

COUNTIES FOR KIDS CHAMPIONS: LETTER TO THE EDITOR TEMPLATE

County leaders have made significant investments in services and supports for children prenatal to age three (PN-3) and their families. We have made meaningful strides even in light of the global pandemic and tough economic times. Counties have shown dedication and commitment by approving local budgets, advancing county-based systems and leading ballot initiatives to expand services for young children PN-3.

The National Association of Counties Research Foundation (NACoRF) urges all county leaders to build on this momentum by sharing your PN-3 story and any efforts that you have championed to move the needle for young children in your county. Now, more than ever, we need county champions like you to help lift up these stories. NACoRF has created this **NEW** resource to help you elevate your county's PN-3 efforts and share why it is important for counties to invest in young children. We encourage you to use this Letter to the Editor template to promote NACoRF's Counties for Kids initiative and help grow the network of county leaders committing to PN-3!

To download the template as a Word document, visit www.countiesforkids.org/lte-template.

HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL STRATEGIES FOR USING THE LETTER TO THE EDITOR TEMPLATE:

- Identify local newspapers that accept letters to the editor.
- Review submission requirements, such as word count. Generally, LTEs should be between 200-250 words. Note: If your draft is too long for a letter to the editor, consider writing an op-ed!
- Get creative! **Use the template below as a guide but edit as needed to reflect your voice and share your unique story.**
- Share who you are and why this issue matters to you.
- Submit the letter to the editor as directed by the newspaper.
- Once your letter is published, share it with NACoRF by emailing info@countiesforkids.org. We will share it!
- Share a link to your letter on social media and use the hashtag #CountiesForKids. Please tag @NACoTweets on Twitter.



Feel free to use the **Prenatal-to-Three County Leader Toolkit** and other **resources** from the National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers for promoting your local PN-3 efforts. For more information, please email info@countiesforkids.org.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR TEMPLATE

Dear Editor:

During the coronavirus pandemic, our youngest children and their families are facing unprecedented challenges and managing household stress. Amidst COVID-19, more than **40 percent** of households with young children are worried about paying for basic needs like food or rent, according to the University of Oregon. Additionally, nearly two-thirds of caregivers feel they have lost emotional support since the start of the pandemic. *[Provide some statements about what young children and families are facing in your county here.]*

Research also tells us that the most rapid period of brain development occurs within the first three years of life, laying the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health. Now is the time to support young children and ensure they have access to high-quality services during these critical years. By investing in young children early and focusing on the prenatal to three years, counties can see higher returns and reduce the need for more expensive supports later in life.

[We encourage you to share your story here. How is your county prioritizing and supporting children prenatal to three? Why do these efforts matter for young children in your county?]

This is why [County Name] is joining **Counties for Kids**, a public awareness campaign for county leaders who are committed to making investments in young children. We encourage all counties to join [County Name] and the National Association of Counties Research Foundation in growing the network of champions advancing prenatal to three policies, programs and systems. *[We encourage you to end with a sentence on why this issue matters to you and your community.]*

[Name]

[Title]

To learn more, visit www.countiesforkids.org.



© NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INC.

About the National Association of Counties Research Foundation:

The National Association of Counties Research Foundation (NACoRF) is a non-profit organization recognized by the U.S. Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service as a 501c3 public charity providing education, technical assistance and research to counties. NACoRF's mission is to ascertain, develop and distribute knowledge about county governments and training of public officials, prospective public officials, and other interested parties.

660 North Capitol St, NW Suite 400 | Washington, DC 20001