



Right from the
Start

2026 Legislative & Budget Priorities

Early Care and Education Priorities

- **Help more families access affordable, quality child care** by expanding family eligibility and increasing provider rates. *Diaz/Vargas*
- **Remove the requirement to participate in child support enforcement** from the Child Care Assistance Program. *Diaz/DiMario*
- **Expand access to child care for child care educators.** *Diaz/DiMario*
- **Invest in wage supplements for skilled, but low-paid early educators** to address staffing crisis. *Donovan/Urso*
- **Strengthen the RI Prekindergarten Education Act** to promote access to high-quality early education for children ages 3 and 4; ensure both RI Pre-K and Head Start program models are supported. *McNamara/Gallo*
- **Update the Early Childhood Categorical Fund** to clarify goals and require collaboration between RIDE and RIDHS for RI Pre-K and Head Start. *Donovan/Gallo*

Health and Development Priorities

- **Sustain the PediPRN consultation program** to help pediatric health care providers meet children's mental health needs. *Shallcross Smith/DiMario*
- **Address the shortage of pediatric primary care** by increasing Medicaid rates. *Tanzi/Lauria*
- **Fund family home visiting programs** with the recommended Medicaid rate increase and state matching funds to draw down all available federal funds. *Governor's FY27 Budget; Giraldo/Valverde*
- **Fund Early Intervention** with the recommended Medicaid rate increase and continue the data dashboard. *Governor's FY27 Budget; Cotter/Valverde*
- **Provide a bridge from Early Intervention to preschool special education** to prevent any disruption in services for eligible children. *Tanzi/Valverde*

Family Economic Security Priorities

- **Create a new refundable state Child Tax Credit** to help reduce child poverty and provide an economic boost to families struggling with the high cost of raising children. *Governor's FY27 Budget; Tanzi/Vargas*
- **Strengthen paid family leave** to match neighboring states. *Giraldo/Lawson*
- **Raise General Revenue** by increasing taxes on high earners; invest new funds to ensure families with young children have access to affordable health care, food, and child care. *Governor's FY27 Budget; Alzate/Murray*