



ZERO TO THREE

BABIES IN THE BUDGET

FEDERAL SHARE OF SPENDING ON INFANTS
AND TODDLERS: FY2017-FY2023



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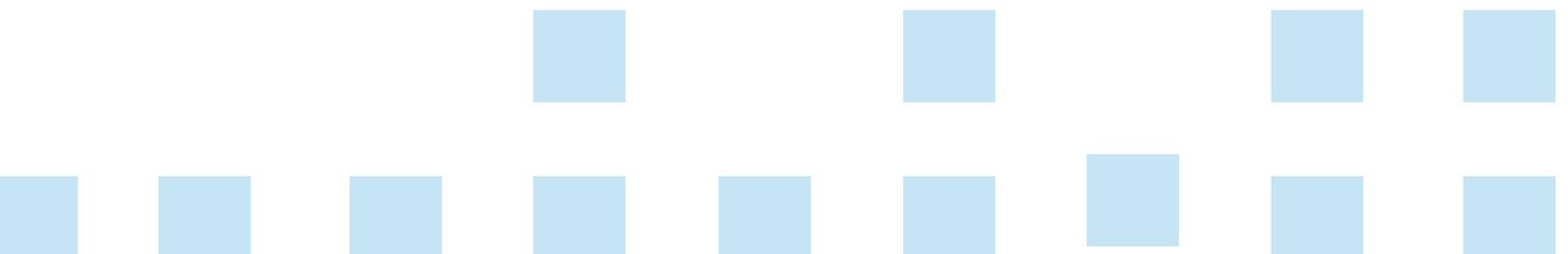
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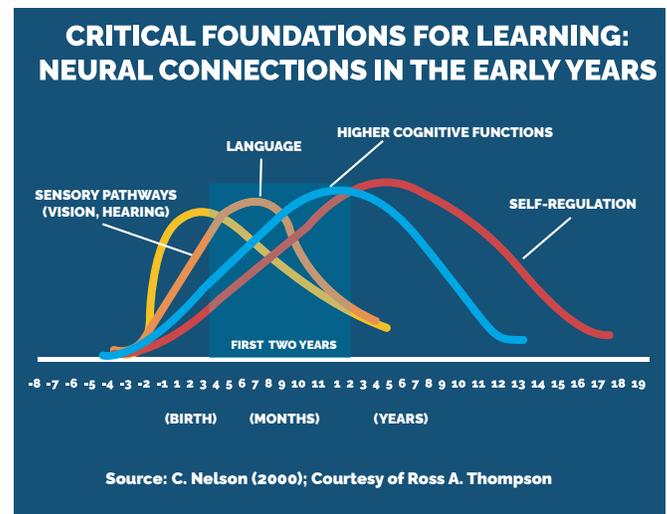


SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

The United States is home to 11.4 million babies and toddlers, who make up 3.4% of our nation's population. Yet, we spend just 1.5% of the federal budget on programs that support infants and toddlers – an underinvestment in our youngest children during the years in which they are developing a foundation that will shape the rest of their lives. The Administration and Congress should reexamine and redouble our nation's commitment to infants and toddlers, prioritizing increased investments to meet the needs of all our young children, especially those facing the biggest barriers to reaching their potential.

The years between birth and age three are unique in human development, laying the foundation for all that follows. Infants and toddlers undergo the most rapid physical, cognitive, and emotional development of their lives, forming one million neural connections a second. By age three, the human brain has reached 80% of its adult volume as young children develop trillions of connections creating the capacity to think and reason, acquire language, form relationships and control their bodies. All later learning and relationships are built on this foundation, impacting children for a lifetime.

Not all children have the resources to ensure a strong foundation. Inequities start at birth and even before. *The State of Babies Yearbook 2022* shows that 40% of babies and toddlers live in families with low income or in poverty. The figures are higher for children of color: Two-thirds of Black and Indigenous infants and toddlers and more than half of Hispanic infants and toddlers live in families with low-income or in poverty. The RAPID Survey project found that economic insecurity and material



hardship in families with very young children increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in families of color, with corresponding increases in parental and child emotional distress.¹ Babies in economically stressed families are more likely to live in unstable housing or have families with high food insecurity that can lead to chronic unrelenting stress that undermines brain development. Promoting equity starts with early investments into all babies' healthy development that will yield long-term returns through better health and productivity.

Federal investments in families with young children have the potential to address these inequities and support the strong early foundation babies and toddlers need to succeed in school and as adults. If federal investments followed the science of early brain development, we would prioritize public investments in the first three years of life based on the understanding that young children develop and thrive in the context of strong family relationships and safe and healthy environments. We would invest in a strong economic foundation for infants and toddlers to meet their basic needs, reduce early stress, and support their overall well-being. We would ensure they and their families have access to quality health care, clean environments and comprehensive supports to ensure their good health. And we would guarantee that infants, toddlers, and their families have access to high-quality positive early learning experiences that nurture and support their development. We would pay special attention to families that experience economic instability, hardship, systemic racism and emotional distress, which can undermine young children's development. These types of investments would deliver a great return, for example, high-quality birth-to-five early learning programs yield a return of 13% per annum.²

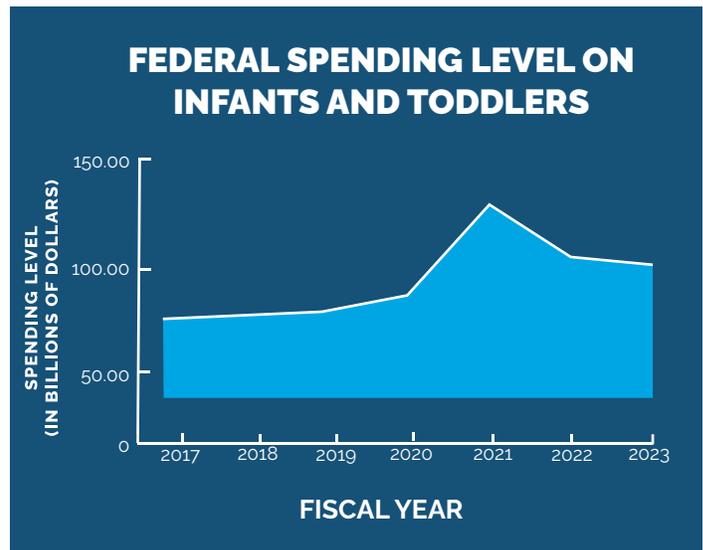


SECTION TWO: HOW DO OUR FEDERAL INVESTMENTS MEASURE UP?

The federal budget channels funding to many areas important for strong development, but it does not invest at the level required to support the equitable development of all children. More than 120 programs across almost every area of the federal budget work together to provide at least some level of the resources young children need as they undergo the foundational years of rapid brain development. The scope of these programs extends far beyond early learning programs that usually come to mind when we think of young children, encompassing a network of supports such as shelter, nutrition, family economics, access to clean air and water, and safe communities. Our analysis organized these programs into three key areas of what young children need to thrive: **Good Health, Strong Families,** and **Positive Early Learning Experiences.**

 GOOD HEALTH	 STRONG FAMILIES	 POSITIVE EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES
<p>Federal investments support mental and physical health by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing comprehensive health insurance like Medicaid and CHIP; • Providing mental and physical health care services, such as Community Health Centers and health workforce development; and, • Ensuring cleaner air and water through investments in renewable energy and initiatives that reduce lead in soil and water. 	<p>Federal investments support strong families, shaping family and community environments in which development unfolds by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing child poverty through tax credits and direct assistance; • Meeting material needs such as food and housing; and, • Building family strengths through home visiting, family resource programs, and child welfare services 	<p>Federal investments promote strong early cognitive, social emotional, and language development and help families work, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting access and paying for child care through the Child Care and Development Block Grant; • Providing high quality early learning opportunities and comprehensive services through Early Head Start; and, • Ensuring early intervention for babies with developmental delays and disabilities through IDEA Part C.

Despite this breadth of programs, federal spending does not prioritize infants and toddlers, even though their foundational development requires robust investment, a fact the science supports. The overall spending trend for infants and toddlers has been erratic since Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, in part because of increased spending during the pandemic. Comparing pre-pandemic levels with current spending as pandemic funding ends shows some needed growth, from \$68 billion in FY 2017 to approximately \$98 billion in FY 2023. Yet, the real value and purchasing power of spending on babies increased by only 16%, eroding particularly as the inflation rate hit its highest point in 40 years.



The “baby share” – that is, the share of the federal budget devoted to infants and toddlers and their families – reflects the value we place on them as a nation. The baby share has not kept pace with overall spending over the past few years. Even when the baby share spiked as a result of emergency pandemic measures, it never reached a level representative of the share of infants and toddlers in the population, let alone levels that the brain science of early development indicates is necessary. That share is shrinking once more as those investments expire. Current federal investments in resources that support our youngest children and families are insufficient to reach those eligible, much less all of those who could benefit, and the programs that support our youngest children are at risk of significant cuts.

The debt ceiling agreement reached between Congress and the White House earlier this year will severely constrain the growth of even our existing, insufficient spending on infants and toddlers and their families and will almost guarantee dramatic and harmful cuts for too many programs and services on which they rely. More than 70% of programs for babies and toddlers are discretionary. During the debt ceiling debate, some lawmakers said they wanted to address the debt for the sake of our children, yet they aimed cuts at the non-defense discretionary programs that support them. In addition, even if funding for FY 2024 comes in close to current levels, it will still fail to keep up with inflation, ensuring that fewer young children receive supports that can make a positive difference in their near-and long-term development.

Policymakers should heed the science of early brain development, which tells us that giving babies the resources to thrive not only aids their well-being, but delivers a significant return on investment for society. This analysis – which shows that our investments in the baby share of the budget are already insufficient and fall short of our spending in other areas – should give lawmakers pause. As a nation, we must invest in, not cut, the programs that families with young children need to thrive.



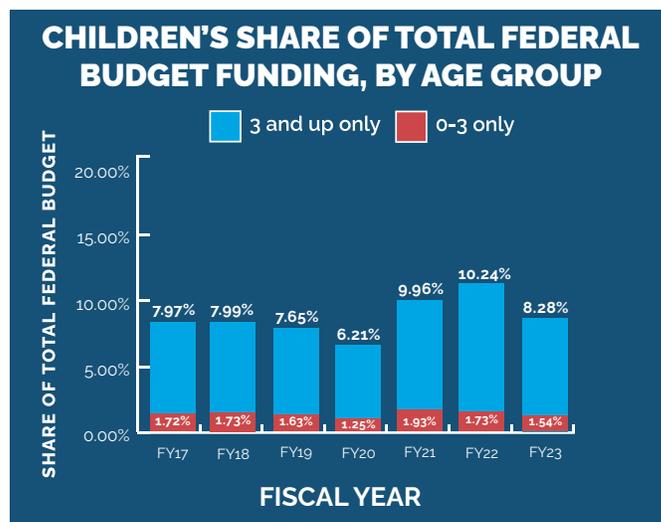
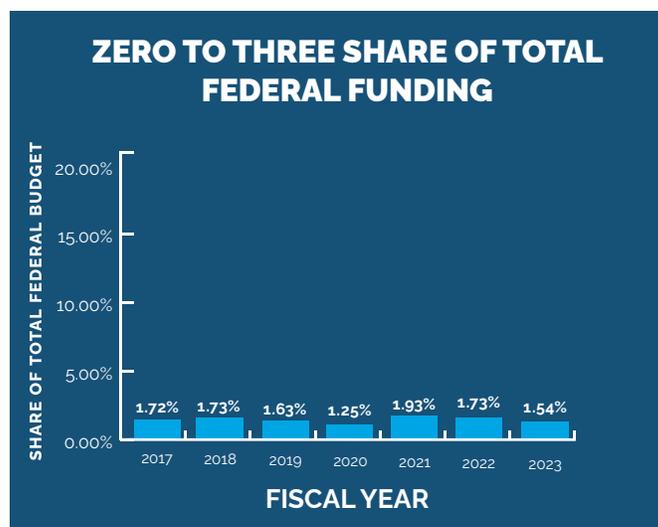
SECTION THREE: KEY FINDINGS

Key finding 1: Overall, spending on children ages zero to three makes up a very small fraction of the federal budget, not even equivalent to their share of the population. We consistently spend less than 2% of the federal budget on babies and toddlers — in FY 2020, we spent just 1.25%. Yet, babies represent 3.4% of the population and these first three years of life are critical to a child's development.

Federal spending on infants and toddlers as a share of the total budget gauges the relative priority placed on ensuring foundational development as an investment in the future. Seen in that light, the budget share dedicated to children during some of the most formative years of human development remains alarmingly low. This finding is in direct conflict with what the science of brain development tells us. If we are truly seeking to reduce deficits and strengthen the nation's economy, we must increase the baby share of the federal budget and make significant investments in early childhood health and development.

Key finding 2: Funding for babies and toddlers has declined as a share of the federal budget since FY 2017 and has not even kept pace with inadequate investments in older children.

It is concerning that the "baby share" for FY 2023 is actually below the FY 2017 level. The share of federal spending on children under age three as a percentage of the budget declined in FY 2019 and dropped again in FY 2020 to just 1.25% following budget cuts. Despite COVID-fueled spending, largely through the American Rescue Plan Act, the spending share increased slightly in FY 2021 to 1.93%, but analysis shows a downward



spending trend resuming in FY 2022 and continuing through FY 2023, when the share is projected to drop below FY 2017 levels to an estimated 1.54%. It should be noted that some of the spending in the American Rescue Plan Act is shown in the year it was appropriated. In some cases the funds will continue to be spent over several years, but nevertheless will end.

Key finding 3: Historically, very young children have not received their fair share of federal investments. This fact becomes more alarming when considering the real change in spending for children ages zero to three as families struggle to address the skyrocketing cost of raising young children, including paying for child care, housing, doctor's visits, diapers, and formula.

In fact, overall funding for babies and toddlers experienced real year-to-year declines in FY 2022 and FY 2023, dropping 27% in FY 2022 and estimated to decline by nearly 8% in FY 2023 when accounting for inflation. From FY 2021 to FY 2022 discretionary spending on young children showed a real year-to-year decline of almost 60%. Mandatory spending declined more than 15%. Inflation exacerbates the impact of the expiration of COVID funding streams that recognized families' economic hardship. Our children's unique needs continue to grow, but our willingness to meet those needs is falling far short, a situation that is costly for them, their families and our society. Research consistently finds that the highest rate of return for early childhood development comes from investing as early as possible, starting at or even before birth.³ Unfortunately, this analysis tells us the structure of federal investments does not line up with research when less than one-fifth of spending on children is allocated to infants and toddlers and real purchasing power continues to erode.

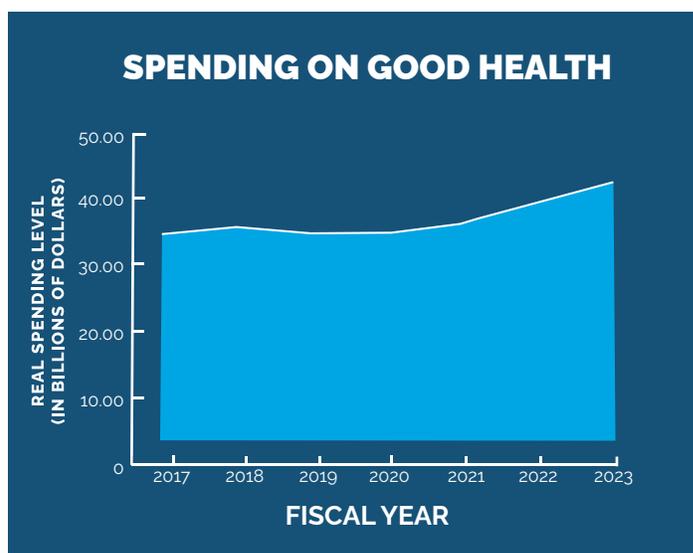
OVERALL SPENDING ON ZERO TO THREE							
FISCAL YEAR	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Spending Level (in billions of dollars)	68.45	71.06	72.33	81.74	131.99	102.87	98.32
Real Change from Prior Year	N/A	1.38%	-0.07%	11.39%	56.33%	-26.91%	-7.74%
Share of Total Spending	1.72%	1.73%	1.63%	1.25%	1.93%	1.73%	1.54%

For a full breakdown of all programs, see appendix on page 19 and the data dictionary on page 25.



SECTION FOUR: GOOD HEALTH

In the federal supports for Good Health critical to child and family well-being, the budget shows steady increases over the last three years and the greatest sustained investments of the three domains. Medicaid drove the bulk of these increases, in part because children were able to maintain continuous enrollment during the pandemic. Spending in the Good Health domain has very little discretionary funding directed at babies, but those funds can help improve services specifically for this population. Ensuring positive physical and mental health, as well as detecting any developmental concerns as early as possible, is basic to keeping early development on track. Coverage losses in Medicaid unwinding as well as constrained funding for programs supporting good health for infants, toddlers, and families would have real, everyday, and reverberating impacts on families. Infants and toddlers need healthy bodies, healthy minds, healthy parents, and healthy environments



GOOD HEALTH	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Spending Level (in billions of dollars)	28.29	30.08	31.64	31.49	31.88	34.59	40.32	45.67
Real Change from Prior Year	N/A	12.68%	2.70%	-2.29%	-0.20%	5.03%	9.31%	9.35%
Share of Total	N/A	0.76%	0.77%	0.71%	0.49%	0.51%	0.68%	0.72%

to thrive. Yet, disparities in health outcomes are apparent even before birth, especially for Black and Indigenous infants and mothers. Federal programs help families with young children access comprehensive and affordable health insurance, mental and physical health care services, and medical homes, contributing to reductions in racial disparities in birth and health outcomes. Health is influenced by environmental factors, with young children of color and those in families with low income disproportionately experiencing harmful effects of pollution and climate change, making environmental protection a powerful component of health and development.

Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program

(CHIP) are by far the largest and most critical federal health programs for delivering the health care necessary for children's positive development. Largely because of these programs, less than 5% of young children are uninsured today.⁴ The programs also wield profound power to promote equity: Less than 4% of Black infants and toddlers in families with low income are uninsured.⁵ Research has found children on Medicaid have better health, educational outcomes, and economic opportunities than children who are uninsured.⁶

While discretionary funding in the Good Health area is small (less than \$1.5 billion in FY 2023), it can drive enhancements in the quality of support specifically for babies and families. For example, a recent set-aside in the **Maternal and Child Health Block Grant** places **early childhood development experts** in pediatric settings and additional funding allocates them to Federally Qualified Health Centers. These specialists improve outcomes by increasing developmental screening, ensuring that children are more up-to-date on vaccinations by age two, and supporting parents in nurturing their children. **Infant and early childhood mental health grants** help build capacity in the states to improve outcomes for very young children by developing, maintaining, or enhancing infant and early childhood mental health promotion, intervention, and treatment services.

For a full analysis on Good Health spending, see page 25.

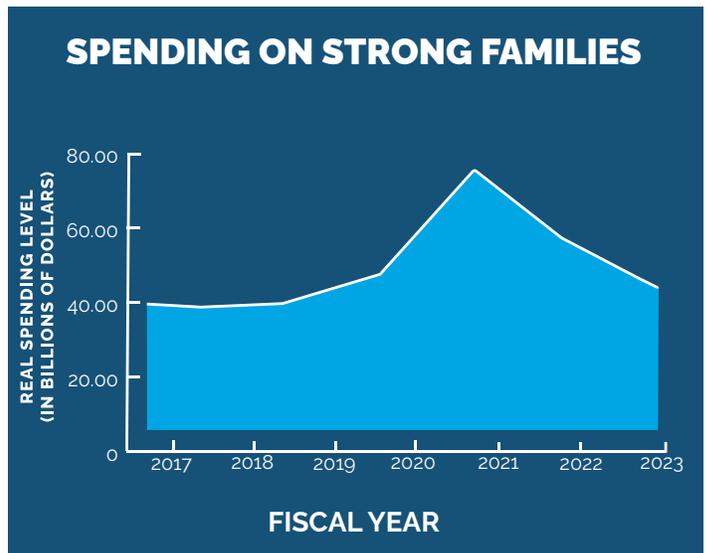
"When [my son] was born and needed open heart surgery, we were stunned and terrified. Everything happened so quickly and I was having a hard time processing it all – trying to stay strong, trying to be there for both my new baby and toddler at home, worried about how we would pay the medical bills, worried about how much time I would have to stay home and take care of him, worried about keeping track of his medicines and appointments, worried about how this would impact his future and our lives."

- Hannah S. Minnesota



SECTION FIVE: STRONG FAMILIES

Robust support for families during the pandemic fueled sharp funding increases for programs in the Strong Families domain in FY 2021. Funding remained high in FY 2022, but has trended downward as those supports expired. The 63% increase during FY 2021 was driven largely by the Economic Impact Payments, the expanded and fully refundable Child Tax Credit and increased Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, which aided families experiencing economic hardship. Yet, real spending levels in the Strong Families category grew just 12% from FY 2017 to FY 2023. Further, the share of spending on infants and toddlers in this domain has actually shrunk since FY 2017 as overall federal spending outpaced investments on infants and toddlers.



STRONG FAMILIES	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Spending Level (in billions of dollars)	32.86	32.26	32.43	33.77	41.41	69.53	54.58	43.58
Real Change from Prior Year	N/A	4.01%	-1.84%	2.24%	20.85%	62.56%	-26.38%	-22.92%
Share of Total	N/A	0.81%	0.79%	0.76%	0.63%	1.02%	0.92%	0.68%

Economic supports: The pandemic response to families' economic need illustrated the positive impact of federal income supports in reducing the family stress that can build with economic difficulties, stress that when chronic and ever-present can become toxic to the developing brain. The pandemic **Economic Impact Payments** as well as the enhanced tax credits helped decrease hardship for families with young children in 2021, reducing the emotional distress that had been high among these families at the pandemic's onset.⁸ The enhanced **Child Tax Credit (CTC)** and expanded **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** in the American Rescue Plan Act drove a 46% reduction in child poverty in 2021 and the largest year-to-year reduction on record of child poverty despite a global pandemic and economic recession.^{9 10} Recent data also shows a reduction in material hardship while these supports were in place, from December 2020 to April 2021.¹¹ Families with young children relied on the expanded CTC and EITC, and upon the enhancements' expiration, nearly 4 million children slid back into poverty.¹² Reinstating enhancements to ongoing programs, primarily EITC and CTC, could provide similar benefits and are among the most critical for young children's development. Approaches such as the EITC to increase income for families in poverty or with low income have been found to improve maternal and child health as well as reduce material hardship. The CTC could have similar impacts yet, because the full refundability provision expired in 2022, it excludes many of the young children who could benefit most.

"I want to be clear that my struggle to find economic security is not a result of laziness"
- Monique V. Michigan

Food and Nutrition: The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** and the **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)**, work together as the first lines of defense against hunger in a child's earliest and most formative years. Research demonstrates that nutrition assistance directly targeted at young children and pregnant people effectively reduces the likelihood of low birth weight, infant mortality, and childhood anemia, and improves diet quality and nutrition intake, initiation and duration of breastfeeding, cognitive development and learning, immunization rates, and use of health services.¹³

Housing Assistance: Stable housing is of particular importance for infants and toddlers, supporting family well-being and lower stress levels. Federal housing programs can play a significant role in ensuring a secure environment for children's early development. **Tenant-Based Rental Assistance** and **Housing Choice Vouchers** or **Tenant-Based Housing Assistance** can provide families with economic challenges critical access to stable housing but because federal investment is lacking, only one in four eligible households receive this important assistance.¹⁴

Community Supports and Child Welfare: All families need support in raising their children and balancing everyday stressors, but some families need support that is more concrete, increasing parenting skills and connecting with community resources. Very few federal programs focus on comprehensively promoting family strengths, but one such program is the **Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program**, whose mandatory funding will double over the next few years. MIECHV aims to improve maternal and child health, prevent child abuse and neglect, reduce crime and domestic violence, increase family education and earning potential, promote children's development, and connect families to needed community resources and supports.

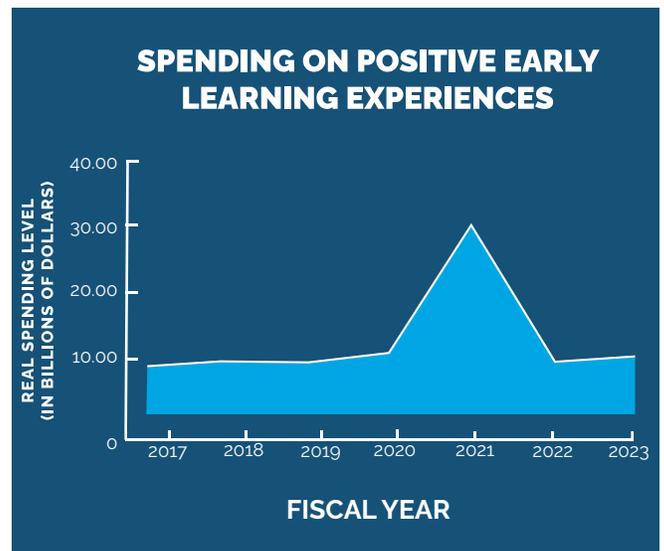
The lack of support for families can leave many overwhelmed by stressors, material hardship, and mental health and substance use issues, which increase their risk of encountering the child welfare system. Federal child welfare programs have historically focused on providing states with **foster care payments**, funded as an entitlement, and administrative support. Only recently has policy started to turn toward building family strengths upstream to prevent child welfare contact. For instance, the Family First Prevention Services Act can draw on foster care entitlement funds for services such as in-home parenting support and mental health or substance use treatment. Still early in its implementation, Family First has channeled an estimated \$183 million to prevention, an amount that is likely to grow. Discretionary funds can help improve systems for infants and toddlers. A smaller yet still comprehensive approach, the **Infant-Toddler Court Program (ITCP)** is specifically tailored to assess and holistically address the unique needs of infants and toddlers and their families. This modestly funded program is designed around early developmental needs, an understanding of intergenerational trauma, and a community-led drive toward systems change.

For a full analysis of Strong Families programs, see page 28.



SECTION SIX: POSITIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Early learning is the only domain funded primarily through discretionary spending, with just 25% coming from mandatory funding sources not subject to the annual appropriations process. Early learning also represents by far the smallest area of spending in our analysis, with the federal government investing only \$9.06 billion—or about \$800 per child age 0-3 in FY 2023—in early care and learning programs. Federal funding for core programs such as the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Early Head Start has increased slightly in real terms since FY 2017, but continues to fall far short of the need. Funding for these programs spiked temporarily as a result of pandemic aid packages passed by Congress in FY 2020 and FY2021, which invested historically significant resources to sustain and stabilize the child care sector. While this funding was largely appropriated in FY 2020 and FY 2021, states were given multiple years to obligate and spend it. The period to obligate and spend the funds ends at the end of FY 2023 (September 30, 2023) for stabilization funding and the end of FY 2024 (September 30, 2024) for CCDBG supplemental funding.



POSITIVE EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Spending Level (in billions of dollars)	6.01	6.11	6.99	7.07	8.45	27.87	7.97	9.06
Real Change from Prior Year	N/A	7.64%	11.82%	-0.74%	17.75%	219.42%	-73.18%	9.80%
Share of Total	N/A	0.16%	0.18%	0.17%	0.19%	0.43%	0.12%	0.15%

Many infants and toddlers are in nonparental care for much of their day, making early care and learning programs a significant factor in shaping development while also helping their parents work. More than 60% of mothers with infants and toddlers are in the workforce,¹⁵ and accessible, affordable child care is often a barrier. Yet, the child development aspects of child care are often overlooked. Equitable access to high-quality early childhood care benefits infants and toddlers in multiple ways that support their development, reinforcing and enhancing their parents' interactions with them in the home learning environment, and supporting their parents' ability to go to work or attend school.

“We have no idea how we could afford child care for two children.”
- Kayla S. Vermont

A key foundation for a strong economy and healthy early childhood development, quality child care is a public good and must be treated as such. Investments in proven supports for families such as the **Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)** – which serves just 16% of eligible children¹⁶—must increase, while the country builds toward a comprehensive child care system. The expiration of pandemic aid to child care providers at the end of September of this year will exacerbate the problems of child care cost and lack of access to quality care. Provider surveys indicate that they will be forced to further raise tuition for families, reduce wages for early educators, or close altogether if federal assistance is allowed to expire without additional investment in the system.¹⁷ Comprehensive early childhood education, beginning at birth, offers a powerful and effective way to mitigate the negative consequences that poverty has on child development, opportunities in adulthood, society's return on investment. Despite these benefits, **Early Head Start (EHS)** reaches only 11% of eligible infants and toddlers.¹⁸ An essential part of the early care and learning system, early intervention to identify and address developmental delays is critical, but just one-in-three babies received a developmental screening using a parent-completed tool and 7.3% received **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C** services.¹⁹

For a full analysis of Positive Early Learning Experiences programs, see page 27.

CONCLUSION

We must redouble our commitment to babies. Our federal budget should follow the science of early childhood development and increase investments in the earliest years commensurate with their importance in shaping the rest of children's lives. The federal budget does reach all the varied aspects of early development. Yet, the budget priority for the youngest children has not approached a level appropriate to either their share of the population or the enormous amount of brain development a robust investment could impact. We are currently underspending on our youngest children during the very stage in which they are developing the foundation of all future learning. The budget deal passed by Congress in June 2023 likely decreased the "Baby Share" even more. The President and Congress must take stock of the long-term implications of placing a low priority on infants and toddlers — the people who will be our nation's future workers and leaders. Following the science of early brain development would lead to increased investments in our youngest children and families, which will ensure a strong future for the nation.

METHODOLOGY

This analysis includes spending estimates for children under the age of three for the programs included in the [First Focus Children's Budget 2022 publication](#).

The majority of budget numbers in this book for FY 2023 can be found in the Joint Explanatory Statements for 2023 appropriations bills, though some of the mandatory spending levels for FY 2023 can be found in the Congressional budget justifications provided by relevant federal agencies for FY 2023 and the Appendix of the president's FY 2023 budget. The Congressional budget justifications and Appendix also are the source for the President's budget request for FY 2023. We use actual outlays in the years where they are available and budget authority where they are not.

Where possible, the estimate for the share of a program's spending benefiting infants and toddlers comes from agency data. While some programs do have data on spending by age, for many programs typically the share is an estimate reflecting participation by age, ideally weighted by cost estimates, or assuming equal spending across participants if no spending data is available. For programs without direct participation data, estimates may instead reflect related statistics about the target population. Finally, for programs where no data is available, the estimate assumes spending on infants and toddlers is equal to the first three years as a proportion of eligible program participant ages, weighted by population. Thus, a program serving children under 18, with no other data, is assumed to benefit infants and toddlers at a rate of 15.1%. For programs that provide benefits to individuals of all ages that do not provide participation data for individual ages, we estimate the share to infants and toddlers based on the percentage of participating households with children under age three.

For additional questions, details about the methodology behind this analysis or how we developed estimates for individual programs, contact **Jessica Troe**, Senior Director of Budget and Data Analytics at First Focus on Children, at jessicat@firstfocus.org.

APPENDIX (In alphabetical order)

132.58%
2017-23

Child Care and Development Block Grant

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Administration for Children and Families
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 27.50%
Category Of Funding: Positive Early Learning Experiences

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$785.4M	\$1.44B	\$1.45B	\$2.56B	\$15.08B	\$1.70B	\$2.21B
Real Change from Prior Year	9.61%	78.67%	-0.88%	74.23%	469.23%	-89.46%	25.59%

The Child Care and Development Fund makes funding available to states, tribes, and territories to assist qualifying low-income families in obtaining child care so that parents can work or attend classes or training and includes both discretionary funding in the form of the Child Care Development Block Grant as well as a mandatory Child Care Entitlement funding stream.

0.92%
2017-23

Child Care Entitlement to States

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Administration for Children and Families
Type: Mandatory • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 27.50%
Category Of Funding: Positive Early Learning Experiences

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$802.2M	\$802.2M	\$802.2M	\$802.2M	\$866.5M	\$890.5M	\$977.6M
Real Change from Prior Year	5.96%	-2.36%	-1.82%	-1.43%	4.57%	-3.63%	5.98%

The Child Care and Development Fund makes funding available to states, tribes, and territories to assist qualifying low-income families in obtaining child care so that parents can work or attend classes or training and includes both discretionary funding in the form of the Child Care Development Block Grant as well as a mandatory Child Care Entitlement funding stream.

NEW SINCE 2017

Child Care Stabilization Fund

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Administration for Children and Families
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 28.00%
Category Of Funding: Positive Early Learning Experiences

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6.71B	\$0.00	\$0.00
Real Change from Prior Year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-100.00%	N/A

The Child Care Stabilization Fund, formed through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, will provide states with grants to help child care providers impacted by the pandemic to reopen or stay open, provide safe and healthy learning environments, keep workers on payroll, and provide mental health supports for educators and children.

29.54%
2017-23

Child Tax Credit (Refundability)

Department: Treasury • Bureau: Internal Revenue Service
Type: Mandatory • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 15.10%
Category Of Funding: Strong Families

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$2.93B	\$2.81B	\$4.36B	\$4.19B	\$11.92B	\$14.87B	\$4.58B
Real Change from Prior Year	1.87%	-6.44%	52.56%	-5.25%	175.16%	17.00%	-70.25%

The Child Tax Credit (CTC) helps ease the costs of having children. The refundable portion of the CTC provides a cash payment to low-income taxpayers who owe little or no income tax. The American Rescue Plan Act made several changes and expansions to the child tax credit: increased the amount of the Child Tax Credit from \$2,000 to \$3,600 for children under age 6, and \$3,000 for other children under age 18, expanded the scope to cover children 17 years and younger compared to 16 years and younger, provided advance payments of an eligible taxpayer's 2021 child tax credit as opposed to waiting until the 2022 tax filing season to receive the benefit, made the credit fully refundable so low-income households can receive the full benefit, and extended the credit to Puerto Rico and the U.S. territories.

-11.67%
2017-23

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services
Type: Mandatory • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 6.60%
Category Of Funding: Good Health

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$1.10B	\$1.14B	\$1.17B	\$1.11B	\$1.06B	\$1.10B	\$1.17B
Real Change from Prior Year	22.15%	1.65%	0.49%	-5.94%	-7.70%	-3.19%	2.89%

The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides funds to states to initiate and expand child health assistance to uninsured, low-income children. Thanks to CHIP, nearly 9 million children have access to healthcare.

-13.22%
2017-23

Earned Income Tax Credit (Refundability)

Department: Treasury • Bureau: Internal Revenue Service
Type: Mandatory • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 15.10%
Category Of Funding: Strong Families

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$8.40B	\$8.65B	\$8.26B	\$8.16B	\$8.90B	\$10.03B	\$8.80B
Real Change from Prior Year	2.88%	0.57%	-6.33%	-2.55%	5.54%	5.66%	-15.23%

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable tax credit available to eligible workers earning relatively low wages. Because the credit is refundable, an EITC recipient need not owe taxes to receive the benefit. For FY 2016-2019, data from the Internal Revenue Service was used to determine the amount of refundable credits being issued to people with qualifying children (the amount allocated to childless adults was not included). As the most recent year of data from the IRS is for tax year 2019 (FY 2020), for FY 2021-2023, we used data from the Congressional Research Service that estimates 97% of EITC funds are allocated to people with qualifying children.

7.71%
2017-23

Head Start and Early Head Start

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Administration for Children and Families
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 30.97%
Category Of Funding: Positive Early Learning Experiences

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$2.86B	\$3.05B	\$3.12B	\$3.29B	\$3.36B	\$3.42B	\$3.72B
Real Change from Prior Year	6.60%	4.42%	0.17%	3.96%	-1.05%	-4.58%	4.93%

Head Start provides comprehensive child development services for economically disadvantaged 3- and 4-year-old children to prepare them to succeed in school, while Early Head Start programs serve low-income infants and toddlers under the age of 3. In providing this demographic with high quality pre-school, Head start narrows the gap between disadvantaged and more privileged children as they enter kindergarten. However, Head Start has yet to reach most eligible children; as of FY 2017, only 31 percent of eligible children had access to the program.

-2.48%
2017-23

IDEA C - Grants for Infants and Families

Department: Education • Bureau: Special Education
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 100%
Category Of Funding: Positive Early Learning Experiences

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$458.6M	\$470M	\$470M	\$477M	\$481.9M	\$496.3M	\$540M
Real Change from Prior Year	5.96%	0.08%	-1.82%	0.04%	-2.21%	-3.40%	5.03%

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Grants for Infants and Families assist states in implementing statewide systems of coordinated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary,

NEW SINCE 2017

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 23.40%
Category Of Funding: Good Health

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$0.00	\$1.2M	\$1.2M	\$1.6M	\$1.9M	\$2.3M	\$3.5M
Real Change from Prior Year	N/A	N/A	-1.82%	38.00%	11.96%	15.84%	44.80%

These grants, first appropriated in FY 2018, support infant and early childhood mental health promotion, intervention, and treatment as authorized in the 21st Century Cures Act.

6.17%
2017-23

Maternal and Child Health Block Grant

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Maternal and Child Health Bureau
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 28.00%
Category Of Funding: Good Health

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$179.7M	\$182.5M	\$189.8M	\$192.6M	\$199M	\$209.4M	\$230.4M
Real Change from Prior Year	6.54%	-0.84%	2.09%	0.02%	0.02%	-1.31%	6.21%

The Maternal and Child Health Block Grant (MCH) aims to improve the health, safety, and well-being of all mothers and children. Through funding to the states, MCH programs strive to support community-based initiatives to address the comprehensive physical, psychological, and social needs of the maternal and child population.

-7.04%
2017-23

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Visiting Program

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Health Resources and Services Administration
Type: Mandatory • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 72.00%
Category Of Funding: Strong Families

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$299.5M	\$263.5M	\$277.9M	\$271M	\$266.4M	\$321.1M	\$336.2M
Real Change from Prior Year	13.02%	-14.09%	3.54%	-3.88%	-4.84%	13.05%	1.08%

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program provides funding for nurses, social workers, or other professionals to meet with at-risk families in their homes, evaluate the families' circumstances, and connect them to the kinds of help that can make a difference in a child's health, development, and ability to learn. Services include health care, developmental services for children, early education, parenting skills, child abuse prevention, and nutrition education or assistance.

30.51%
2017-23

Medicaid

Department: Health and Human Services • Bureau: Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services
Type: Mandatory • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 6.60%
Category Of Funding: Good Health

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$25.40B	\$26.76B	\$26.75B	\$26.83B	\$29.70B	\$34.93B	\$40.04B
Real Change from Prior Year	12.51%	2.84%	-1.86%	-1.12%	7.15%	10.30%	10.64%

Medicaid is a joint federal and state program that provides health insurance coverage to certain categories of low-income individuals, including children, pregnant women, parents of eligible children, and people with disabilities. Each state administers its own Medicaid program, while the federal Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services provides oversight and establishes requirements for service delivery, quality, funding, and eligibility standards. The Affordable Care Act expanded Medicaid in FY 2014, resulting in more adults enrolling in the program. The share of children served by Medicaid is estimated to be roughly 18 percent.

6.71%
2017-23

Project Based Rental Assistance

Department: Housing and Urban Development • Bureau: Public and Indian Housing
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 4.15%
Category Of Funding: Strong Families

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$449.1M	\$478.2M	\$487.8M	\$535.8M	\$559.1M	\$578.9M	\$578.8M
Real Change from Prior Year	7.92%	3.95%	0.16%	8.28%	1.01%	-2.91%	-3.49%

The Project-Based Rental Assistance Program provides funding to landlords who rent a specified number of affordable apartments to low-income families or individuals. Since FY 2007, the share of children receiving Project Based Rental assistance has fallen from 33 percent to 28 percent, and was as low as 21 percent in 2014.

-21.71%
2017-23

Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

Department: Agriculture • Bureau: Food and Nutrition Service
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 66.76%
Category Of Funding: Strong Families

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$4.24B	\$4.12B	\$4.06B	\$3.98B	\$3.36B	\$4.01B	\$4.01B
Real Change from Prior Year	5.96%	-5.05%	-3.41%	-3.30%	-18.36%	11.96%	-3.47%

The Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and breast-feeding and nutrition education to low-income pregnant and postpartum women, as well as infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

81.64%
2017-23

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Department: Agriculture • Bureau: Food and Nutrition Service
Type: Mandatory • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 6.58%
Category Of Funding: Strong Families

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$4.62B	\$4.51B	\$4.18B	\$6.48B	\$9.67B	\$9.24B	\$10.13B
Real Change from Prior Year	1.71%	-4.66%	-9.03%	52.95%	44.49%	-10.39%	5.76%

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, provides direct financial assistance to low-income households for use in purchasing food for home consumption. Children represent nearly half of SNAP participants and receive roughly half of every dollar in SNAP benefits, making SNAP the largest federal nutrition program serving children.

12.63%
2017-23

Tenant Based Rental Assistance (Discretionary)

Department: Housing and Urban Development • Bureau: Public and Indian Housing
Type: Discretionary • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 6.49%
Category Of Funding: Strong Families

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$1.32B	\$1.43B	\$1.44B	\$1.60B	\$1.67B	\$1.78B	\$1.79B
Real Change from Prior Year	9.54%	5.93%	-0.96%	9.33%	1.31%	-0.43%	-2.66%

The Housing Choice Voucher Program, or Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (commonly referred to as "Section 8"), helps subsidize housing costs for over two million families through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. It is the federal government's largest low-income housing assistance program. Since 2007, the share of children using Tenant Based Rental Assistance has fallen from 54 percent to 44 percent.

**NEW
SINCE
2017**

Tenant Based Rental Assistance (Mandatory)

Department: Housing and Urban Development • Bureau: Public and Indian Housing
Type: Mandatory • Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers: 6.49%
Category Of Funding: Strong Families

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of Spending Allocated to Infants and Toddlers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$19.4M	0.00	0.00
Real Change from Prior Year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-100.00%	N/A

The Housing Choice Voucher Program, or Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (commonly referred to as "Section 8"), helps subsidize housing costs for over two million families through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. It is the federal government's largest low-income housing assistance program. Since 2007, the share of children using Tenant Based Rental Assistance has fallen from 54 percent to 44 percent. * The American Rescue Plan authorizes an additional \$4.98 billion of mandatory spending in additional vouchers for Tenant Based Rental Assistance to be allocated over 10 years. We used estimated budget outlays for FY 2022 instead of budget authority.

DATA DICTIONARY and INDEX OF PROGRAMS

GOOD HEALTH

Supporting the physical and mental health of babies and their families provides the foundation for lifelong physical, cognitive, emotional, and social well-being. Federal investments in positive early mental and physical health provide comprehensive health insurance, mental and physical health care services, and healthier environments.

PROGRAM	ZERO TO THREE POLICY FRAMEWORK	FY 23 ON 0-3
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)	Good Health	3.4 M
Autism and Other Developmental Disorders	Good Health	23.7 M
Birth Defects, Developmental Disabilities, Disability and Health	Good Health	111.1 M
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Programs	Good Health	7.7 M
Children and Other Sensitive Populations Agency Coordination	Good Health	960.7K
Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	Good Health	1.17 B
Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Program	Good Health	296.45 B
Children's Mental Health Services	Good Health	16 M
Clean Air and Climate: Climate Protection	Good Health	292 K
Clean Air and Climate: Federal Support for Air Quality Management	Good Health	378.5 K
Climate and Health	Good Health	333.7 K
Community Health Centers (Discretionary)	Good Health	84.3 M
Community Health Centers (Mandatory)	Good Health	0.00
Community Mental Health Services Block Grant	Good Health	41.9 M
Emergency Medical Services for Children	Good Health	3.7 M
Ensure Safe Drinking Water: Drinking Water Programs	Good Health	170.1 K
Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (Formerly National Children's Study)	Good Health	27.2 M
Environmental Justice	Good Health	3.4 M
Healthy Start	Good Health	68.8 M
Hospitals Promoting Breastfeeding	Good Health	9.8 M
Indoor Air: Radon Program	Good Health	6.6 K
Indoor Air: Reduce Risks from Indoor Air	Good Health	9.3 K

PROGRAM	ZERO TO THREE POLICY FRAMEWORK	FY 23 ON 0-3
Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health	Good Health	3.5 M
Maternal and Child Health Block Grant	Good Health	230.4 M
Medicaid	Good Health	40.04 B
National Asthma Control Program	Good Health	1.00 M
National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative	Good Health	14.2 M
National Childhood Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund	Good Health	1.7 M
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)	Good Health	297.3 M
Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes (Discretionary) (I actually think the numbers we have are for Lead Hazard Reduction)	Good Health	61.9 M
Pediatric Mental Health Access	Good Health	130 K
Pediatric Mental Health Access (Mandatory - ARP)	Good Health	0.00
Pesticides: Protect Human Health from Pesticide Risk	Good Health	2.1 M
Pesticides: Protect the Environment from Pesticide Risk	Good Health	1.6 M
Poison Control	Good Health	21.4 M
Project Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Child Health (LAUNCH)	Good Health	9.2 M
Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program	Good Health	5.1 M
Safe Motherhood/Infant Health Programs	Good Health	108 M
State and Tribal Assistance Grant: Safe Water for Small & Disadvantaged Communities	Good Health	1.0 M
State and Tribal Assistance Grant: Reducing Lead in Drinking Water	Good Health	834.6 K
Superfund Cleanup	Good Health	3.5 M
Toxics Risks Review and Prevention	Good Health	2.8 M
Universal Newborn Hearing Screening and Early Intervention (Early Hearing Detection and Intervention)	Good Health	18.8 M
Vaccines For Children	Good Health	2.97 B

POSITIVE EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Infants and toddlers learn through interactions with the significant adults in their lives and active exploration of enriching environments at home and in other care settings. Federal investments in positive early learning experiences promote strong early cognitive, social emotional, and language development while helping families work by providing support in accessing and paying for high-quality child care and early learning opportunities, and early intervention for babies with developmental delays and disabilities.

PROGRAM	ZERO TO THREE POLICY FRAMEWORK	FY 23 ON 0-3
American Printing House for the Blind	Positive Early Learning Experiences	3.0 M
Child and Adult Care Food Program	Positive Early Learning Experiences	1.30 B
Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools	Positive Early Learning Experiences	26.3 M
Child Care and Development Block Grant (Discretionary)	Positive Early Learning Experiences	2.21 B
Child Care Entitlement to States (Mandatory)	Positive Early Learning Experiences	977.6 M
Child Care Stabilization Fund	Positive Early Learning Experiences	0.00
Comprehensive Literacy Development Grants	Positive Early Learning Experiences	44.9 M
Education Innovation and Research	Positive Early Learning Experiences	77.6 M
Head Start and Early Head Start	Positive Early Learning Experiences	3.72 B
IDEA C - Grants for Infants and Families	Positive Early Learning Experiences	540 M
IDEA D - Parent Information Centers	Positive Early Learning Experiences	1.3 M
IDEA D - Personnel Preparation (Discretionary)	Positive Early Learning Experiences	4.6 M
IDEA D - State Personnel Development	Positive Early Learning Experiences	1.5 M
IDEA D - Technical Assistance and Dissemination	Positive Early Learning Experiences	1.8 M
IDEA D - Technology and Media Services	Positive Early Learning Experiences	1.3 M
National Early Child Care Collaboratives	Positive Early Learning Experiences	1.4 M
Preschool Development Grants	Positive Early Learning Experiences	152.5 M
Ready to Learn Television	Positive Early Learning Experiences	4.2 M
Special Education Studies and Evaluations	Positive Early Learning Experiences	532.7 K

STRONG FAMILIES

Young children develop in the context of their families, where stability, safety, and supportive relationships nurture their growth. Federal investments supporting strong families address economic needs with the potential to reduce child poverty, support families in meeting their basic needs such as food and housing, and create supportive communities.

PROGRAM	ZERO TO THREE POLICY FRAMEWORK	FY 23 ON 0-3
Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments Program	Strong Families	11.3 M
Adoption Opportunities	Strong Families	7.70 M
Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (Family Caregiving Advisory Council)	Strong Families	60.4 K
Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Programs	Strong Families	65.6 M
Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (Refundability)	Strong Families	0.00
Child Tax Credit (Refundability)	Strong Families	4.58 B
Child Welfare Services	Strong Families	42.1 M
Child Welfare Training	Strong Families	5.8 M
Children of Incarcerated Parents Demonstration Program	Strong Families	125 K
Children of Incarcerated Parents Web Portal	Strong Families	12.5 K
Children, Youth, and Families at Risk	Strong Families	1.27 B
Choice Neighborhoods	Strong Families	28.43 B
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (Women, Infants and Children Participants)	Strong Families	0.00
Community Services Block Grants	Strong Families	41 M
Consumer Product Safety Commission	Strong Families	9.3 M
Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program	Strong Families	360 K
Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)	Strong Families	68.8 M
Disability Compensation (Veterans)	Strong Families	4.41 B
Disability Trust Fund Benefits	Strong Families	991.8 M
Earned Income Tax Credit (Refundability)	Strong Families	8.80 B
Family Self-Sufficiency Program	Strong Families	6.8 M
Farmers Market Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	Strong Families	17.4 M

PROGRAM	ZERO TO THREE POLICY FRAMEWORK	FY 23 ON 0-3
Guardianship Assistance	Strong Families	33.1 M
Homeless Assistance Grants	Strong Families	124 M
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	Strong Families	75.5 M
Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Visiting Program	Strong Families	336.2 M
Missing & Exploited Children Programs	Strong Families	26.4 M
Multi-Family Housing Voucher Program	Strong Families	2.0 M
National Housing Trust Fund	Strong Families	14.7 M
Native American Housing Block Grant Program	Strong Families	18.9 M
Old Age and Survivors Insurance Benefits	Strong Families	4.2 M
Payments to States for Adoption Assistance	Strong Families	277.4 M
Payments to States for Child Support Enforcement and Family Support Programs	Strong Families	562.2 M
Payments to States for Foster Care	Strong Families	1.49 B
Project Based Rental Assistance (Discretionary)	Strong Families	578.8 M
Promoting Safe and Stable Families (Discretionary)	Strong Families	20.8 M
Promoting Safe and Stable Families (Mandatory)	Strong Families	82.8 M
Public Housing Fund (Formerly the Public Housing Operating Fund)	Strong Families	485.3 M
Social Services Block Grant	Strong Families	156.6 M
Social Services Research	Strong Families	24.3 M
Special Milk Program	Strong Families	938 K
Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)	Strong Families	4.01 B
State Administrative Expenses for Child Nutrition Programs)	Strong Families	3.4 M
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	Strong Families	10.13 B
State Administrative Expenses for Child Nutrition Programs)	Strong Families	3.4 M
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	Strong Families	10.13 B

PROGRAM	ZERO TO THREE POLICY FRAMEWORK	FY 23 ON 0-3
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	Strong Families	10.13 B
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Federal Benefit Payments	Strong Families	1.54 B
Support for Missing and Exploited Children Investigations	Strong Families	1.5 M
Survivors' Pension Benefits (Non-Service Connected Death)	Strong Families	16 M
TANF Pandemic Emergency Assistance	Strong Families	0.00
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)	Strong Families	2.57 B
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (Discretionary)	Strong Families	1.79 B
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (Mandatory)	Strong Families	0.00
Tribal Children and Family Programs	Strong Families	1.2 M
Victims of Child Abuse (VOCA)	Strong Families	11.7 M

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