

# *Investing in Great Childhoods: It's Essential*

## **Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina's Top 10 Policy Goals For Our State & Its Children**

**W**hen we invest in public policies that foster great childhoods we are investing in safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for children. We are investing in school success and increased graduation rates; healthier, more productive future employees contributing to NC's tax base; and reduced costs in our social services, criminal justice, educational, and health care systems. We know that the Protective Factors are conditions in families and communities that increase the health and well-being of children and families. Policies that support families are essential for children, families, and society.

1. Make evidence-based parenting education programs available in all 100 counties in a *continuum from prenatal to college* and make these programs mandatory for foster parents and parents who are at risk or substantiated for abuse and neglect. Examples include:
  - a. Make the Incredible Years evidence-based parenting education program (ages 3-12) available in all 100 counties and make it mandatory for foster parents and parents who are at risk or substantiated for abuse and neglect.
  - b. Make the Strengthening Families evidence-based parenting education program (ages 6-11) available in all 100 counties and make it mandatory for foster parents and parents who are at risk or substantiated for abuse and neglect.
  - c. Expand Nurse-Family Partnership to all 100 counties.
  - d. Expand Triple P-Positive Parenting Program to all 100 counties. One of the most effective evidence-based parenting programs in the world, Triple P gives parents simple and practical strategies to help them confidently manage their children's behavior, prevent problems from developing, and build strong, healthy relationships.
2. Recommend all elementary, middle school, and high school teachers and counselors take the **FREE Recognizing and Responding to Suspicions of Child Maltreatment (R&R)** course – a self-guided two-hour online training that teaches citizens and professionals the signs of abuse and neglect, what to do when they suspect it is happening, NC's reporting law, and what happens after a report is made.
3. Recommend all child care professionals in state regulated homes and centers to take the **FREE Recognizing and Responding to Suspicions of Child Maltreatment (R&R)** course – a self-guided two-hour online training that teaches citizens and professionals the signs of abuse and

neglect, what to do when they suspect it is happening, NC's reporting law, and what happens after a report is made.

4. Require **Protective Factors** screening for all reports of child maltreatment.
5. Increase capability to share data about child well-being, including:
  - a. The ability to share data across counties on individual child welfare cases and to support program evaluation to foster system improvements; and
  - b. The collection of data on social norms around children and parenting to foster collaboration across systems and programs including public health, social services, early childhood development, public education, and public safety.
6. Increase public awareness of ways to support families and children to prevent child maltreatment emphasizing the **Protective Factors**.
7. Recommend that counties develop local child abuse prevention plans using the **Protective Factors Framework**.
8. Encourage appointing authorities to appoint parents to boards to actively participate in decision making on policy related to child development and child abuse prevention, such as the Child Fatality Task Force, local Smart Start Board, public health board, and social services board.
9. Recommend pediatricians screen children for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the **Protective Factors**.
10. Support the development of a state plan to prevent child sexual abuse.