

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>• 18.3 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>• 8.6 percentage point increase in mothers reporting good or excellent mental health</li> <li>• 5.3 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>• An increase in mothers' time spent with children including reading to their children 2.1 more times per week, having breakfast with children 0.7 more times per week, and going on outings with children 1.8 more times per month</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>• Up to a 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.