

Think Babies™ NC What Babies and Families Need to Thrive in North Carolina

January 11, 2019



Goals for the Webinar



- Provide overview on the North Carolina's Think Babies™ initiative and our public policy agenda.
- Encourage you to Think Babies™ – join us in promoting public awareness and policy solutions for infants, toddlers, and families at the national, state, and local levels.
- Share resources to help us all become effective advocates.
- Connect you to opportunities to engage in state and local advocacy activities.
- Build a big voice for babies across North Carolina and the nation!

Overview of Think Babies™ NC



**Make your biggest
priority the
little ones.**



**It's time to
#ThinkBabiesNC!**

Think Babies™ – A National Movement



It's Time to Make Their Potential Our Top Priority!

Build public awareness and policy support for infants, toddlers and families.

- **Pritzker Children's Initiative National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers**

- North Carolina
- Oregon
- New York
- California
- More states coming soon....

- **ZERO TO THREE Think Babies™**

- North Carolina
- Colorado
- Georgia
- Rhode Island
- New Jersey
- Washington

NATIONAL PARTNERS

A diverse network of trusted voices with broad and distinct reach to amplify campaign messages and help make the case for Think Babies™ policy priorities.

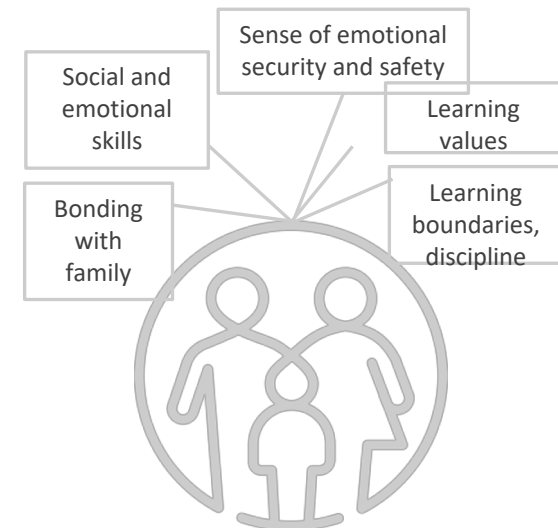
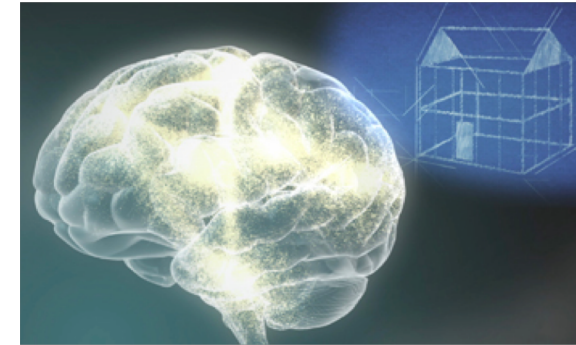
Core partners include:

- 1000 Days
- Alliance for Early Success
- BUILD
- Child Care Aware of America
- Child Trends
- Council for a Strong America (CSA)
- First Five Years Fund
- Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)
- Georgetown Center for Children and Families
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- National Black Child Development Institute
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Governors Association
- National League of Cities
- National Partnership for Women and Families
- Ounce of Prevention

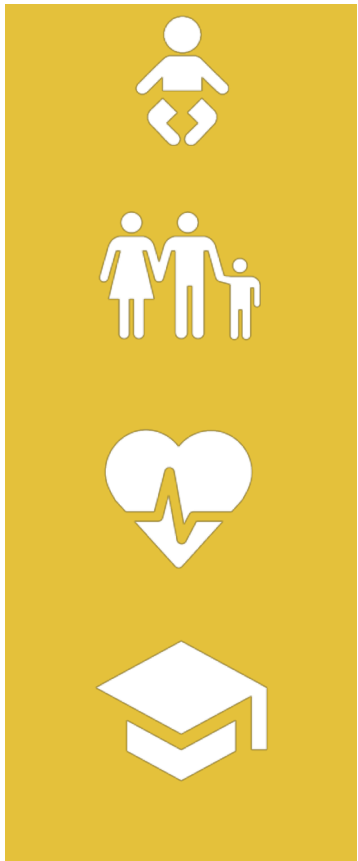
Why Focus on Infants and Toddlers?



- **Early brain science is clear:** Our brains grow faster between the ages of 0 and 3 than at any later point in our lives building the foundation for all future learning behavior and health.
- **Quality of Relationships:** Babies develop and learn through their relationships with adults in their lives—parents, family members, and their early educators, and other professionals.
- **Family Conditions:**
 - **Parenting:** Parenting is stressful and a stretch for all parents and families.
 - **Poverty:** leads to homelessness, food Insecurity, lack of health care, unsafe housing or neighborhoods.
 - **Toxic Stress:** Adversely affects brain development and child outcomes.



North Carolina Baby Facts

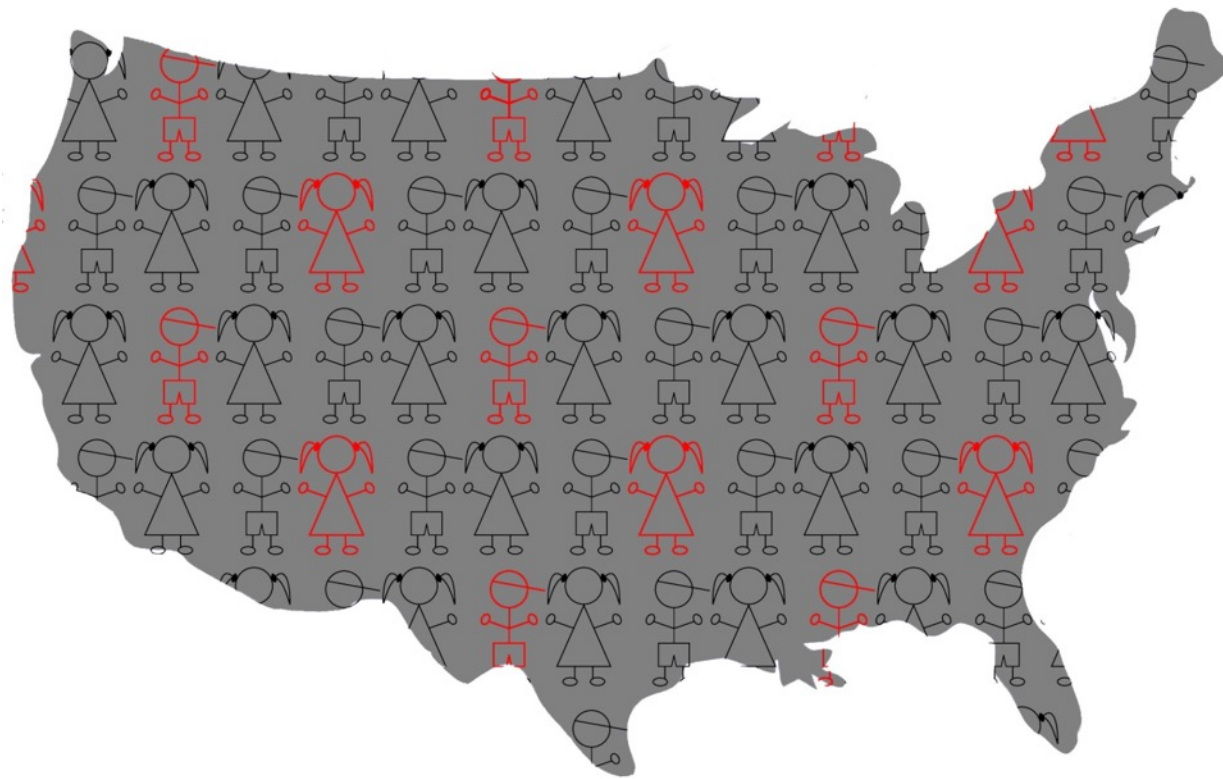


Each year, **120,700 babies** enter the world in North Carolina. There are a total of **363,000 infants and toddlers** under age three.

For too many, the road ahead is filled with huge obstacles and challenges. Consider these facts:

- 62% of parents with babies are working, and 25% return to work within two weeks of giving birth.
- 54% of all infants and toddlers live in poor and low income families
- 9% of babies are born at a low birth weight.
- 61% of children under age 3 experience one or more risk factors known to increase the chance of poor health, school, and developmental outcomes
- 56% have had developmental health screenings; 44% have not.
- 5% of infants and toddlers receive early intervention services.
- 27% of maltreated children are under age three.
- 12,000 infants and toddlers on the wait list for child care subsidies.
- Center-based infant child care costs \$9,254, 41% of the median income for a single parent.

Kindergarten Readiness Nationwide



1-in-4 children will arrive in their first classroom unprepared for their K-12 education success.

- 3 million children nationwide
- In NC – 125,000 children enter kindergarten each year – 30,000 not ready
- Children in low-income families at greater risk of not being prepared if they have not had benefit of quality early childhood program



2019 Policy Priorities for North Carolina's Infants, Toddlers & Their Families

Developed by the Think Babies™ NC Leadership Team



**NORTH CAROLINA
EARLY EDUCATION COALITION**

The NC Early Education Coalition is a proud partner in the national ZERO TO THREE Think Babies™ campaign and in the Pritzker Children's Initiative's National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers.

Think Babies™ NC Leadership Team

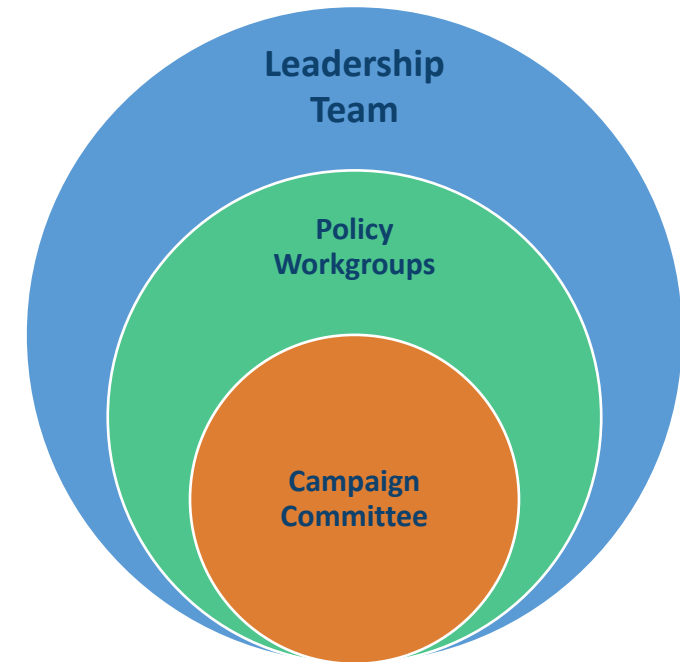


Key state-level organizational partners that have expertise on infant/toddler issues, networks, and policy influence.

- BEST NC
- Child Care Services Association***
- Children's Council of Watauga *
- MomsRising
- NC Association for the Education of Young Children
- NC Child
- NC County Commissioners Association
- NC Early Childhood Foundation*
- NC Early Childhood Funders Collaborative
- NC Early Education Coalition***
- NC Head Start Collaborative Office
- NC Department of Health and Human Services*
- NC Infant Mental Health Association
- NC Institute of Medicine
- NC Partnership for Children
- Office of the Governor
- Onslow County Partnership for Children
- Prevent Child Abuse NC
- Ready for School/Ready for Life (Guilford County)*

*Pritzker Children's Initiative Partner

** Zero To Three Partner



Policy Buckets & Selection Criteria

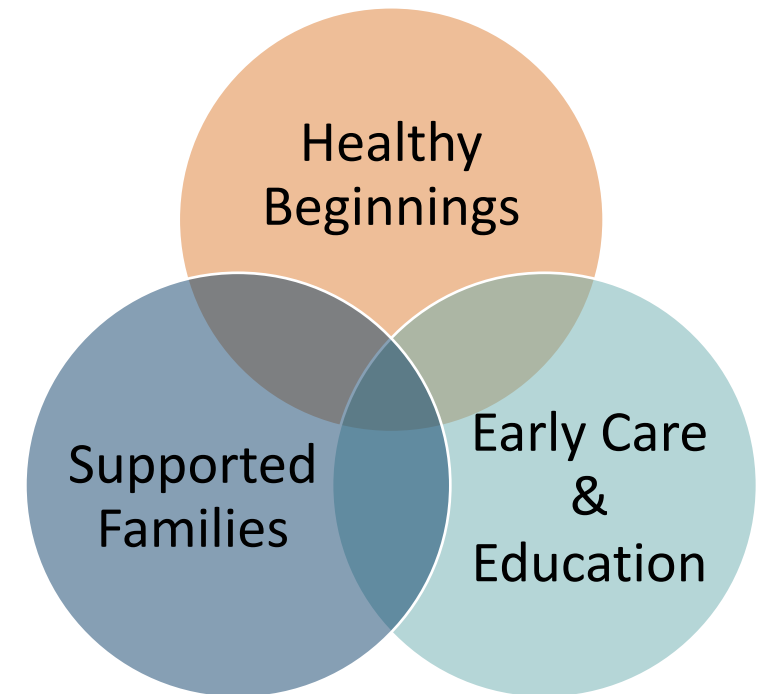


What all babies need to thrive!

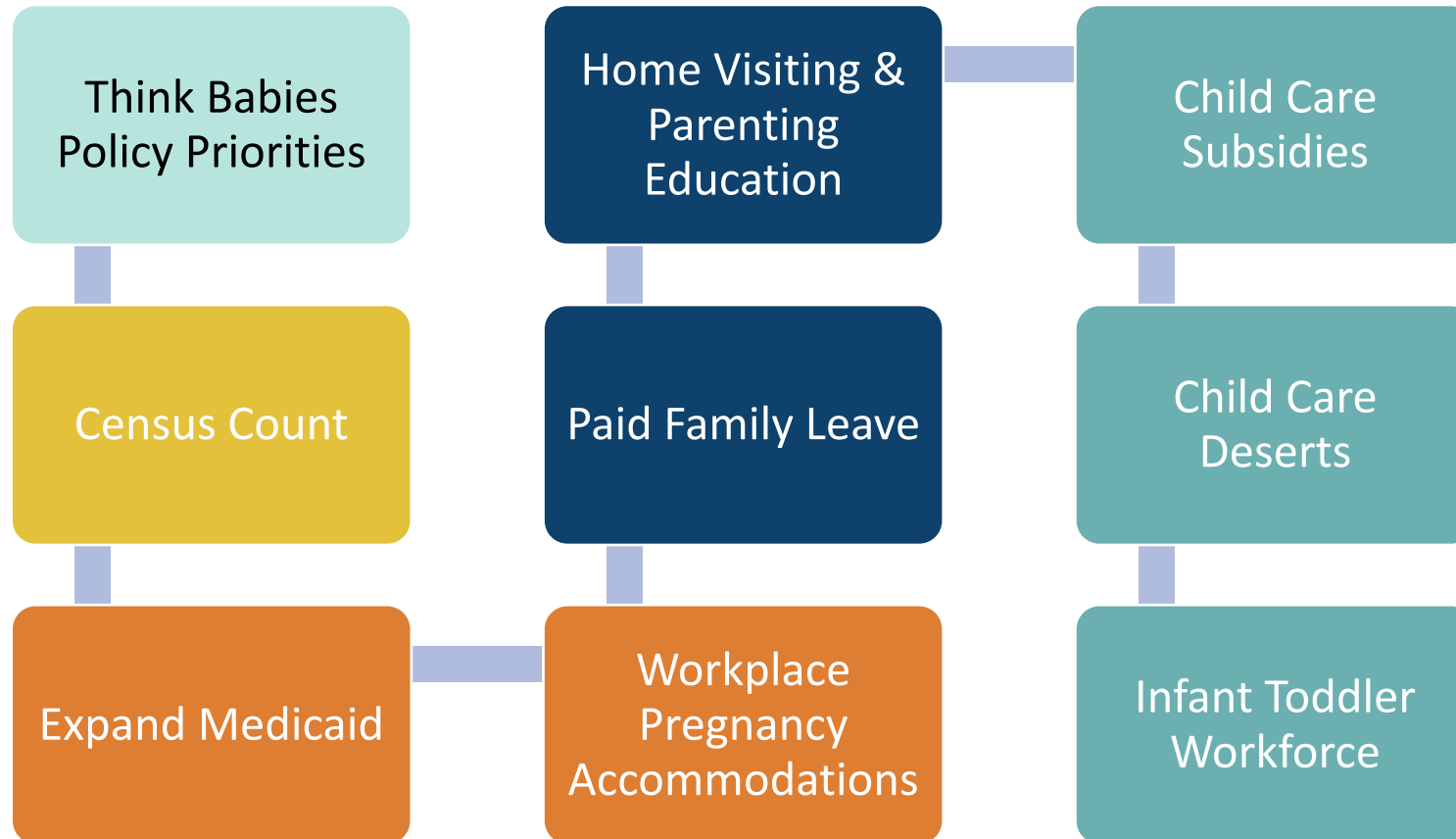
Policy Selection Criteria

- All three buckets
- Urgent need
- Build on recommendations from existing sources
- Research-based solutions
- Make a difference if enacted
- Actionable – organizations committed to work on these issues 2019-2020
- Adopted by consensus of Leadership Team

Aligned with the NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Initiative and the NC Early Childhood Action Plan



8 Policy Priorities At a Glance



Census 2020

Ensure Young Children are Counted

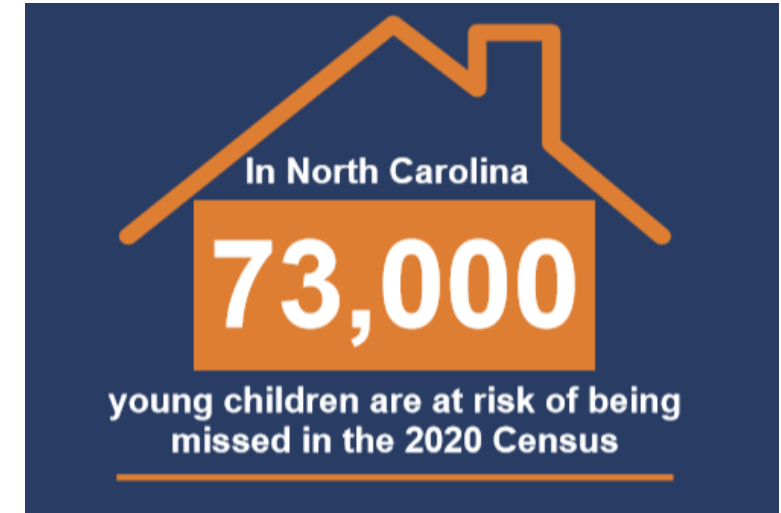


Why Is this Important to Do Now?

- Young children have been undercounted in the past.
 - North Carolina failed to count 25,000 young children in 2010.
 - 73,000 North Carolina children are part of “hard-to-count” groups.
 - An undercount will jeopardize \$5 billion in funding.

Benefits of a complete count to children and families?

- Increased federal funding for child-serving programs including foster care, CHIP, SNAP, and child care subsidies.
- Increased services for “hard-to-count” groups, including low-income households, families who rent their homes, and racial and ethnic minorities.



Healthy Beginnings

Expand Access to Health Insurance

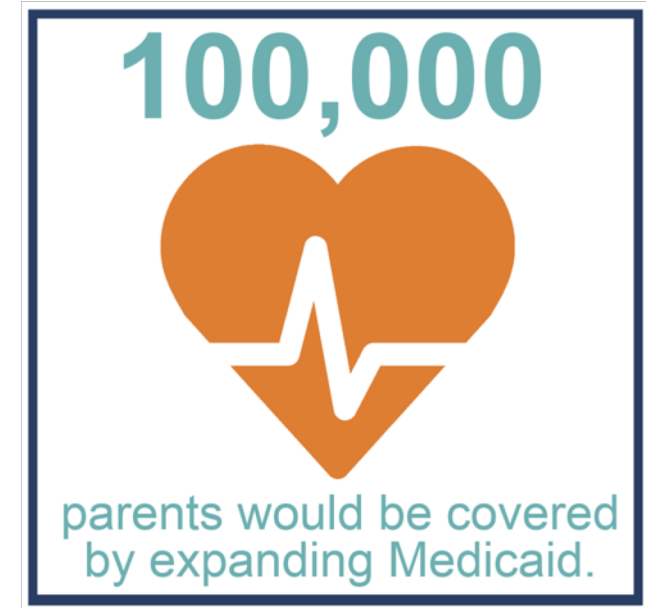


Why Is this Important to Do Now?

- Too many North Carolinians fall into the “coverage gap.”
 - Approximately 500,000 North Carolinians don’t earn enough to buy private insurance but earn too much to qualify for Medicaid.
 - Over 15% of parents of infants and toddlers are uninsured.
 - Closing the coverage gap would expand access to insurance to over 100,000 parents.

Benefits of health insurance access to children and families?

- Improved prenatal and maternal health and a decline in infant mortality.
- Improved child health outcomes – parents are more likely to enroll Medicaid-eligible children when they are covered themselves.
- Increased family financial security.



Healthy Beginnings

Adopt Workplace Pregnancy Accommodations

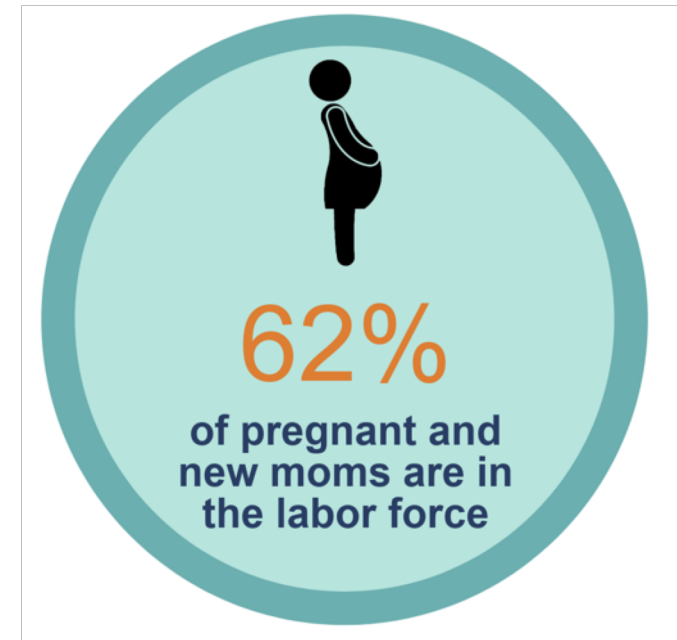


Why Is this Important to Do Now?

- Some NC women are forced to choose between their job and a healthy pregnancy.
 - In North Carolina, 62% of pregnant and new moms are in the labor force.
 - 75% of women will be pregnant and employed simultaneously over the course of their lives.
 - Nationally, 250,000 women per year are denied pregnancy accommodations.

Benefits of pregnancy accommodations to children and families?

- Improved maternal physical and mental health.
- Reduced risk of poor birth outcomes, including infants born preterm or at a low weight.
- Increased family economic security.



Supported Families

Expand Opportunities for Home Visiting Services



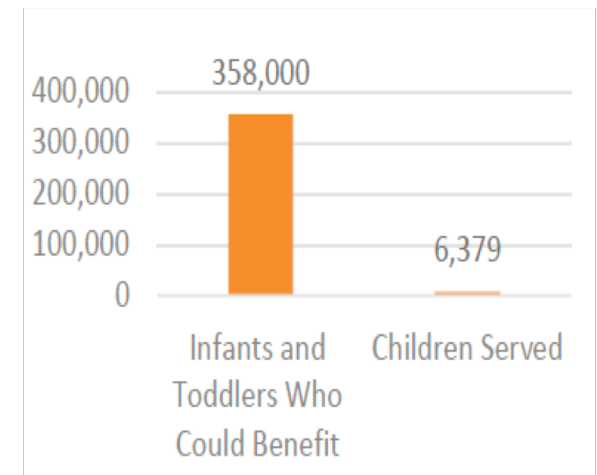
Why Is this Important to Do Now?

- There is an acute shortage of home visiting services.
 - Half of all counties serve less than 1% of all infants in existing home visiting programs.
 - 15 Counties have no home visiting programs.
 - 72% of existing home visiting programs have a waiting list for services.

Benefits of home visiting programs to children and families?

- Increased parenting skills and stronger relationships between parents and children.
- Improved child health outcomes – better immunization rates and reduced rates of child abuse and neglect.
- Improved early learning and school readiness.

Home Visiting Access for Infants and Toddlers, 2017



Supported Families

Adopt Paid Family & Medical Leave for State Employees



Why Is this Important to Do Now?

- Most North Carolina parents don't have access to paid leave.
 - Only 4 county governments in North Carolina offer paid family leave for public employees.
 - Just 11% of private sector workers have access to paid family leave.
 - One in four new mothers is back at work just two weeks after having a baby.

Benefits of paid family and medical leave to children and families?

- Increased time to bond between parents and new children.
- Increased opportunity to find stable child care before returning to work.
- Improved child health outcomes and breastfeeding rates, and decreased rates of infant mortality and child abuse and maltreatment.



Early Care and Learning

Increase Child Care Subsidy Funding

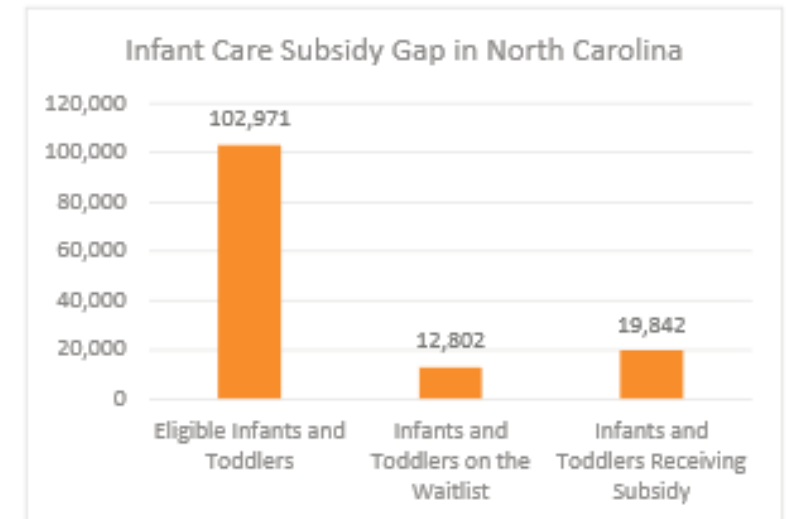


Why Is this Important to Do Now?

- A shortage of subsidy funding exists, especially for families of infants and toddlers.
 - 56% of children under 6 on the subsidy waitlist are infants and toddlers.
 - Only 19% of all eligible infants and toddlers received subsidy in 2018.
 - 97 of North Carolina's 100 counties serve less than one third of eligible infants and toddlers.

Benefits of child care subsidy to children and families?

- Healthy infant and toddler development during the first years of life.
- Increased school readiness when children enter quality programs sooner.
- Increased family economic well-being and self-sufficiency.



Early Care and Learning

Expand Quality Infant Toddler Child Care Programs



Why Is this Important to Do Now?

- There is an acute shortage of quality infant toddler care.
 - In North Carolina, there are 5.3 infants and toddlers for each licensed care slot.
 - 99 of North Carolina's 100 counties qualify as "child care deserts."
 - Quality care is even more scarce: 30 counties have 5 or fewer 4- and 5-star programs serving infants and toddlers.

Benefits of quality care and learning to children and families?

- Healthy infant and toddler development during the first years of life.
- Improved foundation for early learning and school readiness.
- Financial security for working parents who know they have a safe place in which to leave their children.

Greatest Undersupply			
County	Infant-toddler population	Infant-toddler Capacity	Infants/Toddlers per Available Slot
Hyde	91	3	30.33
Camden	341	17	20.06
Yadkin	1275	67	19.03
Jones	296	18	16.44
Polk	454	28	16.21
Yancey	420	31	13.55
Onslow	11485	859	13.37
Warren	561	49	11.45
Currituck	684	65	10.52
Madison	463	46	10.07

Early Care and Learning

Ensure teachers are educated and compensated



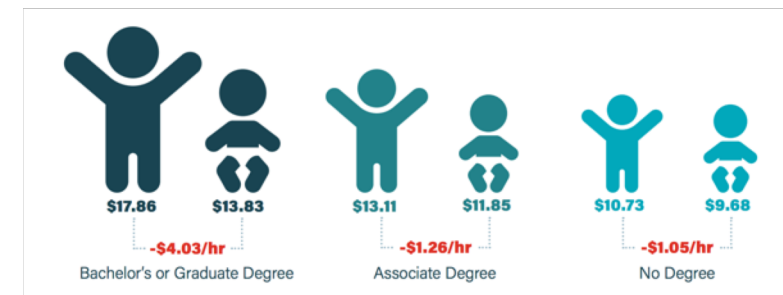
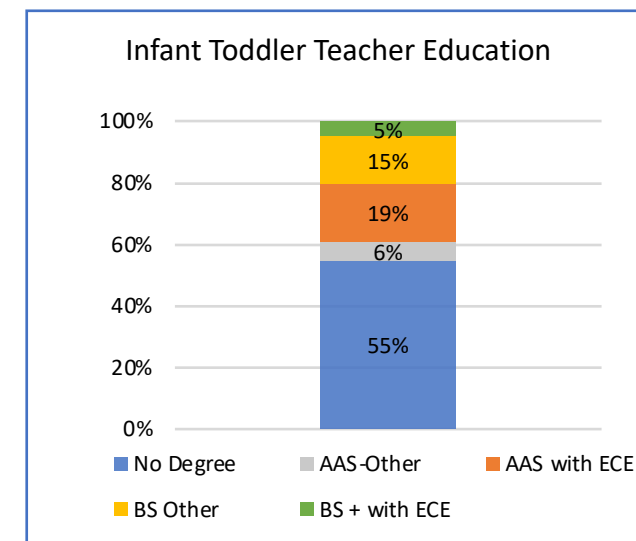
Why Is this Important to Do Now?

Infant toddler teachers are woefully unprepared and poorly compensated for the important work they do.

- Only one course in early childhood education is required to be a lead teacher in an infant/toddler classroom.
- Infant toddler teachers, regardless of degree, earn only \$10.00 per hour – almost half rely on some type of public assistance.
- Programs can't attract or retain qualified early educators.

Benefits of quality early educators to children and families?

- Teachers have the knowledge and competencies to support young children's healthy development and learning.
- Less turnover - teachers remain in the classroom and early childhood field, so babies can build relationships and develop social and emotional skills.
- Increase supply of quality infant toddler programs for working parents.



Think Babies™ NC Campaign Committee



Responsibilities

- Serve as a “lead” organizer for one or more policy issues
- Develop specific legislative or administrative “ASK”
- Connect lobbyists and policymakers
- Strategic messaging and fact sheets
- Engage networks
- Updates to Think Babies™ Network

Early Wins for Babies

- **Healthy Beginnings**
Governor Cooper’s Executive Order on Workplace Pregnancy Accommodation for State Employees
- **Early Care & Learning**
AWARD\$ program – education salary supplement compensative initiative for infant and toddler teachers with at least Associate degree



Next Steps



Be A Big Voice for Babies!

Make the case for these policy priorities to policymakers!

North Carolinians Support the Agenda

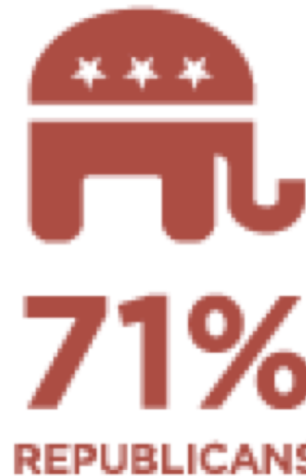


A bipartisan poll commissioned by the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation finds that voters in the state favor a wide range of investments that support parents and children starting at birth and throughout multiple points in children's development.

<https://buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit/>

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOME VISITING AND PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

81% of North Carolinians favor providing more families access to these programs, which provide parents with support during the earliest months and years of their children's lives, a critical time for children's healthy development. This support is across political affiliations.





ADOPT PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE FOR EMPLOYEES. 87% of voters voiced support for allowing parents to take time off with pay following the birth or adoption of a child. 73% of North Carolinians strongly support this policy.

INCREASE CHILD CARE SUBSIDY FUNDING TO EXPAND ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY, AFFORDABLE INFANT AND TODDLER CHILD CARE FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES.

Voters across the state widely recognize that high-quality and affordable programs are in short supply. 68% of North Carolina voters say that half or fewer programs in their area for infants and toddlers meet both criteria.

<https://buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit/>

MAKE SURE FAMILIES LIVING IN CHILD CARE DESERTS HAVE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY INFANT AND TODDLER CHILD CARE.

Regardless of location, voters agree that high-quality and affordable early education for infants and toddlers is hard to find.

12%

CHARLOTTE

11%

**WINSTON-SALEM/
GREENSBORO**

7%

RALEIGH

13%

REST OF STATE



ENSURE INFANTS AND TODDLERS HAVE EDUCATED AND COMPENSATED TEACHERS WITH THE SKILLS NEEDED TO SUPPORT HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT.

Majorities across all parties agree:



85%

REPUBLICANS



91%

INDEPENDENTS



96%

DEMOCRATS

Tools to Share the Results!



Share Graphics

87% of NC voters support parental leave with pay!

Support babies by providing paid family and medical leave for employees.

81% of NC voters support providing more home visiting programs.

Invest in early childhood education and build a stronger North Carolina.

68% of voters say that half or fewer infant and toddler programs in their area are high-quality and affordable.

Invest in early childhood education and build a stronger North Carolina.

91% of voters support increasing wages for early childhood educators to:

- Reduce teacher turnover
- Improve the care and education children receive
- Ensure teachers have a strong knowledge of early childhood development

Invest in early childhood education and build a stronger North Carolina.

Voters agree: Increase wages for early childhood educators to improve the care and education children receive.

85% REPUBLICANS, 91% INDEPENDENTS, 96% DEMOCRATS

Invest in early childhood education and build a stronger North Carolina.

NC voters say that only a fraction of infant and toddler programs in their area are high-quality and affordable.

12% EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT, 7% METHODIST, 11% PRESBYTERIAN/REFORMED, 13% OTHER

Invest in early childhood education and build a stronger North Carolina.

80% of voters say early education should be a higher priority than reducing business taxes in the state.

Invest in early childhood education and build a stronger North Carolina.

Voters agree: Increase opportunities for home visiting and parenting education programs.

71% REPUBLICANS, 80% INDEPENDENTS, 88% DEMOCRATS

Invest in early childhood education and build a stronger North Carolina.

Fact

#ThinkBabiesNC
2018 North Carolina Survey Results

Strengthen Families and Build a Stronger North Carolina

Since 2014, North Carolina voters increasingly support greater investments in programs and supports that promote early childhood development, recognizing that more needs to be done to help families during a critical time in child development. During the first months and years of life, experiences are built into children's bodies—shaping brain development and building the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health. A new, bipartisan poll commissioned by the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation finds that voters in the state favor a wide range of investments that support parents and children starting at birth and throughout multiple points in children's development.

In fact, 80% of voters say early education should be a higher priority than reducing business taxes in the state. As the new legislative session begins, legislators can build a stronger state and strengthen North Carolina families through policies that garner wide voter support.

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOME VISITING AND PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS. 81% of North Carolinians favor providing more families access to these programs, which provide parents with support during the earliest months and years of their children's lives, a critical time for children's healthy development. This support is across political affiliations.

71% REPUBLICANS, 80% INDEPENDENTS, 88% DEMOCRATS

Social Media Posts

Social Media Content

Post 1
North Carolina voters overwhelmingly support paid family leave. North Carolina policymakers should [#ThinkBabiesNC](#) [buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit](#) [insert graphic]

Post 2
8 in 10 voters favor increased opportunities for home visiting and parenting education programs, which provide parents with support during the earliest months and years of their children's lives. [#ThinkBabiesNC](#) [buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit](#) [insert graphic]

Post 3: Majorities across all parties agree that the state should ensure that infants and toddlers have well educated and compensated teachers with the skills needed to support healthy development. Learn more: [buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit](#) [#ThinkBabiesNC](#) [insert graphic]

Post 4: Republicans, Independents and Democrats all agree—North Carolina should provide more families with access to home visiting and parenting education programs. It's time to [#ThinkBabiesNC](#). [buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit](#) [insert graphic]

<https://buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit/>



Baby Talk: Resources to Support the People Who Work with Infants and Toddlers

Issue No. 89 | October 2018

The Benefits of Cultivating Curiosity in Children
While curiosity is central to scientific inquiry, there's very few studies on that topic. Fortunately, scientists are actively unweaving this concept and in the process, making a convincing case that we can and should be doing more to encourage our inquisitive nature. Read more at <https://www.buildthefoundation.org/2018/10/01/the-benefits-of-cultivating-curiosity-in-kids/>.

What Information Are First-Time Parents and Family Members Most Eager For?
Child and family researchers conducted first-time parents and family members of young children have many questions about their child's social and emotional development, and often turn to the internet, other family members, and pediatricians for parenting advice. Parents and family members of young children who are knowledgeable about child development are more likely to engage in positive parenting behaviors, which are linked to better child well-being. Read more or watch a video about this topic at <https://www.buildthefoundation.org/2018/09/14/first-time-parenting-knowledge/>.

How Do Children Learn Through Play?
This free article provides an overview of how play develops young children and ways in which they can support learning and social development of children. Key points are highlighted with clips that are embedded into the article. Take a look at page 18 of the <https://www.buildthefoundation.org/2018/09/14/first-time-parenting-knowledge/> journal for more info. NOTE: While the emphasis of the article is on play, the content is relevant to both families and professionals.

Maternal Sensitivity Can Lead to a Larger Vocabulary for Young Children
In a 2017 study, researchers reviewed video-taped interactions between mothers and their infants to determine what factors were linked to early vocabulary development. Among a sample of 146 mothers and infants enrolled in Early Head Start, researchers found that maternal sensitivity was associated with longer vocabulary at 18, 24, and 36-month-old ages. Read more or watch a video about this topic at <https://www.buildthefoundation.org/2018/09/14/first-time-parenting-knowledge/>.

Research Uncovers the Importance of Language Development in Low-Income, High-Risk Children
A child's early years of language development are crucial for the fundamental skills of school readiness, such as literacy skills and social and emotional growth. While much research has focused on how language development through parent-child interactions, this study examined how language use and development in 2- and 3-year-old children was influenced by what they heard from their teachers and their parents. The study revealed the important role of the conversational context and teachers' understanding that back and forth conversation with the child is very beneficial, particularly for children with income-challenging backgrounds. Read an overview of the study and findings at <http://www.asstet.edu/news/news-an-early-year-in-see-the-most-of-the-publisher-research-at-https://www.buildthefoundation.org/2018/09/14/first-time-parenting-knowledge/>.

BabyTalk is free, online, and available to all. Each issue features high-quality, readily available, and free resources. Resources <https://www.buildthefoundation.org/> are available in English and Spanish. To join the listserve, send an email to newsletter@buildthefoundation.org.

Support for BabyTalk is provided by the National Collaborative for Infant and Toddler Care (<http://www.nationalcollaborative.org/>) and the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation (<https://www.earlychildhoodfoundation.org/>).

Past issues of BabyTalk are archived at <https://buildthefoundation.org/baby-talk/>. For more information, please contact Camille Catlett at camille.catlett@ncsu.edu.

With the support of the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers, we are partnering with Camille Catlett, to make BabyTalk's content available to our partners. Please use any or all of the content in your own newsletters and media outreach channels, crediting Camille Catlett and BabyTalk as the source. We also have suggested social media posts.

<https://buildthefoundation.org/baby-talk/>



Think Babies™ NC Advocacy Opportunities



**NORTH CAROLINA
EARLY EDUCATION COALITION**

The NC Early Education Coalition is a proud partner in the national ZERO TO THREE Think Babies™ campaign and in the Pritzker Children's Initiative's National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers.

Advocacy Resources and Opportunities



Tools to help you make your voice heard for infants, toddlers, and their families:

- Fact sheets
- Infographics – *coming soon!*
- Social media toolkit – *coming soon!*
- Advocacy toolkit
- County-level data and county profiles
- Events in Raleigh and across the state
- Action Center
- Legislator contact information

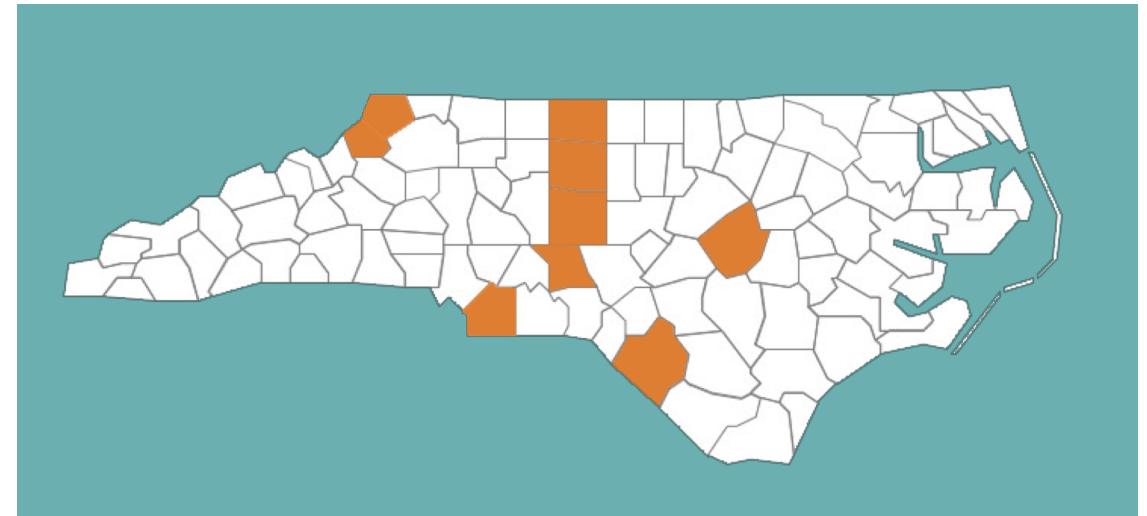


All available at: www.ncearlyeducationcoalition.org/think-babies.html

Think Babies™ NC Community Partners



- Ashe County
- Guilford County
- Johnston County
- Montgomery County
- Randolph County
- Robeson County
- Rockingham County
- Union County
- Watauga County



Get connected to events and advocacy opportunities across the state. Visit www.ncearlyeducationcoalition.org/think-babies.html for a list of upcoming events!

Tuesdays for Tots



Let's #ThinkBabiesNC every Tuesday!

- Post on social media and join weekly Twitter chats
- Contact your legislators
- Meet with your legislators at home or in Raleigh
- Invite policymakers to tour a child care center or program serving babies in your county
- Write an op-ed, letter to the editor, newsletter, or blog
- Share your story and/or collect stories from your community

Monthly Themes

February – Healthy Beginnings

March – Early Care & Education

April – Family Support

Be a Big Voice for Babies!



Here are 5 things you can do right now:

- Share your story
 - <http://bit.ly/ThinkBabiesNCStories>
- Build a relationship with your legislators
- Join the conversation on social media using #ThinkBabiesNC
- Choose an issue that matters to you and get involved
- Take the Think Babies™ pledge
 - <http://bit.ly/ThinkBabiesNCpledge>

Save the Date



Think Babies™ Advocacy Day

Tuesday, April 9, 2019

At the N.C. General Assembly in Raleigh

During the Week of the Young Child

Co-sponsored by MomsRising and the
NC Association for the Education of Young Children

**We need
to take
more than
baby steps.**



Questions?





Thank you for helping us Think Babies™ NC!

www.NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org/think-babies.html

For more information:

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Elaine Zukerman, elainez@NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org

<https://buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit>

For more information:

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