

2017 ADVOCACY SUMMIT

Policy Brief: Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival

Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths Could be a Reality

Since 1990, the world has reduced mortality rates for children under 5 by more than one half. This is one of the greatest success stories in international development.

The U.S. has led an international effort to provide developing countries the tools to care for their children – often with simple, proven and inexpensive interventions that address leading causes of death, such as diarrhea and pneumonia.

Building on those gains, in 2014 the U.S. declared ending preventable child and maternal deaths around the world a national priority.

Contributions to Saving Mothers' and Children's Lives Around the World

Since 2008, the U.S. has saved an estimated 4.6 million children and 200,000 women around the world in USAID's 24 priority countries.

U.S. leadership has encouraged more than 20 countries to develop concrete plans and increase their own resources for health and nutrition programs that reduce child and maternal deaths.

Despite this progress...

16,000 children die each day from preventable and treatable causes such as pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria. A number of these children are excluded – growing up in the hardest to reach areas.

Almost one million newborns die on the day they are born; and close to two million newborns die in their first week after birth.

Malnutrition is an underlying cause for 45% of deaths among children under the age of 5.



Additionally, 800 women die each day due to complications during pregnancy or childbirth.

Action Congress Can Take

We know how to end preventable children and maternal deaths simply by promoting access to proven, cost-effective treatments.

Congress must allocate funding for the International Affairs budget, including **Maternal and Child Health** programs. These programs fund life-saving interventions, such as routine immunizations, teaching mothers how to breastfeed and treatments for life-threatening but treatable childhood illnesses. SCAN recommends \$900 million for USAID's Maternal and Child Health programs in FY 18, which will allow the U.S. to continue making progress in achieving the goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths.

Congress must also enact the **Reach Every Mother and Child Act** – bipartisan legislation that would improve the effectiveness of U.S. maternal and child survival programs. The Reach Act focuses on the hardest to reach, and proposes innovative financing tools, such as public-private partnerships, that could bring new resources to the table, complementing and responsibly leveraging future investments.

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Policy Brief: Expanding Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education in the U.S.

By age 5, a child's brain is nearly completely developed – yet two out of five American children are not enrolled in preschool.

Children from low-income families are often behind their peers socially and academically when they start kindergarten. By the time they are in fourth grade, many are behind grade level in reading and math and are unlikely to ever catch up, even with substantial investments in subsequent years.

Disadvantaged children who don't participate in high-quality early education programs are:

- 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime;
- 60% more likely to never attend college;
- 50% more likely to be placed in special education;
- 40% more likely to become a teen parent; and
- 25% more likely to drop out of school.

The U.S. lags behind other industrialized nations on access to early education, ranking 28 out of 38 developed countries on early education enrollment among 4-year-olds.



Critical Investment for Kids

Investing in early childhood education is one of the most effective ways to break the cycle of poverty.

Research shows that increasing the availability of high quality early childhood education helps prepare children for greater success in school and life through higher levels of educational attainment, career advancement and earnings.

A December 2016 report from Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman shows the rate of return on investments in early childhood development for many children can be 13% per child, per year due to improved outcomes in education, health, sociability, economic productivity and reduced crime.

How Can Congress Help?

Congress must support strong federal investment in the following domestic programs that help low-income families afford high-quality early learning and care. (SCAN recommended FY 18 funding levels in parentheses)

The **Child Care and Development Block Grant** program helps low-income families – families receiving public assistance and those families transitioning from public assistance – pay for child care. (\$3.4 billion)

Head Start and **Early Head Start** are critical to providing comprehensive early care and education to our poorest children. Head Start serves less than half of all eligible preschool-age children, while Early Head Start serves less than 5% of eligible infants and toddlers. (\$10.1 billion)

The **Preschool Development Grant** program has encouraged states to establish, expand or improve the quality of their own prekindergarten programs. (\$250 million)