When families welcome a new child home, whether by birth or adoption, parents should not have to choose between caring for their loved one and risking their financial stability. Paid family leave allows families to be there for the important first moments in the lives of their children knowing their employment is secure.

The vast majority of working people do not have paid family leave through their jobs. Even unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act is only accessible for 56% of working people.

**Paid family leave has proven short- and long-term health and well-being benefits for families:**
- Contributes to fewer low birthweight babies, fewer incidents of pediatric abusive head trauma, fewer infant deaths, and higher rates of breastfeeding
- Promotes parent-child bonding and accessing prenatal care
- Allows mothers time to fully heal from childbirth and reduces likelihood of severe depression in new mothers
- Linked to children having better developmental outcomes, including fewer behavioral problems
- Generates greater income stability for families

**It also has proven returns on investment for employers:**
- Boosts employee morale and reduces turnover
- Creates an incentive for potential employees
- Lever for increased labor force participation

**Advancing Equity in Kentucky**
Improving access to this benefit would boost family and economic stability for all eligible families. Nationally, 25% of Latino and 43% of Black workers report having access to any paid or partially paid parental leave, compared to 50% of White workers.

Paid Family Leave means workers – especially women – are no longer faced with the decision to leave the labor force to care for their families, reducing turnover for employers of all sizes and boosting the economy. It can reduce health and economic disparities as families can maintain an income and have access to health care as they care for their new child. As a first step measure, Kentucky can conduct a cost analysis to study the economic impact of implementing a statewide Paid Family Leave policy.

**Blueprint for Kentucky’s Children Policy Solution:**
Conduct a study focused on developing a statewide Paid Family Leave infrastructure that is best suited from the Commonwealth