**Think Babies™ NC Community Partners Micro-Grants Announcement**

**March 17, 2020**

**Overview**

The *Think Babies™ NC* initiative is designed to ensure that North Carolina’s youngest children, ages zero to three, and their families benefit from effective public policies, programs, and funding that promote a solid foundation for healthy beginnings, supported families, and quality early care and learning experiences. This project will create an effective and engaged coalition of state policymakers and early childhood stakeholders who will work together to raise public awareness and build political will to improve policies and programs for infants and toddlers and their families. As a result, more young children will have access to quality early learning experiences and live in supported families who have the necessary resources to further their child’s healthy development and school readiness.

As part of its *Think Babies™ NC* initiative, the NC Early Education Coalition is interested in engaging communities in this work by supporting local activities to increase public awareness, advocacy and action to better support infants, toddlers and their families. Previous grant recipients may apply again for this cycle.

Funding for the micro-grants is made possible by ZERO TO THREE.

**Community Partners Micro Grants**

In May 2020, Community Partners Micro Grants will be awarded to up to eight city, county, or regional-level partnershipsthat focus on building increased support for healthy beginnings, supported families, and quality early care and learning for infants and toddlers. Applicants must address all three objectives for these grants:

1) raise public awareness,

2) engage community-level infant, toddler, and family advocates, and

3) inform public policymakers about the importance of focusing on infants, toddlers and their early educators and families

**Micro-Grant Awards and Amount:**

Micro-grants will only be awarded to 501(c)(3) nonprofit agencies and are not available to individuals, although individuals who are working on these issues outside a nonprofit agency are encouraged to partner with an existing nonprofit agency. Micro-grants will range from $250 to $2,000. The maximum amount available for each micro-grant is $2,000.

**Micro-Grant Time Frame:**

Activities must take place from May 1, 2020 – September 30, 2020.

**Types of Activities:**

We are interested in partnering with communities that will help us advance our *Think Babies™ NC* work at the local level and build awareness and connection to state policymakers around issues facing infants, toddlers and their families. Priority will be given to communities that already have some interest or focus on infant toddler issues and are able to immediately have specific activities planned to connect and engage with policymakers. Micro-grants will support funding for one or more of the following activities:

* Build or support a local Think Babies™ NC Alliance community team that includes parents, early educators, or child care provider advocacy group.
* Conduct local tours for policymakers of different programs serving infants, toddlers and families.
* Hold a workshop on infant toddler policy and advocacy.
* Create a local Think Babies™ NC public awareness campaign that has multiple components such as a speakers’ bureau, newsletter, websites, social media.
* Host a community forum on infants, toddlers, their early educators and their families that includes a screening of the documentary “No Small Matter.”
* Develop a local infant toddler issue-based advocacy coalition focused on one of the Think Babies™ NC public policy priorities including Paid Family Leave, Health Care Access/Medicaid Expansion, Child Care Access/Subsidies or the Early Childhood Workforce.

**Required Participation:**

Micro-grant activities should be designed by a community team with representatives from early learning, child health and family support, including: local Smart Start Partnerships, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, child care providers, parent groups, and local early education, health and family support programs or organizations serving infants and toddlers. Collaborations must be indicated on the application.

**Micro-Grant Support:**

The NC Early Education Coalition will provide resources about infants and toddlers such as fact sheets, reports, and advocacy tools to support the activities. Coalition staff will also be available to present or participate in local activities upon request and will want to attend all activities if possible.

**Grantee Requirements and Awards:**

All grantees must agree to submit a final activity report and evaluation results to the NC Early Education Coalition within 30 days of the mini-grant completion. This final report must include a list of event attendees and email addresses. The Coalition will provide the final activity report form. Grantees may request 50% of the funding at the start of the grant and will receive the balance upon completion of the project when all reports are submitted. Grantees will be reimbursed within 15 days of final report submission.

**Micro-Grant Application Submission:**

Micro-grant applications must be completed on the attached form and submitted electronically to Angela Burch at angelab@ncearlyeducationcoalition.org by **Friday, April 17, 2020.** The complete application must include:

1) Cover Sheet

2) Narrative description limited to two pages

3) Line-Item budget on attached form

4) 501(c)(3) IRS statement from applicant agency

**Review Process:**

All applications will be reviewed by the NC Early Education Coalition. Final award recommendations will include a diverse set of different types of activities and geographic areas of the state. Final decisions and micro-grant awards will be made by the NC Early Education Coalition.

**Micro-Grant Award Notice:**

Successful micro-grant applicants will be notified by **May 1, 2020**.

**Questions?**

Please contact Angela Burch, Think Babies™ NC Project Manager at the NC Early Education Coalition, with any questions you may have at angelab@ncearlyeducationcoalition.org. *If you are interested in applying, but can’t meet the application deadline of April 17th for any reason, please contact Angela to let us know of your interest so that we can work with you to make a plan to apply.*

**NC Early Education Coalition**

**Think Babies™ NC Community Partners Micro-Grant Application Form**

**COVERSHEET APPLICATION INFORMATION**

|  |
| --- |
| **Micro-Grant Summary** |
| Amount of Micro-Grant Funds Requested (not to exceed $2,000) |  |
| Type of Activity (choose from list above or specify other local activity) |  |
| Geographic Area Served (city, town, county, or region) |  |
| Start and End Dates of Activity |  |
| Estimated # of people reached through this activity |  |
| **Applicant Information** |
| Legal Name of Applicant Organization |  |
| Name of Official with Authority to Sign Micro-Grant Application |  |
| Title |  |
| Address |  |
| City, State, Zip Code  |  |
| Phone Number |  |
| Email |  |
| Signature |  |
| Date Signed |  |
| **Micro-Grant Contact Information (if different from above)**  |
| Name |  |
| Title |  |
| Address |  |
| City, State, Zip Code  |  |
| Phone Number |  |
| Email |  |

**PROJECT NARRATIVE (Narrative Limit Two Pages)**

Complete the form below, and expand as needed.

|  |
| --- |
| **Think Babies NC Micro-grant Application** |
| **Proposal Summary** *Provide a brief summary of the community activity being proposed including why you think this activity is needed, what you will do, How will this activity increase public awareness and community engagement, including policymakers about issues affecting infants, toddlers, and their families? When and where will it take place?* |
| **Major Activities/Tasks and Timeline***Describe the major activities that will take place and the time frame. For example, tour of child care centers serving infants and toddlers, June 2020.* |
| **Activities** | **Date** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Activity Accomplishments/Results***What will be accomplished as a result of this activity? What are the measurable results? How will you evaluate this activity?* |
| **Public Awareness***How will this activity increase public awareness about the issues facing infants and toddlers in your geographic area? What types of public awareness strategies will be used? How will you promote this activity to get additional support or draw attention to infant toddler issues in your area?* |
| **Community Engagement** *How will community members be invited to participate in this activity? What type of community members will be engaged through this activity? How will you recruit participants for this project? What is the estimated number of participants reached through this activity*? |
| **State and Local Policymakers Engagement***How will this activity directly increase awareness and understanding about infant toddler issues among state and local policymakers?*  |
| **Advocacy Skill Building***How will this activity increase the participants’ knowledge, skills or confidence to be more effective advocates for infants and toddlers, their families and/or their early childhood educators?* |
| **Activity Planning Participants***What collaboration, community partner or other support will you rely on to make your plan a success? Who participated in the planning of this community activity (at least one partner is required)? List the names, affiliation and role of each partner.* |

**BUDGET INFORMATION**

**Funds Requested – Awards up to a maximum of $2,000**

*Indicate total amount requested for this activity and a description of what the funds will support. Also, provide a line item breakdown of costs (staff support, supplies, space rental, travel, scholarships, etc.) using the budget form below.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Description** | **$ Amount** |
| Staffing |  |  |
| Contractors  |  |  |
| Supplies/materials |  |  |
| Copying/printing |  |  |
| Speaker stipends |  |  |
| Scholarships/Incentives for participants |  |  |
| Travel |  |  |
| Space rental |  |  |
| Child care support |  |  |
| Other – specify |  |  |
| Other – specify |  |  |
| **Total $ Amount** |  |  |

**Think BabiesTM NC Community Partners**

**2018 - 2019**

**Alliance for Children** addressed issues impacting young children and families in Union County through a public awareness and media campaign, as well as a series of community forums to engage community leaders, business leaders, parents, grandparents, early childhood educators, social workers, direct service providers and other stakeholders.

**Ashe County Partnership for Children**, held two community forums to engage and educate community leaders, elected officials, business leaders, parents and early child educators about early childhood policies, while also addressing current and emerging issues in the community that impact the lives of infants and toddlers.

**Chatham County Partnership for Children** built on their existing work of the Chatham Action for Resilience Initiative by holding 10 small group sessions for key community leaders to view and discuss the film, Resilience. The forums included small groups of policymakers, child care directors, first responders, caregivers, educators and judges to increase the awareness of ACES among the people who make and influence decisions in their community.

**Lee County Partnership for Children**, in collaboration with Central Carolina Community College Early Childhood Education Department, promoted the importance of quality child care and social-emotional development for infants and toddlers through a series of events, continuing education and presentations throughout Lee County that engaged child care providers, early childhood education students, health educators, social workers, business leaders and policymakers, including an educational booth and presentation at the Lee County Fair.

**Mecklenburg Partnership for Children** hosted a series of Coffee and Conversation forums featuring medical professionals speaking about early brain development and toxic stress. These community conversations were targeted to reach state legislators, business leaders, and neighborhood groups. They also hosted a public policy forum to engage and educate policymakers, community advocates, business leaders and public officials on the economic and social benefits derived from supporting the parents of infants and toddlers. To see what Mecklenburg Partnership for Children is doing to Think Babies™, visit Meckbasics.org.

**Montgomery Partnership for Children**, in collaboration with the Montgomery THRIVE Task Force, held a community screening of the documentary Resilience. This screening took place as part of a community resource fair and was followed by a guided panel discussion of the film.

**Partnership for Children of Cumberland County** presented an infant-toddler advocacy training for child care providers. The training included a call-to-action for each participant to inform policymakers about the importance of focusing on policy issues impacting infants, toddlers, their families, and their educators. Facilitators continued to engage participants to offer support and guidance for connecting with policymakers.

**Partnership for Children of Johnston County** invited state-level policymakers, local businesses, civic, education and government leaders to take part in a Think Babies™ Bus Tour, lunch, and conversation with parents and early childhood educators to highlight the disparities in accessibility to high-quality child care throughout the county.

**Partnership for Children of Wayne County** held a community forum and bus tour focused on the issue of infant and toddler child care availability in their county. The forum shared information on the current demographics and provided advocacy strategies to advance policies and programs that support infants, toddlers and families in the community. A tour for policymakers and community leaders of a local child care program highlighted the need for additional infant toddler spots and increased awareness of the overall importance of early childhood education.

**Randolph County Partnership for Children**, serving as the lead agency for the county’s KidsReadyNC Initiative, held roundtable events at local libraries for policymakers, parents and the general public to discuss issues impacting young children and families. A tour for policymakers and community leaders was also coordinated to showcase high-quality child care programs and facilitate conversations with parents and educators.

**Rockingham County Partnership for Children**, as part of the STRIVE Initiative, conducted a Family Perceptions Study to engage community members and learn about their experiences with early education and family support. This assessment was shared with policymakers and community leaders at the 3rd Annual Eggs and Issues breakfast, which served as the launch for a county-wide campaign to raise awareness about the importance of early childhood education.

**Smart Start of New Hanover County** implemented an extensive, multi-step public awareness campaign focused on infants and toddlers. They formed a county-level collaborative to focus on infants and toddlers to lead the campaign, which included local radio and television, social media, and other promotional materials. They also held an advocacy training for students in early childhood education programs at local colleges and universities.

**Smart Start of Pender County** hosted a series of trainings around the Resilience documentary for child care providers and community partners. With information from a 2018 community health assessment, the hosts focused on the top three issues identified by residents affecting quality of life in the community. The trainings drew connections between toxic stress facing infants and toddlers and the identified issues of alcohol, drug or medication abuse, low income/poverty, and child abuse and neglect.

**The Enola Group, Inc.**, an Early Head Start partner in Burke County, hosted a Resilience screening and discussion panel. Their goal was to raise awareness of ACES and how they affect the development and overall needs of infants, toddlers and their families. Community partners assisting with this event included local institutions of higher education, the local Smart Start Partnership, as well as the regional CCR&R agency.

**University of North Carolina at Greensboro** increased awareness of the needs of the early education workforce by facilitating a range of activities, including focus groups with infant and toddler teachers, a public awareness and advocacy campaign, and a strategic job shadowing event that allowed policymakers and other leaders to learn about infant/toddler development and gain first-hand experience in high-quality infant and toddler classrooms.

**UNC Pembroke Foundation** increased public awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) among policymakers and key stakeholders through a community forum and conversation with policymakers and local leaders about how to address the prevalence of ACEs in their community.