

FIRST 3 YEARS Strategic Plan

2024-2027



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Mission & Vision

While genetics provide the blueprint for a child's brain development, it is through everyday moments of connection with their caregivers—like talking, playing, reading aloud, and singing together—that their brains are shaped for learning and interacting with the world. These **strong, positive, and nurturing relationships** not only support a child's healthy development but also bring joy and well-being to caregivers, fostering resilience and protecting against stress. Every interaction becomes an opportunity to build the foundation for a lifetime of emotional health and thriving relationships.

Mission Statement

First3Years nurtures early relational and mental health of infants and toddlers in Texas. Working in deep collaboration with caregivers, parents, and professionals statewide, we cultivate strong early childhood systems, educate our workforce, and advance best practices.

***Our Impact Lasts
a Lifetime***

Vision Statement

Our vision is that all infants and toddlers in Texas spend their first three years in an ecosystem that supports the healthy development of their early mental and relational health.



Strategic Pillars

With Early Relational Health as our foundation, and guided by community data, lived experience, and best practices, we improve outcomes for young children and their families through our four strategic pillars.

Early Relational Health Awareness	Provider Support & Training	Community Engagement & Collaboration	Operational Sustainability
To deepen public understanding of the critical role nurturing relationships play in shaping a child's social, emotional, and cognitive development in the first three years of life—while advancing the field of Infant Mental Health (IMH) and Early Relational Health (ERH).	To strengthen the capacity of professionals serving infants and toddlers by providing ERH-informed training, promoting best practices, and supporting relational well-being among the workforce.	To build and strengthen cross-sector partnerships that advance a coordinated, relationship-centered early childhood system in Texas.	To support the organization's long-term effectiveness and impact through values-driven internal practices, relational leadership, and strong partnerships.
Early Relational Health Foundation			
Trust Parents & Focus on Simple, Everyday Interactions We elevate families as their child's first and most important relationship, using accessible messaging that celebrates simple, everyday moments of connection. Awareness efforts are driven by community voice, rooted in trust, and amplified through strong partnerships.	Build Parallel Relationships & Meet Families Where They Are We center relational practices in all training, fostering a professional culture that mirrors the safe, responsive relationships we expect for children and families. Trainings focus on real-world, culturally responsive strategies and promote the shared growth of peer networks.	It Takes a Village & Trust Parents We co-create community-driven solutions with caregivers and partners, valuing every interaction as an opportunity to build connection and shared purpose. Relational practices shape how we engage, communicate, and lead together for early childhood well-being.	Build Parallel Relationships & It Takes a Village We model our relational values internally—embedding trust, responsiveness, and equity into all operations. Caregivers and funders alike are seen as essential partners in shaping and sustaining our mission.