



CORE MESSAGE

Parents and primary caregivers play the most important role in supporting their children's healthy development. When families have the supports and resources that they need, outcomes for babies improve.

TALKING POINTS

Raising a family is expensive.

- Families with infants and toddlers face high costs associated with their care.
- The boost in income is especially needed as families face rising costs and the impacts of inflation.
- A birth day tax credit helps families offset expenses such as diapers, baby food, transportation, and child care.
- A birth day tax credit helps families offset one-time newborn expenses such as cribs, car seats, and medical costs associated with the birth of their child.

Montanans overwhelmingly support child tax credits.

- In a 2024 Zero to Five Montana poll of registered voters, 75% of respondents said they support Montana state government reducing the cost of child care by providing tax credits to families with children. 71% of respondents agreed tax credits help parents offset the cost of raising a child.

The first three years of life is critical.

- The science is clear. Our brains grow faster between the ages of 0 and 3 than any later point in life, forming more than 1 million new neural connections every second.¹
- Every child deserves a strong start in life. The foundation we provide for them shapes their future and the future of our communities.
- A baby's beginning lays the foundation for all to come.

Tax credits support the well-being of families, communities, and our state economy.

- State tax credits, especially those that provide a refund, can increase family incomes—improving family well-being and self-sufficiency, children's health, and future educational and employment outcomes.²
- Child tax credits result in positive impacts on the health of parents and children, as well as better learning outcomes for children.
- When parents face fewer financial burdens, they are also more likely to stay in a healthy, strong marriages and choose to have children.³
- Tax credits boost the economy by putting money in the pockets of families who are likely to spend it in their local economy.
- 86% of families in Montana have used other tax credits for basic needs like food or rent, as well as education.⁴
- Every dollar invested in children provides \$10 in benefits.⁵
- Economists agree that child tax credit payments are a “proven success at helping families keep up with everyday costs.”⁶
- Child tax credits do not contribute to inflation.⁷

References:

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(3) Hammond, S., Orr, R., & Niskanen Center. (2021). *The conservative case for a child allowance*. <https://www.niskanencenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/The-Conservative-Case-for-a-Child-Allowance.pdf>.
(4) Zippel, C. (2021, October). *9 in 10 Families With Low Incomes Are Using Child Tax Credits to Pay for Necessities*, Education. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/9-in-10-families-with-low-incomes-are-using-child-tax-credits-to-pay-for-necessities-education>.
(5) Joint Economic Committee. (2068). *New data and studies confirm the enormous economic benefits provided by the expanded child tax credit* (pp. 2–3). https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/94aad47c-5fbb-4f52-8c16-99c6477ed988/new-data-and-studies-confirm-the-enormous-economic-benefits-provided-by-the-expanded-child-tax-credit-final.pdf.
(6-7) Economic Security Project. (2022, September 30). *Open letter from 100+ economists: Extend the expanded child tax credit to help families keep up with rising costs - Economic Security Project*. <https://economicsecurityproject.org/resource/open-letter-from-100-economists-extend-the-expanded-child-tax-credit-to-help-families-keep-up-with-rising-costs/>.