

RUTH J. FRIEDMAN, PH.D.

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SUMMARY

Dr. Friedman is a national early learning and child and family policy expert with over 20 years of experience improving the wellbeing of children and families. She has deep subject-matter and political expertise and a strong record of achieving major policy wins for children and families. She led the Democrats' early learning agenda in the U.S. House of Representatives for over a decade and both led and supported numerous child and family policy efforts on behalf of Congressman George Miller (D-CA) and House Democrats, including laws and initiatives on Head Start, pre-k, child care, and home visiting, and in the areas of family poverty, child abuse, early intervention, juvenile justice, and child safety. As an independent consultant, she continues to focus on improving the wellbeing of children and families through collaborations with think tanks, advocacy organizations, researchers, foundations, and the Office of Head Start. She provides child development, policy, and political expertise in ways that drive program improvements, strengthen federal and state advocacy, bridge research and policy, and identify policy opportunities to improve child wellbeing. She also serves as the executive director of the National Child Abuse Coalition. She has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology and an M.A. in public policy. Prior to working for Congress, she worked as a researcher and therapist, focusing on resiliency in children and families.

EXPERIENCE

Child and Family Policy Consultant, Washington D.C.

January 2013 – present

Applying federal and state policy and political experience to enable think tanks, advocacy organizations, membership organizations, researchers, foundations, and government entities to be more effective in their efforts to support children and families. Particularly focused on high-leverage policy areas related to early childhood, early learning, family strengthening, and child maltreatment. Worked with more than twenty organizations, providing policy and political analysis and planning, strategic leadership and support, legislative content and advocacy expertise, and technical assistance for program improvements, new policy ideas, and strategies for improving federal and state policy.

A full description of projects is available upon request. Selected highlights include:

- Senior advisor to the Office of Head Start for the development and execution of major new Head Start regulation that overhauled the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Provided extensive child development, policy, program, and political expertise to senior staff in the development of improvements to early learning and education standards, program operations, accountability, and continuous improvement. Helped lead the development of a new birth-5 Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and advised in the implementation of new program standards and the development of a new monitoring system. (2013-2017)

- Executive Director of the National Child Abuse Coalition, a national leader in federal legislative and advocacy strategy on child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment. Focused on building coalitions that leverage policy changes to strengthen families, prioritize prevention, and reduce fatalities from maltreatment. (2016-present)
- Senior advisor to Child Care Aware of America, providing strategic and content expertise on child care policy for the organization's technical assistance efforts to state and local partners in the response to COVID-19. (2020-present)
- Director of the Society for Research in Child Development State Policy Fellowship, which supports placements of developmental scientists in state departments of early learning to provide states with child development and research expertise and build a workforce that can bridge research with policy development, implementation, and evaluation. (2016-present)
- Top Democratic advisor for the Bipartisan Policy Center's Early Childhood Initiative, chaired by former members, Rep. George Miller and Sen. Santorum. Developed bipartisan early childhood recommendations to better support children's earliest years, help strengthen families, and build stronger communities through paid leave, tax policy, child care, and home visiting. Recommendations facilitated key changes to the child tax credit for low-income families. (2016-2018)
- Expert advisor to the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Foundation in the development of the Children's Initiative, a major nationwide PN-3 effort to expand high-quality services to low-income families with infants and toddlers. Helped identify key policy levers to support child development and health, worked with state stakeholders to identify opportunities for policy change, developed recommendations for effective outreach to policymakers, developed multifaceted public policy strategy for early childhood and health policy, developed a short-term federal strategy to defend key federal programs for children under age three and a longer term federal investment strategy, and served on an expert advisory council. (2017-2018)

Other clients include: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Campaign 4 Youth Justice, Carsey School of Public Policy, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Common Sense Media, Council of Chief State School Officers, Easter Seals, Foundation for Child Development, Juvenile Law Center, Leadership for Educational Equity, MDRC, National Women's Law Center, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation in HHS, and The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Democratic Staff, Committee on Education & Labor, U.S. House of Representatives

2000-2013

Director of Education Policy, 2011 – 2013; Deputy Director of Education Policy, 2009 – 2011; Senior Education Policy Advisor, 2007 – 2009; Legislative Associate, 2001 – 2006; American Psychological Association Congressional Fellow, 2000 – 2001

Led the House Democrats' early learning agenda and shaped policy and political debates, legislation, and laws on child, youth, and family policy on behalf of Chairman/Ranking Member George Miller (D-CA), Committee Democrats, and the House Democratic Caucus, including on Head Start, child care, pre-K, home visiting, IDEA Part C, child abuse prevention and intervention, TANF, juvenile justice, child safety, runaway and homeless youth, missing children, and the Community

Development Block Grant. Developed new policy ideas, bills, amendments, House strategy, laws and led negotiations; crafted messaging and implemented communication strategy; represented Democrats with stakeholders and built coalitions to support policy and political goals; launched Committee investigations and oversight; and managed Committee education staff.

Major legislative and policy accomplishments include:

- Led the House Democratic passage of the 2007 Head Start Act, including major reforms to improve teacher quality, instructional practices, and program accountability.
- Orchestrated the defeat of President Bush's proposals to block grant Head Start in 2003 and 2005 and the defeat of discriminatory hiring practices in Head Start in 2005.
- Drafted, in concert with the Obama Administration, and built support for The Early Learning Challenge Fund Act of 2010, which became the blueprint for the \$1 billion Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge.
- Authored The PRE-K Act of 2007, a new approach to the federal role in pre-K, later used to develop the \$1 billion Preschool Development Grants program, 2014-2017.
- Authored the Child Development and Family Employment Act of 2002, the Democratic alternative for CCDBG reauthorization, including reforms to make child care more affordable, improve child care quality, stabilize the child care field, and improve provider training and compensation.
- Led passage of the Uninterrupted Scholars Act of 2013, a law that has led to improved coordination between child welfare and school districts and better support for the educational outcomes of children in foster care.
- Led the House Democratic efforts in the reauthorization of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 2003 and 2010, including reforms to improve services for abused children and their families and led the efforts on runaway and homeless youth reauthorization, missing and exploited children reauthorization, and the Community Development Block Grant.
- Directed investigations into abusive practices toward teens in wilderness boot camps and developed an oversight bill that leveraged industry changes in the industry.
- Contributed to the investigation into seclusion/restraint practices in schools and worked with Obama Administration to develop federal guidance.
- Directed the first Congressional action on home visiting in 2008, leading to the passage of the Maternal and Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting Act in 2010.
- Planned and executed the Speaker's 2008 National Summit on America's Children.
- Led Committee Democrats' efforts to shift focus of TANF to poverty reduction and include child wellbeing as key outcome.
- Provided oversight and strategic planning for committee agenda, including for child nutrition, elementary and secondary education, and workforce investment.

Post-Doctoral & Doctoral Experience

Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University 1999-2000

Arizona State University, University of Illinois-Chicago 1993-1999

- Published expert in child and youth development, psychopathology and mental health, research methods, and statistical analysis.

- Conducted research on multi-state longitudinal study of the impact of poverty and TANF reform on child and family wellbeing. Conducted statistical analysis and data management, supervised graduate research assistants, prepared policy briefs, and developed peer-reviewed presentations.
- Conducted research on the effects of violence exposure on child wellbeing; urban poverty and mental health; how families buffer the effects of urban stress on adolescent delinquency and depression; and the impact of parental alcoholism on child and youth wellbeing.
- Provided individual, family, and group therapy to children and families from disadvantaged backgrounds, conducted child assessments, and collaborated with Chicago Public Schools and the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services on treatment for children.
- Provided therapy and case management, conducted child assessments, and consulted with the state foster care system at a shelter serving abused and neglected children under the age 10.

SAMPLE PUBLICATION

Friedman, R.J. & Chase-Lansdale, P.L.. (2002). Chronic adversities. In M. Rutter and E. Taylor (Eds.), *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Modern Approaches, 4th Edition*. Blackwell Scientific Publications.

EDUCATION

Ph.D.	1999	Clinical Psychology, Arizona State University
M.A.	2000	Public Policy, University of Chicago
M.A.	1996	Psychology, Arizona State University
B.A.	1992	Psychology, Pomona College