

Child Maltreatment PREVENTION 101

What: Prevention of child maltreatment is providing support and services to families and communities at the earliest possible time before abuse occurs.

Why: It is the responsibility of our communities and state leaders to increase Georgia's investment in efforts to keep children from being harmed in the first place.

1. The substantiated rate of child abuse in Georgia has risen by more than 50 percent over the past six years.
2. Nearly 80 percent of Georgians reported that they believe that child maltreatment can be prevented, according to a May 2003 statewide survey.
3. For every dollar spent on prevention, Georgia saves \$4 – making prevention of child maltreatment not only possible, but cost-effective.

How: Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia uses an array of prevention strategies to address the issue of child maltreatment. They include:

1. Public awareness and advocacy inform the public and policy makers about the problem of child maltreatment and the promise of effective prevention programs. Our media outreach, newsletter, website, annual report, special events and public service announcements engage the public and our statewide network in the effort to end child abuse in Georgia. PCA Georgia's staff volunteers and chartered council network reached more than 5 million Georgians last year.
2. First Steps provides all parents of newborns with support, education and linkages to community resources. Participants report that the First Steps program helped them feel more knowledgeable about their parenting role and their baby's needs. Nearly 100 percent of participants report that they found the program useful and would recommend it to a friend.
3. Healthy Families Georgia (HFG) provides voluntary in-home visitation to first time parents identified as at-risk for poor parenting outcomes. Families participating in HFG have lower rates of repeat teen pregnancy, higher childhood immunization rates, increased potential for self-sufficiency, and babies at decreased risk for developmental delays.
4. The statewide network provides community-based prevention efforts with access to a toll-free Helpline that provides education, support and links to community resources to all Georgians: parents, students, concerned citizens and professionals. Helpline callers report that they found the assistance, educational materials and links to community resources they received helpful and appropriate.

