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## Working Together for a Better Beginning

"I want to focus on the next five years, ten years, and beyond. I want to focus on our future.

The bipartisan reform of No Child Left Behind was an important start, and together, we've increased early childhood education... In the coming years, we should build on that progress... "

-- President Obama, January 2016, State of the Union Address

## Early Childhood Development

Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development  
Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

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### 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.

#### [Helping Fathers and Families that are Parenting in a Violent World](#)

The Office of Family Assistance hosted a series of town halls to gather information on the impact of violence on raising children.

#### [Serving and Engaging Fathers in Home Visiting Programs](#)

What strategies do home visiting programs use to engage fathers, what challenges do they face, and what are the potential benefits of participating?

As we begin a new year – and the last year of this Administration – it is easy to spend time looking back. I prefer to look ahead. Yes, we have just one year left, but so much has been done to set the stage for this year, that I would be lying if I didn't say how excited I am for what is still to come. We have started many initiatives on early care and education during the last seven years. Some have focused on greater accountability for federal and other public investments. They include the [Designation Renewal system for Head Start](#), publication of the revised Head Start Performance Standards and the improved Head Start monitoring system. Others supported the improvement of the ECE infrastructure and included the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, the [Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships](#) and the redesigned [Training and Technical Assistance Framework](#). All focused on improving the quality of what children receive in all settings and included the work on initiatives such as [Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!](#), the [Suspension and Expulsion](#) and [Inclusion Policies](#), the new [Early Learning Outcomes Framework](#), [Caring for Our Children Basics](#), and the publication of a [proposed rule](#) to implement the reauthorized Child Care and Development Block Grant. Finally, the research on the ECE workforce, including the National Academy of Sciences study "[Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation](#)" has defined our work around the knowledge and competencies needed for those who work in ECE and provided a shared goal for the entire ECE workforce.



Now as we enter the home stretch, our challenge is to tie these together in one unified and supportive public agenda that supports high quality experiences for all children no matter where they are located. So how do we do that? As we look to the coming year, it's time to focus on the hardest questions of all – how do we use what we have learned to ensure we have the workforce we need - a workforce that is educated and compensated to prepare our youngest learners for life and the infrastructure to support them? That, my friends, is what we have been working towards. So, in our final year, how do we move to

### [It's Winter Break. Where Do I Go?](#)

Helping Homeless College Students Find a 'Home' During Holiday Breaks.

### [Child Care Proposed Rules Now on the Federal Register](#)

The proposed regulations address the 2014 child care law and will be open for public comment for 60 days.

### [Beyond Breaking Bread](#)

What Head Start Programs Do to Celebrate and Serve Our Nation's Children, Families, and Communities.

### [Responding to the Culture of Children, Families, and Communities](#)

How do local programs support the children and families from different regions and cultures in a meaningful way?

### [Annual Early Childhood Conference Changes Name](#)

ACF's National Research Conference on Early Childhood will continue to showcase cutting-edge research on low-income families with young children.

ACF Informato  
The [December Hispanic Outreach Newsletter](#)

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

## Featured Reports



**OPRE**

Recently posted on the [OPRE Site](#):

**Design Options for Future Early Head**

secure a foundation that builds the next generation of ECE?

First, and most obviously, we must complete work on the Head Start Performance Standards, the final Child Care Development Fund rule, fully implement the new T & TA system and fully implement the second generation of Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships. These actions will firmly establish quality as a goal for all federally funded early care and education.

Next, we need a clearly defined pathway for how to ensure our ECE workforce is trained, educated and compensated appropriately. During the next year, we will be working to use the results of the NAS Workforce Study to develop pathways for all categories of ECE providers.

Finally, it is clear that parents cannot afford to pay what it costs to ensure higher teacher qualifications, education and appropriate compensation. This challenge requires a new and SHARED vision and public private financing strategy. Through both Head Start and the EHS-CC Partnerships, we have demonstrated that when funds are sufficient, we can improve the quality of services children receive. It is clear that we must substantially increase the funds going into ECE, especially the Birth to age three programs. The President's 2016 budget request contained an \$82 billion/10 year request for this purpose. Soon, we expect to introduce legislation to support this request. It is based on what we have learned over the last several years, to support and finance a better system of ECE. This will be a vision that we hope begins the conversation in earnest about how to finance ECE in this country, a conversation that is long overdue. Although I will not be here to see this conversation continue, it is my hope that we will have put in place the foundation on which a fully funded, high quality early care and education system will go from a vision to reality.

*Linda*



## Child Care Proposed Rules on the Federal Register

By Rachel Schumacher, Director, Office of Child Care

A little over a year ago, President Obama signed into law bipartisan legislation that reauthorized our federal child care program – the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Today, I am happy to announce that we have taken the next step toward the vision of more healthy, safe, quality child care for children and families included in this law. Our proposed regulations that address that law are now on display at the [Federal Register](#).



We already know about many of the ways the law has begun to make an impact. The health and safety requirements help ensure that children are in safe settings with trained providers. There are also continuity provisions that give children in low-income working families the chance to stay in those centers and family child care homes and build valuable relationships

## Start Research

What have we learned from the design of the first round of Baby FACES, and how can future descriptive studies of Early Head Start build on past work? [Explore the ways in which future research on Early Head Start](#) can address information needs for research, policy, and practice, as well as a discussion of the methodological strengths, limitations, and challenges experienced in the first round of Baby FACES.

### Child Care Subsidy Policies: Key Aspects of Child Care & Development Fund Policies across States & Time

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) provides federal money to States, Territories, and Tribes to subsidize the cost of child care for lower-income families. Detailed policies vary widely across jurisdictions. Discover key differences in CCDF-funded programs as of October 1, 2014, along with changes in policies from 2010 to 2014 when you...[Read The CCDF Policies Database Book of Tables.](#)



### Planned Impact Analyses for Pathways for

### Advancing Careers and Education

The Pathways for Advancing

Careers and Education evaluation is testing the impacts of nine programs, each involving a different configuration of career pathways design components. [Explore this report](#) to learn more about the programs, the characteristics of the sample enrolled, and the hypotheses the evaluation will test.

with their caregivers. Parents will have the peace of mind that comes with knowing their children are with trained providers in monitored settings. And parents who don't have to spend a day constantly worrying about their children have the chance to pursue their education and careers in a way that brings them closer to financial security.

We believe that the proposed regulations, like the law they address, will help us achieve the goals we all have for children and families in the United States. But an important part of the federal rulemaking process is finding out what others think. Reforming the child care system has been and will continue to be a long process. Many of our partners in the early childhood world, including stakeholders, parents, and child care providers, have been working for decades to improve early childhood in the United States, and we would not have made the progress we have without their effort and commitment.

The process for commenting on proposed regulations is one of the most important ways in which we engage with the public, and we encourage you to read the proposed rules and to share your thoughts through the official comment process. The proposed regulations are open for the public to comment on starting [December 24 with a 60-day comment period](#). Anyone can comment on any part of the proposed rules, and the Office of Child Care will review and address those comments as we move toward a final rule.

I've written in this space before about what an exciting time this is for child care and early education, and I firmly believe in the partnerships that have brought about such positive change. I hope you'll take the time to read our proposed rule and to tell us what you think. A collective effort is what has gotten us this far, and it's what will take us even further.

This was featured on [The Family Blog](#) on December 18, 2015.

## CCDF FY 2016–2018 Final Plan Preprint

The Office of Child Care announced that the CCDF FY 2016–2018 Final Plan Preprint for States and Territories and the accompanying Program Instruction have been posted on the Office of Child Care (OCC) Web site at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/ccdf-reauthorization>. The Program Instruction (CCDF-PI-2015-09) provides guidance on the Plan submission, implementation plans, as well as the criteria and process for requesting temporary waiver extensions for requirements that are not met at the time of the Plan submission. States and Territories will use this Plan Preprint, approved by the Office of Management and Budget, to submit their Plans to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) via the e-submission site on or before March 1, 2016.

ACF has compiled technical assistance resources on reauthorization topics and has cross-walked those topics with major CCDF Plan sections. The collection of resources can be found at <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/ccdf-reauthorization>. As additional resources become available, they will be posted to that Web site as well.

## IM on Developmental and Behavioral Screenings

This week, the Office of Child Care (OCC) published a new [Information Memorandum on developmental and behavioral screenings](#) in child care and afterschool care programs. The new IM addresses provisions in the CCDBG Act of 2014 related these screenings, and includes background information, guidance, potential policies, and resources related to the topic. Child Care and Development Fund grantees might find this information helpful as they prepare their plans and consider policies to promote developmental screenings in child care programs.



## 2016 Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE) Call for Studies

HomVEE seeks studies for a comprehensive review of the evidence base for home visiting program models. This Call for Studies is particularly aimed at identifying studies not previously reviewed by the HomVEE team including unpublished manuscripts (past or recent), conference papers, or new publications (currently in press) that are not included in databases searched for this review. [Visit the HomVEE Website to learn more about the Call for Studies.](#)

Additional Research:

[H-PACT: A Descriptive Study of Responsible Fatherhood Programs Serving Hispanic Men](#)

[Adapting an Evidence-based Curriculum in a Rural Setting: Implementing Reducing the Risk in Kentucky](#)

[Migrant Seasonal Head Start Supplement to the National Agricultural Workers' Survey - Briefs](#)

[Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey \(Baby FACES\) Design Options Report](#)

[The CCDF Policies Database Book of Tables: Key Cross-State Variations in CCDF Policies as of October 1, 2014](#)

**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.

[Topic of Interest: Quality Improvement in Home-Based Child Care Settings](#)

To read the IM, [visit the OCC Web site](#). For other policy resources related to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, visit the [OCC Reauthorization page](#) on the OCC Web site.



## A Team Effort Through the EHS-CC Partnerships

Cathy Garland, Director of the EHS-CCP grant with Children's Home Society Washington (CHSW) was thrilled that their grant gave their agency a chance to expand and create access to Early Head Start (EHS) in more communities with the greatest needs. CHSW had been an EHS grantee since 1995, and they had significant expertise operating their own home-based and center-based programs. For the EHS-CCP grant, CHSW developed criteria for selecting their partners. First, they had to be participating in the state Early Achievers System (QRIS). The partner site also had to be located in areas with a high need for EHS and the provider had to be already serving children on subsidy. Finally, the majority of families served had to have high likelihood for meeting EHS eligibility criteria.

Ultimately, CHSW selected 5 child care partners: 2 partners in Spokane County and 3 in King County (Seattle). All centers worked with high percentages of low-income families. College For Kids one of two centers serving South King County) served a high percentage of immigrant and Spanish speaking families. College For Kids Bilingual Day Care was also relatively new, in operation for about one year. Wilber Flores, Owner of College For Kids Bilingual Day Care (pictured right) attended the first partner recruitment meeting that CHSW hosted. *"The minute I heard about the program, I went to the first meeting and I was completely hooked! This was a great opportunity to get better services for the community we were serving."*



The partnership provided the center with immediate help to remodel their classrooms and provided equipment for their playground. The center also needed basic supplies for their infant-toddler room such as diapers and formula. Wilber was excited about the services offered to families through the Family Advocate who visits the center at least once a week to work with the parents. In addition, the staff took advantage of added benefits and three of them enrolled in college and two of them are working on their credential. They are excited to be going to school and appreciate all the support offered through this program.

Luc Jasmin, Director of Parkview Early Learning Center in Spokane (pictured below), is another child care partner, who says he feels like he just "won the lottery" because of all the benefits his center has received. After several years working with high risk middle school and elementary aged children, Luc became convinced that he needed to start much earlier with birth-5 year-olds so he could really focus on prevention and make sure

There is tremendous variability in home-based settings. Supporting quality improvement in home-based care presents particular challenges in identifying and engaging home-based child caregivers, particularly those who are not connected with a public agency through subsidy payments or regulation, and in developing and delivering accessible and relevant interventions that meet the needs, interests, and circumstances of the range of home-based providers. This [Topic of Interest](#) provides a comprehensive list of research in the **Research Connections** collection that was published in 2005 or later addressing issues related to quality improvement specifically in home-based child care.

[Topic of Interest: Child Care Policy Research Consortium Projects \(1995-2015\)](#)

The year 2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium (CCPRC). To celebrate the CCPRC's 20th anniversary for its 2015 meeting in Washington, DC, on December 2nd and 3rd, **Research Connections** has produced this [Topic of Interest](#), which features all of the OPRE- or Child Care Bureau-funded child care research and policy projects in its collection.

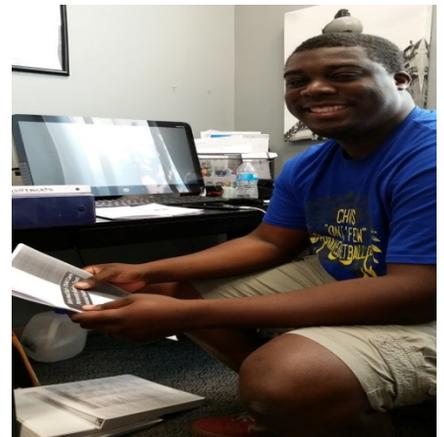
[Is child care burden associated with the risk of child maltreatment?](#)

[What are the effects of a responsiveness-focused intervention in family child care homes on children's executive function?](#)

[Is Head Start cost-effective?](#)

[What are the findings from the Baby Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care \(Baby NAP SACC\) study?](#)

more children had the best foundation for their life. The partnership with EHS had immediate benefits for his center and the staff. First, he was able to provide increases in staff salaries for those who met the EHS credential requirements. The grant also supports brand new infant-toddler rooms and two new playgrounds. Luc says the parents and the children were not used to having so many nice things available just for them. He sees the sense of pride in their eyes when they come to visit their center every day.



CHSW was also committed to fostering learning opportunities. First, CHSW sponsored several training opportunities for the staff from the partner centers to come together by county. For example, they brought together the teachers from all 3 centers in King County to share experiences with each other, introduce the EHS curriculum, and provide time for peer learning and support. They have received a lot of positive feedback about this process from the teachers. Staffs are also excited about the professional development resources available to help them go back to school. Many are now working on their AA and want to move towards their BA. Some are also working on their infant-toddler credential. In Spokane County, they partnered with Washington State Community College District #17, another EHS-CCP grantee, so that the teachers from the partnering centers are brought together as a small cohort so they can go through the AA experience together and receive additional support as a group. They have their first cohort enrolled now.

At its core, EHS-CCP is about learning together through the partnership. Luc shared, "CHSW gives us a sense of family, there is a sense of togetherness. The lines of communication are always open and if there is something we need to figure out – we figure it out together. If I have a question, they are always there to help me." Wilber said simply, "They're there for us – helping us out. I don't feel like I'm by myself anymore. There is a team really --- a team that is backing me up. Our success is their success and it works!"

## Early Childhood Development and Promising Parent Services



Last month, ACF Acting Assistant Secretary Mark Greenberg traveled to Takoma Park Maryland in Region 3 to visit CentroNia

## [State Policies and Practices in Child Care for Infants and Toddlers](#)

This [research brief](#), funded by the **U.S. Administration for Children and Families, the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation**, published by **the Education Development Center**, examines state policies and practices supporting child care for infants and toddlers. The information reported in this brief comes from publicly available data sources as well as from state child care administrators, who are charged with administering the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) at the state level. Check out the [CCDF Policies Database](#) for more information on state CCDF policies and administration.

## [CCDF State Guide](#)

This [guide](#) from the **National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth** provides assistance to states in utilizing their CCDF state plan to support children and families experiencing homelessness. The guide summarizes key policy and practice opportunities to address and advance access and quality for homeless families. Check out **Research Connections'** [resource list](#) on supports for young children experiencing homelessness.

Head Start, a University of Maryland Buffering Toxic Stress Consortium university partnership site funded by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. The site is one of six OPRE-funded research sites implementing promising parenting interventions in Early Head Start settings to determine if they can improve outcomes for the most vulnerable infants and toddlers. CentroNia supplements Early Head Start services with parenting interventions that can impact the effects of early adversity and chronic stress on children's development. (See pictured Acting Assistant Secretary Greenberg with CentroNia staff.)

This specific project is being conducted in collaboration with four Early Head Start programs in the greater Washington D.C. area that serve predominantly new immigrant Latino families and involves a randomized trial of home-based Early Head Start services with and without a supplemental, attachment-based parenting program. The findings across the BTS Consortium will advance the knowledge of how EHS can increase support for early parenting and thus buffer infants and toddlers from the potentially toxic effects of early adversity and chronic stress.

## Early Childhood Workforce

### A State Making Progress

North Carolina continues to make incremental and significant progress in improving the education, compensation and retention of its early childhood teaching and administrator workforce. By using a combination of strategies that embed systemic standards and incentives, the state has seen a shift in the foundational knowledge and skills of those teaching in and leading programs for children from birth to school entry. In 2001, about 19% of their teachers working in licensed centers had a two or four year degree in early childhood education or degrees plus significant early childhood education coursework. In 2015, that percentage had increased to 56%. NC's Early Learning Challenge Fund proposal had hoped to reach 47%, which they exceeded in the last 4 years. During the same four-year period, the percent of directors with two or four year degrees in early childhood education or its equivalent increased from 71% to 81%.

In terms of compensation, teaching staff, in general, saw a real, but small gain in wages over the four-year period. However, teachers with bachelor's degrees saw a much bigger gain in their wages over the four-year period. But an even more impressive gain was in the percent of the workforce covered by health insurance. In 2011, 33% of teachers did not have health insurance from any source. By 2015, this number of uninsured teachers had dropped to 19%. While this rate is still too high, this type of reduction can only be attributed to the passage and implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Finally, the longevity of teachers and administrators working in licensed early care and education programs continues to increase. In the 2003 study of the workforce, teachers reported having worked in the field 5.9 years; in 2015, years worked in the field by teachers increased to 11.5. In the 2003 study, directors reported having worked in the field 13 years; in 2015 that number increased to 18 years. North Carolina's investments in the workforce seem to be paying off.

## Additional Resources



### Invest in Us

**Quality early childhood education programs help children grow.** See how investments in quality programs pay.

Learn more [here](#).



Chapter 8 Released. The [BUILD Initiative](#) released eight chapters of [Rising to the Challenge: Building Effective Systems for Young Children and Families](#), a [BUILD E-Book](#). See chapters and executive summaries [here](#).

and executive summaries [here](#).

### [Open Enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace until Jan. 31!](#)

Open enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace began November 1, 2015 and ends January 31, 2016. Visit [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov) for the latest information on open enrollment and use materials at [Marketplace.cms.gov](http://Marketplace.cms.gov) to share with your community.



## Head Start Program Facts - Fiscal Year 2014

Established in 1965, Head Start promotes school readiness for children in low-income families by offering educational, nutritional, health, social, and other services. Since its inception, Head Start has served more than 32 million children, birth to age 5, and their families. In 2014, Head Start was funded to serve nearly one million children and pregnant women in centers, family homes, and in family child care homes in urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout the nation.

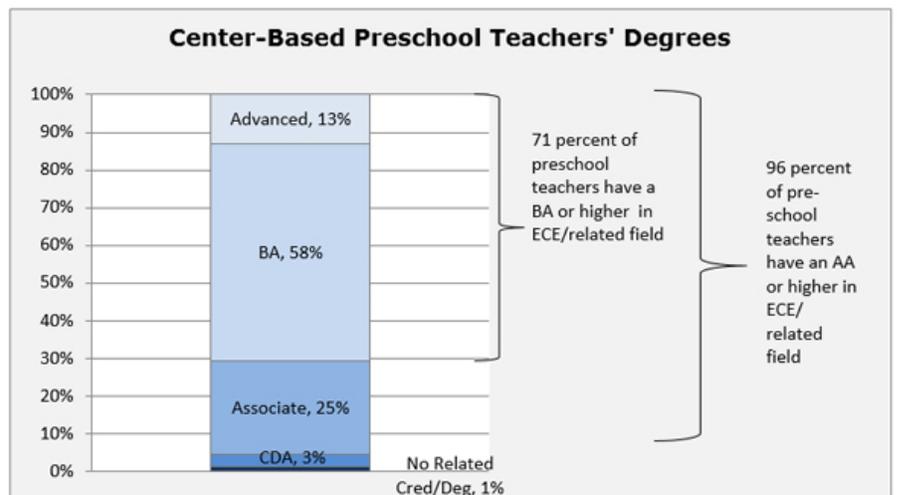
See PDF version: [Head Start Program Facts Fiscal Year 2014](#) [PDF, 293KB]

### Program Staff:

Head Start programs employed 239,000 staff. Parents of current or former Head Start children made up 24 percent of Head Start staff.

- More than 1.1 million adults volunteered in their local Head Start program. Of these, 800,000 were parents of Head Start children.
- About 116,000 staff members provided child development services to children, including teachers, assistant teachers, home visitors, and family child care providers.
- Among child development staff, 30 percent were proficient in a language other than English.
- Seventy-one percent of all Head Start center-based preschool teachers had a baccalaureate degree or higher in early childhood education, or in a related field with experience. The Head Start Act specifies that 50 percent of center-based preschool teachers nationwide should have had these credentials by 2013.

A comprehensive [Head Start timeline](#) is available on the ECLKC website.



## From the Office of Head Start: Head Start Eligibility Verification

Summary: The Office of Head Start (OHS) within the Administration for Children and Families, United States Department of Health and Human Services, proposes to renew, with changes, its authority for record keeping requirements associated with Head Start eligibility verification. OHS revised the Head Start Eligibility Verification form to reflect changes in the eligibility final rule published on February 10, 2015 (80 FR 7368). OHS initially developed the form to help programs determine eligibility. However, Head Start programs are not required to use this specific form. Programs may either adopt the form or design a new form to meet the eligibility requirements.

The Office of Head Start published a final rule on eligibility under the authority granted to the Secretary of Health and Human Services under the Head Start Act (Act) at sections 644(c), 645(a)(1)(A), and 645A(c). The final rule clarifies Head Start's eligibility procedures and enrollment requirements, and reinforces Head Start's overall mission to support low-income families and early learning. A program must maintain records as specified in sections 1305.4(d)(2), 1305.4(l), and 1305.4(h) through (j) of the final rule.

Action Date: A comment is best assured of having its full effect if OMB receives it within 30 days of publication.

Contact: Copies of the proposed collection may be obtained by writing to the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Washington, DC 20447 Attn: ACF Reports Clearance Officer. All requests should be identified by the title of the information collection. Email address: [infocollection@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:infocollection@acf.hhs.gov).

Full Text:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-12-28/html/2015-32565.htm>

## ACF's Tribal Home Visiting Program and Tribal Early Learning Initiative at 30th National Training Institute!



From left: Tamara Newcomb, Erica Ridgley, Tleena Ives, Daphne Colacion, and Christy Stanton

Zero to Three's (ZTT) [30<sup>th</sup> National Training Institute \(NTI\)](#), held this past December 2-4, 2015 in Seattle, WA, brought together multidisciplinary professionals working in

early care and education, home visiting, mental health, early intervention, child welfare, family support, social services, and health care for a conference focused on infant-toddler and family research, practice, and policy. The 30<sup>th</sup> NTI featured a "tribal track" with sessions on changing tribal norms using attachment theory and developing tribal early childhood leaders and supporting families through reflective practice. In addition, the track featured a session on home visiting in tribal communities highlighting ACF Tribal Home Visiting grantees.

During the session, "Successful Partnerships for Developing Home Visiting Services in Tribal Communities", Tleena Ives, Program Director for the [Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe's](#) Together for Children Tribal Home Visiting program, and Daphne Colacion, Program Coordinator for [Lake County Tribal Health Consortium's](#) Partnership with Parents Tribal Home Visiting program, were joined by Tamara Newcomb and Erica Ridgley from the [Muscogee Creek](#) Tribe's Project LAUNCH program. Christy Stanton, Lead Technical Assistance Specialist with ACF's [Programmatic Assistance for Tribal Home Visiting \(PATH\)](#) contract with Zero to Three, facilitated the session, which explored how ACF's Tribal Home Visiting and SAMHSA's Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) have encouraged community partnerships and promoted development of culturally appropriate and successful home visiting services in tribal communities.

The NTI also included the kickoff meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort of the [Tribal Early Learning Initiative \(TELI\)](#). The six new TELI grantees met together to build relationships and set the foundation for their successful TELI projects, including participation in an intensive session on using the collective impact model in tribal communities. The TELI grantees hope to leverage the collective impact model and other tools to develop individualized, tribally-drive plans and strategies coordinate their early learning and development programs and boost the quality of services offered to children and families from pregnancy-to-kindergarten entry.

## Why Child Care Packs Quite the Economic Punch

By Linda K. Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary

For years we've known that child care helps lift up parents to work and boosts children's development. But, a new report shows that child care also boosts local economies.

### Resources, Activities, and Strategies Supporting Student Learning about Inclusion and Diversity

These 5 **free** webinars from FPG are designed specifically for early childhood community college faculty... [more](#)

### AAP: Clinical Report on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

A new clinical report in the November 2015 issue of *Pediatrics*, [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders](#), identifies prenatal exposure to alcohol as the leading preventable cause of birth defects and intellectual and neurodevelopmental disabilities in children. The report discusses the range of effects that can occur in a child whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy and states that no amount of alcohol intake should be considered safe during any trimester of pregnancy. Neurocognitive and behavioral problems from prenatal alcohol exposure are lifelong, but early recognition, diagnosis and therapy can improve a child's outcomes.

### 2015 State Development for Early Care and Education

The **National Women's Law Center** created a new resource that compiles the steps forward, and backward, that states took in 2015 for early care and education. [The State Early Care and Education Updates 2015](#) factsheet provides brief summaries for each state and the District of Columbia.

The Committee for Economic Development (CED) published a new report last year, ["Child Care in State Economies."](#) which examines the child care industry's economic impact within states – parent participation in the labor force, paid child care usage rates, employment within the child care industry, related spillover within communities (i.e., the purchase of goods and services and jobs supported outside the child care industry), as well as the role of public funding.

The report is significant because through economic modeling, it shows that the impact of the child care industry goes far beyond supporting the needs of parents to work. With revenue of \$41.5 billion, the child care industry supports an additional \$41.6 billion in spillover supporting additional industries within communities. More than 1.5 million sole proprietors (those operating child care programs out of their home) and wage and salary employees working within centers support 624,500 jobs in other industries. While individuals in the child care field typically earn low wages, the industry supports about \$18 billion in additional earnings outside of the child care field throughout the United States.

These are important findings because not only does child care help parents work and offer a setting for children to promote their healthy development, but also, the child care industry plays an important role in supporting local economies. The report also found that for every federal dollar increase invested in child care, there is a return of \$3.80 in local economies.



More than 11 million children are in paid care throughout the country while their parents work, obtain higher levels of education or participate in job training. The average cost of care varies from state to state, however, in 30 states in 2013, the price of center-based infant care exceeded the cost of college. States with lower economic growth and lower average income have more families using informal (unpaid) care.

Research shows that quality child care makes a difference in the school readiness of children, particularly for low income children. When children start school ready to learn, they are less likely to be retained in grade, less likely to be placed in special education, and more likely to graduate high school either college or career ready.

The neuroscience shows that a child's earliest experiences affect brain development, that brain development is cumulative, and that the architecture of the brain can impede later language, cognitive, social, and emotional capacity. That's why quality child care matters – the foundation for learning happens long before age 4 or 5 when children typically start preschool or kindergarten.

Continue [reading here](#).

## Interactive Community Mapping Tool for "Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8"

[www.nas.edu/Birthtoeight](http://www.nas.edu/Birthtoeight)

In 2015, the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council\* released the report [Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation](#). The report offered recommendations to build a workforce unified by the foundation of the science of child development and early learning, and the shared knowledge and competencies needed to provide consistent, high-quality support to the development and early learning of young children.



The services that children encounter, and the systems that support the adults who work with them, are fragmented. Yet effective collaboration among the many different types of professionals working directly with children—and among organizational leaders, policymakers, and funders—may strengthen professional learning and other workforce supports and may identify broader strategies that can help all stakeholders align their efforts to achieve positive child outcomes.

A [new online tool](#), with an accompanying discussion guide, offers a series of stakeholder maps that can help prompt a community to better understand how collaborations might be built. The mapping tool and guide are meant to help facilitate implementation of the 2015 report recommendations by offering suggestions to help potential partners explore ways to work together to improve professional learning and other supports for the workforce across the care and education, social services, and health sectors.

To access the mapping tool, please visit <https://kumu.io/instituteofmedicine/birth-to-eight#birththrough-age-eight-stakeholders>.

To start by reading the mapping tool discussion guide, or to read the full report and other related resources, please visit : [www.nas.edu/birthto8](http://www.nas.edu/birthto8).

For any questions, please contact Sarah Tracey at [stracey@nas.edu](mailto:stracey@nas.edu).

\* Effective July 1, 2015, the Institute of Medicine as well as the National Research Council continue their work under the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

## The Arts in Early Childhood

A new report from the National Endowment for the Arts looks at research on how the arts affect young children from birth to age eight. The news is good, but several research questions remain, according to this literature review.

[The Arts in Early Childhood: Social and Emotional Benefits of Arts Participation: A Literature Review and Gap-Analysis \(2000-2015\)](#) synthesized findings from 18 recent reports in psychology and education research journals. These studies focused on the social and emotional outcomes of young children who participated in art forms such as music, dance, theater, drawing, and painting. These quantitative studies looked at typically developing populations, as well as children with autism spectrum disorder. Among the findings:

**Social skills and the arts** – several studies revealed positive associations between arts activities and developing social skills, such as helping, sharing, caring, and empathizing with others.

**Emotional regulation and the arts** – studies showed that the arts help children regulate their emotions, a critical skill for well-adjusted children and adults.



**The role of demographics and development disorders** – how do age, gender, income, and development disorders such as autism affect arts learning outcomes?

The NEA's [Interagency Task Force on the Arts and Human Development](#) convenes federal agencies to share research, resources, and best practices on arts, learning, and health research, producing [public webinars](#), symposia, and reports. Linda Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood is a member of the Interagency Task Force.

Learn more here at <https://www.arts.gov/news/2015/arts-and-early-childhood-development-focus-new-nea-research>.

## Remembering Early Childhood Advocates

It was with great sadness and much appreciation that the early childhood community said good bye to early childhood advocates in the early care and education field.

[Vanessa Rich](#), City of Chicago Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Family and Support Services, Chicago, IL



Vanessa Rich was a remarkable Head Start advocate driven by a passion to expand opportunities for vulnerable children and families. Vanessa began her career in early childhood education as a volunteer for the Head Start program in 1965, and she continued that commitment throughout her life. A national celebration of Vanessa's enormous contribution to the

Head Start community will take place during the NHSA Winter Leadership Institute on 2/2/16. A state celebration honoring Vanessa's life will take place during the IHSA Annual Conference in Springfield, IL on March 14-16, 2016. Share pictures and memories of Vanessa via email to [miocca@ilheadstart.org](mailto:miocca@ilheadstart.org).

See [The Family Room Blog](#) by Dr. Blanca Estela Enriquez, Director, Office of Head Start and the OHS Senior Staff at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2016/01/remembering-vanessa-ann-rich>

[Patty Siegel](#), San Francisco, CA

“This is a tremendous loss to the field of child care and for me personally. Patty was part of the hiring committee that interviewed me in 1983 to work at the Child Care Law Center, the beginning of my career in child care. She has been a cherished friend and colleague ever since. Patty was a fierce advocate for child care, for both parents and providers. She was both powerful and caring and her loss will be deeply felt throughout the country.” Abby Cohen, OCC Region IX Program Manager



[Bruce Hershfield](#), Staten Island, NY, formerly of Bay Village, Boston and Takoma Park, MD

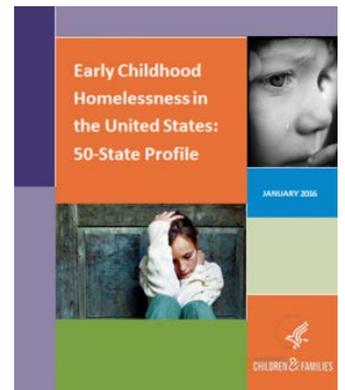


Bruce dedicated himself to advocacy for local, national, and international child welfare, was Director of SMOC Day Care, Office for Children, Executive Director of South Shore Day Care, Child Care Director of Child Welfare League of America, and Assistant Commissioner of Administration of Children's Services for NYC.

## Early Childhood Homelessness

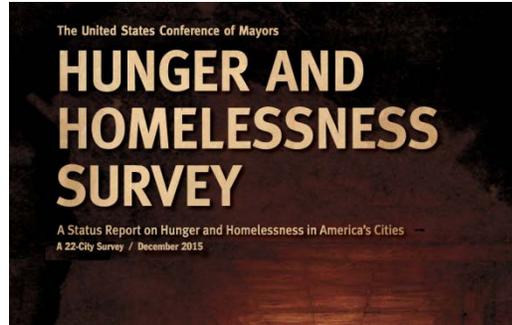
### [Early Childhood Homelessness in the United States: 50-State Profile.](#)

ACF released [Early Childhood Homelessness in the United States: 50-State Profile](#), providing data for children experiencing homelessness in each state and the District of Columbia. The report can be used as a tool for states to meet the needs of vulnerable children and provide information for local, statewide, and federal conversations and planning toward the goal of ending family homelessness. Individual profiles will soon be on the website.



## Conference of Mayors Report

Each year, since October 1982, when The U.S. Conference of Mayors and The U.S. Conference of City Human Services Officials first brought the shortage of emergency services to national attention through a survey of cities of all sizes, the Conference of Mayors presents a report on the problems of hunger and homelessness in America's cities.



The survey includes questions on family homelessness. It does not include questions regarding young children.

The 22 Task Force cities responding to this year's survey are Asheville, NC; Baltimore, MD; Charleston, SC; Chicago, IL; Cleveland, OH; Dallas, TX; Des Moines, IA; Los Angeles, CA; Louisville, KY; McKinney, TX;

Memphis, TN; Nashville, TN; Norfolk, VA; Philadelphia, PA; Providence, RI; Saint Paul, MN; Salt Lake City, UT; San Antonio, TX; San Francisco, CA; Santa Barbara, CA; Seattle, WA; District of Columbia

Ensuring the well-being of our youngest children is essential to the work of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HHS is especially focused on the challenges faced by families with young children who are homeless or at risk for homelessness. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) reached out to states and programs with guidance in 2013 and continues to provide resources to the field. These can be [accessed here](#).

Most recently, both ACF and HRSA encouraged strategies and collaboration on early childhood homelessness to Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV), Tribal MIECHV and Healthy Start grantees. See more [here](#).

Looking for past articles on early childhood homelessness? The [Highlights on Homelessness](#) from the ECD Newsletters in 2015 provides resources from ACF and partners including Project CATCH in Raleigh, NC; Primo Center for Women and Children, Chicago, IL; a Research to Policy Resource List by Research Connections; UMOM in Phoenix, AZ and Families in Transition, Rockford, IL.



## Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) and Preschool Development (PDG) Highlight

At the Annual Grantee Meeting, Grantees and others connected with RTT-ELC and PDG told their stories through two different means: StoryCorps-inspired interviews & Pecha Kucha style presentations. Learn about RTT-ELC and PDG efforts through their stories!



### StoryCorps-Inspired Interviews:

[Click here](#) to listen.

### Pecha Kuchas:

[Click here](#) to view.

## Father Engagement Research

URBAN INSTITUTE



OPRE announced the release of the final report and two briefs from the Fathers and Home Visiting study, conducted by the Urban Institute and funded by OPRE.



Early childhood home visiting programs typically target pregnant women and mothers of young children, but increasing attention is being given to the practice of engaging fathers as well. The study aimed to understand how home visiting programs engage fathers, what fathers' experiences are in those programs, and the perceived benefits of fathers' participation. Qualitative interviews were conducted with home visiting program administrators, staff members, and

participating fathers and mothers in five programs implementing strategies to engage fathers in home visiting services. The findings have implications both for home visiting programs that are interested in working with fathers, and for responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage programs that serve low-income fathers.

The final report, *Approaches to Father Engagement and Fathers' Experiences in Home Visiting Programs*, discusses approaches that home visiting programs use to engage fathers, the challenges they face, the strategies they use to overcome these challenges, and benefits of participating from the perspective of fathers and program staff. In addition, an accompanying brief summarizes key findings from the final report.

The brief, *Serving Young Fathers in Home Visiting Programs: Highlights from a Research Study*, describes the unique set of challenges and the strategies staff use to serve young fathers, and is based primarily on staff interviews in home visiting programs that serve a high number of teen fathers.

## DOL Strengthening Working Families Initiative (SWFI) grant program

On December 17, The U.S. Department of Labor released the application for the Strengthening Working Families Initiative competitive partnership grants (deadline March 16, 2016), a \$25 million initiative to provide job training and create stronger linkages with child care through local program and system activities. The public-private partnerships may use up to 25 percent of the grant for supportive services, including paying for child care and coordinating or establishing child care consumer education and referral services. The grant application is available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=280609>.



National Head Start Association, Yasmina Vinci, Executive Director

The [National Head Start Association \(NHSA\)](#) wrapped up 2015 with a [research blast](#), highlighting a number of recent studies that show interventions that support “soft” skills have meaningful, lasting effects in adulthood. In the past, researchers studying Head Start have focused on measures of cognitive skills, like literacy and numeracy, and whether these gains last or fade over time. But, similar to cognitive skills, soft skills begin to develop at an early age and are refined through practice. It's much harder to measure this kind of development, and too often researchers simply don't. Fortunately, more and more [research](#) is being done on this topic, and long-term studies are showing social-emotional development in early childhood education is critical to functioning positively and productively in school, and in life.



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

*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.*