

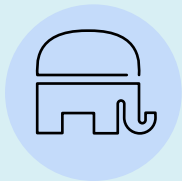


American Heart Association



American Heart Association  
**Voices**  
for Healthy Kids

# Customizing PN-3 Messages With Insights From The Archetypes



**In decision-maker interviews, we tested key messages from [Building Momentum for Prenatal-to-Three \(PN-3\)](#) from the [National Collaborative on Infants and Toddlers](#), and our [Racial Equity in Public Policy](#) messages. We also explored message concepts being used by others in the PN-3 movement and suggested by the early informants in this research.**






The core message frame below is grounded in values and built from elements of existing tested messaging, adapted based on the decision-maker interviews and other insights from this research. You can augment this with policy- or issue-specific messages, tailored to align with the archetype characteristics. This message frame has not been re-tested, but we will be monitoring how it works for advocates and will update as possible. We welcome input from advocates who use them.









## **A VITAL NOTE**







Unless you are working on an urgent and timely policy, your first few meetings will be to listen, understand and connect around shared values, not to convince. Likewise, look for ways to keep the conversation going, even after you've shared your position, to continue moving toward mutual respect and understanding. If you hear no, it's an invitation to stay curious and go deeper.

**Please refer to the [Creating an Ongoing Conversation](#) section to integrate listening and human connection throughout your conversations.**

Core Message	General Supporting Points	Archetype Nuances and Tips	Why This Can Work
<p><b>“Every child deserves an opportunity to get a strong start in life. When we empower parents to create a strong start for their babies and toddlers, it provides a foundation for their future.”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ During the first three years of life, the brains and bodies of infants and toddlers make huge gains in development.</li> <li>▶ The brain is like a sponge. Babies’ brains develop fastest from birth to age 3, and their early experiences — both positive and negative — build the foundation for brain and body architecture that will support their ability to learn, their behavior and their overall health.</li> <li>▶ You may have heard that a child who is not reading at grade level by third grade is likely to have fewer opportunities and positive outcomes later in life. That’s true, and it’s important to support K-12 education. But we often forget about babies and toddlers in that equation.</li> <li>▶ Children whose families live in poverty often lack resources for decent housing, food, clothing and books, and they often do not have access to high-quality child care and early education, or health care. Many arrive at kindergarten without the language or social skills they need for learning.</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="928 167 1371 597" style="background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 10px;">  <p><b>CHURCH &amp; COUNTRY</b> Strongly support two-parent (mom and dad) households, where mom stays home in the early years.</p>  <p><b>TIP</b> Acknowledge that a strong start may include parents staying home if they choose to and the environment supports their ability to do so.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="928 597 1371 748" style="background-color: #e1eef6; padding: 10px;">  <p><b>LEGACY REPUBLICAN</b> Most likely to believe society has a role to play.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="928 748 1371 1117" style="background-color: #ffe0b2; padding: 10px;">  <p><b>POPULIST-ALIGNED</b> Believe society doesn’t have a responsibility to make things fair for everyone.</p>  <p><b>TIP</b> Focus on creating opportunity and empowering parents.</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ There is a strong shared understanding of the importance of PN-3, especially regarding brain development, social-emotional health and physical health. Be sure to cite both positive and negative impacts and outcomes.</li> <li>▶ There is a sense among conservative decision-makers that life isn’t fair and won’t be for everyone, and it’s not society’s job to ensure equal outcomes. However, there is strong support for access to opportunity.</li> <li>▶ Conservatives believe the mom (and dad) are the most important caretakers for a young child and need to see that the new mom is assuming personal responsibility. This messaging is powerful and audiences that are inclined to support PN-3 are “easy to lose” when culturally conservative messages are amplified. Talk about empowering parents first, rather than inserting government or society into the equation, lean into the values of parental control and personal responsibility.</li> <li>▶ Early intervention to prevent poor outcomes later is a strong theme. The fact that a child who is not reading on level by third grade is likely to lack good opportunities and outcomes later in life has strong credibility with conservative audiences. Explicitly linking that to PN-3 is vital.</li> </ul>

Core Message	General Supporting Points	Archetype Nuances and Tips	Why This Can Work
<p><b>“Our country is at its best when we recognize that children, including babies and toddlers, are a vital resource. Opportunity for them now can build healthier, more resilient, more prosperous communities and states in the future.”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Children whose families live in poverty often lack resources for decent housing, food, clothing and books, and they often do not have access to high-quality child care and early education, or health care. Many arrive at kindergarten without the language or social skills they need for learning.</li> <li>▶ By making sure all infants and toddlers and their families have access to what they need, we can strengthen our communities and live up to our promise as a nation.</li> <li>▶ This includes (insert your priority issues including behavioral and physical health services, high-quality child care, paid leave, financial security and support networks).</li> </ul> <p><b>ROI PROOF POINTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Research based on high-quality early childhood programs has found that for every \$1 invested in early care and education, there is a \$4 to \$9 return to society over the course of a child’s life.</li> <li>▶ One in six children in the United States has a disability. Identifying those needs early and addressing them immediately reduces the likelihood of disabilities worsening, decreases the need for later services and saves money.</li> <li>▶ Investing in home visiting programs, such as parent coaching programs, can save in ER visits, child abuse and neglect, special education and grade repetition, and future juvenile delinquency and crime. <i>(Note that voluntary, rather than mandatory, home visiting programs are more strongly supported by conservative decision-makers.)</i></li> <li>▶ Ensuring access to child care and early learning would create an estimated 2.3 million new jobs, as well as provide opportunities for parents with low incomes to return to the workforce.</li> </ul>	<div style="background-color: #fce4ec; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><b>ECONOMIC INFLUENCED</b> Believe government is inefficient and bureaucratic, and should be small and limited.</p> <p><b>TIP</b> Emphasize the most efficient supports to empower parents, including innovative public-private partnerships.</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #e1f5fe; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><b>LEGACY REPUBLICAN</b> Business-oriented; very focused on ROI of any policy.</p> <p><b>TIP</b> Bring data, especially from business- and taxpayer-friendly groups.</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #ffe0b2; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>POPULIST-ALIGNED</b> This group deeply distrusts institutions, experts and statistics that they think can be manipulated.</p> <p><b>TIP</b> Do not come in with data. Ask questions and share stories. Say, “I’m not saying I’m the expert on this, but ...” Bring along someone from their network/district.</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ There is belief in early investment so that’s a strong theme.</li> <li>▶ Be sure to talk about the return on that investment (ROI). Be prepared to answer hard questions and be specific; vague statements like “a major investment” sound the warning bell. When possible, give specific numbers and citations that clearly show where and how cost savings occur.</li> <li>▶ Avoid absolute language such as “top priority” or “one chance to act”; conservatives believe infants and toddlers are a high priority, but one of several.</li> </ul>

Core Message	General Supporting Points	Archetype Nuances and Tips	Why This Can Work
<p><b>“Parents have a responsibility to do all they can for their babies and toddlers. But moms and families don’t always have what they need to be self-sufficient.”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The programs we have, such as WIC, Medicaid and SNAP, have made solid progress toward helping parents be self-sufficient (offer one to two strong indicators). We’ve learned more about what works and what doesn’t, and (this policy) can be even more effective at returning people to self-sufficiency.</li> <li>▶ Because a healthy baby starts with a healthy mom, all mothers need access to care during and after pregnancy, and they need access to the regular well-child visits, screenings and mental health care that give their babies the best start in life.</li> <li>▶ We are working to ensure that all parents know what supports are available to them. But the truth is that there is more help needed.</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="928 167 1371 667">  <p><b>CHURCH &amp; COUNTRY</b> Faith requires helping others — but most believe that churches and communities already have resources to help people.</p>  <p><b>TIP</b> Acknowledge these resources in your community and how they might need more support or partnership with the state. Or better yet, bring one of their leaders with you.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="928 667 1371 1003">  <p><b>ECONOMIC INFLUENCED</b> Prioritize individual choice and freedom, and want to remove barriers for the family unit to maximize personal choices.</p>  <p><b>TIP</b> Offer evidence for how policy can do that.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="928 1003 1371 1533">  <p><b>LEGACY REPUBLICAN</b> Believe in hard work and self-sufficiency and that a good job solves most problems. Also most likely to express sympathy on child care availability and cost as a barrier to work and self-sufficiency.</p>  <p><b>TIP</b> Acknowledge the importance of both increasing good jobs and supporting parents to work if they choose or need to.</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Health is a priority, and there is recognition of the country’s failures around maternal health.</li> <li>▶ Conservatives think there are plenty of programs in place and are likely to think parents just don’t know where to get access. They may not understand the realities of what these programs do and do not provide, or may feel they are wasteful. There is a real opportunity to educate (not lecture) conservative lawmakers about what type of coverage and support is available to new mothers.</li> <li>▶ Acknowledge what is already working, while illuminating how to make those programs even more effective.</li> </ul>

Core Message	General Supporting Points	Archetype Nuances and Tips	Why This Can Work
<p><b>“This is our chance to make a powerful commitment to our youngest generation. How can we work together to ensure that babies and toddlers grow into socially, emotionally and physically healthy kids who are confident, empathetic and ready for school and life?”</b></p>		<div data-bbox="930 167 1371 586">  <p><b>CHURCH &amp; COUNTRY</b> This group is the gentlest and most open to listening when they feel heard and respected.</p>  <p><b>TIP</b> Acknowledge their faith. Never come across as attempting to scold or change their values.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="930 586 1371 894">  <p><b>ECONOMIC INFLUENCED</b> Open to discussion — not lectures. Most likely to say “let’s talk.”</p>  <p><b>TIP</b> Listen and lean into the conversation.</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ You may be tempted to say, “We must act now. ...” But directives like this can feel like a lecture and go against the values of self-determination and individualism.</li> <li>▶ Nearly every opinion leader said they saw parents and families — not society — as the responsible parties, and so when a statement sounds like a societal imperative, it is met with some resistance.</li> <li>▶ Instead, invite a conversation about shared solutions, then put your ask in that context.</li> </ul>
<p><i>(Potentially hold this one until you are negotiating policy specifics)</i></p> <p><b>“We have an opportunity to make policies most effective by prioritizing action where it will meet the greatest need. We can work with our local communities to identify that need and write it into the policy.”</b></p>		 <p><b>POPULIST-ALIGNED</b> Perceive, and resent, that some people get benefits while hard-working middle class taxpayers support everyone.</p>  <p><b>TIP</b> Acknowledge that many people struggle, and by starting where the need is greatest we can be most efficient and eventually expand to serve more people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ There is agreement about the wisdom of investing in children with the greatest need. We have tested messages that overtly name areas experiencing structural racism or “regardless of skin color,” but at this time it is difficult to advance those conversations with any of the archetypes. Need is perceived to be an economic issue; the idea of structural racism is rejected.</li> <li>▶ By reaching agreement to focus where the need is greatest, you may be able to open a door to specific policy language that can ensure that policy solutions benefit communities experiencing greatest disparities, including structural racism.</li> </ul>