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Working Together for a Better Beginning

"In today's economy, when having both parents in the workforce is an economic necessity for many families, we need affordable, high-quality childcare more than ever. It's not a nice-to-have -- it's a must-have. So it's time we stop treating childcare as a side issue, or as a women's issue, and treat it like the national economic priority that it is for all of us."

-- President Obama, January 2015, State of the Union Address

Early Childhood Development

Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20447

August 12, 2015

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 8

Have you been to our website recently?

Learn more about the Office of Early Childhood Development and click [here](#).

Check out these ACF blogs

The ACF blog — The Family Room — talks about new initiatives at the agency, success stories and policy announcements.

[A Head Start for Mothers](#)

"Head Start fortified my confidence as a mother and gave me the tools I needed to get back on the path to self-sufficiency."

[A Busy Week for Early Childhood Development](#)

Several conferences took place focusing on the needs of young children, resulting in amazing action steps going forward.

[Parenting Wisdom – Gained and Shared](#)

Last month we held the State and Territories Child Care Administrators Meeting (STAM). For me it was like "old home week" with so many former colleagues and friends to get caught up with. It was a time to reflect on all that we have accomplished and what remains to be done to implement the Administration's vision for our youngest children. With the clock ticking, it is time to focus on how we build on the work already done to ensure that all children in America have access to the highest early learning experiences that a nation with our resources can provide. The overall objective has always been a more seamless early childhood system that serves families beginning prenatally and moves on from birth to five and into school, making sure everyone has access to the resources it takes to produce the highest quality programs that research demands. Our goal is a system that is aligned both vertically (Prenatal to school entry) and horizontally across programs (Head Start, Child Care and Pre-K programs and other early learning services).



Access to Quality remains our mantra. During my opening remarks at STAM, I reviewed some of the milestones achieved so far – the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant, the creation and full implementation of the Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships, the draft revisions to the Head Start Performance Standards, the new Head Start Outcomes Framework, the completion of the National Academy of Science's study on the early childhood workforce and the completion of "Caring for Our Children Basics." Each of these represents a building block for the future of what Early Care and Education can look like. Better alignment of programs and sharing of resources is critical to our goal. Using the well-researched Head Start model of comprehensive services grounded in solid parental engagement is our vision; we now need to focus like a laser on strategies to achieve it.

Meet adoptive parents Félix and Rosana Correa of Puerto Rico.

[Dreams Realized](#)

An adoption through the foster care system changed everything for Michael and his sister Ashlea.

[Answering the Call to Help Children](#)

The Harding Family

[Ending Child Abuse and Neglect Deaths](#)

Federal commission is having conversations with state, tribes and local communities. Next stop: New York City.

See more blogs and visit [The Family Room Blog](#).

Featured Reports



Recently posted on the [OPRE Site](#): **Three Briefs on the Use of Ongoing Assessment in Early Childhood Programs**



The use of ongoing child assessment for examining children's

performance, tracking their progress, and individualizing instruction to their unique strengths, needs, and interests is considered a best practice in early education programs. In the Fall of 2012, the [Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation \(OPRE\)](#) funded a project to learn more about whether and how teachers use ongoing assessments to tailor their instruction and to help develop criteria for determining the quality of teachers' ongoing assessment practices. The three June 2015 briefs that are now available on this topic are

Here are our key strategies:

1. **Full implementation of the EHS-CC Partnerships.** These partnerships are helping us understand how to better align systems in early childhood and how to focus on high quality comprehensive services for all children. From this work, we can better understand the challenges as well as the benefits of horizontal alignment.
2. **Financing ECE.** To ensure adequate funds are available we need to know the cost of high quality and how to put the nation on a pathway to ensuring adequate funding. Any proposal must balance what parents can afford to pay in order to have access to high quality while at the same time ensuring those who provide the services are fairly compensated. Again, the EHS-CC partnerships are helping us understand this and we will continue to evaluate them as we move along. (A special shout out to those of you who are working with your EHS-CCP programs to make this possible.)
3. **Workforce development.** The relationship between the adult and the child is the single biggest predictor of quality yet as a nation we have struggled to define what that means. Thanks to the National Academy of Science Study on the workforce, we now have a clear national goal and recommendations to support that goal that can guide our work. Our goal now is to turn the recommendations into national and state plans of action.
4. **Accountability that leads to improvement not destruction.** Aligned monitoring and building a common baseline of standards to help states share goals and resources across funding streams is critical. Using "Caring for Our Children - Basics" as shared and minimal health and safety standards and moving to higher levels of quality. Whether this is through a Statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System or some other tiered system, the system needs to address all of the components of quality that we hope to achieve including parental engagement, basic nutrition, social emotional and health services, and developmental screenings. The HHS White Paper on monitoring will hopefully guide states as they seek to improve these systems.
5. **Alignment of federal training and technical assistance.** In order to leverage federal resources, this fall we will finalize the new T&TA system. Our goal is to ensure that higher quality services for children are the ultimate goal. Whether a child is served in child care, Head Start or any other publicly funded program, the quality should be consistent. Therefore, federal funds that support quality should be available to the widest possible audience.
6. **Parent Engagement.** From the half century of experience with Head Start, we know how critical parent engagement is in the earliest years of a child's development. Through our work with the EHS-CC Partnerships, we are seeking to understand how to ensure parents are engaged at every level beginning at birth. Our work on family engagement, expulsion policies, social emotional development and mental health consultation is just beginning. We are proud of the joint development of a new federal TA center to support this work.
7. **Data and technology.** Fundamental to our success is better use of all resources and shared use of data. Technology is critical and we are developing a strategic plan to use technology to support the early childhood field and states, including our rural areas. This included using technology to share train the workforce, share information with parents, report monitoring results, and shared data through management information systems. We recently previewed technology developed in by the Maricopa Association of Governments in Phoenix, Arizona to identify "child care deserts," where there is no child care, but especially no high quality child care. These efforts can help us build for tomorrow. At STAM, we also viewed the results of Wisconsin's efforts to create shared data systems for the CCDF program.

listed below.

[What Does it Mean to use Ongoing Assessment to Individualize Instruction in Early Childhood?](#) Key factors that influence a teacher's ability to use curriculum-embedded approaches to ongoing assessment include programmatic supports, such as training; teacher's knowledge; and family involvement. [Explore this brief](#) to learn more about how practitioners can use ongoing child assessment for individualization of instruction in ECE classrooms.

[What Do We Know About How Early Childhood Teachers Use Ongoing Assessment?](#) Despite a growing emphasis on ongoing child assessment for individualization, we know little about how, or how well, early care and education teachers implement ongoing assessment to adjust instruction or caregiving. [Explore this new brief](#) to learn more about our current understanding and the remaining gaps in knowledge.

[Tailored Teaching: The Need for Stronger Evidence About Early Childhood Teachers' Use of Ongoing Assessment to Individualize Instruction](#) Early care and education professionals consider using ongoing child assessment to tailor instruction as a best practice in early education programs. It is also a requirement in the Head Start Performance Standards. [Explore this brief](#) to learn research-to-practice findings and recommended practices from a literature review on ongoing assessment in early childhood settings.

**Child Care & Early Education
RESEARCH CONNECTIONS**
Promoting high-quality research and informing policy

[Research Connections](#) regularly reviews its latest acquisitions and identifies reports and journal articles of high policy relevance.

[What is the relationship between](#)

Our final and perhaps most far-reaching initiative will lay the groundwork for how we fund child care. In February, the President announced an \$82 billion/ten year proposal for CCDBG that would on average double the reimbursement rates for eligible children (up to 200% of poverty). This initiative will increase quality and comprehensive services for all children birth to four. It is a long-term vision for the direction of this country as we support our working families, their children's development, and their teacher's ability to earn a wage that allows them to provide the quality we need without being forced into poverty themselves.

As I reminisced with old friends at STAM, I realized that there is still much work to be done. However, now more than at any time in my life, we in early childhood education are all working together with a shared vision that all of our children deserve the best chance in life.

Linda

Public Comment Period Extended 30 Days

[Increased Head Start Quality through Revision of the Head Start Program Performance Standards](#)

The Office of Head Start has announced an extension for the public to comment on the proposed Head Start Performance Standards from August 18, 2015 to September 17, 2015. By extending the comment period into September when children are in Head Start programs, we hope to encourage more feedback from parents and others in the Head Start community. Our goal is to obtain input from as many sectors as possible. Because parents play such a vital role in Head Start, we wanted to ensure they have time and opportunity to provide comments.

The Head Start NPRM Extension of Comment Period has been posted for public inspection on the Federal Register site:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/08/12/2015-19747/head-start-performance-standards-extension-of-comment-period>

A high-quality Head Start program can change the course of a child's life, and engage the potential of the entire family. That is why this Administration has made quality improvements to the Head Start program a priority. The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) announced builds on past efforts to strengthen and improve the Head Start program and is a reaffirmation of the President's commitment to ensure every Head Start child has access to high-quality early learning.

After reading the NPRM, please submit your official comments through [Regulations.gov](#). Only comments that are submitted through the FederalRegister.gov or Regulations.gov sites, or the identified alternative methods, will be officially considered before the publication of the Final Rule.

This NPRM will now be open for comment until Thursday, September 17, 2015.

Select the link to submit a comment:

http://www.regulations.gov#!submitComment;D=ACF_FRDOC_0001-0057

Select the link to view the full NPRM:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/06/19/2015-14379/head-start-performance-standards>

[parents' support for early learning and children's academic skills and preschool enrollment and how does this vary by parents' nativity status?](#)

[To what extent has the cost of child care in the U.S. increased over time?](#)

[How do dimensions of teachers' literacy instruction in Head Start classrooms differ across two large-group activities?](#)

[What are recent developments in the education and preparation of early childhood teachers?](#)

[What is the role of learning-related behaviors in the relationship of executive function to academic achievement?](#)

[How do teacher and classroom supports promote kindergarten adjustment for low-income children?](#)

[Quality Rating and Improvement System State Evaluations and Research](#)

Many jurisdictions with QRISs, as well as other interested organizations and individuals, have undertaken research and evaluation efforts to improve their understanding of QRIS implementation, validity, results, and impacts. [Child Care & Early Education Research Connections](#) has compiled a comprehensive [list of state QRIS research and evaluations](#) in its resource database, which can be accessed for free online. If you know of state QRIS research and evaluation publications not included in this list, please let Research Connections know at contact@researchconnections.org.

Additional Resources



Invest in Us

STAM 2015 State and Territory Administrators Meeting: Strategies and Partnerships for a New Era in Child Care

July 13–15, 2015 • The Westin Alexandria • Alexandria, Virginia

The 2015 State and Territory Child Care Administrators Meeting (STAM)

hosted nearly 400 in-person attendees and over 100 who remotely participated. In addition to CCDF administrators, participants included Head Start Collaboration directors, representatives from Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grants and State Early Childhood Advisory Councils.

Secretary Sylvia Burwell gave opening remarks and discussed the importance of the Administration's comprehensive early learning agenda. She recapped for the audience the commitment made 50 years ago to Medicaid and Head Start to lay the foundation for health and education for all. Burwell also shared her personal story of being a Head Start child and recognized her Head Start teacher, Mrs. Rita Pack who instilled a love of learning.



Secretary Burwell discussed the impact of poverty on young children and the importance of high quality early childhood programs as a buffer to the challenges and risks associated with poverty. Today, more than 16 million children in the United States -- 22 percent of all children -- live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level. "We must continue expanding access to high quality child care programs for our youngest children, especially our most vulnerable. We must continue enhancing the quality of our programs to keep pace with what science tells us is best practice." She also thanked the audience for "starting the nation's next generation on the path to be educated and upstanding citizens."



During STAM, participants heard presentations and discussed pressing topics, including how to build child care supply in hard to serve populations (including infants and toddlers, rural communities and homeless families), how to improve training of the child care

workforce, and how to partner with TANF agencies to develop a "two-generation" approach to serving families.

The sessions that were webcasted during STAM 2015 are available on line. To view any of the webcasts, please visit this Web site:

<http://prg.mediasite.com/mediasite/Catalog/catalogs/STAM2015>. The links will be accessible through December 31, 2015.

The following webinars have also been posted:

[Webinar: State Advisory Councils Final Report and Implications for the Future](#)

[Webinar: Moving the Needle on Articulation - Progress From a Ten State Project](#)

Quality early childhood education programs help children grow. See how investments in quality programs pay. Learn more [here](#).



On Tuesday, August 11th from 12-1 pm ET, the **National**

Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families will host a webinar exploring how Latino and immigrant populations search for and decide on child care, with a focus on those families served by publicly funded early childhood education programs. Register [here](#).



The 2015 edition of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's annual report on child well-being focuses on the state of America's children in the midst

of the country's economic recovery. In addition to ranking states in several areas of child well-being, [the Data Book](#) also examines the influence of parents' education, health and other life circumstances on their children.



The **BUILD Initiative** released six chapters of [Rising to the Challenge: Building Effective Systems for Young Children and Families, a BUILD E-](#)

Book. Check back for additional chapters on topics such as health, workforce development, data systems, sustainability and assessment. See chapters and executive summaries [here](#).

The National Policy Digest is a bi-monthly newsletter from [the Ounce of](#)

Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation

www.iom.edu/Birthtoeight



The [Institute of Medicine](#) (IOM) and the National Research Council (NCR) released [Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation](#), one of the most important studies of the workforce in our nation's history. The full report is now available [here](#).

One of the new resources by the Institute of Medicine includes this guide that summarizes considerations from **Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8** for planning and implementing high-quality and coherent professional learning for this workforce.

Find the sixteen-page guide [here](#).

Early Educator Central



In July, ACF released Early Educator Central, a new effort jointly administered through the Office of Child Care and Office of Head Start. Early Educator Central promotes infant-toddler educators accessing

Early Educator Central: Pathways to Credentials and Degrees for Infant-Toddler Educators

No matter what your infant-toddler career pathway is, you'll find resources—organized by role—to help you build your competency and your impact. On track for a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential? For yourself? Looking to strengthen your skills as an administrator, coach, trainer, or consultant? Designing credit or non-credit coursework? Early Educator Central features essential tools for leaders, including a Professional Development (PD) System Cost Analysis Tool and model articulation agreements for use in higher education. Early Educator Central can help!

We have resources to help:

- Teachers:** All Teachers—Child Care, Early Head Start, BRIS-OC Program, center and home-based
- Administrators:** Directors, Education Coordinators, and Instructional Leaders
- Trainers/Coaches:** Trainers, Coaches, Consultants, Specialists, Technical Assistants who support teachers and programs to deliver quality infant-toddler services
- PD System Leaders:** Higher Educators, Curriculum Designers, Policymakers

Our resources include:

- Online Coursework:** Access training or coursework that can lead to a variety of degrees
- PD System Cost Analysis Tool:** Plan for program and/or state costs of preparing credentials and degrees
- Course Framework:** Develop or update courses for new workforce professionals
- Online Digital Observation Tool:** Use the Quality Checklist to compare to video and play back classroom practices
- Articulation Agreements:** View sample agreements for articulating career pathways

Start Exploring Now! Visit <https://www.earlyeducatorcentral.acf.hhs.gov>

Early Educator Central
Pathways to Credentials and Degrees for Infant-Toddler Educators

Jointly administered and funded by the Office of Child Care and Office of Head Start

professional development using existing federally- funded resources. The multi-faceted site supports not only infant-toddler educators, but the entire infant-toddler workforce with federally- funded resources for administrators, trainers and coaches, professional development system leaders, and more.

Early Educator Central provides resources for others with key career roles in early learning, including administrators of early childhood programs; trainers and coaches; higher education professionals and coursework developers; and professional development (PD) systems leaders. We especially appreciate the partnership with the

Department of Defense.

See our Frequently Asked Questions [here](#). Explore the [Early Educator Central site](#) [here](#).

[Prevention Fund](#) that shares up-to-date and noteworthy developments in early childhood on the state and federal level. Drawing on diverse sources from across the field, the digest includes news on policy and funding changes, policy trends and analyses, the latest in early childhood research and information on upcoming events in the field. To subscribe, contact Elizabeth Kenefick (ekenefick@theounce.org).



Children's HealthWatch newest Policy Brief examines how co-enrollment in public programs can lead to stable housing for children.

Children's HealthWatch recommends state and federal agencies support efforts to achieve horizontal integration of programs to ensure that the children of today have the best chances at a successful, stable tomorrow. Read the [full policy brief](#).

AEM Corporation announced a 14-module series on Early Language and Literacy (Free)

An introductory webinar will provide an overview of the series and explain how professional development organizations can access the modules to offer a high-quality training opportunity for students, teachers, and administrators from all early learning settings. Designed to support the emerging language development of children ages birth to 5, the series will feature national literacy experts presenting on the four instructional priorities: oral language, phonological awareness, vocabulary and alphabet knowledge, and print awareness. To learn more about this, join Kathy Thornburg, Sue Mitchell, and Jim Lesko on Tuesday, August 18, at 3:00 p.m. eastern time [here](#).

NEW: Talk, Read, Sing Together Every Day! Tip Sheets

The Administration for Children and Families (HHS) in collaboration with [Too Small to Fail](#) and the Department of Education (ED) developed a suite of resources that can help enrich children's early language experiences beginning from birth. This toolkit includes tip sheets for families, preschool teachers, and infant/toddler teachers and caregivers, as well as a fact sheet that highlights the evidence behind the benefits of being bilingual and embracing children's home languages.



- It's Never Too Early to Help Your Child Learn —Talk, Read, and Sing Together Every Day! [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Tips for Families [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- The Benefits of Being Bilingual – A Review for Teachers and Other Early Education Program Providers [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Tips for Using Language at Home and in the Community [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Tips for Infant & Toddler Teachers and Caregivers [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- Tips For Preschool Teachers & Other Early Childhood Education Program Providers [English](#) [Spanish](#)

Ending Homelessness in America



By Sylvia Mathews Burwell, HHS Secretary

For a year, Bobbie was homeless. She was one of the half-million Americans who face the uncertainty, on any given day, about where they will find their next meal, where they can get care when they are sick, and where they will sleep at night.

Bobbie was lucky to find the Stout Street Health Center – a community health center in Denver, Colorado that provides integrated health care and housing support for the city's homeless population.

She **told a local reporter** that without the men and women working in the health center, "I don't know where I would be."

Last week I had the opportunity to visit the Stout Street Health Center and see the

Elevating QRIS communications

Thirty-nine states have adopted quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) to rate and support child care and education providers and centers serving children birth to age five. Communications plays a critical role in engaging providers, parents, partners, policymakers, and the public in QRIS. From Child Trends, a new report, [Elevating Quality Rating and Improvement System Communications: How to Improve Outreach to and Engagement with Providers, Parents, Policymakers, and the Public](#), provides examples of what some states are doing to market their QRIS, and recommendations for other states.



News and Resources from the BUILD Initiative and QRIS National Learning Network:

[2015 QRIS National Meeting Handouts and Presentations Available](#)

The BUILD Initiative and QRIS National Learning Network has provided access to individual pages from the 67 sessions via the [Program Agenda page](#). They have posted all handouts and presentations received thus far from presenters.



Lessons Learned from Developing Data Sharing Agreements, the **DaSy webinar** previously scheduled for June 29, has been rescheduled for **Monday, September 21st from 3:30 to 4:30 on EDT**. If you've already registered, you'll receive updated login information prior to the event via email. Register for the webinar [here](#).

work they do for up to 18,000 men, women and children experiencing homelessness every year.

What if we could guarantee that no more Americans would have to face what Bobbie did? What if, in just a few years, we could help the more than a million people including children, families and veterans who have no place to call home? What if we finally and completely ended homelessness in the United States?

These questions might sound audacious, but they are the commitments that the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness has made. I'm proud to serve as Vice Chair of the Council, which includes the Secretaries of Housing and Urban Development, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, and 14 other agencies. Together, we're charting a path toward ending veteran homelessness by 2015, chronic homelessness by 2017, and family, youth, and child homelessness by 2020. And as I step into my role as Chair of the Council in 2016, I look forward to making sure that we meet these bold goals.

Continue reading [here](#).

This post originally appeared on [HHS.gov/blog](#).

For information on early childhood homelessness, continue [here](#).

Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Highlight



Webinar Summary: Building Public Will As You Race to the Top

ELC TA and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) co-sponsored a webinar on strategies that States and localities can use to build public will to promote early childhood issues and initiatives. Presenters from Advocacy & Communication Solutions defined public will and public engagement; provided information on how to engage community partners to help advance an early childhood effort; and outlined national, State, and local best practices and lessons learned in the area of public will building. The webinar is summarized in [Building Public Will As You Race to the Top](#)



The U.S. Department of Education Office of Early Learning and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Early Childhood Development Office announced the launch of the website for the Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Program. This new website, [pdgta.org](#), will support state efforts to:

URBAN INSTITUTE

[Urban Institute](#) just released two more briefs from its project ***Bridging the Gap: Understanding the Intersection between Workforce Development and Child Care*** which focuses on strategies to better meet the child care needs of low-income parents needing education and training. The briefs examine on the challenges and opportunities created for this issue by two pieces of legislation last year -- the recent reauthorization of the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) and the passage of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (which revamped the federal workforce development program previously known as WIA). Both of these major policy developments provide unique and urgent opportunities to better meet the child care needs of low-income parents who need education and training, and to forge partnerships between the child care and workforce development systems.

The two new briefs can be found on the [Urban Institute](#) website and [here](#) and [here](#).



ensure strong partnerships between school districts and other early learning providers;

- Align preschool programs within a birth-through-third-grade continuum of services; and
- Create sustainable programs by coordinating existing early learning funds.



THE RAISING OF AMERICA EARLY CHILDHOOD AND THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION

California Newsreel released a DVD version of ***The Raising of America*** documentary series on July 31, 2015. The goal is to promote awareness

about the impact of childhood stressors on healthy brain development; leading causes of health inequities; and the importance of creating safe, stable relationships and environments to prevent child maltreatment and improve health outcomes across the life course. A full suite of video clips, interactives, discussion guides and other resources can be found at www.raisingofamerica.org.

How Children's Social Competence Impacts Their Well-Being in Adulthood

A new 20-year [study](#) shows a link between children's social skills in kindergarten and their well-being in early adulthood, according to the findings published in the [American Journal of Public Health](#).

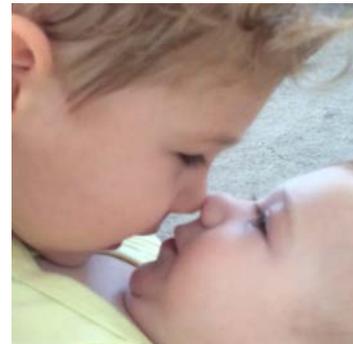
Children who were more likely to "share" or "be helpful" in kindergarten were also more likely to obtain higher education and hold full-time jobs nearly two decades later, the study found. Students who lacked these "social competence" skills were more likely to face more negative outcomes by the age of 25, including substance abuse problems, challenges finding employment or run-ins with the law.



Learn more about the study [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#).

Early Childhood Screenings Ensure a Healthy Start in Life

On Thursday, July 23, First Focus hosted a briefing to congressional staff entitled [Early Childhood Screenings Ensure a Healthy Start in Life: What's Happening in the States to Improve Screening Rates?](#) Katherine Beckmann from the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development at ACF was one of five presenters. Dr. Beckmann [discussed the HHS initiative called "Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive,"](#) a coordinated public outreach campaign to promote awareness of child development and developmental screenings, referrals, and follow-ups. The campaign celebrates developmental milestones, promotes universal developmental behavioral screening, aims to improve early detection, and enhances developmental supports for children and their families. [The Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive site](#) includes a compendium of screening instruments, user guides for multiple types of providers and community-based groups, and a collection of resources about children's healthy development for parents and providers. Other speakers included Neva Kaye, Managing Director at the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP); Liane Wong, David and Lucile Packard Foundation; Mary Ellen Mannix, Health Care Consultant at Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children; Sandy Oxley, Chief Executive Officer for Voices For Ohio's Children and Michael Odeh, Associate Director of Health Policy at Children Now in California. To find out more about the briefing, the speakers, and their presentations, [click here](#).



What else is happening in the states?

Maryland: In 2009, a group of child care professionals began a discussion to transform Maryland's tiered reimbursement system into a more comprehensive program now known as Maryland EXCELS. Currently, two years after Maryland EXCELS' statewide launch, over 5,000 programs are participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS).



Tennessee: Tennessee was the first state to offer free college tuition to all graduating high school students. The Tennessee Promise funded by \$300 million from the state's lottery fund takes effect in fall 2015. The state expects more than 25,000 students to apply for the estimated \$34 million earmarked for the first year of the program. Tuition funds would be considered "last-dollar scholarships" and only available after all sources of aid have been received. See [details here](#).

Oregon: The Oregon Promise was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. It provides a \$10M appropriation targeted toward tuition payments for students who are recent Oregon high school graduates attending and pursuing a certificate or degree at one of Oregon's 17 community colleges. The bill funds grants at a minimum of \$1,000 for each community college student awarded, to be administered by the Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) under the

Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). The Oregon Promise will be enacted next year and be ready for high school graduates the following year.

Nebraska: The Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative launched the Nebraska Early Childhood Exchange site, www.NebraskaExchange.org, an online database of early education resources geared toward educators and professionals in the field.

Delaware: As part of the Early Learning Challenge grant, Delaware is required to evaluate its quality rating and improvement system (QRIS)-Delaware Stars for Early Success-and the RAND Corporation was selected as the evaluator to validate the Delaware Stars QRIS. The report, from the second year of the evaluation, addresses program participation and quality ratings, financial incentives, and technical assistance. [Read the full report here.](#)

Illinois: Two Early Learning Council subcommittees recently produced reports on child health and well-being. The [Systems Integration and Alignment Committee's](#) Health Subcommittee (SIAC) published a [report](#) and proposal to integrate health into early care and education systems with a particular focus on integrating health into policy. The [full report](#) and its [executive summary](#) are available on the IL Early Learning Council [website](#). In addition, the [Home Visiting Task Force's](#) Health Connections Workgroup recently developed [recommendations](#) focused on ways of improving child health in home visiting programs, such as the provision of materials, consultations, and training for home visitors.

Arizona: Scottsdale Community College, the only public two-year college that's on an Indian reservation, will build a center devoted to Native American culture. The college is planning the Indigenous Scholars Institute, which will likely open in spring 2018.

New Mexico: A taskforce from the New Mexico Department of Health, Public Education Department, and Children Youth and Families Department used epidemiological data to compare levels of risk and resiliency across New Mexico's communities and to rank these geographical areas by levels of risk. Those with the highest aggregated need were identified as [Investment Zones](#). Learn more about the Early Learning Challenge and the Investment Zone Project [here](#).

Washington: The Early Start Act was approved by the legislature and signed into law by Governor Inslee. This historic legislation invests expanding high quality early learning for Washington's children and families, particularly in the most diverse and vulnerable communities. For child care providers, the Early Start Act focuses on supporting high quality early learning services through Early Achievers and ensures that the child care providers, especially those who serve low-income families, receive all needed help and resources to sustain high quality programming. Please visit the new [Early Start Act pages](#) on DEL's website to learn about the Early Start Act implementation for July 1, 2016.

Colorado: The Colorado Office of Early Childhood (OEC) has named Erin Mewhinney Director of the Division of Early Care and Learning. Erin has 20 years of experience in policy work, collaboration and education, most recently serving as the Director of the Domestic Violence Program in the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) Office of Children, Youth and Families. Prior to joining CDHS, Erin served as policy director for Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock, taught political science and policy courses at CU Boulder, and was the first Status Project Manager for the Women's Foundation of Colorado.

Federal Report Spotlights Health and Well Being of Children in the U.S.

By Jesus Garcia, Special Assistant, Office of Public Affairs



Ever wanted to know how children fare in today's society? We've got the report for you.

["America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being"](#) provides you 219 pages on several topics about the health and well-being of children. From knowing the rates of child poverty, to statistics on infant mortality, to

the number of children affected by obesity, all these facts and figures are illustrated in charts and presented in short articles discussing trends.

The 2015 edition just came out this month. More than 40 key indicators of children's lives are discussed within this report thanks to the participation of 23 federal agencies, including the Administration for Children and Families.

Continue reading [here](#).

Natural Disaster & Domestic Violence Planning: New Training Curriculum

Signs of domestic abuse can often go unnoticed during emergency response and recovery efforts to natural disasters. Victims of domestic violence are particularly vulnerable during disasters because they may face unique barriers such as social isolation. A new training curriculum includes best practices in emergency response and disaster management in the context of domestic violence. Since natural disasters may increase the risk of domestic violence, emergency responders ought to incorporate strategies to mitigate domestic violence risks into their response and recovery planning efforts. One approach is to prominently display the National Domestic Violence Hotline phone number in emergency shelters, disaster recovery centers, and other sites where survivors receive services: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) and 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

The training curriculum is targeted to emergency responders and professional staff involved in direct social services to victims of domestic violence; it was developed by the National Domestic Violence Hotline with [Superstorm Sandy Supplemental funding](#) from the Administration from Children and Families (ACF), Family & Youth Services Bureau. The training curriculum is available **free of charge** from the National Domestic Violence Hotline website [here](#) (see: Additional Resources - Disaster Response Curriculum). General information on the training curriculum is available [here](#) and information on ACF's Early Childhood Disaster-Related Resources is available [here](#).

Look Before You Lock

It's hot!



[Quiz: How Much Do You Know About Preventing Child Heatstroke?](#)

Think heatstroke can't happen in a car on a cloudy day? Think again. Take this quiz to test how much you know about preventing child heatstroke.

Heatstroke tragedies are 100 percent preventable. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) urges parents and caregivers to take the following precautions to prevent heatstroke incidents from occurring:

Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle – even if the windows are partially open or the engine is running and the air conditioning is on;

Make a habit of looking in the vehicle – front and back – before locking the door and walking away;

Ask the childcare provider to call if the child doesn't show up for care as expected;

Do things that serve as a reminder that a child is in the vehicle, such as placing a purse or briefcase in the back seat to ensure no child is accidentally left in the vehicle, or writing a note or using a stuffed animal placed in the driver's view to indicate a child is in the car seat; and

Teach children that a vehicle is not a play area and store keys out of a child's reach.



To kick off the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year and celebrate Head Start's 50th birthday, the [National Head Start Association](#) (NHSA) is encouraging parents, teachers, directors, and other community

members to celebrate [Head Start's First Day](#). Head Start programs across the country are welcoming kids back to the classroom and spreading awareness about the impact of Head Start by sharing first day activities on their favorite social media platform. Programs will also invite their Members of Congress to visit and participate in the first day of school activities, where they can see firsthand the multitude of ways Head Start is preparing children for kindergarten. Whether it is a child entering a classroom for the first time, students enjoying their first circle time, or teachers

prepping their classroom, NHSA encourages our partners in the early learning community to join us in celebrating the beginning of a new year of opportunity.

National Head Start Association, Yasmina Vinci, Executive Director



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[Sign up](#) to receive the Early Childhood Development Newsletter. If you have questions or comments regarding the newsletter please contact:

marsha.basloe@acf.hhs.gov

For more information on the Early Childhood Development Office at ACF, visit the website <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd>.

The Early Childhood Development newsletter contains links to other websites and news articles. These links represent just a few examples of the numerous reference materials currently available to the public. The opinions expressed in any articles or web pages do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administration for Children and Families. The inclusion of resources should not be construed or interpreted as an endorsement of any private organization or business listed herein.