

# It's Time For Congress To Invest In Babies

**STROLLING THUNDER** 10 YEARS

Hi, I'm baby

**Darian**

This is my story.

**Location:**

**Thornton, Colorado**

**My Grown Up's Name:**

**Laura**

“ We make too much for help, but not enough to live without worry.”



**When babies and families have the resources they need, like food, steady income, and safe housing, it keeps children on track and makes our country stronger. Federal policies play a critical role in the well-being of both babies and their caregivers, including through paid family and medical leave, financial supports, community services, immigration enforcement activities that prioritize babies' well-being, and effective child welfare prevention and intervention programs.**

## Our story begins...

My name is Laura Krech, and my husband Evan and I are raising our 1½-year-old son, Darian—though everyone calls him “Squishy.” We’re a close-knit, family-oriented household. Both of our parents live nearby, and right now, they’re the reason we’re able to keep working. Because we can’t afford child care.

We have full-time jobs. I work at a high school, and Evan is an engineer. We’ve worked hard to build a stable life. After getting married right before COVID-19, we lived in his parents’ basement to save up. It wasn’t ideal, but it helped us eventually buy a townhome in the Denver suburbs. That felt like a huge step forward. But even with two incomes, we’re constantly doing the math.

Right now, our parents take turns watching Darian. We’re lucky. They live nearby and want to help. But this was never meant to be a long-term solution. They’re close to retirement, and I worry about what happens next.

We’ve tried to find help. We applied for child-care assistance programs and even a special grant, but we were told we make too much money to qualify. At the same time, it doesn’t feel like we make enough to live without constant stress.

We’re doing everything we can. We’re working, raising our child and contributing to our community. But the cost of living makes it hard to feel secure.

I want safe, reliable child care for my son, not just whoever is available. I shouldn’t have to choose between affordability and quality.

## IT'S TIME To Make Policy Change

Every day, families like mine are making hard choices about how to stretch a paycheck, between housing, food, and everything babies need. For some families like mine, added challenges like child welfare system involvement or the fear of being separated from loved ones make it even harder to stay stable. I’m asking Congress to invest in policies that help families like mine stay financially secure, safe, and stable.

### We Want Congress to Support Strong Families by:

- Supporting paid family leave, the Child Tax Credit and other financial supports that make raising a baby more affordable.
- Protecting and investing in SNAP, TANF and SSBG, housing assistance like Housing Choice vouchers, and other programs that meet the basic needs of babies and families.
- Ceasing immigration enforcement operations in areas with young children present and avoiding family separations or detentions

*About Think Babies™ and Strolling Thunder™*

ZERO TO THREE created Think Babies™ as a call to action for policymakers to prioritize good health, strong families, and positive early learning experiences, particularly during the crucial early years of brain development. Strolling Thunder™ is an annual event for families to share their stories with their elected officials in person. [Learn more at www.ThinkBabies.org/StrollingThunder](http://www.ThinkBabies.org/StrollingThunder).