

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COLLABORATIVE



2021 Legislative Agenda



WHO WE ARE

We are a collaborative of 13 statewide organizations representing direct service providers and community organizations that strengthen families with young children, protect victims of abuse, and help to heal children who have been abused – so that they can thrive in adulthood. We see strengthening of families, and thus avoiding incidents of child abuse and neglect, as the key to creating a much healthier and happier state.

OUR POLICY GOAL

To increase the availability and accessibility of proven prevention programs that strengthen families. Any family, parent, caregiver, child or young person that wants support should receive it, and in the most responsive way possible, considering factors such as race, gender, culture, ability, and more.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES –

Family & Community
Informed

Inclusive &
Equitable

Outcome
Driven

Scalable



The prevention of child abuse and neglect generally falls into three categories: Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary. The CAP Collaborative supports efforts along the entire continuum of prevention. Primary prevention programs promote healthy child development through strengthening parenting skills and reducing stress, which is a risk factor for child maltreatment. Early and effective primary prevention is more cost effective than fixing the adverse effects of child maltreatment after it has occurred.

Expand Funding for Healthy Families Oregon by \$10M over the biennium.

Healthy Families Oregon (HFO) is a voluntary statewide-accredited evidence-based home visiting program of Healthy Families America serving approximately 2,000 annually (prenatal to age 3) and is one of the state's largest child abuse prevention programs. It prevents adversity and builds resilience during a child's most critical years of development. In 2019 approximately 600 eligible families did not receive HFO requested services. A \$10 million investment would expand the number of families the program serves and prepare for growth (e.g., secure a database, staff state agency, home visitor salaries, etc.) of an anticipated 10,000 to 12,000 new referrals as Family Connects Oregon, a universally offered home visiting program through OHA, rolls out statewide.

Help Relief Nurseries Continue to Serve 1,000 Children with a \$4.8M for Increased Wages.

Relief Nurseries serve children and families who have experienced trauma, abuse, stress, or are at-risk for such experiences. Unfortunately, Relief Nurseries are losing staff to other employers and programs because they cannot afford to raise wages without reducing services to children. If Relief Nurseries raise wages without additional funding, we project that services to ~1000 children will be at risk. While Relief Nurseries represent a successful public-private partnership, private fundraising is already highly leveraged and is not a viable option to close the gap. \$4.8 million in new state funding would allow Relief Nurseries to remain competitive employers of early childhood professionals and maintain critical services to families in need.

Increase dedicated funding for parent education efforts to \$3M.

The Oregon Parent Education Collaborative (OPEC) is a statewide system of support for parenting education funded by four philanthropic foundations in partnership with Oregon State University. Through parenting "Hubs," OPEC offers free parenting education services to families through universal and targeted evidence-based and culturally-specific programs. These additional funds would support access to evidence-based parenting education programs for an additional 1200 families with young children in Oregon along with parenting workshops (available to families statewide) and professional development for parenting educators to ensure programs are evidence-based, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive.

Increase funding for System of Care Advisory Council local System of Care grants by \$4.8M.

This \$4.8m request will provide grant funding for 15 CCOs and the 9 federally Tribes. Local System of Care governance structures are tasked with identifying gaps and needs in their regional Systems of Care. Many of these require the development of locally focused culturally appropriate services and supports. Grants will enable local communities to work on community solutions to keep children at home, in school and in their communities.

Use state funds as a Medicaid match funding supporting Nurse-Family Partnership home visiting services.

The 9 counties with Nurse-Family Partnership programs are paying around \$2.5 million annually as the required local match to draw down Medicaid funds for home visiting services. Requiring counties to put up the match funding for Medicaid precludes many counties that are unable to put forward these dollars. Families in many parts of Oregon are therefore unable to access NFP services that are proven to increase children's school readiness and academic achievement, improve prenatal health, reduce childhood maltreatment, increase maternal employment, and reduce children's mental health problems, among other outcomes.

Remove Bias from Child Welfare by Establishing a Child Welfare Equity Advisory Committee under the Governor's Child Foster Care Advisory Commission.

Implicit bias can be seen in all steps of the child welfare system. Within Oregon's foster care system, historically marginalized communities are deeply impacted by racism, ableism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, and other systems of oppression, leading to injustices such as overrepresentation of these communities in the foster care system. In order to keep families together, we must address bias in all facets of reporting and child welfare. In Oregon the percentage of Indigenous and Black children that were placed in foster care in FFY 2019 was 2.9 and 1.5 times higher respectively, than the percentage of Indigenous or Black children in Oregon's child population. Parents with cognitive disabilities are 1.5 times more likely to have their children removed and placed in foster care.

Expand access to Children's Advocacy Centers through an increased \$6M over the biennium.

Children's advocacy centers (CACs) provide statutorily mandated services to ensure children with concerns of abuse receive medical exams, forensic interviews, family advocacy, and mental health services. The expertise of CACs ensure that child welfare and law enforcement professionals have access to information gathered in trauma-informed, non-leading ways, that can help these partners decide on the next steps to take for child safety. CACs are essential service providers during the pandemic and are always required to remain open and serving due to Karly's Law, an Oregon statute guaranteeing a child with suspicious physical injuries the right to a child abuse medical assessment within 48 hours.

For more information, contact CAP Collaborative convener:
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