

Glossary of Policy & Advocacy Terms

*A Guide to the ABCs and Acronyms
of the Infant-Toddler Policy Process*

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Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)



- **CAPTA is the key federal legislation focused solely on addressing child abuse and neglect by helping states in the support and improvement of their Child Protective Services systems. It provides funding to states in support of prevention, assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment activities. It also makes available grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for demonstration programs and projects.**

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

- CACFP is an entitlement program that provides federal funds for healthy meals and snacks served in child care centers (including Head Start centers) and family child care homes. It provides reimbursement for food and meal preparation costs, training regarding the nutritional needs of children, and on-site assistance in meeting the program's nutritional requirements.

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)

- **The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA) of 1996 revised the structure of federal funding for child care, creating the CCDF as an umbrella program for three different funding streams. This streamlined block grant attempts to maximize states' flexibility in administering child care programs and establishes a single set of rules and regulations that apply to all components of the fund. Thus, CCDF is sometimes referred to as the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), which, although providing only one of the funding streams that make up CCDF, governs the goals and content of all child care programs under CCDF.**
- **CCDF funding is divided into three streams of federal funds: Federal mandatory funds that do not require a state match; federal mandatory funds that do require a state match; and federal discretionary funds that do not require a state match.**

Child Tax Credit

- **A federal tax credit that an adult can claim for each qualifying child under age 17. The credit is limited if modified adjusted gross income is above a certain amount.**

Community Mental Health Services Block Grants (CMHSBG)



- **The Community Mental Health Services Block Grant is authorized by Part B of Title XIX of the Public Health Service Act and is the single largest federal contribution dedicated to improving mental health service systems across the country. The Center for Mental Health Services' CMHSBG awards grants to the states to provide mental health services to people with mental disorders. Through this federal-state partnership, the Center for Mental Health Services supports existing public services and encourages the development of creative and cost-effective systems of community-based care for children and adults with mental disorders. CMHS is the federal agency that oversees State Mental Health Plans and Implementation Reports, using mental health experts for the regional consultative application review process.**

Community Service Block Grant (CSBG)

- The **block grant** provides funds to states, territories, and federally and state-recognized Indian tribes/tribal organizations so that they may provide supportive services and activities to assist low-income individuals and families to become self-sufficient.

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT)



- EPSDT is Medicaid's comprehensive and preventive child health program for individuals under age twenty-one. It provides screening services, including comprehensive physical exams, appropriate immunizations, vision, dental, and hearing services, as well as health care to correct problems found in screening.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

- **Refundable tax credit that is targeted to benefit low-income, working individuals and families. If the EITC exceeds the amount of taxes owed, it results in a tax refund to those who claim and qualify for the credit.**

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- **FMLA requires public agencies and businesses with more than 50 employees to offer unpaid family leave of up to 12 weeks to parents of newborns, those who are adopting children, and those who must care for an ill family member.**

Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

- A defined income level that is used for eligibility determination for many public programs, including Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). In 2008, the FPL was \$17,600 annually for a family of three.

Head Start/Early Head Start

- **A federally-funded program for low-income children and their parents (pregnant women, babies, toddlers and preschoolers), designed to promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, and other social services. Program approaches for delivering services in Early Head Start include: center-based programs, home-based programs and mixed-approach programs.**

- **A federally funded program that helps improve prenatal and perinatal care in communities with high infant mortality rates. Managed by the Health Resources and Services Administration, the program currently serves 97 projects across the country.**

- **Legislation that authorizes the federal government's major student aid program, as well as other key programs such as those providing aid to special groups of higher education and institutions and support services to enable disadvantaged students to complete secondary school and enter and complete college. The act's reauthorization includes provisions to build the capacity of our nation's early childhood workforce, and to create economic incentives to enable early childhood providers to seek out training and professional development opportunities.**

Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP)



- **Enacted in 1974, JJDP created a national juvenile justice system across all states, territories, and the District of Columbia. The legislation also established the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention which is dedicated to training, technical assistance, model programs, and research and evaluation, to support local and state efforts to prevent delinquency and improve the juvenile justice system.**

Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant (Title V of the Social Security Act)



- A **block grant** which provides federal funds to states to improve the health of pregnant women, mothers and children.

Medicaid (Title XIX of the Social Security Act)

- **A means-tested program that pays for medical costs of various assistance recipients and specified other groups among the poor. It is funded by federal and state (and sometimes local) government.**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

- **The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the main federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school.**

Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)



- **IDEA provides federal funds to states and local communities to assist in their efforts to provide a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities. Part B of IDEA contains provisions relating to the education of school-aged and preschool-aged children with disabilities. The preschool program is often referred to as the Section 619 program, referring to the section of the law describing services for this age group.**

Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)



- **Part C of IDEA authorizes the creation of early intervention programs for babies and toddlers with disabilities, and provides federal assistance for states to maintain and implement statewide systems of services for eligible children, ages birth through 2 years, and their families. States and jurisdictions participating in Part C must provide early intervention services to any child below age 3 who is experiencing developmental delays, has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay. Some states serve children who are at-risk for serious developmental problems.**

Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (PRWORA)



- This “welfare reform” law of 1996 replaced the old Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) with TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), set time limits for receipt, mandated work, ended the entitlement to assistance and provided block grant funding giving states great flexibility in designing the TANF program.

Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) (Title IV-B, Subpart 2, of the Social Security Act)



- **The goals of PSSF are to prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families, improve the quality of care and services to children and their families, and ensure permanency for children by reuniting them with their parents, by adoption or by another permanent living arrangement. States are to spend more of the funding for services that address family support, family preservation, time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support.**

Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) (Title XX of the Social Security Act)



- **SSBG allocates funds to states to support a variety of social services programs for adults and children. Grants are determined by a statutory formula based on each state's population. States are given great flexibility in their use of funds and are fully responsible, within the limitations of the law, for determining the use of their funds.**

State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) (Title XXI of the Social Security Act)



- **SCHIP is a joint federal-state program which gives states the option, within federal guidelines, of expanding health coverage to children in families with incomes up to or above 200% of the federal poverty level. SCHIP is not an entitlement program.**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)



- **SAMHSA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), established by an act of Congress in 1992 under Public Law 102-321. SAMHSA was created as a services agency to focus attention, programs, and funding on improving the lives of people with or at risk for mental and substance abuse disorders. SAMHSA is a collaboration between the states, national and local community-based organizations, and public and private sector providers.**

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



- **Formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, SNAP helps low-income people and families buy the food they need for good health by providing low-income households with electronic benefits they can use like cash at most grocery stores. SNAP is the cornerstone of the federal food assistance programs.**

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)



- The new means-tested cash assistance program replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). Its primary goals are to assist needy families with children and reduce dependency through job preparation, work and marriage.
- Features of the program include: benefit levels that vary by state, a requirement that beneficiaries go to work within two years of claiming the benefit, a limitation of benefit receipt to a maximum of 5 years overall, and funding in the form of block grants to states giving states flexibility in program design.

Title IV-B of the Social Security Act

- **Title IV- B provides funding for child welfare services, as well as for preventive and supportive services for families. Subpart 1, Child Welfare Services, provides federal grants to states and Indian Tribes for basic child welfare services including child protective services, supportive services to prevent unneeded placements in out-of-home care or to provide services to children in foster care. It is funded with discretionary funds. Subpart 2, [Promoting Safe and Stable Families](#), funds family preservation and family support services, pre-placement preventive services, reunification services, follow-up services, services to promote parenting skills, and adoption promotion and support services. It is funded partly through [mandatory funding](#) and partly through [discretionary funding](#).**

Title IV-E of the Social Security Act

- Title IV-E is an open-ended entitlement program that provides federal funding for foster care maintenance, adoption assistance, and independent living services. Through this program, the federal government reimburses states for the costs of children placed in foster homes or for other types of out-of-home care (including related administrative, child placement and training costs). It also provides financial support to states for adoption assistance and independent living services. However, reimbursement for foster care or adoption assistance payments is available only for those children who would have been eligible for the old [Aid to Families with Dependent Children \(AFDC\)](#) program.

Universal Newborn Screening

- **A federal program that helps states implement newborn hearing screening for all newborns prior to an infant's discharge from the hospital.**

Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Food Program (WIC)



- **WIC includes a supplemental food program that supplies vouchers issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide for the nutritional needs of low-income women, infants and young children.**

- **Approval or acceptance; usually applied to amendments, resolutions, or motions.**

Amendment

- A proposal to alter the text of a pending **bill** or other measure by striking out some language, by inserting new language, or by both striking out and inserting new language. An amendment can be offered in committee, on the floor of the House or Senate, or in the state legislature.

Appropriation

- **Legislation to provide the money required to fund governmental departments, agencies and programs previously established by authorizing legislation.**

- **Legislation to establish a proposed governmental program (such as [Early Head Start](#)). Authorizations may be for a specified amount of money or an indefinite amount (“such sums as necessary”), but do not actually provide any money.**

- **A proposed law introduced in either chamber of Congress or the state legislature.**

Block Grant

- **Federal funds given to state or local government, which must be spent for a general purpose that is specified by the grant.**
- **Example: [Child Care Development Block Grant \(CCDBG\)](#).**

Budget Reconciliation

- The process Congress uses to adjust tax and spending levels to meet the budget goals established by that year's Congressional [budget resolution](#).

Budget Resolution

- **Legislation which sets forth the Congressional budget goals for the year. The budget resolution is not signed by the President, and therefore does not hold the power of law.**

- **An informal organization of legislators that exists to discuss issues of mutual concern and possibly to perform legislative research and policy planning for its members. There are regional, political or ideological, ethnic, and economic-based caucuses.**

Conference Committee

- **The House and Senate appoint members to this committee to resolve differences between versions of legislation passed by both bodies. Both chambers then vote on the combined legislation, which is called a “conference report.”**

Continuing Resolution

- A **bill**, also known as a “CR,” enacted by Congress to continue the funding for programs and agencies into a new **fiscal year** when the regular **appropriations** process has not been completed on time.

Discretionary Spending

- **Spending (budget authority and outlays) controlled in annual appropriations acts.**
- **Examples: national defense, education, housing, social services, and transportation.**

Domestic Discretionary Programs

- **Federal programs other than defense-related activities and foreign aid/international affairs for which funds are made available each year through the appropriations process.**

- **Statutory language that directs a federal administering agency, a state agency and/or a grant recipient to undertake specific activities with a specified amount of the total program allocation.**

Entitlement Program

- A program creating a legal obligation on the part of the federal government or state governments to provide payments or services to a person, business, or unit of government that meets the criteria set in law
- Examples: school lunch, [Medicaid](#), Social Security, [TANF](#)

- A time-delaying tactic associated with the Senate and used by a minority in an effort to delay, modify or defeat a bill or amendment that probably would pass if voted on directly. The most common method is to take advantage of the Senate's rules permitting unlimited debate, but other forms of parliamentary maneuvering may be used. The stricter rules of the House make filibusters more difficult, but delaying tactics are employed occasionally through various procedural devices allowed by House rules.

Fiscal Year (FY)

- **The twelve month accounting year. For the federal government, the fiscal year is October 1 through September 30 of the following year.**

Fiscal Year (FY)

- **The twelve month accounting year. Each state's fiscal year is July 1 through June 30 of the following year, with the following exceptions:**
 - Alabama: October 1 – September 30
 - Michigan: October 1 – September 30
 - New York: April 1 – March 31
 - Texas: September 1 – August 31

Fiscal Year (FY)

- **The twelve month accounting year. For the federal government, the fiscal year is October 1 through September 30 of the following year. Each state's fiscal year is July 1 through June 30 of the following year, with the following exceptions:**
 - Alabama: October 1 – September 30
 - Michigan: October 1 – September 30
 - New York: April 1 – March 31
 - Texas: September 1 – August 31

- **A session at which testimony is given by experts in order for Members of Congress or state legislators to gather information on proposed legislation. Hearings are held by committee and subcommittee chairs on legislation that has been referred to their committee or subcommittee.**

- **Two houses or assemblies, which when considered as a whole, constitute a body with the task of promulgation of law. With the exception of Nebraska's unicameral Senate, every state has a legislature. The federal legislature is Congress, which consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate.**

- **A requirement from a higher to a lower level of government forcing certain actions.**

Mandatory Spending (direct spending)

- Spending that is authorized through permanent law, not through the [appropriations](#) process. Federal examples include entitlement programs, such as Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare. If a legislature wants to change the level of spending for a mandatory program, it must first change the underlying [authorization](#) act.

- The process used by Congressional and state legislative committees to review and revise a bill.

Omnibus Bill

- **The package legislation that results when a group of bills on related topics are combined into a single bill for consideration on the floor of a legislature.**

Pay-as-you-go (PAYGO)

- A federal requirement that before any increases in mandatory spending are instituted, legislators must first find a way to pay for them either through an increase in revenue/taxes or spending reductions in other areas.

- A public bill or joint resolution that has passed both chambers of a legislature and been enacted into law.

- **A system of laws, regulations and funding priorities forming the foundation for how government operates.**

Reauthorization



- **The process by which legislation is renewed for a specified number of years.**

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- **The method by which a measure passed by the legislature must be submitted to a vote of the people to be approved or rejected in whole or in part.**

- **Specific direction for the implementation of a law. Regulations are developed by an administering agency (or agencies) identified in statute. Regulations incorporate processes for enforcement and compliance.**

- **Final adjournment at the end of a legislative session. Bills under consideration but not enacted must be reintroduced in the next session.**

Special Session



- **A session of Congress or the state legislature after it has adjourned and completed its regular session. The President or Governor convenes special sessions.**

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- In Congress or the state legislature, any number of members may join in introducing a single bill or resolution. The first member listed is the sponsor of the bill, and all members' names following his or hers are the bill's cosponsors.

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Unanimous Consent

- **A procedure whereby a matter is considered agreed to if no Member of Congress or state legislator on the floor objects. These motions save time by eliminating the need for a vote.**

Unfunded Mandate

- **The imposition of legal requirements from a higher level of government without funding for their costs.**

- The refusal by the President or Governor to sign into law a bill passed by both the House and Senate. A veto may be overridden by a vote of 2/3 of the Members present in each chamber, allowing a bill to automatically become law without the President's or the Governor's signature.

- A form of demand subsidy (e.g., [food stamps](#), [Medicaid](#)) which functions as a cash equivalent for the purchase of specified goods/services. Vouchers provide more freedom of choice than a specific service but less than a cash benefit.

- **The term used by many states to describe their state legislature.**

Administrative Advocacy

- **Speaking out about how rules and regulations are developed. This is sometimes called “regulatory advocacy.” State and federal agencies must implement the laws passed by the state legislature and Congress, respectively. To do so, they develop rules and regulations. Administrative advocacy can include testifying at hearings on proposed regulations and educating agency staff about research that should inform their rulemaking.**

- **Speaking out on issues of concern. Advocacy can come in many forms, including raising awareness about a particular issue or engaging in efforts to change policies.**

- A group of organizations working together in pursuit of a common goal. Working in coalition allows members to make efficient use of time and resources and creates a stronger base of support for [advocacy](#) efforts.
- Click [here](#) for strategies on building successful coalitions.

Cost-benefit Analysis

- **An economic tool used to determine whether or not the outcomes of a project or program will justify the amount of money spent. By comparing costs and benefits, you can see which project or program maximizes net benefits.**
- **Click [here](#) to learn more about cost-benefit analysis and early childhood development.**

Electoral Advocacy

- **Speaking out on behalf of issues during campaigns for elected office. It can include a broad range of activities including talking to your friends about campaign issues, providing information on the issues for candidates, or organizing a candidate forum in your community. Note: 501(c)3 organizations can engage in nonpartisan voter education activity, but tax law prohibits them from endorsing or opposing a candidate for public office.**
- **Click [here](#) to find your elected officials, candidates, or election results.**

- **A technique used to effectively communicate a message. Framing refers to the way a story is told and to the way these cues [or stories] trigger the shared and durable cultural models that people use to make sense of their world. When a message is framed well, it allows us to quickly make sense of the information we are receiving so we can readily process new information.**
- **Click [here](#) to learn more about framing infant-toddler issues.**

Legislative Advocacy

- **Speaking out about issues of concern in the legislative branch of government. This may include support or opposition to a [bill](#), crafting new legislative language, providing testimony at hearings or contacting your state legislators or Members of Congress.**
- **Click [here](#) to find your elected officials.**

Letter to the Editor

- **A letter written to a publication to share knowledge of issues of concern with the local community and policymakers. Letters to the editor are typically short—about 250 words, or 3 paragraphs.**
- **Click [here](#) for guidelines on how to write a letter to the editor.**

- **The process of trying to influence legislators or other officials to vote for or against a piece of legislation or to take or not take an official action.**

Media Advocacy

- **Speaking out about issues through the public media, including print, television, and internet. It includes activities such as writing [letters to the editor](#), writing press releases, creating televised public service announcements, or meeting with your newspaper's editorial boards to generate public interest and community support.**
- **Click [here](#) to find your local media.**

Opinion Editorial (op-ed)

- **An editorial written to a publication to share one's knowledge and opinion on an issue of concern with the local community and policymakers. Op-eds are typically 500-800 words.**
- **Click [here](#) for guidelines on how to write an op-ed.**

- **A system of laws, regulations and funding priorities forming the foundation for how government operates.**

- **Program professionals invite policymakers to visit their program, organization, or research project to develop a first-hand understanding of their work with young children and families. Site visits are a great opportunity for policymakers to connect the decisions they make with the issues on which you are [advocating](#).**
- **Click [here](#) for guidelines on how to plan a site-visit.**

References

Compiled and Produced by Ashley Chu, Public Policy Intern, ZERO TO THREE Policy Center
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