




APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April reminds us to renew our commitment to valuing the life of every child, every day of the year! PCA Georgia and communities throughout the U.S. and Georgia will focus on our collective responsibility for the health and safety of all children. Throughout the month, there are opportunities to participate in activities to raise awareness for child abuse prevention. **Child abuse prevention information and a listing of PCA Georgia chartered council events during child abuse prevention month are available at:** www.preventchildabusega.org/html/coucilarea.html

SPECIAL GPB TELEVISION BROADCAST: April 15th - 9pm-11pm

 Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) will host a special evening of programming in connection with Child Abuse Prevention Month. The broadcast begins at 9 pm with the new GPB original production **“The Road Beyond Abuse,”** narrated by Jane Fonda, and is followed at 10 pm by **“The Road Beyond Abuse: A Discussion,”** hosted by GPB’s Susan Hoffman. The program features the powerful stories of adults whose lives were impacted by child abuse and examines what Georgia is doing to address child abuse and neglect. Also, tune in to GPB Radio on Monday, April 13th at 2pm for “The Road Beyond Abuse” radio special. For more program resources, visit the website at www.gpb.org.

PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE: AN IMPORTANT INVESTMENT!

Child maltreatment devastates a child’s psychological and physical well-being, tears families apart and costs society billions of dollars. (*State News, Nov/Dec 2006*) The direct and indirect cost of child abuse and neglect in the U.S. is conservatively estimated to be **\$103.8 billion annually**.

This expense includes the child welfare system and immediate needs of abused or neglected children, as well as those costs incurred by the long-term and secondary effects of abuse and neglect such as special education, juvenile delinquency, mental and physical health care, and the adult criminal justice system. (*Prevent Child Abuse America 2007*)

While the economic costs associated with child maltreatment are large, it is impossible to calculate the impact of the reduced quality of life that child abuse victims experience. This intangible loss can’t be measured in monetary terms, but may represent the largest cost component of violence against children (*T.R. Miller; M.A. Cohen; B. Wiersema; National Institute of Justice 1996*)



A growing body of research has identified strategies proven to reduce risk for child maltreatment, particularly in the early years of life. A chorus of Fortune 500 CEO’s, Federal Reserve Bank analysts, Nobel Prize-winning economists and other business leaders are calling for larger public investments in early childhood. (*The Economics of Early Childhood Policy; RAND Corporation 2008*)

PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE: AN IMPORTANT INVESTMENT! (Cont’d)






However, despite clear progress in the field of child abuse prevention and in cost-benefit analyses of effective early intervention services, only 10% of federal money dedicated for child welfare can be used to prevent child abuse and neglect from occurring. (*Kids Are Waiting; Pew Charitable Trusts, 2008*)

PREVENTION PAYS

Georgia has a number of cost-effective programs and services that keep children healthy and safe. For example:

-  **Healthy Families Georgia (HFG)** home visiting services reduce the risk of child maltreatment in vulnerable families by 40%, and keep children safe in their homes. Providing voluntary HFG home visiting is less than half the cost of basic out-of-home placement for a child within Georgia’s child welfare system:
 - **\$2,600** per family for one year of HFG home visiting
 - **\$5,840** per child for one year of basic foster family services in Georgia-excluding cost of child welfare system services required for placement.
-  **First Steps** program support to parents of newborns results in 98% of babies being linked to primary care medical providers, reducing the likelihood that their families will seek basic medical care from a hospital emergency room:
 - **\$60** doctor office visit cost
 - **\$159** visit to hospital emergency room

Voluntary home visiting programs in Georgia positively impact a number of factors that are related to childhood well-being including parental attitudes regarding harsh discipline, prevention of subsequent teen pregnancies, early identification and intervention for infant developmental delay and increased family stability. These programs can benefit all of us and our state by:





-  Reduced health and mental health care costs
-  Reduced costs of out-of-home care services
-  Reduced costs of child welfare services
-  Reduced law enforcement and judicial system costs for intervention in cases of child abuse and neglect
-  Increased earning potential of the child’s family

Georgia can develop a coordinated plan that creates a strong “portfolio” of prevention investments. It’s time to “get smart” about more investments to prevent child abuse and neglect. If not now, when?



ECONOMIC RECOVERY PACKAGE: ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PREVENTION?

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which includes a number of provisions intended to support children and families over the next two years. Many decisions about how the funds will be spent are being made by state and local officials. A few ARRA provisions with possibilities for more prevention services include:

-  **TANF (temporary assistance to needy families):** ARRA provides increases and more flexibility to TANF, which can be a key source of funding for child abuse prevention through home visitation services.
-  **Head Start/Early Head Start:** \$2.1 billion will be available to Head Start/Early Head Start for services through center-based, home-based and combination options.
-  **Compassion Capitol Fund:** \$50 million in capacity-building grants is being set aside for non-profits and could be an opportunity to fund prevention services.
-  **Prevention and Wellness Fund:** ARRA allocates \$1 billion for this fund, part of which will address chronic disease rates through evidence-based prevention and wellness strategies. Research shows that childhood experience of abuse, neglect, and family dysfunction are major risk factors for the leading causes of adult illness and death in the U. S., which makes a case for the use of these funds for child abuse prevention.

Visit the "Press Room" section of PCA America's website (www.preventchildabuse.org) to access more information about legislation and funding that has implications for child abuse prevention.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

June 17–20, 2009 (Atlanta): APSAC 17th Annual Colloquium



The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC) will hold its national conference at the Omni Hotel at the CNN Center. The event offers advanced training and cultural institutes and over 80 workshops covering a wide variety of issues. For more information or to register, visit: www.apsac.org.

SAVE THE DATE: May 17-19, 2010





2010 PCA America National Conference (Jacksonville)

Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) America will hold the only national level conference devoted to the prevention of child abuse and neglect at the Hyatt Regency in Jacksonville, Florida. More information, including the "Call for Proposals" will be shared this summer. Registration will open January 2010. For updates, visit: www.preventchildabuse.org/2010NC.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED RESEARCH

Report on Physical Punishment in the United States: What Research Tells Us About Its Effects on Children. By Elizabeth T. Gershoff Ph.D. (2008) Columbus, OH; Center for Effective Discipline.

This report synthesizes one hundred years of social science research and hundreds of published studies on physical punishment conducted by professionals in the fields of psychology, medicine, education, social work and sociology. It has been endorsed by several national organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Association and supports several conclusions:

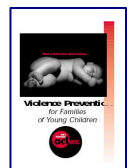
-  Little evidence exists that physical punishment improves children's behavior in the long term.
-  There is substantial evidence that physical punishment makes it more, not less, likely that children will be defiant and aggressive in the future.
-  There is clear evidence that physical punishment puts children at risk for negative outcomes, including increased mental health problems.
-  There is consistent evidence that children who are physically punished are at greater risk of serious injury and physical abuse.

Written for both lay and professional audiences, this report includes state-by-state information about the various laws on physical punishment of children in the U.S., as well as the policies of other countries. The full report and additional resources about effective discipline and advice for parents can be found at the Phoenix Children's Hospital website: www.phoenixchildrens.com.

PREVENTION RESOURCES

Violence Prevention for Families of Young Children

ACT (Adults and Children Together) Against Violence offers a publication which teaches violence prevention techniques to parents and caregivers of young children ages 0 to 8 years. Download this from the ACT publications section at: <http://actagainstviolence.apa.org>



Web Site Dedicated to Strengthening Youth Programs www.findyouthinfo.gov

On this site, you will find interactive resources and tools relating to forming effective partnerships, assessing community assets, understanding risk and protective factors, mapping your community's federal resources and finding evidence-based youth programs.