

# THE BASICS STRATEGY IN ACTION

The Basics Strategy is built on evidence that information, social supports, and reminders delivered via multiple channels, especially by trusted messengers, can help people change their behaviors.

The Basics Strategy is a population-level initiative to enhance the development of children ages birth to three by providing information, social supports, and regular reminders to parents and caregivers to apply The Basics Principles and related practices for early childhood caregiving. People live in social ecologies, surrounded by others with whom they interact in formal and informal relationships and upon whom they depend for material, social, and emotional support. These relationships provide enablers and rewards for enacting the caregiving behaviors that The Basics Strategy promotes.

Our approach engages organizations in multiple local sectors with ideas and encouragement for including The Basics-related messages in routine interactions with clients, employees, and members. Frontline service providers rely on the Basics Community Toolkit for materials they can combine in ways tailored for use in their organizations. Regular Basics Insights text messages provide reminders to parents to use The Principles and provide a convenient focus for conversations between parents and others who support them.

Ideally, parents are exposed to The Basics Principles during prenatal care, then again when the child is born, in well-baby visits with health professionals, and in multiple ways across the community as the child grows. Think of it in medical terms: Families get their first “inoculation” before their child is born, then again at birth in the nursery.

Once their child comes home, The Basics are continually reinforced with “booster shots” each time they take the child to a medical facility or pediatrician for a sick- or well-child visit, go to a religious service, visit the barbershop or hair salon, or go to a playgroup at the library.

