

POLICY

## PAID FAMILY LEAVE

**Paid family leave is one of the five most effective policies that a state can implement to make sure children get off to a healthy start and thrive, and that promote greater equity in child wellbeing.**



The federal Family and Medical Leave Act provides new parents with up to 12 weeks of time off following a birth – but this leave is unpaid, leaving this benefit out of reach for most new parents.

**The most rigorous research studies show that access to paid leave following the birth, adoption, or the placement of a child into foster care:**

IMPACT OF PAID FAMILY LEAVE	EVIDENCE OF IMPACT
Boosts maternal labor force attachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 to 18 percentage point increase in the probability of mothers working 1 year following birth</li> <li>• 13% increase in the likelihood of returning to the prebirth employer in the year following birth</li> </ul>
Increases a family's economic security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$3,400 increase in household income</li> <li>• 2 percentage point reduction in the poverty rate</li> </ul>
Improves maternal mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 to 17 percentage point increase in mothers reporting good or excellent mental health</li> <li>• 3 to 5 percentage point increase in mothers reporting coping well with the day-to-day demands of parenting</li> </ul>
Fosters better parent-child relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10% to 20% increase in parents who reported reading to their infants four or more days per week</li> </ul>
Supports child health and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.3 percentage point increase in exclusive breastfeeding at age 6 months</li> <li>• 5 to 7 percentage point decline in receiving late vaccinations</li> <li>• Substantially fewer cases of abusive head trauma among infants and toddlers</li> </ul>

▶ Go to [pn3policy.org/clearinghouse](https://pn3policy.org/clearinghouse) for the comprehensive evidence review on paid family leave.

[pn3policy.org](https://pn3policy.org)

The prenatal period to age 3 is the most sensitive and rapid period of growth for the brain and body. State policy choices have a substantial impact on the wellbeing of infants, toddlers, and their parents, and on promoting equity among children. See the *Prenatal-to-3 State Policy Roadmap* at [pn3policy.org/roadmap](https://pn3policy.org/roadmap) for more information on the most effective policies and strategies states can implement to help children thrive from the start.