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Highlights

President's FY2018 Budget Request Cuts Social Service Programs

On May 23 the Trump administration unveiled the FY2018 President Budget request-titled "[A New Foundation for American Greatness](#)" -which included major cuts to programs such as Medicaid and CHIP, nutritional assistance, disability benefits, and child and family-targeted tax credit programs. With respect to early education investments, the budget proposes eliminating the \$95 million increase to the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) that was included in the recent FY2017 omnibus bill, cutting Head Start and Early Head Start by \$85 million, reducing funding to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program that often supplements CCDBG funding, and eliminating the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG).

- Media outlets including [The New York Times](#), [FiveThirtyEight](#), [The Hill](#) and [EducationWeek](#) covered the release outlining the eliminated and cut programs and calling into question the economic assumptions within the document.
- National advocacy organizations reacted to the proposal and outlined its impact on children and families. Read more from [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), [First Five Years Fund](#), [Center for Law and Social Policy](#), [National Head Start Association](#) and [National Women's Law Center](#).

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Federal Updates

Head Start

The US Department of Health and Human Services released [Program Instructions](#) outlining a percent cost-of-living adjustment for Head Start grantees that is provided through the \$85 million funding increase under the most recent omnibus spending bill.

Health Care

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released an updated score for the revised American Health Care Act (AHCA) that passed the US House of Representatives earlier in May. It reported that by 2026 there would be 23 million more people uninsured compared with current law, which is similar to what it reported for the original AHCA. It also noted that premiums could be lower, but that they would be lower because insurers could opt out of the Essential Health Benefits (like maternity care and mental health coverage), and because sick people would be priced out of coverage-leaving mainly young and healthy people in the system. Read more from [The New York Times' Robert Pear](#) and [NPR's Alison Kodjak](#), and Health care advocacy groups such as [Families USA](#) and [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#).

Suspension and Expulsion

The US Department of Health and Human Services proposed eliminating from the National Child Health Survey a question about suspension or expulsion in preschool settings, reports [Sarah Sparks](#) with *Education Week*.

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Transitional Kindergarten & English Language Learners

The American Institutes for Research published a [new research brief](#) on the impact of transition kindergarten (TK) on English language learners in California. The report finds improvements in math knowledge, problem skills and literacy skills for those who participated in TK. Read more about the findings from [EdSource](#).

Paid Leave

Urban Institute published "[Paid Family Leave in the United States: Time for a New National Policy](#)" that looks at what is known about current state paid leave programs and how this can inform a national policy.

Health

Child Trends published a [research brief](#) looking at how child well-being is improved with health insurance coverage. Government-funded health insurance plays a particularly important role in advancing these outcomes as close to 50% of children nationwide are on government-sponsored health insurance.

Child Tax Credit & Immigrant Families

CLASP [published a brief](#) on the child tax credit (CTC) and its potential as an anti-poverty tool for children in mixed-status immigrant families.

Preschool Leadership Qualifications

New America released a report, "[A Tale of Two Pre-K Leaders: How State Policies for Center Directors and Principals Leading Pre-K Programs Differ and Why They Shouldn't](#)," which looks across the US assessing the diversity and inconsistencies among education leadership requirements.

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New Research

Head Start

A [new study](#) from the journal *Child Development* finds that Head Start attendance makes a difference in academic outcomes. When children missed 10% or more of the school year they had fewer academic gains than those who attended the program more consistently.

Dual Language

[Early Childhood Research Quarterly](#) released a new study looking at the efficacy of a professional development program for a dual-language learner (DLL) early education program. Researchers found that upon receipt of the program, language interactions between DLLs and teachers and peers increased, and that there were gains in DLLs' Spanish alphabet recognition and mathematical skills.

Behavioral Interventions in Human Services

The US Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation released "[Nudging Change in Human Services: Final Report of the Behavioral Interventions to Advance Self-Sufficiency \(BIAS\) Project](#)" that finds applying behavioral interventions can help improve efficiency, operations, and outcomes in some human services contexts.

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Upcoming Events

November 29-December 1, 2017

ZERO TO THREE's Annual Conference will be held in San Diego California. Visit their website to [learn more](#).

January 31-February 2, 2018

The Ounce of Prevention Fund is hosting the Seventh National Summit on Quality in Home Visiting Programs will take place in Washington, DC. For further details on workshop proposals, visit the [Summit website](#).

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News and Resources

ESSA

New America writes on how to support [family engagement](#) and [chronic absenteeism](#) through the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Early Childhood

- The National Council of State Legislatures [reported on early findings](#) on state appropriations for early childhood programs-including that many states use TANF funds for child care and that some states are using CCDBG funds for preschool.
- David Jacobson with EDC and CEELo [writes in Education Week](#) on the potential for bipartisanship agreement on a number of education issues.
- President of Innovation Strategies International, Harold J. Raveché, [writes in The Hill](#) on the potential of focusing on vocational skills to improve education completion rates, and the importance of early childhood in helping contribute to this work.

- [The Atlantic published](#) a short video that looks at a child's brain development and the importance of investing in children to promote positive development.
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Child Care

- [Governing's J.B Wogan reports](#) on why some states were leaving federal child care money unclaimed in the wake of the economic downturn but how some are now looking to increase funding again.
 - Villanova University economics professor Cheryl Carleton writes in [Good magazine](#) about how President Trump's tax proposal would impact working mothers and their families.
 - Sheryl Sandberg is calling on policy changes in the US to better support working mothers, including offering affordable child care, according to [Bloomberg](#).
 - [Slate's Heather Schwedel reports](#) on the lack of child care center in Apple's new campus.
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Preschool

- [Eye on Early Education](#) writes on the need for equal pay for preschool teachers.
 - [Education Week's Christina Samuels reports](#) on how the curriculum company, Teaching Strategies, is developing a curriculum for kindergarten that encourages hands-on activities and play, attempting to push back against recent calls for more focus on academics in the early grades.
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Education Workforce

Roxanne Garza and Melissa Tooley with New America [report on the decrease in funding to Title II, Part A](#) and how it result in less funding for teacher and principal development and support.

Dual-Language Learners

- The US Office of Head Start released a series of two-pagers on how to support DLLS, providing guidance on [the importance of talk](#), [growing up as a DLL](#), and the [cognitive benefits of bilingualism](#).
 - [New America's Conor P. Williams](#) looks at the state ESSA plans and some potentially worrying trends in accountability mechanisms for DLL performance.
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Poverty

- [Angela Rachidi of the American Enterprise Institute writes](#) on concerns that a basic child allowance won't sufficiently address child poverty.
 - The Stanford Social Innovation Review publishes a piece from Ron Haskins looking at new research on family income instability from week to week that comes from the forthcoming book [The Financial Diaries: How American Families Cope in a World of Uncertainty](#).
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Infants

- [Katherine Hobson reports](#) on how racial disparities persist in rates of sudden infant death syndrome in *NPR*.
- [NPR covers](#) a story looking at how a focus on infant health and well-being during childbirth has resulted in less of a focus on mothers' health.

Tech

- [Hechinger Report's Nichole Dobo writes](#) on a [new study](#) from New York University that finds young children's reading comprehension is similar for print and digital books.
- [Axios' Christopher Matthews reports](#) on the potential of artificial intelligence to influence the early childhood educational experience.

Head Start

- The Office of Head Start [released a national overview](#) of Head Start grantee Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores for 2016, looking at preschool teacher-child observations.
- [The 74 Million's Matt Barnum](#) interviews Harvard Professor David Deming about the long-term benefits of Head Start.
- [Education Week published](#) an article from Mark Shriver commemorating the 52nd anniversary of Head Start in mid-May.

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)

Simon Workman with Center for American Progress writes on [how QRIS can help parents](#) make more informed choices about quality child care and support quality providers.

Pay For Success

Urban Institute [published a framework](#) that looks at how one can value potential PFS projects, looking at potential fiscal and non-fiscal benefits of a project.

Home Visiting Reauthorization Action

The National Home Visiting Coalition is organizing a [congressional sign-on letter](#) in support of reauthorizing the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program for a term of five years with increased funding from \$400 million annually to \$800 million annually before funding expires in September 2017.

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News From The States

[CA](#) | [FL](#) | [GA](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [LA](#) | [ME](#) | [MI](#) | [NE](#) | [NM](#) | [NY](#) | [WI](#) |

California

- Governor Jerry Brown has revised his state budget proposal, restoring \$500 million in funding for early childhood education and child care according to [89.3 KPCC](#).

[EdSource reports](#) that some state advocates are concerned about outdated eligibility limits for child care and no funding increases over baseline levels.

- [The San Francisco Chronicle reports](#) on San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee's proposal to expand the city's homeless child care program with \$2.1 million in new funding.
- [89.3 KPCC reports](#) on efforts in the state legislature to create the CalWORKs Baby Wellness and Family Support Home Visiting Program that would spend \$100 million in offering new moms in poverty home visits.
- [The Orange County Register writes](#) about the Orange County's Early Childhood Mental Health Collaborative's focus on mental health services for preschoolers.
- [Center for Health Journalism writes](#) that families with undocumented children are concerned about keeping their kids on California's Medicaid program.
- The [May edition](#) of the First 5 California FOCUS report includes information about the First 5 California (F5CA) State Commission held in April, the championing of paid family leave in the state legislature, and the awarding of the QRIS contract to WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies.

Florida

- *The Gainesville Sun's* Editorial Board [wrote an op-ed](#) on the importance of investing in county services to support young children.

Georgia

- [The Atlanta Journal Constitution's Kyle Wingfield](#) writes an op-ed on how Georgians are suffering from welfare cliffs.

Illinois

- [Cornelia Grumman](#) with the McCormick Foundation writes about the Foundation and Erikson Institute's new track of its Early Childhood Leadership Academy, The McCormick Foundation Executive Fellows program, that trains professionals across disciplines in the early education system.
- [QCOonline.com writes](#) that the state budget impasse is hurting funding for local provider of home visiting programs, like Healthy Families.
- [WICS reports](#) on state early childhood advocates in Springfield pushing for Governor Bruce Rauner and the General Assembly to pass a balanced budget.
- [WGEM reports](#) that state human services organizations are working together to try and minimize the impact of the budget impasse on kids.

Indiana

- [The Herald Bulletin reports](#) on the recent preschool expansion in the state and its limits, including making the program eligible for kids whose parents hold or are seeking a job.

Louisiana

- [Eye on Early Education writes](#) that Louisiana's unmet child care needs are estimated at around \$1 billion.
 - Proposed cuts to the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) could trigger lost federal funding and put positions in child welfare, child support, and economic stability at risk reports the Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families.
 - HB557 remains in Senate Committee, stalling the state's ability to come into compliance with federal rules on background checks of child care center employees.
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Maine

- [WABI reports](#) on Maine's Speaker of the House's legislation to reduce poverty by using \$150 million in unused federal TANF dollars.
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Michigan

- [Michigan Radio reports](#) on efforts at Flint's Cummings Early Childhood Center to mitigate the effect of lead exposure.
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Nebraska

- [KPVI reports](#) that Nebraska's legislature voted to postpone child care subsidy rate increases.
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New Mexico

- [Education Week reports](#) on Santa Fe's rejection of a 2-cent-per-ounce soda tax to fund preschool.
 - [The Albuquerque Journal reports](#) that the Santa Fe soda tax campaign cost over \$4 million.
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New York

- [Christina Veiga with Chalkbeat reports](#) on New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio' plans to streamline governance of infant-toddler programs.
 - [City & State talks](#) with Ralph da Costa Nunez, the president and CEO of the Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness, about homelessness in New York.
 - [The New York Times writes](#) that Mayor Bill De Blasio's plan to expand universal preschool to 3-year-olds draws concerns from some.
 - [The New York Times reports](#) that Mayor De Blasio is planning to expand the city's Community Schools Initiative that provides schools with wraparound services.
 - [The New York Daily News writes](#) about its concerns over further preschool expansion when early childhood educators are paid low wages.
 - [The New York Daily News reports](#) that most New Yorkers approve of expanding free or low-cost child care options even if it means tax increases.
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Wisconsin

- [Milwaukee Public Radio discusses](#) research on the long-term effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

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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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