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<b>Election Year Advocacy- What You Can Do</b>
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As we are in the midst of a very important election year, it is vital to advocate for child abuse prevention. Many Healthy Families America (HFA) sites and state systems may wonder what role they can play in the electoral process. This article will share a variety of ways the HFA network can have its voice heard.

Educating candidates about child abuse prevention can influence their policy platforms. Electoral advocacy plays out on many levels including the local, county, state, and federal level. However, it is important to keep in mind the following while engaging in pre-election advocacy:

*“The most basic rule of electioneering is that a non-profit organization cannot endorse, contribute to, work for or otherwise support a candidate for public office. It follows that neither can a non-profit organization oppose a candidate.” -The Independent Sector: 1999.*

There are many ways a non-profit can obey this basic rule and effectively and legally advocate for child abuse prevention and family support during an election year. These tactics include: mailings campaigns, voter registration drives, candidate forums, candidate questionnaires, interviews and briefings.

### **Mailing Campaigns**

Letter writing campaigns are an inexpensive and easy way to express your concerns and expectations to the candidates who will ultimately be serving you.

#### Hints for an effective letter writing campaign:

- Let candidates know that a large, broad constituency is concerned about the health and safety of children and the support of families.
- Letters should be clear, concise, direct and personal. The purpose should be stated in the first paragraph, the rest should be brief.
- Letters should explain why the issue matters to the writer.
- Tell candidates that you are a concerned voter.
- End letters by thanking the candidates for considering the points raised.

#### Getting Started:

- Compile a mailing list of all municipal, county, state, and national candidates' campaign headquarters with addresses and phone numbers. You can find this information by

contacting your local voter registrar's office or local Democratic and Republican headquarters.

- Distribute this list to your organization's mailing list along with instructions.
- Set up tables to organize a postcard or letter writing campaign. Seek permission to do so at offices, local shopping centers, or lobbies of public buildings. Make it easy for people to sit down and write a letter. They may not take the time to write once they walk away.

### **Voter Registration Drives**

Our nation remains as divided today as it was in the 2000 elections, and the outcome of the 2004 elections will likely come down to issues of voter registration. Registering to vote and participating in the voting process is a right every citizen should exercise.

Healthy Families Allen County in Indiana is a great example of the power of voter registration efforts. At assessment, potential participants are given voter registration materials. If the family is accepted into the program, a home visitor follows up with them to see if they need any help registering and to impress the value of voter registration. In addition, a letter is sent out to families about a month before the deadline for voter registration, and about a week before the election a letter goes out to remind participants to vote.

Participants in the program are given incentives to vote. Upon turning in their voting stub, they are given coupons to the Baby's Closet, an organization that collects and distributes children's clothing and essentials to low income families. Most participants of Healthy Families Allen County live in areas that are not well served by public transportation. To help remedy this problem, the site is instituting incentives for staff to help with transportation needs on Election Day.

Strategies like these are important for national elections, but also have a significant impact on local elections, which historically yield low voter turnout. The areas where the HF Allen families live have the lowest voting rates in the county; therefore, participants' votes could have a huge impact on local races.

When instituting a voter registration drive, it is extremely important to follow some basic protocols. Check with your county government before going forward with a voter registration drive. There may be regulations regarding registering families during a home visit. Home visitors in Allen County are prohibited from registering families to vote during home visits, from discussing politics with their families, and from participating in political activities that might be construed as leading the families towards or away from any particular candidate. Instead, families are sent information on where to find information on candidates and schedules of candidate forums. About 20 participants are now very politically active, without any direct input or political advice coming from the site. For more information about Indiana's voter registration activities, contact Phyllis Kikendall at the Family & Social Services Administration at (317) 232-4770 or [pkikendall@fssa.state.in.us](mailto:pkikendall@fssa.state.in.us).

### Resources for Voter Registration

- When registering participants to vote, it is important to create enthusiasm around the process. The Parents as Leaders Team of Circle of Parents™ created a document to

motivate parents to engage in the voting process. The piece can be viewed at:  
[http://www.circleofparents.org/downloads/parents\\_voting.pdf](http://www.circleofparents.org/downloads/parents_voting.pdf)

- Project Vote Smart [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org)
- League of Women Voters at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

## **Candidate Forums**

A candidate forum is an opportunity to unite candidates and voters for a discussion on children's issues. The goals of a candidate forum are to educate voters on candidates' platforms, encourage candidates to commit to a children's agenda and encourage forum attendees to become more involved in their community.

### Getting Started

Your organization or coalition should create a team responsible for organizing the forum. This steering committee should appoint a forum coordinator, who should begin to select a format and site, choose a moderator and panelists, approach the candidates and create a timeline for planning and implementation.

The invitation to attend a candidate forum should be extended to all serious candidates. It is best to invite them all simultaneously and to use identical language in the invitations. The non-profit hosting the forum should not state its views or comment on those of the candidates. If there is a question-and-answer component, each candidate should be given adequate and equal time to answer.

The Children's Campaign, Inc. in Florida is doing innovative work connecting constituents with candidates. Their "Candidate Connection" program is a non-partisan information exchange with the goal of improving relationships between candidates and children's experts. For more information, view their website at: [www.iamforkids.org](http://www.iamforkids.org). The Children's Campaign, Inc. also convenes high school students who question candidates for local, state and federal office through their "Teens Take On Politics" project. For more information on helping organize an event in your area, please contact Jason Zaborske, Statewide Coordinator at (850) 425-2600 x303.

## **Candidate Questionnaires**

Candidate questionnaires let constituents know how candidates feel about certain issues. The goals of a candidate questionnaire are to help voters distinguish among candidates' views on child and family issues, make issues influence the voting choices of citizens, persuade candidates to consider or commit to these issues, and to lay the foundation for holding elected officials accountable on decisions affecting children and families.

### Helpful Hints

- Consider using few open-ended questions and more yes/no questions. This makes answers easier to compile and more readily shows differences between candidates.
- In your published results, you may note a candidate's failure to complete a questionnaire.
- List the candidates' campaign headquarters' phone numbers, so citizens can call and inquire further about the candidates' platforms.
- Avoid questions on "candidate experience with children's issues." These answers tend to be self-serving.

- Consider purchasing a special insert in the local newspaper to publish questionnaire results. Be sure to alert candidates in the cover letter of any planned advertising. This will provide extra incentive to complete the survey.

You should prepare the questionnaire and dissemination strategy up to six months before the election. Four months before election or immediately following the primary election, send questionnaires to the candidates. Give a specific deadline for returning responses. For an example of the PCA America 2000 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire, see page. 107-113 of the PCA America Advocacy Guide (see Resource section of this article).

### **Candidate Interviews and Briefings**

Meeting face to face with candidates is an effective way to communicate with them about child and family issues. The candidate interview is a meeting between the candidate and a small group of advocates, service providers, or volunteers. The purpose of the interview is to question the candidate on their views of child abuse prevention and to raise the awareness of the candidate's campaign. Briefings are similar to interviews, but consist of a larger group of advocates who lead the dialogue on the critical issues.

The goals of a candidate interview or briefing are to educate candidates for local, state, or federal office on issues important to children and families; and to encourage candidates to include children's issues in their campaign literature.

### Helpful Hints:

- Know the issues and candidate's previous statements or activity on children's issues.
- Allow plenty of time for issues to be discussed in some depth.
- Your meeting team should rehearse key points prior to the interview or briefing including: opening statements, introductions, restating what will happen with the information, who will ask questions and follow-up questions, watch the time.

It is advisable to conduct the interviews/briefings early in the candidates' campaigns to encourage them to call on you for more information as the campaign progresses and increase the chances that they will speak out on your issues during the campaign. It is also easier to gain access to the candidates early in the campaign. Allow three weeks prior to the activity to prepare the spokespersons that will represent the issues.

### **Resources on Election Year Advocacy**

- More information on these pre-election advocacy tactics can be found in the PCA America Advocacy Guide in the Chapter entitled "Advocacy During Election Years." <http://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org/publications/order.shtml#advocacy>
- Information about the 2004 elections can be accessed through PCA America's legislative action center. For candidate bios, candidates' statements on important issues, or information on voter registration, go directly to <http://capwiz.com/pca/e4/>, or visit our legislative action center (available via our website at [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org), and click on "Elections and Candidates").

- See the Parents As Teachers resource on electoral advocacy here: <http://www.patnc.org/pdf%20files/Election%20Advocac1.pdf>
- What the Candidates Have to Say About Kids and Families: For a host of articles and information about the 2004 election and its implications for children and families, read Connect for Kids' online Kids and Politics section. <http://www.kidsandpolitics.org>

<b>PCA America News</b>
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### ***2004 PCA America National Conference***

We are only a few short weeks away from the start of the PCA America National Conference -- *Spreading the Magic of Prevention* in Orlando, Florida -- what better opportunity to share your successful Child Abuse Prevention Month strategies and learn some new tactics from your prevention colleagues across the country! Advance conference registration closes on April 30th (on-site registration will be available, but will cost more money!). All conference related information can be downloaded from the PCA America website at [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org).

### ***State Systems***

The annual HFA State Leaders Meeting will be held in conjunction with the PCA America National Conference in Orlando, Florida. The meeting will be held from 1:00-5:00pm on Tuesday May 18<sup>th</sup>. All HFA state leaders are welcome and encouraged to attend. The meeting is a unique opportunity to network with state leaders from across the country. This year's meeting will have breakout sessions on key issues for the HFA network including: research, advocacy, leadership development, regional issues, programmatic trends and "emerging issues". If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Lisa Cashion, Director of State Systems Support at [lcashion@preventchildabuse.org](mailto:lcashion@preventchildabuse.org).

Are you exploring the Bush Administration's Healthy Marriage Initiative? Are you interested in learning more about healthy marriage activities and their potential interface with HFA? If so, please contact Lisa Cashion at [lcashion@preventchildabuse.org](mailto:lcashion@preventchildabuse.org). We are trying to get a handle on which states are considering a healthy marriage enhancement to their existing HFA program or state system. Several states are already involved with this initiative and could share technical assistance and support as this initiative unfolds. Let us know!

### ***Training***

Pilot testing of the training and materials for the "Great Beginnings Start Before Birth" prenatal project has now been completed. Focus groups have been held with 10 program sites in NY, OH and VA. Many good suggestions and ideas were received from these groups, which have been incorporated into the final revisions made to the training manuals. Comments from parents and home visitors in these focus groups were very positive, with parents being especially pleased with the information and support provided by their home visitor. Both parents and home visitors found the father involvement activities and handouts very useful in engaging fathers during the prenatal period. A final analysis of the information gathered in the focus groups will be completed later this spring. Over 60 HFA certified trainers are now able to provide this training to the program sites in their state.

A Train the Trainers Institute will be held in Lisle, IL, July 10-16, 2004. This Institute is the first of several steps in the process of becoming a certified HFA trainer. Applications to attend the Institute may be obtained by contacting Phyllis Medrano at [pmedrano@preventchildabuse.org](mailto:pmedrano@preventchildabuse.org). Deadline for submitting applications is May 7, 2004.

### ***Regional Resource Center Update***

With the PCA America National Conference only a few short weeks away, we thought that we would take this opportunity to highlight the numerous opportunities that will be available in Orlando to learn more about the HFA Regional Resource Centers (RRCs).

- **An Exhibit At the Resource Marketplace:** Stop by to learn more about the HFA RRCs and to meet the staff from the Midwest and Western Centers.
- **The HFA Regional Resource Centers: First Impressions of a Pilot Program Workshop:** This workshop is scheduled for Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. and will highlight lessons learned from the RRCs as well as an overview of tools and information developed by the Centers that will benefit the larger HFA network.
- **The HFA State Leaders Meeting:** As part of the agenda for the HFA State Leaders Meeting we will be providing an update on the future direction of the HFA RRCs and plans for developing subsequent Centers. Immediately following the State Leaders Meeting, we will be convening three breakouts: a meeting of the Midwest Regional Resource Center, a meeting of the Western Regional Resource Center and a meeting for any representatives from states interested in learning more about implementing a RRC in the future.

Please plan to join us at any or all of these forums to learn more about the work of the RRCs and the exciting tools, information and resources that are being cultivated within the Centers.

### ***Advocacy Update***

#### **TANF Reauthorization**

Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars became an important HFA funding source in the years following the landmark 1996 welfare reform law, which amended the goals of the nation's welfare program and provided lump sum funding to states in the form of block grants. In the early years of welfare reform, decreasing cash assistance caseloads freed up unspent TANF block grant dollars that were often used by states to support programs serving a broader base of families and communities. In many states, HFA programs were major beneficiaries of what would have otherwise been unspent TANF funds; in fact, in recent years, federal TANF funds have contributed significantly to HFA's expansion. By 2002, when state representatives of the HFA program reported their funding sources to PCA America, federal TANF funds made up 31% of the more than \$90 million in federal funds estimated to have supported HFA that year.

**Senate Bill Set Aside:** The 1996 welfare reform law, authorized for five years, was originally set to expire September 30, 2002. Because the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress was unable to complete the reauthorization process, new bills were again introduced last year. Now it is questionable whether the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress will be able to finish the process begun some 18 months ago before adjourning for the year this fall.

Updating the TANF law was high on Republican leaders' agenda this spring. However, the Senate recently took up its bill as scheduled only to stalemate over procedural and partisan differences. Though not considered "dead" at this point, the Senate TANF legislation – known as the Personal Responsibility and Individual Development for Everyone (PRIDE) Act -- has been set aside because Republicans failed to garner the majority needed (60 votes) on a procedural vote to limit debate on the bill. Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN) can bring the bill back to the floor, but is unlikely to do so unless he's able muster 60 votes for his cloture motion. Negotiations between Democrats and Republicans on how to move the TANF bill forward are expected to continue, but if an agreement is not forthcoming, there will be little time remaining for the Senate to consider its bill and then negotiate differences with the House version in conference committee.

The House passed its version of TANF reauthorization in February 2003. The Senate Finance Committee agreed to report a bill in September after Committee Chair Charles Grassley (R-IA) promised Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME) that she could offer the first amendment during floor debate to significantly increase child care funding.

**Snowe Amendment Increases Child Care Funds:** As promised, Senator Snowe – together with Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT) -- was allowed to offer a child care amendment when the welfare bill was brought to the floor in late March. In defiance of the Bush Administration, as well as House Republican leaders, the Senate voted overwhelmingly (78-20) in favor of the amendment, which adds an additional \$6 billion in child care funding to the welfare bill. Both House and Senate bills had included a \$1 billion increase in child care funding; the Senate bill now calls for an extra \$7 billion, which will need to be reconciled with the House figure once the full Senate passes its bill. The White House has stated that extra child care funds above \$1 billion are not needed because welfare caseloads have been dramatically reduced since the TANF law was enacted in 1996. Senator Snowe and many Senate Democrats have argued that, with tougher work requirements and no additional funds, many eligible families will be at risk of losing child care assistance.

**TANF Extended Through June 30, 2004:** Unable to complete reauthorization before the current law was set to expire March 31<sup>st</sup>, Congress passed its 6<sup>th</sup> short-term extension allowing the program to continue through June 30<sup>th</sup>. Though House Ways and Means Committee Chair Wally Herger threatened to use the latest extension to bring about policy changes to the TANF program, each chamber passed what is called a "clean" extension of the current law. Passing additional "clean" extensions may be more difficult, however, as House Republicans – frustrated by lack of progress in the Senate – push for policy changes to the TANF program that were approved by the House more than a year ago.

**TANF Spending Exceeding Block Grant Allotments:** State HFA initiatives receiving federal TANF dollars should consider the feasibility of receiving these funds over the long term. As stated previously, in the early years of welfare reform the TANF block grant became an attractive source of funding for HFA because states did not typically spend their entire allotment on traditional welfare services such as cash assistance and job training. According to reports by the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) and the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), however, TANF spending in many states now exceeds their block grant allotments. The

reserve of unspent TANF funds from earlier years is thus dwindling. Since the TANF block grant has been losing value over time, and with flat funding will continue to do so, it is not clear how some states will be able to sustain their current TANF spending.

For articles on TANF spending, check out these websites:

- Center for the Study of Social Policy → <http://www.clasp.org>.
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities → <http://www.cbpp.org>.

For information on House and Senate bills, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov>

- H.R. 4 (House version) → Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion Act of 2003
- H.R. 4 (Senate version) → Personal Responsibility and Individual Development for Everyone (PRIDE) Act of 2003

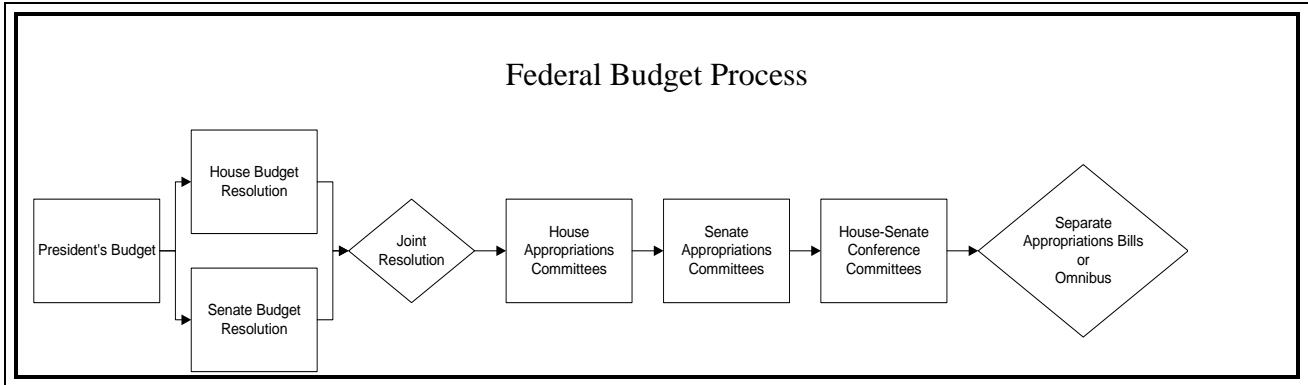
### The Federal Budget

The prevention community has an exceptional opportunity this year to advocate for increased federal appropriations for two important sources of federal funding for HFA. This is because, in an unexpected move, the President's budget proposal – submitted to Congress February 2<sup>nd</sup> – recommended significant increases for state and community-based programs under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). An increase was also requested for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program.

**CAPTA:** Though generally considered an austere budget, the President's proposal included a \$52 million, or 58%, increase in CAPTA funds over last year's levels. His budget also requests that CAPTA state grants for child protective services be increased from \$22 million in FY 2004 to \$42 million in FY 2005. The Title II program, for community-based child abuse prevention grants, would grow from \$33 million in FY 2004 to \$66 million in 2005. No increases are proposed for CAPTA discretionary grants – funded at \$35 million for the current year -- which are distributed through competitive grants to research and demonstration programs. Eight million dollars directed toward Congressional earmarks in FY 2004 would be eliminated under the President's request.

**Promoting Safe and Stable Families:** Like last year, the President's FY 2005 budget proposes to fully fund the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program at \$505 million. Otherwise known as Title IV-B (2), Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds a variety of services along the child welfare continuum, including family support, family preservation, adoption promotion and post-adoption. In the absence of a significant push from the White House last year, Congress in the end opted to appropriate \$405 million instead of \$505 million. Without visible support and advocacy from the Administration as well as the prevention field, such a scenario could repeat itself this year.

**Federal Budget Cycle:** It is important to keep in mind that the President's budget request is just that – a *request* that Congress adopt the Administration's policy intentions. The proposal is by no means the final word on discretionary spending; on the contrary, submission of the President's budget to Congress marks the beginning of the annual budget cycle.



Congress is currently working toward adopting a joint budget resolution. The budget resolution - which does not have statutory effect since it is not signed into law -- sets broad spending limits for Congressional appropriators who will later oversee development of 13 appropriations bills. It in effect represents the Congressional response to the President's budget. Unlike the President's budget document, however, the Congressional budget resolution does not recommend spending amounts for individual programs, such as those under CAPTA or Promoting Safe and Stable Families. Instead, the resolution provides broad allocation amounts for large categories of programs known as "functions". These functional allocations then guide Congressional appropriators as they determine funding amounts for individual federal programs during appropriations committee markups.

At press time the chambers had not yet reached agreement on a joint resolution, though the House and Senate have each passed separate budget bills that generally freeze domestic discretionary spending. Depending on the outcome of conference negotiations, the spending blueprint outlined by the Congressional budget resolution could create a major hurdle for those of us advocating on behalf of CAPTA and PSSF, particularly if spending levels preclude increased appropriations. With or without a budget resolution, the House will begin work on 13 appropriations bills in mid-May. It is the appropriations subcommittees that have the ultimate say over funding amounts for domestic discretionary programs such as CAPTA and Promoting Safe and Stable Families.

The budget process provides an excellent opportunity for advocates to highlight the diminutive CAPTA state and community-based programs, which have been flat-funded for nearly a decade. The stature of CAPTA as an important source of prevention funding has, in fact, been inhibited by its austere appropriations. Though HFA programs are clearly eligible for CAPTA funds, data from 2002 indicates that these dollars made up only a small percentage of the more than \$90 million in federal funds estimated to have supported HFA that year. Promoting Safe and Stable Families, with an appropriation more than four times the size of CAPTA, was estimated to make up 39% of federal funds supporting HFA.

**What HFA Can Do:** PCA America policy staff will monitor the federal appropriations cycle and alert the HFA network to key advocacy opportunities. Though earnest advocacy on behalf of CAPTA and Promoting Safe and Stable Families has already begun, staff anticipates that grassroots advocacy will be most beneficial during deliberations of the House and Senate appropriations committees, beginning in mid-May.

This being an election year, work on the 2005 spending bills will not be completed until fall at the earliest. In the interim, lawmakers have several months to consider the President's request and make changes to certain discretionary spending as they see fit. Within days of receiving the President's budget, lead appropriators were already making clear that many of the proposed increases may not make it through Congress this year. This makes our grassroots advocacy efforts all the more critical. Stay tuned to *SCOOP* and *Prevention Advocate* for further information on advocating for increased CAPTA and PSSF appropriations.

## New Resources

### Funding Resources

#### **Proactive Funding Strategies for Home Visitation: A Resource for Counties**

With the generous support from the Freddie Mac Foundation and in partnership with HFA, this new resource from the National Association of Counties aims to provide home visitation advocates with strategies to attain long-term funding for programs. The publication is now available to download at:

[http://www.naco.org/Content/ContentGroups/Programs\\_and\\_Projects/Early\\_Childhood/Proactive\\_Funding\\_Strategies\\_for\\_Home\\_Visitation\\_.htm](http://www.naco.org/Content/ContentGroups/Programs_and_Projects/Early_Childhood/Proactive_Funding_Strategies_for_Home_Visitation_.htm) or contact Lisa Cashion, [lcashion@preventchildabuse.org](mailto:lcashion@preventchildabuse.org) for a copy of the primer.

#### **2004 Grant Opportunities Notebook**

A guide to this year's Federal funding opportunities for faith-based and community organizations across the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is now available.

Included in the notebook is grant information on the following areas: At-Risk Children and Youth, Economic Development, Health, Substance Abuse, Significant Block and Formula Grants. Also included is information on the Compassion Capital Fund, how to be a grant reviewer, how to make a Freedom of Information request, and web resources for organizations interested in Federal funding. The 2004 Grant Opportunities Notebook is available for download from the Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at [www.hhs.gov/fbci/docs/FBCI2004GrantsNotebook.pdf](http://www.hhs.gov/fbci/docs/FBCI2004GrantsNotebook.pdf).

### Public Policy Resources

#### **State of the States**

Governors from across the country are outlining their agendas to legislatures. Stateline is assembling the state of the state addresses online. (Click the "Resources" header).

<http://www.stateline.org/stateline/?pa=story&sa=showStoryInfo&id=342843>

#### **Preschool Opportunities**

A publication by the Ounce of Prevention entitled, "Ready for School: The Case for Including Babies and Toddlers as We Expand Preschool Opportunities" is available for decision-makers. It lays out for policymakers the need to invest in 0-3, school readiness, a look at the research, and ways states are building birth-to-five early learning systems.

[http://www.ounceofprevention.org/downloads/publications/ready\\_for\\_school.pdf](http://www.ounceofprevention.org/downloads/publications/ready_for_school.pdf)

## **Preventing Abuse and Neglect Prevents Crime: State-by-State Data**

As a follow-up to the report, "New Hope for Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: Proven Solutions to Save Lives and Prevent Future Crime," Fight Crime: Invest in Kids has released state-specific briefs describing the rates of abuse and neglect, later affects of abuse and neglect, and proven programs for preventing such behavior. To access these briefs, see:

<http://www.fightcrime.org/reports/CANstate.php>. For a copy of the full report, see:  
<http://www.fightcrime.org/reports/CANreport.pdf>.

## **Docs for Tots**

Docs For Tots (DFT) is a national non-profit organization focused on developing, supporting, and growing a nationwide network of doctors who advocate to improve the well-being of our youngest children. DFT will support doctors in this advocacy through facilitating linkages with the local child advocacy organizations, providing fact-based resources including talking points and formal presentations on a variety of topics, and through individual technical assistance to doctors as needed. If you would like more information about DFT, please visit the web site, [www.docsfortots.org](http://www.docsfortots.org) or call 202-898-9043.

## Program Resources

### **The Power of Play: Learning through Play from Birth to Three**

ZERO TO THREE has developed a new booklet for parents and caregivers about how play supports a child's cognitive, language, physical, and social development. There is information about play for infants (0-12 months), young toddlers (12-24 months), and older toddlers (24-36 months) that shows what young children can do and types of play they enjoy. The booklet can be viewed, downloaded for free, or ordered in sets of 20 at <http://www.zerotothree.org/play>.

### **Kids in Action: Active Start Physical Activity Guidelines for Babies, Infants and Toddlers**

Toddlers and preschoolers need several hours of unstructured movement each day, but also benefit from the structured movement activities described in this brochure from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education for parents and caregivers.

[http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=kids\\_brochure.html](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=kids_brochure.html)

### **Free Online Presentations by Leaders in the Infant/Family Field**

Last April, ZERO TO THREE hosted a select gathering of leaders from the infant/family field and philanthropy in Washington, D.C. This forum, a "Dialogue with the Experts," was designed to present key issues affecting babies, toddlers, and their families and to provide a special opportunity for networking and learning. The resulting five presentations are now available: The Science of Brain Development, How to Learn: Getting Ready for School, Healing the Child in Juvenile Court, Babies and Public Policy and Early Childhood Prospectus.

To access the presentations, simply log onto <http://www.zerotothree.org>, look for "Spotlight" and click on "Dialogue with the Experts."

### **The Learning Basket®, a Multicultural Resource that has been Successful with Hard-to-Reach Families**

We know that interactive play provides a way for parents to create a healthy bond with their babies and that this bond can prevent child abuse. But reaching out to some families requires an approach that beckons a parent's active involvement. The Learning Basket ® consists of a basket full of objects that can be used in interactive play. The basket is complemented by the

*Play to Learn* activity book (available in Spanish, English and Haitian Creole) which contains over 150 developmentally-appropriate activities for children from birth through 3 years old. Illustrations are multicultural.

The basket and the *Play to Learn* book are used in group sessions and home visits and are complemented by a **Home Visitation Manual** containing over 500 interactive activities as well as critical information about the role of play in learning.

*"The mothers and staff of the family support program continue to have the spirit of the Learning Basket Approach in their homes and in their work together. Six months after the groups drew to a close, this focus has continued to be included in on-going home visiting services."*

- External Evaluator of a Healthy Families Program Using *The Learning Basket* Approach

A Practitioners' Training Course introduces program staff to the materials and how they might be blended into on-going programs as well as effective ways of relating to hard-to-reach parents in home visits and group meetings. This course will be offered for the first time to Healthy Families programs in the Midwest in Chicago on July 21-23. This training can be sponsored by Healthy Families programs in other parts of the country. For details see [www.learningbasket.org](http://www.learningbasket.org). For further information contact The Institute of Cultural Affairs, Anne Marquez, [amarquez@ica-usa.org](mailto:amarquez@ica-usa.org), Tel: 773-769-6363 x 293

## Research

### **Article Describes Feeding Practices Among Infants and Toddlers**

"The first year after birth is the time when habits and preferences are beginning to be formed, and it is important to begin to foster healthy eating habits early," write the authors of an article published in the January 2004 supplement to the Journal of the American Dietetic Association. The article presents findings from the Feeding Infants and Toddlers Study, which was designed to update knowledge of food and nutrient intake, growth and motor development, and feeding patterns of American infants and toddlers. The authors describe infant feeding patterns including breastfeeding status and the use of infant formula and transitions from breast milk and infant formula to complementary foods, table foods, and other beverages.

The authors found that:

- \* About three-fourths of the infants and toddlers were breast fed, and 7% of the toddlers (ages 12-24) months were currently breastfeeding.
- \* Almost all the exclusively breast fed infants were under age 6 months, representing 17% of infants ages 4-5.9 months and 1% of infants ages 6-8 months
- \* About 80% of infants ages 4-5.9 months and over 90% of older infants and toddlers were fed infant formula on a daily basis.
- \* About 20% of toddlers were introduced to cow's milk on a daily basis at age 11 months -- one month earlier than the AAP-recommended 12 months.
- \* One-third of infants ages 9-11 months consumed snack items such as crackers, pretzels, and rice cakes, and about 4% consumed baked goods such as cakes, cookies, pastries, pies, and baked items.
- \* About two-thirds of the infants were introduced to complementary foods between the ages of 4 and 6 months -- the period recommended by AAP.

The authors conclude that "most parents and caregivers can benefit from guidance about the following: (a) introducing appropriate first solid foods such as iron-fortified infant cereals and meats when the infant is developmentally ready, (b) offering a healthy variety of foods such as soft fruits, cooked vegetables, soft cheeses, and fortified grain products in place of energy-dense but micronutrient-poor items, and (c) breastfeeding as long as possible throughout the first year."

Briefel RR, Reidy K, Karwe V, et al. 2004. Feeding Infants and Toddlers Study: Improvements needed in meeting infant feeding recommendations. Journal of the American Dietetic Association 104(1, Suppl. 1): S31-S44.

### **National Statistics on Child Abuse and Neglect Released**

Child Maltreatment 2002 presents national data about child abuse and neglect known to child protective services (CPS) agencies in the United States during 2002. The report is the 13th annual publication of data collected via the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). NCANDS collects case-level data on all children who were investigated or assessed by a CPS agency. The report contains information on characteristics of abuse or neglect referrals made to CPS agencies, characteristics of alleged child abuse or neglect victims, dispositions (or findings) and alleged maltreatments, child and caregiver risk factors, services provided, and perpetrator characteristics. The reports are available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cmreports.htm>.

<b>Conferences</b>
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**"Spreading the Magic of Prevention" -Prevent Child Abuse America;** May 16-19, Disney World Resort, FL; [www.preventchildabuse.org/news/conf.htm](http://www.preventchildabuse.org/news/conf.htm)

**Born to Learn - Parents as Teachers Annual Conference-** May 4-7, 2004.

The Born to Learn Conference addresses the challenges and successes of providing early childhood care and education services that build promising futures for all children, prenatal to kindergarten entry. Online registration available -- <http://www.patnc.org>

**Family Support America's 10th Biennial National Conference-** May 12-15, Chicago, IL; [www.familysupportamerica.org/content/conf/conf\\_index.htm](http://www.familysupportamerica.org/content/conf/conf_index.htm).

**National CASA Conference-** National CASA Association; June 5 -8, Washington, DC; <http://nationalcasa.org/html/events.htm> .

**7th National Summit on Fatherhood-** National Fatherhood Initiative; June 7-9, Atlanta, GA; [www.fatherhood.org/summit04home.htm](http://www.fatherhood.org/summit04home.htm) .

**The National Children's Advocacy Center and The Association for Sexual Abuse Prevention** presents the Fifth National Conference on Child Sexual Abuse Prevention; June 23-25, 2004, Sheraton Nashville Downtown, Nashville, TN. No registration fee will be charged, Scholarship application and conference information are available online at [www.nationalcac.org](http://www.nationalcac.org). For further information, please contact Marilyn Grundy at 256-327-3863.

**Putting the Pieces Together: 1st National Conference on Substance Abuse, Child Welfare and the Dependency Court** (National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare; July 14 through 15, Baltimore, MD; [www.cffutures.com/National\\_Center/SavetheDate/SavetheDate.pdf](http://www.cffutures.com/National_Center/SavetheDate/SavetheDate.pdf))

**The 10th Annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference** "Sharing Responsibility for Illinois Children" October 7-8, 2004, Radisson O'Hare Rosemont. For more information contact Mary Salisbury at Prevent Child Abuse Illinois at 217-522-1129 or [msalisbury@preventchildabuseillinois.org](mailto:msalisbury@preventchildabuseillinois.org)

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**Thanks for reading SCOOP! We'll see you again in August, 2004!**

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