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# STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## California Study Finds “That Cutting Preventive Services Puts Children at Risk”

**CHICAGO, IL, April 20 2012-** Rise magazine reports that a new study by the Sacramento Child Death Review Team (*A Twenty Year Analysis of Child Death Data – 1990-2009*), concludes that child deaths due to child abuse and neglect in Sacramento County went down between 1999 and 2003 when funding for prevention services in California was high, but rose by approximately one child per year from 2003 through 2009 when funding for family support services were cut ([risemagazine.org/featured\\_stories/Family\\_supports\\_save\\_lives.html](http://risemagazine.org/featured_stories/Family_supports_save_lives.html)).

As part of this story, Sheila Boxley of the Child Abuse Prevention Center who headed the team added, “In Sacramento, child welfare funding has been cut by almost one-third. With fewer resources, the department has had to continue to do the things they are legally mandated to do – such as investigations and foster care placement – and they have stopped being able to do much prevention.”

The article goes on to say that beyond the moral and humanitarian reasons for addressing the results of this study, there are economic arguments for addressing these cuts as well. A recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study reports that the lifetime cost per victim of non-fatal child maltreatment is over \$210,000. Prevention services can be provided for \$1200-\$1500 per child per year.

“There are various innovative strategies that are proven to be effective in preventing child maltreatment,” stated Jim Hmurovich, President & CEO, Prevent Child Abuse America. “Why taxpayers are not vocal about budget reductions that curtail the use of these proven and cost effective strategies is beyond me. Certainly services must be available for victims of child maltreatment. Shouldn’t however, we also be asking a new question as well? Wouldn’t it be more effective and less costly to avoid the adverse consequences of abuse from ever happening? It’s time for real leadership to emerge with a plan to not only develop responsible budgeting, but to develop an evidence-based strategy that promotes child well-being while decreasing unnecessary expenses from occurring in the first place. It takes time; it takes thoughtful discussion; and it takes strong committed leadership. Most importantly it takes a clear message from the people that live this everyday, America’s families and taxpayers, who need to stand up and say the current state of affairs is no longer acceptable.”



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**ABOUT PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AMERICA**

Prevent Child Abuse America, founded in 1972, works to ensure the healthy development of children nationwide while recognizing that child development is a building block for community development and economic development. We believe that communities across the country are doing innovative things with great results to prevent abuse and neglect from ever occurring, and what we need to do as a nation is commit to bringing this kind of ingenuity to communities everywhere. Based in Chicago, Prevent Child Abuse America has chapters in 48 states and over 400 Healthy Families America, home visitation sites in 37 states, the Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and Canada. For more information, please visit [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org) and [www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org](http://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org).