lower vocabulary skills. Additional analysis can be read in [Psych Central](#).

Toddler Emotional Regulation

The journal *Early Education and Development* [published an article](#) that looks at the role of teacher sensitivity and its relation to the "transactional nature of harsh parenting and emotion regulation across toddlerhood."

Money in Child Development

The Center for Health Journalism's [Katharine Gammon reports](#) on a new research team examining community, family and poverty with the influence of unconditional cash payments on childhood development outcomes.

Fluoride and the Fetal Brain

A government-funded study recently published results of an examination on fluoride exposure in pregnant women and a lower IQ in children, with findings suggesting there is an association between the two. More from [PR Newswire](#).

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News and Resources

Preschool

The Urban Institute [released a tool](#) detailing characteristics of preschool children; the objective of publishing this instrument aims to inform policy and action.

Investments in ECE

- The Education Trust's Lillian Lowery [published an article](#) in *The Hechinger Report* discussing the significance of investing in Early Childhood Education.
 - Arthur J. Reynolds, a professor of child development at the University of Minnesota's Institute of Child Development, [wrote in Education Week](#) on positive impact of investing in early childhood.
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Adult Determination

[Healthday](#) looks at researcher Julia Leonard's experiment and her views on parental influence on child determination.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Read a [blog post](#) from Child Trends examining the results from state deadline to report development plans in implementing an indicator of school quality or student success through the Every Student Succeeds Act.

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News From The States

[AR](#) | [CO](#) | [FL](#) | [IL](#) | [ME](#) | [OK](#) |

Arkansas

- Local news station [Fox 16 reports](#) on the US Department of Agriculture's \$7.4 million dollar donation to the Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center, supporting research in the areas of child development, maternal health and disease prevention.
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Colorado

- The [NorthernGlenn Thorton Sentinel's](#) Tabatha Deans reports on research conducted within Westminster public schools regarding the benefits of full-day preschool.
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Florida

- Julia Ochoa from [WUSF Public Media](#) discusses Florida's dependence on the Children's Health Insurance Program and its upcoming deadline.
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Illinois

- [Illinois Radio Network details](#) the low reading level test scores prevalent in Illinois schools.
- [KVPI's Greg Bishop reports](#) on the increase of child care subsidies to Illinois families.

Maine

- A new report released by the Maine Women's Policy Center and the Maine Children's Alliance details the success of the early child care system in supporting children, families, and providers. [Investing in Our Future](#) suggests that there's a lack of availability in Maine early childhood education, and an additional burden of high cost for families. Additional conclusions from [Maine Public](#).

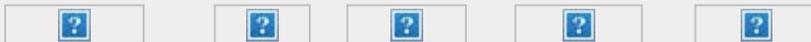
Oklahoma

- [Tulsa World details](#) the perspective of Shelley Cadamy, a foster/adoptive parent largely affected by the recent budget issues and subsidy cuts to child care in Oklahoma.

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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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