



Why Pediatricians Urge TAFDC Family Cap Repeal

The first three years of a child's life are critical for lifelong health and development of body and brain

- Food insecurity and other hardships are linked with impaired health and development among young children with lifelong consequences.
- In our first study covering years 1998 to 2000 children in families not receiving the full TAFDC benefit were more likely to be hospitalized and to live in food-insecure households when compared to children in families receiving the full TAFDC benefit.¹

The TAFDC family cap rule continues to put our children's health at risk in the 21st Century

- From 2010-2016, almost one-third of 1,358 caregivers receiving TAFDC with children under the age of 4 interviewed at Boston Medical Center reported a child not supported on the families TAFDC budget because of the family cap rule.
- Families of infant, toddlers, and preschoolers subject to the TAFDC family cap compared to other TAFDC families report more:
 - Household and child food insecurity
 - Poor/fair child health
- Our research found that the TAFDC family cap may also have a negative impact on early childhood development.

Repeal of the TAFDC family cap rule could reduce food insecurity and improve the health and development of young children in Massachusetts.

Household Food Insecurity is limited or uncertain access to enough nutritious food for all household members to lead an active and healthy life due to economic constraints. Food insecurity increases the likelihood that children will be hospitalized, have developmental delays, iron-deficiency anemia and/or be in fair or poor health.

Child Food Insecurity occurs when children experience reductions in quality and/or quantity of meals because their caregivers can no longer buffer them from the household's inadequate food resources. Child food insecurity intensifies the harmful health impacts associated with household food insecurity.

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¹ Cook JT, Frank DA, Berkowitz B, Black MM, Casey PH, Cutts D, Meyers AF, Zaldivar N, Skalicky A, Levenson S, Heeren T. Welfare Reform and the Health of Young Children: A Sentinel Survey in 6 US Cities. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2002; 156:678-684.