**Leave Behind for Policymakers**

The following sample language can be used to craft your own leave behind to give to policymakers and staff and during meetings with families. This text can be modified to reflect your organization’s priorities.

The science is clear that our brains grow faster between the ages of 0 and 3 than at any later point in our lives, forming more than one million new neural connections every second. When babies have nurturing relationships, early learning experiences, and good health and nutrition, those neural connections are stimulated and strengthened, laying a strong foundation for the rest of their lives. When babies don’t get what their growing brains need during this crucial time, it can lead to life-long developmental, educational, social, and health challenges that impact us all.

**It’s time to invest in the future.**

We need to invest in the first three years of life to give all our babies the best chance to succeed in life.Key areas of investment include:

* Quality, Affordable Child Care. We need to make sure every family who needs it has access to quality, affordable child care for their infants and toddlers that offer one-on-one relationships with caring adults and strong early learning experiences.
* Time for Parents to Bond with Their Babies. We need to give parents dedicated time to bond with their babies in the earliest months, when so much of their development is at stake.
* Healthy Emotional Development. We need to reach parents with resources and services they want and need to nurture their baby’s healthy development and set them up for a healthy life.
* Strong Physical Health and Nutrition. We need to ensure families have access to nutrition and other health services that can give them a healthy start in life.

It’s time to bring national attention to what babies—and families—need to thrive.Be part of the team that’s fighting for our future. Learn more at [WEBSITE] and sign up at [www.thinkbabies.org](http://www.thinkbabies.org).

**About Babies in [STATE/COMMUNITY]:**

The *State of Babies Yearbook: 2019* is a first of its kind resource that seeks to bridge the gap between science and policy with national and state-by-state data on the well-being of America’s babies. The *Yearbook* provides a snapshot of how babies are faring nationally and by state across nearly 60 indicators and policy domains in areas essential for a good start in life: Good Health, Strong Families, and Positive Early Learning Experiences. States are ranked into one of four tiers based on how they fare on selected indicators and policy domains that represent their progress towards assuring babies’ access to health care, paid leave, quality early learning and more. The tiers from bottom to top are: Getting Started (G), Reaching Forward (GR), Improving Outcomes (GRO), and Working Efficiently (GROW).

The data are clear: the state where a baby is born makes a big difference in their chance for a strong start in life. While all states have room to grow, some are doing better for their babies with effective policy solutions to help infants and toddlers overcome early life challenges. In [STATE/ COMMUNITY]:

[INSERT RELEVANT DATA POINTS FROM YOUR [STATE PROFILE](https://stateofbabies.org/states/)]

**For more information, please contact**:

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