

Governor's Weekly Message Transcript: Financial Empowerment Redirects Focus at Early Learning Centers

Every child needs and deserves a good start to their education. It's why our state has made unprecedented commitments to improving access to quality early learning opportunities. In the last couple of years, we have increased by double the number of low-income children attending a highly rated program. To build on our progress, we must also recognize that giving our young children the best chance to prosper means providing stability for their families and our early childhood workforce. About 50 early learning centers throughout the state – and particularly those serving low-income families – have partnered with an initiative that we call Stand By Me. It's a first-in-the-nation, statewide financial empowerment program that gives Delawareans the tools and guidance they need to overcome financial challenges, like credit and debt issues, and to make good decisions with their money. We're making Stand By Me financial coaching services available at these early childhood facilities and participation in this initiative helps early learning programs earn higher ratings. Recently, the federal Administration for Children and Families visited our program, realizing its potential to help families across the country. Stand By Me has already worked with 200 employees of these centers, because our early childhood workers will best provide for our kids when they can experience financial security in their own lives. And we plan to help hundreds of parents and guardians of our young children in the coming year. You can learn more about the support that Stand By Me offers to all Delawareans

by visiting [Stand By Me Dot Org](http://StandByMeDotOrg). By providing financial security for the families and workers who care for our youngest children, we help them thrive personally and professionally. And that will keep Delaware moving forward.