

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4864

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

AN ACT

To develop and implement policies to advance early childhood development, to provide assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Global Child Thrive
3 Act of 2020”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) According to a 2019 report from the United
7 Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Es-
8 timation entitled “Levels & Trends in Child Mor-
9 tality”, the annual number of deaths among children
10 younger than 15 years of age dropped by 56 percent
11 between 1990 and 2018, from approximately
12 14,200,000 to approximately 6,200,000.

13 (2) According to a 2016 article published in
14 The Lancet entitled “Early childhood development:
15 the foundation of sustainable development”—

16 (A) an estimated 250,000,000 children in
17 low-income and middle-income countries suffer
18 suboptimal development due to poverty and
19 stunting alone; and

20 (B) children who do not meet develop-
21 mental milestones are expected to lose about 25
22 percent of their average yearly income once
23 they become adults.

24 (3) According to a report from the United Na-
25 tions Children’s Fund (UNICEF), entitled “The
26 State of the World’s Children 2016: A fair chance

1 for every child”, nearly 250,000,000 of the world’s
2 650,000,000 primary school age children do not
3 master basic literacy and numeracy.

4 (4) According to a 2018 report from the World
5 Health Organization entitled “Nurturing Care for
6 early childhood development”—

7 (A) the environment in which a child grows
8 has a profound impact on future learning, be-
9 havior, and health; and

10 (B) a country’s economic diversity and
11 growth could be improved by investment in
12 early childhood development.

13 (5) According to a 2017 UNICEF report enti-
14 tled “UNICEF’s Programme Guidance for Early
15 Childhood Development”, nurturing care, which is
16 key to early childhood development, consists of a
17 core set of interrelated components, including—

18 (A) behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge
19 about caregiving, including health, hygiene care,
20 and feeding;

21 (B) stimulation, such as talking, singing,
22 and playing;

23 (C) responsiveness, such as early bonding,
24 secure attachment, trust, and sensitive commu-
25 nication; and

1 (D) safety, including routines, protection
2 from violence, abuse, neglect, harm, and envi-
3 ronmental pollution.

4 (6) According to a 2016 report published in
5 The Lancet entitled “Advancing Early Childhood
6 Development: From Science to Scale”—

7 (A) nurturing care from parents, relatives,
8 and other caregivers and services are formative
9 experiences for young children;

10 (B) programs promoting nurturing care
11 can improve early childhood development out-
12 comes; and

13 (C) children who do not receive nurturing
14 care display negative development outcomes,
15 such as greater sensitivity to the effects of
16 stress or behavioral problems, especially chil-
17 dren who do not receive nurturing care before
18 their second birthday.

19 (7) According to the “Advancing Protection and
20 Care for Children in Adversity 2019–2023: A U.S.
21 Government Strategy for International Assistance”,
22 children who live without protective family care, in
23 abusive households, on the streets, or in institutions,
24 or who are trafficked, are participating in armed
25 groups, or are being exploited for their labor are

1 more likely to be exposed to violence, exploitation,
2 abuse, and neglect.

3 (8) According to a 2017 UNICEF report enti-
4 tled “Early Moments Matter for every child”, vio-
5 lence, abuse, neglect, and traumatic experiences
6 produce toxic stress that limits neural connectivity
7 in developing brains.

8 (9) According to a 2014 working paper from
9 the National Scientific Council on the Developing
10 Child at Harvard University entitled “Excessive
11 Stress Disrupts the Architecture of the Developing
12 Brain”—

13 (A) situations that produce toxic stress in-
14 crease the production of cortisol in a child’s
15 brain, which disrupts its healthy development;
16 and

17 (B) chronic stress can potentially affect
18 the expression of genes that regulate the stress
19 response across the life course.

20 (10) According to a 2018 article in the North
21 Carolina Medical Journal entitled “Adverse Child-
22 hood Experiences (ACEs): An Important Element of
23 a Comprehensive Approach to the Opioid Crisis”,
24 adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic
25 or stressful experiences, including emotional, phys-

1 ical, or sexual abuse, domestic violence, household
2 substance abuse, household mental illness, parental
3 separation or divorce, and the incarceration of a
4 household family member.

5 (11) According to a 2016 report in Develop-
6 ment and Psychopathology entitled “Childhood Ad-
7 versity and Epigenetic Regulation of Glucocorticoid
8 Signaling Genes: Associations in Children and
9 Adults”—

10 (A) children and adults are at risk of de-
11 veloping psychiatric disorders and other medical
12 conditions if they have had an adverse child-
13 hood experience; and

14 (B) adults who have had numerous ACEs
15 die nearly 20 years earlier, on average, than
16 adults who have not had numerous ACEs.

17 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

18 It is the sense of Congress that—

19 (1) the United States Government should con-
20 tinue efforts to reduce child mortality rates and in-
21 crease attention on prevention efforts and early
22 childhood development programs;

23 (2) investments in early childhood development
24 ensure healthy and well-developed future generations

1 that contribute to a country’s stability, security and
2 economic prosperity;

3 (3) efforts to provide training and education on
4 nurturing care could result in improved early child-
5 hood development outcomes and support healthy
6 brain development; and

7 (4) integration and cross-sector coordination of
8 early childhood development programs is critical to
9 ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, and continued
10 implementation of such programs.

11 **SEC. 4. ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE EARLY CHILDHOOD OUT-**
12 **COMES GLOBALLY.**

13 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF ASSISTANCE.—Amounts au-
14 thorized to be appropriated to carry out section 135 in
15 chapter 1 of part 1 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961
16 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) for each of the fiscal years 2021
17 through 2025 are authorized to be made available to sup-
18 port early childhood development activities in conjunction
19 with relevant, existing programming, such as water, sani-
20 tation and hygiene, maternal and child health, basic edu-
21 cation, nutrition and child protection.

22 (b) ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE EARLY CHILDHOOD
23 OUTCOMES GLOBALLY.—Chapter 1 of part I of the For-
24 eign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) is
25 amended by adding at the end the following:

1 **“SEC. 137. ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE EARLY CHILDHOOD**
2 **OUTCOMES GLOBALLY.**

3 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 “(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
5 TEES.—The term ‘appropriate congressional com-
6 mittees’ means—

7 “(A) the Committee on Appropriations of
8 the Senate;

9 “(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations
10 of the Senate;

11 “(C) the Committee on Appropriations of
12 the House of Representatives; and

13 “(D) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
14 the House of Representatives.

15 “(2) EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT.—The
16 term ‘early childhood development’ means the devel-
17 opment and learning of a child younger than 8 years
18 of age, including physical, cognitive, social, and emo-
19 tional development and approaches to learning that
20 allow a child to reach his or her full developmental
21 potential.

22 “(3) EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PRO-
23 GRAM.—The term ‘early childhood development pro-
24 gram’ means a program that ensures that every
25 child has the conditions for healthy growth, nur-
26 turing family-based care, development and learning,

1 and protection from violence, exploitation, abuse,
2 and neglect, which may include—

3 “(A) a health, clean water, sanitation, and
4 hygiene program that serves pregnant women,
5 children younger than 5 years of age, and the
6 parents of such children;

7 “(B) a nutrition program, combined with
8 stimulating child development activity;

9 “(C) age appropriate cognitive stimulation,
10 especially for newborns, infants, and toddlers,
11 including an early childhood intervention pro-
12 gram for children experiencing at-risk situa-
13 tions, developmental delays, disabilities, and be-
14 havioral and mental health conditions;

15 “(D) an early learning (36 months and
16 younger), preschool, and basic education pro-
17 gram for children until they reach 8 years of
18 age or complete primary school; or

19 “(E) a child protection program, with an
20 emphasis on the promotion of permanent, safe,
21 and nurturing families, rather than placement
22 in residential care or institutions, including for
23 children with disabilities.

1 “(4) FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGEN-
2 CIES.—The term ‘Federal departments and agencies’
3 means—

4 “(A) the Department of State;

5 “(B) the United States Agency for Inter-
6 national Development;

7 “(C) the Department of the Treasury;

8 “(D) the Department of Labor;

9 “(E) the Department of Education;

10 “(F) the Department of Agriculture;

11 “(G) the Department of Defense;

12 “(H) the Department of Health and
13 Human Services, including—

14 “(i) the Centers for Disease Control
15 and Prevention; and

16 “(ii) the National Institutes of
17 Health;

18 “(I) the Millennium Challenge Corpora-
19 tion;

20 “(J) the Peace Corps; and

21 “(K) any other department or agency spec-
22 ified by the President for the purposes of this
23 section.

24 “(5) RESIDENTIAL CARE.—The term ‘residen-
25 tial care’ means care provided in any non-family-

1 based group setting, including orphanages, transit or
2 interim care centers, children’s homes, children’s vil-
3 lages or cottage complexes, group homes, and board-
4 ing schools used primarily for care purposes as an
5 alternative to a children’s home.

6 “(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the
7 United States—

8 “(1) to support early childhood development in
9 relevant foreign assistance programs, including by
10 integrating evidence-based, efficient, and effective
11 interventions into relevant strategies and programs,
12 in coordination with partner countries, other donors,
13 international organizations, international financial
14 institutions, local and international nongovernmental
15 organizations, private sector partners, civil society,
16 and faith-based and community-based organizations;
17 and

18 “(2) to encourage partner countries to lead
19 early childhood development initiatives that include
20 incentives for building local capacity for continued
21 implementation and measurable results, by—

22 “(A) scaling up the most effective, evi-
23 dence-based, national interventions, including
24 for the most vulnerable populations and chil-
25 dren with disabilities and developmental delays,

1 with a focus on adaptation to country re-
2 sources, cultures, and languages;

3 “(B) designing, implementing, monitoring,
4 and evaluating programs in a manner that en-
5 hances their quality, transparency, equity, ac-
6 countability, efficiency and effectiveness in im-
7 proving child and family outcomes in partner
8 countries; and

9 “(C) utilizing and expanding innovative
10 public-private financing mechanisms.

11 “(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
13 the date of the enactment of this section, the Admin-
14 istrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
15 national Development, in coordination with the Sec-
16 retary of State, shall direct relevant Federal depart-
17 ments and agencies—

18 “(A) to incorporate, to the extent practical
19 and relevant, early childhood development into
20 foreign assistance programs to be carried out
21 during the following 5 fiscal years; and

22 “(B) to promote inclusive early childhood
23 development in partner countries.

24 “(2) ELEMENTS.—In carrying out paragraph
25 (1), the Administrator, the Secretary, and the heads

1 of other relevant Federal departments and agencies
2 as appropriate shall—

3 “(A) build on the evidence and priorities
4 outlined in ‘Advancing Protection and Care for
5 Children in Adversity: A U.S. Government
6 Strategy for International Assistance 2019–
7 2023’, published in June 2019 (referred to in
8 this section as ‘APCCA’);

9 “(B) to the extent practicable, identify evi-
10 dence-based strategic priorities, indicators, out-
11 comes, and targets, particularly emphasizing
12 the most vulnerable populations and children
13 with disabilities and developmental delays, to
14 support inclusive early childhood development;

15 “(C) support the design, implementation,
16 and evaluation of pilot projects in partner coun-
17 tries, with the goal of taking such projects to
18 scale;

19 “(D) support inclusive early childhood de-
20 velopment within all relevant sector strategies
21 and public laws, including—

22 “(i) the Global Water Strategy re-
23 quired under section 136(j);

24 “(ii) the whole-of-government strategy
25 required under section 5 of the Global

1 Food Security Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C.
2 9304 note);

3 “(iii) the Basic Education Strategy
4 set forth in section 105(c);

5 “(iv) the U.S. Government Global Nu-
6 trition Coordination Plan, 2016–2021; and

7 “(v) APCCA; and others as appro-
8 priate;

9 “(E) improve coordination with foreign
10 governments and international and regional or-
11 ganizations with respect to official country poli-
12 cies and plans to improve early childhood devel-
13 opment, maternal, newborn, and child health
14 and nutrition care, basic education, water, sani-
15 tation and hygiene, and child protection plans
16 which promote nurturing, appropriate, protec-
17 tive, and permanent family care, while reducing
18 the percentage of children living in residential
19 care or on the street; and

20 “(F) consult with partner countries, other
21 donors, international organizations, inter-
22 national financial institutions, local and inter-
23 national nongovernmental organizations, private
24 sector partners and faith-based and community-
25 based organizations, as appropriate.

1 “(d) ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
2 THE STRATEGY.—The Special Advisor for Children in Ad-
3 versity shall include, in the annual report required under
4 section 5 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulner-
5 able Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005 (22
6 U.S.C. 2152g), which shall be submitted to the appro-
7 priate congressional committees and made publicly avail-
8 able, a description of—

9 “(1) the progress made toward integrating early
10 childhood development interventions into relevant
11 strategies and programs;

12 “(2) the efforts made by relevant Federal de-
13 partments and agencies to implement subsection (c),
14 with a particular focus on the activities described in
15 such subsection;

16 “(3) the progress achieved during the reporting
17 period toward meeting the goals, objectives, bench-
18 marks, described in subsection (c); and

19 “(4) the progress achieved during the reporting
20 period toward meeting the goals, objectives, bench-
21 marks, and timeframes described in subsection (c) at
22 the program level, along with specific challenges or
23 gaps that may require shifts in targeting or financ-
24 ing in the following fiscal year.

1 “(e) INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE.—The Special Advi-
 2 sor for Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children
 3 should regularly convene an interagency task force, to co-
 4 ordinate—

5 “(1) intergovernmental and interagency moni-
 6 toring, evaluation, and reporting of the activities
 7 carried out pursuant to this section;

8 “(2) early childhood development initiatives
 9 that include children with a variety of needs and cir-
 10 cumstances; and

11 “(3) United States Government early childhood
 12 development programs, strategies, and partnerships
 13 across relevant Federal departments and agencies.”.

14 **SEC. 5. SPECIAL ADVISOR FOR ASSISTANCE TO ORPHANS**
 15 **AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN.**

16 Section 135(e)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of
 17 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2152f(e)(2)) is amended—

18 (1) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as
 19 follows:

20 “(A) Coordinate assistance to orphans and
 21 other vulnerable children among the relevant
 22 Executive branch agencies and officials.”; and

23 (2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “the var-
 24 ious offices, bureaus, and field missions within the
 25 United States Agency for International Develop-

Nothing in the amendments made by this Act may be construed to restrict or abrogate any other authorization for United States Agency for International Development activities or programs.

Attest: CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.