



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Government Funding Is Critical To Raise Wages for Child-Care Workers

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The Budget Reconciliation Bill being debated has the potential to mark a dramatic new era in government assistance for child care. As drafted, the bill caps the income percentage that families spend on child care and includes government funding to provide universal preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Champions insist that this will allow parents to return to work and help close the educational achievement gap between children of the affluent and the poor. But universal preschool offers an important additional benefit: It also expands the portion of the child-care workforce with salaries deriving from federal and state funding, potentially offering these workers an avenue to more bargaining power and employment stability. That would be a major departure from the way child care has functioned in this country for the past 50 years.