

For Crying Out Loud, Ohio Babies Need Us Now.

If Ohioans care about babies, why are so many dying and in crisis?

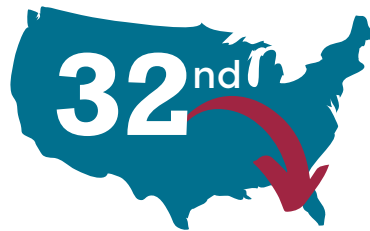
It is never too early to invest in a child, but it can be too late.



In Ohio, babies bear a disproportionate burden of our failing systems. The important goal of **reaching a first birthday should be the floor, not the ceiling of success.** Yet, upon birth, Ohio babies and their families are faced with insurmountable challenges. Governor DeWine put forth a bold and thoughtful proposal for babies in Ohio's FY24-FY25 budget bill, **but the current budget proposal cuts surpass HALF A BILLION DOLLARS** from Gov. DeWine's plan. **These cuts would devastate young children and families.** Babies need our policymakers to prioritize their potential as the budget is deliberated on by the conference committee.



Ohio ranks among the worst for **infant mortality outcomes.**¹



Ohio ranks 32nd worst for **infant maltreatment.**²



Nearly **1 in 4 pregnant moms DO NOT have access** to prenatal care in their first trimester.³



Half of Ohio infants and toddlers live in poverty.⁴

THE TOP 5 THINGS OHIO POLICYMAKERS MUST DO RIGHT NOW TO SUPPORT ALL OHIO BABIES:

1 Invest in Access to Child Care & Early Learning

- **Restore** the Governor's proposed increase for publicly funded child care eligibility from 142% to 160% FPL. The proposed **\$202 million** cut over the biennium would cause 15,000 children and families to lose access to needed care.
- **Restore** the House cut of **\$150 million** in Ohio ARPA funds to support 12,000 child care scholarships for parents in critical care occupations (including child care professionals) earning between 161-200% FPL.
- **Restore** the House proposal of Child Care Infrastructure Grants focused on babies and toddlers. The Senate cut this investment in half and eliminated any focus on the eligibility of communities with high infant mortality rates, leaving only **\$15 million** over the biennium to support child care deserts.
- **Maintain** the Governor's investment in preschool and restore the House proposal of an additional **\$30 million** over the biennium.

2 Invest in Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health & Safety

- **Restore** cuts to the Governor's proposed investment in the only state budget line directly supporting young children's mental health. The House cut the executive proposal by **\$10 million** and the Senate further cut it by **\$5.5 million** over the biennium, leaving the program with only \$3 million and \$4 million in each of the respective fiscal years. This is a nearly 70% cut to the Governor's proposed investment.
- **Restore** cuts to Family and Children's Services totaling **\$107 million** over the biennium.

3 Invest in Infant Vitality & Home Visiting

- **Restore** the Governor's proposed Infant Health and Infant Vitality Grants (nearly **\$4 million**.)
- **Restore** cuts to the Governor's proposed increase to Help Me Grow Home Visiting—a nearly **\$20 million** cut over the biennium equating to a 15% decrease.

4 Invest in Maternal & Young Child Health Care

- **Restore** the Governor's proposal to extend Medicaid coverage to pregnant women and children under age 19 with incomes up to 300% of FPL and adopted through private agencies with special health care needs. (The state share of this investment was valued at **\$76.4 million** over the biennium.)
- **Restore** the House proposal to implement multi-year continuous Medicaid coverage for eligible babies, aged 0-3.
- **Restore** the House proposal on Medicaid reimbursement for Doula services.

5 Invest in Housing, Nutrition, & Family Stability

- **Restore** cuts that support safe housing for pregnant women, Healthy Beginnings at Home, which the Senate reduced from the Governor's budget proposal by **\$13.5 million** over the biennium, a nearly 80% cut.
- **Restore** TANF earmarks in FY25 that support nutrition, stability, and safety for babies and young children, including the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood and the Ohio Children's Trust Fund (nearly **\$10 million** for those programs.)

OHIO BABIES ARE COUNTING ON YOU TO RESTORE MORE THAN HALF A BILLION IN CUTS.

1. Center for Disease Control & Prevention – Infant Mortality Rates by State (2020)
2. Groundwork Ohio's Early Childhood Dashboard Preview (2022)
3. National Partnership for Paid Leave
4. Ready, Set Soar Ohio – The State of Infants and Toddlers (2020)