



# Early Childhood Peer Learning Network for Suburban Counties

National Association of Counties  
Thursday, March 21, 2019  
2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. EST

**Stronger Counties. Stronger America.**



## Tips for Viewing this Webinar

- The questions box and buttons are on the right side of the webinar window.
- This box can collapse so that you can better view the presentation. To unhide the box, click the arrows on the top left corner of the panel.
- If you are having technical difficulties, please send us a message via the questions box on your right. Our organizer will reply to you privately and help resolve the issue.

# Webinar Recording and Evaluation Survey

- This webinar is being recorded and will be made available online to view later or review at [www.naco.org/webinars](http://www.naco.org/webinars).
- After the webinar, you will see a pop-up box containing a webinar evaluation survey. Thank you in advance for completing this survey – your feedback is very important to us!

## Peer Learning Network Objectives



- To highlight strategies for political will building for rural, suburban and urban counties at the local level for children ages prenatal-to-three.
- To provide an opportunity for counties to hear from their peers and engage in facilitated cross-discussion on early childhood topics that support children achieving healthy development at age three.

# The County Role

- Counties are on the front lines of addressing issues like economic opportunity and prosperity - serving their communities and creating opportunities for residents through essential functions like health and welfare, transportation, economic development, and education.
- A child's brain develops faster from birth-to-three than at any later period in life – laying the foundation for lifelong health and well-being. Concentrating local efforts on policies, programs and systems that effect infants and toddlers helps to maximize long-term impact.
- Building and sustaining political will and stakeholder support is a critical aspect of a prenatal-to-three agenda. NACo strives to meet the needs of all 3,069 counties building healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient communities, and in collaboration with the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers, can help to tell your local stories, provide resources and offer support for your initiatives.



## Today's Agenda

### **Welcome**

Tracy Steffek, Human Services Program Manager, NACo

### **Effective Messaging to Help Build a Case for PN-3 Investments in Your County**

Rachel Zaentz, Vice President, Finn Partners

### **PN-3 Resolution Template: A Local Strategy**

Tracy Steffek, Human Services Program Manager, NACo

### **Questions & Interactive Discussion**

Counties are invited to ask questions and share their experiences in building political will.

### **Conclusion**



## Today's Speakers



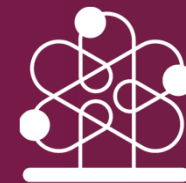
**Rachel Zaentz**  
**Vice President, Finn Partners**



**Kathy Stohr**  
**Project Manager, J.B. and M.K.  
Pritzker Family Foundation**

# Effective Messaging to Help Build a Case for Prenatal-to-Two Year Investments in Your Community

NACo Peer Learning Network: Suburban Cohort  
March 14, 2019



National  
Collaborative  
for Infants  
& Toddlers™



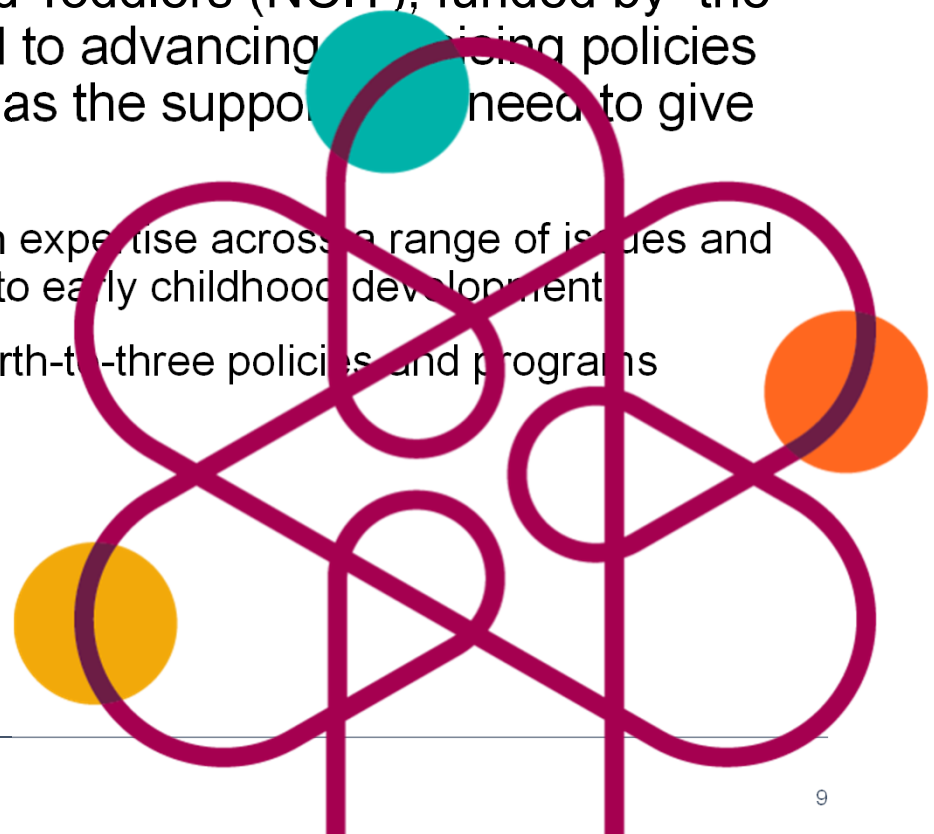
# Today's discussion

- About NCIT
- Messaging: Getting started
- Summary of message research
- Putting the research into action
  - Core messaging
  - Proof points
  - Establish local call-to-action
  - Bridge from challenges to opportunities
  - Address communications challenges
  - Leverage opportunities
- Resources: NCIT Online Solutions Center



# About NCIT

- The National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers (NCIT), funded by the Pritzker Children's Initiative, is committed to advancing policies and programs that ensure every parent has the support they need to give their children a strong start in life
  - Convenes leading national organizations with expertise across a range of issues and sectors – from brain science and economics to early childhood development
  - Goal: Inform best practices and models for birth-to-three policies and programs



# NCIT Commitments

- NCIT is committed to advancing the most promising policies and programs that ensure families have the support they need
- Key Areas:



Healthy Beginnings



Supported Families



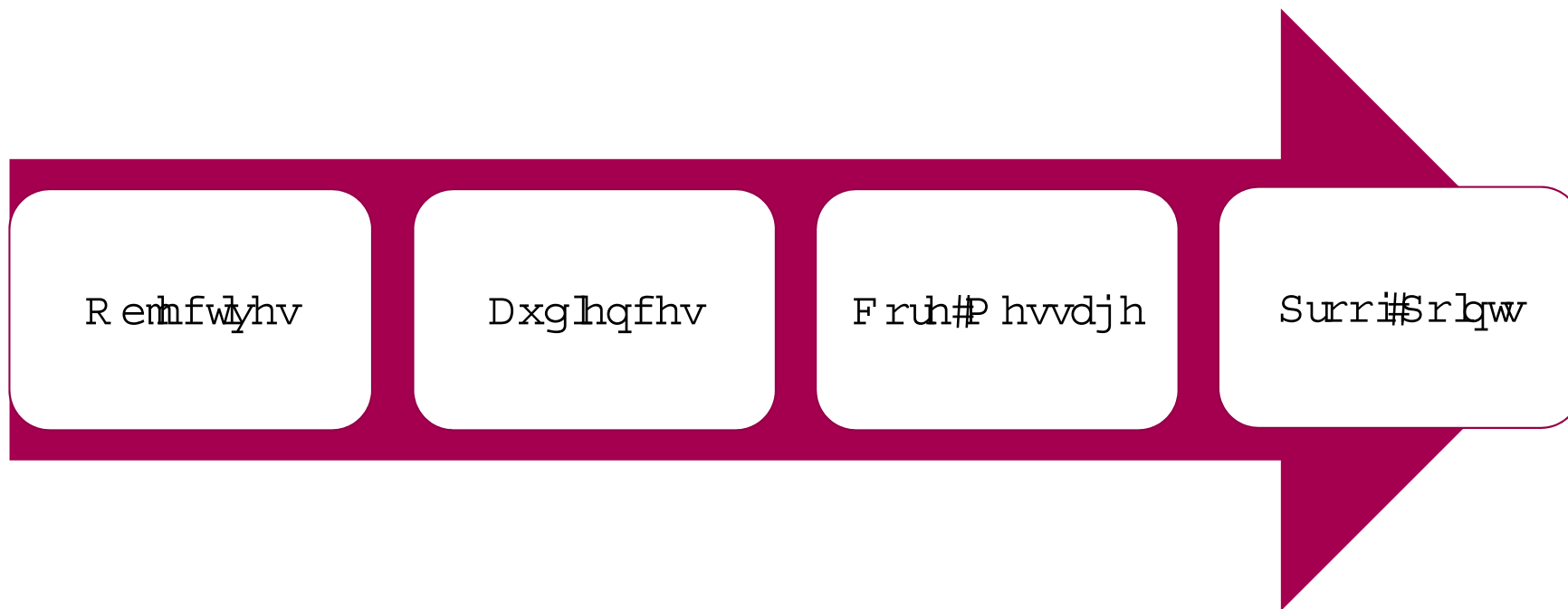
High Quality Child Care and Learning



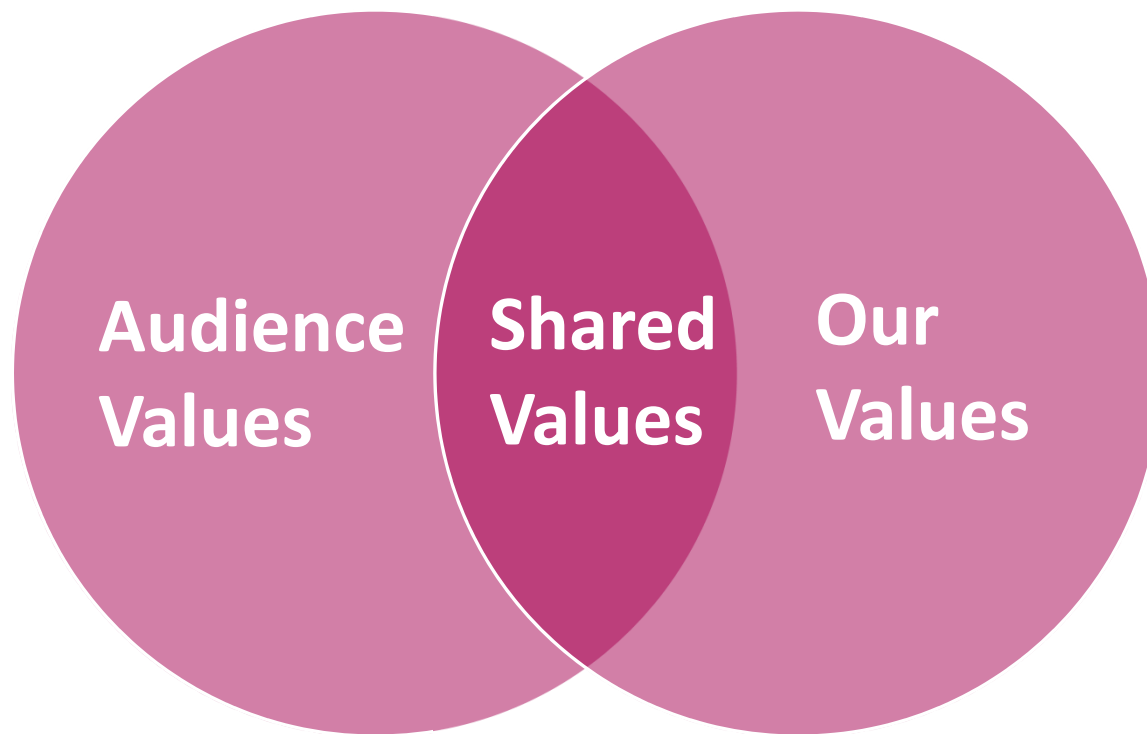
# Collaborative Members



# Messaging: Getting Started



## Guiding principle



## NCIT's communications objective

Ensure policymakers understand the importance of brain/child development from prenatal to age three, and specific policy actions that can support families with babies and toddlers.

## NCIT's audiences

We're talking to policymakers, decision makers and influencers working at national, state and local levels to make the case for programs and policies that support infants, toddlers and their families.





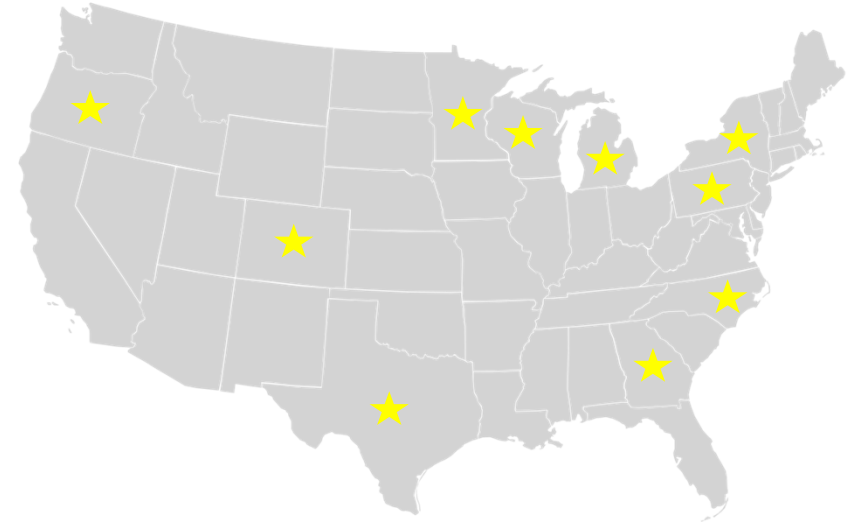
# Core message research



# Methodology

## Phase 1: Engaged Voters

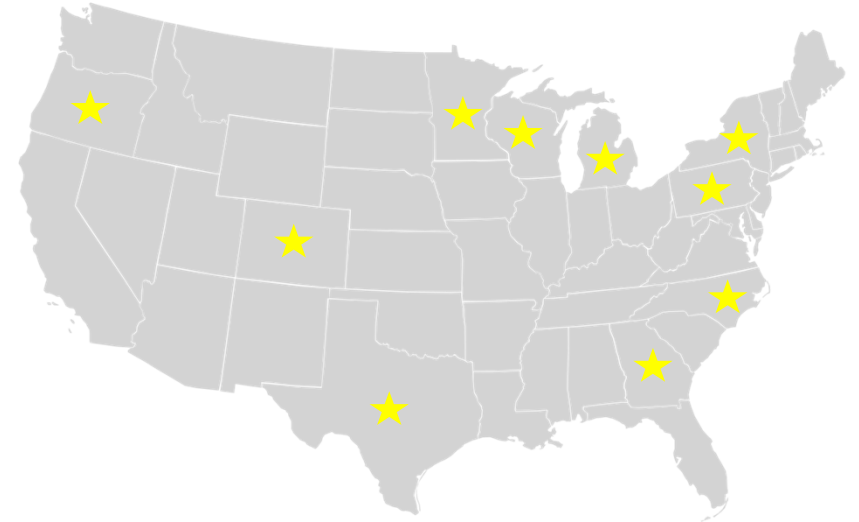
- 4 online qualboards, 3 days each
- Civically engaged, news attentive, voters
- 25 Democratic and Democratic-leaning 
- 25 Republican and Republican-leaning 
- 24 Independent under age 45
- 22 Female Independent voters age 45 and older
- Jan 22 – Feb 2, 2018
- All participants from CO, GA, IL, IN, MI, NY, PA, TX, VA, WI, and WV



# Methodology

## Phase 2: Policy Leaders

- 50 individual in-depth telephone interviews
- 22 Democrats | 6 Independents | 22 Republicans 🐘 🐘
- 17 state legislators/staff
- 14 state agency professionals
- 15 city government officials
- 4 non-government professionals
- Feb 28 – April 9, 2018
- All participants from CO, GA, MI, NC, NY, OR, PA, TX and WI



# Key takeaways from audience research

## Engaged citizens and policymakers



- Widespread belief that early childhood is a critical window for development

- Recognize the first three years are “critical” and the “foundation”
- Don’t position the first three years as overly determinative



- Brain Science is compelling but it’s only half the story

- Lead with brain science to answer “why now” and convey urgency
- Provide the scientific evidence without getting too “science-y”
- Connect policy with the brain science to strengthen the case for policy makers



- This is about empowering parents, not replacing parents
  - Recognize parents as a child's most important teachers and caregivers
  - Talk about how policies and programs are a resource and support for parents
  - Emphasize the voluntary nature of the programs



- Government plays a role, but opinions span the spectrum
  - Explain how government and community efforts will support – not replace – parents
  - Couple the why with the how and demonstrate what's possible
  - ROI is important, especially for policy makers
  - Policy makers need a clear vision of what's working and how investments are paying off



- Demonstrating return on investment is important to all
  - In discussing policy proposals, concerns about cost underlie everything
  - Show how investments relate to state/community economic development
  - Demonstrate how the work effects everyone, not just the child
  - Include examples of research and outcomes

# When describing policy, emphasize ideas including

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# Core message building blocks

Birth to age three is critical for brain development + Parents are stretched, they want and need support + Government plays an important role + Early investment works

# Core message

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## BIRTH TO AGE THREE IS CRITICAL FOR BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

The first three years are the bricks and mortar of brain development.

A child's brain develops faster from birth to age three than at any other later period in life, building the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health.

## GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE

Communities and governments can provide families with support they may need at an especially critical and stressful time.

Programs and policies should start early to ensure healthy beginnings at birth, support families with infants and toddlers and make high-quality child care and learning environments more accessible and affordable to all.

## "Core Ask"

We need to advance policies and programs that ensure every infant and toddler has the support they need to build a strong foundation for success in school and life.

## Proof Points

### PARENTS ARE STRETCHED

Parents are a child's most important caregiver and play the lead role in their child's healthy development.

All families with young children—especially first-time parents, those with both parents in the labor force and those without extended family nearby—are stretched for time and resources.

High-quality child care is often unavailable or unaffordable for parents who need it, and many are not connected to networks or early care supports that can offer guidance and confidence to navigate the earliest months and years.

### EARLY INVESTMENT WORKS

When infants and toddlers get what their growing brains need, they become healthy kids who are confident, empathetic and ready for school and life.

Research shows that when we invest in the first three years of a child's life the returns for the community are the highest, and we can reduce the need for more expensive interventions later.

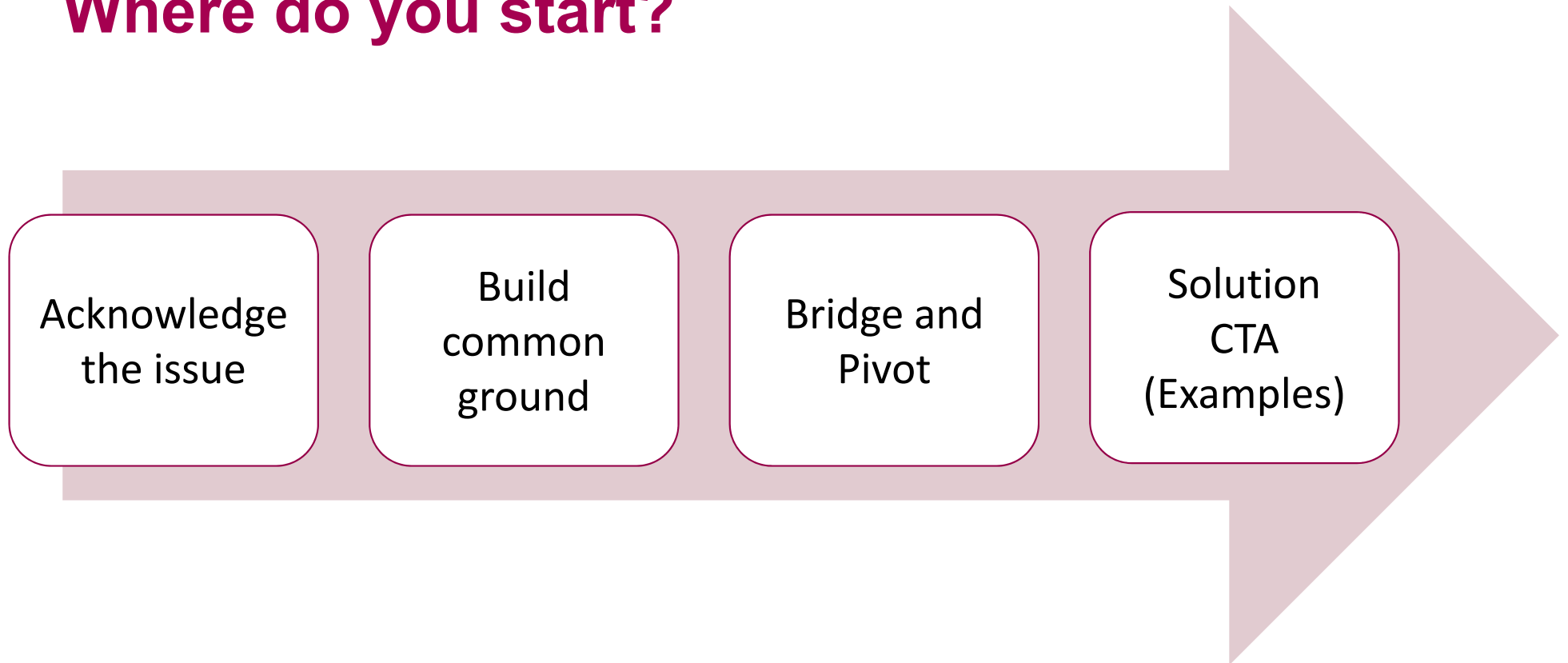
Programs and policies that support healthy brain development from birth to age three result in better social, economic and health outcomes and build a more productive workforce that strengthens our economy now and in the future.

# How to apply the core message



- Start from a place of broad agreement
- Map the core messaging to your work by establishing the problem you need to solve
- Offer a localized solution or call to action
- Build a foundation of proof points

# Where do you start?



## How to build a bridge

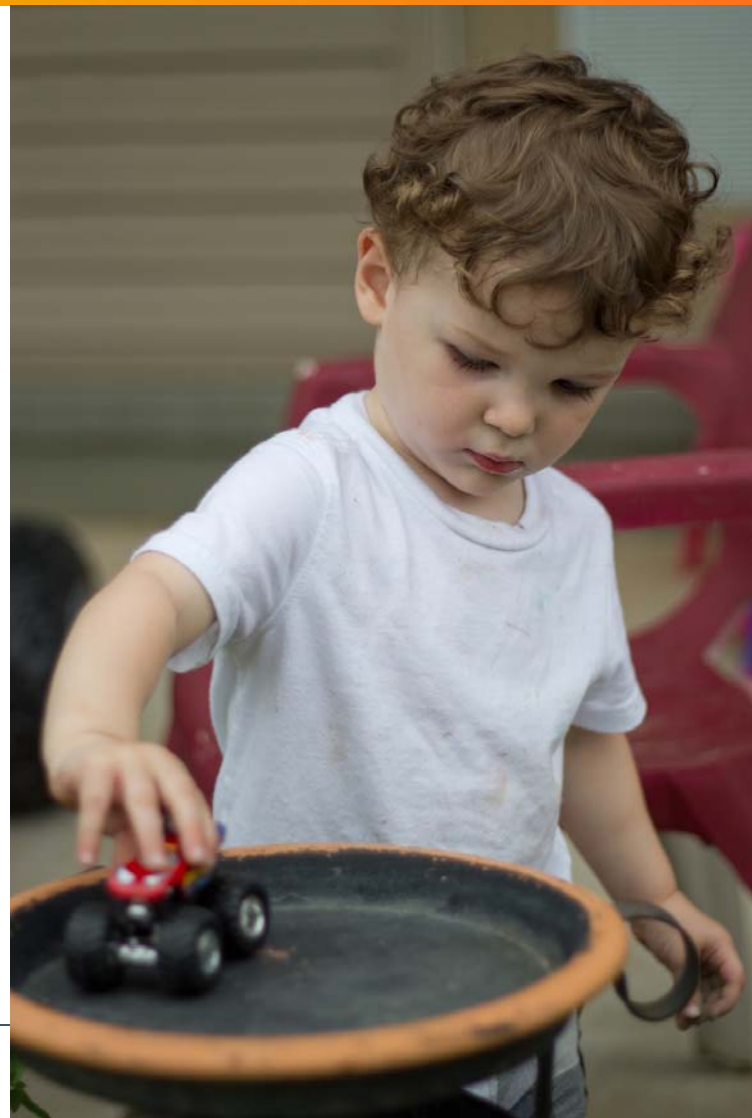
- “That is a common misconception, but the truth is...”
- “I understand that may be the perception, but the facts are...”
- “I don’t know the answer to that question. Let me find out the facts and get back to you.”
- “That’s really not the issue. The issue is...”
- “Let’s look at that another way. In fact...”
- “I’m not sure I agree. But what I am sure of is...”

National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers  
Funded by the Pritzker Children’s Initiative



# Align state and county messaging

How are state and county efforts working together to ensure the healthy development of infants and toddlers? Are you duplicating efforts? If my county is leading the way, what is the role of the state and vice versa?

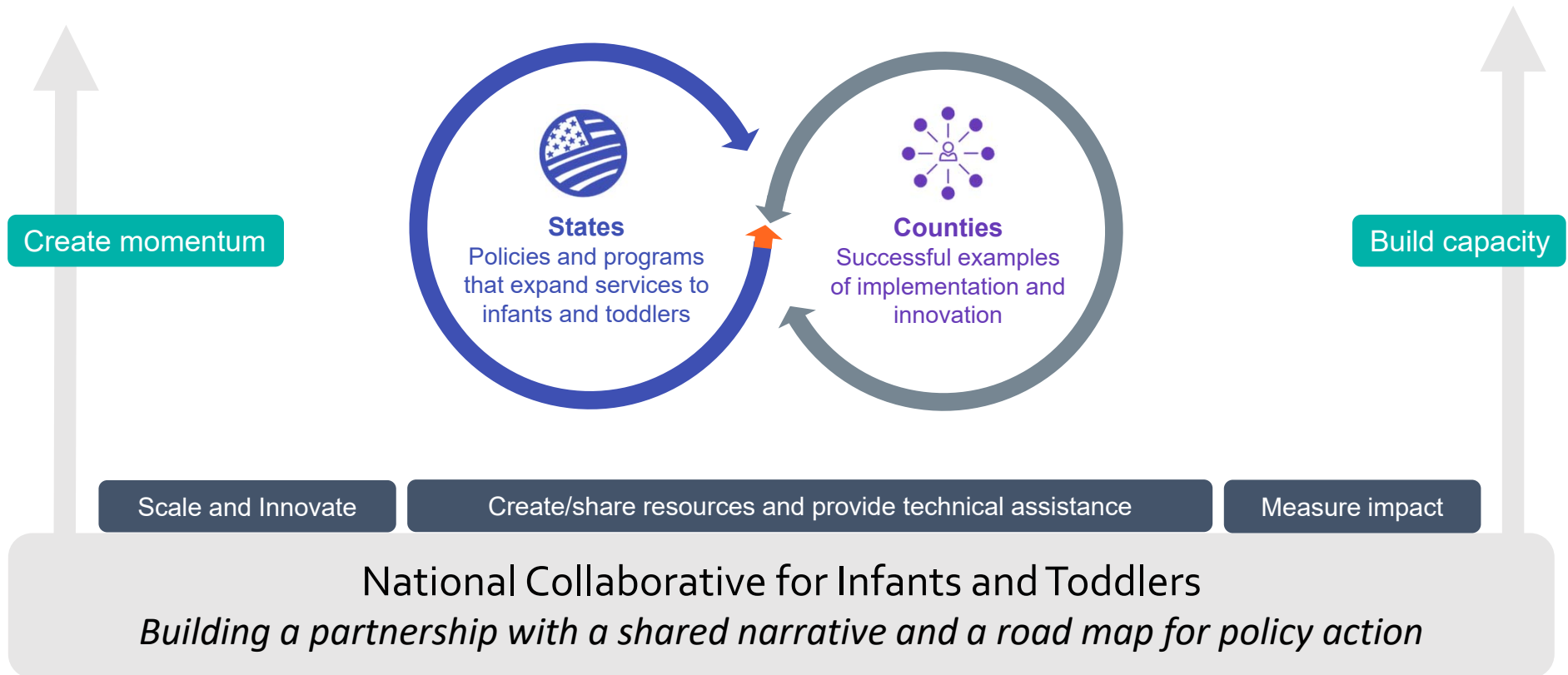


# Align state and county messaging

Ideas to emphasize	Ideas to avoid
Do your research and understand the PN-3 state and community landscape	Don't be defensive around the idea duplicating efforts. Significant work needs to be done at all levels of government.
Provide local examples of how state programs or policies positively impact local efforts and how local programs have prompted state policy changes and/or investment	
Provide examples of how local programs have been successfully brought to scale at the state level, provide examples of local innovations	
Work collaboratively to align PN-3 messaging to ensure a unified voice.	

# Our State and County Model

Children On Track for School Readiness By Age 3



# Align state and county messaging

## acknowledge need

States and counties both have important roles to play in providing parents of infants and toddlers with the support they may need at an especially critical time in their child's development.

## build common ground

Research shows that a child's brain develops faster from birth to age three than at any later period in life, building the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health

## bridge and pivot

Several public state and local systems across the domains of child care, health, early childhood education and human services provide interlocking supports to ensure the healthy development of our youngest children.

## call-to-action

This is why we are working with national partners, early childhood leaders, philanthropy, policymakers and practitioners, both inside and outside state and local government to create and strengthen promising policies and programs and share best practices and coordinate and align efforts, ensuring more states and communities can support the healthy development of our youngest children. For example, [x state] brought a local model from [x county] to scale after seeing its impact at the local level.





Our issues don't always make or break the news, so how can we elevate PN-3 in suburban counties?

## Position PN-3 as the solution

Challenge	PN-3 as a Solution
“I want to attract new families to live in my county...”	New parents want to live in communities with strong supports for young children and their families. Research shows that 83% of millennials would leave their jobs for ones with more family-friendly policies.
“Soaring health care costs are running my county dry...”	A healthy beginning for a child starts with a healthy mother. To improve lifelong health outcomes, expectant mothers need comprehensive prenatal and postnatal care, screenings and services to ensure infants are born safely and continue to thrive into adulthood, reducing health care costs down the road.
“We can’t seem to move the needle in improving our K-12 public schools...”	High-quality experiences during the first three years of life boosts early brain development and lays a strong foundation for lifelong learning in Pre-K, K-12 and beyond.



America's Child Care Deserts in 2018

## Opportunities

- Discuss child care availability and affordability issues
  - See CAP infant and toddler care desert report and toolkits to conduct local studies to better understand the child care landscape in your county and estimate the cost of high-quality child care
- Share compelling stories from providers and families whose lives have been impacted by quality PN-3 services paired with existing or new research on brain development and ROI



## Engage

- Engage hospitals, universities and other influential partners to amplify communications efforts
  - Host events
  - Author op-eds, blogs, LTEs
  - Conduct research
  - Enlist and train expert spokespeople



## Elevate

- Elevate county-level work to demonstrate connections between federal, state, and local policy. The county-level stories often answer questions on how state/federal policies benefit young children and families



# The NCIT Online Solution Center

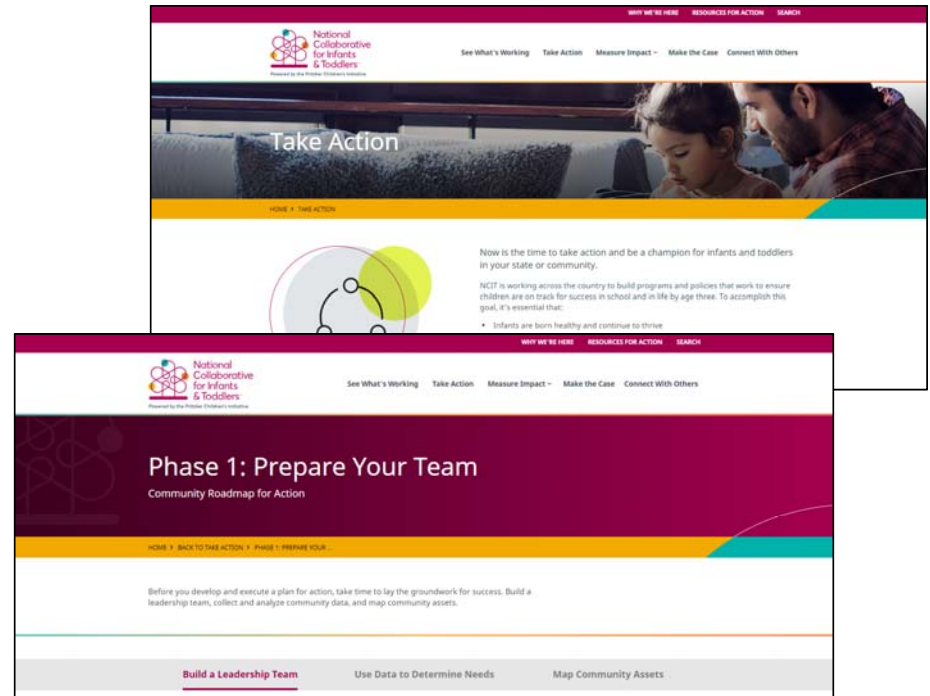
[www.TheNCIT.org](http://www.TheNCIT.org)



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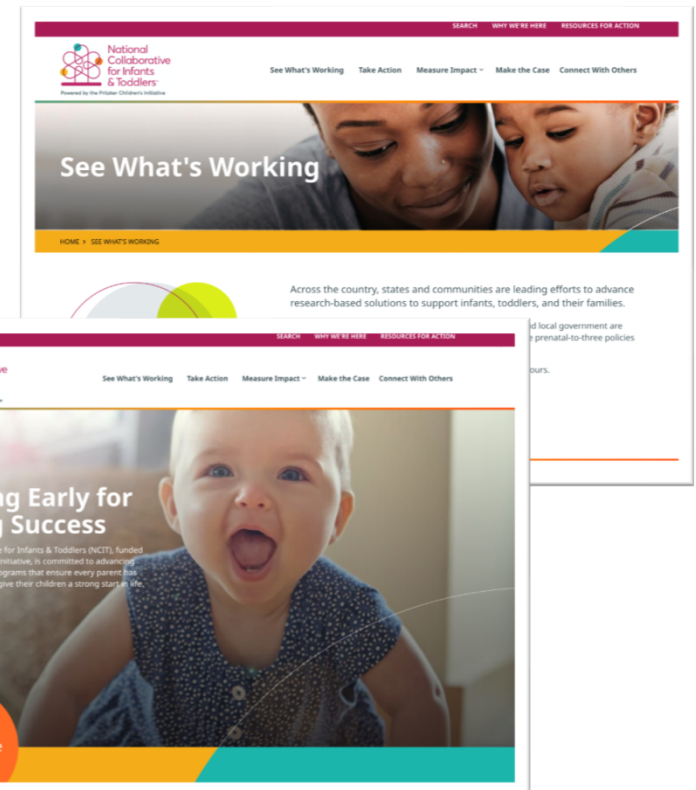
# NCIT's Online Solutions Center

- ✓ Equip those who are in a position to take action with information on building effective birth to three programs and policies
- ✓ Provide resources to inspire offline action
- ✓ Highlight research and efforts from partner organizations
- ✓ Share contact information for partners and grantees



# A Collaborative Effort

- ✓ Conducted interviews with user group to inform site strategy and content before site development
- ✓ Curated resources from partners
- ✓ Engaged users in early 2019 before the site launched to provide feedback on the site content and Roadmaps for Action
- ✓ Additional user testing is planned for summer 2019



# Tools for Action

- ✓ State and county data tool
- ✓ Case studies
- ✓ Roadmaps for action
- ✓ Messaging tools
- ✓ Interactive Outcomes Framework
- ✓ Connect with others map
- ✓ Searchable resource library

**Explore the Map**

See where NCIT partners are located and what they are working on. Looking to learn more about a specific initiative? Connect with a state or community through the contact information provided.

**Assess Where You Live**

Do you know how many infants are born in your state or community each year? To what extent are young children in your area on track for success in school and in life by age three? Have you created that foundation for success?

Use data to start understanding inequalities and to drive a strategy for action.

**Choose a State**

Choose your state to begin to understand the profile of infants and toddlers in your area. For county data, select your county after selecting your state.

Georgia ~ Bibb County ~

**Georgia**

**129,243**

Infants were born in 2017.

**BIBB COUNTY**

**2,244**

Infants were born in 2017.

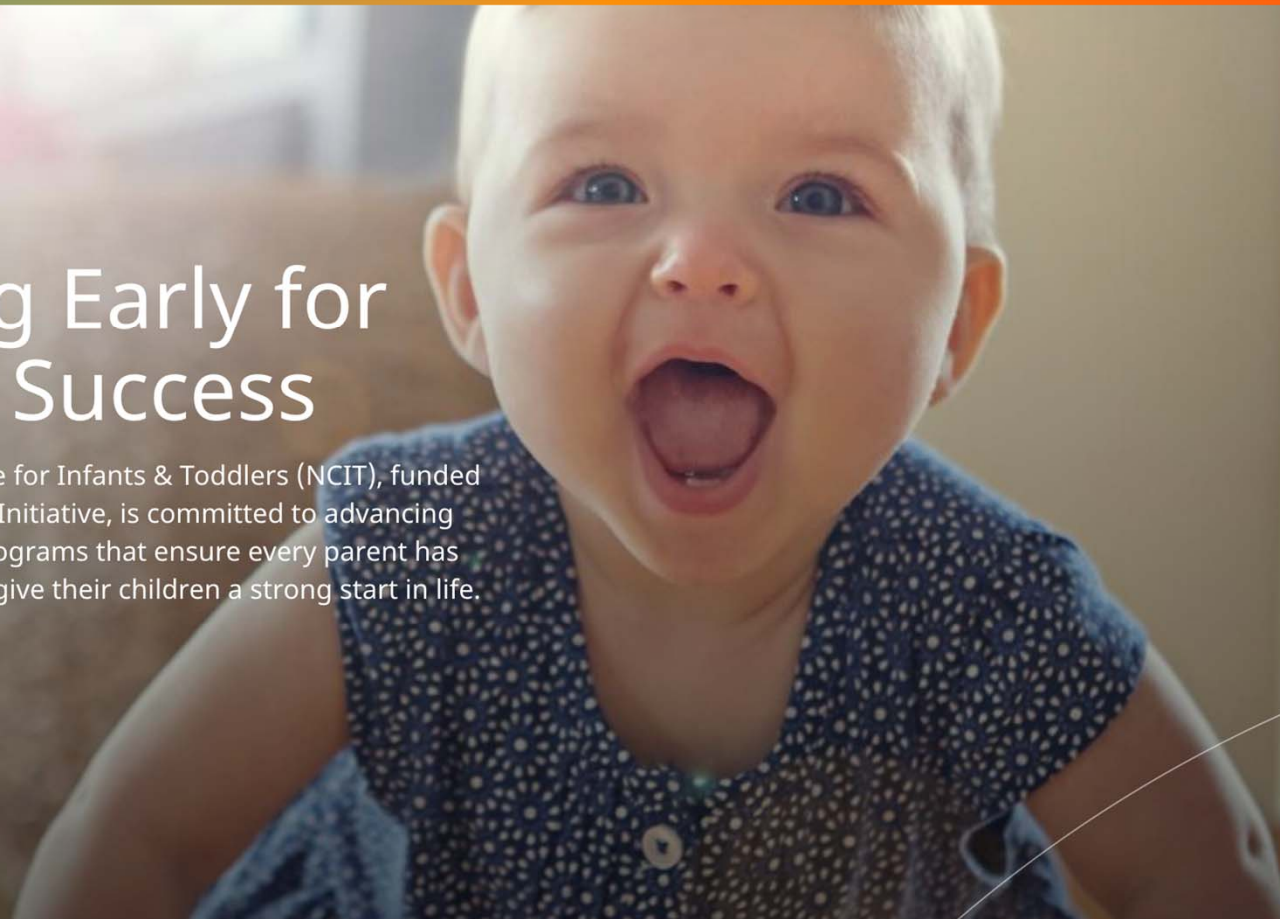
WOMEN, LEAVING FOR WORK, CHILDREN, AND PRODUCTION, THE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE, NCIT, CT, 2017, 2017



[See What's Working](#)[Take Action](#)[Measure Impact](#) ▾[Make the Case](#)[Connect With Others](#)

# Investing Early for Lifelong Success

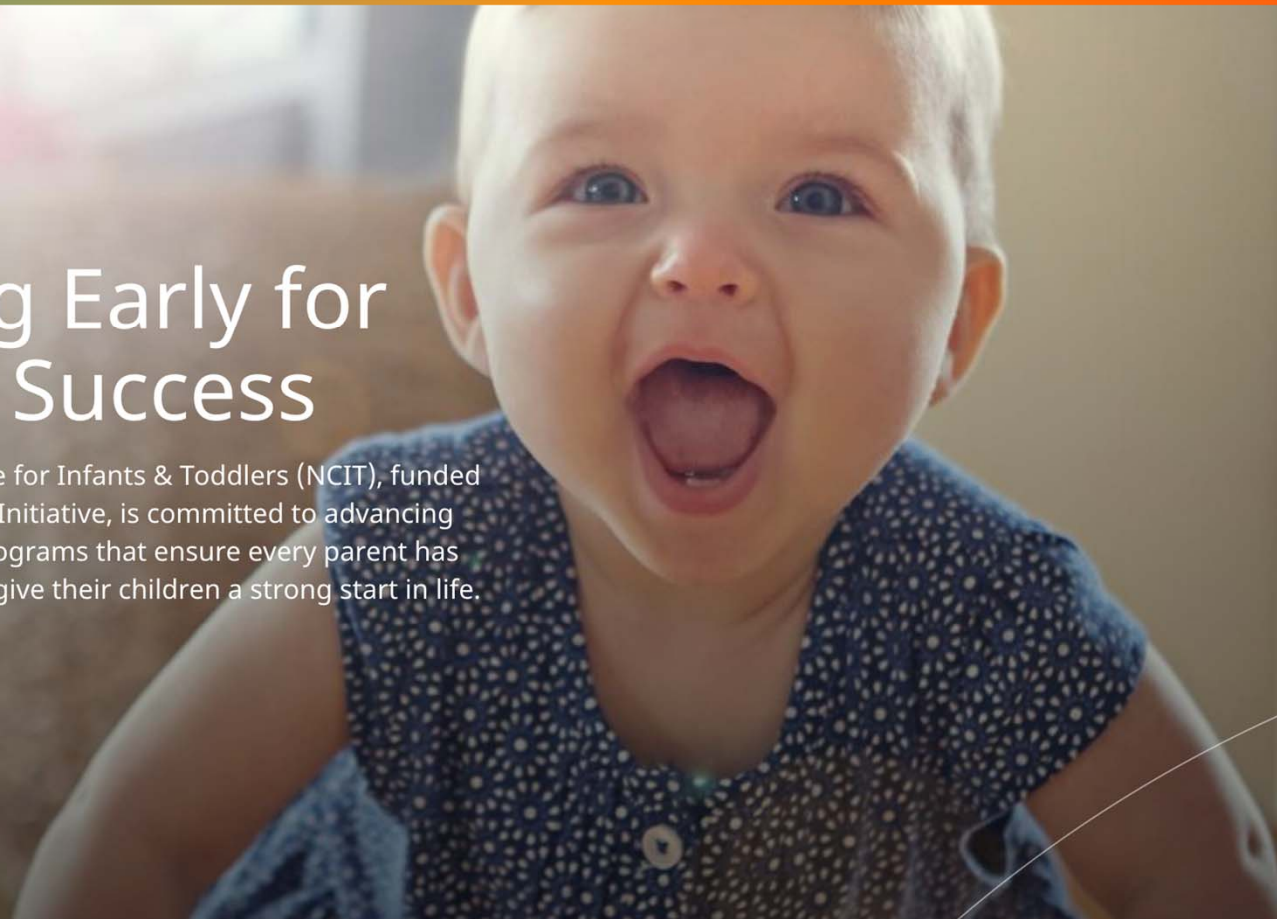
The National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers (NCIT), funded by the Pritzker Children's Initiative, is committed to advancing promising policies and programs that ensure every parent has the support they need to give their children a strong start in life.



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# Case Study: Building a Diverse Early Childhood Coalition to Expand Data-Driven Developmental Screening Services

TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS

**Focus Area:** Healthy Beginnings, Supported Families

**Impact Area:** County

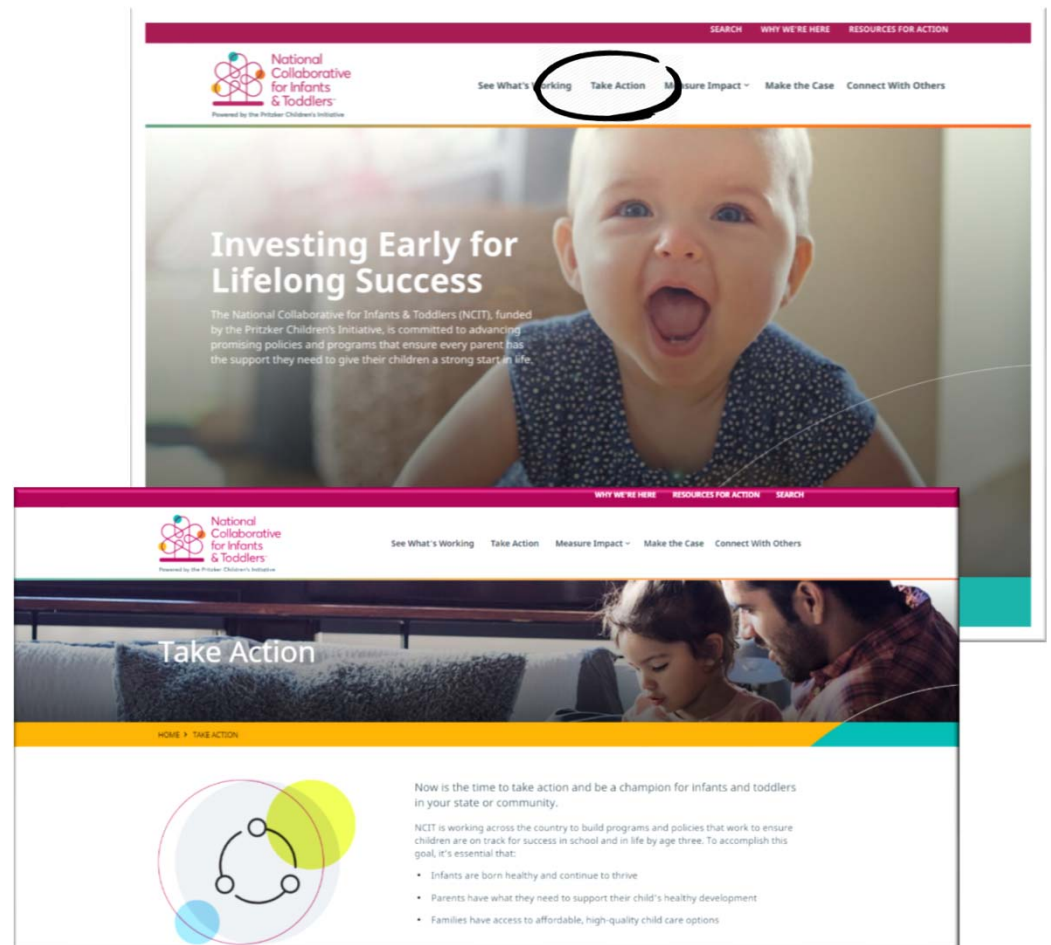
Developmental screenings are an important tool to ensure infants and toddlers are on track for healthy development. When screenings detect issues early, the right supports can address problems and set young children on a path for lifelong success. Recognizing the need for a coordinated system of early childhood screenings and referrals, Tarrant County, Texas, is bringing together a broad group of stakeholders to build an initiative to increase access to, and timely implementation of, early developmental screenings and align appropriate prenatal, early childhood, and maternal health services to better meet families' needs. While the effort is still in the early stages, county leadership is expecting promising, data-driven results.

[View >](#)



# Roadmap Objectives

- Inform policymakers and their staff about how to build effective prenatal-to-three programs and policies
- Provide clear steps for taking action that can inform users at various stages of this work—from new advocates to seasoned experts in the space
- Provide resources and tools to inspire offline action
- Highlight research and efforts from partner organizations





# Accessing the Roadmaps

- The roadmaps will be accessible from the “Take Action” page, the top navigation bar, and the footer at the bottom of every page on the site
- New content on the “Take Action” page will introduce the roadmaps and allow users to enter into the correct roadmap for them
- The content featured in the page design on the right will be added to the bottom of the “Take Action” page


### Build a State or Community Effort

With the guiding principles for action in mind, select the roadmap that's right for you, and determine the key steps and considerations for developing and expanding programs and policies that support infants, toddlers, and families in your state or community.

In the Roadmaps for Action, you'll find information and resources needed to lay the groundwork for change, build a robust plan for action, implement the plan, measure results, and sustain momentum.

Community Roadmap for Action


State Roadmap for Action



#### Prepare

Before developing and executing an action plan, take time to lay the groundwork for success. Build a leadership team, collect and analyze community data, and map community assets.


[Learn More >](#)



#### Build

Informed by community data, work with your leadership team to define a vision for your efforts, develop short-, medium-, and long-term goals, identify funding, build political will, and select outcomes and indicators to track your efforts.

[Learn More >](#)



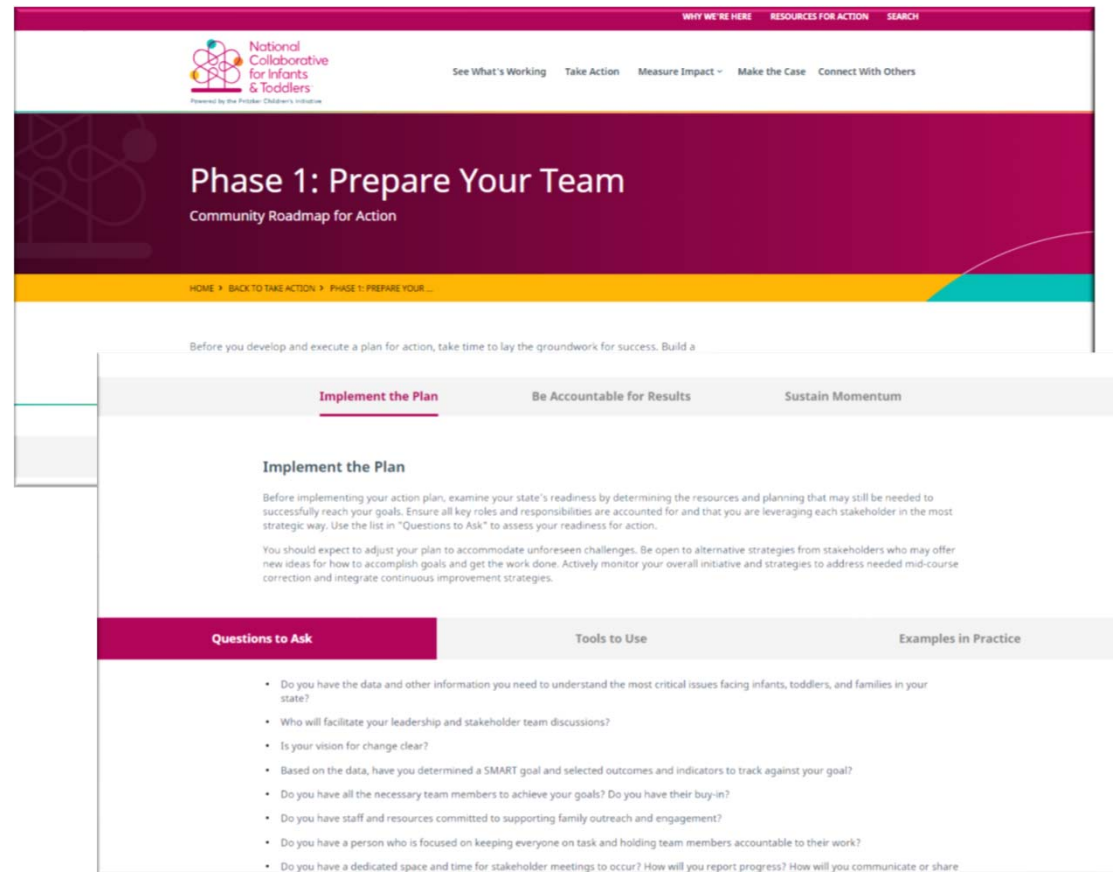
#### Execute

Before implementing your action plan, examine your community's readiness by determining the resources and planning that may still be needed to successfully reach your goals. Then, implement your action plan, evaluate results for infants, toddlers, and families, and build and sustain momentum.

[Learn More >](#)

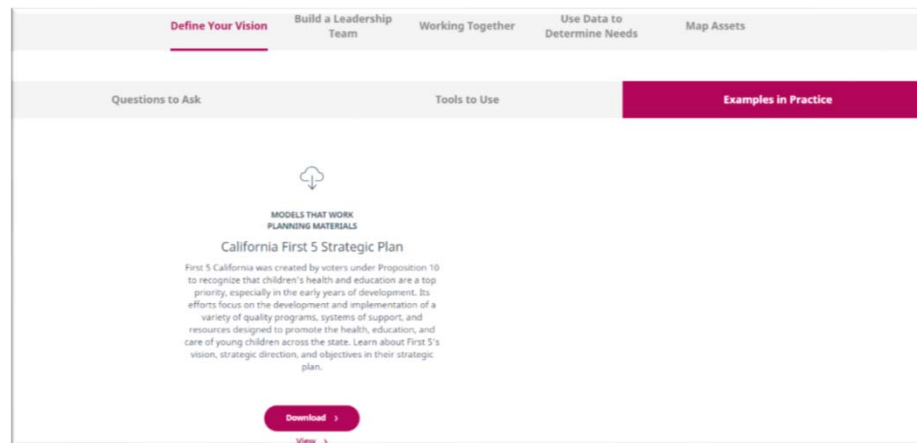
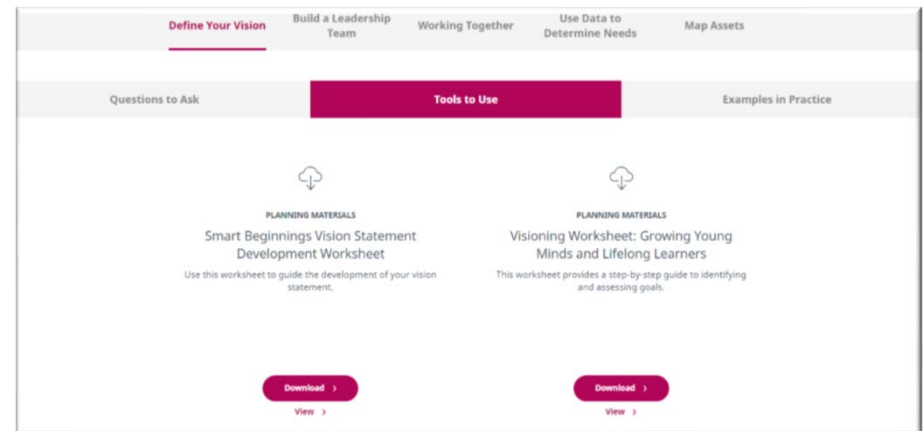
# Roadmap Design

- Two distinct roadmaps: one for the state-level and one for the community-level.
- Both roadmaps are organized in three action phases: “Prepare Your Team,” “Build a Plan,” and “Execute the Work.” There are multiple steps within each phase.
- Each action step includes guidance and key considerations as well as questions to ask, tools to use, and examples in practice.
- The resources in “Tools to Use” and “Examples in Practice” are downloadable for offline use.



# Considerations

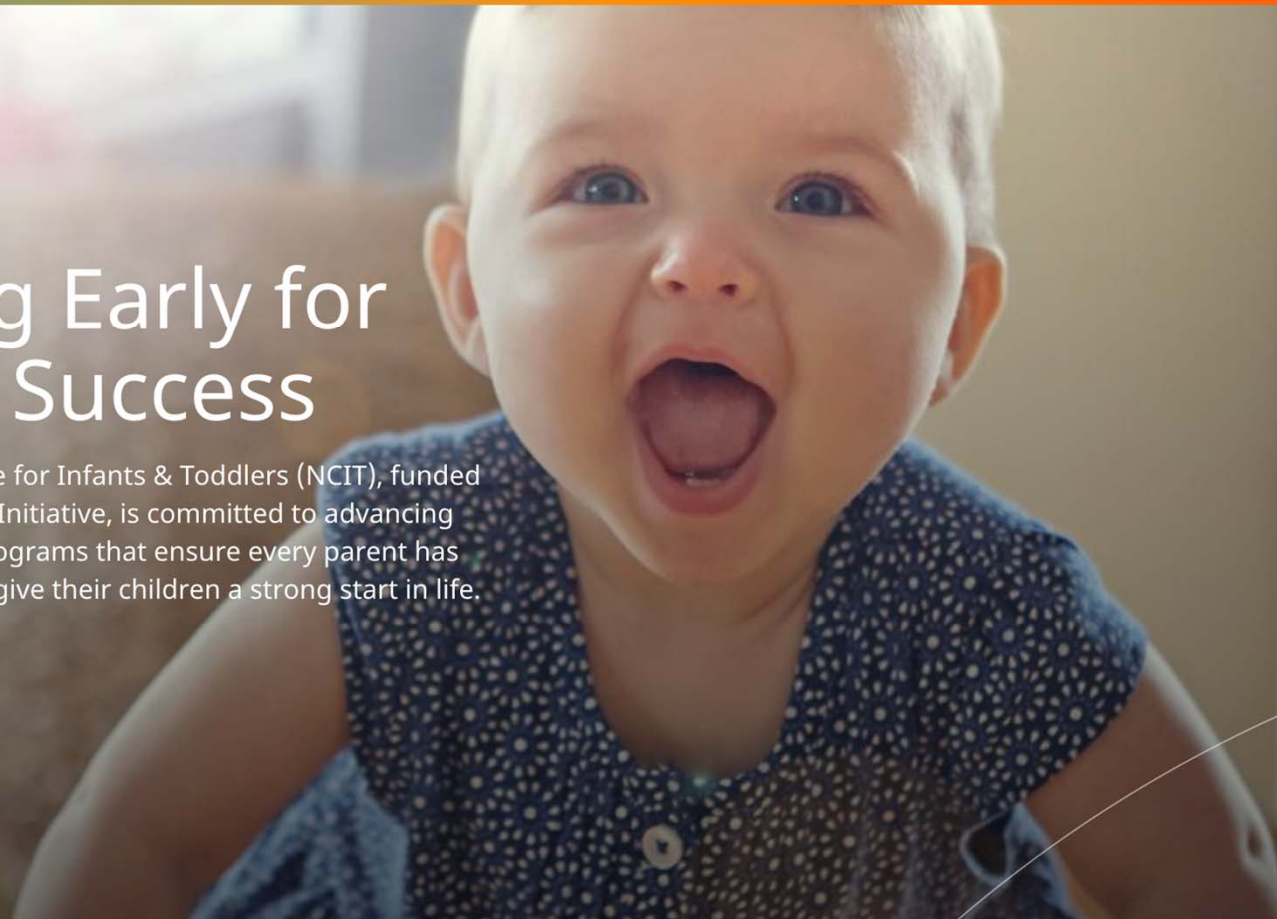
- The roadmaps are not fully populated with all the resources that will be available when they launch. In some instances, no resources or only one or two resources will be displayed in a tab.
- If you click on a tab and resources do not populate, this is not a bug. Additional resources will be added to the site over the coming weeks!



[See What's Working](#)[Take Action](#)[Measure Impact](#)[Make the Case](#)[Connect With Others](#)

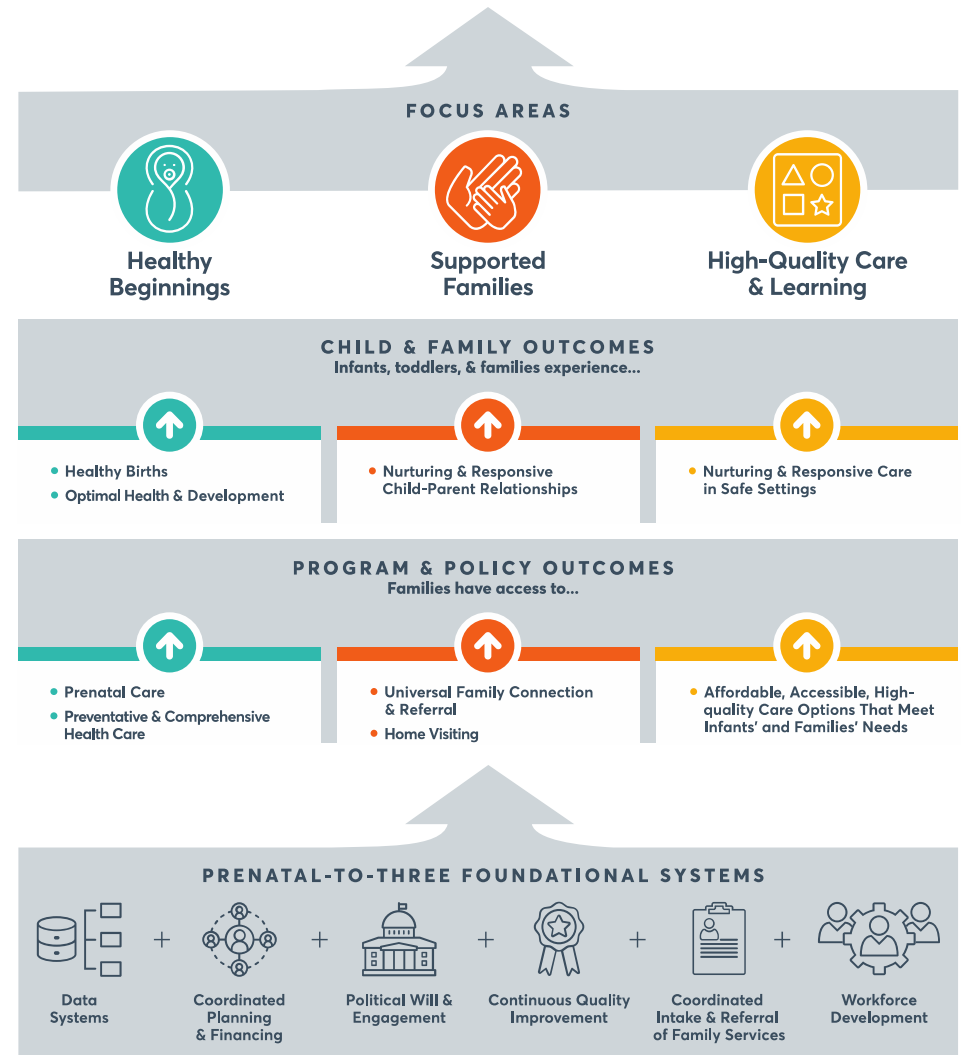
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# Measuring Success: Healthy Development by Age 3



**Prenatal-to-Three Outcomes Framework**

# Data Guidebook

**OCTOBER 2018**



## Identify the Right Indicators to Measure Success in Your State or Community

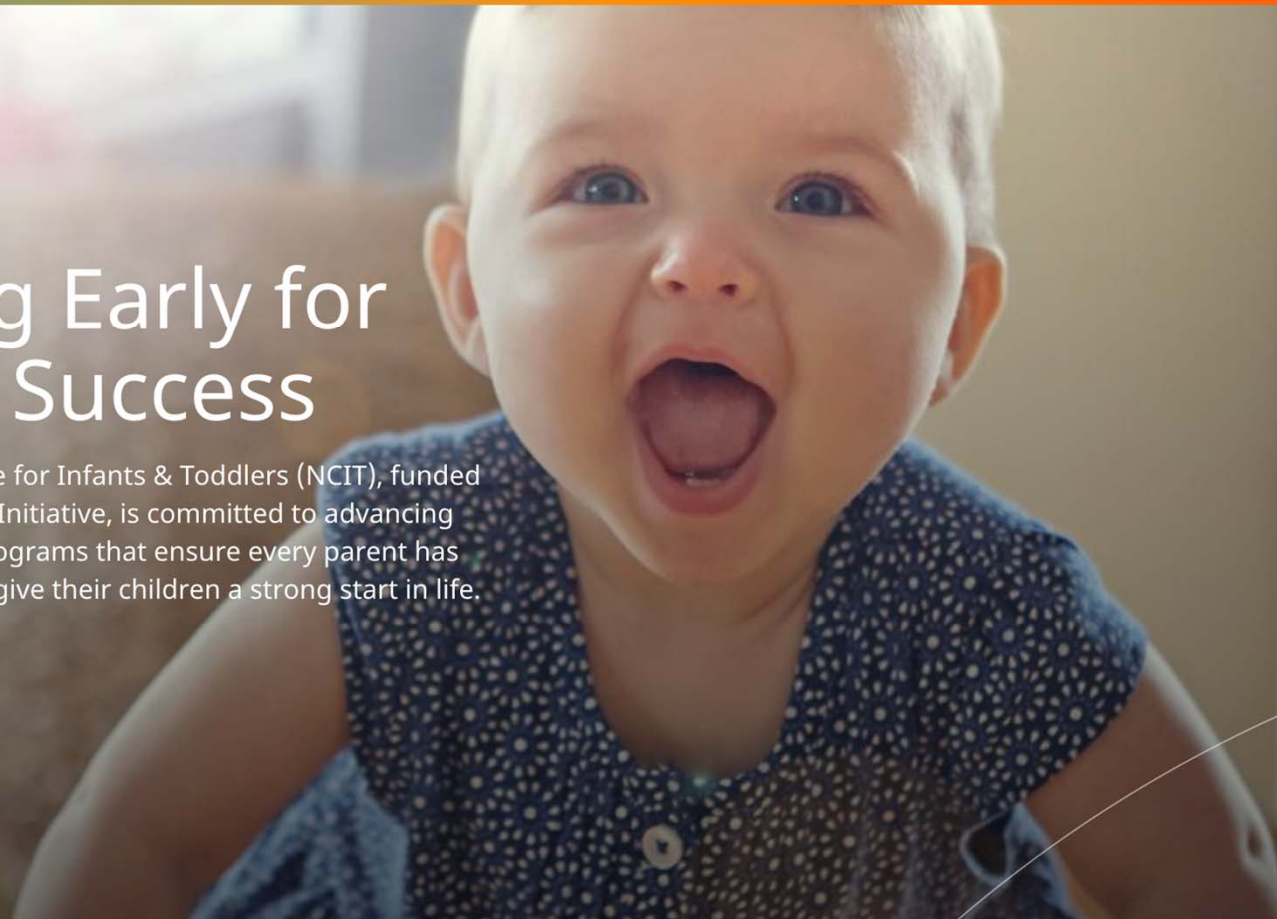
Explore the interactive Outcomes Framework to learn more about the outcomes and indicators related to your focus area. Then, determine the data you need to get started.

[Explore Metrics >](#)

[See What's Working](#)[Take Action](#)[Measure Impact](#)[Make the Case](#)[Connect With Others](#)

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## Make Your Pitch

Use the resources on this page to help make the case for investments in prenatal-to-three policies and programs in your state or community.



### PITCH MATERIALS

#### Make the Case Leave-Behind

Use this leave-behind on its own, or paired with the Make the Case Pitch Deck, to help make the case for investing in policies and programs that support infants, toddlers, and their families.



### PITCH MATERIALS

#### Make the Case Pitch Deck

This ready-made pitch deck highlights the best messages, grounded in research, to explain the importance of investing in the early years. This deck can be used to guide presentations and conversations, or as a leave-behind, for policymakers and advocates at the national, state, and local levels.



Use this leave-behind on its own, or paired with the Make the Case Pitch Deck, to help make the case for investing in policies and programs that support infants, toddlers, and their families.



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## Prenatal-to-three is critical for brain development

A child's brain develops faster from birth to age three than at any later period in life, building the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health.

- A child's experiences in the first three years are the bricks and mortar of brain development, with more than 1 million new neural connections forming in an infant's brain every second.
- Responsive relationships and positive experiences early in life build a sturdy brain architecture that becomes the foundation for core social-emotional skills, early executive functioning and self-regulatory skills, and literacy skills.
- The socio-emotional, physical, and cognitive capacities that are built in the first three years are all important for later success in school, the workplace, and the larger community.
- Supportive relationships and positive learning experiences begin at home but can also be provided through a range of effective programs and policies.



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**...and supports a strong economy and workforce**

Birth-3 investments are needed to prepare our children for an ever-changing workforce.

**Birth-3 investments in high-quality child care bolster the economy TODAY.**

**48%**  
of low-income  
children are  
kindergarten  
unprepared to  
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The growing American skills gap will lead to **6 million** unfilled jobs by 2020.



Companies providing child care **decrease** employee absences by **30%** and

**83%**  
of millennials



say they would leave their jobs for ones with more family-friendly benefits.

Sources: Julia Isaac, Brookings Institution, [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/2016\\_school\\_disadvantage\\_isaac.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/2016_school_disadvantage_isaac.pdf); McKinsey Global Institute, <https://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/employment-and-growth/an-economy-that-works-for-us-its-creation>; Economic Community of West African States, <http://www.ecowas.int/press/communique/2016/comm2016-0173.pdf>.

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Funded by the Pritzker Children's Initiative

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Collaborative  
for Infants  
& Toddlers™

## Connect With Partners

Choose your desired filters, then select the arrow below to see where NCIT partners are located and what they are working on.



Healthy Beginnings

19



Supported Families

16



High Quality Child Care & Early



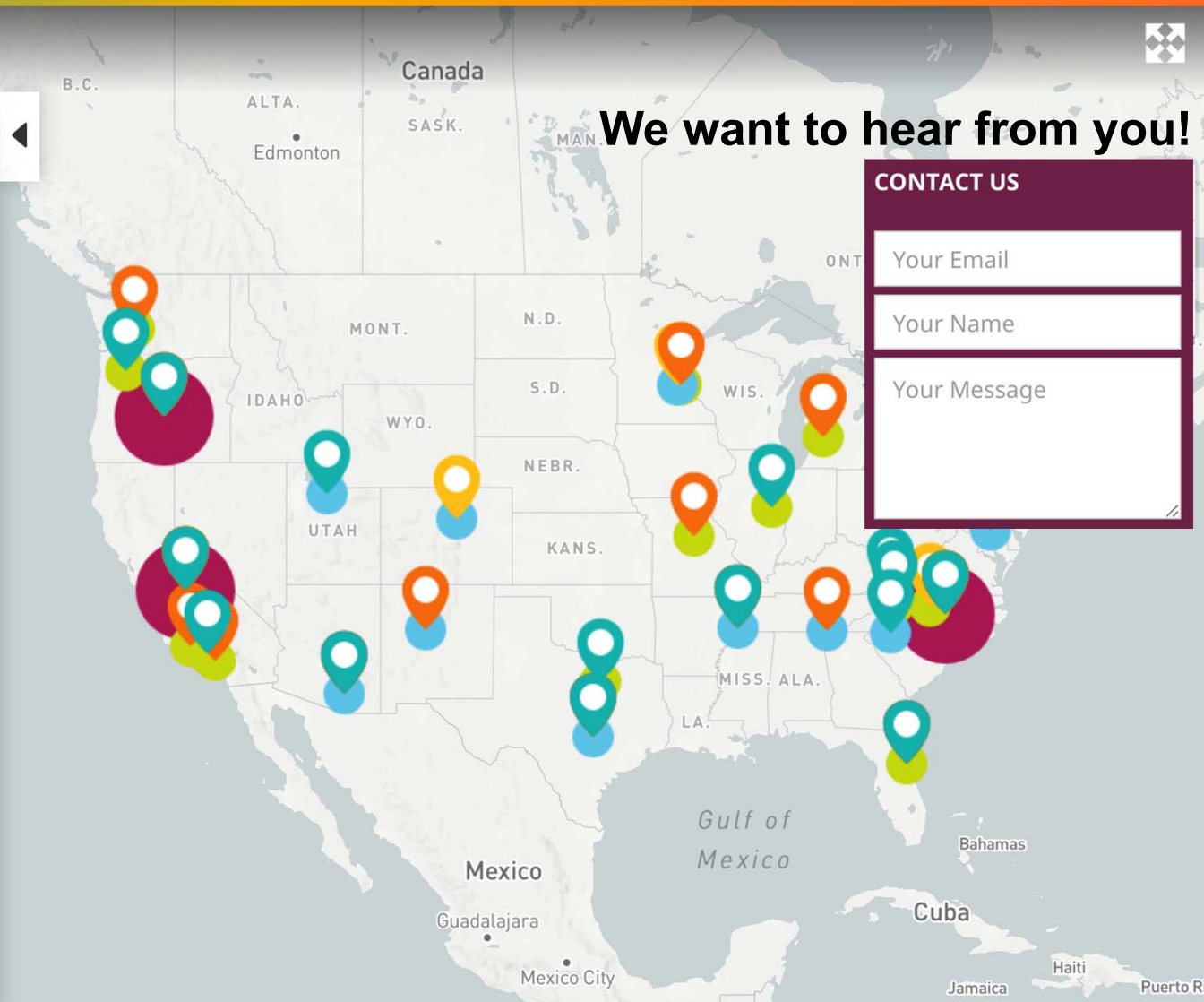
We want to hear from you!

### CONTACT US

Your Email

Your Name

Your Message





# Thank You

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# PN-3 Resolution Template: A Local Strategy

**“The National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers Resolution to Promote Investments in Young Children and Families from Prenatal to Three” – Date**

**WHEREAS**, Counties routinely provide an array programs and services to an estimated 16 million children ages birth to three in the United States; and in 2017 about 29 percent of counties had more than a quarter of all children living in poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, The most rapid period of brain development occurs within the first years of life with the brain developing faster from birth to age three than at any later period in life, building the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health; and toddlers receive what their growing brains need, they become healthy children who are confident, empathetic and ready for school and life; and programs and policies that support healthy development from birth to age three result in better social, economic and health outcomes and build a more productive workforce that strengthens our economy now and in the future; and

**WHEREAS**, Parents are a child’s most important caregivers and play the lead role in their child’s healthy development; at the same time, communities and governments can be effectively provide families with an array of comprehensive support at an especially critical time; and

**WHEREAS**, Programs and policies should start early to ensure healthy beginnings at birth, support families with infants and toddlers and make high-quality child care and learning environments more accessible and affordable to all; and

**WHEREAS**, High-quality child care is often unavailable or unaffordable for parents who need it, and many families are not connected to networks or early childhood supports that can offer guidance and confidence to navigate the earliest months and years of their children’s lives; and

## A Resolution/Proclamation Helps to:

- Demonstrate local commitment to infants and toddlers
- Educate decision-makers and the general public about the importance of early childhood development before age 3
- Build awareness about assets and needs in your county for infants, toddlers and their families
- Create new prenatal-to-three champions



# PN-3 Resolution Template: A Local Strategy

## What Can Elected Officials Do?

- Champion a resolution
- Engage with stakeholders to understand the challenges
- Garner support from other elected officials at the local and state levels

## Consider:

- Strategic timing
- Incorporating local data

## Take Action!

Counties can spark and enhance early childhood investments by taking the following steps, and together, NACo and NCIT can assist counties interested in pursuing action.

### PASS A RESOLUTION

Take action now by passing a resolution and taking the necessary steps to positive change for young children in your community. Participating counties will receive virtual resources to assist with your local implementation efforts and access support to drive change for your youngest residents. Together, NACo and NCIT partners urge county leaders to pass a resolution demonstrating your county's commitment to strengthening early childhood programs, services, policies and systems to help all children reach their full potential. If your county has passed a resolution, please forward a signed copy to [ncit@naco.org](mailto:ncit@naco.org).

[DOWNLOAD RESOLUTION TEMPLATE](#)

## PN-3 Resolution Template: A Local Strategy



**The county board passed a resolution.  
What's next?**

- Share with the media and the public
- Move from conversation towards action
- Provide regular updates to sustain public will

## Instructions for Interactive Discussion



Please type a question into the “Questions” box at any time and the moderator will read the question on your behalf during the Q&A session.

## Contact Us!

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**NACo's Website:** [www.naco.org/ncit](http://www.naco.org/ncit)

**NCIT's Website:** [www.thencit.org](http://www.thencit.org)

