



Press Release

Assessing the Benefits of Paid Family Leave for Children

ANDREW EVANS | JUNE 9, 2020

In the ongoing debate over a federal paid family leave program, much of the discussion has focused on either the costs of such a program or the benefits to the parents. In new research, AAF's Director of Human Welfare Policy Tara O'Neill Hayes and Margaret Barnhorst examine the broader benefits of such a policy, particularly for children. The evidence makes clear that paid family leave could have substantial benefits for children, they find.

Their central points:

- Besides the economic benefits for parents, there are myriad health benefits for children whose parents receive paid family leave, primarily stemming from the increased regularity of well-baby check-ups, greater rates of immunization, increased likelihood and duration of breastfeeding, and increased parental care and engagement;
- The effects of early childcare and parental interaction can last long into adulthood and into many aspects of adult well-being and social and economic productivity; and
- As Congress works to develop a federal paid family leave program, it is important to ensure the benefits will outweigh the costs, and the benefits to children—not just to parents—should be included in that analysis.

[Read the Research](#)