

NATIONAL ALLIANCE

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## CHILDREN'S TRUST & PREVENTION FUNDS

[www.ctfalliance.org](http://www.ctfalliance.org)

### A Shared Responsibility:

# Preventing Child Neglect is More Than a Family Matter

All children benefit from strong families and safe communities where their needs are met. Most children are growing up with these supports. Unfortunately, many are not. Even loving, nurturing parents may have difficulties meeting their children's needs. Some communities face challenges in providing an environment that promotes positive outcomes for their children. When children's needs are neglected, their growth and development can be affected, with life-long costs to them and to all of us.

The **National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds**, with funding from the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**, is focusing

**GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE of this ambitious undertaking, the Alliance invites organizations and individuals interested in learning more and making a contribution to join us in preventing child neglect and supporting families and communities.**

increased attention on preventing child neglect. This work is benefitting from the Alliance's important partnerships with its members and their state

colleagues, parents and other national partners. Initial steps toward key short-term outcomes related to preventing child neglect include:

- 1 **Develop the knowledge base.** Capture current research and practice knowledge about preventing child neglect, including building on family and community strengths and promoting protective factors.
- 2 **Expand the national conversation and raise the issue's visibility.** Reach out to broad and diverse audiences, eliciting input and encouraging dialog on current knowledge, effective strategies and critical issues.
- 3 **Highlight what works.** Promote strategies aimed at strengthening families and communities and reducing the likelihood of child neglect.
- 4 **Strengthen and expand national and state-level collaborations.** Collaborate with multiple systems and with parents and communities to promote strength-based approaches that build protective factors and reduce risk factors.

## Reviewing the Research on Child Neglect

The Alliance's literature review of the most relevant and latest research related to child neglect included studies of factors at the individual, family and community levels, and selected interventions that help prevent child neglect. Findings include:

- ✂ Child neglect remains a less studied and researched form of child maltreatment than child abuse, despite repeated documentation that neglect has deleterious consequences on children's developmental outcomes and behavior as well as on their adult social and economic well-being. However, there have been many developments and advancements in the last decade toward defining and understanding child neglect.
- ✂ There are often multiple factors contributing to neglect including issues in the family, the

community context in which families live and broad policies and social norms.

- ✂ Research does not suggest that a single intervention or type of intervention will suffice to prevent child neglect.
- ✂ Future interventions to prevent neglect should be multidimensional to address multiple causes of neglect. They should be guided by the diversity of contextual factors including culture, cultural patterns of child rearing and child supervision, local community norms, and societal attitudes surrounding parenting and child development

Almost all families, including families in poverty, have the capacity to contribute to their own and their children's well-being.

**CHILD NEGLECT is the most prevalent form of child maltreatment, with serious and long-term consequences. It is also less clearly defined and publicly recognized. While we have seen progress in reducing physical and sexual abuse in recent years, the incidence of neglect has increased.**