



# News Release

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JULY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2017

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## Study Finds At-Risk Wrap-Around Supports Critical to Child Care and Preschool Quality,

### *Proposed Budget Cuts will Hurt Program Quality and State Economy*

NEW HAVEN – High quality early childhood programs have immense positive short and long-term effects for children, families, and the state economy, according to a new study from Connecticut Voices for Children. The report analyzes the key elements of a quality early care and education system and compares Connecticut’s programs to national models.

The report highlights the considerable efforts of the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to promote program quality, and coordinate and support essential wrap-around services. Citing national research, the report details the key elements of effective, all-encompassing early care and education programs. According to Dr. Daniel Long, Research Director at Connecticut Voices for Children, “the best early care models combine responsive, play-based learning experiences with high-quality supports for children and parents, including programs like developmental screenings, home visiting supports, and parent coaching.”

“Early care programs are one of the most effective ways to close existing disparities related to race, ZIP code, and family income,” says Nicole Updegrove, Associate Policy Fellow at Connecticut Voices for Children and report author, “Wrap-around services are a key part of the equation, helping to ensure that young children’s needs are met both in and outside the classroom. “

The report highlights the value of high-quality early care and education to not only children and families, but to the overall state economy. The long-term benefits of programs, however, are dependent upon meeting children’s needs both in and outside the classroom. According to Ellen Shemitz, Executive Director at Connecticut Voices for Children, proposed cuts to the state budget put these economic benefits risk. “Seeking short terms savings through cuts to vital early childhood programs hurts our state in the long run, undermining our efforts to assure quality and equity in education and hurting workforce development and sustainability.”

Ms. Updegrove says, “Connecticut has been on the right path in increasing early care program quality, but we can’t afford to jeopardize access for families who need these programs most. The closure of Care 4 Kids, for example, has left many children with no access to quality early care. High-quality programs bring no benefits to the children whose families cannot afford them.”

The report is a follow-up to another analysis released by Connecticut Voices for Children on July 5<sup>th</sup>, assessing the economic impact of early care and education programs. You can download the economic impact report at [ctvoices.org/ECE-Impact](https://ctvoices.org/ECE-Impact). You can find the quality assessment report at [ctvoices.org/ECE-Quality](https://ctvoices.org/ECE-Quality).

*About Connecticut Voices for Children: Connecticut Voices for Children is a research-based child advocacy organization working to ensure that all Connecticut children have an equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential. Connecticut Voices would like to acknowledge the support of the Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, a project of the Connecticut Council for Philanthropy.*