

Symposium 2025

Child Care Strong:
From Problems to Progress

May 4-7, 2025

#ChildCareStrong

#ProblemsToProgress

SYMPOSIUM 2025 PROGRAM



SUNDAY, MAY 4

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT</p> <p>Rosslyn 1&2</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Building a Solid Foundation: A Comprehensive Approach to Supporting Family Child Care</p> <p>In this session, participants will explore how a comprehensive family child care network approach addresses problems and supports progress for educators and communities. Learn about All Our Kin's family child care network framework. Hear how Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral partnered with All Our Kin to develop a foundation of staff support and professional development so that staff are better equipped to support educators who, in turn, can better serve children and families. Find out how Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral works to ensure their efforts are equity-centered, strengths-based, and grounded in relationship-based practices. Discover how these approaches are strengthening perceptions of responsive CCR&R services family child care educators can count on. Engage in peer sharing about family child care networks and staff support, and consider implications for your work.</p> <p>Travonda Davenport Network Development Strategist All Our Kin Fatima Teresa Valdez-Bain Project Associate All Our Kin Precious Newbell Deputy Director, Family Child Care Signal Centers Inc, Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network Jennifer Drake Director of Network Development All Our Kin</p>
<p>2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT</p> <p>National Landing 2 (Lee)</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Building Bridges: Integrating Child Care into Community and Economic Development</p> <p>Child care is a cornerstone for thriving businesses and a robust workforce. While it may not always be at the forefront, it has the potential to play a significant role in community and economic development agendas. To support CCR&Rs and Intermediaries in building capacity, CCAoA offered Bridging the Gap Community of Practice (CoP) to help develop and strengthen skills and abilities and advance further economic or community development participation and partnership-building. We will share the CoP experience, highlighting challenges, successes, and effective strategies, along with a roadmap created to guide community organizations in strengthening the child care landscape and integrating it into community and economic development efforts. We'll do a deep dive into the roadmap and investigate how this tool can guide outreach and foster cross-system collaboration. Additionally, we'll explore ways to integrate child care into discussions and initiatives related to community and economic development.</p> <p>Shannon Cameron Quinn Early Care & Education Specialist Child Care Aware of America</p>
<p>2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT</p> <p>National Landing 1 (Jackson)</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>From Groundwork to Framework: How Community-Driven Solutions and State Partnerships Are Transforming Child Care in Kansas</p> <p>Discover how Kansas is building a flexible framework for addressing child care access - one that leverages state-local partnerships and adapts to community-specific context.</p> <p>This session will showcase locally-driven child care strategies and key lessons gleaned from efforts to scale those strategies as part of the Kansas Child Care Capacity Accelerator Innovation Community Cohort. This approach to both deep and wide solutions has laid the groundwork to test a set of flexible and adaptive solutions including regional Child Care Zones, a new small center license type, and improved feedback loops between state and local organizations. Collectively, these efforts have helped Kansas strengthen its framework for state-local partnerships to fund, implement, and evaluate community-specific strategies to address local child care needs.</p> <p>Attendees will learn about the Kansas approach to creating scalable and sustainable solutions. It starts with deep investments in locally-defined strategies and hands-on coaching and support to implement coupled with broad investments in and connections to sector-wide strategies like substitute pools and infant care incentives. We'll share the tools and approaches that made a difference, including evaluation methods, coaching and peer learning strategies, site visits to hear the "realities on the ground," and the pivot structure emphasized to grantees to accommodate those shifting 'realities.'</p> <p>We will then dive into the important lessons Kansas leaders are incorporating into a framework for additional support of community-specific child care solutions. These include the importance of funding flexibility and adaptive investors, the value of empowering and supporting local champions, the need to embrace community context as defined by those on the ground, and how to find common ground and pain points when exploring cross-sector collaboration.</p> <p>This session will highlight the need for iteration to create long-term change, and how states can embed this innovation-focused mindset in their work. Attendees can join to hear the experiences of Kansas community champions and how they approached local challenges and pivoted along the way, and leave inspired to bring these insights to their own community</p> <p>Meghan Kluth Chavis Lickvar-Armstrong Associate Researcher University of Kansas</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT</p> <p>Salon D & E</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Future-Proofing ECE: Emerging Technology for Quality & Growth</p> <p>Join us for an engaging session exploring the dynamic landscape of Early Childhood Education (ECE) technology systems and platforms. Attendees will work together to build a hyper-local ECE Technology Ecosystem Map, identify opportunities for streamlining processes, and discover future wins.</p> <p>Key highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands-on learning with the ECE Tech Ecosystem Toolkit • Exploring practical uses of the CCMS and Business Coaching Toolkits • Understanding how technology and automation can enhance child care supply and demand measurement • Empowering attendees to collect real-time vacancy data to better support families, funders, and policy makers <p>Leave with actionable strategies to support the work of child care providers, stakeholders, and state agencies through real-world applications and collaborative discussions.</p> <p>Adam Lucas Technology Consultant Opportunities Exchange Laura Weeldreyer Johanna Borden Consultant Opportunities Exchange Mia Pritts Consultant Opportunities Exchange</p>
<p>2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT</p> <p>National Landing 4 (Madison)</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Strategic Public Financing Solutions for Child Care Sustainability</p> <p>As federal relief dollars dwindle, child care providers, families, and policymakers are grappling with the funding cliff that is threatening the stability of child care systems. During the first year of the pandemic, Congress allocated more than \$52 billion to states to stabilize child care and support families with young children. With the end of stabilization grants, state child care administrators are expressing deep concern about maintaining child care staff compensation, exacerbating the child care staffing crisis, increasing child care costs for families, and the potential for waiting lists in child care subsidy programs (Child Trends, September 30, 2024). Now more than ever, states and territories need data-driven tools and resources to help stabilize their child care systems. This session, led by staff from Children’s Funding Project, introduces participants to actionable strategies that have been successful in states and communities around the nation in addressing this urgent challenge.</p> <p>Participants will gain insights into how communities and states, in this moment of child care crisis, can use fiscal mapping, cost modeling, and revenue options research to take strategic actions to stabilize and grow their child care systems. This session will illustrate, using recent examples from a range of states and communities from across the nation, how they have generated additional revenue for child care systems by answering three critical questions of strategic public financing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current investment: How much funding supports our goals right now? 2. True cost: How much will it cost to fully fund our goals? 3. New funding: How do we fill the gap between current funding and needed funding? <p>Strategic public financing offers policymakers and child care advocates both short-term strategic insights and a way to support long-term growth and continued viability of child care services in their states and communities. Using authentic case examples, participants will learn how states and communities have used strategic public finance to advance their goals for expanding and stabilizing child care.</p> <p>Participants will learn about the three key elements of strategic public financing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiscal mapping: Fiscal maps document and analyze the various sources of funding that support programs and services for children and youth in a state, city, county, or Native nation. They can include public dollars from federal, state, and local sources and sometimes private dollars from foundations and other philanthropies. In this session, we will share with participants how fiscal maps can be used to better understand the existing funding streams that support the child- and youth-focused programs, including child care, in their communities and where funding is falling short of their goals. • Cost modeling: The power of cost modeling is being able to put a price tag on programs and services that communities want for children and youth. In this session, we will introduce participants to the importance of developing cost models that clarify the resources needed to achieve their goals and desired impacts for children and youth with quality and at scale. • Revenue options: Current funding for child care is insufficient and is only getting worse with the funding cliff caused by the end of COVID rescue dollars. This session will share with participants the value of investigating, cataloging, and pursuing additional funding sources that are both significant and sustainable. <p>Elizabeth Gaines Founder and CEO Children’s Funding Project Ashley Brooks Senior Research Associate Children’s Funding Project Kate Ritter Senior Manager, Cost Modeling Children’s Funding Project</p>

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<p>2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT</p> <p>National Landing 3 (Jefferson)</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Strengthening CCR&R Support for Family Child Care Educators Through Policy and Practice</p> <p>This session will equip Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) agencies with actionable insights and policy-driven strategies to better support family child care (FCC) educators. Co-presented by Ronald Jarrett, NAFCC's Director of Policy and Public Affairs and an FCC educator leader, this session will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the most pressing challenges FCC educators face and how CCR&Rs can address these gaps through improved support systems and advocacy. • Highlight how local, state and federal policy change can help resolve systemic issues impacting FCC educators and CCR&R dynamics. • Provide practical tools and real-world examples for attendees to strengthen their services while engaging in meaningful policy advocacy. <p>This interactive 90-minute session will balance presentations, collaborative discussions, and action planning to ensure attendees leave with practical solutions and a clear vision for addressing the challenges FCC educators face.</p> <p>Ronald Jarrett Director of Policy & Public Affairs National Association for Family Child Care</p>
<p>2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT</p> <p>Salon F & G</p> <p>CUTTING EDGE RESEARCH</p>	<p>Update on Child Care Prices</p> <p>The National Database of Childcare Prices (NDCP) is the most comprehensive federal source of childcare prices at the county level in the United States. The NDCP was developed to fill a need for local-level childcare price data, standardized across U.S. states. The NDCP provides county-level data on childcare prices by age of children and type of care provider (center- or home-based) across 48 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico and was recently updated to include data through 2022. This session will provide an overview of the NDCP and how the data were collected; demonstrate how the data can be accessed in various formats; showcase interactive maps and data tools highlighting childcare prices and childcare prices as a share of family income at the county level; and provide an overview of initial uses and research findings from the data, including how childcare prices affect maternal employment. The session will offer information for audience members wishing to conduct original research with the NDCP, as well as audience members who are interested in using existing maps and research without requiring a technical background.</p> <p>Each year, Child Care Aware of America (CCAoA) collects state-level data on childcare prices from all 50 states and Washington, DC, as well as data on childcare supply. This session will provide a preview of CCAoA's soon-to-be-released report of 2024 childcare data. Presenters will describe state trends in childcare affordability and how the price of child care compares to other family expenses such as housing. In addition, national and state trends in child care supply will be discussed.</p> <p>Aishwarya Ganguli Senior Research Analyst Child Care Aware of America Sandra Bishop Senior Director of Research Child Care Aware of America Georgia Poyatzis</p>
<p>4:00 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>Ballroom</p> <p>PLENARY</p>	<p>Shaping the Future: Leadership, Policy, and Social Impact</p> <p>Layla Zaidane is the President & CEO of Future Caucus – an organization working directly with our nation's leading young policymakers on both a federal and state level to bridge the partisan divide and lead a new era of collaborative governance. Susan Gale Perry, CEO of Child Care Aware® of America will lead a fireside chat with Ms. Zaidane exploring the intersection of policy, leadership, and social impact. Expect a dynamic conversation filled with insights, actionable takeaways, and a vision for a more inclusive and forward-thinking society.</p> <p>Susan Gale Perry Chief Executive Officer Child Care Aware of America Layla Zaidane President & CEO Future Caucus</p>

MONDAY, MAY 5

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
8:00 am - 9:00 am EDT Ballroom PLENARY	<p>Navigating Regulatory Change: A Conversation</p> <p>Child care regulations play a pivotal role in ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of children in child care. In recent years, many states have embarked on significant reforms aimed at revising these regulations. This session will feature insights from CCR&R professionals and State Administrators from states at the forefront of experiences with regulatory reform. Join us for a thoughtful discussion on the strategies that have proven successful in balancing the need for robust regulations with the flexibility required to support diverse child care settings. Learn about the challenges faced, the innovative solutions implemented, and how these efforts are shaping a more sustainable and equitable child care system.</p> <p>MODERATOR: DAN HARRIS Executive Director Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA)</p> <p>Jim Murphy Executive Director National Association for Regulatory Administration Candace Witherspoon Director North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education Janet Singerman President & CEO Child Care Resources Inc. Jonny Carkin Director of Operations Early Learning Collaboratives, Idaho AEYC Christi Smith Executive Director Child Care Aware of Kansas Jarvis Doleman Director of Operations Kansas Department of Health and Environment</p>
9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT National Landing 4 (Madison) ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM	<p>Leveraging NAEYC Resources to Support State Quality initiatives</p> <p>While many know about NAEYC resources and use them on an individual basis, there are not many state systems that leverage them holistically. This session will introduce participants to NAEYC resources like accreditation, position statements and content and describe ways that state systems can leverage them to support existing quality initiatives. This session will give examples of how states across the political spectrum can leverage NAEYC resources.</p> <p>Alissa Mwenelupembe Chief Early Learning Quality & Research Officer NAEYC</p>
9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT Ballroom ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM FEATURED	<p>The Backbone of the System: The Role of CCR&Rs as Critical Infrastructure</p> <p>Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) organizations play a crucial role in fostering effective, efficient, and sustainable child care systems that strengthen communities by supporting children, families, and the economy. In this session, we will delve into how the new Position Statement from Child Care Aware of America (CCAoA) can enhance efforts to integrate the work of CCR&Rs into state systems. Learn how these efforts are essential for building the infrastructure necessary to improve child care access and quality, ultimately supporting the economic vitality of communities and ensuring long-term success for families and businesses alike. Join the conversation and explore how CCR&Rs can be a driving force in shaping more resilient, equitable child care systems.</p> <p>MODERATOR: ARIEL FORD Senior Vice President, Program Impact Child Care Aware of America</p> <p>Ryan Page Director of Child Care Co-CCDF Administrator, Division of Family Well-Being and Protection Iowa Department of Health and Human Services Mary Janssen Regional Director Child Care Resource & Referral of Northeast Iowa Heidi Luft Executive Director Thriving Wisconsin Kassidy Farrey Bureau Director, Young Star Wisconsin Department of Children and Families Rita Furlow Senior Policy Analyst Maine Children's Alliance</p>
9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT Salon D&E STAND FOR CHILD CARE	<p>What Does Child Care Look Like Under the Current Administration?</p> <p>In this dynamic session, we will explore the rapidly evolving landscape shaped by a flurry of executive actions and a fast-moving tax bill being considered by Congress. Join us to gain insights into how these developments are impacting child care and discover actionable steps you can take today to adapt and advocate effectively. Don't miss this opportunity to stay informed and empowered in a time of significant change.</p> <p>Christina Koch Federal Policy Analyst Child Care Aware of America Elise Cranston Director of Advocacy Child Care Aware of America Anne Hedgepeth Senior Vice President, Policy and Research Child Care Aware of America</p>

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<p>9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 1 (Jackson)</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>A Systems Approach to Dismantling Barriers: The Case of Farsi-speaking Women Entering the Child Care Workforce</p> <p>In this session, participants will learn about a new initiative that aims to recruit, train, and find employment for newcomer Farsi-speaking immigrants and refugees that seek child care employment opportunities. The session will review the system that was created to allow Farsi-speaking residents to join the ECE workforce by creating a collaboration between government agencies, non-profit organizations, and community volunteers. In addition, participants will learn about barriers and solutions to creating such a system. Finally, session participants will be encouraged to think about ways to duplicate this initiative and consider barriers they may face in their quest to meet the needs of their community.</p> <p>At the core of this initiative, a collaborative approach was established to include diverse members of the community who could work together to advance employment opportunities for under-employed sections of the community who face a variety of challenges preventing them from advancing their careers and reaching financial security. Participants attending this session will have an opportunity to learn about the complex experiences of new immigrants and refugees who arrived in the United States and the way our community has joined together to support them.</p> <p>Liran Laor Program Manager Montgomery County Government, Child Care Support Services</p>
<p>9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 2 (Lee)</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Advancing Early Childhood Education with Local Investments</p> <p>This session will give an overview of how Birth to Five Illinois both has worked with a local municipality to provide funding to home care providers AND how we allocate \$3M in state funding to local communities. In this session we will explain funding goals; equitable and accessible funding design; utilization of local (often not-allocated) cannabis taxes; and supporting community usage vs dictating it.</p> <p>Keven Kerr Regional Council Manager Birth to Five Illinois Angela Hubbard Grants and Relationship Manager Birth to Five Illinois</p>
<p>9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT</p> <p>Salon F&G</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>AI for Good: Using Data-Driven Insights to Transform Child Care Program Quality Participants will leave this session with:</p> <p>A clear understanding of how AI tools can be used to enhance program quality in early care settings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical strategies for using data-driven insights to improve classroom practices, compliance, and child outcomes. • Knowledge of the ethical considerations involved in implementing AI in child care programs. • An action plan for integrating AI tools into their own child care operations. <p>Jaime Rechkemmer Director Strategic Partnerships and Product Strategy WatchMeGrow</p>
<p>9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT</p> <p>Rosslyn 1&2</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Deep Collaboration + Intentional Infrastructure = Positive Impact for Children and Families</p> <p>Status quo government bureaucracy often excludes individuals most in need of public services from resources, systems, and power by limiting access to information, creating language, accessibility, time, and transportation hurdles. By making information about and access to supports and services easily available across the state, First Steps 4K+ and First Five SC offer models for changing the trajectory of communities experiencing generational poverty and disparities in social outcomes. Using South Carolina's experience as a model, the panelists aim to encourage participants to consider how building collaborative services and collective technology can result in more equitable access to the programs and services that give our children the best start to life.</p> <p>Parents and caregivers need not only information about local programs and services, but also streamlined ways to access the services they want and deserve. In this interactive session, three state leaders will share how they organized and implemented First Steps 4K+, a collaborative funding solution for children in four year old kindergarten PLUS their siblings, and how they pioneered Palmetto PreK and First Five SC, two coordinated eligibility and application portals for early education and other publicly funded programs that serve young children and families. Panelists will engage participants in a discussion about centering families and the value of deep collaboration and share ideas and resources for replicating this approach in their states.</p> <p>Participants will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify opportunities to tap into statewide collaborations and foster system changes that benefit families. 2. Explore concepts of system integration through technology solutions as a way to increase access and unify outreach. 3. Understand the role of centering whole family supports and the Two Generation approach <p>Michele Bowers Division Director South Carolina Department of Social Services Martha Strickland 4K State Director First Steps 4K Rachal Hatton-Moore Two-Generation Systems Manager SC First Steps & Early Childhood Advisory Council</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT</p> <p>Alexandria</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Empowering Family, Friend, and Neighbor Caregivers through Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation</p> <p>This session will delve into the crucial role of Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers within the caregiving ecosystem. It will highlight how FFN consultation serves as an innovative approach to bolstering the infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) services provided to these essential caregivers. Our panelists, leading figures from a prominent statewide IECMHC program, will describe the unique challenges FFN caregivers face and demonstrate how an FFN consultation model can provide tailored support to enhance their well-being and the quality of the care they offer.</p> <p>Ultimately, session participants will come away from the session with a more holistic understanding of FFN caregivers and FFN consultation as a promising strategy for supporting and empowering harder to reach, but nonetheless pivotal members of the caregiving ecosystem.</p> <p>By introducing FFN consultation, this session will shed much needed light on the diversity of the FFN workforce, FFN caregivers' strengths and their unique challenges, and will provide session participants with actionable strategies—based on past experiences and lessons learned implementing an FFN consultation pilot, as well as qualitative data from FFN caregiver participants themselves—for reaching, effectively supporting, and empowering these essential caregivers.</p> <p>Silvia Velarde Jana Stassi Consultation Services Coordinator WestEd Jennifer Miller Program Director WestEd</p>
<p>9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 3 (Jefferson)</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Empowering Louisiana Communities: A Strategic Approach to Local Funding for Early Care and Education</p> <p>The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children has developed a comprehensive toolkit to help Louisiana communities—whether cities or parishes—identify and leverage funding opportunities to strengthen their local early care and education systems, no matter the current stage of their system development. This session will highlight innovative approaches for enhancing local systems, with firsthand insights from local leaders who have successfully implemented strategies to improve access and outcomes for children in need within their communities.</p> <p>Sarintha Stricklin Executive Director Innovations in Early Education Holly Hermes Development and Fundraising Consultant Community Foundation of North Louisiana Candace Alfred Weber Chief of Partnerships Louisiana Policy Institute for Children</p>
<p>9:15 am - 10:45 am EDT</p> <p>McLean</p> <p>CUTTING EDGE RESEARCH</p>	<p>Policy Research to Policy Impact: Findings and Lessons from Nebraska's Subsidy Income Expansion Impact Study</p> <p>In 2021, the Nebraska Legislature expanded the initial income eligibility limit for the child care subsidy from 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to 185% FPL, and transitional eligibility from 185% to 200% FPL. There were three critical provisions that impacted the success of this statutory change: 1) federal funds pay for the eligibility changes, 2) inclusion of a sunset date and 3) a requirement for an impact study to assess the eligibility changes. The inclusion of the sunset and the impact study jointly provided an important opportunity. Lawmakers would receive an assessment of the impact on Nebraska families, child care providers and communities to determine if the expanded eligibility for the child care subsidy should remain beyond the sunset date.</p> <p>First Five Nebraska, a statewide public policy advocacy organization with expertise in policy research, partnered with state and national partners to conduct the impact study, published in August of 2024. During this session, presenters will discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy research as a tool for policy advocacy. • Research design that triangulates administrative data with the lived experiences of families, child care providers and community members with a particular focus on feedback loops with those most affected by the policy changes during the research process. • Key findings from the impact study with implications for Nebraska and beyond. • Utilizing study findings as a framework for current and future policy work in the child care subsidy space. <p>Sara Brady Researcher First Five Nebraska Katie Bass Policy Research Manager First Five Nebraska</p>
<p>11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT</p> <p>Ballroom</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE PLENARY</p>	<p>Advocacy Panel</p> <p>Christina Koch Federal Policy Analyst Child Care Aware of America Elise Cranston Director of Advocacy Child Care Aware of America Rachel Wessler Policy Analyst Child Care Aware of America Diane Girouard State Policy Senior Analyst Child Care Aware of America Anne Hedgepeth Senior Vice President, Policy and Research Child Care Aware of America</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>1:00 pm - 2:15 pm EDT</p> <p>Ballroom</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Advocacy Day Prep & State Meetings</p> <p>Diane Girouard State Policy Senior Analyst Child Care Aware of America Rachel Wessler Policy Analyst Child Care Aware of America Christina Koch Federal Policy Analyst Child Care Aware of America Elise Cranston Director of Advocacy Child Care Aware of America Anne Hedgepeth Senior Vice President, Policy and Research Child Care Aware of America</p>
<p>2:15 pm - 3:15 pm EDT</p> <p>Ballroom</p> <p>PLENARY</p>	<p>Strengthening Child Care: Bold Paths to Progress for Children and Families</p> <p>Join Reshma Saujani from Moms First and Susan Gale Perry for a compelling call to action for better child care other policies and investment in young children and their families. Together, they will discuss current approaches to child care policy questions and explore innovative solutions, including business engagement and policy shifts, to create a more supportive infrastructure for caregivers nationwide.</p> <p>Reshma Saujani Founder & Chief Executive Officer Moms First Susan Gale Perry Chief Executive Officer Child Care Aware of America</p>
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>Salon F&G</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Empowering Tribal Nations: Building Child Care Systems Rooted in Sovereignty and Culture</p> <p>Child care leaders face unique challenges in Tribal Nations, where the interplay of sovereignty, cultural preservation, and systemic inequities creates complex landscapes for child care supply-building. This session explores a pioneering approach—the First Children First Nations Child Care Collaborative Initiative (FCFN)—a partnership between First Children’s Finance and All Nation’s Rise.</p> <p>Since 2020, FCFN has worked alongside three Tribal Nations that share geography with Minnesota to assess child care supply and demand, develop actionable strategic plans, and build the political and organizational will for transformative projects. Participants will learn how the FCFN model incorporates Tribal sovereignty and cultural values into every step, from data collection to implementation.</p> <p>Attendees will leave this session with insights into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting culturally-relevant child care supply-demand analyses. • Facilitating cross-sector collaboration for strategic planning in Tribal Nations. • Leveraging community strengths to achieve high-impact child care projects. <p>Join us to uncover lessons, challenges, and success stories from FCFN’s journey, and walk away inspired to strengthen child care systems in your own communities.</p> <p>Jannan Cotto Child Care Systems Coordinator First Children’s Finance</p>
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>National Landing 2 (Lee)</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Supporting Quality in Child Care: Reviewing and Refining Resources that Define and Strengthen Technical Assistance and Professional Development Services in Child Care</p> <p>In this interactive session, participants will delve into the key components and evolving vision behind the “Opening Door to Quality,” a guide designed for Technical Assistance Specialists and other professionals who provide on-site training and technical assistance to program staff in center-based and family child care programs. This guide covers the essential processes and skills necessary to deliver high-quality technical assistance and support.</p> <p>We will explore the key themes and topics and brainstorm ideas for updating the guide to align with the latest trends, research, and focus on integrating current best practices, such as reflective practice and culturally responsive approaches. We will work together to generate ideas and discuss how the materials could be refreshed to meet the needs of today’s technical assistance specialists and other professionals continuing to support quality improvement efforts in early care and education programs.</p> <p>Kandi Novak Early Care and Education Specialist Child Care Aware of America Shannon Cameron Quinn Early Care and Education Specialist Child Care Aware of America</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>Alexandria</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Things to Consider when Implementing, Updating, or Scaling a Coaching Program</p> <p>Classroom teachers crave direct, timely, specific, strengths-based feedback grounded in the curricula and assessments used within their program. Coaches must create a framework for conversations that include information that teachers can use today, tomorrow, and the next day to improve the environment, activities, and interactions within their classrooms. However, many coaching programs are not set up to meet the changing needs of teachers, programs, and regions they serve. As a result, many coaching programs struggle to serve teacher needs and scale with growth effectively. This session will focus on how to do both effectively to drive improvement in the classroom.</p> <p>Participants will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review their CCR & R coaching definition, compare it to national, research-based definitions, and recommend changes as needed. 2. Review the 10 considerations for coaching programs and determine what considerations are missing from their coaching program. 3. Learn about direct yet strengths-based coaching questions and select questions to integrate into coach training. 4. Develop a plan for changes to implement next week, next month, and next year. <p>Rebecca Berlin Senior Vice President Kaplan Early Learning Company</p>
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>Salon D&E</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>A Beginner’s Guide to Building Legislative Champions</p> <p>Welcome to an introduction (or a refresh!) of how to initiate connections and build relationships to develop legislative champions. Child Care needs support from lawmakers at every level, and advocates can play a key role in creating these champions. Join CCAoA staff and CCR&R leaders to learn the basics and walk away with next steps on how to get started!</p> <p>Elise Cranston Director of Advocacy Child Care Aware of America</p>
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>Rosslyn 1&2</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>Care & Immigration: What Care Advocates Need to Know about Centering and Supporting Immigrant Children, Families, and Early Educators</p> <p>One in four children in the United States are children of immigrants, and the majority of immigrant children are from mixed-status families. Additionally, Immigrant child care workers make up 22% of the early childhood education (ECE) workforce. It is critical for the ECE field to recognize that immigration is a key care issue, and to be prepared with data, updates, and resources on the intersection of care and immigration.</p> <p>Through this session, presenters will provide the most up-to-date data on immigrant children and families and the importance of immigrant ECE early educators. This session will also provide critical legislative and administrative updates at the federal level on important issues related to protecting immigrant children, families, and educators in the years ahead. Information will be shared on the strategy for the work ahead, and ways that individuals, organizations, or providers can connect into the work.</p> <p>The session will open with a grounding exercise, recognizing the weight and complexity of the topic to be discussed. This will be followed by context setting through updated data on immigrant children, families, and early educators. There will then be a 10-minute guided participant discussion.</p> <p>The second portion of the session will provide legislative and administrative updates (such as on broad policies and possible impact they will have on immigrant communities and the ECE field, like mass deportation, family separation, worksite raids, etc.) and updates on ECE specific policies and possible impact (such as the protected areas memo, CTC, and nutrition).</p> <p>Finally, the session will provide resources and opportunities to connect to existing efforts and coalition spaces.</p> <p>Juan Carlos Gomez Karla Castillo</p>
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>Rosslyn 1&2</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>Child Care Facilities: Uncovering COVID-era Investments and Progress in States, Localities, and Tribal Communities</p> <p>Investments in child care facilities have historically been overwhelmingly insufficient, leaving a critical gap in infrastructure across the nation. This session uncovers how the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) marked a pivotal step toward addressing these challenges, by making the largest single investment in the sector since World War II. Through findings from our report, developed in partnership with the National Children’s Facilities Network (NCFN), “Improving Child Care Facilities with Federal Relief Funding,” we explore the innovative ways ARPA funding supported state and local efforts to enhance child care infrastructure.</p> <p>Join us to delve into key research, uncover impactful findings, and discuss actionable recommendations for policymakers to ensure sustained progress in creating high-quality, accessible child care environments.</p> <p>Amanda Saillant Child Care Systems Analyst First Children's Finance Anne McSweeney</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>National Landing 4 (Madison)</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>Implementing Public-Private Partnerships for Child Care</p> <p>Public-private partnerships can be an effective strategy for bringing together and maximizing diverse resources, perspectives and expertise in child care and early learning. Join this session to learn more about existing public-private partnership models, brainstorm with attendees about the challenges and best practices of the different approaches and consider what strategies might work for your community.</p> <p>Diane Girouard State Policy Senior Analyst Child Care Aware of America Rachel Wessler Policy Analyst Child Care Aware of America</p>
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>McLean</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>Supporting Children with Disabilities in Early Care and Education: What Do You Want Policymakers to Know?</p> <p>We will present findings from interviews of local, state, and federal stakeholders about issues facing families of children with disabilities in early care and education. Themes include dual language learners with disabilities, family engagement, early intervention, and workforce. We will invite attendees to reflect on findings and share solutions to strengthen our recommendations to federal, state, and local policymakers.</p> <p>We are leading an alliance of national organizations focused on finding policy solutions for challenges facing young children with disabilities and their families in early care and education, and participant input will inform these solutions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine nationwide perspectives and recommendations about what policymakers can do to make early care and education better for children with disabilities, including those who are children of color, dual language learners, and/or from families with low incomes. 2. Give input on how policies can address challenges in meaningful ways in order to strengthen our recommendations to policymakers. 3. Learn about and share bright spots and promising practices for supporting young children with disabilities and their families. <p>Carrie Gillispie Senior Policy Analyst New America</p>
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>National Landing 1 (Jackson)</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Maximizing Impact: Strengthening Early Childhood Programs Through CCMS-Aligned Business Coaching</p> <p>This session will focus on the transformative power of Child Care Management System (CCMS)-aligned business coaching and how it enhances early childhood program operations. Participants will gain insights into how state agencies, Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) organizations, and national networks such as Opportunities Exchange (OppEx) collaborate to provide robust coaching frameworks and technology supports</p> <p>Monique from Quality Care for Children will present a case study detailing their approach to using CCMS data to support providers in achieving key metrics like enrollment stability, financial sustainability, and operational efficiency. This real-world example will highlight practical steps CCR&Rs can take to help providers leverage their data dashboards to meet Iron Triangle benchmarks (full enrollment, fee collection, and revenue per child).</p> <p>The presentation will also feature examples of national best practices, cross-state collaborations, and coaching tools that support providers across various contexts that Opportunities Exchange offers.</p> <p>Johanna Borden Consultant Opportunities Exchange Monique Reynolds Vice President, ECE Business Support & Sustainability Quality Care for Children</p>
<p>3:30 pm - 5:00 pm EDT</p> <p>Ballroom</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM FEATURED</p>	<p>Iowa's Innovation with Iowa Child Care Connect</p> <p>Child care consumer education and referral are a crucial part of CCR&R core service provision, yet our technology tools and approach have not always kept up with how families and the public access information and data. Iowa embarked on an innovative and collaborative 4-year project to develop Iowa's Child Care Connect (C3). C3 is not only an innovative solution for families seeking access to child care but does so in a way that uses multiple data sets to inform on near real-time access and availability of child care for Iowa's families. These data sets include the use of Child Care Management Systems (CCMS) as well as the Child Care Resource and Referral NDS 2.0. In this session you will hear about the work that it took to create C3, and to hear about the incredible impact it has had on the state's child care system.</p> <p>Ryan Page Director of Child Care, Co-CCDF Administrator, Division of Family Well-Being and Protection Iowa Department of Health and Human Services Amy Smigielski Senior Consultant Resultant</p>

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 3 (Jefferson)</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Addressing Child Care Shortages Through Insights from Child Care Providers</p> <p>Across the country, parents are pleading for accessible, affordable child care options. Yet, in DC, the child care subsidy program, a key avenue for families with low incomes to access high quality child care, has been underspent and underutilized for years, even after expanding eligibility to more moderate-income families. Parents tell us that even after they make it through the complicated process of applying for a subsidy, the biggest hurdle they face is finding a facility that fits their needs and accepts child care subsidy. This points to an issue that has been under-discussed and under-researched: what is keeping child care providers from offering child care subsidy and how can we solve it?</p> <p>These are the questions we sought to answer in an effort to expand the supply of child care subsidy seats in the District. Through a survey and focus groups co-designed with child care directors and program administrators, we broke down the application process, administrative requirements, reporting procedures, and other aspects of operating a child care facility to better understand how the child care subsidy program can be improved to encourage greater participation among providers.</p> <p>Some high-level findings include providing individualized support, whether through District administrators or the community of child care directors, throughout the application and approval process, increasing reimbursement rates to meet the true cost of care, streamlining data systems and paperwork requirements, and expanding the number of facilities that are authorized to determine families' eligibility for the child care subsidy program. By implementing these changes, the District can increase the number of child care subsidy seats available to families, thus improving access to affordable child care.</p> <p>Anne Gunderson Senior Policy Analyst DC Fiscal Policy Institute</p>
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 4 (Madison)</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Creating Long-lasting Impact: A Framework for ECE Workforce Systems Change</p> <p>Are you working at the state or local level to create structural changes with and for the ECE workforce? Join the National ECE Workforce Center for a workshop on understanding and utilizing the Systems Change Framework. The Systems Change Framework is a blueprint and structure for ECE system and community leaders to utilize when designing and implementing intentional, evidence-based change for early educators' compensation and career pathways—key topics that represent the most pressing needs of the field and are most closely tied to the systemic inequities we seek to address. Durable solutions to complex, thorny workforce issues like these require a systems approach that acknowledges and works within the interconnected components of the ECE policy landscape.</p> <p>Participants in this session will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) develop a shared understanding of the Systems Change Framework and the drivers for achieving equitable, sustainable, impactful change in compensation and career pathways, (2) learn how these drivers have been put into action, and (3) sample a self-assessment to examine the status of each driver within your context to inform change efforts. <p>Brandy Jones Lawrence Technical Assistance Director National Early Care & Education Workforce Center Anne Douglass Professor, Early Education Leaders UMass Boston</p>
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>Salon D&E</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>Envisioning Change: Developing Effective Strategies to Support Black Early Educators</p> <p>Focusing on solutions to the challenges Black families, children, and early educators encounter, this panel of experts will discuss programs, practices, and policies that helped San Francisco develop a holistic approach to supporting the ECE system. This workshop will suggest strategies to help create systemic changes to assure excellence and achievement for the Black children.</p> <p>Nayo Johnson Chanelle Brown Senior Manager, Equity and Inclusion Children's Council of San Francisco Ben Doyle Chief Programs Officer Children's Council, San Francisco</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>Alexandria</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>More Than a Number: Cost Studies and Modeling in Early Education</p> <p>As states consider the use of cost-based evidence to inform policy, program, and funding decisions, they often encounter contradictory and inconsistent terminology, a lack of clarity around best practices, and guidance for how to interpret findings. The confusion around how cost-based evidence can be derived from state-led and researcher-led efforts can delegitimize the value of cost-based evidence. Additionally, any confusion around research practices and findings can make it difficult to convey information to broad audiences, including the general public and legislators. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) developed the Standards for the Economic Evaluation of Educational and Social Programs (CASP, 2021) to guide both research funders, consumers of research, and researchers themselves towards higher quality cost studies. Session facilitators will highlight how the CASP Standards can be used to guide high quality child care cost estimates in a variety of settings (e.g., center-based programs, family child care programs, out of school time programs). The presentation will also include a discussion of terminology, meanings of key terms, and how they are used in different contexts.</p> <p>Additionally, AIR is launching a small project to develop a product (or set of products) that describes and help leaders use best practices in estimating the costs of early education and child care programs. These products are intended to support states, local governments, advocates, and others as they explore using cost models and cost information to inform policy, program, and funding decisions. In order to develop products that are useful to those leaders, we are gathering information from a variety of members of the child care community, including CCAoA members, about what information and guidance is still needed, and what products would be most useful. During this session, we will set up structured small group discussions to better understand the challenges and pain points administrators experience when developing cost models or seeking cost-based information about early education and care, including conveying information to the general public and legislative audiences</p> <p>Karen Manship Amanda Danks Senior Researcher American Institutes for Research</p>
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 2 (Lee)</p> <p>Stand for Child Care</p>	<p>State ECE Policy: Problems, Progress, Possibilities</p> <p>States are at different stages when it comes to advancing child care policies, allocating state funding, and meeting federal requirements. This session offers an insightful overview of the current state policy landscape, highlighting both challenges and successes for child care policy as states navigate their first legislative sessions without federal relief funding. Join us for a dynamic discussion with CCR&Rs and state partners as they share their experiences, discuss ongoing obstacles, and explore the possibilities for transforming and improving child care systems moving forward.</p> <p>Diane Girouard State Policy Senior Analyst Child Care Aware of America Rachel Wessler Policy Analyst Child Care Aware of America</p>
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>McLean</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>Strengthening the Sustainability of Small Child Care Providers</p> <p>This presentation highlights strategies to ensure the long-term viability of small child care providers. It begins by addressing the critical role these providers play in communities and the challenges they face, including financial pressures, regulatory hurdles, workforce issues, and limited community support.</p> <p>Key strategies for sustainability include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy and Policy Support – Engaging policymakers to secure equitable funding, reduce regulatory burdens, and promote supportive initiatives. • Financial Resilience – Adopting cost-effective models and leveraging community and public-private funding. • Workforce Development – Improving staff recruitment, retention, and professional growth opportunities. • Community Engagement – Building partnerships and raising awareness of child care’s economic and social value. <p>The presentation will feature case studies of successful providers and innovative solutions, offering actionable insights. It concludes with a call to action for providers, advocates, and stakeholders to collaborate and create a sustainable future for the child care industry.</p> <p>Barbara Tedrow Policy Chair New Mexico Early Childhood Association Cindy Lehnhoff Director National Child Care Association</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>Salon F&G</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Healthy Child Care, Stronger Communities: Turning Partnerships into Progress</p> <p>Are you looking to expand your support for families, strengthen child care programs, and increase your impact? Health partnerships can help CCR&Rs increase visibility, grow credibility, and provide even greater value to educators, families and communities.</p> <p>This session addresses practical, integrated strategies for connecting child care and health in ways that align with your existing work. Engage in real-world examples, small-group discussions, and interactive problem-solving as we explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative ways CCR&Rs already support child health. • Simple strategies to integrate health partnerships into current priorities. • How stronger connections with public health benefit CCR&Rs, educators, and families <p>Crystal Crowell Early Care & Education Health Specialist Child Care Aware® of America Amanda Green Senior Director, Healthy Child Care Initiatives Child Care Aware® of America Nicole Garro Director, Early Childhood Health Programs Child Care Aware of America</p>
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>Rosslyn 1&2</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Professional Development Pathway Restructure: Idaho's Journey</p> <p>This session will provide an in-depth overview of Idaho's recent restructuring of its professional development system for child care professionals. We will explore the rationale behind the changes, the key components of the new system, and the anticipated benefits for both providers and children.</p> <p>Topics to be Covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Challenges of the Previous System • The Vision for the New System • Key Components of the New System: <p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain a comprehensive understanding of Idaho's restructured professional development system for child care providers, • Be able to identify the key components and benefits of the new system. • Be able to discuss the implications of the new system for their own practice or work in early childhood education. • Have the opportunity to network with other early childhood professionals and share best practices. <p>Eleni Graham Chelsea Krema Leadership Director IdahoAEYC</p>
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 1 (Jackson)</p> <p>CUTTING EDGE RESEARCH</p>	<p>The State of the ECE field in 2025: Discussing Findings from NAEYC's ECE Workforce Surveys</p> <p>Every year at NAEYC we hear from thousands of early childhood educators from all states and settings who respond to our ECE field surveys to share valuable information about their experiences and those of their programs. The data from these surveys and accompanying quotes tell a story of the continued challenges facing programs and early childhood educators and the clear need for sustained and robust public investments. Our latest survey, from January 2025, assessed the state of the ECE field at the start of the 119th Congress and new Administration and provides insights early educators want policymakers to know.</p> <p>This session will share findings from our 2025 ECE field survey and identify common challenges that must be addressed and opportunities to advance ECE across states. Advocates from various states will share their insights about how to connect survey data to actionable solutions and resources and will highlight opportunities for advocates to use these data with decisionmakers in local, state, and federal government and other relevant stakeholders to uplift the importance of investing in early care and education to better serve children, families, and educators.</p> <p>Paola Andujar Senior Policy Specialist NAEYC</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>8:00 am - 9:30 am EDT</p> <p>Ballroom</p>	<p>Economics and Child Care—Where are We and Where Do We Go From Here?</p> <p>Twenty of the nation's leading experts on economics and child care gathered in Omaha, Nebraska, in October 2024, to discuss the state of child care in the United States and make recommendations on how to use what we have learned to improve. The conversation was framed around five unanswered questions that are barriers to moving forward in building a comprehensive system that truly meets the needs of those who depend on it: families, businesses, providers, and, most of all, the children who receive care. During this session, panelists will delve into the insights from this Roundtable conversation and attendees will learn more about forthcoming work from the participants.</p> <p>MODERATOR: SANDRA BISHOP Senior Director, Research Child Care Aware of America</p> <p>Jason Fichtner Senior Fellow the Bipartisan Policy Center Theresa Hawley Executive Director The Center for Early Learning Funding Equity at Northern Illinois University Linda Smith Director of Policy the Buffett Early Childhood Institute</p>
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>Salon D&E</p> <p>ELEVATING THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM</p>	<p>How Child Care Cost Modeling can Advance the Goal of a Quality Affordable, and Accessible Child Care System</p> <p>In recent years, the extent to which the child care market is broken has increasingly been recognized. Parents and policymakers want to better understand why child care costs so much while educators make so little, why so many child care providers are closing their doors, and why supply is not meeting demand.</p> <p>In this session, we will delve deep into the early childhood education market, answering these questions and more. Beyond providing an overview of this broken market, the session will discuss solutions to remediate the inequities caused by this market failure. Specifically, attendees will learn about the opportunities offered by child care cost modeling to support a sustainable and equitable child care system. Examples will be shared from a diverse mix of states at different stages of implementation, helping attendees identify opportunities to make progress aligned with their own state context. For example, as states already look ahead to the next CCDF state plan cycle, it is important to start considering how cost modeling can inform subsidy rate setting, whether fully replacing the market rate survey approach, or incorporating cost modeling results to the market rates as an additional data point. Beyond subsidy rate setting, cost modeling is a critical component of advocacy efforts working towards increasing access to high-quality affordable child care that meets the needs of families, children, and caregivers.</p> <p>Simon Workman Principal and Co-founder Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies</p>
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>Pentagon A</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>Early Childhood Data and Governance: Understanding State's Approaches to Early Childhood Education</p> <p>We will share organizational charts to illustrate each state's specific governance structure.</p> <p>We will provide key insights into national trends on governance structure, with a particular focus on the variability in the housing and administration of child care. Using a selected sample of state case studies, we will provide key highlights and lessons learned regarding the process of consolidation, challenges faced by state leadership, and the outcomes of that consolidation, including improved access to early childhood programs.</p> <p>We will ensure sufficient time for audience Q&A and small group discussion on the information presented, including asking the audience members to share about their experiences advocating for consolidated governance structures in their states and how data, for example, related to child care access, workforce compensation, and Head Start enrollment, can be useful in shaping their policy and advocacy agendas.</p> <p>Audience members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about CAP's 50-state early childhood database and understand how to access data that will help them advocate for child care policies in their states Understand the landscape of state early childhood governance structures, and how their state's governance choices compare to peer states. Understand the motivating factors behind state governance consolidation efforts in key states, challenges faced during the consolidation process, outcomes associated with consolidation, and lessons learned from state efforts. <p>Rebecca Hanlin Lustick Senior Policy Research Associate Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center Allie Schneider Policy Analyst Center for American Progress</p>
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 4 (Madison)</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>Monitoring Vermont's Historic Early Childhood Investments and Using Data to Inform Policy and Practice</p> <p>Vermont's historic investment in early education, "Act 76", was passed by the state legislature in 2023 and has investments and policy changes going into effect between 2023 and 2026. With this law, Vermont becomes the state with the highest income eligibility threshold for child care assistance in the country. The law also increased reimbursement rates for child care programs by 35%, made direct grants to child care programs to support "readiness" for systems change, and expanded eligibility for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program to families regardless of documentation status. Vermont's public investments to early education are supported by a "Child Care Contribution", composed of a 0.44% payroll tax and 0.11% self-employment tax.</p> <p>Patti Banghart Gottesman Senior Policy Specialist Child Trends Anna Brouillette Policy and Program Director Building Bright Futures</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>Alexandria</p> <p>STAND FOR CHILD CARE</p>	<p>Seizing the Moment: Advocacy Strategies and Easy to Use Tools that Work</p> <p>This session will share best practices around budgeting of resources for child care, support for early education providers, resources for our professionals in training, support for families who need subsidies or have additional care needs – the list of advocacy needs goes on. Participants will leave this session feeling confident and comfortable advocating for a high-quality, accessible, affordable, and equitable child care system.</p> <p>Alexander Maykowski Senior Manager of Public Policy & Organizing Children's Council SF Alan Wong</p>
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>McLean</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>California's Blueprint to Success: Implementing an Innovative Statewide Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant Training Program</p> <p>In this session, attendees will gain insights from a panel of experts who have successfully developed and implemented a large-scale Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Consultant Training Program in a statewide context. The panelist, each instrumental in different phases of the program's lifecycle, will describe successes and challenges from conception to implementation.</p> <p>The session will be divided into three segments that align with the key stages of launching an IECMH Consultant Training Program: development, design, and implementation. For each segment, panelists will discuss key considerations and effective strategies for mental health professionals and system leaders that can be employed in standing up new training initiatives.</p> <p>Attendees will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to foster a collaborative environment that ensures a robust foundation for program development, • Be guided through the process of integrating adult learning principles and building on existing workforce development efforts to craft a responsive and impactful training program, and • Learn how to maintain programmatic quality and collect data can be tracked over time to demonstrate impact. <p>Jennifer Miller Program Director WestEd, Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Network Sujata Bansal Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist WestEd Debbie Reno-Smith Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist WestEd</p>
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 3 (Jefferson)</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Establishing and Implementing Target Compensation for the Child Care Workforce: A Step-by-Step Approach</p> <p>In this interactive workshop, CELFE will walk participants through understanding the complex multi-step process of and the importance of establishing a 'target' salary scale for the child care workforce. Compensation targets can help system leaders understand the investment necessary to stabilize supply and build the quality of child care. The first step is to understand which what level of compensation is competitive in the overall labor market for each economic region of the state.</p> <p>In the first half of this highly interactive workshop, CELFE will engage participants in building a 'target salary scale' using their system's compensation goals and economic data CELFE will provided. Presenters will give an overview of the data sources provided and the pros and cons of using of each of them, and the many tradeoffs inherent in developing system-level target salaries.</p> <p>For the second part of the workshop, CELFE will walk through the realities of implementing a salary scale for the workforce; ultimately answering the question – how DO we raise compensation for the field? It's not just about having the necessary funds/resources – but it also requires a 'mechanism' by which we ensure that the public investments made are in fact raising salaries for teachers.</p> <p>Presenters will walk through actual examples of efforts happening across the country to address compensation and lead a discussion on considerations for each strategy. The strategies that will be reviewed include tax credits, subsidy rate increases, foundational funding grants, workforce bonuses, and more. Using several examples where efforts have been underway for enough time to begin to evaluate, the workshop will review the impact these strategies have actually had – and the lessons learned/trade-offs made in operationalizing the strategy. Discussion will be interactive as we review each model.</p> <p>Sessy Nyman Deputy Director Center for Early Learning Funding Equity at Northern Illinois University Theresa Hawley Executive Director Center for Early Learning Funding Equity at Northern Illinois University</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 1 (Jackson)</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Innovative Approaches to Job-Embedded PD/TA Initiatives: Enhancing Educator Effectiveness and Improving Child Outcomes</p> <p>This session will explore innovative strategies and successful models from leading states and organizations that are advancing high-quality job-embedded professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) initiatives. Participants will discover cutting-edge methods for PD/TA delivery, including collaborative frameworks, scalable models, and approaches designed to foster continuous improvement for early childhood educators, ultimately contributing to better child outcomes. Panelists will share insights from their work, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research findings on PD strategies aimed at enhancing experiences for dual language learners (DLLs), featuring the Self-Evaluation of Supports for Emergent Bilingual Acquisition (SESEBA) model. This model, rooted in adult learning theory, encourages educators to reflect on and tailor strategies to support multilingual learners in the classroom. Attendees will gain insights into how personalized, systematic PD can improve educator effectiveness and positively impact diverse learners' outcomes. • Statewide implementation outcomes of job-embedded PD/TA through coaching specialists, such as early childhood quality coaches, language and literacy coaches, emergency preparedness coaches, family engagement coaches, inclusion coaches, and infant and toddler quality coaches. • Examples from a CCRR&R regional organization that prepares children for lifelong success by strengthening the professional capacity to provide high-quality care and education. The organization's Literacy and Language Building service provides expert guidance through PD/TA, ensuring children, from infancy onward, are equipped with essential skills for a bright future. <p>Attendees will leave with actionable insights and best practices for building sustainable PD systems that elevate the quality of early childhood programs and support continuous professional growth.</p> <p>Jennifer McNellie Manager of Literacy and Language Programs Starting Point Child Care Resource and Referral Heather Hicks Executive Director Statewide Services Signal Centers/ TN CCR&R / WAGE\$ TN Alexandra Figueras-Daniel Jodi Whiteman Senior Director, Partnerships LENA</p>
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>Rosslyn 1&2</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>Re-imagining Early Care and Education: Quality Supports using a Community Engagement Strategy</p> <p>This workshop will focus on the experience of a local government organization and funder in implementing a broad community engagement effort and a resident-driven system governance body to support early care and education strategic planning, from identifying community needs and prioritizing solutions to co-creating program design and implementation.</p> <p>Topics will include details on the community engagement strategy, an overview of what we learned about child care accessibility, teacher recruitment and retention, child development and wellness, and parent-teacher relationships.</p> <p>Key takeaways include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A better understanding of current issues in child care and proposed solutions from the perspective of parents, teachers and child care leadership, • Tangible strategies for engaging those most impacted by quality early care and education, and • Considerations for those desiring to build a community driven approach to funding and service delivery. • By the end of our time together, participants will value how being proximate to community gives space for stakeholders to experience transformational growth by making connections beyond the life of the project. <p>Shannon Vasquez Executive Director Palm Beach Preschool Zipporah Scott Family Child Care Provider Children's Service Council Zandra Pompeo V. P. K. Teacher/ RAC Member Opportunity Early Learning / Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, FL Berthanie Pierre Program Officer Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, FL Yanela Vickers Program Specialist Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, FL Jennifer Coleman System Performance Lead Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, FL</p>

TIME (EDT) LOCATION CATEGORY	SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS SPEAKERS
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>National Landing 2 (Lee)</p> <p>INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p>	<p>The Business Navigator—An Employer’s Guide to Child Care Solutions in New York State</p> <p>In the 2023 State of the State, New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced a commitment to establish a Business Navigator in each of the 10 Regional Economic Development Council regions across New York State to help interested businesses identify options to support employees’ child care needs, and develop a statewide employer child care guidebook.</p> <p>The Business Navigator—An Employer’s Guide to Child Care Solutions in New York State, funded by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services and created by Early Care & Learning Council (ECLC) is the result of the Governor’s promise. Over the course of 12 months (March 2024-Feb 2025), ECLC partnered with 12 CCRCs from across NY State and five expert consultants to develop the Business Navigator, which exists in both print and digital formats.</p> <p>Join us for this informative panel discussion with ECLC and their work partners to learn about the creation process of The Business Navigator, and its roll-out across the state, which included awareness webinars, followed by 10 live launches, one in each of the regional economic development regions.</p> <p>Courtney Jones Family Development Administrator Child Care Council of Cornell Cooperative Extension Grace Reef President Early Learning Policy Group LLC Shameia House Administrative Assistant of Strategy & Vision Early Care & Learning Council Jeannie Thomma Associate Executive Director of Strategy & Vision Early Care & Learning Council</p>
<p>9:45 am - 11:15 am EDT</p> <p>Salon F&G</p> <p>CUTTING EDGE RESEARCH</p>	<p>Sustaining Our Educators: A Holistic View of Workforce Well-being</p> <p>This session will feature a panel discussion with representatives from organizations working nationwide in early care and education policy and research. Panelists will present data and stories highlighting workforce well-being, focusing on caregiver economic and emotional well-being across various settings, including child care centers, home-based programs, and family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) caregivers.</p> <p>Key topics that panelists will discuss include, but are not limited to, financial hardships and compensation, housing experiences, staffing and retention, access to healthcare and health insurance, and emotional well-being and stress management.</p> <p>Panelists will respond to predetermined questions, presenting data and stories from their research and field experiences, before an open Q&A portion with the audience for at least 20 minutes.</p> <p>Audience members will gain a deeper understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current state of the early childhood education workforce across different settings • Challenges faced by educators in various contexts • Innovative strategies to support the diverse workforce • The impact of educator well-being on the quality of care and education provided to children <p>Kate Nicolaou Project Lead; RAPID Survey Project Stanford Center on Early Childhood Ronald Jarrett Director of Policy & Public Affairs National Association for Family Child Care Meghan Salas Atwell Senior Director, Applied Research National Association for the Education of Young Children Alexandra Patterson Home Grown</p>
<p>9:45 am- 11:00 am</p> <p>FEATURED</p>	<p>Investing in the Future: How Philanthropy is Championing Child Care in a Shifting Landscape</p> <p>In a time of increasing pressure on federal social investments and shifting policy priorities, many health and human service and advocacy organizations are turning to philanthropy to help sustain momentum and drive progress. Explore how philanthropic leaders are establishing priorities in today’s complex social and political climate and learn practical strategies for cultivating strong, reciprocal relationships with the philanthropic community—as partners, champions, and investors in change.</p> <p>MODERATOR: MICHELLE MCCREADY Senior Vice President of Organizational Advancement Child Care Aware of America</p> <p>Helene Stebbins Executive Director Alliance for Early Success Marica Cox Mitchell Director of Early Learning Bainum Family Foundation Hannah McIntire Senior Associate, Family Well-Being Strategy Group The Annie E. Casey Foundation</p>
<p>11:20 am– 12:00 pm</p>	<p>Annual Meeting, Recognitions, and Closing</p>

