



FOR OUR BABIES

The human brain grows to 85% of its adult size between conception and age 3.

This simple biological fact has direct implications for the support of human development during the earliest years of life. Compared to other industrialized nations, the U.S. does little to proactively nurture brain development between conception and age 3. A focus on ensuring healthy development during this timeframe will pay dividends throughout life. Delayed, damaged, or insufficient development is very difficult and expensive to correct later in life. If we ignore the earliest years, we do so to the detriment of our children, families, communities, and nation.



For Our Babies is a national movement promoting healthy development in U.S. children from conception to age 3. We advocate for the types of environments, experiences, and relationships that infants and toddlers need in order to thrive.

To capitalize on the opportunity that rapid human brain development provides, and to realize the benefits that healthy children provide to all of us, For Our Babies advocates for the following:

1. Prenatal health care coverage for all families, regardless of income, including home-based support and counseling during pregnancy.
2. Affordable intervention services for at-risk pregnancies.
3. Paid leave for parents for the first nine months of their child's life
4. Affordable visits to the homes of all newborns for the first two years that include guidance by professionals trained in parenting and healthy development, along with counseling on early emotional, social, intellectual, linguistic, and perceptual/motor development.
5. Affordable developmental screenings to identify physical and behavioral needs, with referral to affordable help when needed.
6. Affordable services for children with identified special needs.



7. Free intervention services for families in crisis.
8. Child care regulations that ensure that care is provided in safe, engaging, and intimate settings.
9. Training, compensation, and professional stature for infant and toddler teachers at the same level as K-12 schoolteachers.
10. Childcare subsidies for all families.

The rationale and necessity for these changes comes from the result of research in the fields of neuroscience, genomics, molecular biology, developmental psychology, public health, education, and economics. Research and experience proves that children given the developmental environment we advocate incur fewer health problems and costs, perform better in school, experience fewer and less severe mental health problems, perpetrate less crime, and attain higher socioeconomic status later in life. The economic benefits of the **For Our Babies** platform far outweigh the financial investment. The personal and societal benefits are tremendous.

Our Work

By sharing the relevant experience and knowledge of families, practitioners, and other experts through public appearances, publications, videos, community building, and advocacy work, **For Our Babies** shows how far the U.S. is from meeting the basic needs of our infants and toddlers, how our current treatment of infants harms them and our society, and how the support of positive early development benefits all.

Join with us as we build a new and healthier beginning for babies that will lead to better functioning students and more productive members of society. Share our messages widely and help us grow this movement. Stand up **For Our Babies** and let everyone know that the development of successful students and productive adults starts early.



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For more information, please contact the Center for Child and Family Studies at WestEd followus@fourbabies.org.