



Letters to the editor

Early childhood investment needs bold steps

Thank you to the General Assembly for requesting and to the administration for leading the process resulting in the newly released 'Early Childhood Governance Systems Analysis.' With new research documenting that high quality and effective early childhood services produce positive impacts which last for at least two generations, now is the time for Rhode Island to 'up its game' and take bold steps forward in early childhood investments.

Children's Friend believes that a new cabinet-level state agency of Early Childhood Services is needed to properly invest, coordinate, manage, and be accountable for services which result in better long-term outcomes for our kids, families, and our state.

While we are disappointed that the Working Group on Early Childhood Governance did not recommend the creation of the new cabinet-level agency, there are many positive recommendations contained in their report. These recommendations can help move our early childhood system forward.

The recommended improvements in areas including data coordination and data-driven decision-making, role clarity in state agencies, coordinated budgeting and financial analysis, and a 'no wrong door' approach to services, can all help to move the system forward now in the interim.

To achieve the possible positive impacts, these recommendations must be embraced by our legislative and executive leaders. There must be specific action plans, defined deliverables, and clear accountability. These recommendations need to be incorporated into legislative policy and executive procedures.

With proper oversight and accountability these recommendations can both improve services for kids and families today and be a stepping stone for the bold transformation that is needed to achieve the very best for our kids and our future.

David Caprio, president and CEO of Children's Friend

We can do better in 2024

2024, a leap year, is fraught with anxiety and helplessness from a series of national concerns. To name a few: civil unrest, placement and support of incoming migrants, proper use of pronouns, personal safety in all places of public assembly, and religious intolerance.

Many Americans are not satisfied with the current conditions and take to the streets