Urban and Rural Nebraskans Speak About Early Care and Education

March 24, 2017
Purpose

1. Understand Nebraskans’ attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge about early childhood care and education.
2. Inform our investment in early care and education.
3. Gather opinions about the state’s support for young children at greatest risk.
Main Report
Findings
Long-Term Impact

68% of Nebraska residents say early care and education has a lot of impact on the long-term success of students in school and in life.
Affordability and Availability

Only 6% of Nebraskans strongly agree that high-quality early care and education is affordable for every family in Nebraska.

Just 11% of residents strongly agree that high-quality early care and education is available.
Quality

Just 15% of Nebraskans are very satisfied with the quality of early childhood care and education programs in the city or area where they live, while 31% are satisfied.
Two-thirds of Nebraska residents strongly agree or agree that the state should make early care and education a higher priority than it is today.
Low-Income Children

The majority of Nebraskans agree that the state should provide early care and education for all children from low-income families who choose to use it.
Main Report

Takeaways

1. Early care and education is important to Nebraskans.
2. More affordable and available high-quality child care is needed.
3. Nebraskans believe the state should invest more in early care and education.
4. Nebraskans voice strong support for children in greatest need.
Urban/Rural Report Findings
Research Questions

Do residents of counties with an **urban core**, counties with a **large rural town**, and counties with a **small rural town/isolated rural area** differ …

1. On what life is like for young children in Nebraska?
2. In their views about the value, accessibility, and affordability of high-quality early care and education in Nebraska?
3. In their opinions about the importance of the state’s investment in early care and education?
Concern for the Future

30% & 39%

OF RURAL-AREA NEBRASKA RESIDENTS

OF URBAN-AREA RESIDENTS

believe that children’s lives will get better 10 years from now.
Nebraskans living in Urban Areas are nearly twice as likely as Rural-Area Residents to say that cost is the biggest challenge for families in obtaining high-quality care.
Child Care Availability

more rural than urban

AREA
NEBRASKA
RESIDENTS

AREA
RESIDENTS

say availability is the greatest challenge families face in getting high-quality early care and education for their young children.
Support for Increased Investment

Majorities of Urban-Area Nebraska Residents RURAL-Area Residents

61% & 55%
say the state is investing too little on early care and education programs.
Support for Increased Investment

Nebraskans say the best way to fund early childhood care and education programs for children from low-income families is

PUBLIC OR PRIVATE FUNDS  FEES PAID BY THEIR FAMILY

76%  24%
Urban/Rural Takeaways

1. There is widespread agreement among Nebraskans, no matter where they live.
2. Nebraskans have concern about children’s future.
3. There is consensus among residents across the state about the need for greater state investment.
Thank you!

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