



Gaining Insights into New Hampshire's Early Care and Education Landscape

Carsey Policy Hour
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- »»» What are some of the biggest ongoing challenges in the state's early care and education sector?
- »»» How can growing New Hampshire's ECE data and research infrastructure help?
- »»» What is the New Hampshire Early Care and Education Research Consortium?

Families pay too much.

Most NH households with kids under 5 use child care (71%).

Child care is not funded as a public good, like K-12 schools.

Child care costs for a NH family with an infant and preschooler reached **\$31,868** in 2023.

Providers earn too little.

Although families pay so much...

Intensive staffing needs mean tuition is spread across multiple workers.

In 2023, the average annual salary for a NH child care worker was **\$32,310**.

The difficult business model means...



Our already-inadequate child care supply is shrinking.



Child care costs are high and rising.



Child care often can't offer flexibility that families need.

Where does this leave New Hampshire?

Legislative supports have emerged. For example...

- Effective in 2025:
 - Expanded scholarship eligibility for child care professionals
- Effective in 2024:
 - Expanded scholarship eligibility for families
 - Reduction in family cost-share
 - Increased reimbursement rates to providers

Our ability to track and monitor resulting changes is nascent.

- Data infrastructure hasn't historically been a key investment
- Presented a challenge during COVID & foreshadows subsequent efforts to measure policy impact
- Good time to strengthen our collective research infrastructure!

What is the status of the state's research and data infrastructure?

Historically, **multiple institutions** have produced research on the state's early care and education sector.



The work has often been produced in distinct spheres without intentional coordination.

Multiple **stakeholders** need data but lack a clear, central resource.

At the state

NH Dept. of Health
and Human Services

NH Dept. of
Education

“On the ground”

Child Care
Providers

Advocates

Parents

Media

In policy spheres

State Legislators

K-12 Schools

Infrastructure to coordinate and grow capacity is **necessary**.

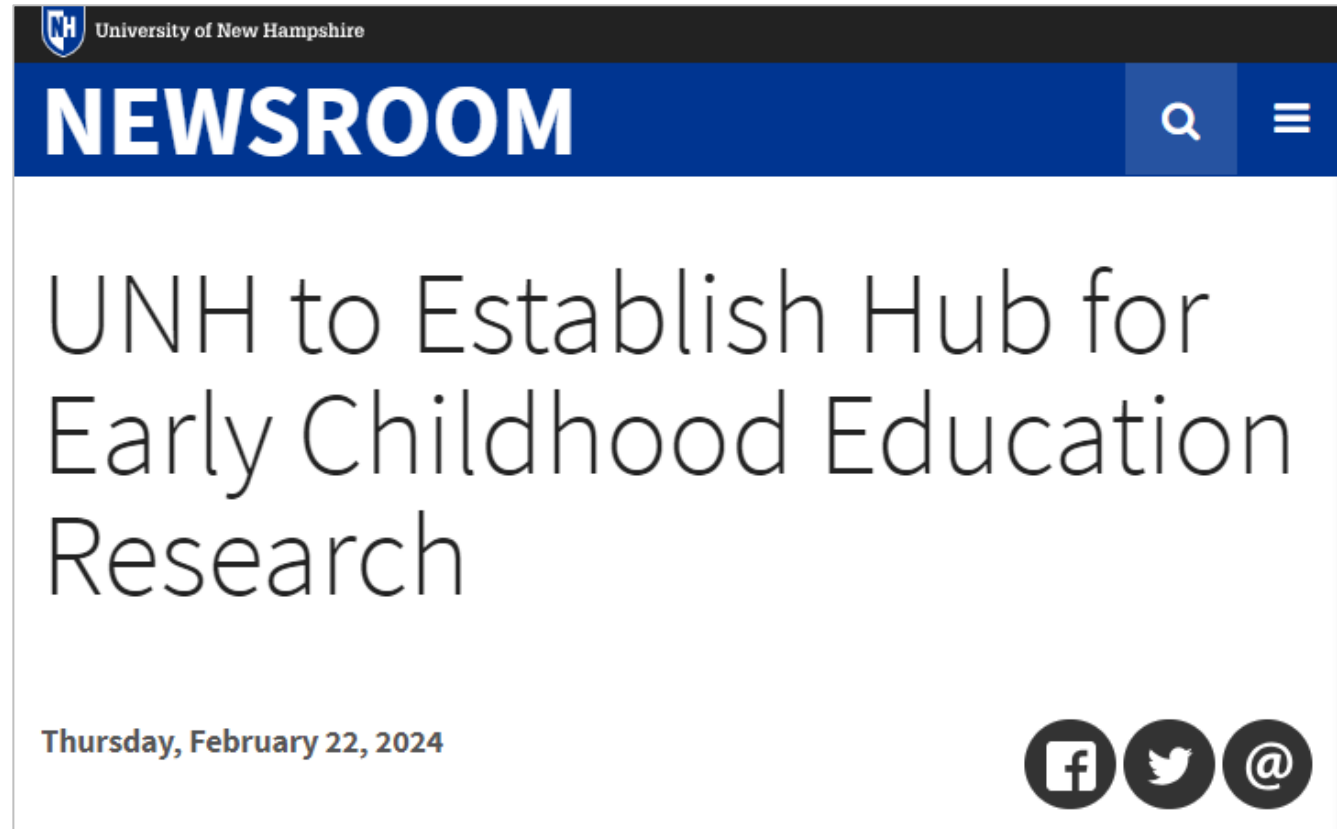
For **research institutions**

- *Has somebody already studied this?*
- *What important questions aren't being studied by anyone?*
- *What resources can we share to accomplish more together?*

For **stakeholders**

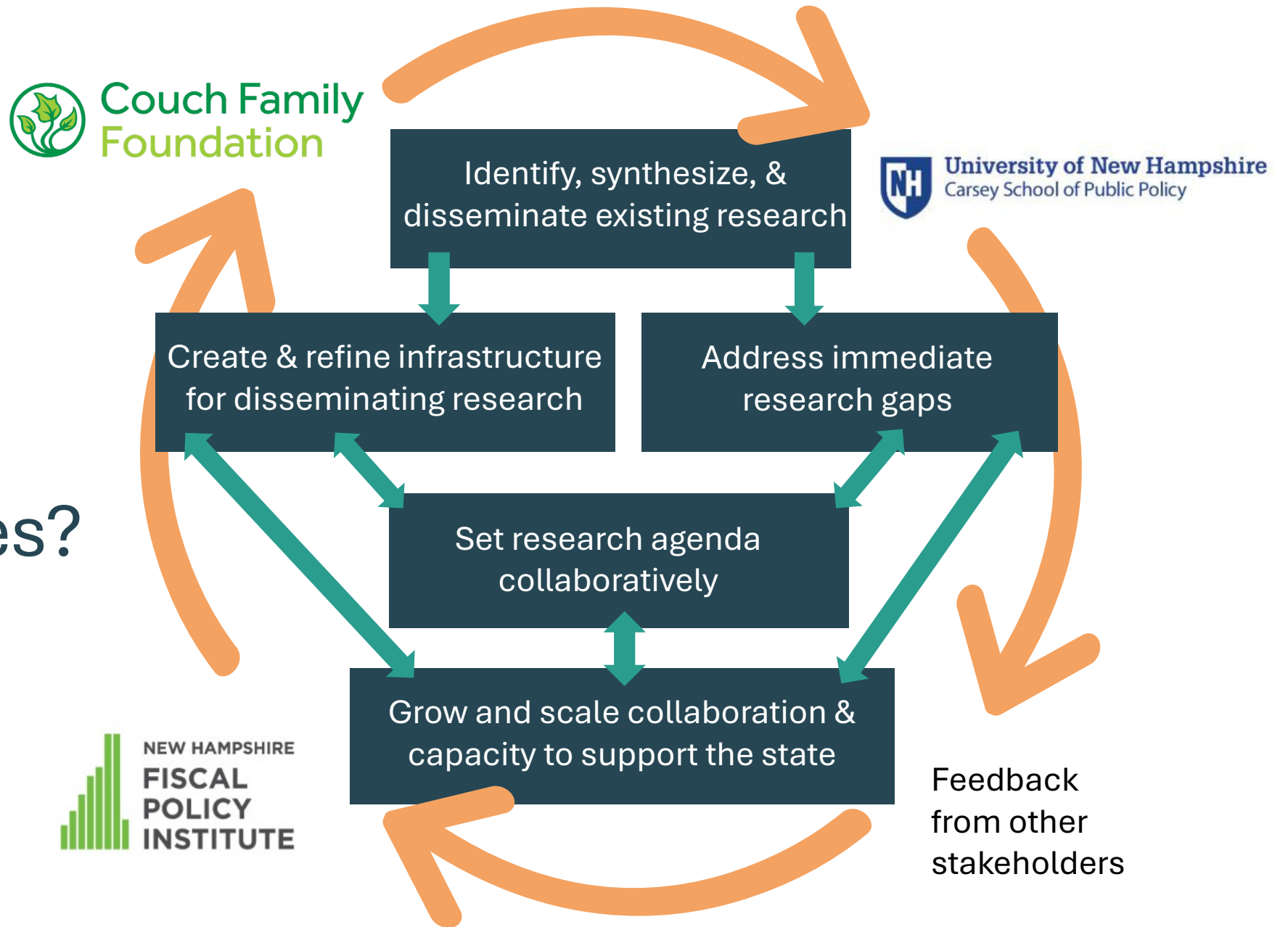
- *Where do I find answers to my policy questions?*
- *Who can I ask for technical assistance?*
- *What's working so far?*
- *What policy agenda should we be working toward?*

In late 2023, the Couch Family Foundation funded the Carsey School to stand up a statewide ECE Research Consortium.



The screenshot shows a newsroom header for the University of New Hampshire. At the top left is the UNH logo and the text "University of New Hampshire". Below this is a dark blue navigation bar with the word "NEWSROOM" in large white letters. To the right of "NEWSROOM" are a magnifying glass icon for search and a hamburger menu icon. The main content area has a white background with the headline "UNH to Establish Hub for Early Childhood Education Research" in a large, black, sans-serif font. Below the headline, on the left, is the date "Thursday, February 22, 2024". On the right side of the content area are three circular social media icons: Facebook (f), Twitter (bird), and a general social media icon (@).

What are the Consortium's initial activities?





NH ECE Research Consortium

PARTNERSHIPS

RESOURCES

CONTACT US

Who We Are

The New Hampshire Early Care and Education (NH ECE) Research Consortium is a network of researchers, providers, funders, policymakers, advocates, and other stakeholders who are committed to understanding and continually improving the early child care and education landscape throughout New Hampshire. The Consortium is housed at the University of New Hampshire's Carsey School of Public Policy, supported by a core team of research experts with deep connections to the field and state partners.

What We do

Collectively, the Consortium aims to build a high-quality body of applied research to support stakeholders in planning, enacting, and strengthening a robust and equitable ECE system. The Consortium works to centralize New Hampshire-specific resources and facilitate access to timely information by producing and elevating vital research related to ECE in the state. We also support technical assistance requests from data seekers and facilitate partnerships that enhance statewide capacity to conduct and use research.

The NH ECE Research Consortium is made possible through generous funding and partnership from the [Couch Family Foundation](#).



www.nhece.org

Repository of NH ECE data

- Building a centralized location for easy data access

Research publications

- *Granite Guide to Early Childhood*
- Additional pubs from Carsey and other NH ECE partners
- Opportunities to collaborate

Stakeholder connections

- Bringing researchers into the fold to contribute and shape ECE agenda

Granite Guide to Early Childhood

A new series of primers summarizing evidence across key areas of New Hampshire's early childhood care and education (ECE) sector



Title	<p>What Do NH Families Want for Child Care?</p>	<p>Fewer Providers, Longer Distances: NH's Child Care Landscape</p>	<p>NH's Well Educated, Underpaid Child Care Workforce</p>	<p>High Child Care Costs Strain NH Family Budgets</p>	<p>Attempting to Offset Costs Through NH Child Care Scholarships</p>	<p>Operating on Thin Margins: The Cost of Providing Child Care</p>	<p>Creating an Equitable Child Care System in NH</p>
Some take-aways	<p>Families sometimes make less-than-ideal tradeoffs for ECE that fit schedules and budgets, but they widely agree on the importance of reliability.</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	<p>Both the volume and variety of ECE options available in NH are insufficient, as offerings continue to consolidate and shrink over time.</p> <p>COMING SOON</p>	<p>Compensation for early educators is low, especially relative to their education, making it hard to recruit or retain workers that could expand supply.</p> <p>COMING SOON</p>	<p>The cost of tuition can be a family's largest expense, which underscores the importance of the ability to make individualized ECE decisions.</p> <p>COMING SOON</p>	<p>While changes to NH's Child Care Scholarship Program mean more help for more families, reaching all who could benefit is a challenge.</p> <p>COMING SOON</p>	<p>Although wages are low, the volume of ECE staff necessary to align with state standards and minimal safety practices means operating costs add up quickly.</p> <p>COMING SOON</p>	<p>With no federal policy relief on the horizon, states must find their own solutions, and lessons learned in NH and other states may guide the way.</p> <p>COMING SOON</p>



NH ECE STAKEHOLDER MAP

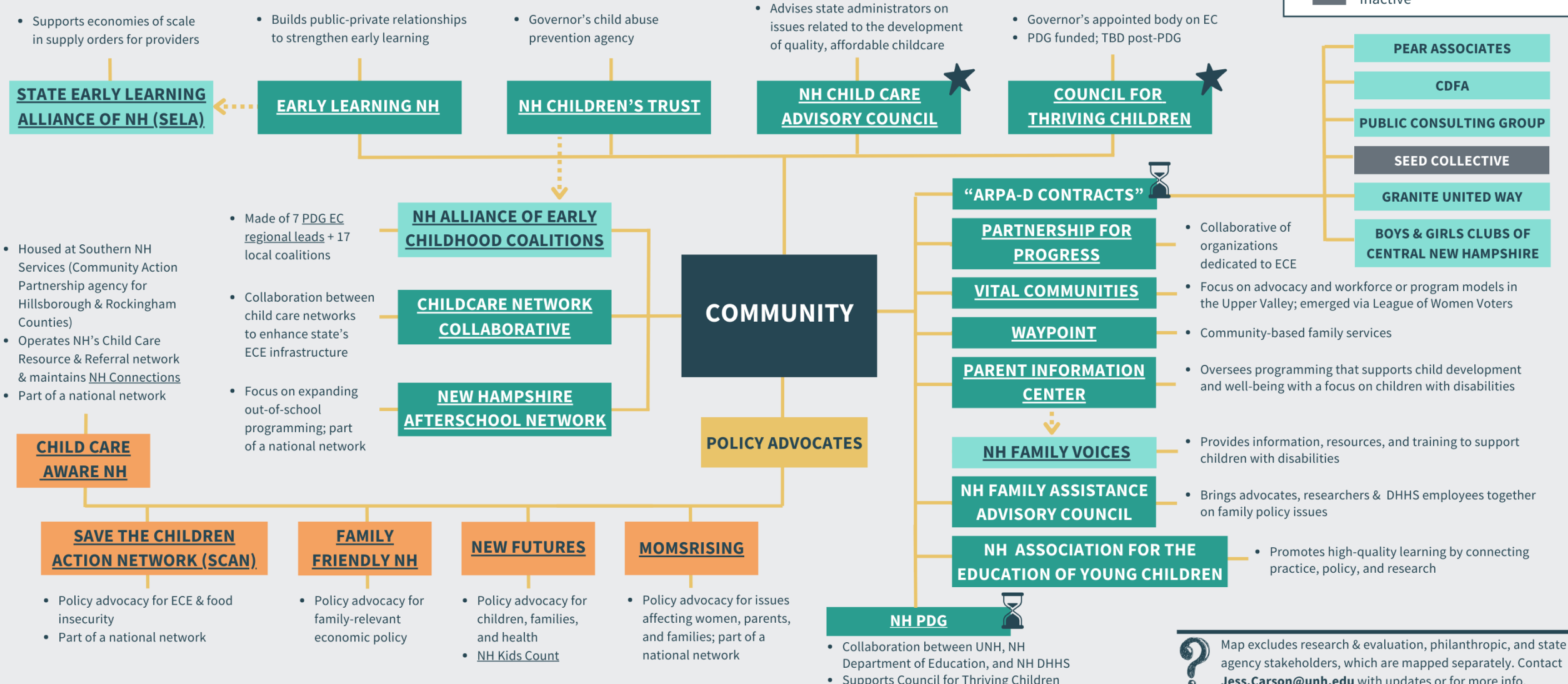
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COMMUNITY

A shared & dynamic resource for understanding the state's ECE ecosystem

LEGEND

- Legislatively enacted
- Time limited
- EC(E)** Early Childhood (Education)
- PDG** Preschool Development Grant
- Parent organization
- Inactive



Map excludes research & evaluation, philanthropic, and state agency stakeholders, which are mapped separately. Contact Jess.Carson@unh.edu with updates or for more info.

Example Partnership: NH Fiscal Policy Institute & Carsey School

Development of an 18-month ECE research agenda, including a shared framework, goals, and a coordinated timeline

Examples
from the
timeline:

Release	Activity	Partner	Topic Area
Spring 2024	Blog	NHFPI	Annual Price of Child Care for Families
Summer 2024	Video explainer	NHFPI	A Healthy Child Care Industry Helps All Granite Staters
Summer 2024	Primer	Carsey	What Do New Hampshire Families Want for Child Care?
Summer 2024	Blog	NHFPI	Child Care Scholarship Usage Increased Over 21 Percent in First Half of 2024
Fall 2024	Brief	Carsey	Availability of Preschool in NH Public Schools

References & Resources

NH ECE Research Consortium

 **Contact us**

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 **Website**


www.nhece.org



Partner Resources

 **NHFPI Website**
<https://nhfpi.org/>

 **NHFPI Video Explainer on Child Care**
<https://nhfpi.org/blog/explainer-a-healthy-child-care-industry-helps-all-granite-staters/>

 **NH Preschool Development Grant**
<https://chhs.unh.edu/early-childhood/preschool-development-grant>



The NH ECE Research Consortium is generously funded by The **Couch Family Foundation**

<https://www.couchfoundation.org/priorities>



Upcoming presentation: 10/2/24

Rochester Child Care Center

<https://www.rochesterchildcare.org/news-events/calling-all-advocates-for-child-care>