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The Hunt Institute Releases 2020 Early Childhood Data Narratives for 50 States, D.C.
As states increase focus on early childhood investment, data can help inform policy

Durham, N.C. – As policymakers and advocates look to build and strengthen early childhood systems in their states, there are many questions they must consider: What programs are currently provided by my state? How many families benefit — and how many need access but aren't being served? How much is child care in my state?

To help policymakers answer these questions, and many more, and to help them better understand their state's early childhood landscape, The Hunt Institute released its *2020 Early Childhood Data Narratives* for all 50 states and Washington, D.C., centralizing existing data from a number of resources into one source.

Following up on the release in 2018, each data narrative includes detailed statistics, indicators and state policies for infants and toddlers, three- and four-year-olds and five- to eight-year olds, including:

- State demographics and common risk factors facing children, including poverty and maternal and child health outcomes;
- Prenatal care and birth outcomes by race;
- Paid family leave and home visiting programs;
- Pre-K trends and state programs; and
- Standards and assessments for kindergarten through third grade.

"As we work together to achieve more equitable education and life outcomes, policymakers need to consider how infants, toddlers and families are supported," said The Hunt Institute's President & CEO Dr. Javaid Siddiqi. "Equipping policymakers with this research is an essential step in building stronger early childhood systems."

As child care costs soar in the United States, this year's data narratives include a summary of price and affordability of infant care as well as federal expenditures on infants and toddlers, including the number of children served by the Child Care and Development Fund and by Early Head Start.

"If we want to move our country forward, we must prioritize early childhood in our states," said former North Carolina Gov. Jim Hunt, The Hunt Institute's Founder and Board Chair. "Whether you are a policymaker, a teacher, a CEO, a local business owner – it will take all of us working together to ensure that our children receive the best resources and support during their most vulnerable years and have access to high-quality early education programs."

Guiding questions included in the narratives provide the opportunity for policymakers, advocates, state agencies and early childhood nonprofits to target specific areas of need. This was seen during the 2019 Early Childhood Leadership Summit, held in June in partnership with the BUILD Initiative. Summit attendees participated in two facilitated state team planning sessions, exploring state-level demographic and outcome data assembled specifically for their discussions. During this time, facilitated conversation centered around health and education disparities through an equity lens and specific strengths and challenges of their states' early childhood systems.

Under the leadership of Dr. Siddiqi, The Hunt Institute has expanded its education policy work to include early childhood issues, which Gov. Hunt continues to serve as a critical voice and leader in this area nationally. Beginning his work on early childhood issues when he was lieutenant governor in the 1970s, Gov. Hunt's vision that every North Carolina child start school on day one, healthy and ready to learn, became a reality when he implemented Smart Start, the state's comprehensive public-private school readiness initiative, in 1993.

"The early childhood landscape is complex, and I'm pleased to see an increased focus on investing in this area across states, but we still have a lot of work to do," said The Hunt Institute's Director of Early Learning Dr. Dan Wuori. "These data summaries help all of us understand the challenges and opportunities for expanding access and quality early learning services."

The Hunt Institute will host an Intersection Webinar on Feb. 12 at 1 p.m. ET. The 30-minute webinar will provide an overview of the information included in the narratives.

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About The Hunt Institute
An affiliate of the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy, The Hunt Institute is a recognized leader in the movement to transform public education. Marshaling expertise from a nationwide partner network since it was established in 2001, The Institute brings together people and resources that help build and nurture visionary leadership and mobilize strategic action for greater educational outcomes and student success. For more information, please visit: http://www.hunt-institute.org/