



HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING AND CARE

2019 CONGRESSIONAL RECESS TOOLKIT

- I. Opportunities for Members to Showcase Support for Early Learning and Care
- II. Top Ten Early Learning Facts
- III. Key Early Childhood Education Talking Points
- IV. Bipartisan Early Childhood Education Accomplishments
- V. National Poll: Why Early Learning is a Top Priority for Voters
- VI. Early Childhood Education Syllabus

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Voters and Experts Agree: Early Learning is Worth the Investment



The overwhelming evidence and research demonstrate that high-quality early learning and care is a crucial component of a child's healthy development. Children from low-income families who receive a high-quality early childhood education are proven to be more likely to earn higher wages, live healthier lives, avoid incarceration, raise stronger families, and contribute to society. That's why, as research shows, for every dollar invested in high-quality early childhood education, society gains up to \$11 in economic returns over the long-term.

What's more, voters see quality early childhood education as a necessity for today's families and want the federal government to work together to find ways to support the care and education of children from birth through age five. According to FFYF's 2018 national poll, **89 percent of voters support making quality early childhood education more affordable for working families.**

Like voters, Congress has long seen early learning and care as an important issue, and recent bipartisan actions demonstrate Members' commitment to this issue. **These include:**

- **Historic \$2.37 billion increase** for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program in FY2018.
- **Steady increase** in funding for Head Start, Early Head Start, and IDEA Preschool Grants over recent years.
- **Creation of the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)** program, which is empowering 46 states and territories to improve and better align current early learning systems.



Access to high-quality care in a child's first five years helps ensure they develop the skills necessary to do well in school, decreasing the need for costly interventions later in life.

- Early learning and care increases high school graduation rates by 14 percent.¹
- Preschool reduced the percentage of children repeating a grade by 15 percent.²

High-quality early learning and care also has tremendous benefits to families and the economy.

- Child care helps parents return to work and generate an additional \$79,000 in lifetime earnings for mothers.³
- A lack of child care causes businesses to lose an estimated \$4.4 billion annually due to employee absenteeism.⁴

¹ Lynn Karoly, Anamarie Auger, "Informing Investments In Preschool Quality And Access In Cincinnati," Rand Corporation, 2016

² Ibid.

³ "2016 Report: Parents And The High Cost Of Child Care," Child Care Aware Of America, 2016

⁴ Lynn Karoly, Anamarie Auger, "Informing Investments In Preschool Quality And Access In Cincinnati," Rand Corporation, 2016

I. Opportunities for Members of Congress to Showcase Support for Early Learning and Care

In recent months, members of the House and Senate from both parties have paid visits to early learning and care providers across the country – highlighting their support and the importance of high-quality early childhood opportunities for children from birth through age five. These visits allow Members to witness first-hand the care and educational experiences that support the healthy development of American’s youngest learners, while raising awareness about the importance of federal investments in programs like Head Start & Early Head Start, child care, and more for local communities.

In-District Events

During in-district work periods, Members have an opportunity to highlight their work on behalf of the communities they serve. While in district, there are many ways to demonstrate support for this important bipartisan issue for children and families.

Convene Local Stakeholders

- **Host** a neighborhood roundtable on quality child care in your area
- **Host** a community meeting with early learning providers and professionals to discuss their experiences

Gain First-Hand Knowledge

- **Tour** a child care, Head Start, or other preschool facility
- **Visit** with families participating in home-based child care
- **Meet** with a child psychologist to discuss how the opioid epidemic is affecting children and families
- **Read** to children
- **Meet** with nurses or other home visiting practitioners funded by MIECHV

Highlight Early Childhood Issues

- **Organize** a task force on early childhood education
- **Ask** business leaders about the importance of access to quality child care for their employees
- **Write** an Op-Ed on federal support for early childhood care and education

These events provide opportunities to engage directly with constituents. Contact Sarah Rubinfeld, FFYF Government Affairs Director, at srubinfeld@ffyf.org, to get in touch with local early childhood education advocates in your area to learn more and schedule events. FFYF is also able to provide background information for your event.

THE SPIRIT

CASEY TALKS CHILDCARE WITH PROVIDERS, PARENTS



News and Tribune

REP. HOLLINGSWORTH MEETS THOSE HELPED BY LOCAL HEAD START PROGRAM



FOX 11

CORTEZ MASTO TOURS LOCAL HEAD START AND WORKFORCE PROGRAMS



Daily Record

CNEW CONGRESS- MAN GRILLED BY PRESCHOOL 'JOURNALISTS'



Crossville Chronicle

CONGRESSMAN ROSE SEES HEAD START CENTER IN ACTION



LISA MURKOWSKI VISITS THE CCS LEARNING FACILITIES





Sample 499 or E-Newsletter

Making sure families can access affordable, high-quality early learning and child care opportunities is critical to helping families break the cycle of poverty and build a brighter future. Overwhelming research shows that investing in early learning initiatives for the first five years of children's lives generate many long-term benefits, including higher likelihood of high school graduation, greater lifetime earnings, and reduced incarceration rates.

My conversations with teachers and families across our [district/state] have proven there is strong support for investing in early learning and care. That is why last Congress, I was proud to help pass bipartisan legislation to increase funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program by \$2.37 billion—helping our state implement critical quality improvements that will better support young children and families. I also voted to reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, which allocates federal funds to states for voluntary, evidence-based home visiting services. In 2017 alone, MIECHV provided more than 942,000 home visits, helping parents improve their family's health and provide better opportunities for their children.

This year, I will continue to seek out opportunities to invest in early childhood education. To follow my continued efforts on this issue and others, you can sign up for my e-newsletter, follow me on social media, or contact my office at any time.

Sample Tweets (Graphics online [here](#))

- Investing in high-quality early childhood education pays off; every dollar we spend returns up to \$11 to society. That's why I'll continue advocating for policies that invest in our country's youngest learners. #ECE
- We've made great strides to make high-quality, affordable #childcare available to families across the country—but it remains out of reach for far too many. I look forward to addressing this challenge with colleagues on both sides of the aisle. #ECE
- Not only does high-quality early childhood education help children lay foundations for success later in life, but it can also break the cycle of poverty. Investments in our children today can pay off for generations. #ECE
- High-quality, affordable early learning and care helps mothers return to the workforce and further their education. I'm advocating to invest in our country's youngest learners to help the American workforce of today and tomorrow. #ECE

II. Top Ten Early Learning Facts



1

For every dollar spent on high-quality early childhood education programs, the return to society is upwards of \$11.¹

2

Children who participated in high-quality early childhood education had higher college graduation rates and rates of employment at age 30 than peers who did not.²

3

High-quality early childhood education programs have the potential to lift families out of poverty through intergenerational benefits to the children of those in ECE today.³

4

Approximately half of Americans live in “child care deserts”—neighborhoods or communities with little or no access to quality child care.⁴

5

Only 40 percent of three-year-olds are enrolled in early childhood programs in America, below the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average of 70 percent.⁵

6

The social skills children acquire as babies are directly linked to their long-term social capabilities in adulthood.

7

A supportive learning environment prepares children for success. Studies have found quality early childhood education programs increased students' likelihood of high school graduation by 44 percent, increased adult earnings by 42 percent, and reduced incarceration rates by 46 percent.

8

High-quality child care delivers long-term benefits to children's cognitive and socioemotional development.

9

Children who have participated in high-quality early childhood education initiatives go on to have lower rates of incarceration, lower rates of arrest for violent crimes, and are less likely to have received government assistance.

10

Child care helps parents return to work and generate an additional \$79,000 in lifetime earnings for mothers.

¹ “The Future of Working Families: How We Care for Our Children,” Bipartisan Policy Center, 2019

² “Research Summary: The Lifecycle Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program,” Heckman Equation, Accessed 12/6/18

³ James Heckman, “Perry Preschool: Intergenerational Effects,” The Heckman Equation, 2019

⁴ Rasheed Malik and Katie Hamm, “Mapping America's Child Care Deserts,” Center for American Progress, 2017

⁵ “Starting Strong 2017: Key OECD Indicators on Early Childhood Education and Care,” Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2017

⁶ “What Do We Know About Social and Emotional Development in Early Childhood?” The Urban Child Institute, Accessed 12/6/18

⁷ Lawrence Schweinhart, et al., “Michigan Great Start Readiness Program Evaluation 2012: High School Graduation and Grade Retention Findings,” Michigan Department of Education, March 2012

⁸ “Perry Preschool Project,” Social Programs That Work, Accessed 12/6/18

⁹ “Social Programs That Work Review: Evidence Summary for the Perry Preschool Project,” Laura and John Arnold Foundation, November 2017

¹⁰ “The Relation of Preschool Child-Care Quality to Children's Cognitive and Social Developmental Trajectories through Second Grade,” Child Development, 2001

¹¹ “Perry Preschool Project,” Social Programs That Work, Accessed 12/6/18

¹² “2016 Report: Parents And The High Cost Of Child Care,” Child Care Aware Of America, 2016

III. Why Make High-Quality Early Childhood Education a Priority: Key Early Childhood Education Talking Points



Sample Talking Points

- Investing in early childhood education now is an investment in our community's future. That's why I'm proud of our recent bipartisan efforts in Congress to provide federal support for early learning and child care programs throughout our state.
- Children from low-income families who receive a high-quality early childhood education are more likely to earn higher wages, live healthier lives, avoid incarceration, raise stronger families, and contribute to society. Additionally, early learning and care increases high school graduation rates by 14 percent.¹³
- The benefits of high-quality early learning and care programs from birth through age five do not end with one child, but extend to their entire family and society at large now and in the years to come.
- Early childhood interventions have intergenerational effects, as research shows the benefits extend to the children of program participants.¹⁴
- Access to stable, high-quality child care also helps parents improve labor productivity by allowing parents to increase hours worked, miss fewer work days, and pursue education.¹⁵
- With a record number of women in the workforce today, working moms, in particular, stand to benefit from these investments in child care and early learning programs. Child care helps parents return to work and generate an additional \$79,000 in lifetime earnings for mothers.¹⁶

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ James Heckman, "Perry Preschool: Intergenerational Effects," The Heckman Equation, 2019

¹⁵ Timothy Bartik, "Early Childhood Programs As An Economic Development Tool: Investing Early To Prepare The Future Workforce," W.E. Upjohn Institute For Employment Research, 2013

¹⁶ "2016 Report: Parents And The High Cost Of Child Care," Child Care Aware Of America, 2016

IV. Bipartisan Early Childhood Education Accomplishments



Policy Actions Demonstrating National Bipartisan Support

Congress has a strong, bipartisan track record of support for funding early learning programs. Members on both sides of the aisle have worked together in the spirit of bipartisanship to significantly increase funding, while also enacting reforms to existing early childhood programs that elevate quality and leverage state and local leadership.

This year, Republican and Democratic Governors from every corner of the nation have proposed major investments in the care and education of children from birth through age five at the state level. In fact, 32 governors proposed a total of \$2.9 billion in increased funding for early learning programs.

The legislation enacted, as described below, are just a few of the most recent examples of Congress' commitment on behalf of children across the country.

FY2020 House Minibus Package

- In June 2019, the House of Representatives approved a minibus package that includes substantial increases for many federal early learning and care programs, including:
 - **\$7.7 billion** for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program, an increase of **\$2.4 billion** over FY2019;
 - **\$11.6 billion** for Head Start, an increase of **\$1.5 billion** over FY2019;
 - **\$350 million** for Preschool Development Grants Birth through Five (PDG B-5), an increase of **\$100 million** over FY 2019;
 - **\$398 million** for IDEA Part B, Sec. 619, an increase of **\$7.3 million** over FY2019; and
 - **\$491 million** for IDEA Part C, an increase of **\$21.3 million** over FY2019.

FY2019 Labor/HHS Minibus Package

- Enacted in September 2018, the FY2019 Labor/HHS Minibus package again prioritized the care of America's young children by including a \$260 million increase for federal early learning and care programs. The bill increased funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program by \$50 million to a total of \$5.28 billion in discretionary funding, building on the historic \$2.37 billion increase the program received in FY2018 through a bipartisan deal. This funding supports greater access to, and the quality of early childhood education programs.

FY2018 Omnibus Bill

- Enacted in 2018, the FY2018 Omnibus bill included a historic funding increase for some of the nation's vital early learning and care programs. The bill increased discretionary funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program to \$5.23 billion – the single largest increase to CCDBG in the program's history and an increase of \$2.37 billion over FY2017 levels. The bill also included significant funding levels for Early Head Start and Head Start, as well as the Preschool Development Grants B-5 (PDG) program, setting funding for those programs at \$9.86 billion and \$250 million respectively. The funding increases in the 2018 Omnibus bill go a long way towards ensuring states are more equipped with the resources needed to continue implementing these important but often costly program improvements, which will in turn promote learning and healthy development.



Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)

- Voluntary, evidence-based home visits conducted by nurses, social workers, and trained professionals support pregnant women and families with young children by providing access to critical resources in the early years. Reauthorized in February 2018, the extension of MIECHV under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 maintained current funding levels of \$400M per year for funds to states and local grantees for five years. Prior to reauthorization, the program had expired in September 2017.

Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit

- The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) is the only credit in the tax code specifically created to help families with the cost of work-related child care expenses. After months of uncertainty surrounding the fate of the CDCTC within the tax reform discussion, bipartisan leaders in the Senate prevailed in early December of 2017 in protecting the credit from being eliminated in the legislation. Last-minute efforts to include an amendment that would have made the credit refundable were unsuccessful, however, leaving the credit unchanged and still out of reach for many low- and middle-income families with lower tax liability.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- This education law replaced its outdated predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). ESSA shifts decision-making responsibility to states with federal guardrails to qualify, incorporates early learning provisions throughout, and authorizes dedicated funding for early learning through the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five program.

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

- In November 2014, the CCDBG Act was reauthorized with bipartisan support for the first time in 18 years. In order to improve the quality of child care programs, the reauthorized law includes reforms aimed at promoting family involvement, strengthening health and safety standards, improving training for the child care workforce, enhancing continuity of care, and increasing the percentage of children from low-income families in high-quality programs. A discretionary funding increase of \$2.37 billion was included in the FY2018 Omnibus bill, nearly doubling the program's funding, and the FY2019 Labor/HHS Minibus package provided a discretionary funding increase of \$50 million.

V. National Poll: Why Early Learning is a Top Priority for Voters

With a divided Congress, voters see early childhood education as a rare, unifying policy issue – and they're paying close attention to their lawmakers' actions.

According to a new bipartisan¹ poll commissioned by First Five Years Fund (FFYF), voters say a divided Congress should have no bearing on lawmakers' ability to pass meaningful legislation supporting high-quality early childhood education. In fact, Democrats and Republicans alike expect members of Congress from across the aisle to work together to get things done—and **investing in early childhood education opportunities remains a rare issue that has strong support across parties. Voters are less interested in seeing partisans stand their ground than they are seeing them stand up for young children and their families.**

- Regardless of party, voters say they will be watching to see if members are working together to break partisan gridlock and get things done in the new Congress.

60%
REPUBLICANS

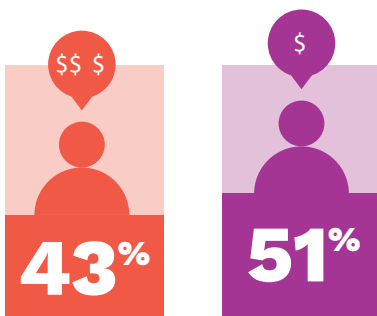
60%
INDEPENDENTS

61%
DEMOCRATS

- Democrats and independents overwhelmingly want to see increased funding for early childhood education, even if it means the Trump administration can take credit for helping children and families.

74%
INDEPENDENTS

81%
DEMOCRATS



Voters see a critical lack of quality, affordable early childhood education, regardless of their income level.

Only 15% say that most or all local programs available to lower- and middle-income families are high-quality and affordable. Respondents making over \$100,000 per year are virtually just as likely (43%) as those who earn less than \$40,000 per year (51%) to say that only some or few programs near them are affordable and high-quality.

Two-thirds of American voters say we need to do more to ensure children start kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school.

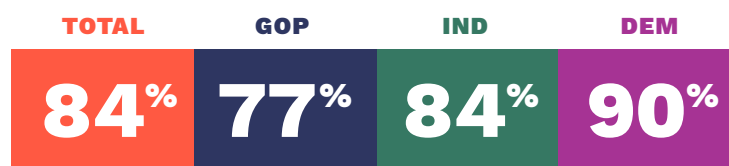
Parents and those without children at home share virtually the same view that more should be done to ensure children start school with the skills they need. 68% of parents and 64% of non-parents agree that more needs to be done.

¹ Methodology: Public Opinion Strategies (R) and Hart Research (D) conducted a telephone survey of N=1,000 voters throughout the country on both landline and cell phones. The survey was conducted November 10-15, 2018 and has an overall margin of error of +/- 3.10%. The sample was distributed proportionally throughout the nation and is demographically representative of the electorate.

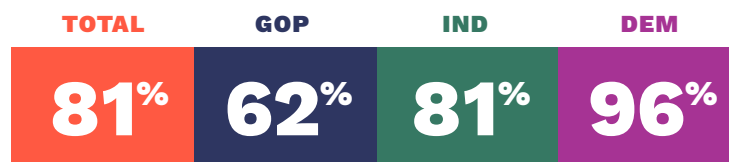


Republicans, independents and Democrats all support proposals that support more families accessing high-quality early learning and care opportunities:

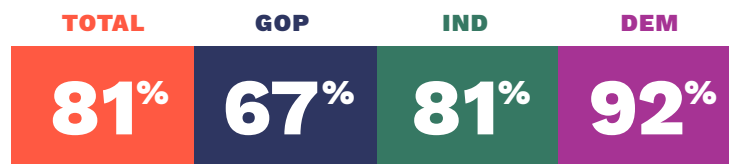
Provide tax incentives to businesses which provide or help their employees afford quality early childhood education programs.



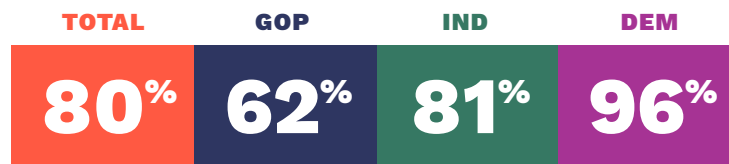
Increase federal funding to states to create or build on their own programs that directly help low-income children.



Increase the child care tax credit to help parents better afford quality child care and early education programs.



Provide greater funding to Head Start and Early Head Start.



For members of Congress, there is no risk to supporting early childhood education – there's only great reward.

Voters are 8 times more likely to have a more favorable opinion of their member of Congress for supporting policies and funding for quality early learning. In fact, more than one-in-four voters say that early childhood education is a primary factor in deciding whether to support an elected official.

Voters want members of Congress to work together to expand early childhood education.

[Learn More at FFYF.org/2018poll](https://ffyf.org/2018poll)

VI. Early Childhood Education Syllabus



Check out these recent news stories and resources on early childhood education for more on the current state of early childhood education in America.

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION

[The Bedrock of American Business: High-Quality Early Childhood Education](#)

NEW YORK TIMES

[As Washington Limp Along, Head Start Thrives](#)

WALL STREET JOURNAL

[Long-Term Study Shows Free Pre-K Helps Low-Income Students, and Their Children](#)

NBC NEWS

[Head Start Program Offers Low-Income Children a Chance to Thrive](#)

CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS

[Governors Propose Nearly \\$3 Billion of Investments in Early Learning Programs](#)

BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

[The Future of Working Families; How We Care for our Children](#)

EDUCATION WEEK

[Democrats, Independents Want Early Childhood Funding, And Don't Care Who Gets Credit](#)

VIDEO

[America Works with Quality Child Care](#)

BROWN CENTER CHALKBOARD

[Does Head Start Work? The Debate Over the Head Start Impact Study, Explained](#)

THE ECONOMIST

[Republicans and Democrats are Taking Early Education More Seriously](#)

FORTUNE

[Child Care Costs More Than College Tuition in 28 U.S. States](#)

How do federal investments and partnerships support ECE in your state?
Check out [FFYF's state fact sheets](#) for all the data.