2020 POLICY AGENDA

For Colorado to remain one of the healthiest economy’s in the country we need to work together to build brighter childhoods.

Our future workforce, innovators, leaders and community members can only reach their full potential through thoughtful development and investment in services and policies that strengthen families and protect children.

It is essential for elected officials and policy makers to understand how to prevent child maltreatment and listen to parents in every community.

FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS HAVE BEEN FOUND TO PREVENT CHILD MALTREATMENT.

Protective factors are conditions or attributes in individuals, families, communities or the larger society that help people deal more effectively with stressful events and mitigate or eliminate risk in families and communities.

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Concrete Supports in Times of Need
- Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development
- Social & Emotional Competence of Children

ILLUMINATING POLICY PREVENTS CHILD MALTREATMENT

Illuminate Colorado builds brighter childhoods through education, advocacy, and family support to prevent child maltreatment. The organization works across all levels of prevention—before child maltreatment has occurred, when families are in high stress situations, and after child maltreatment has occurred—to build research-based protective factors in families and to ensure appropriate system and community responses.

Wondering how a policy prevents child maltreatment?

The Illuminate Colorado 2020 policy agenda highlights policies that build one or more protective factors in Colorado. To learn more about each policy priority and how we can help you can strengthen families in your community, visit IlluminateColorado.org/2020Policy
Establish a statewide paid family and medical leave program for individuals to care for themselves and their families. Create a statewide universal preschool program. Advance priorities emerging from the Infant and Family Child Care Action Plan. Increase access to family planning services to support birth spacing, educational attainment, and economic stability of families. Expand the Child Tax Credit: Strengthening household financial security has been proven to reduce the risk factors for child abuse and neglect. Increase knowledge around healthy sexual development. Ensure all Coloradans (especially children) are counted through the census. Explore mechanisms for universal home visiting following birth of a child. Create an annual cost-of-living adjustment in the Colorado Works Program Basic Cash Assistance Benefit.

**SECONDARY PREVENTION**

These strategies build protective factors in families in high stress situations to prevent child maltreatment before it occurs—including addressing systemic barriers to strengthening families in high stress situations.

Revise the Colorado Children’s Code related to prenatal substance exposure to ensure families with a substance exposed newborn receive support and services appropriate to their family’s strengths and needs. Ensure parents and caregivers have access to substance use disorder (SUD) recovery supports tailored to their needs—including recovery housing options for families. Study multigenerational treatment services for families including SUD treatment, mental health services, and children’s services. Expand early intervention eligibility for developmental services for substance exposed newborns and their families. Ensure families have access to resources at high stress points before child maltreatment occurs via implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act. Ensure communities are equipped to prevent child sexual abuse and protect children, including through the implementation of safe child policies and practices within youth-serving organizations.

**TERTIARY PREVENTION**

These strategies build protective factors in families to prevent recurrence of child maltreatment—including addressing systemic barriers to healing & recovery.

Develop hiring process standards for youth-serving employees regarding behavior issues and boundary violations at previous places of employment in order to prevent reoccurrence of boundary violations and child sexual abuse: Background checks alone do not inform employers of previous problematic behavior if an employee resigns before there is time to create documentation or issue a report. Ensure adults in Colorado have the knowledge and resources to identify and support children and families where abuse and neglect has occurred. Ensure families who are child welfare involved have access to the appropriate resources via implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act.