

# Strolling Thunder FAQs and Answers



## How does my *Strolling Thunder*™ event complement ZERO TO THREE's national *Strolling Thunder* event?

Each spring, ZERO TO THREE brings families from all 50 states and the District of Columbia to Capitol Hill to share their stories with their Members of Congress. Events for 2020, 2021, and 2022 were held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage you to host your *Strolling Thunder* near the time of the national event in Washington, D.C. or during your state legislative session to amplify the *Think Babies*™ message, both for policymakers and the media. This toolkit provides resources and assets to help you plan. Information about this year's event can be found [here](#).

## What is the best way to encourage families to travel to visit with their policymakers?

Many parents are excited about the opportunity to share their experiences with policymakers and to talk about what it means to raise young children today. It's a personal issue that's near and dear to them. Parents of babies and toddlers are juggling a lot, so it is helpful to provide them with support planning logistics, financial assistance, and/or an extra hand to help with their kids, if possible. The best time to hold a *Strolling Thunder* event is during regular business hours during session on a weekday to ensure that you can meet with policymakers or their staff. We understand this may be a challenging time for families to attend an event. We've found that paying for reasonable travel expenses—gas mileage or transportation, meals, and hotel (if staying overnight)—is important for supporting family participation. And for many families a trip can be a fun, educational opportunity.

You can also encourage parents' participation by offering parenting resources to help them best support their babies' brain development. Finally, parents may appreciate the opportunity to ask questions of one another and share their knowledge of what has worked in supporting their young children.

## Can we host a virtual *Strolling Thunder* event?

Yes. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of families with infants and toddlers and changed the ways in which advocacy happens. Educating policymakers about what babies need to thrive has never been more important. Virtual events have made it possible to continue impactful advocacy despite the public health crisis and revealed new opportunities to effectively engage families. Many states have held virtual *Strolling Thunder* events during this time. To help support you holding a virtual *Think Babies* event, ZERO TO THREE created a [Think Babies Virtual Event Guide](#) which complements the other tools, resources, and templates included in the *Think Babies* Events Toolkit.



### **Should we have families sign a waiver?**

Yes. Once you have families on board, you will want to have them sign a release form (see example later in toolkit), which will give you permission to share families' stories with reporters, through social channels, and on your website.