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Advocates Praise Governor Newsom’s Commitment to Early Childhood Education Programs

SACRAMENTO, Calif., (January 11, 2019) - Early childhood advocates praise Governor Newsom’s commitment to providing funding and resources to programs aimed at children aged 0-3. In his first proposed budget, Governor Newsom included hundreds of millions of dollars for early childhood care and education.

Early Head Start (EHS) programs serve infants and toddlers under the age of 3, and pregnant women. EHS programs provide intensive comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families, and to pregnant women and their families.

“We hope Governor Newsom will take this opportunity to invest in the entire ECE mixed delivery system – in which Head Start and Early Head Start play a critical role. Many more families and their children need services. With additional investment, Head Start can be part of the solution,” said Christopher Maricle, executive director of the California Head Start Association, representing California’s 156 Head Start programs.

Additional resources for child care infants and toddlers is desperately needed. Families in California have limited access to high-quality programs, especially those serving children from birth to age 3. Currently, nearly 30,000 children across California are on waiting lists to receive services.

Access to publicly funded ECE programs for infants and toddlers is extremely limited. [Only about 14 percent of eligible infants and toddlers](#) are enrolled in subsidized programs; and most of these children are in a home-based child care or being cared for by friends, family members, or neighbors. Even more striking is that only 7 percent of eligible children under age 3 had access to Early Head Start.

Infant and toddler child care in California is prohibitively expensive for many families. [According to a Child Care Aware report](#), in 2016 California was one of the 10 least affordable states for infant care, costing on average 51 percent of the median income of a single parent. These families have difficulty covering the basic costs of housing, food, child care, health care, and other necessities. In all 58



counties, [the annual salary of a full-time minimum wage worker](#) is not sufficient to cover the basic budget for a single-parent family.

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The California Head Start Association advocates for our members at the federal, state and local county level ensuring that members speak with a unified voice about the challenges facing California's most vulnerable families, and the Head Start community that serves them.