

Changing the Course for Infants and Toddlers:

A Survey of State Child Welfare Policies and Initiatives



Index of state policies and practices to support the development of young children

The ZERO TO THREE Policy Center, a nonpartisan, research-based resource for federal and state policymakers and advocates on the unique developmental needs of infants and toddlers, and Child Trends, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center that studies children at all stages of development, worked together to design the survey and analyze responses. During the course of this collaboration, based on both organizations' knowledge and expertise in early childhood development and the child welfare system, several key policies and practices stood out as particularly significant for fostering the healthy development of maltreated infants and toddlers. These areas are displayed in the table on the following pages, with a landscape of state responses. The five states that did not participate in the survey ([Connecticut](#), [Maine](#), [Mississippi](#), [Montana](#), [Utah](#)) are not included in the index. "I/T" refers to "infants and toddlers."

The Index is structured as follows:

1. Assessments and services for maltreated infants and toddlers
2. Case reviews, court hearings, and family group decision-making
3. Stability, attachment, and permanency for infants and toddlers in foster care

Assessments and services for maltreated infants and toddlers

	AL	AK	AZ	AR	CA	CO	DE	DC	FL	GA	HI	ID	IL	IN	IA	KS	KY	LA	MD	MA	MI	MN	MO
Policy requires health/immunization assessments for all maltreated I/T	X									X	X			X					X			X	
Policy requires dental health assessments for all maltreated I/T	X									X	X			X					X				
Policy requires mental/behavioral health assessments for all maltreated I/T	X									X	X			X								X	
Policy requires developmental monitoring/screening for all maltreated I/T	X			X						X	X			X				X				X	
Policy requires referral to specialists within one week of health or developmental problem identified for I/T in foster care				X											X			X					

	NE	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY	NC	ND	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD	TN	TX	VT	VA	WA	WV	WI	WY	ALL
Policy requires health/immunization assessments for all maltreated I/T											X	X	X				X		X		X			12
Policy requires dental health assessments for all maltreated I/T											X	X					X		X		X			10
Policy requires mental/behavioral health assessments for all maltreated I/T											X						X				X			8
Policy requires developmental monitoring/screening for all maltreated I/T									X		X	X					X		X		X	X		14
Policy requires referral to specialists within one week of health or developmental problem identified for I/T in foster care			X						X					X			X			X	X			9

Case reviews, court hearings, and family group decision-making

	AL	AK	AZ	AR	CA	CO	DE	DC	FL	GA	HI	ID	IL	IN	IA	KS	KY	LA	MD	MA	MI	MN	MO	
Policy requires more frequent case reviews for I/T in foster care						X					X					X								
Policy requires more frequent permanency hearings for I/T in foster care			X		X	X									X									
Policy requires more frequent court review hearings for I/T in foster care						X					X					X								
Policy requires more frequent family group decision-making for I/T in foster care																								
Policy requires more frequent case worker visits for I/T in foster care																							X	

	NE	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY	NC	ND	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD	TN	TX	VT	VA	WA	WV	WI	WY	ALL	
Policy requires more frequent case reviews for I/T in foster care													X												4
Policy requires more frequent permanency hearings for I/T in foster care													X					X							6
Policy requires more frequent court review hearings for I/T in foster care																									3
Policy requires more frequent family group decision-making for I/T in foster care					X								X												2
Policy requires more frequent case worker visits for I/T in foster care																									1

Stability, attachment, and permanency for infants and toddlers in foster care

	AL	AK	AZ	AR	CA	CO	DE	DC	FL	GA	HI	ID	IL	IN	IA	KS	KY	LA	MD	MA	MI	MN	MO
Policy specifically promotes keeping I/T in 1st out of home placement			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
States reported concurrent planning begins immediately, as soon as possible, or within 24 hours of removal				X									X	X							X		
Visit coaching or other relationship-supporting approaches routinely provided								X			X	X		X	X	X							X
Mentoring by foster families routinely offered to birth parents						X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Policy prohibits congregate care for children under age 6								X			X					X					X		
Policy dictates visitation with parents for I/T in foster care occurs at least once a week		X		X			X	X			X		X						X		X		X
Training on developmentally appropriate practices for maltreated I/Ts required for all child welfare agency staff		X									X												
Child-parent psychotherapy routinely provided	X					X		X	X					X				X	X				X

Stability, attachment, and permanency for infants and toddlers in foster care (continued)

	NE	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY	NC	ND	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD	TN	TX	VT	VA	WA	WV	WI	WY	ALL	
Policy specifically promotes keeping I/T in 1st out of home placement	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	39	
States reported concurrent planning begins immediately, as soon as possible, or within 24 hours of removal			X	X		X		X						X			X	X				X	X	X	14
Visit coaching or other relationship-supporting approaches routinely provided	X			X			X									X		X				X			13
Mentoring by foster families routinely offered to birth parents				X				X		X				X		X			X				X		21
Policy prohibits congregate care for children under age 6		X																					X		6
Policy dictates visitation with parents for I/T in foster care occurs at least once a week				X							X		X						X			X	X		15
Training on developmentally appropriate practices for maltreated I/Ts required for all child welfare agency staff															X										3
Child-parent psychotherapy routinely provided				X		X							X	X		X						X			14