Thank you for joining the Alliance for Early Success StateFedConnect Peer-To-Peer zoom call on July 6th. We confirmed during our call that while there will not be an in-person meeting in DC in July for StateFedConnect, we are urging StateFedConnect advocates to make appointments for “virtual Hill visits” in July (between July 12 and August 3) to advocate for early childhood investments in the federal budget, with a major, powerful push for a historic investment in child care, and to share the results of those visits so they can help to inform everyone’s work. (Please note that in-person meetings in DC are not available, but some Congressional District offices may be open for meetings while Congress is on recess in August).

As Danielle said on our call, it is imperative that members of Congress hear a Drumbeat of Action/support for the highest possible investment in child care (Senator Warren has proposed $700 B, the President has proposed $450 B through the American Families Plan and American Jobs Plan). The current bipartisan infrastructure proposal does not include money for early childhood, so your sustained advocacy in July, August and September is crucial to draw attention to its importance and that it must be included.

Members of Congress are in the process of discussing language and content of the potential reconciliation package, so scheduling these meetings now will have a tremendous impact. Here are links to find contact info for your Senators and Representatives. If you need help identifying an office, or a particular staff person, please contact Danielle (Danielle.Ewen@educationcounsel.com) Please see the “Action Item” e-mail Danielle sent to StateFedConnect advocates yesterday with some additional information about virtual Hill visits and links to state fact sheets. We will be sending talking points for your Hill visits at the start of next week.

https://www.house.gov/representatives

https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm

On our July 6th call, we heard great presentations from Maggie Clark from Georgetown Center for Children and Families regarding state and federal efforts to extend Medicaid postpartum coverage from 60 days to 12 months; and from Tommy Sheridan and Kent Mitchell from the National Head Start Association on Head Start/Early Head Start advocacy.

Attached are notes from the call. Maggie also provided a helpful resource that tracks state action on postpartum coverage from the Kaiser Family Foundation:https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/medicaid-postpartum-coverage-extension-tracker/#note-0-2
Notes: StateFedConnect Peer-to-Peer
Zoom Call, July 6, 2021

Facilitators: Elizabeth Burke Bryant (Rhode Island KIDS COUNT) and Danielle Ewen (EducationCounsel)

Next Call: The next call will be on Tuesday, August 3, 2021, 4:00pm ET (first Tuesday of the month at 4:00ET). If you have registered, you will receive a reminder and Zoom link in advance of the call (To register for calls for the rest of the year: https://earlysuccess.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwrfuqprT0rGtY5k0ySZFki-yRoEp_CMnSv)

“Ask Me Anything” Call-In: Every other Tuesday at 1:00 ET. Next call is July 20th at 1pm ET. To join: https://www.gotomeet.me/DanielleEwen You can also dial in using your phone. United States (Toll Free): 1 877 309 2073 United States: +1 (571) 317-3129 Access Code: 965-856-357

July 6, 2021 StateFedConnect Agenda:

- **Implementation of Postpartum Medicaid Extension** – Presentation by Maggie Clark, Senior State Health Policy Analyst at Georgetown University Center for Children and Families
- **Early Head Start and Head Start Advocacy** – Presentation by Tommy Sheridan, Deputy Director, and Kent Mitchell, Director of State Affairs, National Head Start Association
- **Federal Update** – Danielle Ewen, EducationCounsel

**Presentation and Discussion - Maggie Clark**, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, shared updates on the implementation of the Postpartum Medicaid Extension Activity.

- The American Rescue Plan extended postpartum coverage option included 12 months of full-benefit coverage, with federal matching funds available as of April 1, 2022. The option sunsets after five years.
- The following states have appropriated money for 12 months of full-benefit coverage via Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA): Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Ohio, Washington, and West Virginia. Florida and Tennessee have also implemented postpartum extension, but without Medicaid expansion.
• The following states are likely to implement the option before April 1, 2022: Arizona, California, Massachusetts, and Michigan. North Carolina, New York, South Carolina, and Wisconsin are likely to take up the option with no Medicaid expansion.

• Illinois (12 months), Georgia (6 months), and Missouri (12 months, Substance Use Disorder only) have approved the postpartum extension via Section 1115 Waivers. Massachusetts (12 months, regardless of immigration status), Virginia (12 months), New Jersey (6 months), and Texas (12 months, family planning+; application for 6 months of full benefit postpartum coverage in development) are pending approval via Section 1115 Waivers.

• The Medicaid MOE continuous coverage requirement is ongoing through the end of the public health emergency, which is likely Jan 1, 2022. There should be no gap for pregnant people who deliver after PHE ends but before April 1, 2022.

• As states continue to implement this option, calls are being made for extended postpartum coverage to be mandatory in the budget reconciliation package.

Maggie also provided a helpful resource that tracks state action on postpartum coverage from the Kaiser Family Foundation: https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/medicaid-postpartum-coverage-extension-tracker/#note-0-2

Presentation and Discussion - Tommy Sheridan and Kent Mitchell – National Head Start Association, shared information on the current implementation of Head Start programs and recommendations on how additional funding for Early Childhood resources could dramatically increase access to Head Start programs.

• NHSA is releasing a new report in forthcoming weeks on how Head Start can make significant differences in communities with expansion and support from federal funding.

• NHSA hopes to dramatically expand Early Head Start programs, focusing on raising to parity the number of Early Head Start Spots to Head Start Enrollment. Enrollment in Early Head Start is 500,000 children below that of Head Start.

• There are currently 1,600 Head Start grantees, serving 700,000 three- and four-year old’s from primarily low-income homes. The current enrollment only reaches one third of income-eligible children, and Head Start hopes to specifically address the access to Pre-K and gap in enrollment for students of color.

• Head Start emphasizes three main reasons for the success of its programs: Parent Choice, Quality, and Equity. Parents have access to community-based programs, the programs are monitored through robust data systems, Head Start immerses itself in diverse communities where migrant families often lack resources.

• Head Start is proposing two major recommendations to the Biden administration to better support access to Pre-K:
  o Expand Head Start to 800,000 new Head Start slots
    ▪ Pathway 1: Reauthorization of Head Start Act, which hasn’t been reauthorized since 2007, and will modernize the eligibility of Head Start program.
    ▪ Pathway 2: Directly expand Head Start by 250,000 slots.
Pathway 3: Reauthorize and fully fund AIAN and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start. There is not an exact estimate of number of students this will serve, but it will expand equity and access in Head Start.

Pathway 4: Require at least 10% of expanded state Pre-K enrollment be in mixed-income Head Start classroom. This will increase enrollment by 500,000 slots.

Pathway 5: Fund, incentivize, and support the 6 states without state pre-k and build on Head Start, expanding enrollment by 30,000 slots.

- **Require and Incentivize Collaboration with Head Start in State Pre-K Systems**
  - State Pre-K should have enhanced per-child funding models, with a strong focus on equity and targeted enrollment.
  - States can increase duration of Head Start programming to expand access.
  - Collaboration among state and local level Head Start programs can be supported to incentivize enrollment.
  - Head Start also encourages the participation in an annual update to statewide preschool agreements.

**Federal Update – Danielle Ewen**

The Alliance for Early Success and all StateFedConnect state advocates have a major opportunity to advocate for a dramatic increase in federal funding through the Congressional budget reconciliation process. **It is important that every member of StateFedConnect visits with their Congressional representatives from July 12 to August 3.** In-person meetings are not available in DC, though many state offices could be open while members are on recess.

Additional background information on the importance of this funding:

- There is not a consistent number on what is being considered, however, Sen. Warren has proposed $700B, and Pres. Biden has proposed $450B. When meeting with members, ask for the highest possible amount, allowing reform of early childhood resources in your state and district.
- The current bipartisan infrastructure proposal does not include money for early childhood, so advocacy throughout July, August, and September will draw attention to its importance. Reports have demonstrated that funding for climate change will be pitted against early childhood – we must emphasize that climate change **and** early childhood should be funded.
- The timeframe for the budget reconciliation process is not set. We’ve been told they’re writing the language, but they’re most likely still discussing the content and the process will occur through September at the earliest.
- We are hoping to create and maintain a “Drumbeat of Action” – advocacy taking place in the virtual and in-person spaces so members of Congress must see this as something that can’t be negotiated away.
- We will continue to implement child care “Action Wednesdays”, as they were successful in the past. The first event is 7/7/21 at 2:00pm ET, a national webinar, co-sponsored by more than 20
organizations representing different parents and provider groups across the country. Susan Rice, Director of the Domestic Policy Council, will be speaking, and participation is encouraged.

- Talking points will be disseminated for meetings, and advocates should use their relationships with staffers to continuously share stories of the local impact of this funding. Make it clear that funding has been spent well in the past, and emphasize that your state has a plan and knows exactly how the funds will be used. For example, states like North Carolina have waiting lists for care and providers can’t find staff because of the low pay.
- We have updated contact information for Congressional offices, so please reach out if you’re not able to connect with specific offices.
- We’ll be interested in hearing about your experiences, meetings, and sharing strategies to best advocate for care!

The next StateFedConnect monthly call will be on Tuesday, August 3, 2021, 4:00pm ET (first Tuesday of the month at 4:00 ET).