the mom score

What is the MOM Score?

The MOM Score is a tool created by Voices for the Voiceless to shift states towards supporting motherhood and to empower parents and policy makers to be active voices in creating a better world for parents and their children.

Why the MOM Score?

OUR WORLD IS BETTER WHEN MOTHERS (AND FATHERS) ARE SUPPORTED IN RAISING CHILDREN.

Many moms and dads are struggling day-to-day, not just because parenting is hard, but because the institutions are structured in ways that make it harder. State policies regularly place barriers in the way of motherhood or, at best, fail to prioritize support. It's understandable why many Americans are afraid to become parents at all.

The MOM Score exists to shape state policies in a direction that supports moms and the unique challenges we face. It also reflects a human commitment to the value of children and a recognition of the profound work of motherhood and fatherhood.

What are the Five Conditions?

The MOM Score measures states on five conditions for motherhood.

> EARLY CHILDHOOD & K-12 EDUCATION
> Quality and affordable childcare and K-12 education options
>
> INSTITUTIONAL & CULTURAL SUPPORTS
> A religious, social, and community fabric that supports family formation
>
> ECONOMICS
> The means to care for the physical needs of your family without significant strain or deprivation
>
> HEALTH & SAFETY
> Access to mental and physical health care
>
> FAMILY LEAVE POLICY
> The ability to maintain employment while having the flexibility to attend to the needs of your family, from pregnancy through childhood

What About Dads?

We acknowledge the critical role of moms and dads culturally and in the life and well-being of children. In fact, we see moms and dads as inter-related in this mission. When dads are supported, they can better support moms. The changes we're fighting for will ultimately benefit both moms and dads in their parenthood journeys.

How We Score

The MOM Score uses a Point-Weighted Method that calculates state scores using a 500-point framework organized across the five conditions as follows: 1) Early Childhood & K-12 Education: 150 points, 2) Institutional & Cultural Supports: 125 points, 3) Economics: 100 points, 4) Health & Safety: 75 points, and 5) Family Leave Policy: 50 points.

How the States Rank

Motherhood should be made easier – not harder – by state policies. But that's just not the reality – even in states that performed "best" in removing barriers to parenthood.

Top 5 States

Colorado **302.1/500** | Utah **299.5/500** | Maine **293.0/500**

Nebraska **282.3/500** | Minnesota **281.2/500**

Top Takeaways

Support for motherhood sits outside of partisan lines. The MOM Score's top 10 ranking states are a mix of red and blue, and cover the geographical gamut.

We celebrate the top performing states for doing more than their counterparts to support parenthood. But, no state currently sets a gold-standard.

Utah has the highest birth rate in the country. Vermont has the lowest.

Vermont has the lowest rate of obesity controlled maternal mortality in the (0.89 deaths per 100,000 live births). Washington D.C. has the highest at 8.48 deaths per 100,000 live births.

Hawaii has the lowest rate of women uninsured during pregnancy (0.41%), while Georgia has the highest at 9.68%.

Minnesota screens almost 96% of postpartum women for postpartum depression, the highest screening rate in the country. Louisiana screens at the lowest rate (75.6%).

Utah had the lowest childcare costs relative to income, while the District of Columbia had the highest.

Only 20 states (and the District of Columbia) mandate sick-leave.

Only 18 States (and the District of Columbia) provide all-day Kindergarten.

12 states earned high scores for their Paid Family Leave Programs.

12 states have no state pregnancy accommodation requirements for employers.

The Ideal

The MOM Score is built as a tool to drive us towards a more ideal world for the well-being of moms (dads) and children.

A place where men and women have the confidence to get married and have children. After they have children, at least one parent should be able to spend time at home with their children – especially in the early years. But both parents should have flexibility in their employment so they can be present for their children's most critical moments, and have sufficient resources to sustain the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of the whole family. These conditions will lead to stronger family units that raise healthy children who graduate into adulthood secure and successful.

States & Policy Makers

Policy solutions that work – and can be achieved politically – will vary by state. But we challenge policy makers in every state to find solutions to these most acute pain points, balancing state-specific realities and fiscal responsibility with prioritizing families.

1. The lack of employment accommodations for pregnant mothers and families.
2. The cost and availability of quality childcare.
3. Poor maternal physical and mental health outcomes.
4. Prohibitive prenatal and birth costs.
5. The financial strain of raising a family.

Parents

Moms and dads will be the center of the coalition and keep the most pressing barriers to parenthood and the priority solutions front and center for lawmakers. Here's how you can be educated and engaged.

1. Know how your state ranks.
2. Identify your state representatives.
3. Find the right representative to engage with.
4. Send a message to your chosen representative.
5. Start a MOM Score group — in person or online — in your area.

Our world is better when mothers (and fathers) are supported in raising children.

TO READ THE FULL ANALYSIS OF THE MOM SCORE, GO TO: