



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 6694

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BANAL, SARMIENTO (M.), VILLARICA, GARIN (S.), LACSON-NOEL,
GUANLAO, RODRIGUEZ (R.), RAMOS, GOMEZ, ARQUIZA AND
LIMKAICHONG, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 2469

AN ACT RECOGNIZING THE AGE FROM ZERO (0) TO EIGHT (8)
YEARS AS THE FIRST CRUCIAL STAGE OF EDUCATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING THE EARLY
CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Early
2 Years Act (EYA) of 2012”.

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the
4 State to promote the rights of children to survival, development and special
5 protection with full recognition of the nature of childhood and as well as the
6 need to provide developmentally appropriate experiences to address their
7 needs; and to support parents in their roles as primary caregivers and as their
8 children’s first teachers. Further, the State hereby recognizes the age from

1 zero (0) to eight (8) years as the first crucial stage of educational development
2 of which the age from zero (0) to four (4) years shall be the responsibility of
3 the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council. Therefore, the
4 responsibility to help develop children in the formative years between age five
5 (5) to eight (8) years shall be with the Department of Education (DepED).

6 The State shall institutionalize a National System for Early Childhood
7 Care and Development (ECCD) that is comprehensive, integrative and
8 sustainable, that involves multisectoral and interagency collaboration at the
9 national and local levels among government; among service providers, families
10 and communities, and among the public and private sectors, nongovernment
11 organizations; professional associations and academic institutions.

12 The System shall promote the inclusion of children with special needs,
13 provide for reasonable accommodation and accessible environments for
14 children with disabilities and advocate respect for cultural and linguistic
15 diversity, including the use of Filipino Sign Language as the visual language of
16 the deaf community. It shall be anchored on complementary strategies for
17 ECCD that include service delivery for children from age zero (0) to four (4)
18 years, educating parents and caregivers, encouraging the active involvement of
19 parents and communities in ECCD programs, raising awareness about the
20 important efforts that improve the quality of life for young children and
21 families.

22 SEC. 3. *Objectives.* – The National ECCD System shall pursue the
23 following objectives:

24 (a) To achieve improved infant and child survival rates by ensuring
25 that adequate health and nutrition programs are accessible to young children
26 and their parents, from the prenatal period throughout the early childhood
27 years;

1 (b) To enhance the physical-motor, socio-emotional, cognitive,
2 language, psychological and spiritual development of young children;

3 (c) To facilitate a smooth transition from care and education provided
4 at home to community or school-based setting and to kindergarten;

5 (d) To ensure that young children are adequately prepared for the
6 formal learning system that begins at kindergarten;

7 (e) To establish an efficient system for early identification, prevention,
8 referral and intervention for the wide range of children with special needs from
9 age zero (0) to four (4) years;

10 (f) To upgrade and update the capabilities of service providers and
11 their supervisors to comply with quality standards for various ECCD programs;

12 (g) To reinforce the role of parents and other caregivers as the primary
13 caregivers and educators of their children especially from age zero (0) to four
14 (4) years;

15 (h) To enhance and sustain the efforts of communities to promote
16 ECCD programs and ensure that special support is provided for poor,
17 disadvantaged and linguistic minority communities;

18 (i) To improve the quality standards of public and private ECCD
19 programs through, but not limited to, a registration and credential system for
20 ECCD service providers and facilities;

21 (j) To ensure that the education of persons, and in particular children,
22 who are blind, deaf or deafblind, are conducted in the most appropriate
23 languages, modes and means of communication for the individual, and in
24 environments which maximize academic and social development; and

25 (k) To employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are
26 qualified in sign language and/or braille, and to train professionals and staff
27 who work at all levels of education.

1 SEC. 4. *Definitions.* – The following terms are defined as follows:

2 (a) *Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) System* shall refer
3 to the full range of health, nutrition, early education and social services
4 development programs that provide for the basic holistic needs of young
5 children from age zero (0) to four (4) years; and to promote their optimum
6 growth and development.

7 These programs shall include:

8 (1) Center-based programs, such as the day care service established
9 under Republic Act No. 6972, otherwise known as the “Barangay – Level
10 Total Development and Protection of Children Act”, and hereinafter referred to
11 as the child development service, community or church-based early childhood
12 education programs initiated by nongovernment organizations or people’s
13 organizations, workplace-related child care and education programs,
14 child-minding centers, health centers and stations; and

15 (2) Home-based programs, such as the neighborhood-based play
16 groups, family child care programs, parent education and home visiting
17 programs.

18 (b) *ECCD Service Providers* shall include the various professionals,
19 paraprofessionals and volunteer caregivers who are directly responsible for the
20 care and education of young children from age zero (0) to four (4) years
21 through the various centers and home-based programs. They shall include, but
22 shall not be limited to, day care workers hereinafter referred to as child
23 development workers, child development teachers, teacher-aides, rural health
24 midwives, social workers, community health workers, barangay nutrition
25 scholars, parent effectiveness service volunteers, and family day care
26 providers.

27 (c) *ECCD Curriculum* shall refer to the developmentally-appropriate
28 educational objectives and practices, programs of activities, organized learning

1 experiences, recommended learning materials and appropriate assessment for
2 children from age zero (0) to four (4) years that are implemented by service
3 providers through center and home-based programs. It shall consist of national
4 program goals and guidelines, instructional objectives, and content outlines
5 that are age-appropriate, individually appropriate and culturally relevant.

6 (d) *Parent Education* shall refer to the various formal and alternative
7 means of providing parents with information, skills, and support systems to
8 assist them in their roles as their children's primary caregivers and educators.
9 These include public and private parent education programs linked to center,
10 home and media-based child care and education programs.

11 *SEC. 5. System Framework and Components.* – The ECCD System
12 shall ensure that the National ECCD Program is implemented in accordance
13 with quality standards for accreditation and for this purpose there shall be
14 established a National ECCD Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. The
15 ECCD System shall include the following components:

16 (a) *ECCD Curriculum.* – The curriculum shall focus on children's total
17 development and take into account age, individual and socio-cultural
18 appropriateness. It shall promote the delivery of complementary and
19 integrative services for health, nutrition, early childhood education, sanitation
20 and cultural activities. It shall use the child's first language as the medium of
21 instruction;

22 (b) *Parent Education and Involvement, Advocacy and Mobilization of*
23 *Communities.* – This component shall harness and develop parents' strengths
24 as providers of ECCD programs at home, as active partners of other
25 stakeholders, as advocates for community concerns that affect children, and as
26 pillars of support for local and national ECCD programs through community
27 organization efforts;

1 (c) Human Resource Development Program. – The program shall
2 establish mechanisms for the systematic professionalization of ECCD service
3 providers through enrolment in educational program in site-based or distance
4 education modes, through pre-service or in-service training including
5 continuing education programs, whereby a registration and credential system
6 shall be developed in the ECCD System; and

7 (d) ECCD Management. – This component shall consist of a
8 continuing process of planning, implementation, supervision, financial
9 management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting to persons concerned and
10 shall encourage the active involvement of and build the capabilities of service
11 providers, parents and local government officials to sustain the program.

12 SEC. 6. *Expanding the ECCD System.* – The National ECCD System
13 shall henceforth apply to all provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays as
14 may be determined by the ECCD Council to achieve universal ECCD coverage
15 for all children from age zero (0) to four (4) years.

16 SEC. 7. *Implementing Arrangements and Operational Structures.* –
17 The implementation of the National ECCD System shall be the responsibility
18 of the ECCD Council.

19 (a) Responsibilities of the ECCD Council. – The ECCD Council shall
20 be responsible for establishing national standards, developing policies and
21 programs, ensuring compliance thereof, providing technical assistance and
22 support to the ECCD service providers in consultation with coordinating
23 committees at the provincial, city, municipal and barangay levels.

24 The Department of Education (DepED), the Department of Social
25 Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Health (DOH), the
26 National Nutrition Council (NNC) and the Union of Local Authorities of the
27 Philippines (ULAP) shall meet in an annual workshop to prepare work and
28 financial plans that will coordinate their technical assistance and support for

1 the National ECCD Program. They shall observe existing implementing
2 guidelines that ensure consistency in integrated service delivery within the
3 National ECCD System, as follows:

4 (1) The DepED shall recognize the National ECCD Program as the
5 foundation of the learning continuum and shall promote it for all children from
6 age zero (0) to four (4) years; and

7 (2) The DepED, the DSWD, the DOH and the NNC shall provide
8 continuing professional development program support, supplementary learning
9 materials, reference materials, supplemental nutrition and health care services.

10 (b) Responsibilities of Local Government Units. – Local government
11 units (LGUs) shall include allocations from their Special Education Fund
12 (SEF) and Gender and Development (GAD) Fund in addition to other local
13 funds to be utilized for the following purposes:

14 (1) Support the implementation of their ECCD Program;

15 (2) Organize and support parent cooperatives to establish
16 community-based ECCD programs;

17 (3) Provide counterpart funds for the continuing professional
18 development of their ECCD public service providers; and

19 (4) Provide the facilities for the conduct of their ECCD Program.

20 (c) Responsibilities of Families and Communities. – Families and
21 communities shall support the local ECCD programs by participating in
22 various community-based projects such as, but not limited to, health, nutrition,
23 social development and early childhood education projects for the overall
24 development of their children from age zero (0) to four (4) years.

25 *SEC. 8. Strengthening the ECCD Council.* – The ECCD Council shall
26 be strengthened to ensure the State's focus on building a strong foundation for
27 the development and learning of children during the early years from age zero
28 (0) to four (4) years, to support the full range of health, nutrition, early

1 education and social development programs for the child's holistic
2 development and ensure sustained interagency and multisectoral collaboration.
3 The Council shall be attached to the DepED.

4 SEC. 9. *Organization of the ECCD Council.* – The ECCD Council
5 shall be composed of the following:

6 (a) ECCD Governing Board. – The ECCD Governing Board shall be
7 composed of:

8 (1) Secretary of the DepED, as *ex officio* Chairperson;

9 (2) Executive Director of the ECCD Council, as Vice Chairperson;

10 (3) Secretary of the DSWD, as member;

11 (4) Secretary of the DOH, as member;

12 (5) Executive Director of the NNC, as member;

13 (6) President of the ULAP, as member; and

14 (7) One (1) private individual who is an ECCD practitioner and expert
15 shall be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Board, as
16 member.

17 The Board shall meet once a month or upon the call of the Chairperson
18 or three (3) members of the Board.

19 (b) Council Secretariat. – There shall be established an ECCD
20 Council Secretariat to be headed by an Executive Director. The Secretariat
21 shall provide support services for the coordination and monitoring of the
22 implementation of policies and plans formulated by the Council subject to the
23 Compensation and Position Classification System and other existing civil
24 service rules and regulations.

25 SEC. 10. *Functions of the ECCD Council.* – The ECCD Council shall
26 carry out the objectives of the National ECCD System by performing the
27 following functions:

1 (a) Promulgate policies and implement guidelines for ECCD programs
2 in consultation with stakeholders, including the regional level when
3 appropriate, consistent with the national policy and program frameworks as
4 defined in this Act;

5 (b) Establish ECCD program standards that reflect developmentally
6 appropriate practices for ECCD programs, which shall interface with the
7 kindergarten curriculum of the DepED;

8 (c) Develop a national system for the recruitment, registration,
9 accreditation, continuing education and equivalency, and credential system of
10 ECCD service providers, supervisors and administrators to improve and
11 professionalize the ECCD sector and upgrade quality standards of public and
12 private ECCD programs;

13 (d) Develop a national system of awards and recognition to deserving
14 ECCD program implementers and service providers;

15 (e) Promote, encourage and coordinate the various ECCD programs of
16 the DepED, the DSWD, the DOH and the NNC, and monitor the delivery of
17 services to the ECCD program beneficiaries nationwide;

18 (f) Evaluate and assess the impact and outcome of various ECCD
19 programs nationwide through an effective information system;

20 (g) Develop a national system for early identification, screening and
21 surveillance of young children from age zero (0) to four (4) years;

22 (h) Develop various support mechanisms that maximize public and
23 private resources for implementing ECCD programs, giving priority to the
24 needy and high risk children from poor communities;

25 (i) Provide funds to poor and disadvantaged communities for the
26 establishment and expansion of public ECCD programs, improvement of
27 physical facilities and for hiring of ECCD service providers;

1 (j) Promote and encourage private sector initiatives for the
2 establishment of ECCD programs;

3 (k) Provide guidelines for the conduct of solicitations from local and
4 international civic organizations, and request private foundations to
5 supplement available resources; and

6 (l) Perform such other functions as the ECCD Council may deem
7 necessary.

8 SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount needed for the initial
9 implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's
10 appropriations of the DepED, the DSWD, the DOH and the NNC for the
11 purpose. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued
12 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General
13 Appropriations Act (GAA).

14 In addition, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation shall
15 contribute an amount of Five hundred million pesos (P500,000,000.00) per
16 year for five (5) years from its gross income to fund the establishment of
17 National Child Development Centers and the conversion of existing Day Care
18 Centers into Child Development Centers in various LGUs upon approval of
19 this Act. Said amount shall be directly remitted in four (4) quarterly
20 installments to a special account of the ECCD Council.

21 SEC. 12. *Financing ECCD Programs.* – ECCD programs shall be
22 financed through a combination of public and private funds. All public ECCD
23 program providers shall prioritize children from age zero (0) to four (4) years
24 from families who are in greatest need and who can least afford private ECCD
25 programs.

26 (a) Financial and Technical Support. – The DepED, the DSWD and
27 the DOH shall support the implementation of the National ECCD System by
28 providing financial and technical support packages to ECCD programs.

1 (b) Other Forms of Support for ECCD Programs. -- LGUs shall be
2 encouraged to support public ECCD programs in their respective localities.
3 Additional funds may be generated from intergovernmental donors and
4 government financial institutions to support the public programs including the
5 urban poor.

6 There shall be established a fund for an ECCD Program Contracting
7 Scheme with accredited private providers at the community levels.

8 (c) Fees and Contributions. -- Fees and contributions collected for
9 both public and private ECCD programs shall be monitored by the ECCD
10 Council to ensure that these are affordable and within reasonable limits.
11 Families are encouraged to contribute their time and services to support the
12 ECCD programs.

13 SEC. 13. *Annual Report.* -- The ECCD Council shall, at the close of
14 each calendar year, submit annual physical and financial reports to Congress,
15 giving a detailed account of its proceedings and accomplishments during the
16 year, making recommendations for the adoption of measures that will improve
17 the National ECCD System and ensuring achievement of universal coverage of
18 ECCD benefits to all children from age zero (0) to four (4) years, within a
19 period of five (5) years.

20 SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* -- The ECCD Council,
21 in consultation with appropriate government agencies and nongovernment
22 organizations, shall formulate and issue the necessary rules and regulations
23 within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act.

24 SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* -- Republic Act No. 8980, otherwise
25 known as "An Act Promulgating A Comprehensive Policy And A National
26 System For Early Childhood Care And Development (ECCD), Providing
27 Funds Therefor And For Other Purposes" is hereby repealed.

1 All laws, decrees, executive orders, presidential proclamations, rules
2 and regulations or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions
3 of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

4 SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any portion of this
5 Act shall be declared unconstitutional, other parts or provisions hereof which
6 are not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

7 SEC. 17. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)
8 days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2)
9 newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

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