

Prioritizing Early Childhood Education

*Comparing Nevadan's
Opinions on Early Childhood
Education in the State of
Nevada from 2015 to 2019*



This report was prepared by the Nevada Institute for Children's Research & Policy (NICRP).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From January through April of 2019, the Nevada Institute for Children's Research & Policy conducted an opinion poll with 380 adults living in the state of Nevada to gather their current views on issues related to early childhood education (ECE). This survey was conducted as a follow-up to a previous opinion poll conducted in 2015.

Results from the 2019 poll indicate that the majority of Nevadans feel that children are not starting kindergarten with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in school and think that access to quality early childhood education programs would increase children's ability to succeed academically.

- More people *Strongly Agree* that ECE for families should be more affordable in 2019 (50.7%) than in 2015 (42.2%).
- In 2019, 95.8% believe that school failure or underachievement *IS* preventable. Those who believe it is *definitely* preventable increased from 66.6% in 2015.
- 82.0% think that access to quality ECE is *Very Important*; up from 78.7% in 2015.
- The overall importance of participating in ECE to a student's success in grades K-12 increased in 2019, with 77.2% believing it to be *Very Important* versus 74.1% in 2015.
- 76.6% think the *community should be doing more* to help children begin kindergarten with better skills. Though this is a large majority of respondents, this dropped from 81.6% in 2015.

Since 2015, Nevadans have reported slightly lower concerns that all children do not currently have equal access to early childhood opportunities and do not start school with the same skills. However, they continue to recognize the need to improve the quality of existing ECE programs in the state.

- In 2019 67.0% agree that children living in low-income families *DO NOT* begin 1st grade just as prepared as children living in middle-to-high income families; 70.6% of people agreed with this statement in 2015.
- Currently, 85.6% say they *are concerned* that children in lower-income areas may not be able to go to a quality preschool. This has decreased from 92.8% in 2015.
- Those who describe the quality of ECE programs in Nevada as *"Excellent"* declined 45.5% from 2015 to 2019, while those described programs as *"Failing"* increased 54.5% during that time.

To better support ECE, Nevadans understand the importance of prioritizing funding and promoting legislative policy:

- Currently, 87.6% *Agree* funding should be increased to improve access to ECE programs; up from 85.6% in 2015.
- Those who *Agree* funding should be increased to improve the quality of ECE programs remained fairly consistent from 2015 to 2019, from 87.6% to 87.2%.
- About half (49.0%) of people in 2019 *Strongly Agree* funding should be increased so that low-income families can access quality ECE programs – an increase from 2015 (41.0%).
- 60.4% of current survey respondents feel the state *IS NOT* doing enough to ensure that children are entering kindergarten with the skills they need to do their best in school; an increase from 2015 when 55.8% of people who felt this way.

Overall, Nevadans continue to indicate that early childhood education is important to a child’s success later in life and that the community should be doing more to support quality early childhood education.

Introduction

From January through April of 2019, the Nevada Institute for Children’s Research & Policy conducted an opinion poll to 380 adults living in the state of Nevada to gather their current views on issues related to early childhood education. The purpose of obtaining this information is to determine the impact of the Strong Start for Children Campaign over the past four years in raising awareness about the importance of early childhood education. Results from this survey will be compared to those of the original survey conducted in 2015 in an effort to guide future outreach efforts and programming that will help to continue making improvements in early childhood education throughout the state.

Importance of Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education (ECE) refers to both the formal and informal teaching of young children. It has been shown to have both short and long-term benefits to those who are able to access it. Those who receive ECE are better prepared for school upon entering Kindergarten, more successful later in life, and less likely to commit violent crimes. A study published in 2017 has confirmed evidence from previous studies that children who attended early childhood education saw benefits in academics, social skills, and attitudes towards school. Assessing the first cohort of a longitudinal study while in grades 3 and 4, that, researchers found the following differences among students who had previously attended a high quality preschool program and those who had not:

	ATTENDED HIGH QUALITY ECE	CONTROL GROUP
Exceeded Standards in 4th Grade Reading	55 %	39%
Not Meeting Standards in 4th Grade Reading	22%	28%
Exceeded Standards in 4th Grade Math	51%	38%
Not Meeting Standards in 4th Grade Math	30%	20%
% Students with Discipline Referrals in 4th Grade	4%	8%

(Bakken, Brown, & Downing, 2017)

Still, disparities persist for those who are unable to access ECE due to financial, access, and quality barriers. Providing access to high quality early childhood education to all children is starting to be seen as a priority among parents, and the results of this report show that Nevadans agree that more should be done to ensure the availability of high quality ECE for children in the state.

Parents' Attitudes towards Early Childhood Education

Parents' attitudes towards Early Childhood Education (ECE) are a potential indicator of both the use of ECE and the level of priority that these individuals place on ECE. If people are not aware of the short and long term benefits of ECE, do not see it as a priority, or are unaware of how to access it for their children, it stands to reason that these individuals will not be motivated to make full use of the ECE resources available to their families. Recent opinion polls at both the state and national levels have shown that the majority of parents and voters have positive attitudes towards ECE and see it as a priority for the wellbeing of children, regardless of political affiliation:

- 91% of American parents believe that preschool improves student performance in later years (First Five Years Fund, 2017).
- 73% of Americans support federal investments to increase access to high-quality early childhood programs for low-income and moderate-income families (First Five Years Fund, 2017).
- Most parents feel some type of education outside the home during early childhood helps children do their best; 70% feel a formal ECE program is best for their child (Trust for Learning, 2017).
- 75% of voters – both parents and non-parents – say they would support plan to expand access to affordable, quality child care (Anzalone, 2015).

This report details the results of an opinion poll conducted in 2019 among adults aged 18 and over in the state of Nevada, and compares selected results to questions asked of Nevada residents in 2015. Participants were asked about their opinions and perceptions regarding: living in Nevada, education within the state, and the benefits of and barriers to accessing quality early childhood education.

Opinion Poll Results

This summary highlights the major findings of the opinion poll, which included responses from 380 Nevada residents 18 years of age and older. The data are weighted by gender, race, and county to more accurately represent the state. The overall margin of error is +/-5.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Each survey item has its own individual margin of error, which can be requested from NICRP staff. Only weighted data are presented in this report, with the exception of the demographic results (see Methods section for more details).

Selected results are presented for the state as a whole, as well as broken down by political party affiliation. Questions that were included in both the 2015 and 2019 surveys are included below for comparison. For full details of survey results, please contact staff at the Nevada Institute for Children’s Research and Policy.

Demographics

	N	Percent	Weighted Frequency	Weighted Percent (CI +)
County	380			
Clark	257	67.6%	1,873,855	74.1%
Rural Areas	57	15.0%	277,085	11.0%
Washoe	66	17.3%	378,629	15.0%
Gender	380			
Male	148	38.9%	1,263,309	49.9%
Female	232	61.1%	1,266,000	50.1%
Age	380			
18-29	61	16.1%	384,114	15.2%
30-39	63	16.6%	389,461	15.4%
40-49	79	20.8%	502,037	19.8%
50-59	70	18.4%	457,561	18.1%
60-69	53	13.9%	349,426	13.8%
70+	52	13.7%	433,606	17.1%
Prefer not to answer	2	0.5%	13,102	0.5%
Number of People Living in House	380			
1	53	13.9%	420,945	16.6%
2	88	23.2%	624,778	24.7%
3 to 4	132	34.8%	827,378	32.8%
5 or more	70	18.5%	429,278	16.8%
Prefer not to answer	37	9.7%	226,930	9.0%
Number of People in Household Under 18	380			
0	166	43.7%	1,287,868	50.9%
1 to 2	133	35.0%	758,225	30.0%
3 or more	45	11.9%	261,907	10.4%
Prefer not to answer	36	9.5%	221,310	8.7%
Race/Ethnicity	380			
American Indian/Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic	6	1.6%	13,548	0.5%
Asian or Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic	25	6.6%	206,268	8.2%
Black or African American, Non-Hispanic	34	8.9%	174,715	6.9%
Hispanic / Latino	130	34.2%	537,871	21.3%
White, Non-Hispanic	165	43.4%	1,533,257	60.6%
Multiple Races	20	5.3%	63,650	2.5%

	N	Percent	Weighted Frequency	Weighted Percent (CI +)
Employment Status	380			
Employed full-time	208	54.7%	1,409,674	55.7%
Employed part-time	47	12.4%	302,810	12.0%
Out of work and looking for work	11	2.9%	63,128	2.5%
Out of work and not currently looking for work	5	1.3%	18,347	0.7%
A homemaker	11	2.9%	46,557	1.7%
A student	9	2.4%	44,046	1.7%
Retired	77	20.3%	570,216	22.5%
Unable to work / disabled	11	2.9%	72,510	2.9%
Prefer not to answer	1	0.3%	2,020	0.1%
Household Income	380			
Less than \$14,999	30	7.9%	171,563	6.8%
\$15,000 to \$34,999	61	16.1%	377,815	14.9%
\$35,000 to \$54,999	44	11.6%	281,854	11.1%
\$55,000 to \$74,999	32	8.4%	191,153	7.8%
\$75,000 to \$94,999	22	5.8%	190,705	7.5%
\$95,000 or more	51	13.4%	438,454	17.3%
Don't know	36	9.5%	184,078	7.3%
Prefer not to answer	104	27.4%	688,686	27.2%
Education Level	380			
Less than high school	28	7.4%	150,074	5.9%
High school graduate or equivalent	107	28.2%	651,369	25.8%
Some college (less than two years)	27	7.1%	169,924	6.7%
Two year associate degree	28	7.4%	193,100	7.6%
Some college (more than two years)	70	18.4%	453,084	17.9%
Bachelor's degree	68	17.9%	545,554	21.6%
Master's degree	38	10.0%	253,870	10.0%
Professional / Doctorate degree	11	2.9%	87,262	3.5%
Prefer not to answer	3	0.8%	25,070	1.0%

Community Issues

The following question was asked to determine what community issue Nevadans think is the most important priority for state government officials to address. The most common response among respondents in 2019 was “Education and Schools,” the same as in 2015, though its importance decreased slightly. However, more respondents this year indicated that “Affordable Housing” is the most important issue and the importance of “The Environment” doubled among respondents between 2015 and 2019.

Most important issue that elected officials in state government should be working to resolve.

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>% Change</u>	
Taxes or budget deficit	11.9%	9.5%	-20.2	↓
Education and schools	47.8%	40.9%	-14.4	↓
Crime and drugs	12.7%	11.3%	-11.0	↓
Affordable housing	3.5%	6.3%	80.0	↑
Child abuse or child welfare issues	5.4%	4.0%	-25.9	↓
Health care or health insurance costs	10.0%	14.0%	40.0	↑
The environment	2.2%	4.5%	104.5	↑
Early childhood education	6.5%	7.3%	12.3	↑

Respondents were also asked if they believed that it was possible to prevent school failure and underachievement in schools.

- 95.8% think that school failure and underachievement is preventable (72.6% definitely preventable).
- Since 2015, there was an increase of 0.7 percentage points among those who felt school failure and underachievement is preventable. However, those who believed it is *definitely* preventable increased by 9.0 percentage points since 2015.

School failure and underachievement.	2015	2019	% Change	
Definitely preventable	66.6%	72.6%	9.0	↑
Somewhat preventable	28.5%	23.2%	-18.6	↓
Somewhat not preventable	1.3%	1.6%	23.1	↑
Definitely not preventable	2.1%	-		
Don't know/unsure	1.6%	2.6%	23.8	↑

This may indicate that respondents believe that improvements in the school system and efforts to help students can be effective, which in turn means that they might be willing to support such initiatives.

Knowledge & Attitudes towards Early Childhood Education

One of the primary objectives of this opinion poll was to determine the knowledge and attitudes about early childhood education among Nevadans. The following reveals survey respondents' thoughts and general opinions about early childhood education. Overall, this year's survey showed a slight increase in the importance that respondents placed on children having access to quality early childhood education and their participation in ECE as integral to student success in grades K through 12.

- In 2019, 93.7% of Nevadans felt it was important (82.0% very important) that ALL children have access to quality early childhood education; up from 92.1% who felt it was important in 2015.
- In 2019, 91.6% of Nevadans felt that participating in quality early childhood education is important (77.2% very important) to a student's success in Kindergarten through 12th grade; this is up from 90.3% who felt this was important in 2015.

Importance of all children to having access to quality early childhood education:	2015	2019	% Change	
Very important	78.7%	82.0%	4.2	↑
Important	13.4%	11.7%	-12.7	↓
Somewhat important	5.2%	4.1%	-21.2	↓
Not very important	1.3%	0.5%	-61.5	↓
Not at all important	1.3%	1.0%	-23.1	↓

Importance of participating in early childhood education to a student's success in Kindergarten through grade 12:	2015	2019	% Change	
Very important	74.1%	77.2%	4.2	↑
Important	16.2%	14.4%	-11.1	↓
Somewhat important	6.5%	5.1%	-21.5	↓
Not very important	1.8%	0.8%	-55.6	↓

Not important at all | 1.3% | 1.5% | 15.4 | ↑

Additionally, respondents were asked whether the community was doing enough to ensure children are beginning kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school. The percentage of respondents who felt we should be doing more decreased 6.1% from 2015 to 2019, while those who felt the community is doing enough increased 11.3% during the same time period. This shift in perception may indicate that respondents are more comfortable with the level of support, education, and services the community is providing for children before they enter kindergarten to prepare them for school.

In regards to ensuring children begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school:	2015	2019	% Change	
We as a community should be doing more.	81.6%	76.6%	-6.1	↓
We as a community should be doing less.	3.4%	1.9%	-44.1	↓
We as a community are doing enough.	15.1%	16.8%	11.3	↑

Nevadans were also asked to list what they thought was the biggest barrier to accessing early childhood education. As shown in the table below, cost was still perceived to be the biggest barrier in 2019, though its importance decreased slightly. The barrier that showed the largest increase since 2015 was quality, indicated a need to concentrate on enhancing the quality of early childhood programs, staff, and institutions.

Biggest barrier in accessing early childhood education:	2015	2019	% Change	
Cost	43.7%	42.0%	-3.9	↓
Quality	8.7%	12.2%	40.2	↑
Reliability (hours of operation)	5.1%	3.2%	-37.3	↓
Availability (location)	29.5%	17.1%	-42.0	↓
Other	22.7%	22.5%	-0.9	↓

Quality of Early Childhood Education Centers

Only 6.6% of respondents indicated that the quality of Nevada’s ECE programs was excellent, a large decrease from 2015 where 12.1% of respondents provided an “Excellent” rating of ECE program quality.

Quality of ECE programs in Nevada	2015	2019	% Change	
Excellent	12.1%	6.6%	-45.5	↓
Average	47.1%	39.0%	-17.2	↓
Below average	31.8%	27.3%	-14.2	↓
Failing	9.0%	13.9%	54.4	↑

The answers provided to this question may indicate that Nevadans may be dissatisfied with the current quality of available early childhood education programs, and that efforts to improve quality through future investments is greatly desired.

Student Success in Low-Income Families

Children from low-income families face increased obstacles to obtaining high quality early childhood education. The following responses address questions asked specifically about the impact of ECE on children in low-income families and what can be done to reduce disparities in quality and access for that population.

- In 2019, 67.0% agree (22.0% strongly agree) that children living in low-income families DO NOT begin 1st grade just as prepared as children living in middle-to-high income families. This is a decrease from 2015, when 70.6% of respondents felt that way.
- Though the concern was higher in 2015 (92.8%), 85.6% of respondents in 2019 are concerned (52.1% very concerned) that children in lower-income areas may not be able to attend a quality preschool. This indicates that concern about this is consistently high among a large majority of Nevada residents.
- In 2019, 90.1% of people agreed (50.7% strongly agreed) that early childhood education should be more affordable for ALL families. This is a slight decrease from 2015 (94.2%).

Children in low-income families begin 1st grade just as prepared as children living in middle-to-high income families.	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Strongly Agree	8.7%	4.1%	-95.3	↓
Agree	20.7%	25.7%	24.2	↑
Disagree	50.4%	45.0%	-10.7	↓
Strongly Disagree	20.2%	22.0%	8.9	↑

Level of concern that children in lower-income areas may not be able to go to a quality preschool:	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Very Concerned	57.9%	52.1%	-10.0	↓
Somewhat Concerned	34.9%	33.5%	-4.0	↓
Not Too Concerned	6.7%	8.4%	25.4	↑
Not At All Concerned	4.5%	5.8%	28.9	↑

Early childhood education for families should be more affordable.	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Strongly Agree	42.2%	50.7%	20.1	↑
Agree	52.0%	39.4%	-24.2	↓
Disagree	4.40%	6.9%	56.8	↑
Strongly Disagree	1.4%	1.0%	-28.6	↓

Results from the 2019 survey indicate that there is less concern among Nevada residents regarding access to affordable early childhood education. Efforts throughout the project period to expand affordable options throughout the state may have contributed to this trend. However, levels of concern and agreement about the need for affordable quality ECE programs - especially for low-income families – are still present for the majority of respondents.

Funding for Early Childhood Education

The following responses pertain to the reasons respondents feel that the state of Nevada should increase funding to enhance access and quality of early childhood education programs.

- In 2019, 87.6% of respondents agree (49.1% strongly agree) that the state should increase funding to increase access to ECE programs. This is up from 85.6% of respondents who agreed with that statement in 2015.
- 87.1% agree (50.5% strongly agree) that the state should increase funding to improve the quality of ECE programs in 2019. While the overall agreement is consistent with respondents from 2015 (87.6%), there was an increase of 34.3% among those who strongly agreed with this statement.
- In 2019, 87.9% agree (49.0% strongly agree) that the state should increase funding to improve access quality to ECE programs for low-income families – exactly the same level of overall agreement as in 2015. However, respondents of the 2019 survey showed a 19.5% increase among those who strongly agreed with increasing funding to ensure access to quality programs.
- Only 30.2% of respondents in 2019 agreed (7.1% strongly agreed) that the state is doing enough to ensure that children are entering kindergarten prepared with the skills they need to do their best in school. This is a substantial decrease from 2015, when 40.2% of respondents agreed that this was the case.

The state should increase funding to increase access to early childhood education programs.	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Strongly Agree	40.6%	49.1%	20.9	↑
Agree	45.0%	38.5%	-14.4	↓
Disagree	9.8%	7.5%	-23.5	↓
Strong Disagree	4.6%	4.3%	-6.5	↓

The state should increase funding to improve the quality of early childhood education programs.	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Strongly Agree	37.6%	50.5%	34.3	↑
Agree	50.0%	36.7%	-26.6	↓
Disagree	9.5%	8.1%	-14.7	↓
Strongly Disagree	3.0%	3.4%	13.3	↑

The state should increase funding so that low-income families can access quality early childhood education programs.	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Strongly Agree	41.0%	49.0%	19.5	↑
Agree	46.9%	38.9%	-17.1	↓
Disagree	9.2%	8.3%	-9.8	↓
Strongly Disagree	3.0%	3.0%	0.0	-

The state is doing enough to ensure that children enter kindergarten prepared with the skills they need to do their best in school.	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Strongly Agree	9.8%	7.1%	-27.6	↓
Agree	30.4%	23.1%	-24.0	↓
Disagree	45.8%	42.9%	-6.3	↓

Strongly Disagree | 14.0% | 17.5% | 25.0 | ↑

In 2019, a new question was added which asked respondents about their perceptions of what *others* think regarding making early childhood education funding a legislative priority. Results show that respondents believe there is widespread support within the state for people who agree (72.2%; 24.5% strongly agree) that state lawmakers should prioritize an increase in funding that would allow more families access to early childhood education programs.

How would OTHER Nevadans agree with: Increasing funding to allow more families access to early childhood education programs should be a priority for state lawmakers.	<u>2019</u>
Strongly Agree	24.5%
Agree	47.7%
Disagree	19.2%
Strongly Disagree	3.7%

Reach of Strong Start for Children Campaign

Lastly, we wanted to know about how the Strong Start for Children Campaign has reached the community in recent years. In 2019, 6.4% of survey respondents reported having heard about Strong Start – a slight increase from 2015.

- In 2019, there was a slight increase in respondents who had heard about the Strong Start for Children Campaign (6.4% in 2019; 6.2% in 2015).
- Of those who had heard about it, engagement with the campaign website has increased 62.9% since 2015 from 6.2% of respondents in 2015 to 10.1% in 2019 visiting the Strong Start website.

Heard About Strong Start Campaign	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Yes	6.2%	6.4%	3.2	↑
No	93.8%	93.6%	-0.2	↓

Visited StrongStartNevada.org*	<u>2015</u>	<u>2019</u>	% Change	
Yes	6.2%	10.1%	62.9	↑
No	93.8%	89.9%	-4.2	↓

**Of those who have heard about Strong Start*

When asked about where people had heard about Strong Start for Children in 2019, most indicated that they had heard about it from:

- School – teachers, students, or communications from the district
- Facebook
- Television
- Brochures

Selected Results by Political Party

A full list of results is available upon request.

The issue of access to quality education for all children in the state of Nevada is a priority that crosses political party lines. However, there are differences in attitudes and opinions among survey respondents based on whether they identify as a Republican, Democrat, or Independent. The following tables present responses based on political party. Respondents who identified as Non-Partisan, Libertarian, some Other party, or who preferred not to provide their political affiliation are not included in the results below.

Political Affiliation	2015	2019
Republican	33.2%	30.3%
Democrat	33.4%	33.0%
Independent	18.4%	14.6%

Differences persist regarding issues of funding, knowledge of the benefits of early childhood education, and which community issues should take priority. However, these between-party differences remain fairly consistent from 2015 to 2019.

Community Issues

Most important issue that elected officials in state government should be working to resolve.	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Taxes or budget deficit	17.3%	19.1%	3.8%	4.0%	10.0%	6.8%
Education and schools	42.0%	34.0%	49.1%	44.0%	53.3%	47.7%
Crime and drugs	17.3%	20.2%	17.9%	8.0%	8.3%	9.1%
Affordable housing	0.0%	5.3%	4.7%	6.0%	6.7%	6.8%
Child abuse or child welfare issues	3.7%	2.1%	8.5%	5.0%	6.7%	6.8%
Health care or health insurance costs	13.6%	6.4%	10.4%	23.0%	6.7%	15.9%
The environment	0.0%	2.1%	2.8%	5.0%	3.3%	2.3%
Early childhood education	6.2%	6.4%	2.8%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%

Education in your Community

School failure and underachievement.	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Definitely preventable	66.3%	65.2%	71.7%	78.2%	71.2%	77.8%
Somewhat preventable	31.3%	28.3%	24.5%	21.8%	27.1%	17.5%
Somewhat not preventable	2.4%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Definitely not preventable	0.0%	1.1%	0.9%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%
Don't know/unsure	0.0%	5.4%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%

Knowledge & Attitudes towards Early Childhood Education

In regards to ensuring children begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school:	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
We as a community should be doing more.	74.0%	67.4%	84.2%	84.3%	87.3%	88.6%
We as a community should be doing less.	3.9%	3.3%	5.9%	0.0%	1.8%	2.3%
We as a community are doing enough.	22.1%	18.5%	9.9%	12.7%	10.9%	9.1%
Other people think the community should be doing more.	-	55.4%	-	67.3%	-	64.4%
Other people think the community should be doing less.	-	0.0%	-	3.0%	-	6.0%
Other people think the community is doing enough.	-	29.3%	-	25.7%	-	26.7%

Importance of all children to having access to quality early childhood education:	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Very important to me	79.5%	74.2%	84.9%	93.1%	73.3%	73.3%
Important to me	10.8%	12.9%	11.3%	5.0%	20.0%	22.2%
Somewhat important to me	6.0%	10.8%	2.8%	2.0%	5.0%	4.4%
Not very important to me	2.4%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not at all important to me	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%
Very important to others	-	74.5%	-	86.1%	-	75.0%
Important to others	-	13.8%	-	10.9%	-	15.9%
Somewhat important to others	-	9.6%	-	3.0%	-	9.1%
Not very important to others	-	2.1%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Not at all important to others	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%

Importance of participating in early childhood education is to a student's success in grades K-12:	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Very important	72.3%	74.5%	84.9%	86.1%	70.0%	75.0%
Important	12.0%	13.8%	10.4%	10.9%	20.0%	15.9%
Somewhat important	10.8%	9.6%	3.8%	3.0%	8.3%	9.1%
Not very important	2.4%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not at all important	2.4%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%

Biggest barrier in accessing early childhood education:	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Cost	38.0%	38.0%	46.1%	46.1%	43.2%	43.2%
Quality	10.9%	10.9%	10.8%	10.8%	13.6%	13.6%
Reliability (hours of operation)	3.3%	3.3%	2.9%	2.9%	4.5%	4.5%
Availability (location)	17.4%	17.4%	21.6%	21.6%	6.8%	6.8%
Other	23.9%	23.9%	18.6%	18.6%	31.8%	31.8%

What OTHERS believe biggest barrier in accessing early childhood education:	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Cost	-	48.9%	-	55.9%	-	46.7%
Quality	-	8.7%	-	8.8%	-	6.7%
Reliability (hours of operation)	-	1.1%	-	8.8%	-	2.2%
Availability (location)	-	18.5%	-	13.7%	-	20.0%
Independent	-	10.9%	-	6.9%	-	17.8%

Quality of Early Childhood Education Centers

Quality of ECE programs in Nevada	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Excellent	9.5%	4.3%	10.8%	5.9%	4.7%	8.9%
Average	46.0%	48.4%	53.0%	31.7%	46.5%	26.7%
Below average	36.5%	17.2%	30.1%	33.7%	37.2%	37.8%
Failing	7.9%	16.1%	6.0%	16.8%	11.6%	11.1%

Student Success in Low-Income Families

Children in low-income families begin 1st grade just as prepared as children living in middle-to-high income families.	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Agree (% strongly agree)	-	44.1% (4.3%)	-	20.5% (2.9%)	-	25.0% (4.5%)
Disagree (% strongly disagree)	-	54.8% (11.8%)	-	78.4% (38.2%)	-	70.5% (27.3%)

Early childhood education for families should be more affordable.	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Agree (% strongly agree)	92.2% (39.0%)	85.0% (36.6%)	97.1% (47.1%)	96.0% (67.3%)	94.7% (29.8%)	88.8% (44.4%)
Disagree (% strongly disagree)	7.8% (1.3%)	12.9% (1.1%)	2.9% (1.0%)	4.0% (0.0%)	5.3% (0%)	11.1% (4.4%)

Concern that children in lower-income areas may not be able to go to a quality preschool:	Republican		Democrat		Independent	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Concerned (% very concerned)	88.8% (50.0%)	73.9% (33.7%)	96.2% (68.0%)	94.0% (66.3%)	86.7% (45.0%)	84.4% (62.2%)
Not concerned (% not at all concerned)	11.3% (3.8%)	25.0% (12.0%)	3.8% (1.9%)	5.9% (0.0%)	13.3% (3.3%)	15.5% (4.4%)

Funding for Early Childhood Education

The state should increase funding to increase access to early childhood education programs.	<u>Republican</u>		<u>Democrat</u>		<u>Independent</u>	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Agree (% strongly agree)	79.7% (35.4%)	78.5% (32.3%)	97.1% (56.3%)	93.1% (70.6%)	89.5% (40.4%)	95.5% (52.3%)
Disagree (% strongly disagree)	20.2% (6.3%)	20.5% (6.5%)	2.9% (1.0%)	5.9% (0.0%)	10.5% (0%)	0.0% (4.5%)

The state should increase funding to improve the quality of early childhood education programs.	<u>Republican</u>		<u>Democrat</u>		<u>Independent</u>	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Agree (% strongly agree)	83.4% (30.8%)	76.6% (38.3%)	97.1% (50.5%)	93.0% (67.3%)	88.1% (33.9%)	95.5% (44.4%)
Disagree (% strongly disagree)	16.6% (3.8%)	21.3% (4.3%)	2.9% (1.0%)	6.9% (1.0%)	11.9% (0%)	4.4% (0.0%)

The state should increase funding so that low-income families can access quality early childhood education programs.	<u>Republican</u>		<u>Democrat</u>		<u>Independent</u>	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Agree (% strongly agree)	82.3% (34.2%)	72.0% (38.7%)	96.1% (56.7%)	97.1% (62.4%)	86.2% (41.4%)	95.4% (41.9%)
Disagree (% strongly disagree)	17.7% (3.8%)	24.8% (6.5%)	3.8% (1.9%)	3.0% (1.0%)	13.8% (0%)	4.6% (2.3%)

The state is doing enough to ensure that children enter kindergarten prepared with the skills they need to do their best in school.	<u>Republican</u>		<u>Democrat</u>		<u>Independent</u>	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
Agree (% strongly agree)	33.8% (6.8%)	41.1% (7.6%)	39.7% (17.3%)	30.0% (6.0%)	35.3% (5.9%)	24.5% (6.7%)
Disagree (% strongly disagree)	66.3% (9.5%)	51.1% (8.7%)	60.2% (16.3%)	64.0% (25.0%)	64.7% (13.7%)	73.3% (20.0%)

Increasing funding to allow more families access to early childhood education programs should be a priority for state lawmakers	<u>Republican</u>		<u>Democrat</u>		<u>Independent</u>	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2015	2019
<i>Others</i> Would Agree (% strongly agree)	-	61.9% (22.8%)	-	76.2% (27.7%)	-	79.6% (18.2%)
<i>Others</i> Would Disagree (% strongly disagree)	-	30.4% (5.4%)	-	23.8% (1.0%)	-	13.6% (0.0%)

Methods

Opinion poll questions were developed by staff at the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy and the Children's Advocacy Alliance. Staff reviewed a variety of other related opinion polls and measures of parent perceptions of quality of early childhood education to determine the content of the poll. In order to narrow the scope of this survey to capture the most important information and be respectful of participants' time, researchers reviewed questions from the 2015 survey, removed 12 questions, and added 4 new ones. The final opinion poll consisted of 34 questions related to early childhood education, 11 of which captured demographic information. As an incentive for participating, survey respondents were offered the chance to be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 Visa gift card at the completion of the survey.

The survey was conducted by the UNLV Cannon Survey Center (CSC) between January 3, 2019 and April 7, 2019. Calls were made on various days of the week at different times, including weekends, between 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on weekends. Interviews lasted 13 minutes on average. The total of 392 interviews were completed from a sample of 8,548 numbers. The interviewers made up to six attempts on each number. In addition, all respondents were given the opportunity to complete the survey at another time by scheduling at a time convenient for the respondent.

To sample the general population of Nevada, telephone numbers were purchased from Survey Sampling Inc. (SSI). The sampling frames included targeted sample techniques for cell phones to achieve oversampling of African American, Asian, and Hispanic/Latino residents. SSI maintains databases with blocks that are verified to contain residential phone numbers or numbers allocated to cell service providers, and utilize data compiled by credit agencies and other databases to target specified demographic groups. Telephone numbers were dialed by interviewers manually, thus giving the CSC the legal capacity to contact cell phones.

The CSC utilizes Sawtooth Technology software for its CATI system. Prior to the work on the survey, the Cannon staff attended a survey specific training session. Training included a refresher session that covered the following topics: a) interviewer roles and responsibilities; b) importance of maintaining strict confidentiality and general principles of survey administration; c) interviewing procedures, including how to probe survey questions and specific guidelines for probing for numbers, pre-coded questions and any open-ended questions; d) how to maximize respondent cooperation; e) operation of CATI software and f) general administration procedures. Survey interviewers also received detailed training regarding the specifics of this study which included a project overview, study-specific interviewing procedures, and a detailed discussion of the questionnaire contents.

The interviewing process was monitored by phone room supervisors. One field supervisor or senior interviewer was present at all times during the data collection period to assure the quality and integrity of the data collection process. The phone room supervisor was able to instantaneously address any problems that might arise in the field. An auditory and visual monitoring system is in place and the supervisors, the survey manager/data collection manager, and director can access any of the call stations at any time. The CATI software has visual monitoring capabilities built in, thus supervisors can see what is on the interviewers screen as data is being entered as well as hearing both sides of the interview. Both the auditory and visual monitoring systems allow for unobtrusive monitoring. The monitoring process may occur in addition to the actual interview during callbacks, survey introductions, or initial refusals.

Disposition codes defined by the American Association of Public Opinion Researchers (AAPOR) were used to code all numbers and to determine the Response Rate 4 (RR4). Response Rate 4 represents the number of complete and partial interviews, divided by the number of interviews (complete or partial), plus the number of non-interviews (refusal + break-off + noncontacts + others), plus all cases of unknown eligibility, and an estimate of what proportion of the cases of unknown eligibility (Response Rate 4: $RR4 = \frac{(I + P)}{(I + P) + (R + NC + O) + e(UH + UO)}$). The combined response rate between landlines and wireless

was 6.8%. The proportion of interviews that were collected from the wireless sampling frames was 77% of all completed interviews. The margin of error is +/-5.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to note when interpreting these results. Using RDD eliminates members of the population that do not have access to a land line or cell phone from participation in the study. In addition, this survey was quite lengthy, therefore nonresponse bias rates in estimates were likely larger than anticipated. Another factor that increases nonresponse rates in all studies is technological advances that have made it easier for households to identify and avoid telephone calls from unrecognized telephone numbers, as well as individuals subscribing to national do-not-call lists. Additionally, all surveys that rely on self-reported data are limited in their accuracy based on person recall bias.

Weighting

Sample weights were calculated to adjust for unequal probabilities of selection and nonresponse bias resulting from differential response rates across a variety of demographic groups. Post-stratification variables included county, gender, race, and ethnicity. Population characteristics from Nevada were based on 2017 estimates provided by United States Census Bureau. The weighting process helps to more accurately represent the population of Nevada as a whole; therefore weighted data were used for all analyses.

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The Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP) is a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to advancing children's issues in Nevada. As a research center within the UNLV School of Public Health, NICRP is dedicated to improving the lives of children through research, advocacy, and other specialized services. NICRP started in 1998 based on the vision of First Lady Sandy Miller. She wanted an organization that could bring credible research and rigorous policy analysis to problems that confront Nevada's children. But she didn't want to stop there; she wanted to transform that research into meaningful legislation that would make a real difference in the lives of our children. The Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP) looks out for Nevada's children. Our mission is to conduct community-based research that will guide the development of programs and services for Nevada's children. For more information regarding NICRP research and services, please visit our website at: <http://www.nic.unlv.edu>

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