
To: Interested Parties
From: Alex Lundry, Redbud Consulting
Re: National Survey Results - Early Childhood Education
Date: October 2025

Centerline Liberties' September 2025 national survey of 800 registered voters reveals a striking consensus: American families with young children are struggling, and voters across the political spectrum want significant government investment in early childhood care and education. The data presents a clear mandate for action on what has become one of the truly rare bipartisan issues in American politics.

Tough times for American families: More than half of registered voters (52%) believe that most families raising young children in America today are struggling, and only 6% believe they are thriving. This is unsurprising given that only 20% are very confident that families in their community have access to the resources and support they need to successfully raise their children.

Pessimism is grounded in real world experience with childcare: Childcare is expensive and hard to find. An incredible 68% of Americans deem childcare in their community expensive, with 37% saying it is very expensive. Only 20% say it is affordable. More than 1 out of 3 voters say it is difficult to find.

The cost of raising families has had, and will continue to have, a real impact on family growth: The struggles of American families is having real world consequences: 1 in 4 voters (25%) have made at least one of the below very consequential child-rearing decisions due to their concerns about the costs of raising a child.

- 8% have delayed having children due to cost concerns
- 8% are planning to delay having children due to cost concerns
- 11% have had fewer children than they wanted due to cost concerns
- 6% are planning to have fewer children than they wanted due to cost concerns
- In total 25% have done at least one of the above items.

Government support for families deemed inadequate: Voters give the government a "C" grade for supporting young children's development, and 57% believe the government isn't doing enough to support families with children. The areas where government is falling most short include keeping children safe in schools (56% say "not doing enough"), providing mental health resources for parents (55%), and ensuring access to affordable, quality childcare (52%).

Huge support for government investments in families: Likely because of these resource and access shortcomings an overwhelming 79% of voters support additional federal investment in early childhood education, and 81% support state-level investment. Even when reminded of other government priorities like the economy, healthcare and lowering government spending, 66% of voters still say investing in early childhood education is a crucial government priority that will result in better outcomes and long-term economic benefits.

Program priorities: Across a number of different program options, the most popular focused on children's health and development:

- Programs to identify and support children with developmental delays or disabilities (67% believe these are extremely/very important)
- Services for children's emotional and behavioral health (67%)
- Meals, health screenings, and medical care for young children (64%)

Messaging that resonates: When talking about the importance of early care and education (ECE), a few messages stood out as being particularly powerful and persuasive:

1. **Brain development:** Laying the foundation for ECE that the early years as a critical time for brain development and future success
2. **Level playing field:** Framing ECE as ensuring all children, regardless of income, get a strong foundation, promoting the values of opportunity and meritocracy
3. **Network effects:** Investing in families creates lasting benefits for everyone in society. This can be invoked through either a positive frame (strengthens families, improves schools, builds thriving communities) or a negative Frame (decreases need for special education services, reduces juvenile crime and lowers social service dependency).

Republicans are broadly supportive of ECE efforts: These initiatives are quite popular across the political spectrum, including among Republicans with 74% supporting additional government investment in early childhood ed. Republicans in particular respond well to messages about reducing long-term taxpayer costs, strengthening families as the backbone of communities, and early intervention to prevent future problems.

Strategic recommendations: The data point to a clear path for persuasion on the issue:

1. **Lead with the problem:** Voters understand families are struggling - validate this reality.
2. **Focus on health:** Programs with health components test strongest
3. **Use bipartisan framing:** This is one of few issues with genuine cross-party support
4. **Emphasize social and economic ROI:** Long-term savings and societal benefits resonate across party lines

The data reveals an extraordinary opportunity. Rarely do we see such strong, broad-based support for significant government investment in any policy area. The challenge isn't convincing voters of the need - it's translating this mandate into action while navigating the implementation details. There is a first-mover opportunity here for organizations and policymakers who act quickly on this issue as they will find themselves aligned with an overwhelming majority of American voters who see early childhood education as essential to both family wellbeing and America's future competitiveness.