

Quality Child Care and Preschool

Budget Policy Agenda FY24-FY25



(1) Pay for the actual cost of quality publicly funded care that supports a fairly compensated and competitive professional workforce.

- A. Workforce: Implement a wage schedule and other workforce supports for frontline professionals.
- B. Payment Strategy: Implement a payment strategy to stabilize programs (ex. pay on enrollment versus attendance).
- C. Quality Rates: Implement the 2022 market rate survey to ensure equal access to the market for publicly funded children (defined by the federal government as aligning rates to the 75th percentile of the market rate).

(2) Increase access to quality child care for low-income Ohioans to support the healthy development of children and improve parental workforce participation.

- A. Increase Access to Working Families: Increase PFCC eligibility to at least 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- B. Priority Populations: Establish scholarships for priority populations including children of child care professionals, children in state custody including kinship placements and children with special needs.
- C. Expand Access to Public Preschool: Increase state investment in the Early Childhood Education Grant to serve an additional 26,000 children from families with low incomes.

(3) Build quality capacity to support the unique needs of infants and toddlers.

- A. New Capacity for Babies: Establish classroom grants for centers and family child care providers to incentivize new capacity for quality infant and toddler care with a fairly compensated workforce, prioritizing communities with both care deserts and high infant mortality rates.
- B. Supporting Babies in Rural Communities: Pilot the development of quality comprehensive care in rural communities by investing in Early Head Start in these care deserts with a prioritization of Appalachian infants and toddlers engaged in the child welfare or foster care systems.
- C. High Quality & Lead Safe Facilities: Create an early childhood facility fund to focus on the building of safe new facilities or remodeling of existing.

Maternal & Young Child Health

Budget Policy Agenda FY24-FY25



(1) Expand access to and better connect families with critical resources that improve the health of mothers, babies and young children.

- A. Home Visiting: Expand access to evidence-based home visiting programs
- B. Early Intervention: Expand access to Early intervention Part C services by changing policy to allow for a standalone eligibility for babies born preterm.
- C. Comprehensive Screening: Evaluate, fund and implement a comprehensive screening and connection program (e.g., Family Connects).
- D. Mental Health: Expand the reach of depression screening tools helping mothers connect to necessary care and improving their mental wellness and improve care coordination for babies with complex needs including creating access to new and enhanced, evidence-based mental health services for babies and their caregivers
- E. Housing: Expand access to safe, stable housing for pregnant and new mothers.
- F. Nutrition: Evaluate and invest in strategies to increase participation in the Women's, Infants, and Children Program (WIC).

(2) Improve Medicaid coverage and quality to meet the unique needs of moms and babies.

- A. Increase access for young children: Implement multi-year continuous Medicaid coverage for Ohio children ages 0-6 and leverage federal and state investment to expand Medicaid eligibility for children to 300% of the federal poverty level.
- B. Adopted Children: Provide children adopted through private agencies with Medicaid coverage, especially those with complex medical conditions.
- C. Well Visits: Implement policies to increase well visits among Medicaid eligible young children.
- D. Doula Services: Provide a pathway for Medicaid reimbursement of doulas.
- E. Care Coordination: Improve care coordination for babies with complex needs including creating access to new and enhanced, evidence-based mental health services for babies and their caregivers.