ABSTRACT: Much correlational evidence suggests that household income poverty is associated with poorer outcomes in early childhood as well as later life. Yet causal evidence for this link is missing; nearly all experimental impact evaluations of early childhood programs for low-income families in the United States concentrate on early education or parenting. There has never been a U.S. experimental evaluation of direct poverty reduction – through unconditional cash transfers – focused on the first years of life. This lecture summarizes the rationale, design and implementation of an experimental evaluation of unconditional cash transfers for parents of 0-3 year olds in the United States, a study currently in process in four cities. Hypothesized outcomes in the areas of parental investments and stress as well as child brain development and other domains of learning and development will be discussed, as well as implications for income support policies.