



2014 Policy Agenda

The Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS) supports programs and policies that help move children and families from poverty to financial stability. During the 2014 legislative session, CAHS will focus on these two-generation initiatives that support children and parents, from early childhood through participation in the workforce:

- **Codify Office of Early Childhood:** Governor Malloy created the Office of Early Childhood by Executive Order in 2013, to help ensure a strong and effective system of care and education for young children. Enacting the Office into law will ensure its continuity.
- **Create the CHET Baby Scholars Program:** Gov. Malloy's budget calls for a new program to provide \$100 to families of Connecticut children who open a 529 college savings account within a year of a child's birth, with a match of up to \$150 over the next several years. This can help foster an expectation that children will attend college.
- **Move toward universal access to pre-K,** with an additional 1,020 slots in the Governor's budget proposal targeted to poorer districts, a 3% increase in the provider rate, and funding for a Quality Rating Improvement system and licensing.
- **Increase funding for the Care 4 Kids child care subsidy program,** which allows parents to work while their children are in affordable care. The Governor's budget includes \$3,000,000 for additional slots and \$11,300,000 to fund a new union contract with home-based child care providers.
- **Support developmental education reform and the "Go Back to Get Ahead" program** at community colleges and state universities. This includes pilot programs for remedial education focused on ensuring success for the lowest-skilled students, and a state tuition match to incentivize adults in the workforce to return to complete their degree.
- **Restore CT Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to 27.5% of the federal EITC:** In 2012, CT implemented a state EITC equal to 30% of the federal EITC. This was reduced in the last legislative session to 25% of the federal EITC for 2014. CAHS will work to ensure a partial restoration to 27.5% for 2015, as called for in the biennial budget.
- **Increase the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour:** Governor Malloy is seeking a stepped increase in the minimum wage over several years, now at \$8.70 and scheduled to increase to \$9.00 in 2015. An increased minimum wage, combined with the EITC, helps ensure that low-wage workers can earn enough to rise out of poverty.

CAHS will also monitor **administration of the state EITC by the Department of Revenue Services**, to ensure those who are eligible receive the credit. We are also monitoring implementation of the work group studying **Family Medical Leave Insurance**.

CAHS convenes the **Family Economic Success Coalition** to build a movement that will foster long-term system changes to ensure that children and families move out of poverty and can share in opportunities for quality education, health care, housing, and jobs.