Prevent Child Abuse America

200 South Michigan Avenue
17th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604.2404
312.663.3520 *tel*
312.939.8962 *fax*
E-Mail: AsidneyJ@aol.com

Sid Johnson
Executive Director

Children's Defense Fund

MaryLee Allen
Director, Child Welfare
and Mental Health Division

25 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Telephone 202 662 3573
Fax 202 662 3550

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200 South Michigan Avenue
17th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604.2404
312 663.3520 *tel*
312.939.8962 *fax*
E-Mail: AsidneyJ@aol.com

Sid Johnson
Executive Director

nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

DIANE M. SHUST
Senior Professional Associate
Government Relations

1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-3290
(202) 822-7325 Fax (202) 822-7309
E-mail: dshust@nea.org

NATIONAL
CHILD ABUSE
COALITION

Thomas L. Birch *Legislative Counsel*

733-15th Street NW • Suite 938 • Washington • DC 20005 Phone 202 • 347-3666

Fax Transmission

1 page (including this cover)

Thomas L. Birch
733 15th Street, N.W., Suite 938
Washington, D.C. 20005

Telephone: 202-347-3666
FAX: 202-628-0302
E-Mail: tbirch@nasaa-arts.org

To: Nicole Rabner
From: Tom Birch, Legislative Counsel, National Child Abuse Coalition
Date: March 22, 1999

Thanks for meeting with us today to talk about our proposals for child abuse prevention policy in terms of the child care agenda.

As I mentioned, we are also pursuing the possibilities for addressing prevention in juvenile justice and education legislation. In linking a child abuse prevention agenda to education legislation we have identified a menu of federal education programs in ESEA which provide us with options because they play or could play a role in supporting services in a community aimed at supporting families and preventing child abuse and neglect. That menu includes:

1) Title I, Helping Disadvantaged Children
2) Title I, Part B, Even Start
3) Title XI, Coordinated Services
4) 21st Century Schools

A second tier of options might include:

1) Title IV, Safe and Drug Free Schools
2) Title I, Part D, Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk of Dropping Out

We are pursuing meetings with Department of Education and congressional staff to discuss our proposal. The legislation could take the form of adding "prevention of child abuse and neglect" to a list of permissible funded activities in legislation, or adding something more extensive such as we shared with you at today's meeting.

We look forward to keeping in touch with you and certainly want to be of help in any way we can with information that could be useful to you. Thanks again.

HOT HUMAN & CIVIL RIGHTS ACTION SHEET

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Affecting increasing numbers of children each year, child abuse and neglect are national problems that beg a national solution. No part of the country escapes. No ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic group is immune. And all parts of society share in the solution.

According to *Child Maltreatment 1996*, over a million children—or 15 of every 1,000 children in this country—experience harm from abuse or neglect. The circumstances are varied: a parent's substance abuse or lack of parenting skills, a child's disability or difference, a family's marital or financial woes, or a community's economic stresses or struggles with poverty and racism. But, whatever the situation, public school employees are in a position to take note and do something about it.

School employees predominate as a source for recognizing maltreated children, identifying 59 percent of children who suffer harm (Sedlak and Broadhurst 1996). This is because maltreatment affects children's appearance, behavior, and academic performance. When children are injured, hungry, inappropriately dressed, or acting out sexually, school employees express concern. And, when good students suddenly score low on tests, refuse to change for gym, or keep missing the school bus, these same caring adults—teachers, coaches, nurses, bus drivers, and others—should know that something is wrong.

Not only can school employees take note of suspicious signs, but they must also report them, as required by law. And they do. Public school employees make the largest proportion of reports to child protective services agencies—almost 16 percent, says *Child Maltreatment 1996*.

Because this responsibility is taken so seriously, NEA has long supported its members and affiliates with policy and information. In 1974, the same year that Congress enacted the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the NEA Representative Assembly (RA) passed a resolution calling for all children to be protected from child abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Later, the RA passed a series of related resolutions for banning corporal punishment and for improving health care, nutrition, family stability, family and domestic relations, and crisis care.

Over the years, NEA has implemented these resolutions by developing an in-service training program, joining the National Child Abuse Coalition, continuing to support pro-child legislation, and producing materials. This action sheet was requested by the NEA Government Relations Committee.

NEA Resolution
Child Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

The National Education Association believes that all children should be protected from the psychological and physical aspects of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Association urges its affiliates to—

a. Seek clear legal definitions of what constitutes child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

b. Encourage the development of educators preparation courses and employee awareness programs which stress the identification of, reporting procedures for, legal responsibilities for, and techniques for dealing with abused, neglected, and exploited children

c. Cooperate with community organizations to increase public awareness and understanding of the prevalence as well as the causes, prevention, and treatment of child abuse, including neglect, exploitation, incest, and physical abuse

d. Encourage the development and use of materials to increase student awareness of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

e. Require school personnel to report to appropriate authorities instances of suspected child abuse, neglect, and exploitation while providing school personnel with immunity from legal action

f. Encourage development of legislatively funded provisions for dealing with the abusive child, adult, or institution as well as processes, protective options, and coping provisions for the abused, neglected, and exploited child

g. Encourage enactment of legislation for protection of children from parents/guardians who demonstrate neglect by leaving them unattended/unsupervised

h. Encourage positive action from the marketing and media professions in eliminating exploitation, commercialization, and glamorization of physical, emotional, and sexual child abuse.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Definitions of child abuse and neglect guide efforts to protect children. According to Diana English (1998), Chief of Research at the Washington State Office of Children's Research, the states define maltreatment based on minimal standards outlined in CAPTA. Because of the need to balance the protection of children with an appropriate governmental intervention, the definitions, says English, are broad in some states and narrow in others. In addition, some definitions are based on the harm standard—which includes observable harm—and some on the endangerment standard—which includes the threat of harm.

As outlined by English and the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, the generally accepted definitions of the types of abuse and neglect are as follows:

- Child neglect occurs when caretakers fail to provide for children's basic physical, educational, and emotional needs, such as for food, clothing, shelter, affection, and supervision. Such neglect includes abandonment; inattention to medical and school needs; and permission to be truant, to use drugs, or to engage in criminal activity.

- Physical abuse occurs when caretakers inflict nonaccidental physical injury on children. The abuse is characterized by bruises, fractures, and wounds that result from beating, burning, kicking, punching, shaking, stabbing, and excessive spanking.

- Sexual abuse occurs when family members or other caretakers use children for their own sexual stimulation. The abuse includes fondling, intercourse, rape, incest, and sodomy.

- Emotional abuse occurs when caretakers corrupt, terrorize, or chronically reject children. Hard to identify, according to researchers, it includes sustained and repetitive verbal abuse, denial of sleep, and exposure to spousal abuse.

BREADTH AND SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

How often do these types of abuse and neglect occur? Is the incidence increasing? And how are different groups of chiildren affected?

The answers to these questions are contained in two major reports of the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN). *Child Maltreatment*, giving a statistical view of the problem, is an annual report of the actual substantiated and unsubstantiated cases that are collected by the states. The *National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect,* of which there have been three, gives a broad picture of the problem from the view of the professionals who work with children—over 5,600 professionals in 842 agencies in 42 counties (Sedlak and Broadhurst 1996). It reports this data under both the harm and endangerment standards.

Occurrence. Neglect is the most common form of child maltreatment, followed by physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse (DePanfilis 1992; Tower 1992). According to *Child Maltreatment 1996*, about 52 percent of the maltreatment consists of various forms of neglect, including medical neglect.

Increasing incidence. Both major NCCAN reports show substantial increases in child abuse and neglect over time. *Child Maltreatment 1996* shows that victimization increased by 18 percent between 1990 and 1996. The *Third National Incidence Study on Child Abuse and Neglect* shows that abuse reported to professionals quadrupled between 1986 and 1993 (Sedlak and Broadhurst 1996). And the amount of abuse that is actually investigated by child protective services is only the tip of the iceberg.

Abused children. All groups of children are vulnerable to child abuse and neglect but not to the same degree. Based on NCCAN reports (DePanfilis 1992, Sedlak and Broadhurst 1996), children's gender, age, and race are generally related to the rate of maltreatment, as follows:

- Gender: Girls are sexually abused more often than boys, under both the harm and endangerment standards. However, boys are at greater risk of serious physical injury and of emotional neglect. And gays and lesbians are more vulnerable to verbal abuse and physical and sexual assault, especially during their adolescence (Ryan and Futterman 1998).
- Age: As children age, neglect decreases but physical, sexual, and emotional abuse increases. Maximum risk is associated with the middle years (ages 6 to 11).
- Race: According to *Child Maltreatment 1996*, the victimization of children in some groups is disproportionate to their representation in the general population. Blacks and American Indians/Alaska Natives are overrepresented, and Asians/Pacific Islanders are underrepresented. The victimization of Hispanic children is proportional. However, the *Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect* finds race unrelated to the rate of maltreatment. Instead, it attributes disproportional representation data to differences in the attention that children of different groups receive in the child welfare system. The latest data on child abuse and race appear in Table 1.

To reverse the dismal statistics and break the cycle of child abuse and neglect, schools, communities, and families must work cooperatively. NEA calls this the Safe Schools Framework, which it expresses in the equation—Safe Children = Safe Schools + Safe Communities + Safe Families.

In addition, schools, communities, and families must understand the three types of prevention efforts that are used in the public health field. Originally applied to child abuse by pediatrician Ray Helfer, the three types are primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention (National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information).

- Primary prevention programs focus on the general population and seek to stop the problem before it starts. Examples are public service announcements about nonviolent methods of discipline, parent education programs, and public awareness campaigns. Primary prevention efforts also include providing to all students in a school district an education program about sexual abuse (DePanfilis 1992).

Table 1. Type of Maltreatment by Race/Ethnicity of Victim, DCDC[1]

Race/Ethnicity	Type of Maltreatment					Totals
	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Medical Neglect[2]	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Maltreatment	
White	33,181 (56.1%)	76,967 (52.3%)	4,224 (41.3%)	17,978 (64.8%)	7,130 (68.9%)	139,480 (54.8%)
African American	16,406 (27.7%)	50,401 (34.3%)	4,509 (44.0%)	5,339 (19.2%)	1,684 (16.3%)	78,339 (30.8%)
Hispanic	8,053 (13.6%)	16,447 (11.2%)	1,299 (12.7%)	3,901 (14.1%)	1,265 (12.2%)	30,965 (12.2%)
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	670 (1.1%)	2,018 (1.4%)	145 (1.4%)	349 (1.3%)	167 (1.6%)	3,349 (1.3%)
Asian/ Pacific Islander	842 (1.4%)	1,275 (0.9%)	61 (0.6%)	198 (0.7%)	104 (1.0%)	2,480 (1.0%)
Totals	59,152 (100.0%)	147,108 (100.0%)	10,238 (100.0%)	27,765 (100.0%)	10,350 (100.0%)	254,613 (100.0%)

[1]DCDC refers to the Detailed Case Data Component of the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System. The other component is the Summary Data Component (SDC).

[2]Medical neglect figures refer to children whose basic needs are being met but whose medical needs are not being met for financial reasons or because of religious or other exemptions that are outlined in state statutes.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau. *1998. Child Maltreatment, 1996: Reports from the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 2-5.

Secondary prevention programs focus on high-risk families that may be young, poor, or substance abusing. The programs seek to stop an existing problem from worsening. Examples are school-based parent education programs for teen mothers, substance abuse treatment for parents of young children, respite care for parents of special-needs children, and social services offered by full-service schools in distressed neighborhoods.

Tertiary prevention programs focus on abusive families. The programs seek to stop an existing problem from spreading to the next generation by preventing children from developing emotional and academic problems that will, in turn, affect their children. Examples are family preservation counseling services, parent mentor programs, and mental health services to improve family communications and functioning.

Public schools are key to the success of all of these programs, especially at the primary prevention level. According to Cynthia Crosson Tower (1992), school-based programs can provide services to students, communities, and families as shown in Table 2.

Tower also finds public schools essential in two other ways. After a report of child abuse is made, school employees can be supportive of families during the investigation, treatment and rehabilitation processes. And, if a child gets into trouble at school, they can invite parents to meetings to discuss misbehavior or failing grades in a positive manner rather than sending home notes that could reinforce parents' negative feelings about that child.

Tower also urges schools to comply with state and municipal statutes banning corporal punishment. According to the National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools (1998), 27 states and many cities and school boards ban this practice.

In addition to banning abusive practices, legislation enables government and community agencies to resolve the problem of child abuse and neglect. Key federal laws are as follows (Schene 1998; NCCAN 1998):

- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). Originally enacted in 1974 as PL 93-247, this law was amended several times, most recently by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1996 (PL 104-235). CAPTA defines child abuse and neglect; authorizes federal funding to the states for prevention, assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment; provides grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for demonstration programs and projects; and authorizes the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to establish a universal and case-specific national data collection and analysis program on child maltreatment. The 1996 amendments address delays in termination of parental rights, the lack of public oversight of child protection, and the problems of false reports of abuse and neglect. The amendments also help states to establish and expand networks of family resources programs.

- Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (PL 105-89). This groundbreaking law is designed to make child protection services more responsive to the complex needs of children and families. It establishes a timeframe for terminating parental rights, shortens the timeframe for providing services to families in crisis, and promotes the speedier adoption of children who cannot return to their natural parents. It also encourages states to develop innovative strategies to help children and families.

  National Child Protection Act of 1993 (PL 103-209). This law encourages states to enact legislation authorizing fingerprint-based national searches of the criminal history records of people who seek paid or volunteer jobs with organizations that serve children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

- Expansion of Megan's Law (PL 104-145), amending the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act. This law requires state and local law enforcement officials to publicize relevant information for protecting the community whenever a person who has been convicted of crimes against children and of sexually violent offenses is released from prison or placed on parole, probation, or supervised release.

Table 2. School-Based Programs To Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

School-Based Programs for Students	School-Based Programs for Communities	School-Based Programs for Families
Life Skills Training: socialization, problem-solving, and coping skills, and preparation for adulthood	Training and Staff Development: identification, reporting, treatment, and prevention of child abuse and neglect	Help for At-Risk Families: after-school childcare and recreation, identification of adolescents with problems
Preparation for Parenthood: child development, parenting skills, and sexuality education (as opposed to just teaching about sexual abuse)	Public Awareness Programs: cosponsoring events with parent-teacher groups and school-community organizations	Support for Teen Parents and their Children
Self-Protection Training	Use of School Facilities and Resources: making meeting rooms available for self-help groups, public forums, and workshops on child abuse and neglect	

Source: Table 2 summarizes text from Cynthia Crosson Tower. 1992. *The Role of Educators in the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect.* The User Manual Series. Washington, DC: National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, pp. 51-55.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS

- Add a child abuse and neglect task force to your safe schools committee. For background and how-to information on NEA's total-community method for making children safe, see the *Safe Schools Manual: A Resource on Making Schools, Communities, and Families Safe for Children.* For a copy, contact NEA Human and Civil Rights, or visit NEA's Web site at *www.nea.org*

- Observe Child Abuse Prevention Month every April. Call the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information at 800-FYI-3366 or 703-385-7565, or visit the Web site at *www.calib.com/nccanch/prevmnth/intro.htm*

- Participate in Stand for Children Day every June. Contact Stand for Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20009. Call 202-234-0217 or 800-663-4032, or visit the Web site at *www.stand.org*

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations (COSSMHO)
1501 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
Voice: 202-387-5000
www.cossmho.org

National Black Child Development Institute, Inc.
1023 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
Voice: 202-387-1281
www.nbcdi.org

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information
330 C Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20447
Voice: 800-FYI-3366 or 703-385-7565
www.calib/nccanch

National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools
155 W. Main Street, Suite 100B
Columbus, OH 43215
Voice: 614-221-8829
www.stophitting.com

National Indian Child Welfare Association
3611 SW Hood Street, Suite 201
Portland OR 97201
Voice: 503-222-4044
www.nicwa.org

Vietnamese Resettlement Association
6131 Willston Drive, Room 6
Falls Church, VA 22044
Voice: 703-532-3716.

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Ryan, Caitlin and Donna Futterman. 1998. *Lesbian and Gay Youth: Care and Counseling.* New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

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Sedlak, Andrea and Diane D. Broadhurst. 1996. Executive Summary. *Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect.* Washington, DC: National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Tower, Cynthia Crosson. 1992. *The Role of Educators in the Protection and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect.* Washington, DC: National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau. 1998. *Child Maltreatment 1996: Reports from the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. *www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/stats/ncands*

Human and Civil Rights
(202) 822-7700

nea

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-3290

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NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE COALITION
733-15th Street NW · Suite 938 · Washington · DC 20005 Phone 202 • 347-3666

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

ACTION for Child Protection
Alliance for Children and Families
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Bar Association
American Dental Association
American Humane Association
American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children
American Prosecutors Research Institute
American Psychological Association
American Public Human Services Association
Association of Junior Leagues International
Boy Scouts of America
Boys and Girls Clubs of America
Child Welfare League of America
Childhelp USA
Children's Defense Fund
General Federation of Women's Clubs
National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds
National Association of Child Advocates
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of Social Workers
National Children's Alliance
National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse
National Council of Jewish Women
National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association
National Education Association
National Exchange Club Foundation for Prevention of Child Abuse
National Network for Youth
National PTA
Parents Anonymous
Parents United

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PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

Child Abuse Prevention Fights Crime

• Victims of child abuse are more likely to engage in criminality later in life. Over two-thirds (68%) of youths arrested have a prior history of abuse and neglect. Childhood abuse increases the odds of future delinquency and adult criminality overall by 40 percent. Abused and neglected girls fare worse: girls who were abused and neglected in childhood are 77 percent more likely to be arrested as juveniles. In addition, abused or neglected male and female youths are more likely to be arrested one year earlier, to commit twice as many offenses, and to be arrested more frequently than youths who were not abused or neglected. *C. S. Widom (1992). The Cycle of Violence. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.*

Early childhood sexual and physical abuse increase the risk of arrest as a juvenile for being a runaway. Adults abused as children are at higher risk of arrest for sex crimes. Findings also suggest an association for males between physical abuse and arrests for violent sex crimes, such as rape and sodomy. *C.S. Widom & M.A. Ames (1994). Criminal Consequences of Childhood Sexual Victimization. Child Abuse and Neglect. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.*

Preventing Child Maltreatment Helps to Prevent Failure in School

• Abused and neglected children suffer poor prospects for success in school. According to a 1976 study, one-third of abused children aged four and a half were found to have significant neurological damage, and in all cases, learning and emotional behavior were affected in maltreated youngsters of school age. Typically, abused and neglected children in school exhibit poor initiative, language and other developmental delays, a disproportionate amount of incompetence and failure, and inappropriate behavior in peer and adult relationships. *S.R. Morgan (1976). The Battered Child in the Classroom. Journal of Pediatric Psychology.*

• Research into the emotional development of abused children reveals children with negative self-concepts, low self-esteem, aggressive behavior, difficulty in relating to peers and adults, impaired capacity to trust others, and general unhappiness – all characteristics of a child not expected to do well in the classroom. *E.M. Kinard (1979). The Psychological Consequences of Abuse for the Child. Journal of Social Issues.*

Preventing Child Abuse Can Help to Prevent Disabling Conditions in Children

- Physical abuse of children can result in brain damage, mental retardation, cerebral palsy, and learning disorders. *H.P. Martin & M.A. Rodeheffer (1980). The Psychological Impact of Abuse in Children. In: G.J. Williams. Traumatic Abuse and Neglect of Children at Home. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.*

- High incidences of retardation, growth and neurological problems, and impaired emotional functioning are found among physically abused children. Abused or neglected children are disproportionately represented in special education classes. Approximately 25 percent of sexually abused children involved in one study were in classes for the emotionally disturbed. *D.F. Kline (1977). The Consequences of Neglected Cases. In: A.M. Thomas. Children Alone: What Can Be Done About Abuse and Neglect. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.*

Preventing Child Abuse Helps Prevent Serious Illnesses Later in Llife

- Many of the most common causes of death and disability in this country, such as heart disease, cancer, chronic lung and liver diseases, and skeletal fracture, are the result of adverse emotional or physical experiences in childhood. Childhood abuse and dysfunctional households are linked with behaviors later in life which result in the development of chronic diseases that cause death and disability. *V.J. Felitti, R.F. Anda, et al. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. American Journal of Preventive Medicine.*

- Abused children are more likely to be obese, have diabetes, be physically inactive, have high use of health care resources, and score high on measures of psychosocial distress. Similarly, they are more likely to engage in early first intercourse, have an unintended pregnancy, have high lifetime numbers of sexual partners, and suffer from depression and suicide attempts. *V.J. Felitti, R.F. Anda, et al. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. American Journal of Preventive Medicine.*

Community Programs to Prevent Child Abuse

1. Support programs for new parents

- prenatal care: medical; education in child development; information on community resources
- special attention to first-time, teens, single parents
- postnatal care: medical care; sick infants at risk; enhance parent-child bonding

2. Education for parents

- new parents groups: create social networks/instruct in child care and child development
- knowledge about community health and social services
- home visitor services: periodic visits (birth to school); include child care, nutrition, home management, routine health checks

Examples of Successful Programs to Prevent Child Abuse

- A High/Scope Foundation study at the Perry Pre-School in Michigan offered at-risk toddlers a quality Head Start-style preschool program, supplemented by weekly in-home coaching for parents. Those who had been denied the services as toddlers were found, 22 years later, five times more likely to be chronic law breakers by the age of 27. The program led to an 80% drop in the number of chronic offenders.

- In Syracuse, New York, a program providing child development and health services for at-risk infants and toddlers and parenting support found that children denied the services were ten times more likely to become delinquent by age 16. The program cut delinquency by 90%.

- A Prenatal and Early Childhood Nurse Home Visitation Program, sponsored by the University of Rochester Medical School, provided low-income, first-time, teen mothers and babies home visits by a specially trained nurse during pregnancy and for two years after birth. Nurses provided coaching for parents on child development, child-rearing skills and children's health needs as well as connecting them with other community health and human service agencies and informal support networks of family and friends. By age 4, only 1 in 25 of those children receiving services, compared to 1 in 5 of the control group, had been abused or neglected. The program cut abuse rates by 80%.

- Hawaii Health Start offers new mothers the opportunity to enroll in a comprehensive program of services to families which provides preventative health care and home visits by professionals to train in parenting skills and child development and to offer counseling (95% accept services). Two studies have shown the program cut abuse and neglect by 50-60%.

Legislative Proposal

Amend juvenile justice, education, and child care legislation by adding "prevention of child abuse and neglect" to a list of permissible funded activities in an appropriate legislative section, or add the following to the bill:

> "voluntary, comprehensive, and culturally appropriate family support programs, including home visitor services, parenting education, and support services for new parents to prevent or decrease the risk of child maltreatment and increase children's readiness for school. To avoid duplication of services funded under this section, activities supported pursuant to this paragraph shall be coordinated with others that provide family support services."

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CHILD CARE: CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

High quality child care services are essential to a successful strategy for preventing child abuse. Most child abuse occurs when families are under stress. Research has suggested that the availability of quality child care helps alleviate that stress and increases family well-being.

Child care helps to prevent child abuse by:

- Assuring working parents that their children are well cared for and minimizing the stress of combining work and parenting;
- Increasing parents' skills in coping with the pressures of caring for their children;
- Enhancing communication between parents and children;
- Reducing family isolation;
- Improving access to social and health services for the family; and
- Offering some families respite from the daily demands of caring for their children.

Quality child care is a critical resource for 29 million young children living in families with working parents (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998). In 1995, 60 percent of preschool-age children routinely spent at least some time in non-parental care (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

In 1997, 62 percent of mothers with children younger than three, 69 percent with children aged three to five, and 78 percent with children aged six to thirteen, were in the labor force (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1997). In all of these cases the majority of mothers worked full-time.

Non-traditional work schedules are a reality for millions of American families. In 1995, 29 percent of the American workforce, and 34 percent of female employees, had nonstandard work arrangements (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998). The U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau found that mothers struggling to get off AFDC and TANF, who are able to find work, are likely to face jobs that require evening and weekend hours. Nearly one in five full-time workers (14.5 million) worked non-standard hours in 1991, and more than one in three (5 million) of these were women.

An analysis of child abuse and neglect reports reveals patterns that parallel many of the same families most in need of child care. Significant numbers of child abuse or neglect reports involve: families headed by a single parent; families with children under six years old; and low-income families or families receiving public assistance (American Humane Association, 1988; U.S. Dept. of HHS, 1996).

Any federal child care legislation must:

- Help improve the affordability, accessibility and quality, including health and safety, of child care and include extra support for infant child care, before and after school child care, child care in nontraditional work hours, and child care for children who have been abused or neglected;
- Increase the number of children in Early Head Start and expand funding for Head Start;
- Link child care to other support for parents, including services of home visitors, parent educators, and family support centers; and
- Support therapeutic child care for children with disabilities and other specialized services and treatment for abused and neglected children.

Any federal child care legislation must strengthen training for licensing personnel and child care staff to:

- Require training in the identification and reporting of suspected child maltreatment; and
- Require that training of child care workers to improve the quality of child care include education and skills training on preventing child maltreatment, including attention to the dangers of Shaken Baby Syndrome, especially for workers caring for infants.

Any federal child care legislation must do the following to assure quality care:

- Promote linkages between child care and social services (including CPS), health and mental health services, nutritional services, services for children with development delays and children with disabilities, and other services to support families;
- Give priority for funding to child care programs that provide opportunities for parental involvement and unlimited parental access, in order to reduce the likelihood of abuse;
- Support state and local efforts to improve and enforce standards of quality in child care services;
- Require criminal background checks of all child care workers; and
- Include on state child care licensing advisory boards representation from persons with expertise in the identification, prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

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NEA HUMAN & CIVIL RIGHTS ACTION SHEET

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Affecting increasing numbers of children each year, child abuse and neglect are national problems that beg a national solution. No part of the country escapes. No ethnic, religious, or socioeconomic group is immune. And all parts of society share in the solution.

According to *Child Maltreatment 1996*, over a million children—or 15 of every 1,000 children in this country—experience harm from abuse or neglect. The circumstances are varied: a parent's substance abuse or lack of parenting skills, a child's disability or difference, a family's marital or financial woes, or a community's economic stresses or struggles with poverty and racism. But, whatever the situation, public school employees are in a position to take note and do something about it.

School employees predominate as a source for recognizing maltreated children, identifying 59 percent of children who suffer harm (Sedlak and Broadhurst 1996). This is because maltreatment affects children's appearance, behavior, and academic performance. When children are injured, hungry, inappropriately dressed, or acting out sexually, school employees express concern. And, when good students suddenly score low on tests, refuse to change for gym, or keep missing the school bus, these same caring adults—teachers, coaches, nurses, bus drivers, and others—should know that something is wrong.

Not only can school employees take note of suspicious signs, but they must also report them, as required by law. And they do. Public school employees make the largest proportion of reports to child protective services agencies—almost 16 percent, says *Child Maltreatment 1996*.

Because this responsibility is taken so seriously, NEA has long supported its members and affiliates with policy and information. In 1974, the same year that Congress enacted the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the NEA Representative Assembly (RA) passed a resolution calling for all children to be protected from child abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Later, the RA passed a series of related resolutions for banning corporal punishment and for improving health care, nutrition, family stability, family and domestic relations, and crisis care.

Over the years, NEA has implemented these resolutions by developing an in-service training program, joining the National Child Abuse Coalition, continuing to support pro-child legislation, and producing materials. This action sheet was requested by the NEA Government Relations Committee.

NEA Resolution
Child Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

The National Education Association believes that all children should be protected from the psychological and physical aspects of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Association urges its affiliates to—

a. Seek clear legal definitions of what constitutes child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

b. Encourage the development of educators preparation courses and employee awareness programs which stress the identification of, reporting procedures for, legal responsibilities for, and techniques for dealing with abused, neglected, and exploited children

c. Cooperate with community organizations to increase public awareness and understanding of the prevalence as well as the causes, prevention, and treatment of child abuse, including neglect, exploitation, incest, and physical abuse

d. Encourage the development and use of materials to increase student awareness of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

e. Require school personnel to report to appropriate authorities instances of suspected child abuse, neglect, and exploitation while providing school personnel with immunity from legal action

f. Encourage development of legislatively funded provisions for dealing with the abusive child, adult, or institution as well as processes, protective options, and coping provisions for the abused, neglected, and exploited child

g. Encourage enactment of legislation for protection of children from parents/guardians who demonstrate neglect by leaving them unattended/unsupervised

h. Encourage positive action from the marketing and media professions in eliminating exploitation, commercialization, and glamorization of physical, emotional, and sexual child abuse.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Definitions of child abuse and neglect guide efforts to protect children. According to Diana English (1998), Chief of Research at the Washington State Office of Children's Research, the states define maltreatment based on minimal standards outlined in CAPTA. Because of the need to balance the protection of children with an appropriate governmental intervention, the definitions, says English, are broad in some states and narrow in others. In addition, some definitions are based on the harm standard—which includes observable harm—and some on the endangerment standard—which includes the threat of harm.

As outlined by English and the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, the generally accepted definitions of the types of abuse and neglect are as follows:

- Child neglect occurs when caretakers fail to provide for children's basic physical, educational, and emotional needs, such as for food, clothing, shelter, affection, and supervision. Such neglect includes abandonment; inattention to medical and school needs; and permission to be truant, to use drugs, or to engage in criminal activity.

- Physical abuse occurs when caretakers inflict nonaccidental physical injury on children. The abuse is characterized by bruises, fractures, and wounds that result from beating, burning, kicking, punching, shaking, stabbing, and excessive spanking.

- Sexual abuse occurs when family members or other caretakers use children for their own sexual stimulation. The abuse includes fondling, intercourse, rape, incest, and sodomy.

- Emotional abuse occurs when caretakers corrupt, terrorize, or chronically reject children. Hard to identify, according to researchers, it includes sustained and repetitive verbal abuse, denial of sleep, and exposure to spousal abuse.

BREADTH AND SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

How often do these types of abuse and neglect occur? Is the incidence increasing? And how are different groups of chiildren affected?

The answers to these questions are contained in two major reports of the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN). *Child Maltreatment*, giving a statistical view of the problem, is an annual report of the actual substantiated and unsubstantiated cases that are collected by the states. The *National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect,* of which there have been three, gives a broad picture of the problem from the view of the professionals who work with children—over 5,600 professionals in 842 agencies in 42 counties (Sedlak and Broadhurst 1996). It reports this data under both the harm and endangerment standards.

Occurrence. Neglect is the most common form of child maltreatment, followed by physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse (DePanfilis 1992; Tower 1992). According to *Child Maltreatment 1996*, about 52 percent of the maltreatment consists of various forms of neglect, including medical neglect.

Increasing incidence. Both major NCCAN reports show substantial increases in child abuse and neglect over time. *Child Maltreatment 1996* shows that victimization increased by 18 percent between 1990 and 1996. The *Third National Incidence Study on Child Abuse and Neglect* shows that abuse reported to professionals quadrupled between 1986 and 1993 (Sedlak and Broadhurst 1996). And the amount of abuse that is actually investigated by child protective services is only the tip of the iceberg.

Abused children. All groups of children are vulnerable to child abuse and neglect but not to the same degree. Based on NCCAN reports (DePanfilis 1992, Sedlak and Broadhurst 1996), children's gender, age, and race are generally related to the rate of maltreatment, as follows:

- Gender: Girls are sexually abused more often than boys, under both the harm and endangerment standards. However, boys are at greater risk of serious physical injury and of emotional neglect. And gays and lesbians are more vulnerable to verbal abuse and physical and sexual assault, especially during their adolescence (Ryan and Futterman 1998).
- Age: As children age, neglect decreases but physical, sexual, and emotional abuse increases. Maximum risk is associated with the middle years (ages 6 to 11).
- Race: According to *Child Maltreatment 1996*, the victimization of children in some groups is disproportionate to their representation in the general population. Blacks and American Indians/Alaska Natives are overrepresented, and Asians/Pacific Islanders are underrepresented. The victimization of Hispanic children is proportional. However, the *Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect* finds race unrelated to the rate of maltreatment. Instead, it attributes disproportional representation data to differences in the attention that children of different groups receive in the child welfare system. The latest data on child abuse and race appear in Table 1.

To reverse the dismal statistics and break the cycle of child abuse and neglect, schools, communities, and families must work cooperatively. NEA calls this the Safe Schools Framework, which it expresses in the equation—Safe Children = Safe Schools + Safe Communities + Safe Families.

In addition, schools, communities, and families must understand the three types of prevention efforts that are used in the public health field. Originally applied to child abuse by pediatrician Ray Helfer, the three types are primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention (National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information).

- Primary prevention programs focus on the general population and seek to stop the problem before it starts. Examples are public service announcements about nonviolent methods of discipline, parent education programs, and public awareness campaigns. Primary prevention efforts also include providing to all students in a school district an education program about sexual abuse (DePanfilis 1992).

Table 1. Type of Maltreatment by Race/Ethnicity of Victim, DCDC[1]

Race/Ethnicity	Type of Maltreatment					Totals
	Physical Abuse	Neglect	Medical Neglect[2]	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Maltreatment	
White	33,181 (56.1%)	76,967 (52.3%)	4,224 (41.3%)	17,978 (64.8%)	7,130 (68.9%)	139,480 (54.8%)
African American	16,406 (27.7%)	50,401 (34.3%)	4,509 (44.0%)	5,339 (19.2%)	1,684 (16.3%)	78,339 (30.8%)
Hispanic	8,053 (13.6%)	16,447 (11.2%)	1,299 (12.7%)	3,901 (14.1%)	1,265 (12.2%)	30,965 (12.2%)
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	670 (1.1%)	2,018 (1.4%)	145 (1.4%)	349 (1.3%)	167 (1.6%)	3,349 (1.3%)
Asian/ Pacific Islander	842 (1.4%)	1,275 (0.9%)	61 (0.6%)	198 (0.7%)	104 (1.0%)	2,480 (1.0%)
Totals	59,152 (100.0%)	147,108 (100.0%)	10,238 (100.0%)	27,765 (100.0%)	10,350 (100.0%)	254,613 (100.0%)

[1]DCDC refers to the Detailed Case Data Component of the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System. The other component is the Summary Data Component (SDC).

[2]Medical neglect figures refer to children whose basic needs are being met but whose medical needs are not being met for financial reasons or because of religious or other exemptions that are outlined in state statutes.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau. *1998. Child Maltreatment, 1996: Reports from the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Table 2-5.

Secondary prevention programs focus on high-risk families that may be young, poor, or substance abusing. The programs seek to stop an existing problem from worsening. Examples are school-based parent education programs for teen mothers, substance abuse treatment for parents of young children, respite care for parents of special-needs children, and social services offered by full-service schools in distressed neighborhoods.

Tertiary prevention programs focus on abusive families. The programs seek to stop an existing problem from spreading to the next generation by preventing children from developing emotional and academic problems that will, in turn, affect their children. Examples are family preservation counseling services, parent mentor programs, and mental health services to improve family communications and functioning.

Public schools are key to the success of all of these programs, especially at the primary prevention level. According to Cynthia Crosson Tower (1992), school-based programs can provide services to students, communities, and families as shown in Table 2.

Tower also finds public schools essential in two other ways. After a report of child abuse is made, school employees can be supportive of families during the investigation, treatment and rehabilitation processes. And, if a child gets into trouble at school, they can invite parents to meetings to discuss misbehavior or failing grades in a positive manner rather than sending home notes that could reinforce parents' negative feelings about that child.

Tower also urges schools to comply with state and municipal statutes banning corporal punishment. According to the National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools (1998), 27 states and many cities and school boards ban this practice.

In addition to banning abusive practices, legislation enables government and community agencies to resolve the problem of child abuse and neglect. Key federal laws are as follows (Schene 1998; NCCAN 1998):

- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). Originally enacted in 1974 as PL 93-247, this law was amended several times, most recently by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1996 (PL 104-235). CAPTA defines child abuse and neglect; authorizes federal funding to the states for prevention, assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment; provides grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for demonstration programs and projects; and authorizes the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to establish a universal and case-specific national data collection and analysis program on child maltreatment. The 1996 amendments address delays in termination of parental rights, the lack of public oversight of child protection, and the problems of false reports of abuse and neglect. The amendments also help states to establish and expand networks of family resources programs.

- Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (PL 105-89). This groundbreaking law is designed to make child protection services more responsive to the complex needs of children and families. It establishes a timeframe for terminating parental rights, shortens the timeframe for providing services to families in crisis, and promotes the speedier adoption of children who cannot return to their natural parents. It also encourages states to develop innovative strategies to help children and families.

  National Child Protection Act of 1993 (PL 103-209). This law encourages states to enact legislation authorizing fingerprint-based national searches of the criminal history records of people who seek paid or volunteer jobs with organizations that serve children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

- Expansion of Megan's Law (PL 104-145), amending the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act. This law requires state and local law enforcement officials to publicize relevant information for protecting the community whenever a person who has been convicted of crimes against children and of sexually violent offenses is released from prison or placed on parole, probation, or supervised release.

Table 2. School-Based Programs To Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

School-Based Programs for Students	School-Based Programs for Communities	School-Based Programs for Families
Life Skills Training: socialization, problem-solving, and coping skills, and preparation for adulthood	Training and Staff Development: identification, reporting, treatment, and prevention of child abuse and neglect	Help for At-Risk Families: after-school childcare and recreation, identification of adolescents with problems
Preparation for Parenthood: child development, parenting skills, and sexuality education (as opposed to just teaching about sexual abuse)	Public Awareness Programs: cosponsoring events with parent-teacher groups and school-community organizations	Support for Teen Parents and their Children
Self-Protection Training	Use of School Facilities and Resources: making meeting rooms available for self-help groups, public forums, and workshops on child abuse and neglect	

Source: Table 2 summarizes text from Cynthia Crosson Tower. 1992. *The Role of Educators in the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect.* The User Manual Series. Washington, DC: National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. pp 51-55.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS

- ☐ Add a child abuse and neglect task force to your safe schools committee. For background and how-to information on NEA's total-community method for making children safe, see the *Safe Schools Manual: A Resource on Making Schools, Communities, and Families Safe for Children.* For a copy, contact NEA Human and Civil Rights, or visit NEA's Web site at *www.nea.org*

- ☐ Observe Child Abuse Prevention Month every April. Call the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information at 800-FYI-3366 or 703-385-7565, or visit the Web site at *www.calib.com/nccanch/prevmnth/intro.htm*

- ☐ Participate in Stand for Children Day every June. Contact Stand for Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20009. Call 202-234-0217 or 800-663-4032, or visit the Web site at *www.stand.org*

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations (COSSMHO)
1501 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
Voice: 202-387-5000
www.cossmho.org

National Black Child Development Institute, Inc.
1023 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
Voice: 202-387-1281
www.nbcdi.org

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information
330 C Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20447
Voice: 800-FYI-3366 or 703-385-7565
www.calib/nccanch

National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools
155 W. Main Street, Suite 100B
Columbus, OH 43215
Voice: 614-221-8829
www.stophitting.com

National Indian Child Welfare Association
3611 SW Hood Street, Suite 201
Portland OR 97201
Voice: 503-222-4044
www.nicwa.org

Vietnamese Resettlement Association
6131 Willston Drive, Room 6
Falls Church, VA 22044
Voice: 703-532-3716.

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Human and Civil Rights
(202) 822-7700

nea

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-3290

November 1998

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE COALITION
733-15th Street NW · Suite 930 · Washington · DC 20005 Phone 202 · 347-3666

CHILD CARE: CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

High quality child care services are essential to a successful strategy for preventing child abuse. Most child abuse occurs when families are under stress. Research has suggested that the availability of quality child care helps alleviate that stress and increases family well-being.

Child care helps to prevent child abuse by:

- Assuring working parents that their children are well cared for and minimizing the stress of combining work and parenting;
- Increasing parents' skills in coping with the pressures of caring for their children;
- Enhancing communication between parents and children;
- Reducing family isolation;
- Improving access to social and health services for the family; and
- Offering some families respite from the daily demands of caring for their children.

Quality child care is a critical resource for 29 million young children living in families with working parents (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998). In 1995, 60 percent of preschool-age children routinely spent at least some time in non-parental care (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

In 1997, 62 percent of mothers with children younger than three, 69 percent with children aged three to five, and 78 percent with children aged six to thirteen, were in the labor force (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1997). In all of these cases the majority of mothers worked full-time.

Non-traditional work schedules are a reality for millions of American families. In 1995, 29 percent of the American workforce, and 34 percent of female employees, had nonstandard work arrangements (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998). The U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau found that mothers struggling to get off AFDC and TANF, who are able to find work, are likely to face jobs that require evening and weekend hours. Nearly one in five full-time workers (14.5 million) worked non-standard hours in 1991, and more than one in three (5 million) of these were women.

An analysis of child abuse and neglect reports reveals patterns that parallel many of the same families most in need of child care. Significant numbers of child abuse or neglect reports involve: families headed by a single parent; families with children under six years old; and low-income families or families receiving public assistance (American Humane Association, 1988; U.S. Dept. of HHS, 1996).

Any federal child care legislation must:

- Help improve the affordability, accessibility and quality, including health and safety, of child care and include extra support for infant child care, before and after school child care, child care in nontraditional work hours, and child care for children who have been abused or neglected;
- Increase the number of children in Early Head Start and expand funding for Head Start;
- Link child care to other support for parents, including services of home visitors, parent educators, and family support centers; and
- Support therapeutic child care for children with disabilities and other specialized services and treatment for abused and neglected children.

Any federal child care legislation must strengthen training for licensing personnel and child care staff to:

- Require training in the identification and reporting of suspected child maltreatment; and
- Require that training of child care workers to improve the quality of child care include education and skills training on preventing child maltreatment, including attention to the dangers of Shaken Baby Syndrome, especially for workers caring for infants.

Any federal child care legislation must do the following to assure quality care:

- Promote linkages between child care and social services (including CPS), health and mental health services, nutritional services, services for children with development delays and children with disabilities, and other services to support families;
- Give priority for funding to child care programs that provide opportunities for parental involvement and unlimited parental access, in order to reduce the likelihood of abuse;
- Support state and local efforts to improve and enforce standards of quality in child care services;
- Require criminal background checks of all child care workers; and
- Include on state child care licensing advisory boards representation from persons with expertise in the identification, prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

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1. Annie E. Casey Foundation. (1998). Kids Count Data Book, Baltimore, MD.
2. U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (1995). Child Care and Early Education Program participation of Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers. Washington, DC.
3. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (1997). Marital and Family Characteristics of the Labor Force. Washington, DC.
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6. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Administration for Children and Families. (1996). Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect. Washington, DC.

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE COALITION
733-15th Street NW · Suite 938 · Washington · DC 20005 Phone 202 • 347-3666

PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

Child Abuse Prevention Fights Crime

• Victims of child abuse are more likely to engage in criminality later in life. Over two-thirds (68%) of youths arrested have a prior history of abuse and neglect. Childhood abuse increases the odds of future delinquency and adult criminality overall by 40 percent. Abused and neglected girls fare worse: girls who were abused and neglected in childhood are 77 percent more likely to be arrested as juveniles. In addition, abused or neglected male and female youths are more likely to be arrested one year earlier, to commit twice as many offenses, and to be arrested more frequently than youths who were not abused or neglected. *C. S. Widom (1992). The Cycle of Violence. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.*

Early childhood sexual and physical abuse increase the risk of arrest as a juvenile for being a runaway. Adults abused as children are at higher risk of arrest for sex crimes. Findings also suggest an association for males between physical abuse and arrests for violent sex crimes, such as rape and sodomy. *C.S. Widom & M.A. Ames (1994). Criminal Consequences of Childhood Sexual Victimization. Child Abuse and Neglect. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.*

Preventing Child Maltreatment Helps to Prevent Failure in School

• Abused and neglected children suffer poor prospects for success in school. According to a 1976 study, one-third of abused children aged four and a half were found to have significant neurological damage, and in all cases, learning and emotional behavior were affected in maltreated youngsters of school age. Typically, abused and neglected children in school exhibit poor initiative, language and other developmental delays, a disproportionate amount of incompetence and failure, and inappropriate behavior in peer and adult relationships. *S.R. Morgan (1976). The Battered Child in the Classroom. Journal of Pediatric Psychology.*

• Research into the emotional development of abused children reveals children with negative self-concepts, low self-esteem, aggressive behavior, difficulty in relating to peers and adults, impaired capacity to trust others, and general unhappiness – all characteristics of a child not expected to do well in the classroom. *E.M. Kinard (1979). The Psychological Consequences of Abuse for the Child. Journal of Social Issues.*

Preventing Child Abuse Can Help to Prevent Disabling Conditions in Children

- Physical abuse of children can result in brain damage, mental retardation, cerebral palsy, and learning disorders. *H.P. Martin & M.A. Rodeheffer (1980). The Psychological Impact of Abuse in Children. In: G.J. Williams. Traumatic Abuse and Neglect of Children at Home. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.*

- High incidences of retardation, growth and neurological problems, and impaired emotional functioning are found among physically abused children. Abused or neglected children are disproportionately represented in special education classes. Approximately 25 percent of sexually abused children involved in one study were in classes for the emotionally disturbed. *D.F. Kline (1977). The Consequences of Neglected Cases. In: A.M. Thomas. Children Alone: What Can Be Done About Abuse and Neglect. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.*

Preventing Child Abuse Helps Prevent Serious Illnesses Later in Llife

- Many of the most common causes of death and disability in this country, such as heart disease, cancer, chronic lung and liver diseases, and skeletal fracture, are the result of adverse emotional or physical experiences in childhood. Childhood abuse and dysfunctional households are linked with behaviors later in life which result in the development of chronic diseases that cause death and disability. *V.J. Felitti, R.F. Anda, et al. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. American Journal of Preventive Medicine.*

- Abused children are more likely to be obese, have diabetes, be physically inactive, have high use of health care resources, and score high on measures of psychosocial distress. Similarly, they are more likely to engage in early first intercourse, have an unintended pregnancy, have high lifetime numbers of sexual partners, and suffer from depression and suicide attempts. *V.J. Felitti, R.F. Anda, et al. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. American Journal of Preventive Medicine.*

Community Programs to Prevent Child Abuse

1. Support programs for new parents
- prenatal care: medical; education in child development; information on community resources
- special attention to first-time, teens, single parents
- postnatal care: medical care; sick infants at risk; enhance parent-child bonding

2. Education for parents
- new parents groups: create social networks/instruct in child care and child development
- knowledge about community health and social services
- home visitor services: periodic visits (birth to school); include child care, nutrition, home management, routine health checks

Examples of Successful Programs to Prevent Child Abuse

- A High/Scope Foundation study at the Perry Pre-School in Michigan offered at-risk toddlers a quality Head Start-style preschool program, supplemented by weekly in-home coaching for parents. Those who had been denied the services as toddlers were found, 22 years later, five times more likely to be chronic law breakers by the age of 27. The program led to an 80% drop in the number of chronic offenders.

- In Syracuse, New York, a program providing child development and health services for at-risk infants and toddlers and parenting support found that children denied the services were ten times more likely to become delinquent by age 16. The program cut delinquency by 90%.

- A Prenatal and Early Childhood Nurse Home Visitation Program, sponsored by the University of Rochester Medical School, provided low-income, first-time, teen mothers and babies home visits by a specially trained nurse during pregnancy and for two years after birth. Nurses provided coaching for parents on child development, child-rearing skills and children's health needs as well as connecting them with other community health and human service agencies and informal support networks of family and friends. By age 4, only 1 in 25 of those children receiving services, compared to 1 in 5 of the control group, had been abused or neglected. The program cut abuse rates by 80%.

- Hawaii Health Start offers new mothers the opportunity to enroll in a comprehensive program of services to families which provides preventative health care and home visits by professionals to train in parenting skills and child development and to offer counseling (95% accept services). Two studies have shown the program cut abuse and neglect by 50-60%.

Legislative Proposal

Amend juvenile justice, education, and child care legislation by adding "prevention of child abuse and neglect" to a list of permissible funded activities in an appropriate legislative section, or add the following to the bill:

> "voluntary, comprehensive, and culturally appropriate family support programs, including home visitor services, parenting education, and support services for new parents to prevent or decrease the risk of child maltreatment and increase children's readiness for school. To avoid duplication of services funded under this section, activities supported pursuant to this paragraph shall be coordinated with others that provide family support services."

Prevent Child Abuse America

Prevent Child Abuse America

200 South Michigan Avenue
17th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604-2404
312.663.3520 *tel*
312.939.8962 *fax*
ncpca@childabuse.org
www.childabuse.org

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Contact:

Kevin Kirkpatrick
Director, Marketing & Communications
312.663.3520 ext. 110

Child Abuse Bucks U.S. Crime Trends and Continues to Rise

One-Half of U.S. Parents Report Neglecting Their Child's Emotional Needs, According to Prevent Child Abuse America

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 30, 1999 – While overall U.S. crime statistics are on the decline, reports and confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect continue to rise, according to data released today by Prevent Child Abuse America, formerly the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse. At the same time, a new study commissioned by Prevent Child Abuse America found that nearly one-half of U.S. parents reported neglecting their child's emotional needs, most on a daily basis.

Although the nation's overall crime rate fell more than 21 percent from 1993 to 1997, reports of child abuse and neglect grew by 8 percent and confirmed cases increased 4 percent during this same period, according to Prevent Child Abuse America *(see table 1)*. The data, based on surveys by Prevent Child Abuse America and the U.S. Department of Justice, was released by Prevent Child Abuse America on the eve of April's observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month at a news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

"Child abuse is the only violent social problem we face that isn't getting better," said A. Sidney Johnson III, executive director of Prevent Child Abuse America. "As a society, we're making great progress in reducing violent crime, property crime and robbery, and awareness of child abuse and neglect is at an all-time high, yet our children are being victimized more than ever."

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Alarming Statistics

According to Johnson, twice as many U.S. children are reported for abuse and neglect annually as are enrolled in a Head Start program, based on data from a 1998 study reported in *Early Childhood News*. According to Prevent Child Abuse America, the statistics are alarming, particularly in the context of other issues gathering media attention.

"We hear a lot of talk about air bag safety with regard to children, and it certainly is a serious issue, since 67 children died in automobile crashes involving air bags between 1993 and 1997," explained Maura Somers Dughi, president of the Board of Directors for Prevent Child Abuse America. "But in the same five-year period, nearly 5,000 children died from abuse or neglect at the hands of the parent or guardian responsible for their care."

Of children under five who were killed during the period 1976 through 1997, 54 percent were killed by a parent, 30 percent by an acquaintance or other relative, and 15 percent were killed by strangers or unknown persons, according to the Bureau of Justice Homicide Statistics.

According to Prevent Child Abuse America's survey of all 50 states and the District of Columbia, 47 out of 1,000 children were reported as abused or neglected and 15 children out of 1,000 were confirmed as abused or neglected in 1997 (the last year for which complete data is available). This means that child abuse is much more pervasive than other types of violent victimization. The 1998 National Crime Victimization Study reported in 1998 that there were 13 car thefts, 8 aggravated assaults, 4.2 robberies and 1.5 rapes per 1,000 U.S. households.

U.S. Parents Report Neglecting Their Children

For 13 years, Prevent Child Abuse America has commissioned national public opinion polls to determine the public's attitudes and actions with respect to child abuse prevention. The first survey, in December 1986, was conducted by Louis Harris. Subsequent surveys, including the 1999 survey, have been conducted by Schulman, Ronca and Bucavalas of New York City.

The consistency of the survey by Prevent Child Abuse America both in its application and measurement strategies offers a unique data source for assessing the impacts of public education efforts over time and changes in public attitudes and perceptions. Each survey has involved a nationally representative telephone survey of 1,250 randomly selected adults across the country. The study's results are subject to a sampling error of +/- three percentage points.

The most recent survey commissioned by Prevent Child Abuse America, completed in late February, found the following:

- 37 percent of American parents had reported insulting or swearing at their children within the past 12 months
- 50 percent had neglected their child's emotional needs, with 60 percent of these respondents indicating that this neglect took place "almost every day"
- 6 percent had hit, or tried to hit, their children with their hands or with a foreign object
- 1 percent had kicked, bit or punched their children within the last 12 months

"It may not sound alarming to say that one percent of parents in America report that they kicked, bit or punched their children in the past 12 months," said Johnson. "But, one percent of the estimated 103 million parents of children under 17 years of age in this country still amounts to a large number of children, and that only accounts for the parents who admit to engaging in this behavior."

According to the survey commissioned by Prevent Child Abuse America, 64 percent of Americans believe child abuse and neglect have gotten worse in the past seven years, while 24 percent think they have remained the same.

"These statistics tell us that Americans recognize the seriousness of child abuse and neglect," explained Johnson. "Our job at Prevent Child Abuse America remains to help translate that public recognition into action, particularly in support of prevention programs that work, like Healthy Families America."

An initiative of Prevent Child Abuse America, Healthy Families America (HFA) is a voluntary home visiting program with three equally important goals: to promote positive parenting, to encourage child health and development, and to prevent child abuse and neglect. With 320 sites in 39 states, each HFA program is implemented on the local level by public and private partnerships, including business and community leaders, faith groups, healthcare providers, local and state governments, social service agencies and parents.

With chapters in 42 states, Prevent Child Abuse America (formerly the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse) is the leading organization working at the national, state and local levels to prevent child abuse in all its forms. Headquartered in Chicago, Prevent Child Abuse America was founded in 1972 with an endowment from the Donna J. Stone Foundation.

More information about child abuse prevention is available by calling 1-800-CHILDREN or by accessing the organization's website, www.childabuse.org.

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Table 1: Changing Trends in Crime & Criminal Victimization

Type of Crime	Change 1993-1997
Child Abuse & Neglect (Reports)	↑ 8%
Child Abuse & Neglect (Confirmed)	↑ 4%
Violent Victimizations (age 12+)	↓ 22%
Property crimes	↓ 22%
Murder	↓ 28%
Overall crime rate	↓ 21%

Sources:
Wang and Daro (1998, April). Current Trends in Child Abuse Reporting and Fatalities: The Results of the 1997 Annual Fifty State Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America.

Bureau of Justice Statistics (1998). Criminal Victimization 1997: Changes 1996-97 with Trends 1993-97. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

Prevent Child Abuse America

200 S. Michigan Avenue
17th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604.2404
312.663.3520 *tel*
312.939.8962 *fax*
ncpca@childabuse.org
www.childabuse.org

Key Facts

Contact:
Kevin Kirkpatrick
Director, Marketing & Communications
312.663.3520 ext. 110

Key Facts on Child Abuse & Neglect

- While the nation's overall crime rate fell 22 percent from 1993 to 1997, reports of child abuse and neglect grew by 8 percent and confirmed cases increased 4 percent.[1]
- During the period 1993-1997, Prevent Child Abuse America estimates that over 5,000 children died from abuse or neglect in the United States.[2]
- Forty-seven out of 1,000 children were reported as abused or neglected and 15 children out of 1,000 were confirmed as abused or neglected in 1997.[3]
- A child in the United States is twice as likely to be reported as abused or neglected as to be enrolled in the Head Start program.[4]
- Thirty-seven percent of American parents report insulting or swearing at their children within the last 12 months.[5]
- Fifty percent of American parents report neglecting their child's emotional needs, with 60 percent saying this neglect takes place "almost every day."[6]
- One third of all Americans have witnessed an adult physically abuse a child and two-thirds have seen an adult emotionally abuse a child.[7]
- Of those Americans who have witnessed child abuse, 44 percent failed to respond in any way.[8]

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[1] Wang and Daro (1998, April). Current Trends in Child Abuse Reporting and Fatalities: The Results of the 1997 Annual Fifty State Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America. (AND) Bureau of Justice Statistics (1998). Criminal Victimization 1997: Changes 1996-97 with Trends 1993-97. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.
[2] Wang and Daro (1998, April). Current Trends in Child Abuse Reporting and Fatalities: The Results of the 1997 Annual Fifty State Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Shaw, Megan (1998). *Early Childhood News*. Dayton, OH: Peter Li Education Group.
[5] Kirkpatrick, Kevin (1999, March). 1999 Public Awareness Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.

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17th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604.2404
312.663.3520 *tel*
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Key Facts

Contact:
Kevin Kirkpatrick
Director, Marketing & Communications
312.663.3520 ext. 110

Key Facts on Home Visiting to Prevent Child Abuse

- Seventy-four percent of surveyed Americans believe voluntary home visits by a private or public agency in the first weeks after the birth of their first child would have been useful. Only 14 percent reported receiving such support.[1]

- Of those parents who did receive home visits after the birth of their first child, 82 percent described them as useful.[2]

- Sixty-seven percent of Americans believe lack of parenting experience or skills is among the primary reasons for child abuse and neglect.[3]

- Of the Healthy Families America (HFA) sites surveyed nationwide, 90 percent or more of children whose parents are enrolled in HFA are up-to-date on their immunizations and are keeping appointments for well-baby check-ups. More than 94 percent of participating parents have identified an appropriate and stable source of medical care for their child.[4]

- In Florida, a study ongoing since 1993 found that less than one percent of the 1,635 children served by Healthy Families America were reported for child abuse during the study period, compared to a county-wide rate of more than 5%.[5]

- In Oregon, the 1997 statewide immunization rate for two-year-old children is 73 percent, while the immunization rate for children whose parents are participating in HFA is 97 percent.[6]

- In Virginia, 97 percent of participating parents said HFA had improved their parenting.[7]

- In Arizona, HFA participants spent 121 fewer days on public aid, had 200 fewer days on food stamps and 73 fewer days on Medicaid, compared to families with similar profiles, resulting in significant savings to the state.[8]

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[1] Kirkpatrick, Kevin (1999, March). 1999 Public Awareness Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Daro and Harding (1999). Healthy Families America: Using Research to Enhance Practice. Chicago: National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.

Prevent Child Abuse America

200 South Michigan Avenue
17th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604.2404
312.663.3520 *tel*
312.939.8962 *fax*
ncpca@childabuse.org
www.childabuse.org

News Release

Release:

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March 30, 1999

Contact:

Kevin Kirkpatrick
Director, Marketing & Communications
312.663.3520 ext. 110

Fifty Percent of Americans Do Nothing When They Witness Child Abuse or Neglect

New Study by Prevent Child Abuse America Reveals Alarming Trends in How Americans Respond to Child Abuse

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 30, 1999 – Three in ten Americans have witnessed an adult physically abuse a child and two in three Americans have seen an adult emotionally abuse a child *(see table 1)*. Yet nearly half of these Americans failed to respond to the incident, according to a study released today by Prevent Child Abuse America, formerly the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse.

Of the 1,250 Americans surveyed, 44 percent failed to respond upon observing child abuse, with one-half of these individuals reporting that they had no idea how to respond effectively *(see table 2)*. Of those who claimed to have done something in response to the situation, 55 percent reported that they had given the offending adult a disapproving look and 63 percent claimed to have verbally reprimanded the adult. According to Prevent Child Abuse America, these responses can be counterproductive and may further endanger the child.

"The research shows that most Americans fail to respond effectively when they encounter child abuse or neglect in a public place because they don't know what to do," explained A. Sidney Johnson III, executive director of Prevent Child Abuse America. "Clearly, there is a need to give all citizens the information they need to respond to these situations in a helpful, effective and safe manner."

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To educate the general public on appropriate and effective responses to child abuse in a public place, Prevent Child Abuse America has launched a new public service campaign. The campaign includes brochures and posters offering advice on positive parenting and on how to respond effectively when observing child abuse or neglect in a public place.

With funding from Target Stores, a longtime supporter of the organization's child abuse prevention programs, the materials are being distributed through Prevent Child Abuse America's nationwide network of chapters, offering the following tips for responding to child abuse or neglect in a public place:

- Start a conversation with the adult to direct attention away from the child. For example: "My child gets upset like that, too."
- Divert the child's attention (if misbehaving) by talking to the child.
- Look for an opportunity to praise the child or parent.
- If the child is in danger, offer assistance.
- Avoid negative remarks or looks, which are likely to increase the parent's anger and could make matters worse.

New Identity for Nation's Leading Child Abuse Prevention Organization

The public service campaign is part of a major effort to communicate the new name for Prevent Child Abuse America, which has previously been known as the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse. With 27 years of experience and a network of 42 state chapters, Prevent Child Abuse America is the leading organization working at the national, state and local levels to prevent child abuse in all its forms.

In addition to educating the public about effective responses to child abuse, the campaign is intended to better communicate the nationwide breadth of Prevent Child Abuse America's capabilities and the depth of its commitment to end child abuse. The announcement of the organization's new name and public service campaign came on the eve of April's observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month at a news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

Previously, the national organization and its chapters had not followed any standardized model in the use of name or logo, confounding efforts to demonstrate nationwide unity of the organization, its capabilities and its mission. Prevent Child Abuse America had determined that improved clarity of its national identity and heightened awareness of its capabilities could further strengthen its efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect.

"Prevent Child Abuse America – as a national organization and as a network of state chapters – brings an incredible breadth of knowledge and capabilities to the prevention of child abuse and neglect," said Maura Somers Dughi, president of the Board of Directors for Prevent Child Abuse America. "Under our new national identity, it will be easier to demonstrate the strength and value of this knowledge and these capabilities on the local, state and national levels."

Twenty-six state chapters have already changed their names to reflect the national organization's model, as in the case of Prevent Child Abuse California, Prevent Child Abuse Illinois and Prevent Child Abuse New York. Ten other chapters are expected to change their names in the next six months.

New TV and Radio Awareness Campaign Launched

In conjunction with the organization's new name, Prevent Child Abuse America is launching a nationwide campaign of television and radio public service announcements. The energetic and uplifting television spots feature children speaking directly into the camera to offer their thoughts on "What Kids Are Made Of." Complementary radio spots have also been produced. Both television and radio spots are being distributed nationally by the Advertising Council.

The media campaign has been adapted from one originally developed by the Partnership to Prevent Child Abuse, a Connecticut alliance of public and private concerns dedicated to empowering and educating communities and individuals to recognize the vital role they play in child abuse prevention. The partnership includes the Connecticut Center for Prevention of Child Abuse, a chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America.

The spots were produced by Cronin and Company, Inc., of Glastonbury, Conn., which donated its time as part of its 50th anniversary celebration. Response to the campaign was so strong throughout the state, that the Connecticut chapter and its advertising agency, in collaboration with the Partnership to Prevent Child Abuse, approached Prevent Child Abuse America about national distribution.

"We were impressed and thrilled by our Connecticut chapter's television and radio spots from the very start and couldn't have been happier to adapt them for use nationally," said Johnson. "Our chapters are producing incredibly powerful and creative public awareness materials, and we're pleased to be able to work with our chapters whenever possible to share these great materials with the rest of the country."

Headquartered in Chicago, Prevent Child Abuse America was founded in 1972 with an endowment from the Donna J. Stone Foundation and is dedicated to the prevention of child abuse in all its forms. Supported by private and corporate donors, the organization is widely known for its public awareness, education, prevention programs, advocacy and research. More information about child abuse prevention is available by calling 1-800-CHILDREN or by accessing the organization's website, www.childabuse.org.

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Table 1: Personal Observations of Child Abuse and Neglect

Observations of Child Abuse or Neglect	Percentage Responding in the Affirmative
Have you seen an adult physically abuse a child?	32%
Have you seen an adult emotionally abuse a child (e.g., insult, taunt or harass)?	66%
Have you seen an adult neglect a child (e.g., ignore a child's needs, fail to feed or clothe properly or withhold affection)?	47%

Source: Kirkpatrick, Kevin (1999, March). 1999 Public Awareness Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America.

Table 2: Reasons for Failing to Respond to Observations of Child Abuse and Neglect

Reasons for Failing to Respond	Percentage Responding in the Affirmative
Didn't think it was any of my business	57%
Didn't know what the proper response might be	50%
Afraid other people might interpret response as overreacting	23%
Concerned for own personal safety	19%
Thought the parent's actions might be justified	17%

Source: Kirkpatrick, Kevin (1999, March). 1999 Public Awareness Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America.

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Kevin Kirkpatrick
Director, Marketing & Communications
312.663.3520 ext. 110

U.S. Parents Want Help With Newborns

Lack of Experience and Skill Seen as Reason for Increased Child Abuse and Neglect

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 30, 1999 – An overwhelming majority of American parents (74 percent) wish they had received assistance in learning how to take care of their newborns, according to a study released today by Prevent Child Abuse America, formerly the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse. At the same time, such assistance is rarely provided.

In addition, the majority of Americans (67 percent) believe that lack of parenting experience or skills is among the primary reasons for child abuse and neglect *(see table 1)*. Lack of experience and skills in proper parenting was the second most cited reason for abuse and neglect, behind drug and alcohol abuse, according to the study commissioned by Prevent Child Abuse America. Results of the study were released by the organization on the eve of April's observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month at a news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

While 74 percent responded that voluntary home visits by a private or public agency in the first weeks after the birth of their first child would have been useful, only 14 percent reported receiving such support. Of those who did receive such visits, 82 percent described them as useful. Sixty percent of new parents received donations of food, clothing or baby equipment during the first six months after the birth of their child.

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"As a society, we're good at helping parents make sure the baby dresses well and is fed properly," said A. Sidney Johnson III, executive director of Prevent Child Abuse America. "But when it comes to helping them learn how to become good parents, they're on their own."

Seventy-two percent of American parents surveyed would have welcomed a visit by a home visitor in their hospital rooms after the birth of their first child to determine if they wanted or needed any help in caring for the child. More than three out of four Americans believe that public funding should be available to make home visits available on a voluntary basis to parents who want to learn more about caring for their newborns and nearly one-half (47 percent) approve strongly of such public support.

Healthy Families America

One program aimed at providing the assistance parents say they want in the first years of their child's lives is Healthy Families America (HFA), an initiative of Prevent Child Abuse America. The program offers voluntary home visitation services to expectant and new parents to promote positive parenting, improve child health and development, and reduce child abuse and neglect. The program is currently available to more than 20,000 families nationwide through 320 sites in 39 states.

HFA provides voluntary home visitor services for new parents through networks of statewide systems. HFA offers parenting education and support services, tailored to the specific needs of a family and provided on a voluntary basis in the home.

Among the range of services that may be provided by HFA home visitors are the following: linking families with primary care physicians, healthcare services, and other social services in the community; tips on how to care for a new baby; advice on positive parenting; counseling and support on responding to a child's needs; and stress management.

HFA Research Results Show Promise

Ongoing research of Healthy Families America shows positive results, according to a report by Deborah Daro of the Chapin Hall Center for Children and Kathryn Harding of the National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research, an arm of Prevent Child Abuse America. The review of HFA evaluation studies is scheduled to appear in "The Future of Children: Volume 8" to be published in May 1999 by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

The results are particularly strong in the area of parent-child interaction and parental capacity. According to Daro and Harding, various studies indicate that those engaged in HFA services also showed a significant decrease in their overall potential for child maltreatment and parental stress. Other findings reported as a result of 17 HFA evaluations indicate health benefits for children whose parents participate in HFA, as shown by the following:

- 90 percent or more of the children whose parents are enrolled are up-to-date on their immunizations (By comparison, 77.5 percent of all children and 70 percent of those below the poverty line are up-to-date on their immunizations.)[1]
- 90 percent or more are keeping appointments for well-baby check-ups
- More than 94 percent of parents have identified an appropriate and stable source of medical care for their child

According to Daro and Harding, most HFA programs and evaluations have been ongoing for less than three years, making definitive findings regarding initial or long-term program impacts impossible. "Within this context, however, these initial findings suggest that continued program development along the lines implied by the HFA model offer significant hope for reducing child maltreatment rates and enhancing parental capacity," wrote Daro and Harding.

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[1]National Center for Health Statistics. (1997) Health, United States, 1996-97. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Studies.

Results are particularly dramatic among participants who enrolled in the HFA program during the prenatal period. In one Virginia HFA program, for example, participants who were enrolled prenatally experienced fewer birth complications, delivered a greater number of full-term babies and had fewer low birth weight babies.

"We're greatly encouraged by the results we're seeing with regard to Healthy Families America," said Johnson. "Certainly we have a long way to go before we can really measure the long-term impact of the program. But the preliminary research appears to illustrate that HFA is effective in promoting positive parenting, fostering the health and development of the child, and preventing child abuse and neglect before they have a chance to materialize."

With ongoing, sustained support from the Freddie Mac Foundation, and others, the initiative was launched in 1992 in partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities. The American Academy of Pediatrics has described Healthy Families America as "one of the most hopeful and promising developments that has occurred in the recent memory of those working in the field of child maltreatment."

For more information about Healthy Families America or Prevent Child Abuse America, please call 1-800-CHILDREN or visit the organization's website, www.childabuse.org.

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Table 1: Reasons cited most often for child abuse and neglect

Reason	Response
Increased alcohol and drug abuse by parents	69%
Lack of parenting experience or skills	67%
Abusive parents were abused as children	64%
Presence of non-family members living in the home	48%
Kids are harder to control these days	39%
Lack of spiritual guidance/God/religion in the parent's lives	2%
Other	12%
Don't know	2%

Source: Kirkpatrick, Kevin (1999, March). 1999 Public Awareness Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America.

Pr v nt Child Abus America

200 S. Michigan Avenue
17th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604.2404
312.663.3520 *tel*
312.939.8962 *fax*
ncpca@childabuse.org
www.childabuse.org

Background

Contact:
Kevin Kirkpatrick
Director, Marketing & Communications
312.663.3520 ext. 110

Overview

Each year an estimated 3 million cases of suspected child abuse and neglect are reported to Child Protective Service agencies, and more than three children die each day in the United States from child abuse and neglect. Prevent Child Abuse America (formerly the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse) was established in 1972 by Donna J. Stone to build a nationwide commitment to preventing all forms of child abuse.

Today, supported by private and corporate donors, the organization is widely known for its public awareness, education, prevention programs, advocacy and research. Our Healthy Families America (HFA) program of voluntary home visits for new parents has grown to more than 320 sites in 39 states, the District of Columbia and Canada. More than 20,000 families are served annually, and the number is growing.

On the state level, our chapter network has provided leadership to promote and implement prevention efforts. Our research center has made noteworthy contributions to the expansion of current knowledge in the child abuse prevention field. Our educational efforts have helped raise public awareness about the issue of child abuse from 10 percent in 1976 to over 90 percent in 1982.

Parents magazine named Prevent Child Abuse America one of the ten most effective, family-oriented organizations in the country.

Chapter Network

Founder Donna Stone recognized that a strong presence at both the state and national levels was essential to leading child abuse prevention efforts. Thus, Prevent Child Abuse America established state chapters across the country. In 1976, the first chapter was formed in Kansas. Prevent Child Abuse America's network of 42 state chapters now involves more than 120,000 active volunteers who organize and implement direct service child abuse prevention programs.

The aim of each chapter is to be *the* child abuse prevention leader within the state. Every chapter is involved with various activities to raise public awareness and education. State chapters are also involved in advocacy by influencing legislation. Some chapters help to make primary prevention programs available to their communities, while other chapters serve as an information source, offer 1-800 help lines, or have training programs for professionals and parents.

The result of Prevent Child Abuse America's training, technical assistance, and education activities has been the growth and strengthening of the Chapter Network. Prevent Child Abuse America's goal is to charter a chapter in every state.

Healthy Families America

In 1992, Prevent Child Abuse America launched Healthy Families America (HFA), in partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities and with the support of the Freddie Mac Foundation. It focuses on three equally important goals: to promote positive parenting, to encourage child health and development, and to prevent child abuse and neglect.

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These goals remain constant from site to site. But, because of the flexibility of the HFA program model, HFA's 320 sites in 39 states are tailored to meet the specific and expressed needs of the families and communities they serve. In addition, all HFA sites adhere to proven best practice standards that ensure the highest quality of service delivery to families.

Each HFA program is implemented on the local level by public and private partnerships, including business and community leaders, faith groups, healthcare providers, local and state governments, social service agencies and parents.

HFA's national partners include the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Hospital Association, the American Medical Association, the National Head Start Association and the Cooperative Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Research

The National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research was established in 1986 to increase understanding of the complex causes of child maltreatment and to establish an empirical base of information on the effectiveness of child abuse prevention programs. In 1994, the Center established a formal national network of prevention researchers to solidify the link between research and practice.

To better determine the volume of child abuse reports and the availability of child welfare resources, the center conducts an annual national survey of child protective service agencies. This fifty-state survey provides the most current data available on the number and characteristics of child abuse reports and fatalities, as well as changes in the funding and scope of child welfare services. The center also commissions an annual public opinion poll to determine the public's attitude and involvement with child abuse prevention.

Public Awareness

At its inception in 1972, Prevent Child Abuse America's focus was on public education. An early partnership with the Advertising Council allowed Prevent Child Abuse America to get its prevention message out to the general public. The first of many educational pamphlets, "What Every Parent Should Know," was produced and disseminated. In 1995 Prevent Child Abuse America established a toll-free telephone number 1-800-CHILDREN to increase public awareness about child abuse prevention.

Public opinion polls have indicated that the percentage of people aware of the problem of child abuse has increased greatly over the years. Prevent Child Abuse America plays an important role in changing public attitudes toward child abuse and neglect.

Prevent Child Abuse America's prevention efforts include a variety of initiatives that provide the public with a broad education about the problem of child abuse and neglect. The primary vehicles used have been our national media campaigns developed in conjunction with the Ad Council. Early campaigns focused on the existence of the problem and gave reasons for focusing on prevention. Later public awareness efforts addressed how parents under stress could help themselves, and encouraged the public to call 1-800-CHILDREN to learn how they could get involved in child abuse prevention in their communities.

In addition to our national media campaigns, Prevent Child Abuse America produces and maintains a library of more than 70 publications, which have an annual circulation of more than 2 million throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Prevent Child Abuse America is the nation's largest producer of child abuse and neglect publications. Included in the library of publications are a series of Spider-Man comic books. The first comic book was created in 1984 in an innovative initiative to educate children about non-violence. Subsequent comic books have proven to be an effective tool in teaching children and adolescents about such topics as fatherhood, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

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Since 1983, April's National Child Abuse Prevention Month has become a national event. Prevent Child Abuse America sends out thousands of "Child Abuse Prevention Month" packets. This year's theme is "Communities Rising to the Challenge." The packets are designed to solicit the involvement of entire communities by encouraging the formation of partnerships to build a support network for families and children.

Advocacy

Prevent Child Abuse America supports its chapters on the state and local levels and collaborates on the federal level with over 30 national organizations, which comprise the National Child Abuse Coalition. Through these partnerships, Prevent Child Abuse America is able to advocate for critical resources and a continuum of services — starting with prevention — to support children and their families.

Beginning in 1979 with our Kansas chapter, Prevent Child Abuse America took the lead in helping to establish Children's Trust Funds in nearly all fifty states and the District of Columbia. Using both public and private revenue sources, these trust funds serve as a continuous funding mechanism for child abuse prevention efforts at the state and community levels.

Over the years, Prevent Child Abuse America has been instrumental in ensuring that the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) is reauthorized and that funding is continued for localized child abuse prevention efforts through Community-Based Resource and Support grants. We also worked to ensure the safe passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, which reauthorized the Family Preservation and Family Support grants, renamed Safe and Stable Families.

Recent advocacy efforts have focused on creating effective and informed citizen participation in community efforts to protect children from abuse. In addition to providing training and seminars, Prevent Child Abuse America, along with the Child and Family Policy Center, developed and distributed guidelines for states as they begin planning for, and implementing, citizen review panels. These panels will provide oversight and reviews of state child protective service systems, as outlined in CAPTA.

Currently, Prevent Child Abuse America is looking at a variety of national funding streams to support prevention efforts, including the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant, Medicaid, the new Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and revenue from the tobacco settlements. To achieve these aims, Prevent Child Abuse America communicates with chapters and HFA sites through action alerts, legislative updates and analysis, and monthly bulletins.

Development and Cause-Related Marketing

Prevent Child Abuse America has been fortunate to garner a broad base of support from corporations, foundations, individuals, associations and workplace campaigns. Their support over the years has enabled Prevent Child Abuse America to achieve dramatic results.

Among our most significant corporate and foundation supporters are the Ronald McDonald House Charities, the Freddie Mac Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Other key Prevent Child Abuse America benefactors include: the Baxter Allegiance Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the William T. Grant Foundation, Target Stores and the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company Foundation.

The Campaign for Healthy Families is an effort to raise funds for the continued expansion of the Healthy Families America program. Leland C. Brendsel, chairman and CEO of Freddie Mac, is chairing a major fundraising effort to raise $15 million from the corporate sector to ensure the long-term success of Healthy Families America.

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With lead support from the Freddie Mac Foundation, the following have already made commitments to the Campaign for Healthy Families: Abbott Laboratories, Andersen Consulting, Bear, Stearns & Co., The Michael Bolton Foundation, Countrywide Home Loans, Fannie Mae Foundation, J.P. Morgan, Field Foundation of Illinois, GE Fund, Goldman, Sachs & Co., J.M. McDonald Foundation, National Basketball Association, The Travelers Foundation, Frank P. Smeal Charitable Lead Trust and the St. Paul Companies Inc.

Prevent Child Abuse America has maintained a longstanding partnership with the National Basketball Association. Other cause-related marketing partners have included Target Stores, Coca-Cola, Dutch Boy Paints, Nabisco and Gund Teddy Bear.

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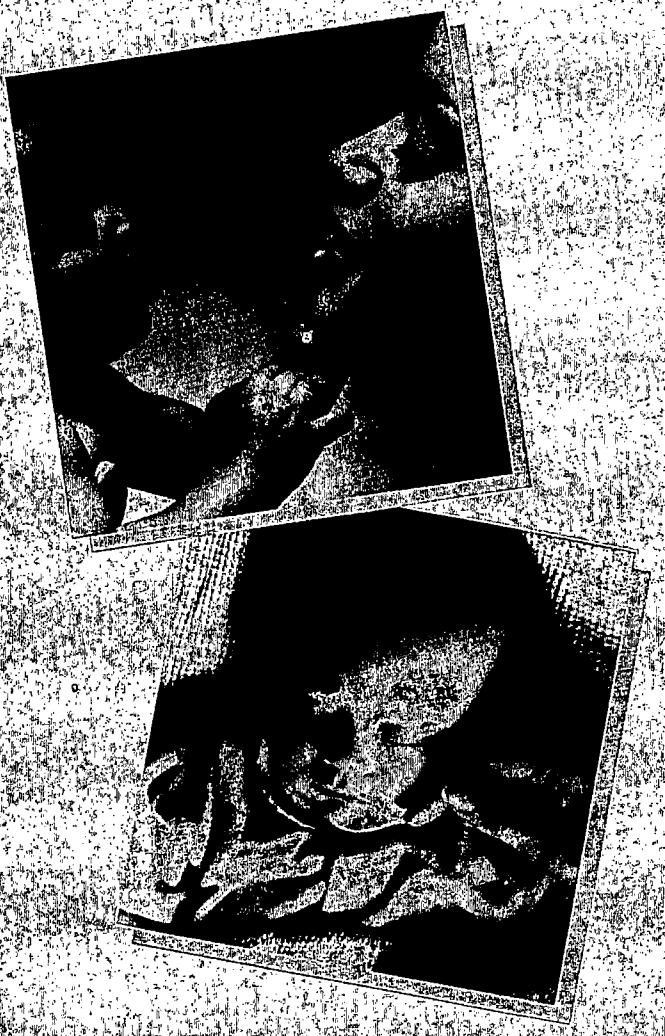
Healthy Families America



Healthy Families America

an initiative of the
National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse

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Draft

Preview of Packard Foundation Report

- The foundation reviewed home visitation broadly and did not focus specifically on HFA or any other single program.

- Results of home visiting analysis are "sobering." Programs have very ambitious goals and don't reach all of them.
  - ✓ Overall, while results vary, they are small in magnitude.
  - ✓ The findings are better on parenting and child abuse prevention, but not as positive on child health and development.
  - ✓ The major problem appears to be implementing home visiting programs as designed, in terms of enrollment, engagement, retention, staff training, technical assistance and curriculum.

Packard Foundation Recommendations

- Any new home visiting program expansions should be reassessed in light of these findings and should have more realistic expectations.
  - ✓ Home visiting is not a "silver bullet" and cannot improve all outcomes by itself. It should be considered as part of an overall strategy, in collaboration with other programs.
  - ✓ Existing programs should focus on implementation issues – and researchers should focus on these issues, as well.

- Packard Foundation is willing to fund implementation research and quality improvement initiatives.
  - ✓ HFA Research Network is a good model of how to bring researchers together.

Possible NCPCA Response to Packard Foundation Report

- We welcome the findings of the Packard Foundation. They provide another piece of the puzzle in our continuing evaluation of the success of home visitation in reducing child abuse and in promoting positive parenting. They also will help us further improve our services to families and children.

- Since Healthy Families America is focused on preventing child abuse and on promoting positive parenting, we're pleased that the Packard Foundation report concludes that home visitation can be an effective tool in meeting these goals.

- To improve the effectiveness of home visiting programs, the Packard Foundation has recommended a strategy that mirrors the HFA program model by building coalitions at the state and local levels with service agencies, healthcare providers, faith groups and business communities, etc.

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- The Packard Report also underscores the importance of the Healthy Families America Campaign, which focuses on providing local sites with the training and technical assistance they need.

- We are delighted that the Packard Foundation is planning to invest more funding in research to improve home visiting.

- It is important not to overstate the results of the Packard Foundation study or to draw broad conclusions about the programs analyzed, given the limitations in the study.
  - ✓ A substantial amount of empirical and theoretical research has suggested that early intervention with the parents of newborn children can be essential in promoting a child's health and development and in preventing child abuse and neglect.
  - ✓ The Packard Foundation studied a wide range of home visitation programs, many with vastly different implementation strategies and program objectives.
  - ✓ HFA is less than six years old (and many sites are less than three years old), making any conclusive analysis of the program very premature.

Additional HFA Talking Points

- We are in agreement with the Packard Foundation's plans to invest more funding in research to improve home visiting.
  - ✓ Our HFA Research Network – which includes close to 50 researchers – has completed studies of 17 HFA sites, while 18 additional evaluations are in progress, for a total of 35 studies.
  - ✓ With funding from public and private sources, an estimated $15 million is being invested in research efforts throughout the HFA system.
  - ✓ This research must be ongoing, and we must be prepared to think long-term. Since most HFA programs and evaluations are less than three years old, they have not yet produced definitive findings regarding either initial or long-term program impact. The current pool of evaluative findings, therefore, offers guidance, but not definitive proof of their effectiveness.

- Preliminary evaluation by the HFA Research Network suggests that the vast majority of program participants are securing necessary healthcare for themselves and their babies:
  - ✓ 90% or more of the children enrolled in HFA services are up-to-date on their immunizations and are keeping appointments for well-baby check-ups, etc.
  - ✓ More than 94% have identified an appropriate and stable source for their medical care.
  - ✓ Those engaged in HFA services showed a significant decrease in their overall potential for maltreatment and parental stress.

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- ✓ The research also suggests that home visitation services on a regular basis provide families with greater comfort in understanding their child's development and less overall distress and rigidity.

- We're also pleased that the Packard Foundation has recommended a strategy that mirrors the HFA program model to improve the effectiveness of home visiting programs.
  - ✓ The Packard Report supports the HFA approach of recognizing that home visiting programs cannot – by themselves – solve all of the problems they address. They must work in collaboration with other programs that address the same, and related, issues.
  - ✓ That's why HFA seeks to build coalitions at the state and local levels with social service agencies, healthcare providers, faith groups and business communities, etc.
  - ✓ The Packard Report also underscores the importance of the Healthy Families America Campaign, which focuses on providing local sites with the training and technical assistance they need.
  - ✓ The Critical Elements of the HFA initiative provide for a credentialing process, which employs external examination and validation to ensure that HFA sites adhere to Best Practices and maintain the highest degree of program and service quality.

file - child abuse

Date: April 1, 1999
For Release: Immediately
Contact: Michael Kharfen ACF, (202) 401-9215
Mark Weber, SAMHSA, (301) 443-8956

Headline: HHS REPORTS NEW CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT STATISTICS

President Clinton issues proclamation for April as Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month and HHS distributes prevention materials nationwide

HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala today reported that 1997 national child abuse and neglect statistics continued to decline slightly to under one million children as reported by states. The decline, the fourth in a row reported by the federal government, came as the nation marked April as National Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month.

"Though we're reporting a slight decline in children as victims of abuse and neglect - these numbers nevertheless represent an unacceptable human tragedy we must do more to prevent," said Secretary Shalala. "The Clinton administration is committed to supporting innovative community efforts to give children at risk a better chance for a safe and nurturing permanent home. We also encourage states to recognize the connections between substance abuse and child abuse, which are taking a toll on so many American families."

Based on preliminary state-reported child abuse and neglect statistics, HHS estimates that child protective service agencies investigated reports of alleged maltreatment of nearly three million children. Of those children investigated, states found that 963,870 children were victims of abuse and neglect. In a trend starting four years ago, the number of children abused and neglected has decreased from a record 1,018,692 in 1993. Though state reports capture much of child abuse and neglect, separate studies have found that the number of victims may be higher. Parents and relatives continue to be the main perpetrators of maltreatment. Parents comprised 75 percent and other relatives 10 percent of perpetrators. Non-related individuals were 6 percent.

According to a new report, substance abuse is a substantial factor in a third of all child abuse and neglect cases, and up to two-thirds of foster care cases. The report, "Blending Perspectives and Building Common Ground, " written collaboratively by three HHS divisions - the Administration for Children and Families, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Administration - provides recommendations on the need for closer coordination between the child protection and substance abuse treatment systems.

"This report highlights the critical importance of creating and strengthening collaborations across agency and discipline lines," said Olivia A. Golden, HHS assistant secretary for children and families. "By working together we can eliminate barriers to effective treatment for families."

"Families where there is child abuse and neglect often face multiple problems that require comprehensive solutions," said SAMHSA Administrator Nelba Chavez, Ph.D. "Our experience and research has shown that integrating substance abuse and mental health services into social and health programs is critical to meeting the needs of parents and children."

The department will be distributing several thousand packets of prevention information to states and local child welfare agencies and community organizations as a part of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month. This information is also available at the following Web site: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov. The prevention materials can also be obtained by calling the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect at 1-800-FYI-3366.

The Clinton administration has promoted and supported policies and innovative programs to address the problems of child maltreatment and substance abuse. In 1997, President Clinton signed into law the Adoption and Safe Families Act based on proposals in his Adoption 2002 plan. The law strengthened protections for children and promotes permanent placements through more timely decisions by the child welfare system.

HHS also provides grants to states and local communities for programs that work with infants in the child welfare system born to parents who are substance abusers and has granted waivers to several states to use federal foster care funds more flexibly to provide substance abuse services. It has also encouraged and participated in joint meetings of state child protective and substance abuse services directors.

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Note: HHS press releases are available on the World Wide Web at:

http://www.hhs.gov.