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Highlights

Federal Budget Deal Includes Reauthorization for MIECHV and Additional Funding for CCDBG

Congress passed another continuing resolution for FY18 that included a number of positive provisions for early learning including a reauthorization of the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program for five years. The deal also included \$5.8 billion over two years in funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), effectively doubling the program's discretionary funding and paving the way for implementing important quality improvements to child care that were included in the 2014 reauthorization of the program. [The New York Times](#) outlines the increases in funding for the budget as a whole over the next two years, or rather increasing the spending caps for defense and nondefense discretionary spending. Read more from [First Five Years Fund](#), [Center for Law and Social Policy](#), [National Women's Law Center](#).

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Federal Updates

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

This month marked the 25th anniversary of the [passage of FMLA](#). The Partnership for Women & Families marked the occasion with a digital day of action, calling for more attention to research supporting the benefits of paid family leave.

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Policy Trends & Analysis

School Discipline

The Education Commission of the States released a series of three publications highlighting state trends on ["Alternative School Discipline Strategies,"](#) ["Restraint and Seclusion"](#) and ["Suspension and Expulsion."](#) These publications cover the status of school discipline in the United States, including recent changes in legislation, school discipline alternatives and ways to create a safe school environment.

State Early Childhood Trends

[Education Commission of the States](#) and [First Five Years Fund](#) have highlighted mentions of early childhood in 2018 governors' state of the state addresses thus far.

Preschool to Third Grade

The Education Commission released ["Initiatives From Preschool to Third Grade: A Policymaker's Guide"](#) to serve as a primer for policymakers and their staff highlighting early learning legislation and key state examples.

Instructional Quality

The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) published ["Building Capacity to Enact Change for Classroom Quality Improvement in New Jersey,"](#) which outlines the strategies and lessons learned from building a peer learning community in select school districts in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Education.

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New Research

Education Research

A [new report](#) was released from the Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis Project (CCEEPRA) entitled "Validation of the Quality Ratings Used in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS): A Synthesis of State Studies." This report addresses whether QRIS ratings effectively differentiate the quality of early child care and education programs that run under state QRIS.

Early Education Benefits

[New research published](#) in JAMA Pediatric examines life outcomes of children who attended Chicago Child-Parent Centers in the late 1980's-early 1990's. This research highlights the specified, research-based preschool program and educational outcomes of participants decades later. [Education Week](#) also discusses the findings of this research.

Medicaid

A recent analysis from Johns Hopkins published in [Pediatrics](#) reports the benefits of low-income parents enrolling in Medicaid for themselves and their children. Findings of the study highlight an intersection between Medicaid enrollment, well-child visits, income and the federal poverty level.

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News and Resources

Household Income and Birth

[The Urban Institute's Alexandra Stanczyk writes](#) about the relationship between changes in household income and the arrival of a newborn child, and how it highlights the significance of paid medical and family leave. In particular, this piece highlights the likelihood of a decreased income level for those with new children, as well as the discrepancies between individuals for deeper income reduction.

Early Childhood Data

The Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis Project (CCEPRA), through the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services [released a new guide](#) for researchers who use child-related administrative data. These guidelines highlight existing resources that help researchers with data analysis.

ECE Legislation Leaders

[Education Week's Christina Samuels](#) talks about the push for early childhood education nationwide, and the progress made by state leaders in this initiative.

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News From The States

[AR](#) | [CA](#) | [CO](#) | [IL](#) | [NE](#) | [NM](#) | [NY](#) | [PA](#) |

Arkansas

- [The Hechinger Report](#) looks at a program in Arkansas helping low-income parents graduate community college at a quicker rate.

California

- [The Center for Law and Social Policy \(CLASP\)](#) blogs about California's headway in expanding home visiting programs.
- Learning Policy Institute issued a new report, "[Building an Early Learning System that Works: Next Steps for California](#)" that highlights California's progress and challenges in building an improved early learning system.
- [The Mercury News reports](#) on a statewide child advocacy organization, Children Now. The piece also highlights shortcomings in California's state of early childhood education, particularly for low-income children.
- [Sarah Jackson writes for New America](#) about how a free apprenticeship program is helping early childhood workers earn additional education and training.

Colorado

- [The Denver Post reports](#) on the benefits and uncertainties of expanding the child care tax credit in Colorado.

Illinois

- [Route Fifty looks](#) at the recent initiative by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, The University of Chicago and Thrive Chicago to develop a quality of life index for youth that will inform future policy and budget.

Nebraska

- Nebraska state representative Rick Kolowski writes for the [Omaha World-Herald](#) on the significance of making investments in education.

New Mexico

- [The Santa Fe New Mexican details](#) how New Mexico state democrats are pushing for the state to use money from the land grant fund to bankroll early education programs.
- [La Cruces Sun-News editorial board highlights](#) the necessity to invest in the children of New Mexico, and recent legislative sessions relating to early childhood education.

New York

- [Chalkbeat](#) looks at the impact and recommendations of the mayor's budget for 3-k preschool sites.

Pennsylvania

- Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, writes an op-ed for the [Philadelphia Tribune](#) regarding the impact of recent federal policy changes on child health care.
- [New Castle News](#) details Governor Tom Wolf's call for increased school funding.

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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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