



**EMPLOYEE HEALTH INITIATIVE:
NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**



April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect and encourage individuals and communities to support children and families.

"Strengthening Families and Communities" is the ongoing theme for National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The theme conveys the message that service providers and concerned individuals can help families and communities identify their strengths and build on those strengths to provide a safe, loving environment for their children.

2010 Report Shows Child Maltreatment Decreased in 2008 and Prevention efforts to be intensified.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF) announced that 2008 saw the lowest child victimization rate in five years. In addition, the number of children who suffered maltreatment decreased for the second year in a row. These findings are contained in "Child Maltreatment 2008," an annual report issued every April marking the start of National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

The recent data show an estimated 772,000 children were victims of child abuse and neglect, a rate of 10.3 per 1,000 children. Data from the states continue to indicate that almost a third of the victims are younger than four years old. More than three million reports of suspected child abuse and neglect were received in 2008, involving six million children nationwide.

"Although we are encouraged by the decrease in child maltreatment, the results show too many children still suffer from abuse and neglect, and we have not yet experienced the full impact from the economic situation," said Carmen R. Nazario, HHS assistant secretary for children and families. "As our commitment, we will continue to strengthen prevention strategies that target critical resources for families and communities at risk."

One such strategy is in the recently-signed health care law. The act provides funding to states, territories and tribes, beginning with \$100 million in FY 2010 and increasing to \$400 million in FY 2014, for home visiting programs to improve children's health and well-being related outcomes, including the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Another strategy is a foster care initiative that began this fiscal year and is proposed at \$20 million per year over five years. It is designed to implement innovative approaches to reducing long-term foster care and finding a permanent placement for children who are victims of child abuse and neglect.

One of ACF's latest prevention efforts involves The National Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood (QIC-EC). This is a \$10 million dollar, five-year project launched in 2008 to address the nation's urgent need to find innovative, effective approaches for reducing the likelihood of abuse and neglect for children from birth through five years of age.

"These new grants reflect our conviction that stable communities with well-coordinated service systems are the best environments for preventing child maltreatment among the youngest children, while promoting the potential of all children. When we capitalize on the strengths within communities and families, we can create not only healthier homes, but also stronger, more vigorous neighborhoods where economic development can thrive," said Bryan Samuels, ACF commissioner of children, youth and families.

2010 Resource Guide



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, its Child Welfare Information Gateway, and the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention created this resource guide targeted specifically for service providers who work with parents, other caregivers, and their children with the common goal of strengthening families. The guide contains resources to promote community



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
OFFICE OF HEALTH SERVICES

awareness of five important protective factors that can help families protect children from the risk of child abuse and neglect, including tip sheets for parents in English and Spanish. These resources were developed with input from numerous national organizations, Federal partners, and parents committed to strengthening families.

Click here for 2010 Resource Guide: [View](#) - [Download \(PDF - 1,610KB\)](#)

Tips for Parents

Click here for Tips for Parents: [Download \(PDF - 315KB\)](#)

This set includes six tip sheets written to help service providers offer guidance to parents and caregivers on specific issues, while supporting factors known to protect families from the risk of child abuse and neglect.

Overview: Prevention is the best hope for reducing child abuse and neglect and improving the lives of children and families. Strengthening families and preventing child abuse requires a shared commitment of individuals and organizations in every community. With respect to human services, prevention typically consists of methods or activities that seek to reduce or deter specific or predictable problems, protect the current state of well-being, or promote desired outcomes or behaviors.

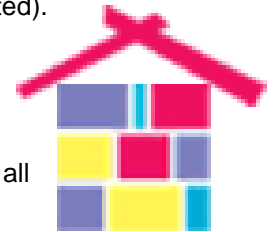
What is child abuse prevention? Research has found that successful child abuse interventions must both reduce risk factors and promote protective factors to ensure the well-being of children and families. Protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. They are attributes that serve as buffers, helping parents who might otherwise be at risk of abusing their children to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.

Why is child abuse prevention important? The impact of child maltreatment can be profound. Research shows that child maltreatment is associated with adverse health and mental health outcomes in children and families, and those negative effects can last a lifetime. In addition to the impact on the child, child abuse and neglect affect various systems — including physical and mental health, law enforcement, judicial and public social services, and nonprofit agencies as they respond to the incident and support the victims. One analysis of the immediate and long-term economic impact of child abuse and neglect suggests that child maltreatment costs the nation as much as \$258 million each day, or approximately \$94 billion each year.

Framework for Prevention of Child Maltreatment: Professionals working to prevent child abuse and neglect have borrowed from other disciplines, including public health, education, and mental health, to influence and guide practice. However, public health has had the greatest influence in organizing a framework of prevention services. That framework consists of three levels of services: *primary* prevention programs, directed at the general population (universal); *secondary* prevention programs, targeted to individuals or families in which maltreatment is more likely (high risk); and *tertiary* prevention programs, targeted toward families in which abuse has already occurred (indicated).

Ecological Framework for Prevention is based on the following assumptions:

- ❖ Children and families exist as part of an ecological system. This means that prevention strategies must target interventions at multiple levels: the individual, the family, the community, and society.
- ❖ Primary responsibility for the development and well-being of children lies within the family, and all segments of society must support families as they raise their children.
- ❖ Assuring the well-being of all families is the cornerstone of a healthy society and requires universal access to support programs and services.



Child Abuse and Neglect

When Children Are at Risk: Learn more about child abuse and neglect, risk and protective factors, identification, long-term consequences, and how to report suspected child abuse and neglect. This information packet includes fact sheets about child maltreatment and the services available from the Child Welfare Information Gateway.

Click here: [View](#) [Download \(PDF - 1,200KB\)](#)

The full report, "Child Maltreatment 2008," is available at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm08/>. For more information about the QIC-EC, visit: www.qic-ec.org. Additional information on National Child Abuse Prevention Month and child abuse prevention in general is available at the Child Welfare Information Gateway: <http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing>. Information from this source is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). The information contained in this article is from: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, its Child Welfare Information Gateway, and the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.