

# Developing America's Potential: An Agenda for High-Quality Child Care

Helen Blank, NWLC  
Danielle Ewen, CLASP  
Adele Robinson, NAEYC  
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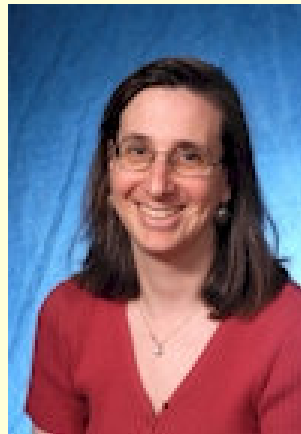
# Speakers for this Session



**Helen Blank**

**Director, Leadership and  
Public Policy**

**National Women's Law  
Center**



**Danielle Ewen**

**Director, Child Care  
and Early Education  
Policy**

**Center for Law and  
Social Policy**



**Adele Robinson**

**Senior Director of  
Public Policy and  
Communications**

**National Association  
for the Education of  
Young Children**

# Helen Blank, National Women's Law Center



Helen Blank, as Director of Leadership and Public Policy at the National Women's Law Center, leads the Center's work on early education, as well as its leadership activities including PLAN, the Progressive Leadership and Advocacy Network, a program for emerging leaders on low-income women's issues.

Previously Ms. Blank served 24 years as the director of the Child Care and Development Division at the Children's Defense Fund. While at the Children's Defense Fund Ms. Blank spearheaded a variety of efforts for improved early learning legislation. In an effort to pass the Act for Better Child Care, the first comprehensive federal child care legislation, she organized the Alliance for Better Child Care. Additionally she developed a guide for the implementation of the legislation that was widely used by state policymakers and child care leaders. She was a principal figure in the development of Child Watch, a project in collaboration with the Association of Junior Leagues, which monitored the effects of the 1981 budget cutbacks on children and families. In 1991, she led an effective campaign to convince the Bush administration to issue regulations for a program that allowed states to use the new federal funds in the best interests of children. She was also a leader in efforts to expand and improve the child care provisions in welfare reform, subsequently developing a guide to assist states in implementing the provisions. In addition, she created the Child Care Now!® Campaign, an ongoing initiative, which attempts to focus attention on early care and education.

## Danielle Ewen, Center for Law and Social Policy



Danielle Ewen directs the Child Care and Early Education Policy team. Prior to joining CLASP, Danielle Ewen was the Senior Policy Analyst at the Trust for Early Education (TEE), where she worked on federal policy issues related to pre-kindergarten. Prior to joining TEE, Ms. Ewen worked at the Children's Defense Fund as a Senior Program Associate in the Child Care and Development Division. In that role, she worked on issues related to early childhood education policy, including child care, Head Start, pre-kindergarten, and school-age care, and helped develop several publications, including reports on state child care and pre-kindergarten policies and investments. These include *Low Income Families Bear the Burden of State Child Care Cutbacks* and *State Developments in Child Care, Early Education and School-Age Care 2002*. Ms. Ewen was also the Assistant Director for the National Child Care Information Center. In that position, she provided technical assistance to grantees of the Child Care and Development Block Grant, oversaw a large question-and-answer service, and responded to requests for information about the child care subsidy system from policymakers, parents, providers, and others in the child care field. In addition, Ms. Ewen is the author of several publications that examine the child care assistance system and state spending on quality initiatives, including: *Child Care and Development Block Grant Report of State Plans* and *Report on the Activities of the States Using Child Care and Development Block Grant Quality Improvement Funds*. Ms. Ewen was also a Policy Analyst at the U.S. Department of Education in the Office of Migrant Education, where she worked on issues related to implementation of Chapter 1 programs, family literacy, bilingual education, and evaluation. She holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley and a Master's in Public Administration from Columbia University.

# Adele Robinson, National Association for the Education of Young Children



Adele Robinson is the Associate Executive Director of Policy and Public Affairs, directing federal and state policy and public communications efforts. NAEYC is the world's largest association of early childhood professionals working with and for children from birth through age 8. Prior to joining NAEYC, Ms. Robinson was a Senior Program Associate in the Government Relations division of the National Education Association and was Director of Government Relations for the National Association of State Boards of Education. She was a Legislative Assistant to the U.S. Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, responsible for legislation relating to early childhood, elementary and secondary education, and higher education.

NAEYC is considered by Congressional offices as a critical advisor on Head Start, the Child Care & Development Block Grant, provisions in No Child Left Behind particularly regarding literacy and teaching young children, teacher quality provisions of the Higher Education Act, and other legislation that discusses access to and quality of early learning from birth through third grade.

Ms. Robinson is co-author of Advocates in Action: Making a Difference for Young Children, an advocacy guide used by many colleges in policy coursework, and *Risky Credit*, an article on tuition tax credits in the framework of education and tax equity policy, published in the Stanford Law & Policy Review, as well as other articles.

She earned her undergraduate degree from Yale University and her law degree from Boston University School of Law. Before working in public policy, Ms. Robinson was an attorney in a law firm in Boston.

Child care helps children, families, and communities prosper. When America supports child care, we encourage children, families, and our nation to reach their full potential.

# The Vision for Child Care

## **The Vision for the Reauthorization of Child Care will:**

- I. Ensure Children and Families Have Access to Affordable, Healthy, and Safe Care
- II. Improve Quality to Promote Early Learning
- III. Improve and Expand Care for Infants and Toddlers
- IV. Provide Needed Research and Technical Assistance
- V. Encourage Effective Coordination
- VI. Address Facilities
- VII. Improve Services to Families with Limited English
- VIII. Improve Services to Children with Disabilities and Other Special Needs

# **Ensuring Access to Affordable, Healthy, and Safe Care**

- ❖ **Double the number of children who receive child care assistance**
- ❖ **Reimburse providers at no less than the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of market rate**
- ❖ **Establish minimum health and safety standards**
- ❖ **Require minimum training for child care providers**
- ❖ **Require comprehensive background checks of all licensed providers**
- ❖ **Require a minimum of 2 inspections annually, one being unannounced**
- ❖ **Make the Dependent Care Tax Credit refundable, expand the sliding scale and index the credit for inflation**



# **Improving Quality to Promote Early Learning**

- ❖ **Require states to develop a QRIS infrastructure**
- ❖ **Establish grants to help providers:**
  - **Achieve higher levels of quality ratings**
  - **Obtain training, credentials and degrees**
  - **Receive increases in compensation commensurate with education**
- ❖ **Address the cultural and linguistic needs of children**

# **Improving & Expanding Infant and Toddler Care**

- ❖ **Provide grants to top level QRIS providers to operate community-based family and child development centers**
- ❖ **Fund organizations to operate Family Child Care networks and offer TA to infant/toddler providers**
- ❖ **Establish state-wide infant toddler networks**
- ❖ **Give priority to expand high quality infant /toddler care in low income neighborhoods**

# **Providing Needed Research & Technical Assistance**

**❖ The following research will be required:**

- Demographic information on children receiving assistance**
- Workforce characteristics including compensation and credentials**
- NAS study on the cost of quality child care by age of child & setting**

**❖ Technical Assistance must be provided on:**

- QRIS components and implementation**
- Developing & conducting statistically valid market rate surveys**

# **Promoting Effective Coordination**

- ❖ **Require a state CCDBG plan to be submitted to the State Advisory Council on Early Care and Education. Plans must describe coordination among child care, Head Start, and state prekindergarten programs (including special education preschool programs).**
- ❖ **Establish an Office of Early Care and Learning within the Administration for Children and Families that houses the Head Start Bureau and the Child Care Bureau.**
- ❖ **Establish an Interagency Early Learning and After-School Council, chaired by the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Education, to coordinate federal funding for child care and development programs for children birth to age 13 across federal agencies.**

# **Ensuring an Adequate Supply Of Facilities**

**❖ Authorize federal funding to establish an ongoing pool of capital for the renovation and construction of facilities in low-income communities, including those serving families with limited English proficiency. This pool will be accessed through experienced non-profit facilities intermediaries who may use the funds to make grants and loans to child care providers for this facility renovation and construction, and to provide technical assistance on facility design and development**

# **Improving Services to Families With Limited English Proficiency**

**❖ Authorize federal funding for grants or contract to develop, implement and demonstrate the effectiveness of techniques and approaches for training child care providers with limited English proficiency to improve high-quality child care. Grants or contracts will be awarded on a competitive basis to community-based organizations with experience and expertise in providing training services to child care providers with limited English proficiency.**

# **Improve Services to Children with Disabilities and Other Special Needs**

**❖ Authorize federal funding for grants or contracts to develop, implement, and demonstrate the effectiveness of techniques and approaches for training child care providers to provide high-quality care for such children. Grants or contracts will be awarded on a competitive basis to community-based organizations with experience and expertise in providing training services to child care providers to meet the needs of children with disabilities and other special needs in community child care programs.**

# Achieving the Vision

- ❖ **Will require significant increased federal investments**
- ❖ **Is a roadmap for the reauthorization of CCDBG**
- ❖ **Is a starting point to begin the conversation  
at the federal level**