



# Strengthening Conditions for Families to Thrive

## Iowa ACEs Policy Coalition 2024 Priorities

We all want Iowa to be a safe, prosperous place to live. Promoting parent health and well-being is an effective common-sense strategy to build and sustain a thriving Iowa. When parents are healthy and well, children can learn and grow, families can fully contribute, and Iowa's economy and communities can flourish.

Access to health care and paid time off creates opportunities for parents to have the support and skills they need, build financial stability, and focus on nurturing relationships with their kids— all of which help prevent adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and promote children's lifelong healthy development. An investment in Iowa families is an investment in a flourishing Iowa.



### Policies

- Extend Medicaid coverage
- Expand access to paid leave benefits

### Thriving Conditions

- Quality health and mental health care
- Supportive networks
- Equitable and family-friendly workplaces

### Thriving Families

- Nurturing caregiver-child relationships
- Strong mental, physical, and emotional health
- Safety
- Belonging
- Economic stability
- Capacity to learn and contribute

### Thriving Iowa

- A growing population
- Strong economy with expanding businesses
- Vibrant cultural and recreational experiences
- Strong social networks
- Safe, stable, and connected neighborhoods

# Policy Opportunities

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## KEEP NEW MOMS COVERED

When caregivers have their physical and mental health needs met, their health outcomes improve, and they are better able to care for their families.

**Enact Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 12 months postpartum:** Currently in Iowa, Medicaid enrollees who qualify for coverage due to their pregnancy, lose coverage 60 days after giving birth, but many health complications arise at 6-12 months postpartum. Ensuring coverage can increase access to care, improve health outcomes for mom and baby, and reduce costs. It is the simplest and most targeted way to ensure that new mothers can get the care they need, when they need it to help keep them and their baby healthy.

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## PRIORITIZE FAMILY, MAINTAIN STABILITY

When caregivers can take time to attend to family health and safety needs, they can participate in life's most important moments, maintain financial stability, and continue to contribute to a strong Iowa workforce.

**Expand access to paid leave benefits.** Today's workforce encompasses a greater share of caregivers who are raising children and supporting elderly family members, and yet 4 out of 5 Iowans do not have access to paid leave through their jobs. Paid leave is effective in allowing employees to improve their families' health and well-being, while remaining committed to their jobs.

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## Iowa ACEs 360 advocates for policy decisions that foster a society based on these values:

- All people have inherent worth.
- The future can be different.
- Healing and belonging occur through connection and trusting relationships.
- Our identity is shaped by our history, culture, and unique experiences.
- The freedom to create change contributes to individual and collective well-being.

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## For more information on our policy priorities and efforts, contact:

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Iowa ACEs 360 supports communities, organizations, and people in taking informed actions to prevent and mitigate the lifelong effects of childhood adversity. Through advocacy, advancing knowledge, and catalyzing innovative practices, we foster broad changes that lead to healing and well-being for all Iowans. Learn more at [www.iowaaces360.org](http://www.iowaaces360.org).