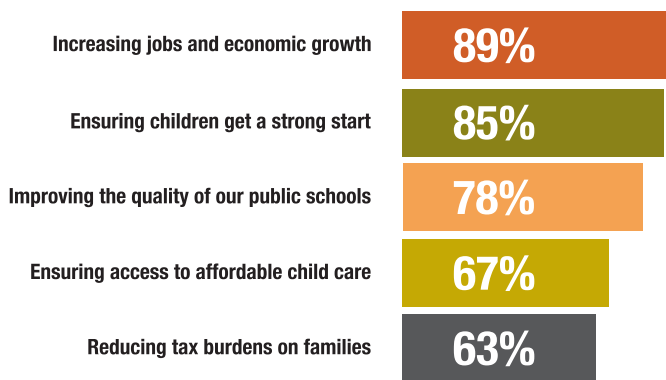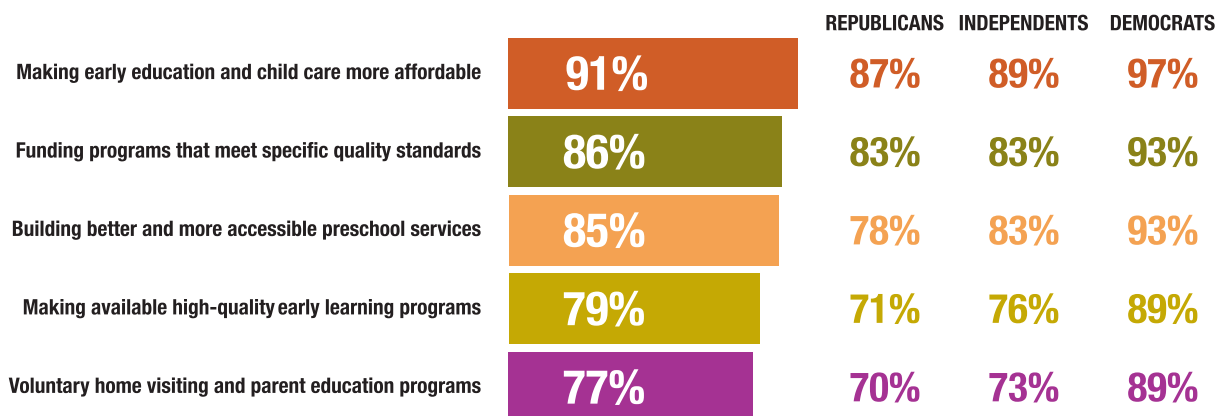# AMERICA SPEAKS: NEW POLL SHOWS INVESTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IS A NATIONAL PRIORITY.

A new national poll conducted for the First Five Years Fund by the bipartisan team of Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates shows that early childhood education continues to be a national priority for Americans, regardless of party. **71% of voters—including 60% of Republicans—support greater investment in early childhood education if it increased the deficit in the short-term, but paid for itself in the long-term by improving children's education, health and economic situations so that less spending is needed in the future.** Majorities of Democrats, Republicans and Independents want the federal government to help states provide more access to high-quality early childhood education for low- and middle-income families.

Voters place children getting a strong start in life as one of the highest national priorities. 85% say this is important, second only to increasing jobs and economic growth, ranking it far above reducing the tax burden on families (63%). Making sure that working parents can find quality affordable child care ranked as the fourth most important issue at 67%.
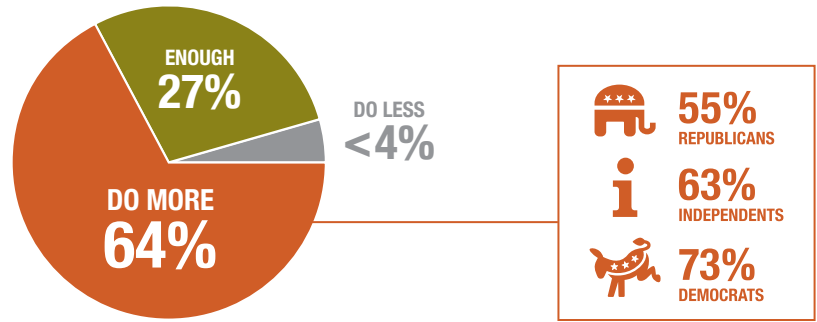
Increasing jobs and economic growth	**89%**
Ensuring children get a strong start	**85%**
Improving the quality of our public schools	**78%**
Ensuring access to affordable child care	**67%**
Reducing tax burdens on families	**63%**

Voters favor deep, wide and varied investments in early childhood programs from birth to age five.

		REPUBLICANS	INDEPENDENTS	DEMOCRATS
Making early education and child care more affordable	**91%**	**87%**	**89%**	**97%**
Funding programs that meet specific quality standards	**86%**	**83%**	**83%**	**93%**
Building better and more accessible preschool services	**85%**	**78%**	**83%**	**93%**
Making available high-quality early learning programs	**79%**	**71%**	**76%**	**89%**
Voluntary home visiting and parent education programs	**77%**	**70%**	**73%**	**89%**

First Five Years Fund
www.ffyf.org

AMERICA SPEAKS: NEW POLL SHOWS INVESTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IS A NATIONAL PRIORITY.

Regardless of party, voters overwhelmingly say we should be doing more to ensure children start kindergarten with the knowledge and skills to do their best. 64% say we should do more; only 27% say we are doing enough; and virtually nobody says we should be doing less (4%). 55% of Republicans, 63% of Independents and 73% of Democrats say we should do more.

ENOUGH
27%

DO LESS
<4%

DO MORE
64%

55% REPUBLICANS

63% INDEPENDENTS

73% DEMOCRATS

Seven in ten American voters support a proposal that would increase federal investment to help states provide more access to high-quality early childhood programs for low- and moderate-income families. Poll respondents were presented with the broad outlines of a plan put before Congress:

"Congress is considering a plan that helps states and local communities provide better early childhood education programs to parents of children from birth to five. It provides ten billion dollars per year for ten years in grants to states to provide all low- and moderate-income four-year-olds with voluntary access to high-quality preschool programs. It also makes available voluntary programs in high-quality early education and child care for infants and toddlers, as well as home visiting and parent education."

This registers overwhelming support among the electorate with little opposition. 71% favor the plan and only 23% oppose it.

TOTAL SUPPORT **71%**

TOTAL OPPOSE **23%**

UNSURE **6%**

Overwhelming majorities of key voter groups support this plan for federal investment in early childhood education.

- 60% Republicans
- 68% Independents
- 84% Democrats
- 80% of Hispanics
- 72% of suburban women

Voters are willing to spend now in order to reap later economic benefits from early childhood education.
71% of voters—including 60% of Republicans—support greater investment in early childhood education if it increased the deficit in the short-term but paid for itself in the long-term by improving children's education, health and economic situations so that less spending is needed in the future.

Over two-thirds of voters say that Congress and the Obama administration should make early childhood education a legislative priority. Over three-quarters of Americans (76%) want Congress to act on this early childhood education proposal this year or next year; only 19% feel it should not be pursued.