

Iowa Forum for Children and Families

Fall 2000

POPULATION

UPDATING



POLICY

UPDATE

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Introduction

Protecting Children: Everyone's Business

Staff of Child and Family Policy Center, Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, and State Public Policy Group

The tragic case of Shelby Duis has brought the state's child protective service (CPS) system into broad, public attention. Most importantly, Iowa citizens are seeking solutions that will prevent other tragedies from occurring.

According to national estimates, each year 1,200 children in the United States die at the hands of their parents. In Iowa, the number of such child deaths was 10 in 1998 (it is already 9 so far in 2000).

Not all these children are known to the formal child protection system. Sadly, despite society's best efforts, it is not possible to guarantee that no child ever will die at the child's parents' hands.

Still, there are many actions that can be taken to reduce the chances that tragedies will occur. Some involve changes to the child protective service system itself – to the ways in which reports of child abuse and neglect are made and action taken. Others, however, involve actions taken by the larger community – calling on all citizens to take part in protecting children. Still others involve changes in the services and supports offered to children and families – from preventive and early intervention services to foster care and adoption services.


Any actions Iowa takes in child protection must recognize that the child protective service system receives almost 20,000 reports of abuse and neglect each year. Thankfully, only a tiny proportion involve cases as horrific as Shelby's. Many involve families that need some help, but represent the best caregivers their children can have. The challenge Iowa faces is developing a system that both is more vigilant and forceful in acting when there are signs of child endangerment while being more helpful and providing better guidance when families are overburdened or ill-equipped in their parenting roles yet before child endangerment becomes a concern.

As this Iowa Forum report suggests, in addition to reforms to the child protective service system, there is a strong role for citizens and communities to play in keeping children safe. Citizens provide the overall watchful eyes needed to keep all children safe. Communities provide the informal and formal supports that all families and children need to manage

stress, provide guidance and support, and reduce isolation – through faith communities, support groups, self-help and mutual aid organizations, civic associations, youth programs, boys and girls clubs, big brothers and sisters groups, family nights, and a multitude of other activities.

This *Policy Update* offers a variety of perspectives on how these elements need to be woven together to keep children safe. The Governor and the General Assembly both have pledged to make child protection a top priority of the 2001 legislative session.

This *Policy Update* is made possible through a grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. The Clark Foundation has been a national leader in developing community-based child protective service systems and has supported Linn County in Iowa as one of four national demonstration sites devoted to developing community partnerships to keep children safe. The Clark Foundation's initiative is described in one of the sections of this *Policy Update*.



Iowa Forum June 14th Conference Synopsis

On June 14th, the Iowa Forum hosted a statewide meeting, *Community Partnerships for Protecting Children*. Over one hundred fifty concerned Iowans participated – including mandatory and voluntary child abuse reporters, local government officials, state legislators, community empowerment board members, advocates, social workers, legislators, businesspeople, child care workers, juvenile court officers, and department child protective service staff and administrators.

Lieutenant Governor Sally Pederson provided the opening address and Shay Bilchik, Executive Director of the Child Welfare League of America, provided the keynote address. The Child Welfare League of America is the oldest and largest national organization of public and private agencies and organizations providing family and children's services. Excerpts from Shay Bilchik's address are provided below, with excerpts from Lieutenant Governor Sally Pederson's address provided in Section III.

The meeting drew upon Iowa and national experiences in developing new partnerships between the child protective service (CPS) system and community organizations and individuals – to more effectively report on and respond to signs of potential abuse and to develop more effective service strategies that strengthen families' community support systems, including faith communities and voluntary and neighborhood based organizations.

At lunch, Director of the Department of Human Services Jesse Rasmussen recounted a personal experience in seeking to help a family in need that spoke to the need for social work to recognize and support the natural support systems all families need to succeed. Another plenary speaker as well as workshop leader, Susan Kelly from the Clark Foundation, used case examples to emphasize the draw in the community and involve families in their own case planning, in order to succeed in establishing safe home climates.

Morning and afternoon workshops focused upon the nuts-and-bolts of the child protection system and the points at which community eyes and voices are needed, public education campaigns that can heighten visibility and response to children and families in need, ways that case planning can better involve both families and their support systems, and ways of developing new twenty-four hour neighborhood response systems and services that can prevent child abuse from occurring. At the concluding session, participants challenged one another to continue to work together to develop community responses to child protection.

Keynote Address Excerpt – Protecting America’s Children is Everyone’s Business

Shay Bilchik, Executive Director, CWLA

Protecting children and strengthening families is the Child Welfare League of America’s mission. We’ve been working for 80 years to protect them not only from something—abuse and neglect—but also for something—to preserve their potential, so all our children can become the caring parents and productive citizens of the future.

Those of us who accept the responsibility for children, along with parents, are the ones who hurt the most when a child is lost forever—a child like Shelby Duis in Spirit Lake. In Shelby’s case, hard questions are being asked. These questions must be asked, and answered. That’s what it means to accept responsibility.

At the same time, we know that this responsibility does not rest solely with the child protection system, any more than it rests solely with the parents. It takes a village, a community, to protect a child. It’s everybody’s business. And that’s why we’re here today.

Clearly, the child welfare system, in isolation, is not succeeding in protecting America’s children. But this is the key: no one system, in isolation, can possibly protect them all.

A system in isolation has certain predictable – and frequently dysfunctional – behaviors. When the system is constrained for resources, as is usually the case with the child welfare system, one result is a kind of triage mentality. The directive, whether explicit or implicit, is to sort out reports of abuse and neglect so that the system’s scarce resources go to the most severe cases. Families whose problems are less severe are told, in effect, “Go away and come back when it’s worse.” Clearly that’s not what anyone intends, but without active links to other community agencies that can meet these families’ real and immediate needs, it’s very likely to happen. A system in that position, in isolation, could fail to respond until trouble escalates into tragedy.

Our goal is to create the opposite of isolation, which is connection. It

is about how the community can come together to protect children by building connections, continually weaving and reinforcing the network of protection and support for families. It is about creating supportive communities where families get all the services they need before the needs are critical, and where children are protected. It is about making places where children are not only safe, but also nurtured.

When I think of safe children, I think of systems working together. When I think of systems working together, I draw an analogy to good police work. Some of the most successful community policing across the U.S. has been premised on the "broken windows" prevention strategy. At the very first broken window – the first sign of deterioration in a community – police, together with other community leaders, take aggressive action to eliminate the problem and prevent further deterioration.

The broken windows strategy works. This rapid response sets a community standard. The announcement is clear and strong: we don't allow that here. This is the same standard we want to set for child welfare across the U.S.

Let me emphasize the difference between the broken windows strategy and another approach known as zero tolerance. I am not recommending an immediate jail sentence for the kid who broke the window, any more than I would recommend taking children away from their parents at the first report of neglect. But neither would I recommend ignoring the signal that has been sent.

The difference between a harsh, unbalanced, punitive approach and a positive, restorative approach, in both cases, is the involvement of the community. Police departments, operating in isolation, can't keep a community together. Neither can CPS departments operating in isolation. It takes community connections: people coming together and working together, to keep the pieces intact.

Fortunately, we know what works. We have developed many successful approaches – but those that are comprehensive show the best results.

When we speak of a comprehensive approach, we're talking about the continuum that goes from prenatal care through home visiting and other family supports, through the array of services the child welfare system can offer, then on, if necessary, into a strong system of graduated sanctions in the juvenile justice system, with the involvement of all relevant community partners at every stage.

This comprehensive strategy is carried out in the home, in the community, in the school, in the social systems, and in the culture. In order to reduce violence, institutions must be accountable. The health and well-being of our children and youth require a finely-crafted network of family supports — healthcare; neighborhood infrastructure; strong schools and places of learning; active involvement in churches and mosques


and synagogues; job opportunities; playgrounds; art and positive values; and social services and policing — a continuum of supports and sanctions that add to quality of life for people of all ages.

This is exciting — particularly because we know so much about what works — 0-3 programs; nurse home visiting; developmental pre-school; after school programs; drug abuse prevention; CASA; Child Advocacy Centers; mentoring; early intervention; top notch juvenile justice system programs.

Still, this continuum of supports doesn't just magically happen. Our research has identified six critical success factors needed to develop them: six traits that cropped up time and time again in successful programs. They are: leadership, agency and community support, maximizing existing resources and systems, marketing, training and technical assistance, and early wins, to keep morale up and everybody working together.

Do these correspond to your experience in your community initiatives? I'm sure that your initiatives have many elements in place. I'm also sure that you still have some important work to do.

You are not alone. This is a challenge for our entire country — but it is starting to happen and you are the best hope it's happening more consistently and comprehensively.

Let me leave you with a challenge, a call to action. Each of you here today will be hearing about wonderful things that other people are doing to protect children, and you'll be sharing the great things you're doing. Please don't leave here without a personal action plan for reaching out to bring someone else in. Let's make sure that everyone here takes the responsibility for making child protection someone else's business — for inviting someone in who's not yet engaged. We are talking about a movement — a movement catching fire. And things don't just catch fire; they are set on fire. You, every one of you in this room, is the spark we need to set this movement on fire. Then we'll have the passion and energy and numbers we need to ensure that all children survive and thrive. 

Lieutenant Governor Sally Pederson Opening Address: Keeping All Iowans Safe from Abuse

Lieutenant Governor Sally Pederson opened the June 14th Iowa Forum meeting on community partnerships for protecting children. The following is an excerpt from her address.

I'm pleased to see so many of you gathered on behalf of Iowa's children. I believe that no work is more important than the work we do on behalf of children. Children are our most vulnerable citizens. They depend on us, and desperately need us to advocate for them. I am here to tell you how important your work is to Iowa, and to thank you for doing that work.

The subject of child abuse has been much on the minds of Iowans this year, due to the tragic death of Shelby Duis in Spirit Lake. It is indeed a tragedy that it has taken a death to focus attention on child abuse. Because for every child who dies, there are countless thousands of Iowa children who continue to live in violent situations.

The costs of such abuse are immeasurable: there are hundreds of millions of dollars in costs to provide services to troubled children, youth, and families. There are physical costs and emotional costs. And there are long-term costs that perpetuate child abuse: abused children are far more likely to fail in school, to become pregnant in their teens, participate in juvenile crime, or to become abusers themselves.

Governor Vilsack and I are committed to the prevention of abuse against every citizen in Iowa. Iowa's quality of life depends on improving the health and well-being of all of our citizens, from infants to victims of spousal or partner abuse to the elderly. Iowa's quality of life depends on minimizing stress for Iowa's families and ensuring the safety of each of our citizens in each of our communities.

The Governor and I and our staff and our department directors will be working hard in the next year to improve the systems that prevent abuse—of all of our citizens, regardless of their age, regardless of their economic status. And we will need your help.

To create the political will that can make change, advocates for abused children will need to work together with those who advocate for victims of domestic abuse and for the elderly and other dependent adults. Together, all of you can create a strong voice—you can focus the public's


attention and the legislature's attention on the need to protect our children, but also on the need to protect all of our citizens who are victims of abuse.

Let me give you a very specific example. Mental illness and substance abuse are problems that need to be talked about openly, without discrimination or disgrace. These are problems, as you know, that often are factors in abuse of all kinds.

The Governor and I proposed a mental health and substance abuse parity bill this past legislative session [Ed note: Parity bills require health insurers to treat mental health and substance abuse issues in the same way – in parity with – the way they treat physical health issues]. Unfortunately, Iowa's House of Representatives passed a watered-down mental health parity bill and ignored substance abuse altogether.

Because Governor Vilsack and I voiced our commitment to passing a meaningful parity law, and because we were able to rally others with the same commitment, legislators in Iowa heard loud and clear that they needn't bother with a parity bill that would have little real impact. The bill died in the Iowa Senate.

In order to get real parity, advocacy groups have to flex their muscle and insist on real parity. This summer, our administration will be meeting with providers, consumers, and advocates, working to build an unstoppable coalition to get a meaningful mental health and substance abuse parity bill pushed through the legislature next year. Mental illness and substance abuse directly affect one out of every four Iowa families. And believe me: those one out of four families have the potential to be a very powerful lobby.

Today, as you are focusing on community partnerships that can help keep our children safe, I hope you'll think about collaboration in the broadest terms. By doing so, you can make a difference in the lives of countless Iowans. You can make a powerful, positive difference in the future of our state. 

Department of Human Services: Protecting Children... Our First and Foremost Priority

Adult, Children, and Family Services Division Administrator Mary Nelson

Recently, both Governor Tom Vilsack and Department of Human Services Director Jessie Rasmussen, reasserted that the safety of children is our first and foremost priority and is paramount to the work of the Department. Each day, DHS receives approximately 50 reports of suspected child abuse.

Every time a child protection worker responds, he or she is asked to make critical and difficult decisions affecting the safety of the child, but only after alleged abuse occurs. To better protect children from further risk of abuse, it takes the community, the courts, children's advocates, and informal and formal supports and services to collaborate with one vision to protect children in families who come in contact with the child protective or child welfare systems.

The review and reshaping of child protective system is an on-going process.

Using the data reporting format recently released in the Federal Child Welfare Outcomes Report, 14 out of every 1,000 children in Iowa have, by definition, been abused, or 10,031 children in 1997. While the number of cases has not increased substantially in the last few years, more complex family issues have been identified as needing to be addressed. Domestic violence and alcohol and substance abuse are issues that need immediate attention to ensure a child's safety.

In an effort to provide child protective and child welfare service systems the best "tools," support, supervision, and feedback mechanisms must be in place to ensure that children reside in safe, permanent, and nurturing families.

DHS will encourage community involvement, engage families in case planning, partner with substance abuse and domestic violence experts, and intensify quality assurance are key DHS investments in working toward increasing the safety of Iowa's children.

In conjunction with the Clark Foundation, the Department has participated in the Community Partnership for Protecting Children initiative in Linn County. The hallmark of this project is acknowledging that the protection of children is everyone's business.

DHS's current focus and activities related to better assure the safety and well being children and families, mirror the key strategies of the Clark Initiative:

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- Family engagement in case planning;
 - Networks of neighborhood and community supports and local decision making; and
 - Modifying or developing new policies, practices, and cultural change.

(See box for a summary of current activities)

Holding a family meeting has been successful in developing a tailor-made plan to support the family and better assure the safety and well-being of the children in the family. These meetings include the family, the children, when appropriate, extended family members, friends, neighbors, and other formal and informal supports. All participants can become part of the case plan with specific activities and desired goals. The case plans, too, build upon the family strengths. The time invested to engage the family in the process creates a greater investment on the family's part and is more likely to fit their own unique strengths and needs. There has been statewide training for DHS and private service providers in the use of the Family Unity Model. This model, like Social Work Case Management (SWCM), focuses on child safety, family decision making, building on the strengths and resources of the family, and encourages the use of informal supports. Such supports can and do provide the ongoing resources necessary for families to sustain a safe home as opposed to merely short-term compliance. Local DHS staff are encouraged to use the model and the Department is examining ways to fund the facilitation of family teams, as well as the participation of providers in the process. While Decategorization can fund such an activity, the state is working to clarify the use of existing funding streams to support the family teams.

Building upon the success of Decategorization and the more recent Iowa Community Empowerment Initiative, DHS has taken a lead in developing a sense of responsibility for caring for neighbors and developing networks of formal and informal services and supports. As a part of local decision making, the use of data is becoming increasingly more important in terms of budgeting, service trends, case planning, results of service, and accountability. A data warehouse with child protection and child welfare services data has been designed and a test version is in production. Once operational, DHS state and local administrators, and field staff will have access to information, down to the case specific information.


Several months ago, the Department began using an in-depth case review method, the Quality Service Review, to learn how well children and families are faring from the services they receive. Each child case reviewed serves as a "test" of the service system. Reviewers conduct a thorough reading of files, interviews with the family, case workers, providers, teachers, and others involved in the child's life. Key questions relate to child safety, health needs, school progress, family support, and progress toward permanency for the child. At the end, an appraisal is completed and describes what's working, what are factors contributing to desired results, and practical steps to sustain progress toward success. The results

of the reviews provide workers, supervisors, and providers an understanding of successful strategies, suggestions for troubleshooting barriers to success, and a means to track system practices as they change.

Training for CPS workers has been revised in the last year to address specific issues of domestic violence and family alcohol and substance abuse. DHS is also working with domestic violence experts on how to strengthen partnerships. By collaborating with the Department of Public Health, strategies are being developed for a cross-training curriculum, the development of a screening tool to be used by CPS workers, and funding resources to encourage local collaboration.

On the system level, the American Humane Association (AHA) has been contracted to conduct an in-depth assessment of the child protection system. The scope of the review is to provide recommendations regarding:

- Any changes in policies or procedures to improve child safety;
- What should be done to improve the quality of practices;
- What resources are needed to improve the system;
- How to develop and support the community role in child protection; and
- How, overall, the system could function better.

In August of this year, the newly-formed Child Welfare Partnership Committee met for the first time to strengthen partnerships between DHS, the courts, children's advocates, and providers. This advisory group is designed to explore issues and advocate for improvements in the child welfare system. In the end, it is the Department's vision, through the committee, to sustain improvements in the safety, permanency and the well-being of children and families who come to the attention of the child welfare system. 

Summary of Activities

<p>Family Engagement in Case Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of family meetings • Evaluation of QSR data • Training redesign • Training and skill development 	<p>Neighborhood Networking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Empowerment Boards • Direct practice modifications • Networking with domestic violence & substance abuse partners
<p>Practice, Policy, and Cultural Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National assessment • Employee manual modifications • Direct practice modifications • Analyzing funding streams • Integrating initiatives • Defining and developing quality staff performance 	<p>Local Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing use of outcome measures • Data warehouse development • Feedback from QSR • Inter and intra-agency coordination and collaboration

The Clark Foundation Community Partnership Approach

excerpts from *Community Partnerships for Protecting Children* by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation

The Community Partnership for Protecting Children Initiative is a long-term effort that aims to fundamentally change the way communities and CPS agencies respond to child abuse and neglect. Four cities were chosen as pilot sites for the approach: Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Jacksonville, Florida; Louisville, Kentucky; and St. Louis, Missouri. The Initiative was designed and implemented under the guidance of the Program for Children at the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation with three fundamental goals:

- Children in the targeted neighborhoods will be less likely to be abused or neglected;
- Children who come to the attention of CPS will be less likely to be re-abused or neglected;
- Serious injury to children due to abuse and neglect will decrease.

In most counties, the local CPS agency – created by state and federal legislation – works out of a downtown office. Reports come to the CPS agency through a variety of sources – schools, hospital workers, concerned citizens – and those reports either meet evidentiary requirements or are dropped if the evidence doesn't confirm the report. Currently, most CPS workers struggle with heavy caseloads that prevent them from following up on signs of serious trouble in a home if those signs do not meet the legal definitions of abuse and neglect. Even families that meet the legal definition often don't get the degree or type of service needed. Because most CPS agencies have been oriented toward a few solutions – providing a standard array of preventive services such as counseling, removing children from homes and recommending that criminal charges be filed – families who come in contact with the agency are often prone to mistrusting the system. As a result, these families may not seek help from CPS workers (such as parenting advice, health care, or substance abuse treatment), even if they desperately need it.

Under the community child protection approach, the local CPS agency works with the community to develop a wide range of responses – many aimed at preventing abuse before it even occurs. What this means in practice is a fundamental shift in who assumes responsibility for child

abuse and neglect. Under this approach, CPS agencies still handle the serious reports of maltreatment and in some cases, children must still be removed from their homes and placed in foster care. But regardless of the severity of the problem, CPS workers also take the time to assess the family's situation and to look closely at the family's strengths and needs. And CPS workers look to all members of a community to work with them in supporting families. Neighbors and citizens work to inform residents about the Community Partnerships Initiative and link troubled families to supportive services. CPS agencies station workers in schools and community centers where they consult with teachers, day care workers, and other individuals involved in assisting families. Parent groups plan activities – such as family movie nights and picnics – designed to relieve everyday stresses on families, knit community residents closer together and provide an opportunity for discussion about common concerns. Parents Anonymous and other self-help groups establish activities in the neighborhoods where parents live.

Community Partnerships focus on four core strategies – strategies that form the cornerstone of the initiative.

One: An individualized course of action is implemented for all children and families who are identified by community members as being at substantial risk of child abuse and neglect. If communities are to work together to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect, no one response can serve each and every family's needs. In the partnership sites, CPS workers are now convening family team meetings with families, neighbors, and local service providers that result in tailor-made plans designed to support the family and ensure the safety and well-being of the children in that family. These plans identify the specific activities to be carried out by parents, friends, extended families, and other formal and informal supports. Action plans also identify one caring adult – sometimes a relative or a neighbor – who stays in close contact with the child and family, even after formal services and involvement with the CPS agency are phased out. Finally, action plans build on the strengths of families – as opposed to focusing on their weaknesses – and adapt to cultural and racial norms that vary from family to family.

Two: Each partnership in the four cities organizes a network of neighborhood and community supports. Each partnership locale is creating a formal association of agencies, neighborhood groups, and families to support the overall mission of community child protection. Core members of these networks include: schools, faith institutions, mental health professionals and healthcare providers, substance abuse and domestic violence programs, police, child care providers, parent groups, and of course, the public CPS agency. The network is intended to accomplish several purposes:


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- To provide needed support and services to neighborhood families;
 - To provide the means to intervene in crisis situations where a child is at risk of being harmed; and
 - To broaden the community's "eyes and ears" to identify and help more at-risk families.

Three: The CPS agency begins to adopt new policies, practices, roles, and responsibilities. In order to take a leadership role in the partnership, the CPS agency had to change the way it responded to reports of maltreatment, while still fulfilling its legal mandate to protect children from abuse and neglect. For the CPS agencies in the four sites, this process meant teaching staff different skills for working with families in the system. Instead of simply investigating a report of abuse or neglect, the reports are "differentially" assigned based on severity. If the child's safety is at risk, then formal investigative procedures are followed, including removal when necessary. If the child's immediate safety needs are met, but the family is still in need of help, then the worker connects parents to the services and resources they may need by first conducting a thorough assessment.

CPS agencies are also expected to act as "safety consultants" to other members of the partnership network – assisting teachers, pediatricians, family support workers, and residents in determining what they can contribute to child safety in the community, and how to effectively intervene when a child is at risk of harm.

Four: Each partnership establishes a local decision-making body that reviews the effectiveness of community child protection and engages community members to participate in and support the initiative. This group takes primary responsibility for self-evaluation — learning how to collect and analyze data to measure their own progress towards reducing child abuse and neglect. The partnerships use the process as a management tool and, at the same time, explore critical questions such as:

- Are strategies (or activities) reaching the families they were intended to serve?
- Are strategies achieving desired results?
- Can the partnerships document what works – or what doesn't work?

Asking these questions along the way allows the partnerships to adapt their strategies and gain experience in what is, for the most part, an entirely new way of thinking about and doing child protection. 

The Role of Prevention in Keeping Children Safe

Steve Scott, Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, which directs the Iowa Child Abuse Prevention Program

For months, Iowans have been discussing how to ensure that our children do not suffer the abuse that Shelby Duis and too many others have. The debate so far has largely focused on how to improve the Department of Human Service's response to child abuse once it occurs. What has been missing is any discussion of how to prevent abuse from ever occurring in the first place. We must begin including prevention in our discussions of how to respond to Shelby's death.


The state's longest standing (since 1982) and most extensive prevention effort is the Iowa Child Abuse Prevention Program (ICAPP), which our office organizes and directs. In fiscal year 2000, ICAPP helped children and families in 63 Iowa counties. It provided crisis and respite care for 2,189 children, visited 3,368 families with newborns, and instructed 25,379 children on how to avoid being sexually abused. Almost 2,000 parents participated in parent education classes and support programs, and 3,157 adults attended sexual abuse prevention classes and drama troupe presentations.

In 1992, the legislature created a second child abuse prevention program, titled Healthy Opportunities for Parents to Experience Success (called HOPES or, more commonly, Healthy Families Iowa). This program visits families with newborns in ten counties in hospitals or soon after the return home. HOPES further offers voluntary, ongoing visits to families at greater risk of abuse, helping 826 families in fiscal year 2000.

The premise supporting these prevention efforts is that child abuse is preventable and children can be made safe from it. Almost all parents love their children, wish to be good parents, and do not want to abuse their children. Unfortunately, some parents are socially isolated; have few resources to help them through difficult times; face stresses with which they cannot cope; or lack important parenting skills. Parents in these circumstances may well abuse their children.

Prevention programs seek to provide families the support, education, and care they need so as to reduce the risks of abuse. ICAPP and HOPES both do this work with appropriations of less than \$1 million each, representing approximately \$2.00 per child in Iowa. ICAPP and HOPES have received no state funding increases in six years. At the same time, state spending on treating the problems resulting from abuse continues to grow, exceeding \$250 million this year to pay for DHS to operate its

child protection system, help troubled families, and, where needed, place children in out-of-home-care.

It is time to examine the gross imbalance between what we spend on preventing abuse and what we pay for trying to fix what has gone wrong. Enhancing our investment in these child abuse prevention efforts makes sense, given the harm that abused children suffer. It also makes sense because of the cost of responding to and treating the costs of abuse.  X

Calendar of Upcoming Activities

The following represent upcoming activities and events directly related to child protective services reform and the legislative session.

Community Dialogue Meetings Sponsored by the
Iowa Forum October 20th - November 30th

General Assembly Meeting on Child Protection November 15th

American Humane Association Study Due November 17th

Ombudsman Report on Child Protection Due by end of November

Governor's Budget Hearings
Accountable Government November 12th

3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Southeastern Iowa Community College

Building 400, Room 406

1015 South Gear Avenue

West Burlington

New Economy November 21th

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Davenport Public Library

321 Main Street

Davenport

Education November 27th

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

St. Luke's Hospital

1026 A Avenue, NE

Cedar Rapids

Health Care November 28th

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Sioux City Public Library

529 Pierce Street

Sioux City

Safe Communities	December 4 th
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	
Council Bluffs Public Library	
400 Willow Avenue	
Council Bluffs	
Environment	December 6 th
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	
Mason City Public Library	
225 2nd Street, SE	
Mason City	
General Hearing	December 11 th
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	
Maytag Auditorium	
Iowa Public Television	
6450 Corporate Drive	
Johnston	
First Day of Legislative Session	January 8 th
Governor's Condition of State and Budget Address	To be Announced

The Policy Update is a publication of the **Iowa Forum for Children and Families**. The Policy Update provides current information about the changing roles of federal, state, and local government, and how these changes will impact Iowa's children and families. The Iowa Forum for Children and Families is funded by a number of foundation supported initiatives. The publication is funded from a grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.

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