

# Strong Start for America's Children Act of 2015

Representative Richard L. Hanna (NY-22) | [www.hanna.house.gov](http://www.hanna.house.gov)



***The Strong Start for America's Children Act is an innovative 10-year federal-state partnership to expand and improve early learning opportunities for children across the birth-to-age-five continuum.***

Millions of young children from low-income families lack access to high-quality, affordable preschool programs. Decades of studies have found that quality preschool leads to a wide range of short- and long-term benefits, including better educational outcomes, stronger job earnings, and lower levels of crime and delinquency. The Strong Start for America's Children Act is a bold, 10-year innovative federal-state partnership to expand and improve early learning opportunities for children across the birth-to-age-five continuum.

## ***Expanding access to Preschool for 4-Year Olds***

Formula funding is provided to states – with a state match – for high-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten for four-year old children from families earning below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). States in turn provide sub-grants to local entities to offer children high-quality prekindergarten, which must include:

- Teachers with high qualifications;
- Rigorous health and safety standards;
- Small class sizes and low child-to-staff ratios;
- Instruction that is based in evidence and is developmentally appropriate;
- Evidence-based child-staff comprehensive services for children, including strong parent and family engagement, nutritious meals, and health screening and referrals.

## ***Building quality early learning partnerships***

Early Head Start and child care partnerships are supported to improve the quality of child care for infants and toddlers through age three. Local Early Head Start agencies are permitted to contract with local center-based child care programs and family child care homes serving infants and toddlers to raise child care program quality through training and technical assistance. Finally, these partnerships must meet the high-quality performance standards of Early Head Start and blend federal funds to provide high-quality, full-day care.

## ***Support for children with disabilities***

Authorization of federal funding for early childhood services for children with special needs would be increased through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs.

## ***Recognizing the importance of home visitations***

The bill expresses a sense of the House that federal funding for voluntary, evidence-based home visitation programs be continued.