Community Child Abuse Prevention Plan

A Call For Action
What Is Child Abuse and Neglect (Maltreatment)?

“What I is Child Abuse and Neglect (Maltreatment)?

“Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act, which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.”
Using Prevention Science to Guide Community Action

Premise of Prevention Science

- To prevent a problem before it happens, the factors that predict the problem must be changed.

Advances in Prediction

- Longitudinal studies have identified predictors of child abuse and neglect - Risk factors.
- AND predictors of positive outcomes including success in school - Promotive and protective factors.
A Four-Pronged Approach to End Child Maltreatment

1. Understand Risk Factors
2. Understand Protective Factors
3. Use Evidence-based/informed Approaches to Serve Children and Families
4. Set of Core Metrics to Track Milestones Over Time to Increase the Impact of Their Work
Risk Factors for Child Maltreatment

- Lack of adequate legislation
- Social, economic and health policies that lead to poor living standards or socio-economic inequality
- Cultural norms that promote or glorify violence, including physical punishment
- Social and cultural norms that diminish the status of the child in parent-child relationships
- Tolerance of violence
- Gender and social inequality in the community
- Lack of services to support families
- High levels of unemployment
- Lack of parent-child attachment
- Family breakdown
- Intimate partner abuse
- Being socially isolated
- Breakdown in support in child rearing from extended family
- Parent was maltreated as child
- Parent misuses drugs or alcohol
- Parent is socially isolated
- Child was unwanted as a baby
- Child shows symptoms of mental ill-health

Adverse Childhood Experiences (or ACEs) are stressful or traumatic experiences that occur prior to the age of 18.

1. Emotional abuse
2. Physical abuse
3. Psychological abuse
4. Sexual abuse
5. Neglect
6. Witnessing domestic violence
7. Household member with mental illness
8. Household member with substance abuse
9. Incarcerated parent
10. Loss of parent
Untreated Adverse Early Childhood Events Only Exacerbate Over Time

Child Maltreatment: physical, sexual, emotional, neglect

Teen Dating Violence

Sexual Violence

Intimate Partner Violence

Elder Abuse

Peer Violence: youth violence, bullying, gang-related violence, fights

Suicidal Behavior
Protective Factors for Resilience
Trump ACE’s Every Time!

Safe, cohesive neighborhood

Basic needs met: Food, Housing, etc.

Access to healthcare and social services

Connection with a caring, stable adult

Safe home
What Can Be Done About ACES?

Cumberland
- 2 or More: 31%
- 1: 19%
- 0: 50%

North Carolina
- 2 or More: 24%
- 1: 25%
- 0: 51%

United States
- 2 or More: 22%
- 1: 25%
- 0: 53%

Home visiting to pregnant women and families with newborns
Parenting training programs
Intimate partner violence prevention
Social support for parents

Parent support programs for teens and teen pregnancy prevention programs
Mental illness and substance abuse treatment

High quality child care
Sufficient income support for lower income families
Equity Gaps Begin Early and Widen Progressively

**Biological risks**
- Chronic under-nutrition
- Iron and iodine deficiency
- HIV infection

**Psycho-social risks**
- Poor caregiver-child interaction
- Maternal depression
- Institutional rearing
- Exposure to violence
- Poor learning environment

**Protective factors**
- Good nutrition
- Responsive & nurturing parenting
- Safe and stimulating environment
- Health care (prenatal, maternity, new born, infant)
- Adequate family income

*Lancet, 2011*
Bridging The Chasm

Involving those who don’t yet realize that they are working on issues that represent the “downstream” wreckage of child abuse and neglect--and other adverse childhood experiences--in the effort to bridge the chasm.

Routine screening for trauma is needed
A Community Paradigm Shift For Children and Families

Moving Upstream

• Change the conversation from “What’s Wrong With You” To “What’s Happened To You”
• Move upstream by building protective factors and fostering resiliency
• Go where the kids already are
• Focus on ALL families
• Universal, non-stigmatizing, educational approach
• Acting before anything bad happens
• Measure results in growth of protective factors/family strengths
• A more universal, evidence-based model built on promoting resilience

Foundational Ideas

• A consideration of culture
• The strengths-base perspective
• The biology of stress
• Resiliency theory
• A focus on well-being
• The nature of risk and protective factors
To Get Involved, Contact

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“Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see”.

~ John W. Whitehead, “The Stealing of America”