Cradle to Kindergarten:
A New Plan to Combat Inequality

Ajay Chaudry, Taryn Morrissey, Christina Weiland, and Hirokazu Yoshikawa

APRIL 12, 2018
FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA 2018 CHILD HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND CARE SUMMIT
GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA
Take aways

1. Most children in the U.S. are not entering school ready to learn.
2. Large disparities in children’s development and skills begin early & widen quickly.
3. Gaps by family income in children’s access to and the quality of early learning opportunities are large and growing.
4. The earliest years are the most promising period for brain and skill development, yet it is when the U.S. invests the least.
5. Greater investments in a cohesive vision of high-quality early childhood interventions can promote improved, more equitable development and give all children a level playing field.
The educational achievement gap is large, growing, and spans a wide socio-economic gradient.

Source: Reardon (2011)
Much of the gap measured across primary schooling are present at school-entry.
U.S. workers lack access to paid family leave – especially lower income workers.

Large disparities by family income in use of early learning programs, especially for youngest children.

Rates of center-based ECE for children ages 0 to 5, by family income and child age, 2011

Source: Chaudry, Morrissey, Weiland, and Yoshikawa (2017)
Children from low-income families experience lower quality, as well as less access – at age 2

Source: Chaudry, Morrissey, Weiland, Yoshikawa (2017)
Children from low-income families experience lower quality in center-based care at age 4.

Source: Chaudry, Morrissey, Weiland, Yoshikawa (2017)
Quality matters: Higher-quality instruction leads to bigger gains.

Source: Chaudry, Morrissey, Weiland, Yoshikawa (2017)
Educational investments in the early years have greatest benefit – but we do too little.

Federal and State/Local Spending on Children, by age

Federal

State

$1,277

$4,138

$4,023

$4,579

$3,723

$10,430

Ages 0-2

Ages 3-5

Ages 6-17

Source: Edelstein et al. 2013

Average per child annual public expenditure for education in U.S.

Before K

K-12

$1,350

$12,400

Source: Kena et al. 2016
Average cognitive and achievement skill impact at the end of preschool program treatment.

Source: Magnuson & Duncan, 2016, The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences
Cradle to Kindergarten:
A new plan for early childhood that gives all children a fair shot.

- **Paid parental leave** as social insurance for children and working parents.
- **Reliable guarantee of child care assistance** for working families to assure all children can access good, stable early care and learning opportunities.
- **Universal early education** that starts at age 3.
- **Re-imagine Head Start** to begin early and provide continuous development services to the most vulnerable children until school entry.
# Paid Parental Leave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Context</th>
<th>Our Proposal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• FMLA provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave at the birth of a child.</td>
<td>• Paid parental leave to guarantee families with working parents 12 to 16 weeks per family of partially paid, job-protected leave at birth or adoption of a child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Only 60% of workers are eligible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Affordable High-Quality Care and Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Context</th>
<th>Our Proposal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good child care is expensive and hard to find.</td>
<td>• “Assurance” subsidies to support high-quality care and education for low- and moderate-income working families with children birth-5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Families with children under 5 spend 11% of incomes on child care.</td>
<td>• Family incomes below 250% FPL, state option to go to 400% FPL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Families with incomes below 200% FPL spend 22%.</td>
<td>• Family co-payments on sliding scale (3-10% of income).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 15% of eligible families with children receive subsidies through Federal and State CCDF funding</td>
<td>• Subsidies adequate to pay for quality and support stable, professionally compensated workforce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Subsidy programs vary by state and are complex.</td>
<td>• Increased, refundable child care tax credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Child care tax credits provide minimal benefits (max $600) and are not refundable.</td>
<td>• % of paid costs for all types of paid care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Maximum benefit increased to $3000 (1 child).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Universal Early Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Context</th>
<th>Our Proposal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Few states and cities have universal programs primarily for 4 year olds, and</td>
<td>• High-quality universal preschool for children aged 3 and 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some states have none.</td>
<td>• Developmentally focused curricula and professional development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fewer public programs for 3 year olds.</td>
<td>• Consistent and transparent quality standards and measurement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What exists is a piecemeal system.</td>
<td>• Full school-day and longer school year, with wrap-around care options to meet family needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Variation across many dimensions (governance, location, hours, workforce,</td>
<td>• Mixed auspice (in schools and community centers).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality assessment) in what exists across states.</td>
<td>• Alignment with Birth-to-Three and K-3\textsuperscript{rd} Grade Education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In many countries with advanced economies, nearly all children receive a public education starting at age three.

Source: OECD Social Expenditure Database (Data for Chart PF3.2F)
Note: Total expenditures include child care and pre-primary education expenditures
A New Head Start Begins at (or before) Birth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Context</th>
<th>Our Proposal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Beneficial program aimed at most disadvantaged, but serves fraction of eligible  
  • ~40% in Head Start  
  • ~4% in Early Head Start  
| • Target the most vulnerable young children starting before or at birth:  
  • Communities of concentrated poverty.  
  • Poor families and those facing adverse circumstances (e.g., foster care).  
| • What happens in the context of universal preschool?  
| • Engaging children and families in the most adverse circumstances and concentrated poverty from earliest point in child development with comprehensive, intensive, and continuous services.  
| • Integrate center-based early learning with home visiting and other comprehensive services.  
| • Head Start centers as hubs to link with child health and other service providers (e.g., WIC, Medicaid/CHIP, Special Needs services).  
| • Generate innovations in birth to 3 services and test program elements to further improve systems.  

Targeting the highest need communities

More than 3 million American children (4%) live in areas of highly concentrated poverty. Majority of children in these communities live in families that often live in deep and persistent poverty, while others live in families with incomes near the poverty line. 900,000 of these children are under the age of five, and more than 150,000 newborns start life in one of these communities each year.

Disadvantage is highly concentrated in communities with high poverty:

- Highly racially/ethnically segregated
- Low educational attainment
- Chronic joblessness
- High teen pregnancy rates
- High rates of disadvantaged family structure
## A 10-year investment plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Existing Funding &amp; Service Levels</th>
<th>Cradle to Kindergarten Funding &amp; Service Levels</th>
<th>New Investments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funding (in billions)</td>
<td>Number Served (annually)</td>
<td>Funding (in billions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public paid parental leave</strong></td>
<td>$0.9</td>
<td>~330,000 (8% of newborns in US)</td>
<td>$19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Care Subsidies/Assurance</strong></td>
<td>$13.9</td>
<td>~730,000</td>
<td>$30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child &amp; Dependent Care Tax Credit</strong></td>
<td>$6.2 (states)</td>
<td>1,050,000* (13% of 3 &amp; 4 year olds)</td>
<td>$33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State or Local Public Preschool for 3 and 4 year-olds</strong></td>
<td>$9.0</td>
<td>960,000 (5% of birth to 5 in US)</td>
<td>$17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A New Head Start for Infants and Toddlers</strong></td>
<td>$30.0</td>
<td>2,600,000</td>
<td>$99.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Of this number 450,000 children receive Head Start and/or Child Care Subsidy Funding in combination with public preschool funds.

^Of this number 700,000 children would receive Head Start and/or Child Care Subsidy Funding in combination with public preschool funds.
U.S. lags nearly all nations with advanced economies in spending on early childhood care and education.

Public spending on early childhood care and education as a % of GDP, 2013 and latest available

Source: OECD Social Expenditure Database (3.1A)
Note: Total expenditures include child care and pre-primary education expenditures