***The resources in this toolkit are designed to help you reach out to candidates to advocate on the issues that matter most to you. Whether it is in-person, at a virtual event, on social media, or through email, your engagement makes a difference. Feel free to adapt these materials to educate candidates in other state and local elections. Please reach out to educate all viable candidates for a given office. Your voice matters to the candidates running to represent you.***

In-Person & Virtual Events

“Town hall” meetings or candidate forums with voters are a great venue to share your concerns with candidates. Federal candidates, as well as your state and local leaders, regularly hold these sessions throughout the campaign cycle, and they are often open to the public. They usually include a question-and-answer session – giving you the opportunity to share the *Think Babies* message and ask the candidates about infant-toddler issues. meetings or candidate forums with voters are a great venue to share your concerns with candidates.

* ***Find an event***: Sign up for a candidate's listservs, newsletters, or social media account to get updates and check back to learn when they may be hosting public forums. You can also visit [TownHallProject.com](https://townhallproject.com/) to find campaign town hall events for federal candidates on the ballot in 2022. ***Prepare***: Once you have identified an event, prepare a brief statement or question beforehand. As you prep, be sure to review the *Think Babies Election Toolkit* sample questions and the [Candidate Guide to Think Babies](https://www.thinkbabies.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Candidate-Guide-to-Think-Babies_2022.pdf) for more information on infant and toddler issues and stories from parents across the nation. You can also coordinate with other advocates in your community to make a stronger impact. Remember to practice what you want to say and be specific with questions. This toolkit also includes a worksheet to formulate your own questions to get you started. Always remember to pose open-ended questions.
* ***Follow up***: Give the [Candidate Guide to Think Babies](https://www.thinkbabies.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Candidate-Guide-to-Think-Babies_2022.pdf) in this toolkit to the candidate or staff members at in-person events and be sure to follow up with a digital version of the guide after in-person and virtual events. Staff are a critical link in educating candidates and elevating issues. After an event, you can email the candidate and their staff to reinforce your message and thank them for their time. Don’t forget to provide your contact information and remind them about your areas of expertise – they may want to follow up with you down the road!

**Social Media**

Use social media to share *Think Babies*messages and buzz about what babies and families need to thrive. Social media is a great way to directly connect with all candidates while also amplifying infant and toddler issues with your networks. This toolkit includes sample social media posts that you can use or adapt, as well as the social media profiles for each candidate. Remember to use the #ThinkBabies hashtag and tag [@ZEROTOTHREE](https://twitter.com/ZEROTOTHREE?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor) so we can amplify your posts.

**Email**

Use email to reach out to the campaigns directly and share information on the needs of babies and families. Use the sample email in the toolkit to get started, make sure to personalize your story and put a face to the challenges families experience as well as the benefits of supportive policies like paid family and medical leave, child care supports, and economic security supports like the Child Tax Credit. Some campaigns have specific email addresses you can use, others ask you to fill out a form on their website.