

Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina's **TOP POLICY GOALS** For Our State & Its Children



North Carolina's future prosperity requires the healthy development of our children. When we invest upstream in public policies and programs that build strong families and supportive communities, we are securing the safe, stable, and nurturing environments all children need.

All North Carolinians must play a vital role in providing supportive and nurturing environments where children thrive.

Focusing on the following priority issues for policies that support families is essential for North Carolina's future prosperity.

1 Expand access to evidence-based home visiting and parenting education programs to parents and caregivers on a continuum from prenatal to college.

Evidence-based parenting education, whether delivered in the home or in a group setting, has been shown to prevent child abuse and neglect.

2 Implement family friendly policies and programs in the workplace that support and strengthen families.

Policies that promote family economic security such as paid family and medical leave are associated with significantly higher rates of breastfeeding and maternal health, reductions in hospitalizations for abusive head trauma, and lower rates of family stressors and risk factors.

3 Increase family economic security.

Empowering families to meet their basic needs of food, shelter, and medical care by strengthening household financial security is proven to reduce the risk factors for child abuse and neglect by alleviating some parental stress and helping to establish a stable household—two factors that can help protect children from abuse and neglect.

4 Improve access to quality, affordable child care.

Access to affordable child care also reduces parental stress, and having access to high-quality child care is associated with fewer symptoms of maternal depression. Both parental stress and maternal depression are risk factors for child abuse and neglect.

5 Invest in evidence-based programs to prevent child sexual abuse.

Research shows that the two most effective ways to prevent child sexual abuse are through education and training focused on adults and programming focused on skills training in children

6 Support implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act.

Family First includes historic reforms to help keep children safe with their families and avoid entry into foster care. States have the option to use this federal funding for evidence-based home visiting programs such as Healthy Families America (HFA). Read more about the implementation of the [Family First Prevention Services Act in North Carolina](#).

Prevent Child Abuse NC works closely with our statewide partners to support policies that strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment. Our policy priorities align with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Technical Packages to Prevent Violence, including the [Essentials for Childhood framework](#) and preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). We also prioritize strategies and goals in the [NC Early Childhood Action Plan](#) as well as the [Think Babies™ NC](#) initiative.

For more information on our policy priorities contact Melea Rose-Waters, Policy Director, at mrosewaters@preventchildabusenc.org



Social and Emotional Competence

Children's early experiences of being nurtured and developing a *positive relationship* with a caring adult *affects all aspects* of behavior and development.



Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development

Children *thrive* when parents provide *not only affection*, but *also* respectful communication and listening, consistent rules and expectations, and *safe opportunities* that promote independence.



Social Connections

Parents with a social network of *emotionally supportive friends, family, and neighbors* often find that it is *easier to care* for their children and themselves.



5 Protective Factors

Resilience

Parents who can cope with the *stresses of everyday life*, as well an occasional crisis, have *resilience*; they have the flexibility and inner strength necessary to *bounce back* when things are not going well.



Concrete Support

Families who can meet their *own basic needs* for food, clothing, housing, and transportation—and who know how to access essential services such as childcare, health care, and mental health services to address family-specific needs—are *better able to ensure the safety and well-being of their children*.



ACEs can have devastating impacts on long term health

When a child experiences adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), it can have life-long consequences for physical and mental health. But, one caring adult can make a difference. That's why we know building protective factors in parents, communities and businesses is important.

For more information

Please call 919-829-8009 or email info@preventchildabusenc.org

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Prevent Child Abuse
North Carolina™