

Why childcare policy matters and what we can do to change it: A social work perspective

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The Family Impact Lens

- When policies or programs are developed the family impact lens looks at
 - How families are affected
 - How families contribute to the issue
 - The impact of getting family involvement
- When programs are implemented the family impact lens considers
 - Family dignity
 - Availability of information for family decision making
 - Family choice about services
 - Family involvement in parent/professional collaborations

Bogensneider, K. (2014). Family Policy Matters: How policymaking affects families and what professionals can do. Routledge.

A social worker perspective

- The social work code of ethics
 - commitment to social justice
 - Vulnerable populations
 - Enhance people's ability to reach their full potential
 - Requirement to advocate for societal change
- Ecological systems model of understanding growth and development
- Research
- Education

Need for child care and early education

- 70% percent of mothers in the workforce
 - 64.2% for those with children 6 and younger ([Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016](#))
- On average children under 5 are in care for 36 hours a week (Child Care Aware, 2015)
- 65% of parents have their work schedules affected by child care needs ([Child Care Aware, 2015](#))
- No system, patchwork of care
- Dearth of affordable quality care ([Child Care Aware, 2015](#))

Child care as a family issue: Issues related to child care

- i. Support for women in the workforce
- ii. Education and support for poor women
- iii. Opportunity to get untrained women into the workforce
- iv. The role of government
 - a. Federal
 - b. State control
- v. Cost/ benefit analysis
- vi. Moral need/ civil rights issue
 - a. Quality
 - b. Cost
 - c. availability

Understanding the issue: History and the framing of child care

The Children's Bureau (1912)

The Women's Bureau (1920)

The Federal Office of Education (1867)

Private daycare for the privileged (1920s)

Head Start (1965)

Child Care Development Act (1971) vetoed

Act for Better Child Care Services (1988)— shift to greater economic less moral/ethical basis

The role of interest groups

- Women's groups
- Children's groups
 - Child welfare
 - Early education
- Unions
- Conservative groups

The Trump candidacy and espoused concerns

- Cursory review of media sources from the primaries through the election (NYT, Wall Street Journal, CNN, MSNBC and Fox):
- Focus on cost of care,
- No attention to
 - Caregivers,
 - Quality of care except cases of abuse/neglect on Fox

What can we do now?

- State level advocacy
 - State legislative proposals: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/child-care-and-early-education-legislation-databas.aspx>
 - [Colorado HB 1210](#) : prevent preschool expulsion
 - [Massachusetts HB 2010](#) : prevent preschool expulsion
 - [Minnesota SB 1663](#) : increase scholarship funding for vulnerable low income populations
 - [Minnesota SB 1512](#) : money for childcare start-ups and expansions
 - Focus on increased coordination, increased funding for pre-K and low income kids, tax incentives
- Partnerships for effective lobbying
- Influencing federal policy
 - Funding
 - Keeping the issue on the agenda

Working with communities

- Engage and empower parents
- Networking across groups
- Supporting parents to engage in legislative advocacy

Making child care heard: News Media

Op-eds and blog posts

- [To fix America's childcare](#), let's look at the past. The Conversation.
- [More childcare rules could cause more harm than good](#). City Limits.
- [Feminists need to](#) focus on childcare. The Independent.
- [Trump should copy US military model](#) to fix American child care crisis. Long Island Press.
- Trump's child care plan is [a good start](#) but it's still not enough. Fox News.
- [Making the best choices](#) for children. Washington Post.

Radio Shows

- [To fix America's childcare](#), let's look at the past. The Matt Townsend Show, BYU Radio.
- [Tackling the high cost](#) of child care and the presidential candidates' plans. Radio Times, WHYY .
- [The struggle for affordable child care](#). WYPR

Making childcare heard: Political Action

- Demonstrations
 - Where is child care?
 - A unified child welfare agenda?
- Social media communication
- Community organizations with good websites
 - National Women's Law Center
 - Zero to Three
 - The Future of Children

Framing child care as family policy

- It's obvious—child care isn't really just about care for children, it is about the inter-relationship between children's care and
 - family economic stability
 - Child care providers' economic stability
 - Childhood emotional and academic development and its impact on children and families
- Supporting child care is supporting families
- The right to life should include a life with some basic supports such as a quality education beginning in early childhood