

# OUR POLICY PRIORITIES



## Healthy Development

Children who are born healthy, grow and develop in healthy environments, and have access to quality healthcare services have better physical, emotional, and mental health throughout their lives.



*Groundwork supports the healthy development of young children through policies and practices that:*

- Increase access to high-quality prenatal care.
- Expand coverage and access to high-quality healthcare through Medicaid and CHIP programs for young children and their families.
- Support early identification and treatment for young children faced with developmental delays (timely developmental screenings and early interventions).
- Reduce incidences of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma and increase access to programs that build resilience and mitigate its impact.
- Protect young children from lead hazards where they live and learn.



## Quality Early Learning

The early years of development lay the foundation for all learning that happens later in life. When children have access to high-quality learning experiences in the earliest years, they have better long-term health, education, and economic outcomes.



*Groundwork supports quality early learning through policies and practices that:*

- Increase access to voluntary, evidence-based home visiting services and Early Head Start.
- Expand access to high-quality publicly funded child care by increasing eligibility to 200% of the federal poverty level and supporting programs to become highly rated in Ohio's *Step Up to Quality* system.
- Expand access to high-quality preschool and Head Start programs.
- Support a quality early education workforce that is highly qualified and well compensated.



## Empowered Families

Families are the first and most important teachers and caregivers. A family's economic and environment stability plays a critical role in a child's early development. When families have the resources and support to provide adequate care and enrichment during the earliest years, children can grow and thrive.



*Groundwork supports empowered families through policies and practices that:*

- Increase access to parenting and family support systems designed to prevent and treat behavioral and emotional problems in young children so that they can grow in their families schools and communities.
- Stabilize families so that there are fewer young children engaged in the child welfare system and ensure that young children in state custody, living in foster or kinship placements, experience a continuum of care and supported transitions.
- Foster economic stability for families with young children.