**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 any later point in our lives, forming more than one million new neural connections every second. When babies have nurturing relationships, positive 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 to thrive, they don’t develop as they should. This leads to life-long developmental, educational, social, and health challenges.

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

We need to invest in the first three years of life to ensure that all babies and families have what they need to thrive including good health, strong families, and positive early learning experiences. In [STATE] key areas of investment include:

* + [ADD BULLETS WITH STATE POLICY SOLUTIONS, SEE THINK BABIES KEY MESSAGES AND TALKING POINTS FOR POLICY AREA SPECIFIC LANGUAGE]

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](https://stateofbabies.org/)* is a 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 *Yearbook* shows us that, even before the pandemic, the littlest among us face big challenges, and the policies and programs in their state can make a difference in their ability to reach their full potential. Most alarming, significant disparities across key indicators of well-being emphasize the big barriers babies of color face.

The data are clear: the state where a baby is born makes a big difference in their chance for a strong start in life. All states need to do better for babies. Even among states with high averages, significant disparities exist in the opportunities available to babies and families of color to thrive, often driven by historical and structural inequalities. By nearly every measure, children living in poverty and children of color face the biggest obstacles, such as low birthweight, unstable housing, and limited access to quality child care. The current crisis has further exposed and exacerbated these disparities and structural barriers, which have harmful and life-altering effects that begin even before birth and can last a lifetime.

In [STATE/ COMMUNITY]:

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

**For more information, please contact**:

[NAME, TITLE, ORGANIZATION]

[PHONE NUMBER] | [EMAIL]