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Highlights

Infants and Toddlers

ZERO TO THREE and the Center for Law and Social Policy recently [released four reports](#) as part of the "Building Strong Foundations: Advancing Comprehensive Policies for Infants, Toddlers, and Families" project. The project seeks to advance infant and toddler well-being in multiple areas: high-quality early care and education opportunities; strong parents; economically stable families; and healthy bodies, healthy minds, and healthy parents.

- [Paid Sick Leave and Paid Family and Medical Leave](#): Details of paid sick leave, and paid family and medical leave when a child is born, adopted, or newly fostered.
- [Cash Assistance and Tax Credits](#): Examines assistance and refundable tax credits as a way to improve income stability for lower-income families with toddlers and infants.
- [Education and Training](#): Looks at affordable education and training as a means to improve parental employment opportunities.
- [Housing](#): Supports housing assistance programs for a reduction in housing crises and conditions that can undermine early childhood development.

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Federal Updates

Federal Budget

With narrow votes in the Senate and House, Congress approved a joint budget resolution for FY18. Supporters of the budget plan, including the [White House](#) claim that it will spur economic growth, which will offset lost revenue. Opponents of the new budget claim that it is a means to reforming the [tax code](#), by allowing a simple majority to [pass massive tax cuts](#). Read additional coverage from the [Washington Post](#).

- See the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) [analysis of the new plan](#).
- Remarks on the new budget plan can be found from the [Coalition on Human Needs](#), the [Food Research and Action Center](#) and [Reuters](#).

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 last month, 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 5 years and provide additional funding, although as [Education Week's Christina Samuels](#) highlights there were some discrepancies in the approach to funding the bill. [The Center for American Progress](#) outlined the number of children and families at risk of losing services given the expiration of the program.

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy announced last week that a bill would be debated this week, but as [Governing reports](#) Democrats are pushing for a bipartisan solution for funding the program. This comes after Congress failed to reauthorize CHIP before the end of the fiscal year last month, which [Georgetown Center for Children and Families](#) noted would have the fiscal effect of causing the program to run out of funding before the end of 2017. Read analysis of the House bill from [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#).

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Child Care

- The Hamilton Project, a venture through Brookings, released a [policy proposal](#) regarding public investment in child care. The author, Elizabeth U. Cascio from Dartmouth College and the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), recommends creating a single refundable federal child care tax credit and investing in QRIS systems and expansion of universal preschool for 4-year-olds.
 - Quartz's Corinne Purtill & Dan Kopf [discuss a recent poll](#) from National Public Radio revealing that childcare cost continues to be a massive financial burden on families. More information and findings from [Quartz](#).
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Bilingual Speakers

Migration Policy Institute (MPI) released "[Dual Language Learners: A National Demographic and Policy Profile](#)" looking at policies involving dual language students across early education systems.

Workforce

The Office of Child Care's State Capacity Building Center (SCBC) [published six briefs](#) using information from the National Survey of Early Care and Education to support strengthening the workforce and coordinated monitoring.

Child Development

The Harvard Center on the Developing Child published "[Three Principles to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families](#)," which outlines that policies and services should support responsive relationships for children and adults, strengthen core life skills, and reduce sources of stress in the lives of children and families.

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New Research

Effective Preschool

Researchers from Vanderbilt University and early childhood educators in Tennessee laid out what is being dubbed the "Magic 8" effective preschool practices in a study published in the journal [Child Development](#). Practices include quality instruction, fostering social

learning, and creating a positive emotional climate. [Education Week](#) and [Hechinger Report](#) discussed the study.

Home Visiting

NIEER's co-director of research, Milagros Nores, wrote about the [AVANCE Parent-Child Education Program](#) as an example of a two-generation program that builds supports outside of the home.

Media

[National Public Radio](#) looks at survey data from Common Sense Media indicating that 98% of homes have access to a mobile device. Read the [full report](#) from *Common Sense Media*.

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News and Resources

Federal Tax Reform

- Senator Marco Rubio writes in [Sunshine State News](#) about Child Tax Credit Expansion.
 - [The Nation's Bryce Covert](#) writes on the potential impact of the new proposed tax reform plan, particularly on the lack of expansion of the Child Tax Credit.
 - Bellwether's Sara Mead writes in [U.S. News and World](#) report about child care with Ivanka Trump's push for increased child tax credit.
 - [The New York Times' Ernie Tedeschi](#) also discusses the tax reform framework with respect to the Child Tax credit.
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Early Childhood Education

The Thomas B. Fordham Institute featured Sara Mead on a podcast entitled "[The State of Early Childhood Education](#)."

Home Visiting

[Register now](#) for the Seventh National Home Visiting Summit on Quality in Home Visiting Programs January 31 - February 2, 2018 at the Grand Hyatt in Washington, DC. We are excited to announce the [2018 conference agenda](#). Registrants can now select from a diverse array of sessions, including 28 workshops, 3 communities of practice and 4 plenary sessions. The Ounce of Prevention Fund looks forward to convening over 700 fellow researchers, advocates, policymakers, and practitioners in the joint pursuit of advancing the home visiting field. Session space is limited so don't miss the opportunity to register and secure your session seats today.

Student Engagement

[Education Week released a report](#), "Nurturing Students' Climb to Success: Why Engagement and Motivation Matter" detailing student motivation and outcomes in a number of schools.

Breast-feeding

The University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing issued a [public release](#) stressing the need for targeting interventions for breast-feeding challenges due to obesity.

2020 Census

Mario Beovides, director of Impact of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund (NALEO), [published a blog post](#) on the Education

Commission of the States in honor of National Hispanic Heritage Month and outlining a recent report about the 400,000 young Latino children left uncouncted from the 2010 Census.

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News From The States

[CA](#) | [CO](#) | [FL](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [LA](#) | [MA](#) | [NH](#) | [NM](#) | [DC](#) |

California

- Governor Jerry Brown signed AB300 that will expand child care and allow for more flexibility in subsidized child care providers according to [The Californian](#).
- The Western Center on Law and Poverty, Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations, Children's Defense Fund-California, MAZON, Food Research and Action Center, and SEIU California [co-sponsored legislation](#) that ends actions that may target children who do not have money in their school lunch account or in hand to pay for their meals. [Read more](#). The governor signed the bill earlier this month.
- [The Times-Herald Online reports](#) on the announcement from the US Department of Agriculture that SNAP will be available for those affected by the California wildfire. Information is also available on the [California Department of Social Services' website](#).

Colorado

- [Chalkbeat reports](#) on early childhood leaders in Colorado and their survey that was distributed to local parents, preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers. Reports from this research indicate a lack of agreement regarding what constitutes a child being ready for kindergarten.

Florida

- [The Orlando Sentinel](#) covers the expansion of disaster-related food stamp assistance for Floridians living in Seminole and Orange counties.

Illinois

- Monique Garcia from the [Chicago Tribune](#) describes Governor Bruce Rauner's million dollar legislative spending cuts.

Indiana

- Governor Holcomb seeks to expand pre-k for the second time in 2019, according to [Eric Berman of WIBC](#).

Louisiana

- [Sam Karlin from Business Report](#) examines the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry's push to focus on early, high-quality child care.

Massachusetts

- [Eye on Early Education](#) looks at recent findings from Massachusetts' MCAS data to supplement support for investments in the early childhood workforce.

New Hampshire

- Casey McDermott from [New Hampshire Public Radio](#) looks at New Hampshire's attempt to overhaul state licensing laws and community reaction.

New Mexico

- New Mexico's Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) is rolling out the Comprehensive Early Learning Training and Consultation System with the goal of supporting the state's early learning programs in more coherently reports [Las Cruces Sun-News](#).

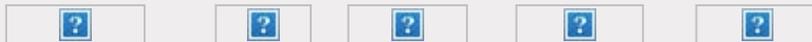
Washington, DC

- According to an article by Michael Alison Chandler of the [Washington Post](#), a recent analysis on federal data shows that 47% of children and teens in Washington, DC having experienced a traumatic event.

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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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