



## Our Advocacy Agenda: 1,000 Days, an Initiative of FHI Solutions

### Our Mission

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1,000 Days leads the fight to build a strong foundation for mothers, children, and families to thrive. The first 1,000 days from pregnancy to age 2 offer a window of opportunity to create a healthier and more equitable future for all pregnant, birthing, postpartum, and parenting people and their children. Our mission is to make health and well-being during the first 1,000 days a policy and funding priority, both in the U.S. and around the world. Our work is inspired and informed by families who strive every day to give their children a strong start to life.

***Our priority advocacy agenda for 2021-2024 is centered on ensuring parents and children have access to the nutrition, supports, and care they need to thrive.***

### Advocacy Priority #1: Nutrition

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The nutrition that mothers, pregnant people, and children receive in the 1,000-day window has a profound impact on a child's ability to grow, learn, and thrive. Ensuring mothers and children have a healthy first 1,000 days also benefits societies. Leading economists agree that investing in a child's earliest years is one of the smartest things a country can do to combat poverty and create the human capital needed for economies to diversify and grow. Research shows it can lead to healthier societies, a more globally competitive workforce, lower healthcare costs, stronger economic growth and greater equality of opportunity.

- **In the United States, we are committed to ensuring parents and caregivers have the resources and knowledge they need to access good nutrition.** This includes advocacy for federal nutrition programs -- especially the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) -- to be fully funded and designed to best meet the needs of today's families. We also advocate for clear, science-based dietary guidance for families, which we translate into accessible resources for parents and caretakers.
- **Our global advocacy calls for ending malnutrition in all its forms by 2030 through scaling-up evidence-based interventions and robust funding for nutrition.** In coalition with civil society and other key partners such as the International Coalition for Advocacy on Nutrition (ICAN) and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, we lead a worldwide movement to keep nutrition priorities at the top of global, regional, and national health agendas and budgets. We educate leaders on why nutrition is a smart investment toward the economic success and sustainable development of nations. We hold donors and other stakeholders to account to deliver on their commitments to nutrition to drive progress against the World Health Assembly global nutrition targets and the Sustainable Development Goals

- **We also work to make good nutrition accessible for families and caregivers**, which includes behavior change campaigns to increase healthy diets and improve feeding practices. In the United States, that includes parent education materials and direct engagement via social media. Globally, we spotlight harmful marketing practices, such as violators of the Breast Milk Substitute (BMS) code, and we advocate on behalf of families for increased national regulation to stop predatory marketing practices harmful to the health and well-being of children and families.

### **Advocacy Priority #2: Community & Workplace Supports**

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Parents and caregivers need support from their communities and workplaces to give their children the strongest start to life. We work to ensure they have the support they need to reach their breastfeeding goals and are given the time and resources they need to care for themselves and their babies before and after giving birth.

- **One of the biggest barriers to a healthy first 1,000 days in the United States is the lack of a national paid family and medical leave program.** We are building [the case for paid leave](#) as a public health imperative. We also advocate for family-friendly policies and programs in workplaces and communities to ensure equitable access to the lactation services and support women need to meet their breastfeeding goals. These policies help make the workplace a safe and enabling environment, and advance maternal health and well-being, infant health and development, and gender equity in the workplace.
- **Community supports include the systems where nutrition and health services are delivered.** We work with fellow advocates and policymakers to increase investments in the proven, scalable interventions deployed through traditional health centers and at community level to reach the most vulnerable communities.

### **Advocacy Priority #3: Health Care**

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During the 1,000-day window families must have access to quality, affordable health care to protect their physical and mental health. We know that healthy babies start with healthy parents. The health care a person receives during the first 1,000 days can shape their lifelong health and well-being.

- **In the United States, we advocate to expand and extend Medicaid/CHIP coverage and protect and strengthen the Affordable Care Act so all women and children can access comprehensive, quality health care.** Recognizing our nation's current crises in both maternal mortality and postpartum mental health, we also work to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities and ensure mothers and people who give birth receive equitable and culturally-competent care before, during, and after childbirth.
- **Our global advocacy calls for increased investments in the food and health systems families need to be healthy.** 1,000 Days plays a unique role as the secretariat for ICAN, a global network of 3+ organizations, including advocates, implementers, campaigners, and foundations, united under the goal to save and improve lives through better nutrition. With a special near-term focus on 2021 as

the Nutrition Year of Action, our advocacy will include mobilizing more and better resources and policies for three priority health areas, which include making nutrition integral to Universal Health Coverage, building food systems that promote healthy diets, and addressing malnutrition effectively in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

To learn more, please contact Initiative Director Blythe Thomas at [bthomas@fhisolutions.org](mailto:bthomas@fhisolutions.org)

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