Summary of Proprietary Findings
From the Critical Insights on Maine™ Survey for:
Background & Methodology

• Survey of 609 registered voters in Maine.
  – 301 surveyed by landline or cellular telephone / 308 surveyed online.
  – Conducted between October 6 and October 26, 2017.
  – 20 minutes on average.
  – Questions asked on behalf of Right From the Start Coalition and other sponsors.
  – Margin of sampling error of +/- 3.9 percentage points.
  – Data reflect state demographics and give equal weight to phone and online respondents.

Many of the questions presented here were based on a national survey conducted by the First Five Years Fund. Their assistance with this research is greatly appreciated.

This is privileged and confidential information that cannot be provided to others without the explicit consent of the Right From the Start Coalition.
Key Findings

• Early education counts:
  – Mainers believe it is important and that it benefits individuals, families, and the state.

• Broad support for early education:
  – Mainers want to make it more available through state programs.

• Elected officials should do more to advance education in early childhood.
Importance of Early Education & Preschool
Eight out of ten agree that child care should include early learning to make children successful in school and life.

Desired Role of Education in Child Care

- Strongly Agree: 56%
- Agree: 24%
- Not sure: 6%
- Disagree: 7%
- Strongly Disagree: 6%

(n=609)

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
Child care should include early learning that prepares children for success in school and life.
Eight out of ten feel providing affordable early education and child care programs is important.

**Importance of Access and Quality**

(% very or somewhat important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Importance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making early education/child care more affordable for working families to give children strong start</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping state/local communities build better preschool services and making them more accessible</td>
<td>77%</td>
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Nine out of ten parents of kids in early education programs say these issues are important to them.
Eight out of ten believe improving the quality of public education is important.

**Importance of Issues**

(\% rating issue extremely or very important)

- Controlling the cost of health care: 87\%
- Increasing the number of good paying jobs: 86\%
- Improving the quality of public education: 79\%
- Making sure that our children get a strong start in life through quality early childhood education: 78\%
- Reducing the tax burden on families: 78\%

(n=609)

Now I’m going to read you some goals that people might have for our country right now, and I’d like you to rate how important you, personally, consider each goal to be. How important to you is...?
Eight out of ten believe starting kindergarten with knowledge and skills is important for overall well-being.

Impact of Programs on Well-being
(% somewhat or very important for overall well-being)

- Children receive primary and preventive care (well-child visits, immunizations, dental care) 86%
- Children begin kindergarten with knowledge and skills to do their best in school 81%
- Parents receive education & guidance (help understanding developmental milestones or good nutrition) 81%
- Children receive early development screenings to identify physical, emotional, or intellectual challenges 80%

In your mind, how important are the following in a person’s overall well-being as they grow up?

A strong start to school is nearly as important as medical care.
Most believe early education programs and other support for young families will broaden Maine’s tax base.

Incentives to Retain and Attract Younger Workers to Maine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The state should improve the quality of child care and preschool so young parents want to raise children in Maine</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offering high-quality early education programs is a good way to attract more young adults and families</td>
<td>68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offering affordable child care for low-/middle-income families is a good way to attract more young adults/families</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The state should increase support for young families to encourage them to move to Maine</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six out of ten agree that more children will have a positive impact on Maine’s economy (59%).

To what degree do you agree with the following statements?

(n=609)
Support for Early Education & Preschool
Three out of four Mainers believe helping parents with the cost of child care and preschool is a good idea.

**Views Toward State Funding for Early Education**

*Proposals that help parents with the cost of quality child care and preschool are...*

“...a bad idea. We cannot afford to provide all of these additional programs for a small number of parents at a time when we are cutting funding to other existing programs from health care to roads. Why can’t young children just be at home with their parents?”

“...a good idea. Investing in our children is investing in our future. We must do more to make sure our children begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school. These proposals will help parents with the very high cost of quality child care and preschool, ensuring that more children will get a strong start in life.”

(Among those who selected a shown option; n=510)
A large majority support a variety of proposals to increase funding for child care and early education programs.

**Support for Proposals That Increase State Support**

- Increasing funding for low-/middle-income child care so parents work/attend school: 78%
- Providing greater funding to programs like Head Start: 76%
- Expanding state grants to communities to improve access to quality preschool: 74%
- Funding to support social & emotional learning and development: 74%
- Increasing funding for better compensation for early childhood educators: 73%
- Increased funding to improve quality of early learning programs for all incomes: 72%
- Greater funding for home visiting prog.'s supporting early learning, well-being, dvlpmnt.: 68%

Parents of children in early education programs are especially likely to support these programs.

Maine’s next Governor and the State Legislature may be considering a number of proposals that could help parents with the cost of quality child care and preschool. For each proposal, please indicate whether you would support or oppose that particular change. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose?
Role of Elected Officials in Supporting Early Education & Child Care
Two out of three would have a more favorable impression of gubernatorial candidates supporting child care and preschool.

If a candidate for Governor supported policies and funding for more families to have quality child care and preschool, would your impression of that candidate be...?
Three out of four believe a governor should improve the quality and affordability of child care and preschool.

Governor’s Role in Improving Quality of Child Care and Preschool

- Should work to improve the quality of child care and preschool and make it more affordable for parents: 73%
- Should NOT work to improve the quality of child care and preschool and make it more affordable for parents: 13%
- Unsure: 14%

(n=609)

Do you think Maine’s next Governor should or should not work to improve the quality of child care and preschool and make it more affordable for parents?