

Teaming up to keep kids...



Prevent Child Abuse America

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Talking Points for the News Media

The following talking points were prepared for your use in communicating with the news media in your community. Remember that local news media will pay more attention to a topic if there is some kind of local "angle." Your ability to supplement these talking points with evidence (factual or anecdotal) from your community will make your story much more appealing to the news media.

Child abuse and neglect continues to be an important public issue.

- While the nation's overall crime rate fell 22 percent from 1993 to 1997, reports of child abuse and neglect grew by 9 percent and confirmed cases increased 3 percent.¹
- During the period 1993-1997, Prevent Child Abuse America estimates that over 5,000 children died from abuse or neglect in the United States.²
- Forty-six out of 1,000 children were reported as abused or neglected and 15 children out of 1,000 were confirmed as abused or neglected in 1997.²
- *Add local and statewide statistics, if available.*

Prevention programs can work.

- *Describe local and/or state prevention initiatives.*
- One nationwide prevention program -- Healthy Families America® (HFA) -- was launched in 1992 by Prevent Child Abuse America (formerly the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse). Several studies of HFA sites nationwide found that 90 percent or more of children whose parents are enrolled in HFA are up-to-date on their immunizations and are keeping appointments for well-baby check-ups. More than 94 percent of participating parents have identified an appropriate and stable source of medical care for their child.³
- In Florida, a study ongoing since 1993 found that 1.3 percent of the 1,635 children served by Healthy Families America were reported annually for child abuse during the period 1993-1997, compared to a county-wide rate of 5.6% in 1995.³
- In Oregon, the 1997 statewide immunization rate for two-year-old children is 73 percent, while the immunization rate for children whose parents are participating in HFA is 97 percent.³
- In Virginia, 97 percent of participating parents said HFA had improved their parenting.³

We all have a role to play in keeping children SAFE AT HOME by preventing child abuse and neglect.

- One third of all Americans have witnessed an adult physically abuse a child and two-thirds have seen an adult emotionally abuse a child.⁴
- Of those Americans who have witnessed child abuse, 44 percent failed to respond in any way.
- *Insert information on Child Abuse Prevention Month activities in your community.*

¹ Bureau of Justice Statistics (1998). Criminal Victimization 1997: Changes 1996-97 with Trends 1993-97. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

² Wang and Harding (1999, September). Current Trends in Child Abuse Reporting and Fatalities: The Results of the 1998 Annual Fifty State Survey. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America.

³ Daro and Harding (1999). "Healthy Families America: Using Research to Enhance Practice." The Future of Children. Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 152-176.

⁴ 1999 Public Opinion Poll. Chicago: Prevent Child Abuse America. (1999, February).

