

# ECONOMIC SECURITY

## CORE MESSAGES

**Solution.** Targeted interventions in the first three years can mitigate negative outcomes, ensuring families have safe housing, food security, and stable income.

**Problem.** We put our nation's present and future at risk when high poverty rates impact access to housing, health care, food, clothing, and early childhood education for families with infants and toddlers.

**Call to action.** We need to invest in our future by supporting families with young children and providing access to adequate income, housing, health care, nutritious food, and quality early education.

## MAKING THE CASE

- **Early childhood development.** Infants and toddlers' early experiences shape lifelong health and brain development. Poverty during this critical period impacts brain growth and health outcomes. To mitigate the harmful health effects of poverty, families need access to resources to provide safe housing, nutritious foods, adequate clothing and diapers, and regular access to medical care so their young children have the stability they need during this critical time of rapid growth and development.
- **Financial burdens.** The cost of child care alone for families with infants is approximately 21% of the U.S. median income for a family of three. Families with young children often earn their lowest income at a time when their caregiving responsibilities and costs are the most demanding. What's more, many low-income parents work in low-wage jobs that can not support a family and lack necessary benefits such as health insurance and paid time off.



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- **Racial disparities.** Nearly one in five infants and toddlers live in families experiencing poverty. Due to longstanding inequities in public policy, nearly twice as many American Indian/Native and Black infants and toddlers experience poverty. One-half of babies in the U.S. are children of color, making today's children represent our nation's most racially and ethnically diverse generation. We have an opportunity to ensure that our policies, programs, and services meet the needs of our community's increasingly diverse families.
- **Economic impact.** The negative impacts of early childhood poverty can persist well into adulthood, impacting educational attainment, later earnings, adult health, and reliance on public benefits. But when families with young children have equitable access to opportunities that help them build economic security, it not only lifts the whole economy, but guarantees stronger, healthier, and more resilient communities for generations to come.

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*NCIT is here to support your advocacy campaign in a variety of ways to help you plan and execute your campaign. We support advocacy campaigns by mobilizing communities, advancing science and research through communications and messaging expertise, and other forms of capacity building for organizations. We offer tools and resources, connections to partner organizations, one-on-one coaching, and training to organizations advocating for policies that impact expectant parents, infants, toddlers, and their families. Each request starts a conversation – you don't have to have all the details ready. We'll get you connected to the right person! [Connect with us here!](#)*