Child Abuse and Neglect in North Carolina

Each year, more than 100,000 children are reported as being abused or neglected in the state of North Carolina. Every accepted report is investigated through a strengths-based, family-centered assessment conducted by either local law enforcement or the local department of social services (DSS.) These professionals recognize that parenting is an exceptionally difficult job, and that many families face issues that make parenting all the more challenging. This approach ensures that children who need protection get protection and those families who need help get help.

Child maltreatment can also be linked to many emotional, behavioral, and physical health problems. Associated emotional and behavioral problems include aggression, conduct disorder, delinquency, antisocial behavior, substance abuse, intimate partner violence, teenage pregnancy, anxiety, depression, and suicide. Several programs have demonstrated reductions in child maltreatment and have great potential to reduce the human and economic toll on our society. Triple P Positive Parenting, a multilevel parenting and family support system: (http://www.triplep–america.com) aims to prevent severe emotional and behavioral disturbances in children by promoting positive and nurturing relationships between parent and child. Currently, there 14 ABSS School Social Workers are Triple P trained.

While the overall number of reports may sound high, abuse is an underreported crime. North Carolina law requires that any adult who suspects that abuse is occurring must make a report. To make a report, call your local DSS agency or police department.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reports for North Carolina - SFY 2011-2012

- 132,679 children were reported as being abused or neglected in North Carolina (increase of 2,368 cases from SFY 2010-2011)
- Of the 132,679 reported cases, 1,682 children were residents of Alamance County (increase of 80 additional cases from SFY 2010-2011)
- There were 51 new unduplicated children that entered foster care during 2012 in Alamance County. Additionally, more than 50% are children under the age of 6. At any given time there are 70-75 children in DSS custody living away from their parents

Child abuse and neglect cost the United States $124 billion

Rivals cost of other high profile public health problems

The total lifetime estimated financial costs associated with just one year of confirmed cases of child maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and neglect) is approximately $124 billion, according to a report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, published in Child Abuse and Neglect, The International Journal.

Key findings:

- The estimated average lifetime cost per victim of nonfatal child maltreatment includes:
  - $32,648 in childhood health care costs
  - $10,530 in adult medical costs
  - $144,360 in productivity losses
  - $7,728 in child welfare costs
  - $6,747 in criminal justice costs
  - $7,999 in special education costs
- The estimated average lifetime cost per death includes:
  - $14,100 in medical costs
  - $1,258,800 in productivity losses

http://www.preventchildabusenc.org