prenatal-to-3 policy IMPACT CENTER | VANDERBILT Peabody College

Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center

Who we are. What we do. Why it matters.

We aim to accelerate states' implementation of evidence-based policies that help all children thrive from the start.

Why the Earliest Years Matter

The first 3 years shape every child's future. Decades of research show that investments during this sensitive period of brain and body development have long-term benefits for children, their families, and society.

State policy choices determine whether young children grow up healthy and thriving or face unnecessary barriers to development. The Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center, a nonpartisan research center at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College, provides state leaders with clear, evidence-based policy solutions to support healthy children and strengthen families.

What We Do

Our team of researchers and policy experts equip state leaders with data and research-based support to help states:

- *Identify which policies work and under what conditions*
- *Make smarter, more effective investments in early childhood policies and programs*
- *Equitably implement early childhood policies and programs*
- *Achieve their goals for improving the wellbeing of children and families*

Our Signature Resources

To support states in making informed policy decisions, we provide access to a range of recourses including:

- *Prenatal-to-3 State Policy Roadmap to track states' annual progress implementing effective policies*
- *Prenatal-to-3 Policy Clearinghouse of ongoing, rigorous evidence reviews*
- *Policy Impact Calculator simulating the impact of state policy choices on a family's resources*
- *State Early Childhood Governance landscape scans*
- *State Policy Checklists detailing key policy levers within each Roadmap policy*
- *Targeted, Research-Based Supports for States including summaries of the evidence base, policy analyses, and scans of how other states are implementing policy solutions from our team of researchers and policy experts*

"If you want to get the most out of your investments in children's development, you should invest when children are developing the most."

DR. CYNTHIA OSBORNE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Our State Services

Our team of researchers and policy experts at the Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center partner with state leaders to provide the evidence-based resources and expertise they need to achieve their goals for child and parent wellbeing. We provide timely, responsive, data-driven support tailored to each state's context, with most services offered at no cost to states. Our services and expertise cover various areas, including but not limited to:

Data Support and Analysis

We use state-level and national administrative data and collect our own data via surveys, perform data analyses and benefit-cost analyses, and advise in the creation of data dashboards. Examples include:

Data simulations. We simulate how changes to your specific policy (e.g., your state's EITC or subsidy policy) would impact resources for a family in your state as modeled in our Policy Impact Calculator.

Cost modeling. We estimate costs across multiple PFML policy designs and simulate the premium rates needed to fund each.

Illustrations of impact. We supply demographic data for legislative districts (e.g., number of working families and average earnings) to help you illustrate the potential impact with lawmakers.

Return on investment. We conduct rigorous evaluations of your state's policy, including calculating the return on state investment.

Research and Evaluation

We use rigorous and mixed methods to evaluate state and community policies and programs and their impact on outcomes for children and families. Example evaluation projects include:

What does the availability and access to essential child care services look like in a region with 2 million young children?

We developed and fielded an original survey to all child care directors in three Texas Workforce Commission regions to collect novel data on the size of the child care workforce and child care supply.

Can increasing access to books in child care settings and coaching educators and parents support early literacy skills in young children?

Our team is conducting a randomized control trial studying the implementation and outcomes of a new program implemented in child care centers to build early literacy skills in middle Tennessee.

Information Requests

We respond to state leaders' specific questions tied to state and national prenatal-to-3 legislative activity and trends, rigorous research, and policy impact. Examples include:

Community-based doulas. Provided a cabinet member from a State ECE department with an explainer of how states approach certification for community-based doulas.

Paid family and medical leave. Compared one state's proposed paid family and medical leave program to other state programs across policy levers for state advocates.

Child care. Analyzed child care as a market failure broadly and within the state-specific context for a state representative.

Presentations

We provide virtual and in-person presentations on a variety of topics related to legislative trends and rigorous research. We receive frequent requests for prenatal-to-3 policy overviews, as well as presentations on specific issue areas and individual states' policy goals.

Policy Academies

We convene state teams of policymakers, leaders, advocates, and researchers to participate in intensive policy-specific workshops focused on evidence, policy levers, and implementation strategies. This collaborative learning model fosters immediate policy or implementation progress.

Connect with us to learn more about our services and resources.

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