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The Early Childhood Innovation Network
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 Under3DC

 Under3DC

What's in the Birth-to-Three Act

DC Law 22-179, the Birth-to-Three for All DC Amendment Act of 2018 became effective October 30, 2018.

We now have a clear, achievable plan for how to create a better future for DC families.

- A recently passed law, the Birth-to-Three Act, promises to make a real difference for every DC family. It builds on and connects with the success of DC's universal pre-K program.
- It lays out the blueprint for big structural change and builds a system that works together for all DC families. By connecting dots and coordinating between early development, health, education and economic programs and services, it ensures every infant and toddler in DC has the support they need to thrive.
- When the Birth-to-Three Act is fully funded and implemented – ideally by 2028 – all DC children under three will have access to high-quality early learning and health care opportunities.
- The law phases in eligibility for subsidized child care by first expanding slots for infants and toddlers in families who are paid lower wages — most of whom are Black or Brown.
- Once the needs of lower income families are met, it expands support to families in need of all income levels. When fully funded and implemented, no DC family will spend more than 10% of their income on child care.

We all have a stake in ensuring the success of the new law and Under 3 DC is working together to help implement the Birth-to-Three Act throughout the city.

- Families want what's best for their children.
- Businesses are more successful when their workers have reliable child care.
- Early childhood educators love their jobs, but struggle to make ends meet on wages barely above the minimum wage.
- Between now and 2023, the Under 3 DC agenda is focused on three primary cornerstones of the Birth-to-Three Act.

We will improve access to high-quality child care for low-income families with infants and toddlers.

- To help more low-income families receive the highest-quality of early childhood educational care, we must ensure homes and centers are fairly compensated.
- Many providers rely almost exclusively on child care subsidies to offer their services. Even though DC funds its subsidy program well by comparison to other states, reimbursement rates are still too low for providers to adequately compensate their educators or take sufficient steps to improve the quality of care they deliver.
- By providing higher reimbursement rates for the vouchers tied to centers who care for infants and toddlers, child care settings can afford to take steps to improve the quality of care they provide for children under three. And, generally operate their businesses with less stress.
- DC families deserve a child care system that works well for everyone, including child care providers.

We will increase pay for early childhood educators.

- To meet the DC's child care demand, we urgently need to expand the pool of skilled and experienced early childhood educators.
- To do this, we'll fight to pay early childhood educators better, on par with their peers – DC Public School pre-K teachers.
- By increasing pay for these positions, the law addresses part of DC's income inequality — particularly for women of color — as well as attracts and retains a talented workforce of early educators needed to fully implement other components of the Birth-to-Three Act.

We will help more parents access health and developmental care.

- To ensure every DC infant and parent has a healthy and strong start, we must expand and better coordinate the District's successful child development and whole family health programs.
- Expectant parents and families with young children living in DC are eligible for services that encourage positive maternal and child health. But too few families even know that they exist or are able to get the full set of health supports they need.
- Programs like Healthy Futures, HealthySteps, Help Me Grow, and Home Visiting meet parents and caregivers where they are to help them proactively address concerns like prenatal nutrition, breastfeeding, postpartum depression, and healthy child development.
- By increasing funding for these health and developmental services we can begin to ensure that DC will become a place where equity starts at birth for every family.

About Under 3 DC

Under 3 DC, a broad based coalition in the District of Columbia, harnesses the voices and power of parents with young children, early educators, advocates, and health professionals to create transformative social change. The Coalition's efforts center on the people experiencing racial and economic injustice every day. It shines a spotlight on the need for more public investments to support families with infants and toddlers. Together, we can set the city on a path to creating and sustaining a high quality, equitable early childhood system.