

Supporting Families During COVID-19



March of Dimes recognizes families across the nation are under an enormous amount of stress right now; spiking unemployment rates, adjusting to virtual and in-person education, and physical distancing has made it more difficult to rely on social networks for support. Congressional action has been critical in protecting Americans during the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

It is imperative the next COVID-19 response package bolsters support for struggling families by improving emergency paid sick days and paid leave policies created by previous packages, increasing access to nutrition programs, and strengthening home visiting programs.



Improving Emergency Paid Sick Days and Family Leave Policies

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act provided paid sick and family leave for some workers impacted by COVID-19. Unfortunately, the new programs do not address the gaps that put workers at risk. This includes the carve-out for workers at businesses with 500 or more employees, hardship eligibility for businesses with fewer than 50 employees, and the limited reasons to take leave.

To close these gaps and protect the health of families during the pandemic, March of Dimes urges Congress to include *the Providing Americans Insured Days of Leave (PAID Leave) Act* and paid family leave provisions in the HEROES Act, in the next legislative package to address COVID-19.



Addressing Food Security

Prior to the pandemic, 1 in 10 families in the country struggled to have food on the table. Continued economic strain has intensified many families' dire situations, and additional Congressional action could ensure programs and resources for families are available to meet the rising need to decrease food insecurity.

March of Dimes urges Congress to consider building on previous investments for families by increasing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for beneficiaries, boost the maximum benefit by 15% and increase the minimum monthly benefit to \$30 to protect American families and spur economic growth.



Serving Families through Home Visiting

Pregnant women and new moms are facing several unique challenges during the pandemic, and are among the at-risk population. It is imperative that home visiting programs through the nation's network are able to continue.

March of Dimes joins our partners at the Home Visiting Coalition in calling for Congress to make policy changes and targeted investments in the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program to ensure it can continue to serve families during the pandemic and in the difficult months to follow. We urge Congress to provide \$100 million to the program for training to deliver services and ensure programs have resources (technology, formula, diapers) to support the needs of families.