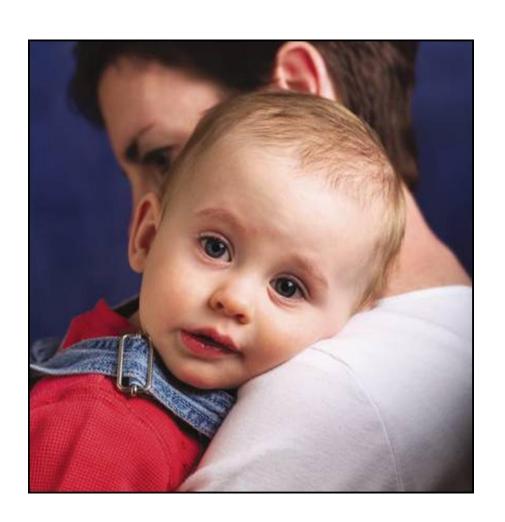


State Strategies to Improve Services for Infants and Toddlers

Barbara Gebhard ZERO TO THREE December 7, 2013

Invest Early





The earliest years present an unmatched opportunity to effectively intervene with at-risk children

Infants and Toddlers in the US



- 48% live in low-income families, 13% with unemployed parents, and 35% with a single parent
- 1/3 of births are covered by Medicaid
- Only 75% of 2-year-olds are fully immunized
- 36% of TANF families have at least one child under 3
- 31% of children entering foster care are under 3
- 63% of mothers with infants are in the labor force, but child care subsidies serve only 1 in 6 eligible children
- Less than 4% of eligible children participate in EHS and less than 3% receive Part C early intervention

ZERO TO THREE's Policy Agenda



Health:

- · Physical Health
- Social & Emotional Health
- Developmental Screening

Family Strengthening:

- Basic Needs
- Family Support
- Home Visiting
- Child Welfare
- Paid Family Leave

Early Learning:

- Child Care
- Early Head Start
- Early Intervention





Positive Early Learning Experiences

Comprehensive Early Childhood System Equation



Services + Infrastructure = System

Accessible
High Quality
Culturally Responsive
Inclusive

Per le Coordinate Leadership
Recruit & Engage Stakeholders
Finance Strategically
Enhance & Align Standards
Create & Support Improvement
Ensure Accountability

Strategies—Good Health



- Embed maternal depression screening and response into services for mothers of very young children
- Conduct developmental screening of all infants and toddlers and refer to needed services
- Provide infant and early childhood mental health consultation in all settings serving infants and toddlers



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Strategies—Strong Families



- Reach parents of young children where they are to offer parenting support
- Establish a strong system of high-quality home visiting services
- Infuse a developmental approach into child welfare services for infants and toddlers
- Expand access to paid family leave



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Strategies—Positive Early Learning Experiences



- Find out where the babies are and who is caring for them
- Provide supports for home-based child care providers
- Expand access to EHS services
- Develop an infant-toddler specialist network to support programs serving infants and toddlers
- Include a specific focus on infants and toddlers in QRIS standards and supports

Strategies—System



- Develop and implement Early Learning Guidelines for infants and toddlers
- Develop core knowledge and competencies and implement credentials for those working with infants and toddlers
- Include data on infants and toddlers in comprehensive, integrated data systems
- Create a financing mechanism to expand services for infants, toddlers, and their families

Home Visiting in the States



- MIECHV is a new (2010) federal program administered by HHS that provides states with funds to support evidence-based home visiting programs
- MIECHV TA Coordinating Center, operated by ZERO TO THREE, provides TA to state grantees
- States differ in:
 - Extent to which home visiting services existed previously
 - Amount of state funding for home visiting
 - Home visiting models chosen for funding

Home Visiting in the States



- All states are using funds to:
 - Provide direct services to families
 - Develop the capacity to measure benchmarks and CQI
- Build state-level capacity to administer and coordinate a home visiting system
- Current priorities of states:
 - Data on benchmarks and data systems
- Core competencies and training for home visitors
- Centralized intake and service coordination mechanisms
- Funding and sustainability
- More progress in developing a system of the various models than in integrating with the broader early childhood and health systems





Publications by ZERO TO THREE Policy Center:

National Baby Facts and State Baby Facts:

www.zerotothree.org/policy/statebabyfacts

 Many other infant-toddler policy resources <u>www.zerotothree.org/public-policy</u>

