

PENNSYLVANIA'S PRENATAL-TO-AGE-THREE POLICY AGENDA



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Pennsylvania was awarded an implementation grant from the Pritzker Children's Initiative, which focuses on a strategic planning initiative to expand access to high-quality services for our prenatal-to-age-three population. The overall goal for the initiative is to increase the number of Pennsylvania low-income infants and toddlers, as well as their families, receiving high-quality services by 25% by 2023 and 50% by 2025. In addition to increasing access to high-quality services, the prenatal-to-three collaborative is focused on ensuring equitable inclusion for all services and across the policy focus areas. Recognizing people of color are disproportionately more likely to have poor health outcomes, access to employment, and access to high-quality early care and education experiences, our work will continue to uplift policies that breakdown those systemic inequalities.

Six Focus Areas

- [Child Care](#)
- [Evidence-Based Home Visiting](#)
- Maternal and Child Health
 - a. [Children's Health Insurance](#)
 - b. [Lead Screening and Abatement](#)
 - c. Child Nutrition
 - d. Prenatal/Maternal Health

Specific Objectives

Child Care

Pennsylvania's prenatal-to-age-three child care priorities are embedded within a current advocacy campaign, [Start Strong PA](#), which launched in January 2019. Start Strong PA aims to support healthy child development, working families, and the economy by advocating for increased access to and affordability of high-quality child care programs, beginning with infants and toddlers.



For more information on the child care work, please contact:

Jen DeBell, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children (PennAEYC), jdbell@pennaeyc.org

Cara Ciminillo, Executive Director, Trying Together, cara@tryingtogether.org

Home Visiting

Pennsylvania's prenatal-to-age-three home visiting work is embedded within a current advocacy campaign, [Childhood Begins at Home](#), which launched in 2017. Childhood Begins at Home seeks to build public and policymaker awareness and support for increased state investments in voluntary, evidence-based home visiting programs.



For more information on the home visiting work, please contact:

Becky Ludwick, Vice President of Public Policy, Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, rludwick@papartnerships.org





Maternal and Child Health

Prenatal and Maternal Health

Maternal health is a newer policy focus area within the prenatal-to-age-three work in Pennsylvania. We have brought together advocates in this space to a larger early learning table to advance this work in conjunction with the infant and toddler agenda. Research has shown us that healthy moms are more likely to raise healthy babies. Maternal health is a vital component to ensuring we are giving our youngest children opportunities to succeed. This work consists of expanding access to critical services, such as health care while pregnant and the first year following birth, as well as increasing depression and anxiety screenings, and access to doula services.

For more information on the maternal health work, please contact:

Sara Jann, Public Policy Director, Maternity Care Coalition, sjann@maternitycarecoalition.org

Maggie Livelsberger, Policy Director, Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, mlivelsberger@papartnerships.org

Child Nutrition

For children to be healthy and develop as they should, they need access to nutrition for their growing bodies and minds. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a key component to ensuring infants and toddlers, as well as their families, have access to healthy nutrition. The prenatal-to-age-three work focuses on increasing WIC participation across the Commonwealth and modernizing the current WIC program to be more accessible for families.

For more information on the nutrition work, please contact:

Laura Stephany, Health Policy Coordinator, Allies for Children, laura.stephany@alliesforchildren.org



Children's Health Insurance

Access to health insurance is necessary for Pennsylvania infants and toddlers to thrive. The prenatal-to-age-three work focuses on reducing the number of uninsured infants and toddlers in Pennsylvania, as well as ensuring all children, regardless of citizenship, are eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

For more information on the child health work, please contact:

Becky Ludwick, Vice President of Public Policy,
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children,
rludwick@papartnerships.org

Colleen McCauley, Health Policy Director,
Public Citizens for Children & Youth (PCCY),
colleenm@pccy.org

Community Engagement

To ensure our policy focus areas are making a difference for children, families, and communities, it is important for the work to include a community engagement component to allow feedback from stakeholders in the work. The prenatal-to-age-three work includes continual outreach to families, service providers, and community-based organizations to ensure the policies we are working to implement positively impact their lives. This outreach also includes a deeper educational component to strengthen leadership development for parents and providers to effectively use their voice to advance conversations in prenatal-to-three policy.

To learn more about the community engagement work, please contact:

Kristen Rotz, President, United Way of Pennsylvania,
krotz@uwp.org.

Lead Screening and Abatement

Research has shown us lead can seriously harm a child's health and cause well-documented adverse effects such as damage to the brain and nervous system, slowed growth, development and learning and behavior, hearing and speech problems. Ensuring Pennsylvania infants and toddlers are not harmed by lead hazards, the prenatal-to-age-three work focuses on increasing lead testing in children before age 2, connecting children who test positive to lead to resources such as early intervention, and enabling state investments for lead remediation.

For more information on the lead work, please contact:

Donna Cooper, Executive Director, Public Citizens for Children & Youth (PCCY), donnac@pccy.org

Colleen McCauley, Health Policy Director,
Public Citizens for Children & Youth (PCCY),
colleenm@pccy.org





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