



**5.48K**

families supported



**\$4.0M**

grants



**\$3.4M**

co-investments



**\$51.8M**

additional funding attracted for programs since 2017



**\$4-9**

Return on Investment for every \$1 spent on early childhood programs

THE **BURKE**  
FOUNDATION

# 2023 Impact Report

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# Letter from Burke Foundation President and Executive Director



**James Burke**  
PRESIDENT



**Atiya Weiss**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At the Burke Foundation, our mission is to identify, rigorously evaluate, and scale policies and programs that **foster the healthy development of children and families during the earliest years** – the most crucial time for building a foundation for lifelong health and well-being.

New Jersey, where the Burke Foundation was founded and does most of its work, routinely shows up as one of the top three states in median household income, masking the struggles many families face.

The state's wealth is paradoxical: New Jersey also has profound racial, geographic, and economic disparities. That inequity plays out in many ways, especially in the health and well-being of mothers, young children, and their families. In New Jersey, alarmingly, Black women are **seven times more likely** than white women to die from pregnancy-related complications. Cumberland and Salem, rural counties in southern New Jersey, have the least healthy population in the state and have limited access to prenatal care. For many families, child care is unaffordable, costing as much as **19% of their income**.



With the aim of **making our state a healthier, more equitable place to live**, in 2018 the Burke Foundation embarked on a journey to tap the knowledge and expertise of partners in New Jersey and across the country to see how we could make a difference.



It became clear that **investing in families early** is essential.

Scientific research shows that the first 1,000 days – from pregnancy through a child's second birthday – are the most determinative time for physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional development.

**This is a critical window with huge implications for lifetime health and well-being. And we were encouraged to take a multi-generational view of our work – investing in parents and young children alike.**

By focusing on families and communities to improve health and well-being in the first 1,000 days, we have a multiplier effect. Healthier babies grow to be healthier adults, improving their life chances and lowering the cost of care over a lifetime.

## This approach is paying off.

Burke awarded **\$4 million** in grants in 2023 and drew **\$3.4 million** in co-investment from government, corporations, and other nonprofits. Because of the impact of our investment, Burke's pilot programs and initiatives have attracted more than **\$51.8 million** in additional public and private funding to scale statewide over the last five years.



And importantly, we saw several key initiatives hit their stride, improving maternal and infant health and the healthy development of children and families. These include such standout programs as:



### Family Connects launch

Launching Family Connects, which will ultimately make a **nurse available to visit every newborn's home** in the state, potentially serving 100,000 families a year.

[LEARN MORE →](#)



### HealthySteps expansion

Expanding HealthySteps so **7,600 families will have a child development expert** help them better understand and nurture their children's social and emotional development during pediatric visits.

[LEARN MORE →](#)



### AMAR Doula program growth

Growing the Burke-supported AMAR Community Doula program in Trenton so more **mothers can benefit from the culturally congruent care** these birthing partners provide before, during, and after delivery.

[LEARN MORE →](#)

These programs have seen participants **benefit measurably**, including:



Fewer preterm births



Increase in exclusive breastfeeding



Lower rate of low-risk C-sections



Connecting families to community resources



Higher well-child visit attendance



Reduced healthcare costs

## All of these successes involved partnerships.

### We work side-by-side with dedicated people and organizations that make change happen for families.

We applaud New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy's commitment to make the state the safest and most equitable place in the nation to deliver and raise a baby through her ambitious Nurture NJ strategy. More than **60 pieces of legislation** to support families have been passed, including funding nurse home visits for newborns, extending Medicaid coverage to 365 days following a birth, increasing maternity care provider reimbursement, allowing doulas to practice in hospitals, and creating the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority – all of which will have monumental impact for years to come.



But too many in New Jersey still lack the opportunity to reach their full potential – to raise their families in good health and to be part of a thriving community. **These disparities echo across the U.S.**

The Burke Foundation is committed to strengthening, through our grantmaking and partnerships, systems of care that support New Jersey families.

That's why we're launching the **First 1,000 Days Policy Coalition**, a cross-sector effort to meet a serious challenge. The Coalition will complement our current maternal and child health work and advance two-generation, family-centered policies in support of thriving young children and families in New Jersey. We'll approach maternal and child health through a focus on creating the conditions needed for success: affordable child care; better, more inclusive family leave policies; increased tax credits for working families; and reduced administrative barriers for existing safety-net programs.



We are convinced that through collaboration, attention to measurable outcomes, and the practice of true community engagement, New Jersey's nonprofit sector can collectively create **a brighter future for the youngest members of our society and those who care for them.**

We encourage you to browse our **first annual Impact Report** for a deeper look at the Burke Foundation's programs, priorities, and results.

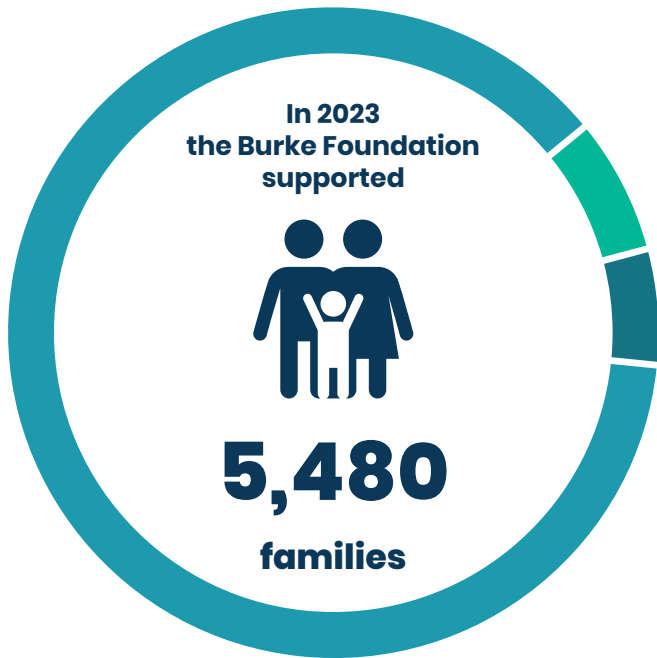
Best Regards,

**James Burke**  
PRESIDENT

**Atiya Weiss**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# Our Impact

## By the Numbers



with

**\$4 million**  
in grants

attracting

**\$3.4 million**  
in co-investment

and

**\$51.8 million**  
in additional public and private funding  
attracted for Burke programs since 2017



We measure our success in a variety of ways, but here are just a few **concrete examples** of the impact our grantees had in 2023:

**\$44 million**

Amount New Jersey allocated in 2023 for expansion of Family Connects.

**97.9%**

Percentage of participating mothers who were screened for postpartum depression and intimate partner violence through Family Connects.

**71.3%**

AMAR participants experienced 71.3% fewer preterm births and 52.4% fewer low-risk C-sections compared to all Medicaid births in Trenton.

**43.2%**

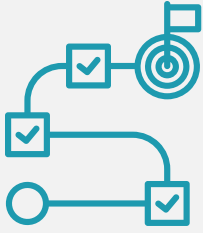
Increase in HealthySteps children participating in 6 or more well-child visits by age 15 months vs. nonparticipants.

**458**

Families served in 2023 by CenteringPregnancy or CenteringParenting

**100%**

100% of all nine pediatric residency programs in New Jersey implemented “Keystones of Development,” an early childhood curriculum for pediatric and family medicine residents.



# Milestones

Through a focus on the earliest years, our investments and partnerships in 2023 sparked new investments and initiatives that are a **win for families**:

## Family Connects

**A nurse in every New Jersey newborn's home**

The Family Connects NJ universal newborn home visiting program offers 1-3 home visits from a registered nurse to parents and caregivers of newborn babies and stillbirths, free of charge, starting during the all-important first few weeks following birth.

During Family Connects visits, nurses provide timely education, check-ups, and referrals to community services. The visits enable nurses to check on the health and well-being of mothers and babies at a high-risk time for physical and mental health complications.

### MILESTONE

**\$44M**

Building on Burke's Family Connects pilot in Mercer County, with the state Department of Children and Families, New Jersey allocated **\$44 million for expansion in five counties beginning in January 2024.**

**97.9%**

**97.9%** of participating mothers were **screened for postpartum depression and intimate partner violence** through Family Connects.



***“Whether it’s your first child or your third child, whether you have Medicaid or private insurance, all moms need help during the postpartum period.”***

**Grysmeldy Gonzalez, RN, BSN**  
Family Connects Nurse Manager  
IN NJ SPOTLIGHT NEWS

# AMAR Community Doulas

## Building community doula care



*“My experience having a community doula from AMAR was extraordinary, and I wouldn’t have enough words to thank her for being with me on such a vulnerable yet special day. I don’t have relatives in this country, and having her by my side helped me understand my rights, my options, and make the best decisions for myself and my baby.”*

**Susan Castro**  
Participant

Working closely with the Children’s Home Society of New Jersey’s AMAR team, Burke supported a pilot program to provide community doula care to Spanish-speaking pregnant people in Trenton and later all of Mercer County.

Community doulas are trusted, nonclinical birth workers – typically living in the area they serve – trained to provide tailored emotional, physical, social, and educational support during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum. Community doulas provide culturally congruent, community-based care, bridging language and cultural differences and serving as a liaison between clients and healthcare providers. They help women experience individualized, safe, and equitable maternity care.

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### MILESTONE

## **\$631.5K congressional earmark & \$1.25M, 5-year grant**

With support from U.S. Rep. Bonnie Watson-Coleman, the Children’s Home Society of New Jersey received **\$631,500 in a congressional earmark** to train and hire more community doulas and offer doula training and services to Black, Muslim/Arabic-speaking, and Eastern European-speaking women – reflecting New Jersey’s rich diversity. The program also received a **\$1.25 million, five-year grant** from the federal Office of Minority Health to serve even more families.

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## **71.3%**

AMAR participants experienced **71.3% fewer preterm births** and **52.4% fewer low-risk C-sections** compared to all Medicaid births in Trenton.



# HealthySteps

## Transforming pediatric care for families

HealthySteps is an evidence-based model designed to transform primary pediatric care by integrating a child development expert into care teams – making use of an excellent opportunity to reach at least 90% of babies and toddlers at routine well-child visits.

A HealthySteps specialist provides tailored support on common concerns physicians often lack time to address, including behavior, sleep, feeding, attachment, language development, parental depression, connections to community resources and early intervention, and adapting to life with a baby.

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### MILESTONE

## Site expansion to serve 7,600 children

HealthySteps expanded from serving 2,200 children per year at our 3 Hackensack Meridian Health pilot sites to **7,600 children with the expansion to new sites** at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, Trenton's Henry J. Austin Health Center, and Zufall Health Center sites in Dover and West Orange.

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### MILESTONE

## \$500K state funding + \$500K federal match

State legislation provided **\$500,000 in state funding** with a **\$500,000 federal match** to create an enhanced Medicaid payment for well-child and sick visit claims submitted for children under age four at HealthySteps practices. Plus, the New Jersey Chapter, American Association of Pediatrics secured a **4-year, \$4-million federal grant** to expand the program in partnership with ZERO TO THREE.

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## 43.2%

**43.2% increase in children participating** in 6 or more well-child visits by age 15 months.



***“The HealthySteps program supports the whole family... Despite my son having life altering health concerns, the HealthySteps team held my hand throughout the whole experience.”***

**Vanessa Sosa**  
HealthySteps mom

# Spreading the word on the value of Early Relational Health

## Early Relational Health

A Review of Research, Principles, and Perspectives

SEPTEMBER 2023



***“It’s about understanding that parents want to do what’s best for their children, that they have the capacity to parent, and that we as professionals are there as a partner to parents, in a supportive role.”***

**Thelma Ramirez**  
Co-author

The 2023 Burke-commissioned report, *Early Relational Health: A Review of Research, Principles, and Perspectives*, by Harvard University’s Dr. Junlei Li and Thelma Ramirez, is a **groundbreaking exploration of the science and practical applications of caregiver and child bonding**.

It provides a valuable resource for understanding and enhancing the crucial role that the earliest years play in building a child’s lifelong health, educational success, and more. The report lays out five early relational health principles that, woven together, can guide practitioners and leaders on the front lines of education, health, and social services.

### MILESTONE

## Report distribution

The report was completed and distributed through Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Burke Foundation. In addition, Dr. Li and Ms. Ramirez have shared the report widely with early childhood professionals, pediatricians, and healthcare providers through webinars, podcasts, and workshops.

## \$4-\$9 ROI

There is an estimated \$4-\$9 return on investment for every dollar spent on **early childhood programs for children from low-income households** struggling to make ends meet.

# Centering

Bringing pregnant women and families together for healthcare

The Centering model takes traditional primary healthcare beyond the exam room and into a group setting where patients learn from their providers and each other during 2-hour, billable visits.

CenteringPregnancy brings together 8-12 expectant mothers for prenatal care and CenteringParenting gathers 6-8 families and their babies up to age 2 for their well-child visits.

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## MILESTONE

# 23 total sites awarded as of 2023

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# 458 families

458 families served in 2023 by  
CenteringPregnancy or CenteringParenting.



***“As a first-time mom, being in a group setting you can learn a lot from other mothers who are expecting. Being able to express concerns and receive answers to questions from the provider gives time for more elaboration.”***

**Cherriece**

New Jersey mom and former CenteringPregnancy participant



# Enhancing Residency Training

## Preparing the next generation of pediatricians and family medicine physician



***“The residents enjoy this type of program to help them become better pediatricians and have a better understanding of all of these issues that they don’t experience themselves.”***

**Survey Respondent**

**Residency Program Preceptor**

Many parents look to their pediatricians for advice on how to help their children meet milestones for healthy development. However, most graduating pediatric residents don’t feel adequately equipped to advise parents on ways to promote early childhood development.

The Burke Foundation partnered with the New Jersey Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (NJAAP) to create “Keystones of Development,” an early childhood curriculum for residents in all nine New Jersey pediatric and all 12 family medicine residency programs.

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### MILESTONE

## Curriculum engagement

**371 residents completed the curriculum** from all nine New Jersey pediatric programs and 12 family medicine programs.

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## 100% curriculum integration

100% of all nine pediatric residency programs in New Jersey implemented “Keystones of Development,” an early childhood curriculum for pediatric and family medicine residents.

# New for 2024

The Burke Foundation will continue its core programs in 2024 and explore new ways to implement effective early childhood solutions, innovative approaches, and promising practices that **address the needs of children and families in New Jersey**.



## Forming the First 1,000 Days Policy Coalition

We are convening a cross-sector coalition to identify and advance two-generation, family-centered child care policies to promote the wellbeing of New Jersey's youngest residents, their families, and communities. Improving New Jersey's infant and toddler child care systems will not only yield significant benefits for the families that need and pay for care, the children who receive care, and the educators who provide care, it will also benefit New Jersey's economy, businesses, and the community as a whole.

Rutgers Center for Women and Work is developing a research-based agenda to improve the conditions for success for New Jersey's families in partnership with Advocates for Children of New Jersey, Moms First, The Council of New Jersey Grantmakers, and a growing number of partners.

The Coalition is supported by funding from the Burke Foundation, Turrell Fund, Maher Charitable Foundation, Schumann Fund for New Jersey, The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation, and other philanthropic partners.

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## Strengthening the Mercer County family child care network

We granted All Our Kin funds to create a family child care network in Trenton and offer technical assistance to home-based child care providers to strengthen the quality, availability, and sustainability of their services. (Partner: MacMillan Family Foundation)





## Providing doula business training

Doulas, like many small and micro-business owners, grapple with the complexities of establishing a sustainable business. We are helping doulas establish stable, profitable doula practices for the benefit of New Jersey's families. The effort, led by our grantee Civitas Strategies, includes a digital platform with a resource library of interactive sessions, 50 self-training tools, and a coaching component. (Partner: The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation)

## Launching a hospital-based doula program

St. Joseph's University Medical Center in Paterson, a critical safety-net hospital, launched an innovative team-based pilot program to hire 6 full-time doulas integrated into its maternity care team. The team will produce a playbook of best practices and lessons learned for hospitals wanting to replicate the model. (Partner: Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation)



## Piloting a family navigator

Burke is exploring an initiative with the NJ Department of Labor to help New Jersey families successfully apply for and receive benefits under the state's Paid Family Leave program.

# Who We Are

## About the Burke Foundation

The Burke Foundation believes everyone benefits when we invest in families at the **earliest, most essential stages of life.**

The returns can be measurable — on the order of **\$7 for every dollar invested** — and immeasurable, as in a lifetime of health and well-being and generational improvements in financial security.

The Burke Foundation actively seeks out the most effective early childhood solutions and invests in innovative approaches and promising practices that address the needs of children and families in New Jersey. Our community-centered approach promotes health and well-being today and into the future.



## Our Vision

The Burke Foundation is guided by a vision of **New Jersey's families thriving and improving health and well-being across generations.**



## Our Mission

We identify, rigorously evaluate, and scale policies and programs that foster the **healthy development of children and families in the earliest years** – the most crucial time for building a foundation for lifelong health and well-being.

# Our Priorities

We do this by making catalytic investments in:



## Healthy pregnancies and strong beginnings

Finding and supporting innovative, effective, and equitable healthcare solutions that improve maternal and infant health and well-being.



## Healthy caregiver-child relationships

Advancing programs and policies that provide nurturing care and promote strong, stable caregiver-child relationships.



## Healthy futures workforce

Building a diverse, sustainable child care and perinatal workforce to provide relationship-centered care and support professionals caring for our children and families in the earliest years.

## We work in partnership with:



Community members & leaders



Healthcare professionals



State, local, & federal government policymakers



Nonprofit organizations



Business leaders

## And by encouraging supportive policies for families:



Improved healthcare for mothers and children



High-quality, affordable, and accessible child care



Paid family leave for parents and guardians



# Our Story

The Burke Foundation was established in Princeton, NJ, in 1989 by the late Jim E. Burke.

During his 37 years with Johnson & Johnson, Jim Burke built a legacy of visionary leadership, and served as Chairman and CEO for the last 13 years of his tenure, when he oversaw a vast expansion of the company. His leadership of Johnson & Johnson during the Tylenol poisonings in the 1980s is regarded as a textbook example of how to handle a public relations crisis.

Jim received the highest civilian honor in the nation in 2000, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and was named one of history's greatest CEOs by Fortune magazine in 2003.

Jim had a passion for improving the health and well-being of children, and from the beginning of his philanthropic journey, chose to invest in tangible ways to help children and their families thrive.



Jim E. Burke



Burke Foundation President James Burke being honored by Children's Home Society of New Jersey.

**In 2012, James Burke became president of the Burke Foundation and has continued its focus on the healthy development of children, together with the Board of Trustees, identifying the period between pregnancy and age two as a key focus area in which to invest Foundation resources to achieve the greatest impact for New Jersey children and their communities.**

To achieve this vision, James and the Board hired the foundation's first executive director, Atiya Weiss, and together they built a team of nonprofit leaders and subject matter experts who are carrying forward the organization's ambitious plans.

## Investing early

Our emphasis on the **earliest years of life** began in 2018, in recognition of the profound impact those years have on children's future health and well-being.

**That commitment led us to a place-based, community-centered approach in Trenton, Camden, and Newark.**

We made the strategic decision to target our support to traditionally underserved families — the population with the greatest unmet needs. New Jersey's alarming rates of maternal and infant mortality are much worse for people of color, with Black women 7 times more likely than white women to die from pregnancy-related complications — demanded action. The enormity of the COVID-19 pandemic further exposed and worsened some of society's greatest inequities, underscoring the urgency of this focus.





## First 1,000 Days

Burke's **First 1,000 Days** approach – covering the period from pregnancy to a child's second birthday – offers a timely **window of opportunity to address the social determinants of health**. Such non-medical factors as **availability of nutritious food**, a **safe home environment**, and **adequate financial resources** drive as much as 80% of health outcomes. Economic and social stressors that ricochet through households struggling to make ends meet undermine the short- and long-term well-being of families and communities.

**Burke's approach to grantmaking is to be a significant value-added partner, connector, convener, and problem solver to help build the power and resilience of families and communities.**

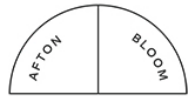
We deploy a range of resources to complement grant funding, including deep community engagement and partnership, technical assistance, support for evaluation and sustainability, and a rich network of connections. This enables us to work with our partners – funders, state government agency leaders, policymakers – to unlock resources and promote policy changes that support scaling promising initiatives, with the aim of sustained financing to promote long-term impact.

**Ultimately, our ambition is to create intergenerational impact in health and well-being by transforming systems to deliver better care, prevention, and community connections during those First 1,000 Days for babies, mothers, fathers, and families.**

# Partners and collaborators

Burke initiatives are the product of **deep partnerships with communities and co-investors**, who work with us to make lasting change possible.

Our thanks to our many partners in this vital work to build stronger families and communities.



ALL OUR KIN





**Narrative Initiative**



**THE BURKE**  
**FOUNDATION**