



Preserving Childhood: Oregon's Leading Efforts to Prevent Child Abuse and Strengthen Families

Executive Summary

The on-going pain and trauma for tens of thousands of children in Oregon who are wounded by abuse and neglect is preventable. As a state, we have the tools to prevent child abuse and save children's lives while building stronger families in Oregon. Utilizing best practice strategies with proven outcomes and ensuring adequate public and private investments in these strategies will result in a safer and healthier childhood for children in Oregon.

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The Children's Trust Fund of Oregon is a statewide organization focused exclusively on the issue of child abuse prevention and strengthening families. Since 1985, the Children's Trust Fund has provided strategic investments in proven prevention programs across Oregon, public awareness and education campaigns related to child abuse prevention and research and policy work on emerging best practice in this field. Prevent Child Abuse Oregon (PCA OR) is a chapter of the national Prevent Child Abuse America and is an advisory committee to the Children's Trust Fund of Oregon. The PCA OR Advisory Committee is comprised of leading experts, service providers and researchers. Collectively, the advisory committee explores the latest research on strategies that work to reduce risks for child abuse and neglect and change community, family, and parenting behavior associated with child abuse and neglect.

In 2011, almost 11,600 children were confirmed victims of abuse and neglect and more than 74,000 reports of suspected abuse were received by the Oregon Department of Human Services. The Preserving Childhood report outlines the cost of child abuse, linking childhood trauma to increased expenses in special education, foster care, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy,

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mental health issues and health issues later in life. Factoring these increased costs and the number of children confirmed as victims of abuse and neglect in 2011, the report estimates the total cost for one year of child abuse and neglect in Oregon to be \$2.5 billion.

In this report the Children's Trust Fund and the PCA OR Advisory Committee envision how strengthening and supporting families can reduce child abuse and neglect through the utilization of best practice programs. This report identifies and defines 12 programs currently being utilized in Oregon at various levels of implementation and evaluation (Evidence-Based, Promising and Emerging). Details on each program's features and selected research findings are highlighted in the report.

The report also offers key recommendations for improving child abuse prevention efforts in Oregon. Recommendations for funders and policymakers include:

- Bringing prevention services to scale, expecting and using best practice programs, investing in evaluation and training, and using incentives for families and communities participating in these programs.

Considerations for local communities and service providers include:

- Selecting best practice programs, ensuring fidelity to the model, and mapping needs and services at the local and statewide level.

To read the companion *Strengthening Oregon Families: Advancing Knowledge to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect* report, visit our website: www.ctfo.org