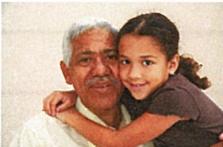


Prevention of Child Maltreatment



Esther Devall
edevall@nmsu.edu
575-646-1161

Shelly A. Bucher
sbucher@nmsu.edu
575-646-1277



What is Child Maltreatment?

Any act of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that results in harm, potential for harm or threat of harm to a child.



Acts of Commission

- Acts that are deliberate and intentional regardless if harm to the child is the intended consequence of the act.
- Types
 - Physical abuse.
 - Sexual abuse.
 - Psychological abuse.



Acts of Omission

- Failure to provide for basic needs regardless if harm to the child is the intended consequence.
- Types
 - Physical/Emotional neglect.
 - Medical/dental neglect.
 - Educational neglect.
 - Failure to supervise.
 - Exposure to violent environments.



Effects of Child Maltreatment

- Brain Architecture.
- Mental Health.
- Health Risk Behaviors.
- Social Functioning.
- Life Expectancy.



More Specifically

- Smaller brains.
- Learning Disorders.
- Juvenile Delinquency.
- Suicides.
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases.
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse.



Costs of Child Maltreatment

- Short and long-term health care.
- Special Education.
- Productivity Losses.
- Child Welfare and Criminal Justice Costs.
- **\$124 BILLION** lifetime economic burden for reported child maltreatment in 2008.



Child Maltreatment in New Mexico

B. Child Maltreatment Data (National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS))

Overview Maltreatment Information⁶

	2008		2009		2010		2011	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Children subject of an investigated report alleging child maltreatment	23,178	45.8 per 1,000	23,277	45.6 per 1,000	27,122	52.3 per 1,000	27,729	53.4 per 1,000
Total child maltreatment victims ⁷	5,656	11.2 per 1,000	5,368	10.5 per 1,000	6,818	11.6 per 1,000	6,231	12.0 per 1,000
Child fatalities	19	3.8 per 100,000	10	2.0 per 100,000	19	3.7 per 100,000	15	2.9 per 100,000



Child Maltreatment in New Mexico

- Child victim rate higher than national average of 9.9 per 1,000.
- Data underestimates actual victims.
 - Estimated that 1 in 5 children experience maltreatment in their lifetime.



Risk Factors



- Poverty.
- Young maternal age.
- Single parent status.
- Isolation.
- Substance abuse.
- Depression.
- Lack of understanding child development.



Protective Factors

- Nurturing and attachment.
- Parental resilience.
- Social connections.
- Knowledge of parenting and child development.
- Concrete supports for parents.
- Social and emotional competence of children.



Prevention vs. Treatment

- Prevention is more effective and less costly than treatment.
- Investing in prevention yields a 19 to 1 savings over long-term costs.
- Cost effective even if reduction is modest.



Types of Prevention

- **Primary** – programs for the general population that try to prevent abuse before it occurs.
 - Media campaign, parent education, family support.
- **Secondary** – programs for families with risk factors for abuse such as poverty or young parental age.
 - Home visiting, respite care, high school parent education.
- **Tertiary** – programs for families where maltreatment has already occurred to prevent reoccurrence.
 - Family preservation, parent mentor, behavior modification



Prevention Approaches

- Media campaigns.
- Parenting education classes.
- Home-visitation programs.
- Parent support groups.
- Hotlines and crisis nurseries.



Media Campaigns

- Increase awareness.
- Change behavior.
 - Shaken Baby Syndrome.
 - Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.
- Combine with other efforts.
- Follow-up and evaluate.



Parenting Classes

- Strengthening Families.
- Focus on protective factors.
- Early intervention.
- Strong theory base.
- Strategies to recruit and retain.
- Skilled staff.
- Follow up and refresher.



Home-Visiting Programs

- Improve parenting skills.
- Custom to meet family needs.
- Skilled staff.
- Greatest benefit is for low-income, first-time adolescent mothers.



Parent Support Groups

- Groups that provide child care information and skills, problem-solving, home management, behavior modification and social interaction skills most successful.
- Provide encouragement and support to develop individual and family strengths.



Community Prevention Efforts

- New focus on communities rather than individuals.
- Create communities where:
 - there are many services and supports for parents.
 - neighbors share a belief in collective responsibility to protect children.




Community Prevention Efforts

- Outcomes:
 - Reduced parental stress.
 - Improved parent-child interactions.
 - Reduced injury to young children.
 - Reduced rates of child maltreatment.




Lever for Change

- Parent Partnerships.
- Professional Development.
- Policies and Systems.



Parent Partnerships

- Create opportunities for parents to engage with other parents to learn about and use protective factors in their own families.
- Designate specific resources for parent engagement, participation, and leadership.
- Ensure parental involvement in policy and planning efforts.



Professional Development

- Build a workforce of common knowledge, goals and language.
 - High School.
 - College.
 - Continuing education.



Policies and Systems

- Infuse protective factors into regulations and procedures.
- Engage multidisciplinary partners.
- Link to cross-system planning efforts.
- Adapt contractual methods for funding and defining programs to include a protective factor focus.



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- Strengthening Families Initiative.
 - Less likely to use corporal punishment.
 - Increase in couple satisfaction, communication, conflict resolution and family organization.
- Family Resource Center.
 - Promoting a healthier community.
 - Support, infants & toddlers, after school, literacy, nutrition, family activities, therapy, stress reduction.



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- Community Mental Health & Wellness Clinic.
 - Outreach, advocacy, education, consultation.
- Child Advocacy Studies Minor.
 - Interdisciplinary undergraduate minor.
- E-Learning for Educators.
 - Collaboration for mandated training on recognizing and reporting abuse and neglect.



NMSU

- Equine Therapeutic Riding Program.
 - Improved confidence, independence, social skills.
- SW Region National Child Protection Training Center.
 - Eliminate child abuse through education, advocacy and training.
- Citizen Review Boards.
 - Systemic reform.



Policy and Funding Recommendations

- Parenting programs.
- Crisis child care.
- Training and education.
- Evaluation.



***“We can end child abuse
and
we can do so within the lifetimes of
our great grandchildren
if
we start the clock ticking from this
moment.”***

-Victor Veth-