



National Policy Digest

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Highlights

Congress Yet to Reauthorize Bipartisan Home Visiting Program

The fate of the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood (MIECHV) program remains up in the air after Congress failed to extend it before the program expired at the end of the fiscal year this past September. Before the program expired, the House and Senate passed bills to reauthorize the program for five years and provide additional funding although there were some discrepancies in the approach to funding the bill. Most recently, lawmakers have made [progress on a deal](#) that would extend MIECHV, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and other health-related programs that could be added to larger negotiations on federal funding. The current Continuing Resolution for FY2018 ends this Friday and CHIP and MIECHV are a couple of a number of items that are being worked out in the final ours. Members of the [National Home Visiting Coalition](#) and partners continue to monitor the situation. Read more from [First Five Years Fund](#).

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Federal Updates

CHIP

Congress has also failed to pass an extension for CHIP since the program expired at the end

of the fiscal year. [Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families](#) explains how in the absence of new appropriations some states have been dipping into carryover funds (each allotment can be used for a two-year period) and more have been awarded redistributed funds from CMS in an attempt to keep programs afloat for longer. As noted above, lawmakers are [working on a deal](#) to extend the program in the larger federal funding negotiations.

Federal Tax Reform

Republicans in Congress secured enough votes to pass a federal tax reform bill before the end of 2017 after negotiating on the differences in the House- and Senate-passed bills. The [Tax Cuts and Jobs Act \(HR 1\)](#) is estimated to add at least \$1.5 trillion to the deficit and repeals the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate in the process.

- Media coverage and additional details available from [The New York Times](#), [Vox Media](#) and [The Wall Street Journal](#).
 - Find fact sheets and press releases from members of Congress on the [Senate Finance](#) and [House Ways and Means](#) majority websites.
 - Research and advocacy organizations have been analyzing the impact of the legislation on working families and their children including: [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), [First Focus Campaign for Children](#), [First Five Years Fund](#) and the [Center for Law and Social Policy \(CLASP\)](#).
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Child Care

- The [Office of Child Care \(OCC\) announced](#) the FY 2019-2021 Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan Preprint with a request for public comment. This publication presents the process and criteria for requesting additional background check requirements for interstate check components and for addressing the backlog of completing background checks for existing providers.
 - OCC also released a notice entitled Food Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs: Request for information on their [website](#), and an [additional request](#) to seek approval to collect information on ECE professional development coaching practice.
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Higher Education Act

The House Committee on Education and the Workforce introduced the [Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform \(PROSPER\) Act \(H.R. 4508\)](#) last week and marked up the bill earlier this week.

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Head Start Association (NHSA) recently released a publication entitled ["New Early Childhood Coordination Requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\): A Toolkit for State and Local Educational Agencies, Head Start Programs, and the Early Childhood Field."](#) The toolkit will provide state and local educational stakeholders with the appropriate tools to successfully meet the statute's new requirements and support young children in their schooling.

Equity

CLASP examines the impact of institutional and structural racism on child care and education. The new report, "[Equity Starts Early: Addressing Racial Inequities in Child Care and Early Education Policy](#)," highlights racial disparities that occur due to racism, and explores these issues in the realm of early childhood programs, policies and systems.

Child Development

ZERO to THREE [released a report](#) examining public perceptions of child development. Specifically, this research looks at messages and policies regarding emotional development of young children, and how these messages resonate with a national survey of voters. Key findings, a full list of which can be found on the [ZERO TO THREE website](#), includes a result of nine out of ten voters believing brain development is a crucial topic and receiving majority support.

Child Care

- Child Care Aware dives into the true cost of child care around the United States with a comprehensive and detailed report, recently [released on their website](#) in full.
 - A new report "[Undervalued: A Brief History of Women's Care Work and Child Care Policy in the United States](#)" released by the National Women's Law Center (NWLC) focuses on the necessity to raise wages for those working in child care. The [full report](#) goes into detail regarding the history of women in the labor force and its relationship to child care.
 - NWLC also [issued a release](#) addressing gaps in state child care assistance. A [fact sheet](#) on this report can also be found on the NWLC website.
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Infants and Toddlers

CLASP and ZERO TO THREE's [Building Strong Foundations: Advancing Comprehensive Policies for Infants, Toddlers and Families](#) includes 13 policy recommendations detailing needs of infants, toddlers and their families. This project seeks to promote policies that address the well-being of these groups.

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New Research

Early Childhood

The RAND Corporation published [Taking Stock of Outcomes and Economic Returns from Early Childhood Programs](#), a report that synthesizes the research on early childhood program evaluations.

Mental Health

[Children's National Health System](#) led a multidisciplinary study that was published in *Pediatrics* details research indicating that pediatricians would mandate mental health screenings during checkups if increased training and support were provided.

Autism in Females

[New research](#) from The Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders at Children's National Health

System details parental perspective gender differences in social aspects of autism. The research study finds that parents perceive female children with autism having more day-to-day skill difficulty than males.

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News and Resources

Parents as Teachers

[Parents as Teachers' Jill Saunders](#) writes a piece in *Media Planet* reminding readers of the significance of teaching outside of the classroom.

Children and Media

Published in *Child Development*, a [recent study](#) looks at parental perspective of 2 to 5-year-old digital screen usage and psychological well-being. The article also looks at these findings in the realm of caregiver attachment, curiosity and positive affect. Brett Molina from [USA Today](#) further discusses the findings.

Milestone Tracker

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released a free app that allows parents to track child development. The app includes milestone checklists, tips and activities, advice on when to act early to speak with a healthcare professional and a personalized milestone summary. More about the app, including a link to download, on the [CDC website](#).

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News From The States

[CA](#) | [CO](#) | [IL](#) | [LA](#) | [MI](#) | [NE](#) | [NM](#) | [ND](#) | [PA](#) | [DC](#) | [WI](#) |

California

- ZERO TO THREE and *Maternal Mental Health* [provide recommendations](#) to improve the perinatal maternal health care system in Los Angeles County.
- [JAMA](#) has released research detailing marijuana use among pregnant females in California spanning nearly a decade.

Colorado

- J. Adrian Stanley for the [Colorado Springs Independent](#) looks at funding shortages and the introduction of wait lists for state subsidized child care assistance program in El Paso County, a reportedly low-income area.

Illinois

- [PRI's The World](#) looks at Chicago's infant mortality rate, and why leaders who are

tackling this persistent issue are looking to Cuba for inspiration.

Louisiana

- Jess Clark writes for [New Orleans Public Radio: Education Desk](#) regarding the high price of child care, and the difficult situations and choices forced upon families that follow.
 - [New Orleans Metro Education News](#) and [The Times-Picayune](#) talk Louisiana's early childhood education, and it's new ranking system
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Michigan

- In the [Detroit News, Michigan's Children's Matthew Gillard discusses](#) special education investments and their crucial role in future improvement of educational success and quality of life, particularly for vulnerable families.
 - [Michigan State University Today](#) looks at MSU students influencing preschoolers' reading skills.
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Nebraska

- [The North Plate Telegraph](#) examines programs hoping to improve early education through child care.
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New Mexico

- A joint effort with New Mexico in Depth, [Las Cruces Sun-News reports](#) on their hosting a conversation featuring State Senator Bill Soules and Representative Rebecca Dow on early childhood education.
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North Dakota

- [Fox West Dakota details](#) North Dakota's struggle with CHIP funding.
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Pennsylvania

- [New research](#) published in Science Advances looks at the significance of fracking on infant human health and Pennsylvania. The article suggests that there is evidence for negative health impact, particularly for those infants in utero within a certain distance of fracking sights. Read more from [PBS](#).
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Washington, DC

- Rachel M. Cohen for the [Washington City Paper](#) writes about the regulations governing Washington DC's different publicly funded pre-k programs.
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Wisconsin

- In an [op-ed for *Journal Sentinel*](#), Alan J. Borsuk talks New York City early education, and how Wisconsin could learn from recent successes.

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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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