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**Highlights**

**Groundbreaking Report on Financing ECE**

The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine convened a committee of experts to study how to fund ECE that is accessible, affordable for families and of high quality. In its report, ["Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education,"](#) the committee concludes that "transforming the financing structure for ECE to meet the needs of all children and families will require greater coordination among financing mechanisms, as well as significant mobilization of financing and other resources across the public and private sectors." The report is a follow up to the vision outlined in the 2015 report ["Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8."](#)

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## Federal Updates

### Federal Budget

In response to the Trump Administration's FY2019 budget request last month, several House committees have sent budget requests to the House Budget Committee detailing spending needs for programs under their jurisdiction and reacting to the new FY2019 Budget. This all comes as negotiations are still underway for finalizing FY2018 budget before the end of the most recent continuing resolution (CR) on March 23. The last CR is the one which also allowed appropriators to incorporate new, higher, spending caps into a FY2018 Omnibus spending bill, that includes an unprecedented \$5.8 billion in funding over two years for the Child Care and Development Block Grant program (CCDBG). Unfortunately, as the deadline quickly approached, recent disagreement among appropriators around policy riders has put the Omnibus budget negotiations on hold. Read more from [First Five Years Fund](#).

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### Immigration

[Governing](#) discusses how the proposed immigration changes around "public charge" that [Vox](#) and [Reuters](#) first shared that proposed immigration policy changes are already scaring families from accessing services.

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## Policy Trends & Analysis

### Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

First Five Years Fund published its latest addition to its ESSA toolkit of resources, "[Early Learning in State ESSA Plans: Implementation Snapshot](#)" that provides an early look at where states are leveraging ESSA to develop new or bolster ongoing early childhood education efforts.

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### Child Care

- Child Care Aware released "[Millennial Generation: How the Changing Economic Environment Impacts Parents' Ability to Afford Child Care.](#)"
  - The Center for American Progress' Simon Workman published a new report, "[Where Does Your Child Care Dollar Go?: Understanding the True Cost of Quality Early Childhood Education.](#)" focusing on understanding the true cost of quality early education and where program fees are spent in order to inform those who may be paying for these services.
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### Immigration

The Center for Law and Social Policy released two companion reports about the impact of proposed immigration policy changes is affecting young children. "[Our Children's Fear: Immigration Policy's Effects on Young Children](#)" is based on 150 interviews of early child care and early education professionals in six states--California, Georgia, Illinois, New Mexico, North Carolina and Pennsylvania--and indicates fear of deportation, interruption of daily routine, decreasing access to health services, lack of resources and economic instability as massive themes and concerns for children's long-term well-being. "[Immigration Policy's Harmful Impacts on Early Care and Education](#)" describes professionals that care for young

children in immigrant families, their perception on how families are coping with the issues, and provides guidance for supporting the early childhood workforce.

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### **Federal Spending**

The Center for the Study of Social Policy released "[Federal Spending Prenatal to Three: Developing a Public Response to Improving Developmental Trajectories and Preventing Inequities](#)" which provides estimates of federal spending for pregnant women, infants and toddlers, birth to three.

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### **Infant Care**

The National Women's Law Center wrote "[Shortchanging Our Youngest Children: State Payment Rates for Infant Care](#)" which includes state-by-state data from February 2017 on payment rates for providers caring for infants whose families receive child care assistance.

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### **Medicaid**

Mark Wietecha writes for [The Hill](#) detailing federal policy scenarios that could affect millions of children enrolled in Medicaid and Congress' role in the outcome of these legislative outcomes.

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### **State ECE Policy**

The National Women's Law Center published its [annual report](#) on state early childhood education legislative updates.

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## **New Research**

### **Executive Function**

A recent [Brookings](#) article discusses learning and executive function in an age of technology. Specifically, the authors--Claire Cameron, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek and Helyn Kim--discuss learning a breadth of skills, which would likely result in school enrichment. They cite teaching skills such as collaboration, communication, content, critical thinking, creative innovation and confidence as critical thinking areas which reflect models of workplace needs and discussions about cradle to career growth.

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### **Immigrant Access**

New America's Aaron Loewenberg highlights a recently released Urban Institute study, [Expanding Preschool Access for Children of Immigrants](#), which aims to provide a reference for policy makers interested in reducing barriers to pre-k entry for immigrant families. [Loewenberg conducts](#) a Q&A with head researcher Erica Greenberg, discussing the report and its implications.

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### **Child Development**

Novel [research published](#) in Early Childhood Research Quarterly, entitled "Effects of Maternal Mentalization-Related Parenting On Toddlers' Self-Regulation," found that mentalization in parenting promotes toddler self-regulation. The study also supports mentalization-related parenting programs to support at risk families.

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## Mental Health

[U.S. News and World Report](#) highlights a study published in the British Journal of Psychiatry that found that 1 in 4 pregnant women have mental health issues. As indicated in the article, diagnoses include depression (found in 11%), anxiety (15%), eating disorders (2%), obsessive-compulsive disorder (2%), post-traumatic stress disorder (just under 1%) and smaller incidences of bipolar disorder and other disorders. The piece also highlights the plethora of options available to treat pregnant women.

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## News and Resources

### Home Visiting

Check out this month's Achieve OnDemand™ online, learning offerings for home visitors and supervisors. Each month there is a new set of live, one-hour webinars facilitated by home visiting experts. You can also take advantage of self-paced trainings that cover critical topics such as home visiting foundations, trauma-informed practice, infant mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse, ASQ-3™ and more. Visit our [website](#) for a full listing.

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### Preschool Financing

The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes announced a redesign of its "[Cost of Preschool Quality & Revenue calculator \(CPQ&R\)](#)" a free Excel-based tool to help determine costs and funding sources related to implementing high-quality preschool programs.

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### Co-Sleeping

For [Futurity Katie Bohn discusses](#) results from a new study indicating the possibility of mothers who co-sleep with their infants potentially experiencing more feelings of depression, worrying about infant sleep and perceiving criticism about their parenting decisions.

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## News From The States

[AZ](#) | [CA](#) | [CO](#) | [FL](#) | [GA](#) | [IL](#) | [KS](#) | [LA](#) | [MI](#) | [NY](#) | [PA](#) | [RI](#) | [WI](#) |

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### Arizona

- Russell Begaye, Navajo Nation president, [told the press](#) he would approve funding to support a diversion of \$6.3 million from the tribe's rainy day fund to the Head Start program, which has had inconsistent federal funding in the past.

- [The Arizona Daily Star](#) published a piece on Arizona's history of managing TANF, SNAP, and Medicaid benefits and how this affects its residents.
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## California

- [Voices of San Diego](#) looks at the San Diego Unified School District's Preschool for All program, and the plans to close an increasing amount of development centers that enroll children who have working or student parents and meet income eligibility guidelines.
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## Colorado

- Recently published in [Chalkbeat](#), Anne Schimke discusses the proposed opening of a 24/7 child care facility, intended to prevent child neglect and abuse and keep children out of the foster care system. The center would give parents a safe place to leave their youngest children when they're facing a crisis.
  - [The Colorado Independent examines](#) claims from gubernatorial candidate Jared Polis, who recently indicated his intention to make preschool and kindergarten free for Colorado children.
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## Florida

- House Bill CS/CS/HB 1091 - Early Learning (Grall, R-Vero Beach) [passed the Florida Legislature](#) on a bipartisan and nearly unanimous vote and has been sent to Governor Scott for his signature. The landmark bill is considered to be the most impactful childcare legislation since the in School Readiness Act (Florida's subsidized childcare program) passed in 1999. The new law will require the Florida Office of Early Learning (OEL) to adopt program accountability measures, including a provider and program assessment of teacher-child interactions, in order to begin to weed out the lowest performing providers and to establish a baseline for improvement and performance-based reimbursement. An appropriation of \$6 million in federal CCDBG trust fund dollars will pay for these baseline assessments. The law will also require the OEL to identify an observation-based child outcome measure to strengthen quality improvement strategies, improve early childhood teaching practices and increase positive child outcomes.
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## Georgia

- [Education Week](#) details Atlanta 323: Partnership for School Readiness & Achievement, a partnership within the Urban Child Study Center at Georgia State University.
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## Illinois

- Although budget cuts have resulted in many universities across the state stopping early child care services, child care for students at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville is still surviving according to reports from Fox 2 Now and the [Belleville News-Democrat](#).
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## Kansas

- The University of Kansas [released an article](#) detailing the process of improving children's response to literacy instruction (by training psychologists, special early childhood educators, and teachers who individualize literacy interventions), and the role that researchers have to play in helping children meet literacy goals in preschool.
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## Louisiana

- In Baton Rouge, retired military leaders released a new report showing that three out of four young adults in the state are unable to join the military because they are too uneducated, too overweight and have a record of crime or drug abuse. Read the article from [KALB](#).
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## Michigan

- Governor Rick Snyder proposed to spend \$5 million in state funds on Early On Michigan, an early intervention program that seeks to deliver services to children with developmental or learning disabilities. Read more from [Chalkbeat](#) and [Education Dive](#).
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## New York

- Jane Lynch and Dr. Leesha Hoilette, board members of The Children's Agenda, wrote an [op-ed in Democrat & Chronicle](#) on supporting expanded access to affordable child care.
  - New York State Senator Michael H. Ranzenhofer (R) introduced legislation (S7815) that expands New York's Child and Dependent Tax Credit by doubling the current cap on child care expenses according to [The Batavian](#).
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## Pennsylvania

- Philadelphia's [CBS Philly](#) reports on Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney's five-year plan, discussing the pros and cons of a recent proposal, which would raise taxes in

order to pay for schools, but also reduce the number of available pre-k slots for children.

- Olympic medalist Allison Braver writes for [The Inquirer](#) on the potential long-term benefits of investment in child care.

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## Rhode Island

- In a piece entitled "[The Importance of Investing in Early Childhood Education](#)," *the Rhode Show* displays a video and reports information regarding critical returns of early child care.

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## Wisconsin

- [The Urban Milwaukee](#) talks about the decline of families who are covered for child care from state funding, at an overall rate of 28%.

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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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