



## **GRANTEE PARTNERS FY17**

### **STATES**

#### **Arizona**

##### **Arizona Early Childhood Alliance**

**Primary Contacts:** Kelley Murphy, Sam Leyvas, Ginger Ward

Arizona's Early Childhood Alliance (AZECA) is a coalition of more than three dozen early childhood organization dedicated to collaborating on public policy solutions to help young children be prepared for kindergarten and educational success.

AZECA is working to increase the capacity of the state QRIS system to include more providers. Currently only 1/3 of eligible child care providers are in the system, so the QRIS cannot be used to measure the overall quality of child care providers in the state. They are also partnering with state agencies and other stakeholders to expand the reach of the QRIS. Their second goal is to phase in a tiered reimbursement system that aligns with the state QRIS, as well as other recognized quality standards such as Head Start or National Accreditation.

Georgetown Center on Children and Families, ZERO TO THREE, and Harriet Dichter provide expert consultation to Arizona First Things First on the revision of its five-year strategic plan.

#### **Arkansas**

##### **Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families (lead), ForwARd Arkansas, Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators**

**Primary Contacts:** Rich Huddleston, Richard Abernathy, Susan Harriman

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families works to ensure that all children and their families have the resources and opportunities to lead healthy and productive lives and to realize their full potential through data analysis, public policy development, and coalition building. ForwARd Arkansas is a partnership of parents, educators, civic leaders, business professionals and policymakers promoting a PreK-12 policy agenda that will help Arkansas dramatically improve student achievement, close the achievement gap and become a leading state in education. The Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators is an umbrella association, representing twelve constituent educational administrator organizations and approximately 2,500 school administrators working to improve the quality of education and educational leadership in Arkansas.

These partners are collaborating on the PreK Improvement Project in Arkansas to increase investments in the Arkansas Better Chance program that are dedicated to quality improvements,

especially those related to teachers' education, compensation, and professional development. Their long-term vision is to create a strong birth-to-eight educational system that focuses on the whole child and serves as the building block for success in secondary school, higher education, and the workforce. AACF is part of the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community. The Council for a Strong America and the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes provide TA to support this effort.

## **California**

### **Children Now (lead), Advancement Project**

**Primary Contact:** Ted Lempert, Stacy Hae Lim Lee

Children Now (CN) is a leading non-partisan research, policy development, and advocacy organization dedicated to improving children's overall well-being in California. Advancement Project (AP) champions the struggle for greater equity and opportunity for all, fostering upward mobility in communities most impacted by economic and racial injustice with a focus on health, education, and early care and education.

These partners are collaborating on a project to elevate infant-toddler priorities in California. Through data analysis, research, and stakeholder engagement, these two organizations will develop a politically viable, long-term early learning plan and funding strategy to improve access to high-quality early care and education focused on infants and toddlers living in poverty. AP is providing TA to county-level agencies to conduct needs assessments of infant-toddler services that yield more accurate and comparable data across the state. The results will inform policy agendas for communities, state policymakers, and advocates. CN is leading an effort of advocates across the state to engage policymakers and gubernatorial candidates and launch a communications campaign to promote an infant-toddler agenda. They are continuing to advocate for funding and policies to raise reimbursement rates, expand preschool access and infant-toddler care, and support the effective implementation of the new CCDF plan. CN is participating in the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE.

## **Colorado**

### **Clayton Early Learning (lead), EPIC, Colorado Children's Campaign**

**Primary Contact:** Charlotte Brantley, Karla Pleitez, Lauren Heintz

Clayton Early Learning focuses on family-centered classroom and home-based practices through their schools, research and program evaluation, and professional development of teachers and leaders to prepare young children for school. The Colorado Children's Campaign is the state's leading child advocacy organization, using data and research to organize an extensive statewide network of child advocates across the state. EPIC is a membership organization of business leaders, nonprofits and foundations committed to making early child care, education, health and parenting among Colorado's highest priorities for public and private investments.

These partners are working to help build a comprehensive early childhood system in Colorado. This includes increasing the state's capacity and investments for quality PreK and full-day kindergarten, expanding access to and improving the quality of child care, focusing on early childhood workforce development, promoting policies that support mental health and social/emotional development, and advocating for policy strategies and investments for families

so they can support their children's healthy development. The Colorado partners will be supported by the National Center for Children in Poverty, Center on Law and Social Policy, and ZERO TO THREE. Clayton Early Learning and Colorado Children's Campaign are also participating in the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community.

## **Florida**

### **United Way of Miami-Dade, Children's Movement of Florida, Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions**

**Primary Contacts:** Jessica Scher, Vance Aloupis, Carol Brady

These organizations work to raise the standards of, and increase access to, early childhood education in Florida. They build strategic partnerships and a spirit of collaboration among business leaders, policymakers, early learning professionals, advocates and parents to increase awareness and public support for high quality early learning. The Council for a Strong American and the Committee for Economic Develop support the Florida partners in their work.

United Way of Miami-Dade is focusing on: raising the quality of subsidized child care programs by expanding the School Readiness Performance Project, coordinating and advancing efforts to use fewer assessments, identifying methods to coordinate teacher professional development, raising public and policymakers' awareness of early childhood development, building legislative support for policy and funding priorities, and embedding home visiting awareness and state policy advocacy in two early childhood coalitions. The Children's Movement of Florida and Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions are engaging the business community, building communications capacity in social media, and crafting and testing messages and materials that resonate with the private sector and policymakers, and participating in the Alliance supported Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE.

## **Georgia**

### **Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students**

**Primary Contact:** Mindy Binderman

The Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) is a statewide advocacy organization that focuses on bridging the gap between Georgia's families, business community, and policy leaders as it promotes school readiness for young children. GEEARS works closely with state agencies to implement policy change, advocate for early learning in the General Assembly, and engage civic leaders.

GEEARS' policy priorities are to: decrease PreK class size; increase child care subsidies; enact tax credits for child care providers, teachers and parents; ensure sufficient funding to implement the new CCDBG regulations without reducing access to quality child care; and advance policies that improve the social-emotional health of young children. They are hosting a site visit showcasing early childhood advocacy in Georgia. These site visits offer a unique view into some of our leading advocacy states, while also giving the host state an opportunity to talk about shared challenges with their peers. The Council for a Strong American and the Committee for Economic Develop support GEEARS in its advocacy work. Louise Stoney advises on school readiness tax credit strategies, and the National Center for Children in Poverty provides

consultation on parent engagement assessments as well as assessing the need for early childhood mental healthy supports in the state.

## **Illinois**

**Ounce of Prevention Fund, Illinois Action for Children, Voices for Illinois Children, Latino Policy Forum, Council for A Strong America**

**Primary Contact:** Gail Nourse

A coalition of organizations in Illinois is maximizing cross-system efforts to serve the most vulnerable children, including those in the child welfare, homeless children, and children with disabilities. Other areas of focus include developing a Universal Newborn Screening Initiative, advancing an Early Childhood Expulsion and Suspension Prevention Act, and supporting the Department of Health and Family Services application for an 1115 waiver with a focus on behavioral health. Many of these initiatives require an increased understanding of the Medicaid and managed care system, and the Illinois partners will consult with CLASP, NASHP and NCCP for support as needed. The Ounce of Prevention Fund is in the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE.

## **Kansas**

**Kansas Action for Children**

**Primary Contact:** Annie McKay

Kansas Action for Children (KAC) shapes health, education and economic policy on behalf of all children in Kansas. They conduct research, analysis, communications, and outreach to impact public policy for young children and their families, with a plan that prioritizes opportunities to impact children birth through 8 and mitigate, prevent, or reduce childhood poverty.

Given the difficult political and economic conditions in the state, KAC is focusing on repairing the safety net and improving child care rules and regulations. Their primary strategies include: educating policymakers about the dangers of securitizing resources set aside for early childhood and the importance of investing those resources in early education and health programs, mobilizing constituents in support of early education, shaping the public dialogue around poverty, identifying opportunities to mitigate the impact of the HOPE Act on families, identifying opportunities to improve access to child care assistance for children and their parents, and engaging stakeholders in the child care rules and regulations implementation process.

## **Louisiana**

**Louisiana Policy Institute for Children**

**Primary Contact:** Melanie Bronfin

The Louisiana Policy Institute (Policy Institute) is a source of nonpartisan, independent information on issues concerning children birth through 4. They develop policy proposals and provide educational and outreach activities to ensure Louisiana's youngest citizens are on a path to success.

The Policy Institute is developing policy proposals, mobilizing the business community, and advocating for increased access to high quality early care and education (ECE) with the funding

necessary for 211,000 vulnerable children. They are focusing on: renewing and improving Louisiana's School Readiness Tax Credits package and increasing state investment in early care and education, expanding engagement in advocacy from business leaders in the Louisiana Early Childhood Business Roundtable, and monitoring and maximizing the value of implementing Louisiana's Act 3 and federal CCDBG reauthorization for low-income children 0-4. The Policy Institute receives technical assistance from Council for a Strong America, Child Trends, and Louise Stoney, primarily on their work related to the School Readiness Tax Credits.

## **Maine**

### **Maine Children's Alliance**

**Primary Contact:** Rita Furlow

The Maine Children's Alliance (MCA) provides nonpartisan leadership by promoting and advocating for sound public policies that benefit Maine's children. They provide comprehensive data and information about the status and well-being of Maine's children and have become a valuable resource for state policymakers.

MCA is focusing on social emotional development and child care. They are working with the Maine Children's Growth Council on Social Emotional Learning and Development, hosting an all-day meeting and making policy recommendations on this topic. They are working with partners around the implementation of CCDBG in Maine. They are developing an early childhood agenda by hosting Maine's 2nd Children's Convention. MCA will support legislative co-chairs to create a bipartisan early childhood legislative caucus to educate and engage lawmakers around the value of investing early in Maine's children. MCA is receiving technical support from several Alliance partners, including Center for Law and Social Policy and National Women's Law Center to maximize the opportunities provided by the reauthorization of CCDBG, and National Center on Children in Poverty on the social emotional development survey results and implementation. MCA also collaborates with the Fight Crime, Invest in Kids state office and Educare Central Maine on advocacy efforts.

## **Massachusetts**

### **Strategies for Children, Inc.**

**Primary Contact:** Amy O'Leary

Strategies for Children (SFC) works to ensure that Massachusetts' children have the support they need in the early childhood years to be ready to succeed in school and life. They inform legislation, do budget advocacy, raise awareness with the media, and provide local TA to improve early learning systems, kindergarten readiness, and third grade reading proficiency outcomes.

SFC is focusing on increasing investments in PreK, cultivating business and political champions, leveraging local initiatives and leadership to advance state policy, improving the workforce, and increasing alignment between early childhood and K-12 policies related to early literacy and the state's ESSA plan. SFC is collaborating with the Committee on Economic Development to support this work.

## **Michigan**

### **The Center for Michigan**

**Primary Contact:** John Bebow

The Center for Michigan (CFM) is a business coalition with the goal of making Michigan a better place by encouraging greater understanding and involvement in policy issues among the state's citizens, and making sure their voices are regularly heard. They do this by calling forth citizen views, amplifying those views, and projecting them into the halls of power.

CFM is working to protect the state's PreK program, Great Start Readiness Program, and improve birth through age three policy with a focus on child care. CFM meets regularly with the business-led Children's Leadership Council of Michigan, the governor's education advisers, the Office of Great Start, lawmakers, and fellow early childhood advocates to develop and deploy strategies and tactics for improving the availability of affordable, high quality child care and preserving the expansion of Michigan's high quality, public PreK initiative. CFM participates in the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community. Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health participates in the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE.

## **Nebraska**

### **First Five Nebraska**

**Primary Contact:** Becky Veak

The vision of Nebraska First Five (FFN) is that all Nebraska children begin kindergarten with the experience they need to become successful students and productive citizens. Working with state partners in the legislature and government agencies, they seek to create effective early childhood policies that promote accountable early childhood investments with outcomes that eliminate the achievement gap for Nebraska's youngest learners.

FFN is focusing on increasing investments for infants and toddlers, ensuring policies that support the early childhood workforce, and improving the level of quality in child care. FFN continues to work to reform the child care subsidy program, including strengthening the quality of care that children at risk receive, making the subsidy more attractive as a source of revenue for providers, and reaching all children at risk. CLASP assists FFN in its work. The Early Childhood Data Collaborative also assists the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska on effective use of integrated data.

## **New Jersey**

### **Advocates for Children of New Jersey**

**Primary Contact:** Cecilia Zalkind

Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) works for a future where all children in the state grow up healthy, safe and educated. They improve high quality early education policies and programs for children from infancy to age 8 and their families by educating, informing and engaging leaders and the public on children's needs, and by conducting independent research, data, and policy analysis.

ACNJ is focusing on reading on grade level by the end of 3rd grade by expanding access to, and participation in, high quality preschool. They address chronic absenteeism in preschool and kindergarten by working collaboratively with school districts to educate and engage parents about the importance of daily attendance and the link to grade-level reading. They are working with early education partners to make preschool expansion a priority issue for the 2017 gubernatorial and legislative elections. ACNJ co-facilitates the State Based Advocates for Early Learning work group with Rhode Island KIDS COUNT that informs federal policy developments and engages states in advocacy to support federal action. ACNJ is collaborating with the EducationCounsel to support this work.

## **New Mexico**

### **New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership, UNM Center for Education Policy Research, Envision NM and Pegasus Legal Services for Children**

**Primary Contacts:** Claire Dudley, Dana Bell, Jane McGrath and Tara Ford

The mission of the New Mexico Early Childhood Partnership (NMECDP) is to create the public awareness and political will for investments in early childhood care and education in New Mexico. The Center for Education Policy Research (CEPR) facilitates and expands education policy research across networks of university-based researchers, policy makers, and practitioners statewide in support of the search for solutions to education problems with special focus on early childhood care and education. Envision NM improves healthcare quality for children and adolescents by providing quality improvement and coaching to help pediatric and primary care providers make sustainable positive changes in their practices. Pegasus Legal Services for Children is a private, non-profit agency that serves the civil legal needs of New Mexico's vulnerable children and youth by promoting and defending the rights of children and youth to safe and stable homes, quality education and healthcare, and a voice in decisions that affect their lives.

NMECDP is developing and implementing the Expand New Mexico PreK campaign to raise awareness, increase quality, examine wage parity in a mixed-delivery system, increase General Fund appropriations, and expand legislative, business leader, and family champions. They are participating in the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community and the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE. CEPR is adapting and applying the CEELO Cost of Preschool Quality Tool to create New Mexico-specific cost estimating scenarios for providing high-quality preschool programs within the state's mixed public/private delivery system. Envision NM and Pegasus Legal Services for Children are creating a medical-legal partnership to promote screening for socio-emotional needs of young children from birth to age 5 and to expand community advocacy awareness of the importance of comprehensive screening and legal mandates. The New Mexico partners are accomplishing this work with technical assistance supports from several Alliance partners. NMECDP will receive technical support from Child Trends, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, Council of Chief State School Officers, and Education Commission of the States as it implements its Expand PreK campaign. CEELO is helping CEPR to produce cost estimates using the Cost of Preschool Quality Tool. National Academy for State Health Policy, Center for Law and Social Policy, and National Center for Children in Poverty are providing subject matter expertise to Envision NM and Pegasus Legal Services as they promote developmental screenings for young children. Partners in New Mexico are also collaborating with the Committee on Economic

Development and the Council for a Strong America to support this work.

## **New York**

### **Center for Children's Initiatives**

**Primary Contact:** Betty Holcomb

The Center for Children's Initiatives (CCI) works to ensure every child in New York starts life with a foundation of health, care, and learning to succeed in life by securing funding, resources, and policies from prenatal to third grade.

CCI is working on a multi-year effort to make PreK a right for all 3- and 4-year-olds in the state. They are working with legal experts and K-12 advocates to make the case for incorporating early learning into the state's definition of sound and basic education. CCI is addressing immediate challenges to existing PreK funding and identifying opportunities to advance broader early childhood investments, such as child care, professional development, and comprehensive services for young children. The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, Committee for Economic Development, Center on Law and Social Policy, and the National Women's Law Center are providing TA to support CCI's efforts. CCI is also participating in the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community.

## **Oklahoma**

### **Smart Start Oklahoma**

**Primary Contact:** Debra Anderson

Smart Start Oklahoma seeks to provide better opportunities to the children and families in the state by engaging businesses and the public in supporting and investing in early childhood in a coordinated early childhood system focused on strengthening families and school readiness for all children.

Smart Start Oklahoma is focusing on: bringing the family voice into the design and improvements of early childhood programs and services; supporting the development of an integrated early childhood data system; partnering with the department of education in piloting a kindergarten assessment; and creating messages and public awareness around early childhood in the light of severe budget reductions in our state. The Early Childhood Data Collaborative provides technical assistance related to integrated data systems. Smart Start Oklahoma participates in the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE.

## **Oregon**

### **Children's Institute**

**Primary Contact:** Swati Adarkar

The mission of the Children's Institute (CI) is to move research to action by promoting cost-effective public and private investments in young children birth through third grade to increase the number of Oregon's children who are developmentally on track, arrive at kindergarten prepared for success, and meet third grade benchmarks.

CI is focusing on increased and more flexible investments in high-quality programs and services like home visiting, special education, and early intervention for vulnerable children birth to five; aligning PreK through third grade; and high-quality preschool programs including Preschool Promise and Head Start. They are working on a blueprint for a prenatal to three system. The BUILD Initiative, Center for Law and Social Policy, National Center on Children in Poverty, and Child Care Aware of America will be providing TA to support CI's work. CI is participating in the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE and PreK Advocacy Learning Community. Children First for Oregon is also participating in the Home Visiting Community of Practice.

## **Pennsylvania**

### **Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children**

**Primary Contact:** Joan Benso

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children (PPC) is a statewide, independent, nonpartisan and nonprofit advocacy group working to improve the health, education and well being of the Commonwealth's children. PPC's core strategies include research and analysis, strategic communications, mobilization, and government affairs.

PPC is focusing on: advancing public policies that improve the developmental screening rate using validated tools; expanding the availability of evidence-based home visiting strategies, assuring the availability of high-quality child care for low-income families, and expanding the number of children enrolled in high-quality PreK. PPC is participating in the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community and the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE.

## **Tennessee**

### **Memphis Tomorrow, PeopleFirst**

**Primary Contacts:** Blair Taylor, Barbara Prescott

Memphis Tomorrow, an association of CEOs of the state's largest businesses, engages the highest-ranking officers and the resources of their companies to foster prosperity and quality of life. PeopleFirst is a collaboration of business, government, academic and civic leaders dedicated to strengthening Memphis and Shelby County's cradle-to-career pipeline.

These partners are leading a coalition that includes the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth to advance policies and investments that improve the state's Voluntary PreK Program. They are developing and advancing a policy agenda that will increase the capacity of the Tennessee Department of Education and other organizations to improve implementation of VPK at the local level, and to enhance quality monitoring and continuous improvement systems so that children make strong gains in PreK and sustain them over time. Both partners are participating the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community.

## **Texas**

### **Children at Risk, Texans Care for Children**

**Primary Contacts:** Bob Sanborn and Mandi Kimball, Stephanie Rubin

Children at Risk serves as a catalyst for change and educates policymakers to improve the quality of life for children through strategic research, public policy analysis, education, collaboration and advocacy. Texans Care for Children is a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan, multi-issue children's policy organization that develops policy solutions, produces research, and engages Texas community leaders to educate policymakers, the media, and the public about what works to improve the well-being of Texas children and families.

Children at Risk is leading an advocacy effort to improve the quality and increase the efficiency of Texas' PreK program for low-income children. Through research, data analysis, and stakeholder engagement at the state and local levels, they are advancing a policy agenda that focuses on sustained quality improvement funds, cross-agency coordination and use of funding streams, collaboration between public schools and private providers, teacher preparation, and increasing access to full-day programs. Texans Care for Children is building a statewide coalition and developing a strategic early childhood policy agenda that takes advantage of political opportunities in the state while addressing the needs of young children from birth to age five. They are focusing on improving policies related to PreK, early intervention, child care quality, and supports for new mothers. Both partners are participating in the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community. TexProtects is participating in the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE.

## **Washington DC**

### **DC Action for Children**

**Primary Contact:** Shana Bartley

DC Action for Children (DC Action) provides data-based analysis and policy leadership on critical issues facing children and youth in the District of Columbia. They promote policies and actions that optimize child and family well-being.

DC Action is working to establish high-performance birth to three programs that produce results for children and families; develop a flexible funding stream to create and sustain quality programs; and create linkages across agencies to limit duplication of services and improve outcomes for children birth to three and their families. DC Action will accomplish this goal by developing champions of birth to three, and share DC Kids Count data through reports and testimony given at City Council and hearings. DC Action receives consultation from Harriet Dichter on the birth to three strategy, and Frontera Strategy on home visiting. DC Action participates in the Alliance Home Visiting Advocates Community of Practice led by ZERO TO THREE.

## **Washington State**

### **Children's Alliance**

**Primary Contact:** Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer

The Children's Alliance (CA) is a multi-issue advocacy organization that works to ensure that laws, policies and programs work for kids. With a coalition of 125 organizational members across the state, they work toward a common goal of improving policies for Washington's children and hold state leaders accountable until they secure the resources required to make all children in the state safe and healthy.

CA is in the midst of a multi-year effort to advance and implement major policy changes, including the development and passage of Washington's Early Start Act and the state's Child Care and Development Fund plan. They are leading sustained legislative and administrative advocacy to ensure that these new policies have the funding and resources to be implemented effectively and equitably. Areas of focus include professional development, quality rating and improvement system, 12-month child care subsidy eligibility, and PreK expansion and improvements. They are working with early childhood and K-12 advocates to frame an early learning agenda and incorporate PreK and early learning in the state's ESSA plan. The BUILD Initiative, Center on Law and Social Policy, and National Women's Law Center on providing TA to support CA's work. CA is also participating in the Alliance PreK Advocacy Learning Community.

## **Wisconsin**

### **Wisconsin Council on Children and Families**

**Primary Contact:** David Edie

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families (WCCF) provides research, public education, and advocacy for the development and implementation of public policy that improves child and family well being in health, economic security, safety and education. They work to ensure every child in Wisconsin can grow up in a just and nurturing family and community by focusing on early learning, health, and family support.

WCCF is building on the recommendations to increase high-quality child care, home visiting, and public-private partnerships from the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council. They are supporting the new Legislative Children's Caucus and promoting early prevention efforts such as effective early care and education, home visiting, and early childhood mental health consultation. They are promoting policies and funding to increase the number of vulnerable children in high-quality child care, with an emphasis on racial equity. They are working with a strong coalition to reduce childhood obesity and with the Infant-Toddler Policy Workgroup that is proposing a pilot for mental health consultation. WCCF is collaborating with several Alliance partners on this work, including BUILD (QRIS), ZERO TO THREE (early childhood mental health consultation), Council for a Strong America, and Committee for Economic Development.