

Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP
1 Horse Guards Road
London, SW1A 2HQ

5 June 2025

Dear Chancellor,

We write to you as parliamentarians and organisations campaigning for, and supporting, babies, children and families in the UK. We ask that you put babies, children and families at the heart and forefront of this month's comprehensive spending review.

As you've recognised, the cost of living is weighing down on working people.^[1] The wealthiest households now are headed by people aged over 54^[2] while parents with babies and children to support are struggling every day. We urge you to prioritise them in your spending review.

We know that investing in this early period makes good economic sense, with the Institute of Fiscal Studies finding that Sure Start generated £2 in benefits for every £1 invested^[3]. We hope this government will be a brave government, willing to make long-term investments for the wellbeing of our babies, children and families, and for the future wellbeing of our whole society.

The Government's Plan for Change promises to "strengthen and join up family services to improve support through pregnancy and early childhood," but these vital services require proper funding. Untreated perinatal depression, anxiety and psychosis alone costs society £8.1 billion for each one-year cohort of births in the UK.^[4]

While we don't seek to be prescriptive in this letter, we know that evidence currently converges on investment in the following areas having the greatest impact on babies, children and families:

- Investing properly in childcare that is sustainable for both providers and families
- Alleviating child poverty through multiple mechanisms
- Investing in support for new parents and babies
- Supporting vulnerable babies and children on the edge of care
- Improving paternity and maternity offers and protections
- Job security and wider societal improvements to support squeezed families

We want the government's 'opportunity mission' to be a success, and we know there are tough choices to be made. But babies, children and families are the foundation and the future of our country.

It is striking that data from the Royal Foundation's Centre for Early Childhood found that most parents of young children feel it's a shared societal responsibility to help children thrive, but most non-parents believe that responsibility should be left to parents and carers alone^[5]. This government must set the tone and expectation that we should all play our part in ensuring the future of our country are raised to thrive.

If this government is serious about growing our own talent, then this has to start from birth, and even before. We know now that the most significant impact on a child's development happens before the age of five. Supporting parent-infant relationships could save the UK £900 million annually, so this makes economic sense too.^[6]

This government has the chance to ensure real long-term growth is what it is remembered for. This starts with investing in our babies, children and families - ensuring hope and opportunity for all, a thriving society and a prosperous economy.

Yours sincerely,

Maya Ellis MP, Chair, APPG on Babies (Pregnancy to Age Two)
Munira Wilson MP, Co-Chair, APPG for Children
Jess Asato MP, Co-Chair, APPG for Children
Freddie van Mierlo MP, Chair, APPG for Fatherhood
Connor Rand MP, Chair, APPG on Parents
Jess Brown-Fuller MP, Chair, APPG on Infant Feeding
Sarah Russell MP, Co-Chair, APPG for Flexible and Family Friendly Working

Elsie Blundell MP, Heywood and Middleton

North

Beccy Cooper MP, Worthing West

Liz Jarvis MP, Eastleigh

Dr Kieran Mullan MP, Bexhill and Battle

Gill Furniss MP, Sheffield Brightside and

Hillsborough

Dr Allison Gardner MP, Stoke-on-Trent

South

Peter Lamb MP, Crawley

Rachael Maskell MP, York Central

Andy MacNae, MP, Rossendale and Darwen

Neil Duncan-Jordan MP, Poole

Jo White MP, Bassetlaw

David Williams MP, Stoke-on-Trent North

Baroness Lister

Baroness Goudie

Lord Russell of Liverpool

Baroness Tyler of Enfield

Baroness Hollins

Keith Reed, CEO, Parent-Infant Foundation

Anna Feuchtwang, CEO National Children's
Bureau

^[1] [Rachel Reeves on X: "I know the cost of living is still weighing down on working people..."](#)

^[2] [Household total wealth in Great Britain - Office for National Statistics](#)

^[3] [The short- and medium-term effects of Sure Start on children's outcomes | Institute for Fiscal Studies](#)

^[4] [Costs of perinatal mental health problems - Centre for Mental Health](#)

^[5] [Understanding public attitudes towards early childhood](#)

^[6] ['Maternal Attachment and Child Outcomes', McKay, May 2025](#)