



POLICY TOOLKIT:
**ECONOMIC SUPPORTS
FOR FAMILIES AS A
PREVENTION STRATEGY**

**Prevent Child Abuse America
Chapter Network
Policy Affinity Group**

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ECONOMIC SUPPORTS TO FAMILIES AS A PRIMARY PREVENTION STRATEGY

This Policy Toolkit was developed in partnership with the Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) chapter network's Policy Affinity Group. This group is made up of representatives from approximately 17 PCA America chapters who work together to further the capacity to address policy strategies across our nationwide network.

**STATE TAX
CREDITS**

**LIVING
WAGES**

**PAID FAMILY
+ MEDICAL LEAVE**

This Public Policy Toolkit, examines the impact of three economic supports – **state tax credits, living wages, and paid family and medical leave** – in the primary prevention of child abuse and neglect. It compliments an earlier toolkit on the role of paid family and medical sick leave in primary prevention.

This toolkit contains information and resources to inform the PCA America chapter network and our partners of key policy considerations, including an outline of the policy areas, their impact on families, federal and state policy updates, and actionable messaging tools.

The three economic support strategies were chosen with input from our PCA chapter network, as well as a review of current federal and state legislation, policy priorities, and recent research. Additional primary prevention strategies, which are beyond the scope of this toolkit, include child care subsidies intended to help low-income families pay for care, supportive housing policies that work to prevent and end homelessness, and immediate and financial supports for families, including cash assistance, rental support, diaper banks, or food banks. These are all valuable strategies that help support families and can reduce and prevent child abuse and neglect.

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MAKING THE CASE FOR ECONOMIC SUPPORTS AS PRIMARY PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Economic supports to families, such as **state tax credits, living wages, and paid family and medical leave**, are critical policy strategies in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. These policies help break down barriers to family success and address long-standing racial disparities and structural inequalities, including persistent poverty.

Financial insecurity is a common source of parental stress, which in turn leads to greater likelihood of child maltreatment. Supports to families in times of need, particularly economic supports, are critical policies to support the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Over the last 10 years, a considerable decline has occurred in the reported number of children experiencing sexual and physical abuse, but cases of neglect have remained steady. Economic supports for families can be used individually or collectively as a policy strategy in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

MESSAGING AND COMMUNICATION

Advocacy happens in many different ways, but at its core it's about raising awareness, building and leveraging relationships, and educating others around the issues and policies that matter to you. There are varying degrees in which a PCA chapter, or nonprofit organization, can engage in advocacy that do not cross into lobbying. Advocacy can include such activities as:

- ✚ Educating and informing lawmakers
- ✚ Helping to shape state laws and budgets
- ✚ Making your voice(s) heard about important issues that affect our daily lives
- ✚ Helping policymakers find solutions to problems
- ✚ Providing critical information for adoption or rejection of introduced legislation

On the other end of the spectrum are lobbying activities. Key lobbying activities include activities in direct support or opposition to a specific piece of proposed legislation. While nonprofits can engage in some lobbying the IRS has strict rules regarding the percentage of a nonprofit's budget that can go toward lobbying activities.¹ It's recommended that any agency follow the rules and guidelines as set around lobbying and advocacy when engaging with lawmakers.

As is the case for any advocacy effort, messaging strategies that are tailored to and resonate with the specific perspectives of stakeholder audiences are critical to a campaign's success. Examples of messages, including references to social media tools (see Appendix A), example one-pagers, talking points, and more are incorporated throughout the toolkit.

Advocacy vs. Lobbying

Advocacy is public support of a cause or policy and there are many avenues of advocacy that nonprofits can engage in that do not constitute lobbying.

- Advocacy or Education is public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.
- Lobbying is seeking to influence (a politician or public official) on an issue or a specific ask such as supporting a piece of legislation.

¹ <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/lobbying>

STATE TAX CREDITS AS A PRIMARY PREVENTION STRATEGY

The state tax credits highlighted here include the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC). Many states offer their own versions of the EITC and CTC to complement the federal credits. These tax credits for families with children help low-income families increase their income while incentivizing work or offsetting the costs of child-rearing. Improving a family's financial security can reduce child abuse and neglect through improving parents' ability to meet the family's basic needs, while also reducing parental stress and depression.

These tax reliefs have had historic bipartisan support.² The federal EITC has been in place since 1975 and Rhode Island enacted the first state EITC in 1986. The federal CTC was established in 1997 as part of the Taxpayer Relief Act with at least seven states enacting a child tax credit since this passage. There has been increased attention to these economic supports to families at the federal level through legislation, including the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the American Families Plan of 2021, as well as the Build Back Better Act.

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDITS

Earned income tax credits (EITC) are used to bolster the economic security of low-income working families, especially those with children. These tax credits encourage parents and guardians to work while offsetting the impact of taxes, which can essentially lead to increased family income while incentivizing work. By reducing personal income tax liability, low-income tax filers are able to retain more of their income.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the EITC as a tool to mitigate the risk factors associated with child abuse and neglect, due to its potential as a strong economic support to families. A refundable state EITC is associated with:

- reductions in child protection services involvement, especially for single- mother families and larger families and;
- an 11% decrease in foster care entries compared to states without a state-level EITC, even after controlling for child poverty rate, racial/ethnic composition, education, and unemployment – assuming that the state credit is at least 10% of the federal EITC.³

Federal and State Updates

The federal EITC reduces the amount of federal income tax owed. The amount of the tax credit is based on three factors: an individual or family's earnings, number of qualifying children, and marital status.

During the 2020 tax year, there were 25 million eligible workers and families that received almost \$62 billion in federal EITC. The average EITC amount received per tax filer in 2020 was nearly \$2,500.⁴ The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 temporarily expands eligibility and increases benefits for the federal EITC. These changes are intended to provide greater economic security for vulnerable children, young adults and families.

There are now 30 states and the District of Columbia with an EITC in place.⁵ Approximately half of state EITCs (24 states and D.C.), like the federal credit, are refundable. A refundable credit allows tax filers to receive the full amount for which they are eligible, even if it exceeds the amount they owe in taxes. To be eligible for EITC refunds at the state and federal levels, a tax return must be filed. Since many low-income workers are not required to file a return, they often miss out on the full value of refundable credits.

The federal EITC tax credit is a refundable tax credit for low- and moderate-income workers, which means that even if you don't owe any tax, you can still receive a refund.

2 <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Rockefeller-Foundation-EITC-Policy-Paper-2020-1.pdf>

3 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559519900922>

4 <https://www.eitc.irs.gov/partner-toolkit/basic-marketing-communication-materials/eitc-fast-facts/eitc-fast-facts>

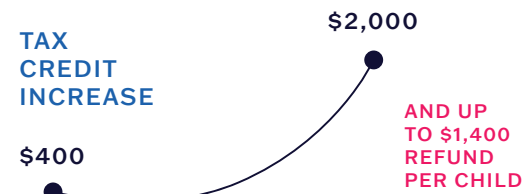
5 <https://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/earned-income-tax-credits-for-working-families.aspx>

THE CHILD TAX CREDIT

The child tax credit (CTC) is a partially refundable tax credit that allows low- and moderate-income families to reduce their tax liability. The credit phases out depending on the modified adjusted gross income amounts for both single and joint filers.

Federal and State Updates

The federal CTC was established in 1997 and the refundable portion is called the Additional Child Tax Credit. Now, through the passage of The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 and the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the tax credit has increased to \$2,000 from \$400 per child and has limits to the refundable amount of up to \$1,400 per child.



The American Rescue Plan Act made historic expansions to tax credits for working families and has increased the CTC for 2021. The relief bill overhauls the CTC by expanding the current annual benefit, including more low-income households, and distributes the credit's benefit through monthly cash payments. The credit amount is significantly increased for one year. Beginning in July 2021 through July 2022 families with children will be eligible to receive a tax credit of up to \$3,600 for each child ages birth through five and up to \$3,000 for each child ages six through 17. This benefit represents an increase from a previous cap of \$2,000 for each child regardless of age, it is newly inclusive of children age 17, and families are no longer subject to the earnings minimum to be eligible for a refund.

Months into its temporary expansion, the CTC has proven to be a critical support to families, reduce child poverty, and support local economies. The first expanded CTC payments reached 36 million families⁶ and lifted 3 million children out of poverty, providing much-needed support for parents struggling to put food on the table, pay mortgage or rent, and make ends meet.⁷ A study by the National Bureau of Economic Research found that in just the first few months of CTC payments, food insufficiency in low-income households decreased by 25%. Further, the Build Back Better Act seeks to extend the current expanded child tax credit through 2022 and makes full refund-ability permanent.



FOOD INSUFFICIENCY IN LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS DECREASED BY 25%.

State child tax credits often have bipartisan support, similar to the federal level. There are seven states that have enacted a child tax credit with differences regarding refund-ability and how the credits are calculated. States have also enacted legislation related to the federal child tax credit or explored the creation of a state level tax credit.⁸ The support for this tax relief for families has seen an increased interest by states with eleven states⁹ introducing legislation to create or expand state-level child tax credits since 2019.

⁶ The US Department of Treasury reports that the first Child Tax Credit payment reached 59.3 million children in July, the second payment reached 60.9 million children in August, and the third payment reached 60 million children in September.

⁷ The first Child Tax Credit payment kept 3 million children from poverty in July 2021; the second payment kept 3.5 million children from poverty in August 2021; the third CTC payment kept 3.4 million children from poverty in September 2021; and that the payments reduced food insufficiency among low income families with children.

⁸ <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/child-tax-credit-overview.aspx>




⁹ California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, New York, Oregon and West Virginia

Messaging Strategies for EITC and CTC

Following are communication strategies, including key questions for consideration when developing your communication plan:

- What is the **refundable EITC** in your state? Is it **at least 10%**?
- Is there both a refundable **federal** and **state EITC** in your state?
- If there was **an 11% decrease** in foster care entries in your state, how many **fewer children** would be in foster care?
- What is the landscape of the EITC in your **neighboring states**? PN-3 Policy Impact Center is an **excellent resource** with a breakdown of refundable EITCs by state.
- Has your state set a **fixed limit** for CTC? The fixed limit for state CTC ranges from **\$205 up to \$1000**.
- Has your state set a **CTC percentage** of the federal CTC? The percentage for state CTC ranges from **5% to 33%** of the federal child tax credit.
- Does your state's CTC have any **qualifiers or exemptions**, such as marital status, number of children, or income level?

SOCIAL MEDIA TWEETS AND IMAGES:

	Generous & refundable tax credits improve parent & child mental & physical health as well as infant health. #EITC #CTC
	Reducing the financial burden on families through economic supports makes a huge impact on children and families. #CTC #EITC
	3.6 million children were kept out of poverty thanks to the Child Tax Credit payment. #CTC

See **Appendix A** for social media images.

As a branding tool, the EITC logo can be used: See the EITC logo guidelines | Earned Income Tax Credit ([irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov)).

TALKING POINTS:

- The extended child tax credit will help families afford the rising costs of staples like food and gas. Other provisions in the bill will bring down costs of childcare, health care, and utilities.
- The child tax credit supports families during this time of economic uncertainty. Families need this help more than ever to meet everyday challenges and make ends meet.
- The child tax credit is a tax cut for families to help ease the burden of rising costs. The cost of living has been rising for years, but most American families have gotten no help. The child tax credit is offering this critically-needed support to millions of families every month.

OP-ED:

See **Appendix B** for a Op-Ed published in North Carolina: "[The Connection of State Earned Income Tax Credit and the Reduction of Child Abuse](#)." This op-ed discusses how reinstating a state EITC could lead to a reduction in rates of child abuse. It was published in a local North Carolina newspaper, co-written by Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina Policy Director, Melea Rose-Waters, and UNC-Greensboro Professor, Mat Despard.

LIVABLE WAGES AS A PRIMARY PREVENTION STRATEGY

The goal of a “living wage” is to prevent families from falling into poverty by allowing employees to earn the minimum income necessary to provide adequate coverage for basic needs such as food, child care, shelter, and health care. Oftentimes, a living wage is higher than most state minimum wages, which is the lowest amount of money someone can earn as mandated by law.

Children are the biggest beneficiaries of increased minimum wage. There is evidence that increasing state minimum wages is associated with a reduction in child poverty.

In Maine, just the first phase of a voter-approved gradual increase in the minimum wage, from \$7.50 to \$9 an hour, helped lift 10,000 children out of poverty. Pennsylvania researchers estimated that a minimum wage increase to \$15 an hour would bring hundreds of thousands of children above the poverty level in the state. And, in California, projections of the anti-poverty impact of a \$15 minimum wage showed significant benefits for young children.

There is also some evidence that increases in the minimum wage may lead to fewer reports of child maltreatment, as one study found that **for every \$1 increase in the hourly wage beyond \$7.25, there was an associated 9.6% reduction in reports of child neglect.**¹⁰ The associated reduction in neglect reports was particularly strong for babies and young children, ages during which the brain is rapidly developing and building the foundation for lifelong wellbeing.

Federal and State Updates

The federal minimum wage is \$7.25 an hour, with many states setting their minimum wage higher. The Raise the Wage Act of 2021, introduced by Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA), has the goal of gradually increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15 by 2025. There has been more than a decade with no increase in the federal minimum wage and this act aims to give millions of Americans a well overdue raise and lift workers and their families out of poverty.

Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have minimum wages above the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. However, there are five states that have not adopted a minimum wage and two states that have a minimum wage below \$7.25 per hour. In 2021, 24 states will experience a higher minimum wage¹¹ including Delaware, Rhode Island, and Virginia. The current state minimum wages in effect as of January 1, 2021, as well as future enacted minimum wage increases can be found here.

¹⁰ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.09.033>

¹¹ <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/best-states/minimum-wage-by-state>

Messaging Strategies

Following are questions for consideration when developing your communications plan:

- What is the minimum wage in your state? What would a **\$15/hour minimum wage** mean for workers in your state?
- What is the minimum wage needed to meet basic needs in different counties across your state? What is the **Self Sufficiency Standard** for your state?
- What is the minimum wage in surrounding states? Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center is an excellent resource for state comparisons and other data on minimum wage.
- Consider new partners and look at intersections of **other groups** who care about these issues or policies.

SOCIAL MEDIA TWEETS:



Raising the wage floor boosts the incomes of low-wage workers and families, and in some cases lift them out of poverty.

Increasing the #minimumwage is good for child well-being.

TALKING POINTS:

- Ensuring families have adequate income is basic to creating an environment in which young children thrive. Families need a range of equitable policies that ensure they can support their young children and access safe and stable housing, health and mental health care, healthy food, and high-quality early care and education for their young children.
- Raising the wage floor can boost the incomes of low-wage workers and their families, and in some cases lift them out of poverty.
- Higher state and local minimum wages promote greater economic security for families with young children, contribute to healthier birth outcomes, and can reduce racial disparities in poverty.

PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE AS A PRIMARY PREVENTION STRATEGY

Paid family and medical leave policies refer to partially or fully compensated time away from work for specific and generally significant family caregiving needs. Having access to programs that support the arrival of a new child and attending to one's own health and that a family member are associated with reductions in hospitalizations for abusive head trauma, higher rates of successful breastfeeding and maternal health, and lower rates of family stressors and risk factors. For example, a 2016 study found that California's paid family leave policy was associated with a reduction of pediatric abusive head trauma admissions¹².

Yet, only 17% of workers in the U.S. have access to any paid family leave through their employers¹³.

Comprehensive paid family and medical leave policies allows parents the flexibility to provide care and nurturance to their families and does not force parents to choose between employment and care.

Paid family and medical leave generate substantial health benefits for children and families, including promoting health equity, higher rates of maternal health, lower rates of family stressors, reductions in hospitalizations for abusive head trauma, and allowing employees to meet their personal and family health care needs while fulfilling work responsibilities.

RESOURCES

[Paid Family Medical and Sick Leave Toolkit](#)

[The Role of Paid Family Medical and Sick Leave One-pager](#)

¹² <https://doi.org/10.1136/injuryprev-2015-041702>

¹³ <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2019/access-to-paid-and-unpaid-family-leave-in-2018.htm>

Federal and State Updates

A universal paid family and medical leave program that covers all workers, and provides progressive wage replacement so that workers can pay their bills has been included in the Build Back Better Act. The act provides payments for eligible people who take leave from work due to a serious health condition, care for an immediate family member with a serious health condition, birth or adoption of a child, or the foreign deployment of a family member in the armed forces.

The Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act (FAMILY Act), sponsored by Representative Rosa DeLauro (CT-D), is a measure that entitles every individual to a family and medical leave insurance benefit payment for a specified benefit period and prescribes a formula for determining the individual's monthly benefit amount. It would establish an Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave within the Social Security Administration. The FAMILY Act would build on the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 by ensuring that workers are compensated when they take the leave they are entitled.

State paid family leave programs require employers to allow eligible parents time off from work to bond with a new child while receiving a portion of their wages.

Currently, there are 10 states that have adopted a statewide paid family leave program. However, only six of these states (California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Washington) have fully implemented a paid family leave program of a minimum of six weeks following the birth, adoption, or the placement of a child into foster care.

Among the minority of states with a paid family leave program, parents are allowed to take between 4 and 12 weeks off of work, with pay varying based on a proportion of the employee's wages prior to taking leave.

In states without paid family leave, the only access to leave is through the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows qualifying workers to receive 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave with continuous health coverage. Only 60% of workers qualify for the FMLA¹⁴. Because the FMLA provides only unpaid leave to eligible workers, many parents with low incomes may not use the time off or may shorten the duration of leave to avoid losing wages.



Most recently, there has been much legislative activity around paid family and medical leave. In the 2021 legislative year, 23 states considered legislation to enact a paid family leave program of at least six weeks. Rhode Island recently passed legislation to expand their state's paid family leave benefit from four weeks to six weeks beginning in 2022, and Oregon, Colorado, and Connecticut are set to fully implement their paid leave programs in the coming years.

¹⁴ https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/WHd_FMLA2018PB1WholsEligible_StudyBrief_Aug2020.pdf

Messaging Strategies for Paid Family and Sick Leave

Following are examples of messages which have resonated with a variety of audiences on how paid family leave can contribute to a decrease in child abuse and neglect and family stress.

SOCIAL MEDIA TWEETS AND IMAGES:

	Paid leave strengthens families. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to pass a paid family and medical leave policy that would lift up all American workers and families. Let's make history together. #PaidLeaveForAll
	Want fewer infant deaths? Pass Paid Family Leave #PaidLeaveForAll

See **Appendix A** for social media images

TALKING POINTS:

- At some point everyone needs to take time away from the job to deal with a personal or family illness or to take care of a new child.
- Most working parents do not have access to paid family leave. Many parents must make the impossible choice between unhurried time to bond with their babies and losing their jobs or economic security.
- Only 60% of workers qualify for the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Because the FMLA provides only unpaid leave to eligible workers, many parents with low incomes may not use the time off or may shorten the duration of leave to avoid losing wages.
- A families' financial stability not only reduces parental and family stress, but it allows children's basic needs to be satisfied. Financial insecurity leads to increased parental stress, which could be a trigger for abuse and neglect; providing families with stronger household financial security reduces this stress and therefore the incidences of abuse and neglect. Furthermore, we know that stability is necessary for healthy childhood development.

OP-ED:

See **Appendix C** for an Op-Ed on Paid Parental Leave in Idaho

MESSAGING GUIDES:

- [ZERO TO THREE and the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers Paid Leave Messaging Guide](#)
- [MomsRising talking points and state-specific information on Paid Family Leave](#)
- [PL+US messaging brief](#)
- [Public opinion on paid leave](#)

CONCLUSION

When communities, policymakers, and resources are invested in prevention strategies, we can begin to envision a world where the negative impacts and outcomes from child maltreatment will be nonexistent. **We can prevent child abuse, America, by investing in upstream strategies that can address the root causes of child abuse and neglect.**

RESOURCES

[Economic Supports Can Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect in North Carolina' white paper](#)

This white paper examines the evidence for child maltreatment prevention with the economic supports of paid family and medical leave; a refundable state EITC; improved access to affordable health care; increases in the minimum wage; childcare subsidies; supportive housing; child welfare differential response with concrete supports; and resources provided through evidence-based home visiting programs.

[PCANC Blog Post on Economic Supports](#)

This blog post draws the connection for how economic supports are connected to the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

[NC Paid Family and Medical Leave toolkit](#)

This toolkit provides messaging and social media images for talking about paid family and medical leave as a child maltreatment prevention strategy, and for posting about it online.

[NC Recovery Rebate / State EITC toolkit](#)

This toolkit provides messaging and social media images for talking about a refundable earned income tax credit, also referred to as a recovery rebate, as a child maltreatment prevention strategy, and for posting about it online.

[NC Earned Income Tax Credit one-pager](#)

This one-pager highlights key points and messaging about a state EITC as a child maltreatment prevention strategy.

[Chapin Hall Policy Brief: System Transformation to Support Child & Family Well-Being: The Central Role of Economic & Concrete Supports](#)

This policy brief discusses the need for system transformation in child welfare to incorporate economic and concrete supports. The brief discusses the conflation of poverty and neglect, challenges with mandatory reporting laws, proposes a theory of change on how economic and concrete supports would benefit families, and 4 strategy areas of policy, people, data, and programs.

[State Tax Credits - Tax Credits for Workers and Families](#)

This resource provides an interactive map with data on state tax credits in the form of Earned Income Tax Credits, Child Tax Credits, and Child and Dependent Care Credits. There are also state-by-state pages offering more in-depth information.

Illinois work on EITC - [House Bill 2792](#) and [Senate Bill 3429](#)

Bill text for Illinois bill that would amend the Illinois Income Tax Act to create an eligible dependent tax credit and to modify the earned income tax credit.

[Why the U.S. needs a \\$15 minimum wage: How the Raise the Wage Act would benefit U.S. workers and their families | Economic Policy Institute \(epi.org\)](#)

Article citing resources and research on various arguments for an increase in the federal minimum wage. This article includes information about the importance for families with children, and mentions the impact of an increased minimum wage on reducing child abuse, citing the “Money Matters” publication.

[Get It Back Toolkit/Materials Doc: Child Tax Credit](#)

This toolkit by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities provides messaging, scripts, social media posts, and other resources on the Child Tax Credit.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Resources:

- [CDC Foundation's EITC Infographic](#): A colorful infographic on the benefits of the EITC from a public health perspective.
- [CDC One-Pager: "Can State Earned Income Tax Credits Help Prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences?":](#) This one-pager provides clear definitions, key research findings related to EITCs, and identifies gaps in coverage by the EITC.
- [Essentials for Childhood Framework](#)
- [Preventing ACEs Technical Package](#)

[Predictors of child neglect: Mothers' parentification, stress, marital status, education, and financial situation - ProQuest](#)

Dr. Chitiyo's dissertation explores strongest predictors of child neglect, finding that estimated monthly income was one of the strongest predictors of child neglect.

[Money matters: Does the minimum wage affect child maltreatment rates? - ScienceDirect](#)

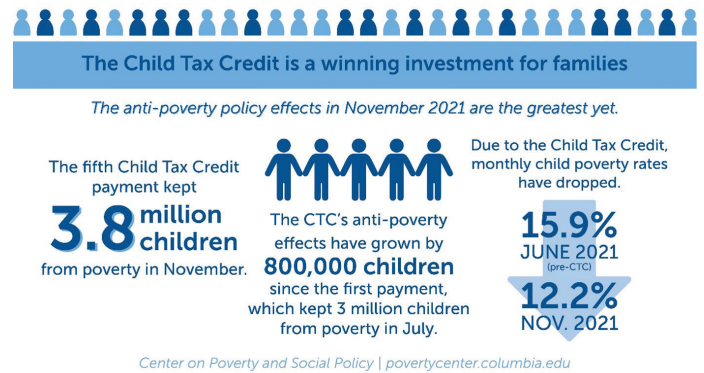
A journal article examining the impact of minimum wage on rates of child maltreatment. The analysis found that increasing the minimum wage leads to fewer child maltreatment reports, a reduction that is especially strong for neglect among young and school-aged children.

APPENDIX A: SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGES FOR CTC, EITC AND PAID LEAVE POLICIES

Following are images that can be used to post alongside messaging on social media. Simply right click on the image to copy the image for your use.

CTC Social Media Images

The following images were developed by PCANC and are being shared for use across the PCA chapter network. These versions have had the PCANC logos removed so they can be branded with individual chapter logos.



Refundable State EITC Social Media Images



Paid Family Leave Social Media Images



APPENDIX B: OP-ED ON THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT IN NORTH CAROLINA

“The Connection of State Earned Income Tax Credit and the Reduction of Child Abuse”

OPINION AND COMMENTARY:

Editorials and other Opinion content offer perspectives on issues important to our community and are independent from the work of our newsroom reporters.

Welcome to NC Voices, where leaders, readers, and experts from across North Carolina can speak on issues affecting our communities.

NC’S RECOVERY REBATE ACT

Every child is filled with tremendous promise and we have a shared obligation to foster their potential. That means shoring up the ways we support families. North Carolina’s proposed Recovery Rebate Act is an easy and cost effective policy option that will reduce financial pressure on N.C. families and prevent child abuse and neglect.

North Carolina spends over \$2 billion each year on the downstream consequences of child abuse and neglect. Injuries and other harm associated with child maltreatment mean we must identify cost effective prevention strategies, like generous and refundable tax credits.

Nearly 1 million N.C. families would benefit from a Recovery Rebate, and nearly 1.2 million children. The rebate would give qualifying working families in North Carolina an extra \$500 annually to buy groceries or pay rent. When parents thrive, children thrive. Children benefiting from additional income from the Recovery Rebate are more likely to do better in school and to see their employment and earnings prospects improve over their lifetime.

Refundable tax credits like the Recovery Rebate are also associated with an 11% decrease in foster care entries compared to states without the same type of support for working families. This would mean that approximately 1,150 fewer children could be diverted from entering foster care each year.

We can keep the heaviest loads from weighing families down if act now to invest in the Recovery Rebate for our children.

In an era of intensive political polarization, there is something for legislators of both major parties to like about the Recovery Rebate Act. There’s no reason why N.C. legislators can’t work together to support this “no-brainer” of a policy to support the state’s families with children.

Dr. Mathieu Despard, Associate Professor, UNC Greensboro Department of Social Work
Melea Rose-Waters, Policy Director, Prevent Child Abuse NC

This story was originally published May 18, 2021, 1:13 PM
<https://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/article251155264.html>

APPENDIX C: OP-ED ON PAID PARENTAL LEAVE IN IDAHO

Paid Parental Leave Creates Great Families

Kudos to Governor Little for issuing the executive order to provide for paid parental leave for state employees. In his words “this will enable families to spend time together in those critical weeks after a child enters the family.” This order will impact the 25,000 state employees who work for the executive branch of state government, the largest workforce in the state.

Paid parental leave will have another impact: It will help to strengthen families and prevent child abuse. Preventing child abuse and neglect is our work at the Idaho Children’s Trust Fund. We are charged by the Legislature to provide funding, training and share best practices with a network of prevention organizations throughout the state.

How does paid parental leave help to prevent child abuse? Research from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is showing that paid parental leave helps prevent shaken baby syndrome. Researchers gathered data on the number of children hospitalized between 1995 and 2011 in California where paid parental leave was in place and compared that with several states without leave policies. Admission rates for abusive head injuries dropped significantly among children under the age of 2 following the enactment of paid family leave. States without a similar policy saw no significant drops in hospital admissions among children due to abusive head trauma, although these rates did increase at times.

Why would this be the case? What is the relationship? We know that the primary trigger for shaking a baby is crying and the parent or caregiver’s frustration with their inability to soothe the baby. Caregiver frustration is intensified when the caregiver is in a hurry to get to work or to child care. By having a couple of months to rest and establish a new schedule, new parents will have the opportunity to ease into their new world of (possible) sleepless nights paired with the wonders of enjoying their new baby. Having more time to bond with an infant and to build strong attachment in the earliest months is critical to brain development and children’s well-being. Paid parental leave creates time and space for this process. This bond also helps build the mother’s resilience to overcome some of the more challenging aspects of early parenting. This resilience buffers the stress that can lead to situations in which abuse and neglect are more likely to occur.

Prevention is the key. We already know the costs of not preventing for our families and communities but there is also a monetary cost for employers and society. When the CDC and others calculate the long-term cost of child abuse and neglect, they factor in the costs of lost productivity caused by absenteeism, disability and early death. The cost of child abuse and neglect is estimated to be at least \$124 billion per year according to the CDC. Preventing child abuse and neglect saves lives and saves money.

As Governor Little suggests, the state can be a role model for both the public and private sectors to look at adopting family friendly work policies. Already some local governments, Chobani and other companies have adopted paid parental leave policies. These family friendly work policies are good for workers and good for the companies that provide them. Even more important they are good for our families and communities.

Roger Sherman is the Executive Director of the Idaho Children’s Trust Fund which is the state affiliate of Prevent Child Abuse America.