Core Policies for Infants, Toddlers, and Families

CLASP and ZERO TO THREE’s Building Strong Foundations: Advancing Comprehensive Policies for Infants, Toddlers, and Families project seeks to promote federal and state policies that comprehensively address the wellbeing of infants, toddlers, and families. In the first phase of Building Strong Foundations, ZERO TO THREE and CLASP identified 13 policies core to advancing infant-toddler wellbeing, recognizing that all babies need...

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds, and Healthy Parents
- Low-income infants, toddlers, parents, and pregnant women should have quality, affordable, publicly financed health insurance.
- Infants, toddlers, parents, and pregnant women should receive appropriate health screenings, preventive primary care, and medically necessary treatment services.
- Infants, toddlers, and parents should receive appropriate screening, diagnosis, and treatment services to meet their mental health needs.
- Low-income families with infants and toddlers and pregnant women should have access to nutrition support programs.

Economically Stable Families
- Low-income parents of infants and toddlers should have access to affordable education and training to improve their employment opportunities.
- Families in poverty with infants and toddlers should get cash assistance and refundable tax credits to supplement their earnings.
- Parents with infants and toddlers should have paid sick leave from work when they are ill, when their child or a family member is ill, or to obtain preventive care for themselves or their families. Parents should have paid family and medical leave when a child is born, adopted, or newly fostered.
- Low-income families with infants and toddlers should have affordable, safe, and stable housing.

Strong Parents
- Families of infants and toddlers should have access to a continuum of parent support services and resources to support their child’s development.
- Infants and toddlers in the child welfare system should receive developmentally appropriate supports responsive to the needs of the child and family.

High-Quality Child Care and Early Education Opportunities
- Low-income families with infants and toddlers should get child care assistance to afford safe, stable, high-quality child care that promotes children’s development and parents’ education, training, and work.
- Vulnerable infants, toddlers, pregnant women, and families should have access to comprehensive early childhood services through Early Head Start.
- Infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities should be identified and receive early intervention services in a timely manner.