

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

# The Power of Connection



**ZERO TO THREE**  
Early connections last a lifetime

We put meaningful connections at the center of our work each day.



In 2018, we focused on deepening our connections with the millions of caring adults who touch the lives of infants and toddlers.

Executive Director Matthew Melmed recently sat down with our Board President Paul Spicer and Board Vice President Brenda Jones Harden to discuss the importance of connections, the impact of our work, and their excitement for ZERO TO THREE's future. Here's a quick look at highlights from their inspiring conversation.

**MATTHEW**

"Today, more and more professionals understand that they need to know more about infant and early childhood mental health and early emotional connections. More policymakers are talking about meaningful changes to support parents too, whether it's paid family leave or better child care, particularly for babies and toddlers who face adversity."

"My hope is that we can deepen the impact of our work, so we can build a society with the knowledge and will to ensure that every baby has the strongest start in life. I know that this is possible with the support of our funding partners and donors, our Board Members, our staff, and ZERO TO THREE members. I'm really excited about the future."

**PAUL**

"We confront so many challenges as a society that if we're all stuck in the traumas of our childhoods, we're not going to be able to weather them. Should ZERO TO THREE realize its vision for all babies, the future really would be limitless. In an ideal future, all babies would have what they need: safety, security, and health."

**BRENDA**

"Science tells us that early experiences really do matter, and the connections that we have with the caregivers in our lives make a real difference in how we see and understand the world."

"ZERO TO THREE occupies a unique position in the early childhood landscape. We focus on a relatively small age range, but our reach is broad—from family, to policies, to all the service settings that touch the lives of infants. In terms of giving voice to the needs of babies, we don't leave any stone unturned."

**Matthew Melmed, J.D.**  
Executive Director

**Paul G. Spicer, Ph.D.**  
Board President

**Brenda Jones Harden, Ph.D.**  
Board Vice President

# Multiplying our impact.

■ 2017 ■ 2018

**3,234,646**

Unique Website Visitors

2,558,751

**3,998**

Organization Members

2,379

**273,233**

Downloads of Organization's Materials

210,352

**51**

Strolling Thunder Families and Babies Brought to Washington

**338**

Training Workshops

**2,097**

Media Articles Highlighting Our Work and Perspective

**32,402**

Professionals Attending Training

**68,187**

Policy Network Members

**271,187**

Video Views on YouTube and Vimeo



# Supporting parents building the most important bonds



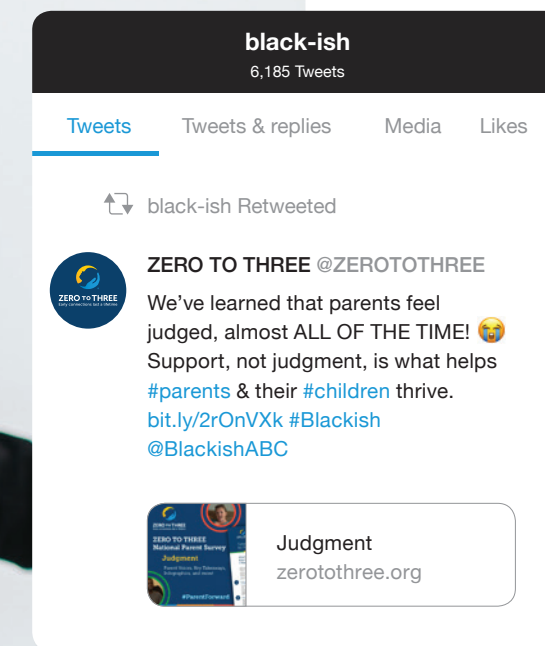
## Parenting

### Strong connections, right from the start

Children learn from birth and rely on parents and the other caregivers in their lives to protect and care for them. The impact of parents may never be greater than during the earliest years of life, when a child's brain is developing most rapidly. One of the many ways we help parents build secure and loving relationships with their children is through our Positive Parenting infographic, which highlights nine primary parental behaviors that support a child's capacity to love, trust, explore, and learn—the foundation of positive life outcomes.



Learn more: [zerotothree.org/positiveparenting](http://zerotothree.org/positiveparenting)



### Expanding our reach with media partners

ZERO TO THREE recognizes the powerful influence of modern media to elevate and amplify positive messages about parenting. We teamed up with the award-winning television show *Black-ish* in its fourth season. With a new baby added to the cast, we helped the writing team bring positive parenting messages into the homes of millions of families and engaged in lively conversation on social media.



Parenting



# Understanding the needs of today's parents

In the spring of 2018, ZERO TO THREE and its partners at the Bezos Family Foundation, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Einhorn Family Charitable Trust, and the Overdeck Family Foundation commissioned a national survey, **Millennial Connections**, to explore how and where parents of young children seek information about parenting, including the topics they search and the sources they trust. Survey results showed that parents most often rely on their own social networks for advice, with 86% of parents turning to immediate family members for information.

See the results: [zerotothree.org/millennialconnections](https://zerotothree.org/millennialconnections)



## Keeping families strong across the miles

To further our mission to support families, we've launched **Babies on the Homefront 2.0**, a free mobile app designed to support the unique needs of military-connected families with young children. Families now have at their fingertips a treasure trove of positive parenting resources, including fun ideas for playtime and tips for supporting their child's development, even during long deployments. The app also provides a secure, convenient place to share and save photos and videos that capture precious moments, and it includes emojis to share feelings with their child.



The free app, sponsored by USAA, is available in both English and Spanish on Apple and Android devices.



## Making screen time learning time for babies and toddlers

Babies today are born into a world full of rich human interaction and engaging screen media experiences. This leaves parents with a lot of questions about the role that screen media should play in their children's lives. To provide clear answers and guidance, we updated Screen Sense—a resource series that summarizes the latest research on screens and children under age 3. Screen Sense provides useful tips for parents who choose to make screen media a part of children's lives, so they can do so in a way that harnesses the potential of technology to enhance learning and development.

Learn more: [zerotothree.org/screensense](https://zerotothree.org/screensense)



## Professionals

# Sharing knowledge and building skills

One professional who has worked in the early childhood field for 25 years shared that a ZERO TO THREE workshop she participated in “stands out as one of the most significant I have ever attended. The curriculum developers and faculty were the most knowledgeable, open, and respectful presenters I have known.”

“I am awed and inspired,” said another learner.

In May 2018, we launched the **ZERO TO THREE Learning Center**—the hub for our data-supported, research-informed, competency-based professional development programs that elevate the knowledge, skills, and abilities of multidisciplinary professionals serving young children and their families. Bolstering ZERO TO THREE’s leadership in supporting the early childhood field, we established our inaugural Trainer Certification program and Faculty Institutes for Higher Education. These new initiatives expand the reach of our three signature professional development programs: Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators™, DC:0-5™, and The Growing Brain. Our team of experts trained 800 participants in person, supported more than 630 professionals engaged in our online courses, facilitated more than 25 webinars, and hosted a series of trainer support events.

Our expert trainers reached within and across early childhood sectors, effectively translating complex research and concepts into usable content and valuable learning moments. Across all our

offerings, our relationship-based approach was repeatedly praised as a key ingredient in helping learners achieve real and meaningful growth.

We also continued to deepen our support of early childhood professionals with the growth of the **ZERO TO THREE Membership program**, which celebrated its second anniversary in 2018. We ended the year with 3,715 members from the United States and 283 international members representing 41 countries. Our online community, Member Connect, marked the anniversary with the launch of an online Summer Book Club series through which members connected with best-selling authors such as Kathy Hirsch-Pasek, PhD, and Alicia Lieberman, PhD.

The **ZERO TO THREE Annual Conference 2017** was held in sunny San Diego and drew nearly 3,500 attendees from around the world, offered more than 100 opportunities for participants to learn and network, and featured 200 speakers. From community-based approaches, to early intervention, to creating a culture of parent engagement, the robust agenda of plenary and breakout sessions addressed the most urgent and critical issues affecting babies and families. Participants returned home ready to shine with new knowledge and a renewed sense of urgency to form life-changing connections with the children and families they serve.



“I am awed and inspired.”

— Learning Center workshop participant

## QUICK FACTS:

### Membership Program

3,715

members from the United States

283

international members

41

countries represented

### 2017 Annual Conference

3,500

attendees

100

opportunities for participants to learn and network

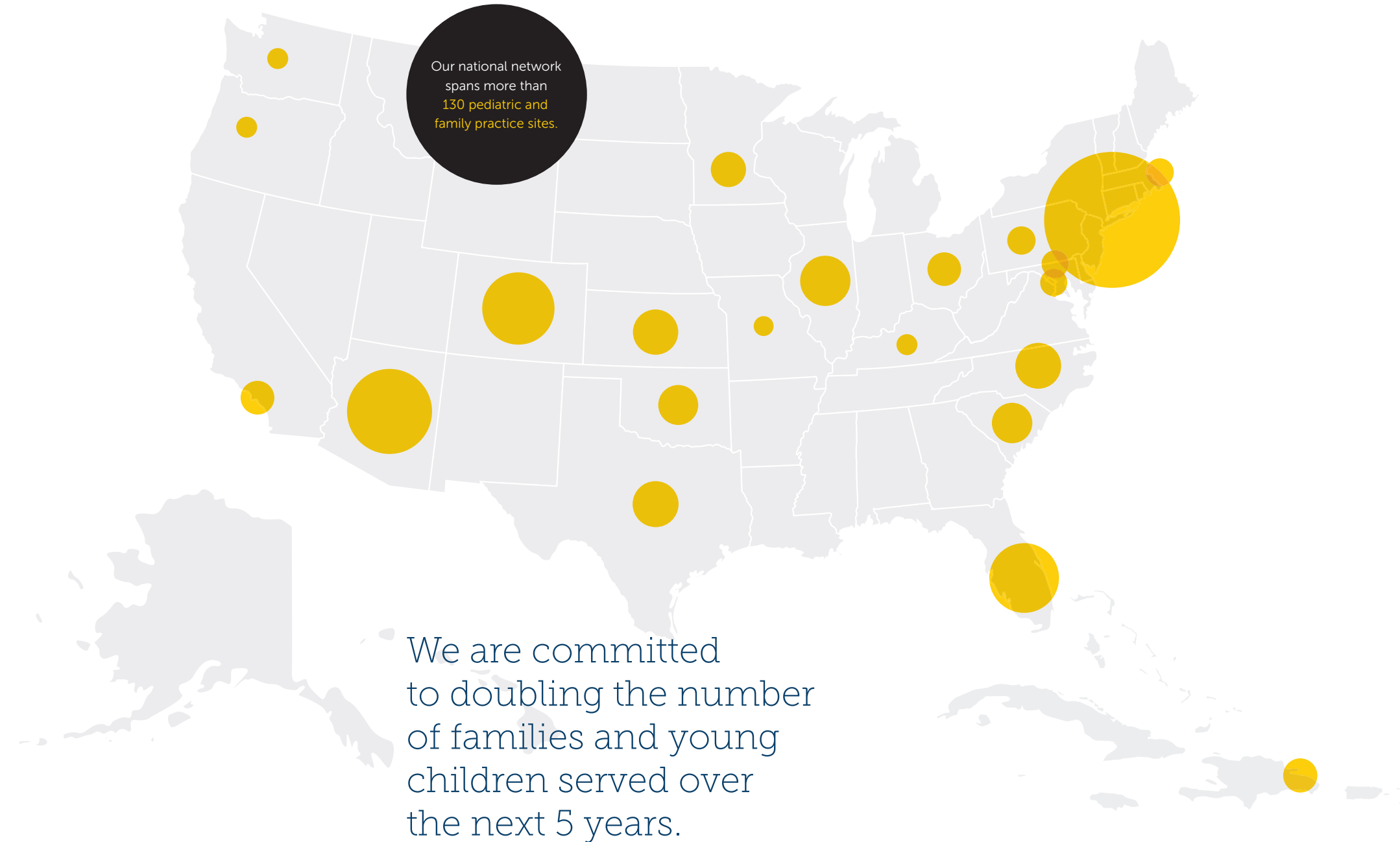
200

speakers



Transforming Healthcare

# Transforming systems to put healthy families first



## The network effect



Learn more: [healthysteps.org](http://healthysteps.org)

Pediatric primary care is the one system in the United States that regularly touches almost all families with young children, making pediatric offices the ideal platform for providing comprehensive services to ensure that babies and toddlers have a healthy start in life. ZERO TO THREE's HealthySteps program is an evidence-based, interdisciplinary pediatric primary care program that promotes positive parenting and healthy development for babies and toddlers, with an emphasis on families living in low-income communities.

HealthySteps continued to expand its reach and impact as we welcomed Rahil Briggs, PsyD, as the program's new national director. A nationally known psychology expert, Dr. Briggs brings to ZERO TO THREE more than a decade of experience launching, scaling, and leading the system-wide HealthySteps program at Montefiore Health System in New York.

Thanks to the program's 2018 expansion into 28 new sites and 5 new states, tens of thousands more children and families are benefiting from HealthySteps. As of the end of 2018, 136,000 children in 20 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico were served by the network's 137 sites. This growth was driven by both the strategic targeting of priority states by ZERO TO THREE and unprecedented community-level interest in the model.

We are grateful for the generous support of Blue Meridian Partners, which has invested in the first phase of HealthySteps' long-term growth plan. Together we are committed to doubling the number of families and young children served over the next 5 years, and to ultimately reaching more than 1 million children annually by 2032, while transforming the promise of pediatric care.

**QUICK FACTS:**

5  
new states

137  
sites

136,000  
children served

## Transforming Child Welfare

# Working together to reunite families

ZERO TO THREE's Safe Babies Court Team™ helps communities address serious issues that result in families losing custody of their young children.

Safe Babies Court Team connects families with the services they need to transform their lives and provide their children with the support that will help them to grow and thrive, while ensuring that the parents are reunited with their babies as swiftly as possible.

The approach is working. After losing custody of her children, Rachel, a mother of six, was given new hope as a parent after a team composed of a judge, a case worker, staff members of a childhood development agency, and others worked with her to address the challenges that were preventing her from being able to fully care for her children. Rachel lost custody of her twin sons because her substance abuse problems prevented her from working steadily and securing reliable housing. Under the traditional foster care/court system, Rachel would have had little chance of being reunited with her children. But ZERO TO THREE's

Safe Babies Court Team helped her create a plan to stay sober, providing her with substance abuse counseling and employment assistance, while allowing her to forge a relationship with the child care facility that her sons attended. The long, hard work paid off. She obtained regular and reliable work, and, for the first time in her life, secured steady housing for herself and her family. Rachel reunited with the twins and has provided a stable, permanent home for them for more than 5 years. "This is the first time anyone listened to me speak in my life," she said of the experience.

Rachel is not alone—across the country, the Safe Babies Court Team is serving as a model of shared responsibility for improving the lives of families. This approach is transforming the child welfare system into one of child well-being.

#### QUICK FACTS:

Children with closed cases supported by Safe Babies Court Team

83.75%

in permanent homes within 12 months (compared to national standard of 40.5%)

0.7%

recurrence of maltreatment (compared to national standard of 9.1%)

"This is the first time anyone listened to me speak in my life."

— Rachel, mother of six



Policy

# We are better together



Learn more: [thinkbabies.org](http://thinkbabies.org)

In a sea of business suits on Capitol Hill, a brigade of baby strollers is an unusual sight. But that was the scene one spring day in Washington, DC, for the **second annual Strolling Thunder™**, the marquee event for **Think Babies™**, ZERO TO THREE's advocacy campaign to make the potential of every baby a national priority. Families visited more than 160 Congressional offices to urge members of Congress to prioritize investments in our nation's youngest children.

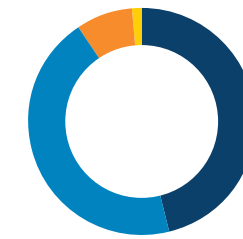
Lauren Rangel of Austin, Texas, participated in the event with her husband and three children. On this trip, her first to the nation's capital, Rangel had the opportunity to share her story and advocate for policies and programs that families like hers need to thrive. The experience ignited a passion for advocacy in Rangel. Now a public policy fellow at Easterseals Central Texas, Lauren mobilizes other parents to share their stories. "[Strolling Thunder] made me realize just how important it was to not tune out, because decisions that impact our lives are being made every day, whether or not we choose to engage."

Decisions that affect babies and families are made at all levels of government, not only on Capitol Hill. For that reason, ZERO TO THREE expanded its Think Babies campaign to six states: Colorado, Georgia, New Jersey, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and Washington. Our state partners have engaged more than 350 stakeholders in infant-toddler coalitions, hosted state Strolling Thunder events, and held numerous parent advocacy trainings and listening tours.

To amplify the Think Babies message, we formed relationships with leading children's policy and advocacy organizations, bringing our roster of national partners to 53 organizations. New national partners added in 2018 include Sesame Workshop, Education Trust, United Parent Leaders Action Network, PolicyLink, and Help Me Grow National Center.

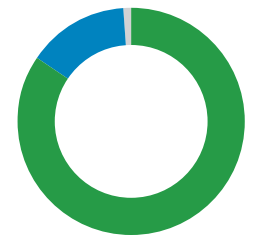


## 2018 Financials



### 2018 Revenue

- 46.2% Federal and State Government Grants and Contracts
- 44.4% Private Grants, Contributions and Contracts
- 8.2% Program Service Revenue
- 1.2% Investment Income



### 2018 Expenses

- 84.7% Program Services
- 14.3% Operations Support
- 1.1% Fundraising and Development

### Assets, Liabilities & Net Assets

	2018	2017
Assets	\$ 63,491,197	\$ 57,181,667
Liabilities	\$ 10,076,936	\$ 9,862,736
Net Assets	\$ 53,414,262	\$ 47,318,931



# Connecting passion with purpose

MIRIAM PHALEN

## The Power of Positivity



You can hear the joy and excitement in Miriam Phalen's voice when she starts to talk about children. "I love babies! They are the biggest joy ever," she says with enthusiasm. "But I also know how overwhelming and exhausting the early years are and also how important they are. The early years lay the foundation for their future, influencing the child's well-being far into adolescence and adulthood."

Phalen, a tireless child advocate for more than 30 years, connected with ZERO TO THREE through the HealthySteps program at Children's Hospital at Montefiore in the Bronx, New York, where she volunteered her time and expertise in marketing and organizing fundraising events.

Phalen's gift to ZERO TO THREE funded the creation and dissemination of the Positive Parenting "Power Pack" which featured a special edition poster of our new Positive Parenting infographic, an invitation to an exclusive webinar for members, a quick guide to our full suite of resources, and a digital advocacy toolkit—#KeysToPositiveParenting—to help our professional network share these resources far and wide.

"We know the negative impact of trauma in the life of a child, and we know the positive impact of a child being raised in a nurturing and loving environment," Phalen says. "That is why my husband, David, and I support ZERO TO THREE. It is their mission to educate and support parents, caregivers, and early childhood professionals."

Phalen, who is also a mother and a grandmother, says she wants to see every child reach his or her potential. She believes that is possible through the work of ZERO TO THREE and others passionate about babies and toddlers and their well-being. She had the opportunity to meet many of these like-minded, mission-driven people when she attended her first ZERO TO THREE conference in 2018.

"A child has to feel safe and secure," Phalen says. "It is our obligation and our responsibility as a society to protect the most vulnerable. If we don't, who will?"



CLINTON BOYD JR.

## A Seat at the Table

As a boy growing up in a poverty-stricken, high-violence, inner-city community, Clinton Boyd Jr. knew that he wanted to be an agent for change. A father at age 16, who didn't quite know how to be a parent and provide for his child, he quickly realized that many of the child- and family-serving systems in place failed to value and support marginalized fathers such as himself.

"I understood early that love-centered policies and well-functioning systems were important for the societal advancement of Black boys and men," says the Chicago native. "The hearts of the people creating these systems and policies have to be empathetic toward the plight of those who are poor and disenfranchised."

With that in mind, Boyd wanted to position himself to be part of the conversation for necessary change. So, in hopes of improving the lives of all children, he pursued an interest and career in sociology, which led him to an 18 month fellowship with ZERO TO THREE in 2016.

"I deeply appreciate the cross-disciplinary and multisector nature of the fellowship," says the doctoral candidate at Georgia State University. "Until the fellowship, I solely looked at social problems through the lens of a sociologist. Broadening the intellectual scope of my work to include the perspectives of a wide range of

seasoned professionals helped me in profound ways. I enjoyed learning how other disciplines and sectors went about addressing the vexing social problems that wreak havoc in the lives of young children."

Boyd says he also appreciated the specialized trainings that the Fellows received, such as how to leverage social media platforms. He plans to use what he learned to realize his vision: to develop a holistic, multifaceted fatherhood empowerment program for Black men.

The fellowship gave Boyd access to a network of early childhood professionals with whom he developed deep and meaningful relationships. "What I enjoyed most about the ZERO TO THREE Fellowship was developing lifelong bonds with my cohort members as well as leveraging their professional expertise. Whenever I encountered a roadblock concerning my vision for change, their wise counsel always helped me to circumvent the obstacle."

He is also grateful for ZERO TO THREE's influence on local, state, and federal policies that affect children. "I find solace in knowing I am not alone in the fight for policy and system-level change," he says. "We all have our unique niche that we bring to the work, but we all have a collective purpose."



We are tremendously grateful for the generosity of our Baby Champions.

Your continued support allows us to extend our work to advance the proven power of nurturing relationships. Now more than ever there is much to be done. Together we can ensure all babies and toddlers have a strong start in life.

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- AT&T Employee Giving
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- United Way of San Diego
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- USAA
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- World Bank Connections Fund

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- Robert Ackley
- Sandra Adams
- Therese Ahlers
- Carol Airone
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