

# Pa. human services agency touts Wolf's budget plan for focus on families <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS

WILKES-BARRE — The state Department of Human Services this week highlighted several initiatives in Gov. Tom Wolf's 2018-19 budget proposal, including investments in early childhood education to support low-income families struggling to stay in the workforce due to the cost of child care.

Wolf proposed a \$25 million investment, matched with \$5 million in federal funds, to expand access to early childhood education services, allowing parents to work while their children are in safe, reliable child care.

The investment consists of:

- \$10 million to provide approximately 1,600 additional low-income children and families access to child care.
- \$3 million to establish a pilot program focused on early childhood education programs for children under 3.
- \$2 million to provide a rate increase for services provided through Nurse Family Partnership and Community-Based Family Centers to enhance capacity.

"Child care is a critical work support to low-income working families that allows parents and caregivers to be focused employees," said DHS Acting Secretary Teresa Miller. "Child care access also allows children to enjoy high-quality learning environments that benefit their healthy growth and development."

Families and children can also benefit from support services provided through evidenced-based home visiting programs. Early childhood and prenatal home visiting programs ensure families have the support and services they need to provide a healthy home environment. And Wolf has proposed \$4.5 million for an initiative to expand evidenced-based home visiting focused on communities impacted the most by the opioid epidemic.

Home visiting can improve parents' knowledge and skills, help develop social support systems, and improve access to education, health, and community services. The investments within this initiative include:

- \$4 million to expand evidenced-based home visiting to 800 families in communities most impacted by opioid abuse.
- \$500,000 for training for county children and youth staff, early intervention providers, home visiting professionals, and private provider staff focusing on working with families experiencing opioid or substance abuse and infants with substance exposure.

"By giving parents in treatment the tools and assistance to meet their child's needs, we hope to reduce the number of children entering out-of-home care while supporting the parents' recovery," said Miller.

-reprinted from Times Leader

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## Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/02/pa-human-services-agency-touts-wolf%E2%80%99s-budget-plan-focus-families> [2]  
<https://www.timesleader.com/news/693191/pa-human-services-agency-touts-wolfs-budget-plan-for-focus-on-families> [3]  
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