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Highlights

Indiana General Assembly Doubles Funding for State Pre-K Program

Governor Holcomb signed legislation that doubles the funding to \$22 million per year and expanding the number of eligible counties from 5 to 20 for the state's On My Way Pre-K. The legislation also rolls the state's early education matching grant (EEMG) program into On My Way. Read more from *Indiana Public Media* [here](#) and [here](#). A [coalition of advocates](#) pushed for the change through its campaign All IN 4 Pre-K.

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Federal Updates

Federal Budget

Congress voted in favor of a one week stopgap spending bill late last week to avert a government shutdown while details around a final FY2017 budget deal were worked out between members. Votes are expected soon on the proposed deal and emerging details suggest increase funding for a number of federal early learning programs including Head Start and CCDBG. Read more in [Education Week](#) and [Business Insider](#).

Healthcare

Republican leadership in the House revived its efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Rep. Tom MacArthur authored an amendment to the American Health Care Act (AHCA) that would allow states to apply for a waiver to exempt markets from certain regulations such as the community rating protection that prevents discrimination against people with pre-existing conditions. The amendment did not alter other changes in the bill such as structural changes to Medicaid. The plan failed to secure a new vote late last week, appears to still be on the table for now. [The Hill](#) reports that major healthcare groups like AARP continue to denounce the bill. [The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) and the [Center for American Progress](#) outlined how the changes would impact coverage and premiums.

Home Visiting Reauthorization

[Politico reports](#) on efforts to reauthorize funding for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program and its popularity with both parties.

Free and Reduced Lunch

The US Department of Agriculture released updates to the annual adjustments in Income Eligibility Guidelines for determining free and reduced price meal eligibility in response to annual updates to the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#).

Child Care

The US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Care introduced [child care technical assistance resources](#) that will ultimately be incorporated into Childcare.gov that is required on the CCDBG Act of 2014. This current page highlights existing technical resources and documentation and is intended for CCDF Administrators.

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Preschool

Brookings published a report, [Puzzling it out: The current state of scientific knowledge on pre-kindergarten effects-A consensus statement](#), which looks across research and practice to determine what we know about preschool programs and their effects. A task force of researchers lay out six consensus statements including "Children's early learning trajectories depend on the quality of their learning experiences not only before and during their pre-k year, but also following the pre-k year."

Child Care

- CLASP and NBCDI published "[CCDBG and Racial Equity: Opportunities in the CCDBG Reauthorization to Support Racial Equity in State Child Care and Early Learning Systems.](#)"
 - CLASP released a new [factsheet](#) projecting that 217,000 children could lose child care assistance without funding changes to CCDBG in 2018.
 - [NWLC published](#) state fact sheets detailing state child care policies.
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Fatherhood

The Administration for Children and Families Office of Planning Research and Evaluation [published a report](#) on how promoting responsible parenting among fathers who have histories of incarceration.

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New Research

Getting to School

Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis [published new research](#) that finds that taking the bus to school in kindergarten can have a positive effect on school attendance.

Health Care

A study from [Health Affairs](#) finds that low-income children with chronic problems who are shifted from CHIP to marketplace plans will face increased costs.

Reading

A [new study](#) from researchers at the Ohio State University finds that 1st graders reading skills are ahead of 1st graders' skills 12 years ago. [Education Week](#) reports on the development.

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Upcoming Events

May 17, 2017

An ad hoc committee under the auspices of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will hold its [third public session](#) in Washington, DC about its work to study how to fund early care and education for children from birth to kindergarten entry.

June 27-29, 2017

QRIS National Learning Network is hosting the [QRIS National Meeting](#) in Dallas, TX.

June 28-30, 2017

The Education Commission of the States will be hosting its [2017 National Forum on Education Policy](#) in San Diego on June 28-30 at the Hotel Del Coronado.

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. The call for proposals is now open until May 24. For further details on workshop proposals, visit the [Summit website](#).

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News and Resources

Immigration

- CLASP published a report ["Five Reasons Trump's Immigration Orders Harm Children."](#)
 - [New America writes](#) on supporting dual-language learners as children of immigrants.
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Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- [Education Week takes a look](#) at what elements of state ESSA plans have yet to still be determined.
- [PBS discusses](#) how states are measuring success in their new ESSA plans.
- [Education Week asks](#) what are the long-term goals for state ESSA plans.
- Elliot Regenstein and Maia Connors of the Ounce of Prevention Fund wrote for the [Fordham Institute's blog](#) on the importance of addressing the early grades in school improvement under ESSA.

Early Childhood Education

- Brookings looks at the policy and programs that invest in children and have longer-term payoffs in its [The Hutchins Center Explains series](#).
- [National League of Cities blogged](#) about the importance of maintaining funding for programs that help children.
- Abby McCloskey writes in the [National Review](#) about the importance of families in Republicans putting forth their agenda.
- Neil Irwin writes in [The New York Times' the Upshot](#) on how liberals have their own supply-side economics through programs to help children and families.
- [Christine Yeh writes](#) for *Education Week* on the importance of focusing on inequality when looking at the national education debate.

Child Care

- [New York Magazine writes](#) that parents need child care assistance more than paid leave.
- [Market Watch reviews](#) what you need to know about child care and taxes.
- [US News and World Report writes](#) on how child care and paid family leave could address the wage gap.
- [Harvard Business Review discusses](#) the role some companies are playing in easing the stress of their employees' child care.
- [KALW discusses](#) child care in the US with researcher Ajay Chaudry.
- [The New York Times writes](#) that child care assistance can have benefits to mothers and their sons in particular.

Kindergarten Readiness

- Brookings looks at [kindergarten readiness](#) and how to help determine if your child is ready for kindergarten in a new report.
- [NPR](#) looks at research that suggests that children should enroll in kindergarten whether or not they are considered ready.

Early Childhood Workforce

New American writes about the importance of [improving the early childhood workforce](#) to help with continuity and by focusing on [teacher well-being](#).

Parenting

[The Atlantic](#) looks at how Boston Basics is helping parents and children in their earliest years.

SNAP

Harvard's School of Public Health [published an interview](#) on how expanding SNAP can help families and children.

Social Emotional Learning

- [The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reports](#) the benefits of social-emotional learning to young children.
- [Ready Nation released a report](#) on the importance of social emotional skills in early childhood for long-term career success.

QRIS

BUILD released a [resource guide](#) for financing QRIS.

Pay For Success

[Urban Institute looks into](#) what President Trump's "skinny budget" proposal does and does not say for pay for success funding.

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News From The States

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Arizona

- [Glamour published](#) an interview with Arizona Congresswoman Martha McSally on the gender pay gap and caregiving.
- [The Arizona Republic reports](#) on efforts to fund full-day kindergarten in the state that are running into challenges that could result in not funding some low-income schools.

California

- [EdSource published](#) a report on the progress California has yet to make in offering full-day preschool.
- [The Los Angeles Wave reports](#) on efforts to address child poverty in California through recently proposed state legislation.
- [EdSource writes](#) that few districts are taking advantage of changes to expand access to transitional kindergarten.
- [89.3 KPCC discusses](#) how recent research on busing can inform efforts to combat kindergarten truancy.
- [The Press Telegram reports](#) that Palm Beach is one of the few counties to take advantage of new transitional pre-kindergarten changes and expand access.
- [89.3 KPCC reports](#) that Los Angeles Unified School District is piloting an expansion of a dual-language preschool program.

Colorado

- Governor John Hickenlooper signed into law [Senate Bill 17-110](#) that increases the number of unrelated children a home child care provider can care for without a license.
- [Chalkbeat writes](#) that key school funding legislation is on hold in Colorado.

- *Chalkbeat* reports on [efforts to pay higher-quality child care providers](#) in Colorado and the challenges this raises.
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Florida

- [Palm Beach Post reports](#) on the Opportunity Early Childhood Education and Family Center that offers high-quality learning opportunities for children and families.
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Georgia

- [41 NBC/WMGT reports](#) on a \$2.5 million grant to Georgia College and State University to support a new childhood literacy program.
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Illinois

- The Illinois Education Research Council (IERC) at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville [published a report](#) on Illinois' Early Childhood Innovation Zones.
 - *The Chicago Tribune* reports on recent research showing [little benefit to delaying kindergarten](#) or "redshirting."
 - *Education Week* discusses innovative efforts in Chicago to [personalize learning](#).
 - [The Daily Herald reports](#) on a state lawmaker getting a look at early education funding in Round Lake, IL.
 - [The Chicago Tribune reports](#) on the growth of early childhood programs on the south side of Chicago.
 - A judge denied the Chicago Public Schools its request for an injunction to block state aid for pensions to other school districts as a leverage point to address the financial distress CPS is facing. Mayor Emanuel announced that schools would remain open through the end of the year although the city still needs to find the money to pay for it. Read more in [Crain's Chicago Business](#).
 - *The Daily Herald* discusses the importance of building [early childhood tax credits](#) into tax reform.
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Indiana

- *Chalkbeat* reports on efforts in Indiana to [fund a virtual preschool program](#).
 - *The Post-Tribune* reports on the [release of Indiana Youth Institute's annual KIDS COUNT data book](#), detailing the education, health and economic state of Indiana's children.
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Louisiana

- [Education Week profiles](#) lessons from working toward earning an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate with the Children's Coalition for Northeast Louisiana.
 - Louisiana Policy Institute for Children tracks [current legislation](#) that has an effect on children and their well-being in the state.
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Maine

- [The Bangor Daily News published](#) an op-ed on how to address the state's child care affordability issues.
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Michigan

- [mLive reports](#) that members of Congress are advocating for more federal funding for Flint.
 - [Bridge Magazine writes](#) that child care is an issue that concerns employers and not just families.
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Nebraska

- [The York News-Times reports](#) on the importance of MIECHV funding for families and children.
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New Hampshire

- [The New Hampshire Union Leader reports](#) on efforts in the State House to make it harder to qualify for food stamps.
 - [The Concord Monitor reports](#) that Governor John Sununu is pushing for full-day kindergarten.
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New Mexico

- [KUNM reports](#) that Governor Susana Martinez vetoed a bill funding a new home visiting program through Medicaid.
 - [Albuquerque Journal reports](#) on how the Santa Fe preschool program funding will work if approved during a citywide vote on May 2.
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New York

- New York City announced this week that it will be extending full-day, high-quality public early childhood education to 3-year-olds with 3-K for All, a program that builds on the city's existing Pre-K for All program that has served 4-year-olds. NYC will join the ranks of Washington as one of the few to offer universal preschool to 3-year-olds. Learn more about 3-K for All by visiting the [program website](#), watching [Mayor de Blasio's announcement](#) and by reading [The New York Times article](#).
- [Spectrum News Central New York reports](#) on the struggles families face finding child care options in central New York.
- [Business Insider reports](#) that universal preschool in New York City is helping improve children's health according to new research.
- [Schulyer Center published](#) an overview of New York State 2017-2018 budget and how it affected the well-being of New Yorkers, particularly those living in poverty.

- [New York Post reports](#) on elevated levels of lead in the drinking water of some of the city's preschool programs.

Oklahoma

- [The Oklahoman reports](#) on the need for non-traditional child care options for parents working atypical hours.
- [Public Radio Tulsa reports](#) on efforts to encourage parents to enroll their children in preschool.

Oregon

- [The Oregonian reports](#) that Portland may see cuts to some of its preschool programs.

Tennessee

- [The Tennessean reports](#) that the Tennessee House of Representatives approved HB 872, which calls for a review of all state laws and policies related to early-grade school suspensions. The Senate has yet to vote on the bill.

Washington, DC

- [The Washington Post reports](#) on the DC Mayor's budget proposal to address the shortage of infant and toddler care.
- [Inside Higher Ed](#) looks at DC's recent policy change mandating lead teachers in child care centers have bachelor's degrees.

Wisconsin

- [WUWM Milwaukee Public Radio reports](#) on how Educare is helping Milwaukee children and families.
- [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reports](#) on state efforts to address challenges with changes to the child care program that had parents paying providers with a debit card as opposed to getting paid directly by the state.
- [WUWM Milwaukee Public Radio discusses](#) how trauma in early childhood can have lifelong effects.

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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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