

# *Towards Better Baby Care: A National Commitment*



## **Statement of Principles**

- ♥ Every infant and toddler should grow-up in a strong and nurturing family.
- ♥ Every infant and toddler should have a clearly identified medical home with up-to-date primary care.
- ♥ Every infant, toddler and their family should have health insurance and access to information on health resources, including services for special needs children.
- ♥ All families should have access to paid family and medical leave for the first year of a baby's life.
- ♥ All pregnant women, expectant fathers, and parents of infants and toddlers should have access to parent education and family support.
- ♥ All working families with infants and toddlers should have access to quality, affordable care.
- ♥ All infants and toddlers with special needs should have access to early intervention services.
- ♥ All infants and toddlers should have a stable and permanent home and access to specialized services where needed.

## *12 Steps to Better Baby Care*



You can promote **safe and healthy care**, **family-centered care** and **developmental care** by encouraging your state and community to invest in the following steps to Better Baby Care:

### **Safe and Healthy Care**

1. Ensure that all child care meets state and local licensing requirements and that standards follow the recommendations in the National Health and Safety Standards for Out-of-Home Care.
2. Provide every infant/toddler program with access to health and mental health consultation and support.
3. Promote the inclusion of children with special needs and provide ongoing support to parents and providers.

### **Family-Centered Care**

4. Help parents understand how to select and monitor the quality of care for their infants and toddlers.

5. Promote parent involvement, parent education, and family support through child care and services that reflect the cultures and languages of the families served.

6. Create networks of support for family child care and kith and kin providers.

#### **Developmentally Appropriate Care**

7. Ensure that infant/toddler providers have specialized training in child development and family support, and receive adequate compensation.

8. Develop the capacity of all higher education institutions in the community to offer courses in infant/ toddler care and supervision.

9. Provide an infant/toddler specialist to work with providers and parents in every Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

#### **Critical Investments**

10. Expand the supply of quality infant care through direct investments and higher reimbursement rates for accredited care.

11. Ensure that all eligible children have access to Early Head Start.

12. Provide families with paid parental leave for the first year of a baby's life.

## *How to Get Involved*



**There are a variety of ways that you and your business can help advocate for Better Baby Care. You can...**

...Lead a discussion with your managers and employees of the needs of infants and their families in your business community. Share the statement of principles and steps to improve quality care with others during conferences or meetings

...Join with other community groups and early childhood professionals to identify and implement at least one step to improve infant and toddler care. Start with improving health and safety.

...Establish a scholarship fund that will help pay for training of infant/toddler providers in the community.

...Sponsor a provider in your neighborhood.

...Collect stories and other information on the needs of families in your community. Share this information with policymakers.

...Consider providing paid family leave for your employees.

...Support a Better Baby Care Forum in your community or state. Bring all the infant and toddler providers together for a special networking and sharing. Highlight research and promising ideas.