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Highlights

Head Start Celebrates 50th Anniversary

The Head Start program celebrated its 50th birthday on May 18. The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) created a [50th Anniversary website](#); President Obama issued a [proclamation](#); and supportive statements were issued by HHS [Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell](#), director of the Office of Head Start, [Dr. Blanca Estela Enriquez](#), and chairman of the House Education and Workforce Committee [John Kline](#). Additionally, [Darren Walker](#), the president of the Ford Foundation, discussed the program in the [Huffington Post](#) in light of having been a child participant in the inaugural class; and numerous organizations commemorated the occasion, including the [First Five Years Fund](#) (FFYF), the [Center for Law and Social Policy](#) (CLASP), [New America](#), and the [National Head Start Association](#). Read additional national coverage about the anniversary from sources across the web:

- [Huffington Post](#)
- [Education Week](#)
- [PBS](#)

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Federal Updates

Strong Start Act

The House and Senate reintroduced the Strong Start for America's Children Act through Sen. Patty Murray and Reps. Bobby Scott and Richard Hanna. The legislation, originally introduced in 2013, would create new federal partnerships with states and communities to help improve and expand high-quality, full-day preschool programs. The House [Committee on Education and Workforce](#) (CEW) and the [Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions](#) (HELP) issued legislative language and statements. In addition, organizations reported on it including the [First Five Years Fund](#) (FFYF) and the [Center for Law and Social Policy](#) (CLASP).

Data Privacy

Sens. Ed Markey and Orrin Hatch reintroduced a bill that would update the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in a number of ways including giving parents the right to access private companies' records of their children and prohibit targeted ads using student data. The Protecting Student Privacy Act of 2015 joins a similar bill in the

House by Reps. Jared Polis and Luke Messer and ones in the works by both Sen. Richard Blumenthal and House Education and the Workforce Committee leaders Reps. John Kline and Bobby Scott. Read the bill text [here](#), Sens. Hatch and Markey's statement [here](#), and news coverage [here](#). The Data Quality Campaign also created a [comparative table](#) of the previously introduced legislation.

Draft Inclusion Policy

The US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services released a draft policy statement on inclusion for young children with disabilities and solicited feedback in May. Read more [here](#).

Child Nutrition

Congress is starting to focus on the reauthorization of the federal child nutrition programs that are set to expire at the end of September 2015. A House Education and Workforce subcommittee held a hearing concentrating on waste, fraud and abuse of these programs. Read more [here](#).

Child Poverty Reduction Act

Reps. Danny K. Davis, Gerald E. Connolly, and Barbara Lee introduced the Child Poverty Reduction Act of 2015 (H.R. 2408) to establish a national target for reducing child poverty by half in 10 years and completely eliminating it in 20. In order to meet this goal the legislation would create a Federal Interagency Working Group on Reducing Child Poverty and request the assistance of the National Academy of Sciences to develop a plan. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Training and Technical Assistance

- The US Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Administration of Children & Families (ACF) announced a revamped early childhood training and technical assistance system between the Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care. "The transformed system will provide training, resources and materials to multiple stakeholder groups at regional, state and local levels to support school readiness as the foundation for life-long learning and success. Bringing together knowledge and skills from Head Start, child care, and our health partners in HHS, our new design incorporates a continuum of services from expectant families through the early childhood period and on to afterschool and summer enrichment, which is a big part of child care programming." Read more [here](#) and about access the new system [here](#).
- In conjunction with the revamped training and technical assistance system, ACF published six new funding opportunity announcements that solicit proposals for new National Early Childhood Centers. The grants will focus on health and wellness; development, teaching and learning; parent, family and community engagement; quality assurance; afterschool and summer enrichment; and program management and fiscal operations. Read more [here](#).

My Brother's Keeper

President Obama unveiled My Brother's Keeper Alliance, a spinoff of the My Brother's Keeper initiative that similarly plans to support men of color from early childhood to adulthood. Read more [here](#).

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Pre-K

- The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) released its annual report on The State of Preschool for the 2013-14 school year that analyzes state pre-K enrollment and quality standards. Read the report [here](#) and reactions to the report [here](#) and [here](#).
- The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) released "Approaches to State Pre-K Eligibility Policy: Considerations for Policy Makers in Revising Policy to Increase Access for High Needs Children," and "Examples of State Guidance to Determine and Verify Income Eligibility for Prekindergarten Programs." Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) examined which states are using the school funding formula to fund preschool, finding at least 16 states and the District of Columbia doing so. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Workforce Development

- The Migration Policy Institute's National Center on Immigration Integration Policy new report "Immigrant and Refugee Workers in the Early Childhood Field: Taking a Closer Look" attempts to gain a better understanding of the unique characteristics of immigrant workers in early childhood education to make sure their needs are reflected. Read the report [here](#) and reactions [here](#).
- Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce released a report titled "The Economic Value of College Majors" that highlights how graduates who majored in early childhood education and elementary education are among the lowest paid. Read more the report [here](#) and coverage [here](#).

Child Care

- The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) released a new report "Building Pathways, Creating Roadblocks: State Child Care Assistance Policies for Parents in School" that analyzes state-specific child care assistance restrictions that impede the success of student parents and the two-generational impact of advanced education more broadly. Read more [here](#).
- NWLC and the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) created state fact sheets that summarize specific information related to the requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) reauthorization law in each state as a complement to the organizations' overall implementation guide for states and NWLC's 2014 state fact sheets on child care assistance policies. Read [here](#) and [here](#).
- The Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) analyzed child care payments by state in its new report, 'Status of Women in the States.' Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Early Learning Challenge

The BUILD Initiative published the first two chapters of its E-Book, Rising to the Challenge: Building Effective Systems for Young Children and Families, which shares state experiences of implementation of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

Child Development

The National Human Services Assembly released its new report, "Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Young Families: Two-Generation Policy Recommendations," that outlines strategies for enhancing federal policy including additional investment in and linkages between block grant programs such as Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, Social Services Block Grant, Child Care Development Block Grant, and Community Development Block Grant. It also focuses on state and local level opportunities and provides state case studies. Read more [here](#).

Dual Language Learners

Through support by the McKnight and Heising-Simons Foundation, a new report that summarizes DLL research, policies, and practices was released titled, "Helping America's Dual Language Learners Succeed: A Research-based Agenda for Action." Read more [here](#).

Child Health

The US Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau released "Child Health USA 2014" that reports on the health status and service needs of children in the United States. Read more [here](#).

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New Research

Early Childhood Education

The US Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF)'s Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) released initial findings from the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) conducted in 2012 to analyze the supply and demand for early childhood education. The [report](#) focused on the cost of early childhood education and how it varied by community characteristics. OPRE also released two fact sheets about the provision of early care and education during [non-standard hours](#) and [characteristics on home-based providers](#).

Early Head Start (EHS)

OPRE presented national data on EHS programs and the families and children served from all three waves of the Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study (Baby FACES), as well as an additional report focusing on the cohorts through age 3. Read more [here](#).

Poverty

National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) fellows and Harvard University economists Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, and Lawrence F. Katz released a working paper reanalyzing the mid-1990s Moving to Opportunity (MTO) experiment, this time using administrative data from tax returns to focus on long-term impacts on young children (younger than age 13). The economists report significant associations between improved college attendance and earnings and moving to a lower-poverty neighborhood for young children, but in contrast negative long-term impacts, if anything, for older children. Read more [here](#).

Early Head Start

OPRE presented national data on EHS programs and the families and children served from all three waves of the Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study (Baby FACES), as well as an additional report focusing on the cohorts through age 3. Read more [here](#).

Kindergarten Readiness

OPRE presented national data on EHS programs and the families and children served from all three waves of the Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study (Baby FACES), as well as an additional report focusing on the cohorts through age 3. Read more [here](#).

Early Childhood Program

The US Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES)'s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released findings from the Early Childhood Program Participation Survey of the National Household Education Surveys Program of 2012 (NHES:2012) that collects data on children's participation in early care, as well as parent satisfaction. Read more [here](#).

Child Health

Researchers published a study in the journal *Pediatrics* about preschoolers' engagement in physical activity, finding it to be suboptimal. Read coverage [here](#) and [here](#).

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Upcoming Events

June 24

First Focus's **Children's Budget Summit 2015** in Washington, DC.

[Register Here >](#)



Other News, Announcements and Resources

Early Childhood Investment

- The Roosevelt Institute's Chief Economist, Joseph Stiglitz, calls for investing in early childhood education among other things in "Rewriting the Rules of the American Economy: An Agenda for Growth and Shared Prosperity." Read more [here](#).
- Govs. Robert Bentley and Earl Ray Tomblin, from Alabama and West Virginia respectively, penned an op-ed in *Forbes* about the need for quality early childhood education investment. Read more [here](#).

Kindergarten

The Child Care & Early Education Research Connections created a new Topic of Interest page on full-day kindergarten and School Improvement Grants (SIGs). Read more [here](#).

Child Care

- ReadyNation's new report "Business Leader Actions to Support Early Childhood: A Global Imperative; A Local Opportunity" highlights positive examples of small and large organizations and business leaders around the world supporting children's path to being healthy and productive adults. Read more [here](#).
- The Atlantic's City Lab profiles how cities and counties are making innovative changes in child care and early education. Read more [here](#).

Dual Language Learners

New America's Dual Language Learner National Work Group "kicked off a 10-week series on research, policies, and practices pertaining to the education of dual language learners (DLLs) in U.S. public schools." Read more [here](#).

Mental Health

The CEO of Mental Health America wrote a blog post in Health Affairs calling for a different approach to children's mental health problems, including mental health screenings in school, changes to suspension practices, and a greater focus on early intervention. Read more [here](#).

Early Childhood

Invest in US hosted a virtual town hall on school-community partnerships to build strong early learning communities featuring officials from the White House, the US Department of Education, and the US Department of Health and Human Services, in addition to the Ounce of Prevention Fund and school district representatives. A video of the webinar is available [here](#).

Family Engagement

New America outlines 'Abriendo Puertas' (Opening Doors), a successful 10-week parent education program about child development for Latino parents. Read more [here](#).

Home Visiting

NPR and Kaiser Health News profile Nurse-Family Partnerships and the positive evidence surrounding home visiting models. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

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News From The States

[AZ](#) | [CA](#) | [CO](#) | [FL](#) | [GA](#) | [IL](#) | [LA](#) | [MI](#) | [NE](#) | [NM](#) | [NY](#) | [OK](#) | [OR](#) | [WA](#) | [DC](#) |

Arizona

- KJZZ reported on the National Institute for Early Education Research's State of Preschool findings that Arizona lags behind the national average in preschool participation and noted that pre-k is not funded through the state budget. Read more [here](#).

California

- ReadyNation argues California could save close to \$820 million in the long run if it provided an additional 31,500 preschool slots for low-income 4-year-olds in its new report, "You Get More Than What You Pay For." Read more [here](#).

- An Early Childhood Education Coalition called on the California State Assembly and Senate to prioritize quality early childhood education after Gov. Jerry Brown proposed only a minimal increase in his May Revision to his proposed 2015-16 state budget. Read more [here](#). More responses to the state budget [here](#) and [here](#).
- The LA School Report discusses the results of the National Institute for Early Education Research's (NIEER) annual report that finds California only met four of the 10 standards in light of the LA Unified School District plans to cut a preschool program. Read more [here](#).
- The Southern California Public Radio - KPCC reports on the UCLA Labor Center's program to spread information about how the value and availability of early education programs in California to immigrant families has been spreading through janitors. Read more [here](#).
- The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality and other experts unveiled the Equal Opportunity Plan, a new initiative for reducing poverty in the state that includes identifying critical life periods including early childhood, where low-income children are at a disadvantage. Read more [here](#).
- The leaders of Stronger California penned an op-ed in *The Sacramento Bee* calling for California's budget surplus to help poor families with child care. Read more [here](#).

Colorado

- The executive director of the Aspen Community Foundation wrote an op-ed in the *Aspen Times* about the importance of quality early childhood education in honor of May being the Month of the Young Child in the Roaring Fork Valley. Read more [here](#).
- Chalkbeat Colorado provides a roundup of education-related bills that failed in committee, as well as a highlight of the Senate passing House Bill 15-1317-the "pay for success" proposal laying the groundwork for the creative financing of social services. Read more [here](#).

Florida

- Gov. Rick Scott sent a letter to state agency heads asking them to prepare for a shutdown if the legislature cannot reach an agreement on the budget. The governor is refusing to expand Medicaid in the state, which is causing a budget deficit as the state loses federal money. Read more [here](#).
- There is a push in the state to revive two bills that died in Florida's abruptly-ended legislative session that would have overhauled the state's mental-health system (SB 7068) and improved standards for early education program providers in health, safety, and education (HB 7017, SB 7006). Read more [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).
- The founder of Healthy Aims for Little Ones and Families (HALO for Families) in Florida penned a guest column in honor of Head Start's 50th Birthday in the *Florida Times-Union*. Read more [here](#).
- The Florida Department of Education announced it would not release the voluntary pre-kindergarten (VPK) readiness rates for the 2013-14 school year due to technology problems. Read more [here](#).

- The *Florida Times-Union* reported on NIEER's findings that Florida is among the top three in the nation for providing access to free, voluntary preschool, yet shows a declining enrollment and spending far below the national average. Read more [here](#).

Georgia

- Gov. Nathan Deal's Education Reform Commission discusses additional money for advanced college degrees for pre-K teachers. Read more [here](#).

Illinois

- New America writes about Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel's new two-year grant program, "Early Learning for Immigrant Families" aimed at reducing immigrant families' barriers to early childhood program participation. Read more [here](#).
- Rep. Cheri Bustos discussed the need for affordable child care and celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Head Start. Read more [here](#).
- A retired US Army brigadier general with "Mission: Readiness" wrote a letter to the State Journal-Register about how the military suffers when Illinois fails to invest in its children. Read more [here](#).

Louisiana

- The *Daily Comet* profiles the regulation changes local child care centers are preparing to make in light of Act 3. Read more [here](#).

Michigan

- WILX.com reported on the skyrocketing cost of child care including a report by the Michigan League for Public Policy on the state of child care in Michigan. Read more [here](#).
- The coalition Education Schools Detroit released its ratings of early childhood programs in the Detroit-area. Read more [here](#).
- The Examiner published a column celebrating Head Start's 50th Anniversary. Read more [here](#).
- Model D Media published a story about the national Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program and Detroit's Neighborhood Services Organization (NSO) that provides it. The story is part of a larger effort funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to highlight people and programs that have positive impacts on Michigan children. Read more [here](#).

Nebraska

- Nebraska advocates launched their newly-developed Nebraska Early Childhood Business Roundtable website. Read more [here](#).
- The *Lincoln Journal Star* editorial board wrote about the compromise between Gov. Pete Ricketts and state Sen. Kathy Campbell to raise payments and address the

"cliff effect" in assistance programs (LB89), as well as legislation creating transitional child care (LB81). Read more [here](#).

New Mexico

- KRWG NPR published US Sen. Heinrich's 10 reasons why the US Senate Republican budget resolution was wrong for New Mexico including cuts to Head Start. Read more [here](#).
- The Albuquerque Journal discussed the positive results of a two-year study of Catholic Health Initiatives' St. Joseph's Children home visiting program, one of the largest in the country, and its ability to follow evidence-based practices. Read more [here](#).

New York

- New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio revealed a spending plan that includes additional funding for pre-k expansion and illustrates that it will be more expensive than originally expected due to increased demand and the cost of private space. Read more [here](#).
- Richard Buery, New York City's deputy mayor, reported that the number of homeless families applying to the city's pre-k program has gone up from fewer than one in three to more than half of all eligible 4-year-olds living in shelters. Read more [here](#).
- The Century Foundation released the report, "Lessons from New York City's Universal Pre-K Expansion: How a Focus on Diversity Could Make it Even Better," that provides a background on the city's universal pre-K expansion and how it fits into the national landscape, as well as, the issue of diversity in universal pre-K. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- New York City's Special Commissioner of Investigations reported on the several cases pre-K and kindergarten students leaving NYC schools unsupervised. Read more [here](#).
- New York City began soliciting proposals for half-day pre-k providers. Read more [here](#).
- A coalition of Orthodox Jews and secular parents united over the issue of half-day pre-k slots, asking for them to be made available for parents who desired it. Read more [here](#).
- MaryEllen Elia has been appointed as the next state education commissioner by the New York State Board of Regents, replacing John King, who now serves as senior adviser to Education Secretary Arne Duncan. Read more [here](#).

Oklahoma

- Gov. Mary Fallin signed into law H. B. 2157, the Family Support Accountability Act. The legislation directs the state's home visiting funds to go to effective programs. Read more [here](#).

Oregon

- Education advocates in Oregon are tracking the state's budget closely as the legislative budget only sets aside \$60 million for targeted education priorities as compared to the \$220 million requested by former Gov. John Kitzhaber. The Wilsonville Spokesman reports that early childhood programs may be the winner. Read more [here](#).
- Gov. Kate Brown named Salam Noor, previously the assistant superintendent of Salem-Keizer schools and assistant state superintendent at the Oregon Department of Education, as Oregon's new state schools chief. Read more [here](#).
- Richard P.F. Holt, a professor of economics at Southern Oregon University, penned an opinion piece in the Mail Tribune about the importance of high-quality preschool and intergenerational poverty. Read more [here](#).
- *The Oregonian* reports that while Oregon is among the top states for spending per child (despite some decreases over the years) and meeting quality standards, access to the program is extremely limited as enrollment among 4-year-olds remains below 10 percent according to the NIEER report. Read more [here](#).

Washington

- *The Olympian* published an editorial about the lack of progress for African-Americans in impoverished inner cities mentioning the need for early learning. Read more [here](#).
- NBC Right Now reported on NIEER's findings that few children are enrolled in quality preschool programming in light of recent proposals by the Senate and House to increase state spending for preschool enrollment. Read more [here](#).

Washington, DC

- The Office of the State Superintendent for Education released a new report evaluating the quality of the district's preschool programs during the 2013-14 school year. Read more [here](#).

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The Ounce of Prevention Fund gives children in poverty the best chance for success in school and in life by advocating for and providing the highest quality care and education from birth to age 5.

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 contact Eleanore McKee (emckee@theounce.org)



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