



## Candidates Early Childhood Education Survey Results

The Children Matter Action Fund is surveying all candidates for Pennsylvania House and Senate seats to learn more about their views on childcare and early childhood education. We invite you to learn more by reviewing their responses below; by contacting their campaigns; and by following them on social media. Let them know your views on the importance of ensuring young children in Pennsylvania get the early education supports they need and deserve.

Name: **Joanna Bryn Smith**

Current Job: Assistant Conflict Counsel Attorney

Website: <http://www.paforjbs.com>

Social Media: @PAforJBS

Campaign Contact Person: **Allie Boyer**

Campaign Contact Cell Phone: **559-760-9717**

Campaign Contact Email Address: **allie@paforjbs.com**

You are running for election in which

House or Senate District?: **House District 120**

**Q: What are your views on the benefits, or drawbacks, of allocating additional state funds for high-quality early learning education?**

**A:** I believe very strongly that there are only benefits of allocating additional state funds for high-quality early learning education. The earlier a child begins to learn and the earlier a child has a chance to grow to love learning, it will grow into a life-long love of learning, which in turn will benefit that child and society.

**Q: Will you support increasing annual investments in the Pre-K Counts and Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program line items?**

**A:** Yes. I believe this investment is vital to the future of our country.

**Q: How important, or unimportant, is expanding access to high-quality child care to working families in your district?**

**A:** Education is absolutely a top priority in my district. My district is a working district and almost everyone I know needs childcare in some way. When we invest in high-quality child care, we invest in the future of our community.

**Q: If you support increased state investment in subsidized child care for infants and toddlers at the campaign's recommended levels, how will you help the campaign expand child care for working families? OR If you do not support the proposed increases in access to child care, please explain why.**

**A:** I support increased state investment in subsidized child care for infants and toddlers at the campaign's recommended levels. One way that we can ensure that the program is being used to its full potential is to help childcare centers with a high percentage of CCW children reach STAR Level 2.

**Q: Improved parenting skills, increased family economic self-sufficiency, improved maternal and child health and reducing abuse and neglect are just a few of the key benefits realized through evidence-based home visiting services. How do you view the needs and benefits of home visiting to families?**

**A:** I support the Childhood Begins at Home initiative, and after working in public defense for nearly a decade, I have become acutely familiar that there is a holistic way to assist families who need these additional services. I have worked with many families who have needed these kinds of home visiting programs, and am proud to be able to say that I have worked with local programs to assist these at-risk or vulnerable families. When we care for our children and invest the resources up-front to ensure they are successful, we can begin to better combat inequality.

**Q: How will you support the expansion of state investment dollars to serve those in your district who can benefit from home visiting?**

**A:** I will commit to looking for new and different financial revenues to expand these home visiting programs. For example, currently, on average Pennsylvania spends about \$14k per year on a child in school, but \$160k per year for every child involved in any way in the juvenile justice system. I would look to move those funds to invest them on the front end, for young children and families. I submit that if we invested those resources on the front end, we would not need that revenue on the back end in the juvenile justice system.

**Q: What would you do to increase payments to high-quality providers to improve their ability to retain qualified professionals?**

**A:** Again, I believe the legislature to have been myopic when handling child care and intervention. I am not a proponent of placing the resources in the juvenile justice system, I would support a reinvestment of these resources into many facets of early child care, including retaining high-quality professionals. In the case of childcare, I truly believe that a higher investment on the front end yields a better result and saves resources in the long run.

**Q: How will you champion early care and early childhood education?**

**A:** I have always been a champion of early child care and early childhood education; I am a living example of how beneficial these programs are. I know that better communities start with better schools, including early childhood education. When we have good education, it brings people to the community, which brings businesses, which brings jobs. Everyone wins when we ensure we have exceptional and equally accessible early care and early childhood education.