PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia releases new report on advancing economic security for children and families

Report examines evidence behind ten policy areas: Medicaid, food and nutrition supports, housing supports, early care and education, cash assistance for families, tax credits for families, paid family and medical leave, minimum wage increases, predictive scheduling policies, and diaper assistance.

Philadelphia, PA – February 9, 2026 – PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia today released a new report reviewing scientific evidence that supports the protection, enhancement, and implementation of ten economic security policy areas. Produced in partnership with Maternity Care Coalition (MCC), the report finds that expanding or implementing the policy areas can enhance economic security for children and families at a time when affordability concerns dominate. While primarily aimed at state lawmakers in Pennsylvania, the report includes insights for state officials across the country.

"Research shows that only half of people born in the 1980s, including today's parents of young children, outearn their own parents, raising serious concerns about economic security for children and intergenerational mobility for families," said Dr. Meredith Matone, Director of PolicyLab. "This review of the evidence behind policies and programs such as Medicaid, SNAP and Head Start shows that investing in families from the prenatal period through early childhood can have a significant positive impact on children's long-term health, educational outcomes, and economic stability."

The report is the latest addition to PolicyLab's Evidence to Action series, which translates the findings of rigorous academic and community-partnered health outcomes research into recommendations that policymakers can implement to improve the health and well-being of children and families.

"This report shows the direction that state lawmakers in Pennsylvania and across the country can take to support economic security for families now and into the future," said Rebecka Rosenquist, Deputy Director for Policy and Strategy at PolicyLab. "Our report examines the impact of each policy area on children's long-term health, educational and economic outcomes. We look at what expanding some and implementing others would likely do for families. But none of these policies exists in a vacuum. If implemented together, these policies could help move the needle for kids and families."

The full report is available here.

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About PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia: PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) is dedicated to achieving optimal child health and well-being by informing program and policy changes through interdisciplinary research. Founded in 2008, PolicyLab is a Center of Emphasis within the CHOP Research Institute, one of the largest pediatric research institutes in the country. With more than 35 highly-regarded faculty and 85+ passionate professionals who bring expertise from a myriad of fields covering health, research and health policy, our work focuses on improving public systems, improving health care delivery and improving child health outcomes. For more information, visit http://www.policylab.chop.edu.

About Maternity Care Coalition (MCC) is a community-based nonprofit organization serving Pennsylvania and Delaware with over four decades of commitment to improving maternal and child health and early care and education. MCC's mission is to improve the health and well-being of pregnant women and parenting families and enhance school readiness for children 0-3. We achieve this through direct service, advocacy, and research, in collaboration with individuals, families, providers, and communities. We envision a future where parents impacted by racial and social inequities can birth with dignity, parent with autonomy, and raise babies who are healthy, growing, and thriving.