

MARYLAND’S EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES: ALLIED VIEWS

The table below provides a comparison of two allied perspectives on developing a system of services and supports for young children and their families. The first perspective is taken from a document entitled *Maryland as a Nation: Comparing Maryland’s Early Childhood System to the Systems of Other Countries: A Secondary Review of the UNICEF Innocenti Centre’s International Comparison of OECD Early Childhood Systems* and prepared by the Division of Early Childhood Development, Maryland State Department of Education in 2009.¹ The document details how Maryland compares to a variety of developed nations on a prescribed set of criteria. According to the analysis, items highlighted in green represent the benchmarks met by Maryland, those in lavender have been partially met, and those in blue have been indicated as prioritized items given the current climate.

Distinct, but quite allied, the second perspective is being offered simply for *discussion and debate* as a part of a presentation entitled, *20/20: Creating an early childhood vision and process for Maryland*. It represents provisional ideas of one individual rather than any official or publicly endorsed stance.

UNICEF Group ¹	SLK Group ²	UNICEF Benchmark ¹	SLK 20/20 Ideas ²
Group A. Focus on Government Policy		1. Minimum entitlement to paid parental leave	
		2. National plan with priority for disadvantaged children	
Group B. Focus on Access to Early Childhood Services	I. Above the Ground	3. Minimum level of child care provision for children under 3 years old	1. Parenting education/family support 2. Health/mental health linkages 3. Family child care better integrated 4. Services for 0-3 5. 100% access for at-risk children 6. Effective transitions
		4. Minimum level of access for 4-year-olds	

¹ Division of Early Childhood Development, Maryland State Department of Education. (2009, June). *Maryland as a nation: Comparing Maryland’s early childhood system to the systems of other countries: A secondary review of the UNICEF Innocenti Centre’s International comparison of OECD early childhood systems*.

² Kagan, S. L. (2010). *20/20: Creating an early childhood vision and process for Maryland*. [PowerPoint presentation].

Group C. Focus on Quality of Early Childhood Services	III. Infrastructure: Workforce	5. Minimum level of training for all staff	11. Linkages between higher education (AA and BA) and to the new realities of the field 12. Competency based credential for lead teachers 13. Significant improvements in Compensation individualization/Personalization of professional development 14. Program regulations 16. Accreditation incentives 17. QRIS support
		6. Minimum proportion of staff with higher level education and training	
	IV. Infrastructure: Program Quality	7. Minimum staff-to-child ratio	
Group D. Focus on Supporting Infrastructure	II. Infrastructure: Governance, Finance, and Data	8. Minimum level of public funding	7. Consolidated governance 8. Consolidated data and accountability 9. Synchronized financing 10. Rigorous research 15. Program monitoring/enforcement
		9. Low level of child poverty	
		10. Universal outreach of essential child health services	
	V. Infrastructure: Families, Public Will, and Advocacy		18. Honest mechanisms and expectations for parent engagement 19. Elaborated advocacy capacity 20. Early childhood: not a public afterthought