

Youth Recommendations for ensuring that young people and families can receive Health Care, Child Care, & Family Supports

Ensure Young People and Families Can Afford Needed Healthcare

Increase access to health insurance and reduce healthcare costs for patients. One student recommended expanding access to insurance and reducing the costs patients face so that young people and families can afford needed healthcare. The student also called for addressing the root causes of rising healthcare prices.

Source: sanuadama, Affordable Health Care, 2025

> ***"Affordable health care matters because it impacts their financial stability, health, and future well-being. Without access to affordable health care, young people may delay or forgo needed medical treatment."***
>
> *~ sanuadama, 2025*



Help Young People Prevent Unintended Pregnancies and Access Reproductive Health Support

Strengthen teen pregnancy prevention education and access to reproductive healthcare. One student recommended making reproductive health education and support services in schools and the community engaging, age-appropriate, ongoing, and accessible to teens. The student also recommended increasing access to counseling and reproductive healthcare, involving teens in designing programs and campaigns, partnering with community organizations for outreach and support, and including both girls and boys in pregnancy-prevention efforts.

***Sources**: Author unknown, Teen Pregnancy, 2026; and Sabia Samus and Ashley Juarez-Osorio, Cost of Baby Food for Teen Parents, 2025*

> ***"My solution is to expand and normalize youth reproductive health education and support services in schools and the community...[and] involve teens in designing programs and campaigns."***
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> *~ Author unknown, Teen Pregnancy, 2026*

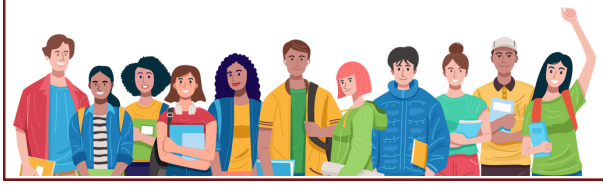
Help Pregnant & Parenting Teens Meet Everyday Needs

Make baby food affordable and connect teen parents with resources for themselves and their children. Students recommended affordable baby food and free resources for children. Their Report Card identified WIC, food resources, childcare services, diaper distributions, clothing, economic assistance, and other community supports as resources that can help teen parents and their children. The students also emphasized improving WIC access and recognized that language, transportation, limited knowledge of services, lack of trust, and other barriers can make support harder to access.

***Source**: Sabia Samus and Ashley Juarez-Osorio, Cost of Baby Food for Teen Parents, 2025.*

> ***"Teen parents may be particularly vulnerable to food insecurity due to financial constraints and limited resources... Our initiative tackles this crisis through expanded WIC access [and] community support programs."***
>
> *~ Sabia Samus & Ashley Juarez-Osorio, 2025*





Youth Recommendations for ensuring that young people and families can receive Health Care, Child Care, & Family Supports

Expand Access to High-Quality Early Care

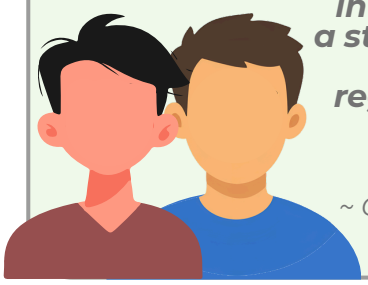
Increase public investment in early care and education. Students recommended increasing funding for childcare subsidies, educator and provider compensation, and facilities, noting that high-quality care can be unaffordable for families while providers face financial challenges.

Expand childcare spaces for infants and toddlers. Students recommended investing in new facilities or adapting existing public buildings for childcare and providing grants and technical assistance to providers that expand infant and toddler capacity.

Increase compensation for early childhood educators. Students recommended bringing early educator compensation closer to that of K–12 teachers, noting that low wages contribute to staff turnover and can affect the quality of care.

Source: Chase McKnight and Viggo Viira, *Early Childhood Education in Alexandria*, 2025

> ***"Families currently face a confusing, fragmented process to access care...High-quality programs are unaffordable for most families....nd to see every child in Alexandria with a strong start in life and economy. We intend to see every child in Alexandria with a strong start in life and education... regardless of race, background, or income.***
>
> *~ Chase McKnight and Viggo Viira, 2025*



Make Early Learning Easier to Access and More Equitable

Create a coordinated enrollment system for early learning programs. Students recommended a universal, citywide application system to make it easier for families to navigate enrollment across childcare, preschool, Pre-K, and other early learning programs.

Prioritize early childhood investment in underserved communities. Students recommended using data to target investment in historically underserved neighborhoods and prioritizing funding for programs serving Black, Latinx, immigrant, and low-income families.

Make early learning culturally and linguistically responsive. Students recommended using materials and strategies that reflect the cultures and languages of the families programs serve and providing ongoing professional development to support culturally responsive practice.

Strengthen Family Partnerships and System Coordination

Give families a meaningful role in early learning programs. Students recommended involving parents in decision-making and education and providing programs with training and resources to build authentic relationships with families.

Strengthen coordination and accountability across early childhood programs. Students recommended creating a unified governance structure with clear responsibility for coordinating and overseeing early childhood programs across public agencies and community-based providers.