In partnership with the Pritzker Children’s Initiative (PCI), National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers the National League of Cities’ (NLC), Cities Supporting a Strong Prenatal to Age 3 Agenda (PN-3) offers city leaders guidance and support to establish and strengthen prenatal to age three strategies to achieve better outcomes for their youngest residents through improving kindergarten readiness for all children. The first three years are the bricks and mortar of brain development, setting the foundation for all learning. During this time the brain develops at a speed never to be repeated later in life, which is why taking advantage of the early years including in policies that promote healthy development is so important. Investments in the early years builds the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health.

GOAL AREAS

Anchoring this work is the outcomes framework of the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers. This framework identifies systems-level, policy/program-level, and child/family level outcomes that can help to ensure children are on track for school readiness by age three in the areas of: Healthy Beginnings, Supported Families, and Quality Care and Learning.

Healthy Beginnings: A prenatal to age three agenda that supports healthy beginnings works to ensure that pregnant women and children are healthy.

Supported Families: Children live in safe, stable, and nurturing families and communities.

Quality Care and Learning: Children are cared for in high-quality settings that support their social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Indicators of a robust Prenatal to Age 3 Early Childhood System:

Healthy Beginnings:
- Infants, toddlers and families experience healthy births and optimal health and development through age 3.
- Families have access to prenatal care, as well as preventative and comprehensive healthcare.
  - Reduction of incidents of child injuries, death, and health issues.
  - Increases in the availability of evidenced-based home visiting models that are designed to provide ongoing supports to newborns who have been identified as at-risk.

Supported Families:
- Develop a collaborative network of early childhood stakeholders, identify models for coordinated intake.
  - Increasing the number of family and caregiver engagement to services and programming available in their community.
  - Advocate for policy change to improve local and state family services; increase access to resources and address the social, economic, and political factors that harm health; and ensure the financial sustainability of a high functioning public preconception, pregnancy, and early childhood system.

Quality Care and Learning:
- Infants, toddlers and families experience nurturing and responsive care in safe settings
- Families have access to affordable care options that infants, toddlers and families’ needs
  - Increases in children receiving and referral through surveillance, screening, or assessment.
  - All infant and toddler caregivers have opportunities to build competencies through education, training, coaching, and other effective forms of professional learning that are appropriate for the settings of care.

For more information:
https://www.nlc.org/early-childhood-success