



Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children



May 14, 2026

**The Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children voices its strong support for H-7320 (Diaz), which would remove the child support enforcement requirement from the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).** Rhode Island is one of only 9 states in the U.S. that continues this regressive policy, which disproportionately impacts the young children and parents that need child care the most.

According to a policy brief on this subject developed by [Zero To Three](#), a national partner in advocacy, the current child support enforcement policy **burdens and often excludes** single parents, which amount to roughly 20% of families nationally. It also **creates bureaucratic and costly hurdles** for parents including establishing parentage (often through genetic testing), identifying, and locating noncustodial parents, and providing private and often sensitive information. This may require that parents attend court appointments and participate in multiple, costly legal proceedings, which can take place over many years.

As an affiliate of a national organization, NAEYC, we have heard from other states that have successfully removed this requirement. Notably, Mississippi removed this requirement in May 2023. Since then, the state's lead agency says 17,000 children have received child care assistance who wouldn't have previously been eligible. Colorado, Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, New Mexico, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia have also made recent strides, leaving Rhode Island behind.

There is no evidence to suggest that child support enforcement in child care subsidy processes improves compliance (Selekman, 2018), and this policy does not help families gain access to additional funds to improve their financial security, leaving no justification for this burdensome rule.

Our state must consider the impact to our youngest learners that will miss out on impactful early learning opportunities while their parent pursues compliance with these burdensome rules. Similarly, we must consider the custodial parents' inability to earn a living and support their child(ren) while seeking adequate child care and being met with unnecessary bureaucracy.

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