



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

## Early Care and Education Quarterly Update—SUMMER 2019

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### RECENT NCSL EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PRODUCTS

NCSL's Early Care and Education staff, along with our colleagues in education and health, host webinars and podcasts, produce reports, create webpages and pen articles to support your work. Here are our recent products.

#### Early Childhood Archived Webinars

In August, experts from Child Trends addressed state early childhood governance structures and action steps to develop cross-agency data governance that supports shared collection and use of early childhood data. Listen to the [archived webinar](#) to learn more.

In July, Louise Stoney with the Alliance for Early Childhood Finance and Opportunities Exchange explored innovative financing strategies to ensure access to high-quality early learning services for children and their families, and support for providers. Stoney's [slide deck and the archived webinar](#) are now available.

In June, Sharon Lynn Kagan with the National Center for Children and Families at Teachers College, Columbia University examined how six countries with different demographics address early care and education. Kagan shared how states can design and implement services for young children and families that aim to advance early childhood outcomes. Listen to the [archived webinar](#) to learn more.

#### Prenatal-to-Three Policy Guidebook

[Strong Beginnings, Successful Lives: A Prenatal-to-Three Policy Guidebook for Legislators](#) provides a national context and identifies entry points for enacting infant and toddler policy for state legislators. Each discussed option is organized into one of three topic areas: healthy beginnings; family supports; and early learning, development and care.

## Early Care and Education State Budget Actions FY 2019

NCSL surveyed 50 state legislative fiscal offices about appropriations for early care and education programs for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019. Programs tracked include child care, prekindergarten, home visiting and other early childhood programs. [Access the findings](#) for a snapshot of how legislatures are using federal, state, local and private funding to support early learning and healthy development in young children.

## Mitigating the Benefits Cliffs

Benefits cliffs, or the sudden drop-off of public assistance due to modest increases in income, is increasingly being seen by state and federal policymakers as a deterrent to employment and family economic stability. NCSL's brief, [Moving Up: Helping Families Climb the Economic Ladder by Addressing Benefits Cliffs](#), looks at the issue and discusses a menu of policy options state policymakers could consider to address and mitigate the effects of benefits cliffs.

## State Implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act

In response to rising child maltreatment rates and foster care caseloads, Congress enacted the Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First) in 2018. This landmark legislation offers states an unprecedented opportunity to transform state child welfare systems by providing substance abuse, mental health and other prevention and treatment services to prevent children's entry into foster care. The law also seeks to reduce states' reliance on group and residential treatment homes and instead prioritize family-based care. A recent NCSL LegisBrief, [Family First: Federal Child Welfare Law](#), takes a closer look at the federal law and how states have responded.

## NCSL TRACKS LEGISLATION



NCSL's early care and education database tracks legislation from the 2008-2019 legislative sessions for all states and territories. Search 2019 legislation on our [webpage](#) or [live tracking sheet](#) by state, topic, status, primary sponsor, bill number or keyword. The database is updated weekly through the generous support of the [Alliance for Early Success](#).

Check the [session calendar](#) for convening and adjourning dates, updates on special sessions, and dates of formal organizational sessions.

### **Enacted bills of note:**

[CO SB 63](#) | Senator Kevin Priola (R) | Requires the department of human services, in consultation with the early childhood leadership commission and various stakeholders, to draft a strategic action plan addressing the declining availability of family child care homes and infant child care.

[NE LB 590](#) | Senator Tom Briese (NP) | Streamlines the process by which Department of Health and Human Services staff verify the training and credentials of licensed child care providers by using an existing Department of Education database called the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System.

[NJ SB 3330](#) | Senator Dawn Marie Addiego (D) | Establishes a pilot program in the Department of Children and Families to study the impact of child care services provided by community providers operating in public school facilities; requires community providers to meet certain criteria.

[WA SB 5437](#) | Senator Claire Wilson (D) | Expands eligibility to the early childhood education and assistance program. The Department of Children, Youth and Families must: (1) Establish a pilot

project to implement a state-funded birth to 3 early childhood education and assistance program to eligible children who are under 36 months old; (2) Offer home visiting services that the child or family are eligible for under the particular home visiting service's statutory eligibility requirements; and (3) Select up to 10 pilot project locations during the first year of the project, with an attempt to select a combination of rural, urban, and suburban locations.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR CAPITOL FORUM



### NCSL Capitol Forum

[Register and join](#) us Dec. 10-13 in Phoenix, Ariz. The [NCSL Capitol Forum](#) is where legislators and staff come together to tackle critical state-federal issues, gain insight from national experts, and work to craft the States' Agenda.

### NCSL Calendar

Find other NCSL-sponsored webinars and meetings on our [calendar](#).

## RESEARCH REQUEST OF NOTE: SUPPORT EMPLOYEES' CHILD CARE NEEDS



**Question:** How do states encourage employers to support their employees' childcare needs (for instance, by providing on-site child care, financial assistance or tax credits as incentives?) Have any of these been effective in some states?

**Answer:** Twenty-nine states have enacted tax credits for employers who provide child care benefits to their employees, though just [16 states](#) currently have this policy in place. Researchers have found these policies are [largely underutilized](#) and therefore often ineffective at increasing access to child care. There are many reasons an employer might not take advantage of a tax credit including lack of knowledge on their availability or understanding on how to use them, uncertainty about the tax credit's permanence, little or no existing tax liability, and perhaps most importantly, the credits may be too small relative to the actual cost of assisting employees with child care.

The [National Study of Employers](#) found that just 7% of employers offer onsite child care while over 40% report providing access to child care resource and referral services to assist employees in *finding* child care. More often, employers provide Dependent Care Assistance Plans (56%) which allow workers to use pre-tax dollars to reimburse eligible dependent care expenses. This 2019 [document](#) explains dependent care assistance plans a bit further and is part of a forthcoming employer child care toolkit from the [Committee for Economic Development](#).

## EARLY LEARNING FELLOWS PROGRAM UPDATE



Want to learn about NCSL's Early Learning Fellows program? Interested in being a Fellow in 2020?

NCSL's eighth cohort of the program was composed of 24 legislators and two legislative staff representing 13 states. To learn more, visit [NCSL's Early Learning Fellows website](#).

Participants were selected through a competitive application process and are considered experienced or emerging leaders in early childhood and early learning issues. The kickoff meeting took place June 5-7 in Omaha, Neb. and highlights included a discussion on early brain development and a site visit to a high-quality early childhood learning center.

This summer, Fellows convened virtually for two webinars. In July, they learned about innovative financing mechanisms for early childhood programming such as tax credits and shared services. Then in August, three experts shared information and policy examples about early childhood data collection and governance. Finally, the 2019 Early Learning Fellows traveled to Denver, Aug. 25-27 to hear from experts about language development in the early years, home visiting and social-emotional learning. After a busy and education-filled summer Fellows will now receive personalized assistance from NCSL staff as they execute their action plans created during the meetings.

Funding for this program comes from the Alliance for Early Success, Buffett Early Childhood Fund, Heising-Simons Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Access materials from both in-person meetings including agendas and PowerPoint Presentations and archived versions of both webinars [online](#).

NCSL looks forward to offering this program again in 2020 in which selected participants will:

- Build knowledge alongside legislators and staff about new research and policy.
- Participate in a peer-learning environment, fostering the exchange of early learning policy ideas and solutions.
- Meet, connect and learn from other legislative leaders.
- Identify action steps as part of an individual action plan.
- Speak and learn from leading researchers and policy experts.

For more information about this premier NCSL program contact Alison May at [alison.may@ncsl.org](mailto:alison.may@ncsl.org) or call 303-856-1473.

#### 2019 LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT RECAP



[NCSL's 2019 Legislative Summit](#) in Nashville attracted more than 6,000 attendees for an array of policy sessions, networking with fellow legislators and the chance to hear from Dolly Parton, presidential historian John Meacham and author and inspirational leader Wes Moore.

Over 170 attendees at a joint Health and Human Services and Education session heard from John King, president and CEO of [The Education Trust](#) and Laurie Smith, education policy advisor to [Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant](#). The panelists discussed the importance of promoting school readiness early (prenatally, in fact) and how to create high-quality programs and classroom environments that can help children overcome adversity, address opportunity gaps and prepare them for school. Find materials from this session and many more on the [Summit website](#).

See you in Indianapolis, Aug. 10-13, for NCSL's 2020 Legislative Summit!

#### FEDERAL UPDATE



NCSL's Washington, D.C.-based staff ensure state legislatures have a strong, cohesive voice in the federal system. Stay up to date with NCSL's bimonthly Health and Human Services State-Federal Newsletter for health and human services committee members. [Newsletters are archived](#) on NCSL's website. The [August edition](#) includes news from

Congress and from the administration, updates from the courts, relevant funding announcements and handful of spotlights include both health and human services.

A bipartisan group of Senate and House members joined to introduce the Resilience Investment, Support, and Expansion (“RISE”) from Trauma Act ([S. 1770](#), [H.R. 3180](#)) this summer. In addition to a number of provisions to expand access to Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) training and workforce support, this bill would establish an IECMH Leadership Program to award grants to establish training institutes and centers of excellence for IECMH.

## FEATURED RESOURCES

### **How Policymakers Can Support Early Childhood Data Governance**

New [research](#) from the Early Childhood Data Collaborative provides actions policymakers can take to support early childhood data governance. One first step: Identify critical questions that integrated data can help answer in order to inform future policy and program decisions.

### **Prenatal-to-Three Policy Impact Center**

The University of Texas at Austin launched the [Prenatal-to-Three Policy Impact Center](#). The new center will partner with states as they develop and implement evidence-informed policies that improve outcomes for infants, toddlers and their families.

### **2019 Directory of Early Learning State Contacts**

Source: [Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes](#) (CEELO) | May 2019

This latest edition of the Directory of State Early Learning Contacts contains updated information for state contracts in the birth through third-grade system in each state. Access the [directory](#).

## RESOURCES FROM THE FIELD

### **Leveraging the Potential of Home Visiting Programs to Serve Immigrant and Dual Language Learner Families**

Source: [Migration Policy Institute](#) | August 2019

Read the [report](#).

### **2019 Kids Count Data Book**

Source: [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) | June 2019

Read the [report](#).

### **What If We Expanded Child Care Subsidies?**

Source: [Urban Institute](#) | June 2019

Read the [report](#).

### **Checking in on the Child Care Landscape**

Source: [Child Care Aware® of America](#) | June 2019

Read the [report](#).

### **Raising the Bar for Early Childhood Education: Early Signals on How Louisiana's Education Policy Strategies Are Working for Early Childhood Providers and Community Networks**

Source: [RAND Corporation](#) | June 2019

Read the [report](#).

### **How-to: 5 Steps for Brain-Building Serve and Return**

Source: [Center on the Developing Child](#) | May 2019

Watch the [video](#).

### **High-Quality Early Child Care: A Critical Piece of the Workforce Infrastructure**

Source: [Federal Reserve Bank of Boston](#) | May 2019

Read the [report](#).

### **From the Ground Up: Improving Child Care and Early Learning Facilities**

Source: [Bipartisan Policy Center](#) | May 2019

Read the [issue brief](#).

### **Perry Preschool: Intergenerational Effects Toolkit**

Source: [Heckman](#) | May 2019

Read the [report and toolkit](#).

### **The New Economy and Child Care: Nonstandard-Hour Work, Child Care, and Child Health and Well-Being**

Source: [Mathematica](#) & [American Public Human Services Association](#) | May 2019

Read the [report](#).

### **Universal Approaches to Promoting Healthy Development**

Source: [The Future of Children](#) | May 2019

Read the [policy brief](#).

### **Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs And Health**

Source: [Health Affairs](#) | April 2019

Read the [brief](#).

### **Child Care in State Economies – 2019 Update**

Source: [Committee for Economic Development](#) (CED) | Spring 2019

Read the [report](#).

*Outside links are provided for informational purposes only and do not constitute an endorsement by [NCSL](#).*

*This update is made possible by the generous support of the [Alliance for Early Success](#). It is an informational service for state legislators and legislative staff who are part of NCSL's Child Care and Early Education Legislative Network. Contact Alison May for more information at 303-856-1473 or to offer information from your state. You may also request to subscribe, if you are a legislator or legislative staff, or unsubscribe by emailing [cyf-info@ncsl.org](mailto:cyf-info@ncsl.org).*

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