



### American Families Plan Discussion Guide

Recently, President Biden released the details of the American Families Plan which has the potential to impact Head Start and other early childhood programs. While all the details have not been released, it is important to note the plan’s call for a \$200 billion investment in free universal pre-school (UPK) for all three and four-year olds. The plan includes specifics such as raising the salaries of employees in pre-k and Head Start programs to at least \$15 per hour and staff with comparable qualifications will receive compensation to commensurate with that of kindergarten teachers.

The administration has also turned their attention to child care programs. The proposal for child care support includes investments to ensure low and middle-income families pay no more than 7% of their income towards high-quality child care. The plan also proposes funding for child care providers to improve quality focusing on small class sizes, coaching, culturally and linguistically responsive environments, and inclusive programming. Another aspect of the plan addresses the wages of child care providers using the same approach the administration is proposing for Head Start and UPK programs. All the changes and proposals may leave you wondering, “*how will this impact my program*”. The questions below can be used to determine the best way to prepare your program to respond to changes in the early childhood landscape.

1. What is the make-up of your current state preschool system and what are its current impacts on your program? For example, is it administered in public schools and in other community-based programs?

Question	Answer
How many children aged four-years can be enrolled in the state preschool program in your area ( <i>call the schools or relevant agencies to get the most recent number of prek slots at each site, often data sources online are outdated</i> )	
How many children aged three-years can be served in state preschool programs?	
What is the schedule of the prek program in your area (full-day, part-day, etc.) and when does it close during the year	
What are the enrollment trends in your program? Go back 10, 5, and 3 years to determine changes in the HS enrollment of three- and four-year-olds and review any EHS expansions.	

2. How is Head Start different from state preschool? Are these differences likely to remain if the American Families Plan is implemented?

3. If there was an expansion of state preschool slots would your program be able to participate?

Benefits of UPK expansion for your program:	Potential partnerships and how you might collaborate:	Potential impacts on HS enrollment if state preschool was to expand in your state?

4. How would increasing child care subsidy eligibility impact your program?

How many child care slots in your area serve children aged 0-5 years?	
How many families receive a child care subsidy?	

5. If child care programs were able to increase wages, lower class sizes, and reduce ratios to match Head Start, would you lose families because of the extended hours of care that child care provides?

6. What are the trends among working parents in your program?

Question	Answer	Comments
How many children have all parents working?		
How many parents work full-time/full-year around?		
Is there are waiting list for child care subsidies in your area?		

### Action Steps and Considerations

Use this space to discuss activities your program can take to prepare for any changes or identify what issues you plan to monitor. For example, is it time for your program to update the community assessment? What additional data should you collect? Should you consider a conversion, or should you wait to see how any changes play out? What advocacy steps might you take? What new partnerships should you explore?

