



ZERO to THREE

Early connections last a lifetime

Building Strong Foundations for Families



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Building Strong Foundations for Families (BSFF)



ZERO TO THREE's Policy Center is pleased to introduce a new state technical assistance project which assists selected states in building and strengthening comprehensive policies, programs and systems that ensure families with infants and toddlers thrive

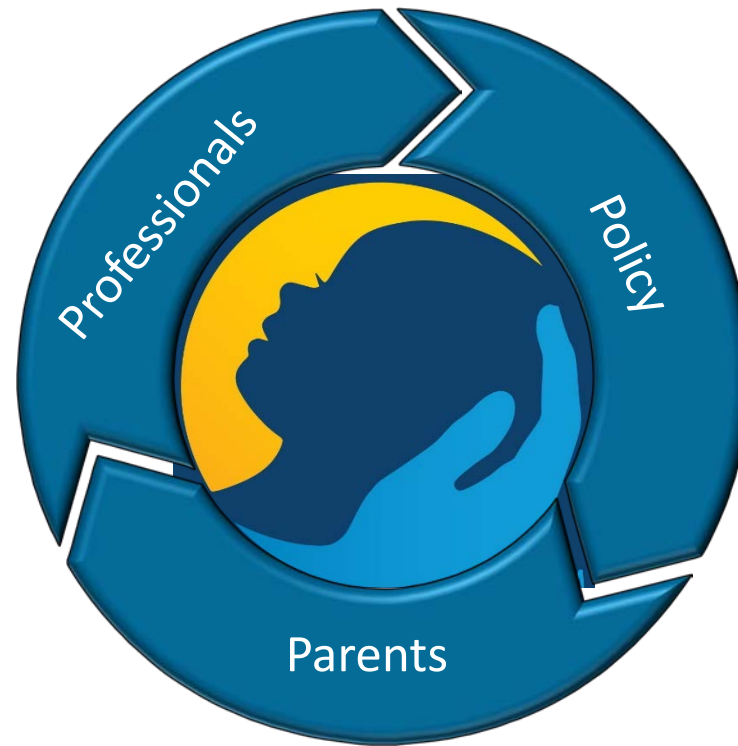


Agenda for today's orientation

- Your partners in this project – ZERO TO THREE
- BSFF framework
- BSFF in your state
- Technical assistance supports
- Questions
- ZERO TO THREE Resources



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The ZERO TO THREE Policy Center is a nonpartisan, research-based resource for federal and state policymakers and advocates on the unique developmental needs of babies and toddlers.



Understanding what works

From decades of experience, ZERO TO THREE understands and supports the need for systems to build in and promote equity for babies and families of color. A comprehensive and cross-sector approach is the way to advance robust policies to optimize the potential of all babies and families.

BSFF deepens ZERO TO THREE's policy agenda which emphasizes the need for babies to have:

- Good Health
- Strong Families
- Positive Learning Experiences



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Building on successful work

By working alongside states, ZERO TO THREE has provided expertise which can be leveraged for BSFF states' successes. Recent projects include:



Think Babies



Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Financing Policy Project



National Infant Toddler Court Program



Advancing State Policies for Infants and Toddlers



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Bringing intentional focus to infants and toddlers



Almost all states have established structures and processes for promoting cohesive services for young children, but the unique needs of babies and toddlers are often overlooked.

Children's brains grow faster between birth and age 3 than at any later point in life, forming one million new neural connections every second.

When babies have nurturing relationships, enriching early learning experiences, and strong health and nutrition, they have a crucial foundation for healthy development.



Addressing deep challenges



When babies don't get what their growing brains need to thrive, this leads to lifelong developmental, educational, social, and health challenges



2 in 5 babies live in low-income families. Children of color are two to three times more likely to be affected by poverty than white children



Babies in low-income families are more likely to experience crowded housing, unsafe neighborhoods, adverse childhood experiences and maltreatment





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COVID-19 has further exposed a fragile support system



Families have experienced an earthquake: a sudden, unexpected episode, that disrupts everyone without prejudice.

But what sometimes follows an earthquake is a tsunami that spreads across the ocean and disproportionately impacts those who cannot make it to higher ground.



COVID-19 impacts continuing to unfold

- As unemployment soars and families lose income, food insecurity has increased. Diapers and formula are more difficult to both afford and access.
- Social distancing has increased isolation and stress as families are cut off from support networks, and mental health concerns proliferate. Families of children with disabilities report much higher levels of stress.
- Routine and preventive maternal health care, preventive child health care, and mental health services have been difficult to get. Vaccination rates have fallen alarmingly.
- The child care system is in upheaval as some providers close, possibly never to reopen.
- There is a disproportionate impact on people of color, in infection rates and deaths and in the people whose work is now deemed essential.



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BSFF is a policy framework rooted in evidence

Building Strong Foundations:
Advancing Comprehensive Policies for Infants, Toddlers, and Families

Babies Need...



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Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds, and Healthy Parents

**Quality, affordable, publicly
financed health insurance**

**Health screenings, preventive
primary care, and medically
necessary treatment services**

**Screening, diagnosis, and
treatment services to meet
mental health needs**

Nutrition support programs



Economically Stable Families

**Affordable education and training
to improve employment
opportunities**

**Cash assistance and refundable
tax credits to supplement
earnings**

**Paid sick leave, and paid family
and medical leave**

**Affordable, safe, and stable
housing**

Parent support services and resources to support their child's development

Developmentally appropriate supports for infants and toddlers in the child welfare system



High-Quality Child Care and Education Opportunities

**Child care assistance to afford
safe, stable, high-quality child
care**

**Access to comprehensive early
childhood services through Early
Head Start**

**Identify and provide early
intervention services in a timely
manner**



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Framework grounded in racial equity



Rooted in discriminatory policies throughout U.S. history, racial disparities exist across nearly every measure of wellbeing, including health, economic security, and access to early learning experiences.

Strong policies are a tool to disrupt and dismantle institutional racism, promote equity and ensure every child in every family gets a strong start.

Learn more in [Building Strong Foundations: Racial Inequity in Policies that Impact Infants, Toddlers, and Families](#)



When infants, toddlers, and parents have the supports they need to succeed

- Families are stronger and more stable
- Communities are safer and more productive
- The nation's economy is empowered by a strong future workforce



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BSFF in your state



Cross-disciplinary, public-private teams in participating states will build and make progress on their own statewide infant-toddler policy agenda with ZERO TO THREE's Policy Center resources and expertise available for support, and opportunities to partner across other ZTT projects.

State teams

Each state will have a(n):

- core team committed to execute the project. The core team will have 5-7 people with authority to influence change, and will represent key agencies and organizations serving babies, toddlers and families.
- stakeholders beyond the core team involved as needed and desired according to policy priorities.
- team lead(s) to serve as the point person for communication with ZERO TO THREE and lead the core teams' efforts.
- entity to receive and manage the TA grant.



Grant period and award amounts

The BSFF State TA project will span approximately two years

Year 1:

**May 15th, 2020-February 14th, 2021
with a grant amount of \$40,000**

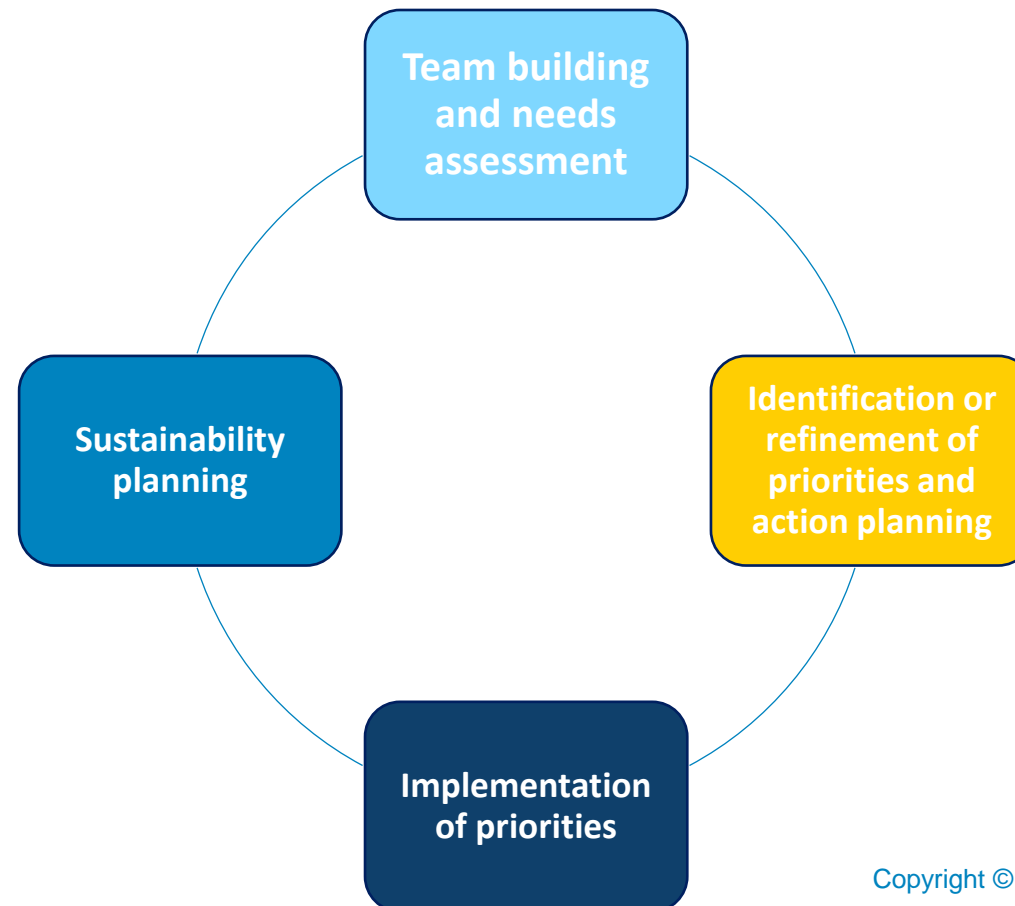
Year 2:

**February 15th, 2021-February 14th, 2022
with a grant amount of \$75,000**



Tailored to fit the needs of each state

Project activities will generally follow four phases, though each states' context will vary





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Technical assistance



Technical assistance will take the form of:

- Individualized, intensive support conducted by a primary TA Specialist
- Peer-to-peer learning activities

States will receive technical assistance to develop/refine and make progress on an infant-toddler policy agenda, recognizing that COVID-19 will require flexibility and understanding as its impact evolves



TA Activities

- A monthly call with your primary TA Specialist
- Two in-person (or virtual, depending on travel restrictions) convenings of peers to learn together.
 - The first in fall 2020 (virtual)
 - The second in mid to late 2021
- Up to 2 site visits a year (depending on travel restrictions)
- Virtual learning and sharing sessions with other states
- Peer learning calls for state team leads
- Send a representative to a national convening on economic security and early childhood policies in late 2021.
- Web-based site for peer learning and sharing



TA requests



Contact your assigned TA Specialist with any needs, and refer to the “TA Menu” as a guide to understand possibilities for support



Questions?



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THANK YOU!

ZERO TO THREE POLICY CENTER

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ZERO TO THREE Resources

- [Advancing State Policies for Infants and Toddlers](#)
- [Building Strong Foundations for Families resources](#)
- [COVID-19 Policy Response resources](#)
- Home Visiting self-assessment tools for [state](#) and [community](#) levels
- [IECMH-Financing Policy Project](#)
- [Infant-Toddler State Self-Assessment](#)
- [Integrating Home Visiting in State and Tribal Early Childhood Systems](#)
- [National Infant Toddler Court Program](#)
- [Planting Seeds in Fertile Ground: Steps Every Policymaker Should Take to Advance Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health](#)



ZERO TO THREE Resources

- [Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five resource series](#)
- [State initiatives articles](#)
- [State of Babies Yearbook](#)
- [*Think Babies*](#)
- [*Think Babies* Home Visiting resources](#)
- [*Think Babies* IECMH resources](#)
- [*Think Babies* PFML resources](#)