Every week almost 12 million children under age 5—over 60 percent of that population—are in a regular child care arrangement their parents have chosen for them. As the future innovators, workers, and leaders upon whom our nation’s long-term security and prosperity depends, they are America’s most important asset. It was against this backdrop that our first report authored by former Sen. Rick Santorum and Rep. George Miller determined “in the search for effective strategies to secure the long-term health and prosperity of our democracy, America’s youngest children, keepers of our common future, are an obvious place to start.”

BPC’s Early Childhood Initiative explores how our nation can better support young children and their families to make sure all Americans can start the journey of life with a fair shot at realizing their full potential and becoming successful adults. The initiative ultimately seeks to identify how the early childhood system could be more effective and efficient and recommend how our nation will finance this important investment.

Recent Work

**Building Bipartisan Support for Child Care: A Toolkit | September 2019**
This toolkit offers an array of resources to build bipartisan relationships and solutions ensuring all children have an opportunity to a quality educational foundation, and that parents can participate in the labor force.

**36 Years Later: A Nation Still at Risk | September 2019**
Mirroring the structure of the original, groundbreaking A Nation at Risk, this paper finds 36 years later, despite many reform efforts, not much has changed, and identifies the need for a new, shared vision and public commitment to early care and education.

**Supporting the Early Childhood Workforce | July 2019**
The early childhood field struggles to recruit and retain high quality staff. This paper discusses how a loan assistance program would help solve these problems.

**Registered Apprenticeships: A Viable Career Path | September 2019**
This paper reports on the potential for apprenticeships in the early childhood education field as a solution to recruit and retain early childhood educators, and promote quality in the workforce.

**Interstate Background Checks Are Critical to Protect Children | July 2019**
Comprehensive background checks required under CCDBG promote child safety, but states have struggled to fully implement the law’s provisions. This paper outlines steps that would help states reach full compliance.
Surveys

Child Care Costs Impact Families’ Employment, Savings, and Future Planning November 2019
This survey, conducted in partnership with Morning Consult, shows in order to afford child care, families make significant financial decisions and trade-offs, including changes to their employment, budgets, and future family plans.

Building Bipartisan Support for Early Childhood Excellence | July 2018
In partnership with Luntz Global, this survey found conservatives and liberals alike recognize early childhood development is critical to the wellbeing of the nation, and even align on some policy approaches. The report includes messaging guides and insights into different viewpoints around the country.

In The News

Environmental Hazards Are Child Care’s Silent, Solvable Crisis | January 2020
Environmental hazards can negatively impact growth and learning and blunt the impact of public investments in child care. Stricter guidelines for child care programs could help mitigate these hazards.

Addressing Needs of Student Parents Through CCAMPIS | September 2019
In 2016, 4.8 million undergraduate students were raising children—nearly one out of four students. Balancing parenting responsibilities with studies presents challenges that CCAMPIS helps mitigate.

Congress is Delivering for Working Families: Early Childhood Funding Wins in FY 2020 | December 2019
Certain funding and policy provisions included in the bipartisan, bicameral fiscal year 2020 funding legislation will help families achieve stable employment and improve child and family well-being.

Potential Effects of a Minimum Wage Increase Underscore Key Flaws in the Child Care Market | August 2019
As support for higher minimum wages grows, conversation and research has typically focused on impacts on the macroeconomy and on specific sectors. This blog discusses how certain characteristics of the child care market present unique challenges that should be considered in areas where wages grow.

How Head Start’s Requirements Can Be a Disservice to Families and Communities December 2019
Head Start provides invaluable services to low-income children and families, but changes in society over time mean that the program's requirements might be out of date. Changes should be considered to ensure that those most at-risk and vulnerable are able to access the program’s critical services.

America Must Focus on Early Childhood Education Workforce | The Hill, July 2019
This op-ed discusses how individuals working in similar industries receive higher pay and greater benefits than early childhood educators, and calls upon Congress to consider mechanisms to better support this critical profession.

Learn more at bipartisanpolicy.org/early-childhood.