

YOUNG CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING RHODE ISLAND POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 2019

Child Care

- Continue to increase and expand **tiered quality rates for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)** to meet the federal benchmark for equal access to quality child care. Ensure programs serving all ages of children (birth through age 12) have the resources they need to meet high-quality standards.
- Strengthen the state's **child care licensing system** to meet national recommendations and post inspection reports on a public website for parents and families to access.
- Increase state investments to improve the quality of infant/toddler child care. Develop and implement a **wage supplement strategy** to improve qualifications and retention of effective infant/toddler teachers and caregivers.

Pre-K and Head Start

- Expand Pre-K so that **all four-year-olds can enroll in a high-quality Pre-K or Head Start** program that promotes learning through play.
- Continue to build on the **diverse delivery system for Pre-K** with child care programs, Head Start agencies, and public schools operating Pre-K classrooms. Ensure Rhode Island continues to meet all the **national benchmarks for quality Pre-K**.
- **Provide choices for parents**, including programs that offer wraparound child care and serve younger siblings, and promote the development of **highly-qualified, effective, diverse, and well-compensated teachers**.

Early Elementary

- Support implementation of **high-quality, developmentally-appropriate curricula and assessment** in kindergarten and Grades 1 to 3. Work to align curricula and teaching practices across early childhood programs and school districts.
- Implement a **statewide Kindergarten Entry Profile** system so that kindergarten teachers have information about each individual child's strengths and challenges. Use the transition to kindergarten to gather information about each child from families and from early learning programs. Aggregate data to track trends in children's early learning and development in communities and across the state.
- **Reduce chronic absence** in the early grades by ensuring schools are a welcoming place for families, children, and community members and implementing school-based attendance teams to support families that are having difficulty getting children to school.



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Paid Family Leave

- Build on the success of our Temporary Caregivers Insurance (TCI) program that provides partial wage replacement so parents can take time out of work to care for a new child. **Improve wage replacement rates** for low-wage workers so they can afford to take the time off they need.
- **Extend the number of weeks** available through TCI so all newborns and newly adopted or foster children can stay home with their parents and caregivers for at least 12 weeks.

Family Home Visiting

- Increase state funding so all pregnant and parenting families facing significant challenges can participate in evidence-based family home visiting programs **known to improve child and family success**, including Nurse-Family Partnership, Healthy Families America, Parents as Teachers, and Early Head Start.

First 1,000 Days of RIte Care

- Build on the strengths of our RIte Care program by **improving connections to high-quality infant and toddler programs and services** through the 13 well-child visits scheduled in the first three years of life, full implementation of EPSDT, and high-quality prenatal care.
 - Sustain strong health insurance coverage rates.
 - Improve developmental screening and referral rates to Early Intervention.
 - Strengthen maternal depression and infant mental health screenings, services, and supports.
 - Coordinate pediatric care with family home visiting and Early Intervention programs.

