

# **Policy update**

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# A Manifesto for Babies



First 1001 Days Movement

**The First 1001 Days Movement** is a coalition of over 200 charities and professionals who believe that babies' emotional wellbeing and development matters.





**Recommendation**

**1**

**An ambitious cross-government strategy  
to support babies' healthy development**



**Recommendation**

**2**

**Invest more in prevention**



Recommendation

**Tackle health inequalities so that all babies  
have a good start to life**



**Recommendation**

**4**

**Develop a workforce plan for children's social care and the early years**



Recommendation

**A rapid review of the tax and benefits system for parents and carers of under-2s**



# Media coverage

## Charities evoke spirit of Sure Start in call for bold Labour early-years policies

**First 1001 Days Movement says five-year decline in toddler development is a 'ticking time bomb' for the UK**



Recent research found that one in five two-year-olds in the UK are already below expected levels of development. Photograph: Jordan Rowland/Unsplash

An incoming **Labour** government must revive the 1997 spirit of Sure Start and put babies at the heart of policies if it is to achieve its goals, a coalition of charities has said.

The **First 1001 Days Movement**, a coalition of more than 200 charities and professionals, said a five-year decline in toddler development was a “a ticking timebomb” for the UK, and called for vulnerable babies and their families to be seen as “mission critical”.

## Covid generation facing developmental time bomb

Charities say urgent action is needed to help children who missed early health checks



By two years of age one in five toddlers is behind in their expected milestones, say experts

Share    

Save 

A coalition of more than 200 charities and health professionals have said that the decline in development among children born during the pandemic is a “ticking time bomb” as they called for urgent action to help those affected by the disruption.

# Parliamentary launch





## If they could tell you campaign



Better Health Start for Life NHS

# LET'S GET CUDDLY!

If they could tell you, they'd say doing things together builds connections in their brain.

Search Start for Life for tips and advice, and information on your local Family Hub.



Better Health Start for Life NHS

# SOMETIMES I JUST NEED A HUG

Feeling comforted and safe builds connections in their brain.

## What's next?

Despite the positive 'noises', neither party has committed funding to Start for Life beyond 1 April 2025

Although we have seen the number of Teams growing, we estimate 400 Teams are needed in England alone, to deliver the government's vision

Although we wrote to the Chancellor calling for £67.3 million of additional funding from 2025/26-2027/28 to allow every local authority area to develop at least one parent-infant team, we've not had a reply



## Next steps

- We need politicians to understand what's at stake
- At least 1 in 10 babies in the UK experiences fear and distress because of disturbed or unpredictable care.
- There is no national target yet for supporting them



## IMHAW 2024 theme is

- The IMHAW toolkit will support you to contact your local MP/candidates
- Together we will ask them to pledge to 'speak up for babies' (which does not imply new spending or policy commitments)
- Wherever possible we will encourage them to visit a local team or service

**Speak up  
for babies**  
#IMHAW2024



# How to engage politicians

- This is Gill Furniss MP visiting Sheffield PAIRS in March
- Politicians are not won over by the academic or the theoretical arguments. If they don't have personal experience, then they need to meet professionals and families to understand just how critical it is that they speak up for babies!

