

2024

It Shouldn't Hurt to be a Child!



Child's Hope

Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Plan for
Outer-Wayne County, MI

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Out-Wayne Prevention Plan

INTRODUCTION

For 39 years, Child's Hope has been working to find ways to provide free education to the Outer-Wayne County community to decrease the risks of a child being mistreated. Child's Hope has embraced the collective impact approach in uniting with other service organizations to provide the most effective plan for child protection. Meeting the needs of our families in the community results in measurable outcomes, meaning a better quality of life for our children.

Child's Hope is dedicated to implementing activities to families that align with the evidence-informed Strengthening Families framework and the Healthy Outcomes of Positive Experiences (HOPE) framework. Using these models recommended practices, tools, and resources are encouraged to increase the community's capacity to keep children safe. Child's Hope conducts periodic evaluations to receive input from parents/guardians on the effectiveness of the information provided. Gathering this information aids Child's Hope and its partners to effectively advocate, educate, and intervene to prevent child maltreatment.

BACKGROUND

During the 80s there was an epidemic of child abuse. Offenders included family members, teachers, religious workers, youth, and care workers. By then professionals were aware of how these offenses were causing mental health issues, and suicide in some cases.

In 1985, Child's Hope was established with a mandate to help and support Out-Wayne children and sustain their right to grow up safe and healthy. Funded by Children Trust Michigan f.k.a Children's Trust Fund, this funding mandate is that the board of directors must consist of representatives from the public health department, a mental health organization, county prosecutor's office, law enforcement, school district, county court, department of human services, business owner, and a parent. These perspectives offer current information on these systems that serve our catchment area.

Early on, Child's Hope conducted activities such as car seat safety and diaper drives. Through a partnership with Kid's Talk, Blankets for Kids was also developed to provide blankets to potential victims who came through their intake. Child's Hope shortly after incorporated My Body is Mine body safety training for children in schools. When there was an uprise in cases of children being left in cars, Child's Hope developed a No Child Left Behind Campaign.

Still going on to this day, Child's Hope's biennial Children's Summit helps to raise awareness of current child maltreatment issues. Other activities that Child's Hope has facilitated are Talk Protect Report community training and Stewards of Children: Darkness to Light sexual abuse prevention training. For more than ten years, Child's Hope has partnered with Dearborn schools to facilitate their mentoring program formerly called Read to Me. Through this PNC Foundation funded program, more than 1,000 preschool and kindergarten students have been mentored. Every initiative aims to transform communities to improve the lives of children who are at-risk.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to the US Census, Wayne County had an estimated population of 1,757,043 in 2022. It is the most populous county in the state of Michigan with the largest child population at 23.4%. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Protective Services, 14% of Wayne County's children had confirmed incidents of being abused and neglected. Reviewing several secondary sources of data, we found that in 2021 there was a child population of just over 412,000 in Wayne County, and 29.1% of the children lived in poverty.

The Center for Disease Control states that “a combination of individual, relational, community, and societal factors contribute to the risk of child abuse and neglect.” They go further to list these factors as:

- Being a child under the age of 4 years old
- Being a child with special needs
- The Caregivers adverse experiences and lack of knowledge
- The Family's adverse experiences and lack of knowledge
- The Community's condition.

The Children's Bureau also states that “While most people in financial need do not maltreat their children, poverty can increase the likelihood of maltreatment, particularly when poverty is combined with other risk factors, such as depression, substance use, and social isolation.”

Strengthening Families Protective Factors act as a counterweight to risk factors. They buffer the impact of what the researchers call “toxic stress”. Risk factors, it turns out, are not very predictive

of future events; and we cannot get good outcomes for children only by focusing on reducing risk. The protective factors protect against the risk and promote positive outcomes.

According to the CDC study from 1995-1997, there are 3 types of Adverse Childhood Experiences, and they are physical, emotional, and sexual Abuse; physical and emotional neglect; and household dysfunction. Positive experiences, ranging from infant attachment to mentoring for adolescents, are essential to children's well-being and to their development into mentally, emotionally, and physically healthy adults.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

Child's Hope has a plan to build capacity and facilitate projects to educate and bring awareness in response to these problems to support children as much as possible.

Our Vision is that *we are creating, educating, and supporting our communities to keep our children safe and thriving.*

Our Mission is *to promote the prevention of child abuse and neglect in Out-Wayne County through effective collaborations and prevention activities.*

Child's Hope uses the tagline "It Shouldn't Hurt to Be a Child", and since the year 2020 we are also exploring "The Power and Possibilities for Child Protection When Advocates and Stakeholders Collaborate." We are welcoming more individuals and organizations to the table to work together to decrease the number of children's deaths, reported and confirmed child abuse

cases, and neglect in Out-Wayne County. Child's Hope recognizes that for children to reside in a safe and flourishing home and community, reliable partnerships must exist. These partnerships are intended to provide reliable services and support for strengthening families and giving hope.

Partnering for Prevention – involving youth, parents, schools, communities, and corporations

Increasing parent involvement in their child's life. (Family nights)

Involving public and private institutions in social activities and in the distribution of prevention materials.

Supporting success in school performances.

Structure

Board

The board guards the mission of the organization and, through guidelines, steers it in the right direction.

Oversight:

- The board monitors the activities, the health, and the ethical behavior in the organization.
 - Approves broad policies to guide and protect the organization, board, and staff
 - Monitors that all legal requirements get proper attention
 - Hires the executive director and delegates to him or her the daily operations
 - The board ensures that the organization is well-equipped to fulfill its mission.
 - Adequate finances, capable staff, and esteemed reputation.
- Planning and evaluation:
- Adopts an overall strategic mindset by focusing on the big issues that matter most

- Annually evaluates the performance of the executive director and determines appropriate compensation
- Evaluates its own performance regularly - at least every three years

Fiduciary duty over the organization:

- Makes sure adequate financial expertise is secured on the board
- Sets overall fiscal policies and ensures appropriate internal controls
- Approves the annual budget and carefully monitors the financial reports
- Hires an auditor and/or tax consultant as needed

Fundraising Policies:

- Approves gift-acceptance policies
- Actively participates in the overall fundraising efforts

Advisory

Basic Function: The Advisory Group will provide specific knowledge and strategies that help to guide our planning for child abuse and neglect prevention activities.

Duration: The Advisory Group will continue until it is dissolved by the Board of Directors, through a recommendation by the Executive Director.

Accountability: The Advisory Group is accountable to the Board of Directors through the Executive Director.

Membership: The Advisory Group shall be comprised of only those mandated by Children's Trust Michigan. These mandates are as follows:

- Wayne County Department of Health and Human Services
- Wayne County Department of Public Health (Public Health Agency)
- Mental Health Agency or Authority
- Wayne County Family Court (Probate)
- Office of the Prosecuting Attorney or Michigan Attorney General's Office
- Local Law Enforcement Agency
- A School District
- Parent Leader/Representative
- Private Business

Staff

Maintaining a regular contact with the board/president, the executive director keeps the board informed about the issues (good and bad) and activities that are part of the life in the organization.

Programs and administration:

- Oversees daily operations
- Develops job descriptions, approves compensation, hires staff and delegates operational responsibilities to them

Strategic and operational plans:

- Ensures that strategic planning happens with the board's appropriate involvement
- Leads operational planning and approves the plans for the staff
- Ensures a process for staff performance exists

Financial management:

- Works with treasurer to prepare the annual budget
- Provides financial oversight and monitors cash flow

Fundraising plan:

- Assists with the development of a fundraising plan, oversees its implementation, and involves the board in fundraising
- Acts as the main representative of the organization communicator with major funders

Organizational objectives

- Spread awareness and motivate adults in target locations on importance of child protection.
- Create a participatory model of the community, schools, and businesses in Out-Wayne County in support of child abuse and neglect prevention.
- Build sustainability and capacity through identifying, prioritizing, and addressing development opportunities.

Activities

Young children experience their world through their relationships with parents and other caregivers. Safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments are essential to preventing child abuse and neglect. Positive relationships in a young person's life can reduce the risk of experiencing violence. A person's closest social circle influences their behavior and contributes to their experience.

Project: Talk with Me

The goals of Talk with Me are:

1. To build young children's self-esteem through mentorship.
2. To increase the opportunity for literacy by providing high quality, free books for children.

Description:

According to researchgate.net, a meta-analysis of 73 independent evaluations of mentoring programs published over a decade showed that mentoring improves outcomes across behavioral, social, emotional, and academic spheres of a young person's development simultaneously.

As children are aging and rapidly learning, it is important for parents to model appropriate relationships so that children learn to follow the best examples in life. Emerging evidence suggests that engaging parents more closely in the mentoring relationship, honoring their role and encouraging them to support their child's participation, can help strengthen the entire family.

Parents are the biggest influence in their child's life and having open, honest conversations is one of the most powerful ways to connect with their children and help them develop into healthy adults.

Talk with Me is two or more individuals engaging in productive conversations. These conversations are guided by strategically selected story books and the "Let's Chat" bookmark. Over time these conversations develop into trusting relationships. In trusting relationships, one may be more likely to share issues and challenges that may be uncomfortable and troubling.

Talk with Me is a 1.5-hour session that educates and facilitates engaging activities for parents and children ages 4 and 5 years old in an effort to prevent child abuse and child neglect. These activities include story time, a play and learn demonstration, and an arts and craft project.

Families play a fundamental role in child protection. What a family learns during a Talk with Me introduction session is encouraged to be repeated at the family's home. Each family leaves with a book and Let's Chat bookmark guide.

Responsible Person – Ramana Roberson (Interim)

Partnerships – Dearborn Schools, Wayne RESA GSRP, and ACCESS

Project Duration – August-June

Outcomes - Children demonstrate improved communication and be able to express their thoughts in their own words by:

- Intentionally building oral language development
- Creating an environment for things to talk about and reasons to talk
- Increasing understanding of the social rules of conversation—taking turns, listening when someone else is talking
- Elevating speaking skills by using language to express ideas and feelings, to ask questions, or communicate information
- Improving listening skills to increase understanding of what other people are saying when they speak, to understand oral directions, and listening in order to enjoy stories
- Increasing critical thinking skills by providing thinking questions for discussion with Parents/Mentors.

Also,

- Parents/guardians recognize the importance of good parenting skills that help children at different levels of development.
- Teachers will report an appreciation for the mentoring relationship.
- Mentors will experience personal growth and develop leadership skills.
- Partner organizations are better able to achieve their goals.

Measurement – Questionnaires

Total Project Budget – \$11,200

- Coordinator \$3,000

- Administrative \$1,000
- Session Expenses \$4,500 Three (3) sessions
- Family Packets \$1,500 One hundred-fifty (150) families @ \$10 per family
- Travel/Mileage \$1,000
- Printing/Copying \$200

Project: Let's Protect!

The goal of Let's Protect is:

1. To lower risk factors and increase resilience, assets, and protective factors to prevent the likeliness of child abuse and neglect.

Description:

Let's Protect! welcomes the entire outer Wayne County community to learn and take actions to prevent child maltreatment by participating in its trainings, workshops, forums, summits, and other community-wide events to support families in raising strong children and prepare them for life as a responsible adult.

Professional Team Prevention Trainings

Delivering Talk, Protect, Report training and Adverse Childhood Experiences training which help teams and individuals understand the keys to prevention in their work and daily lives.

Presentations

Energizing and motivating groups to optimize their ability to strengthen families in their communities.

Responsible Person – Ramana Roberson

Partnerships – DWIHN, WCDHHS, Dearborn Kiwanis, Brownstown Police

Project Duration – October-September

Outcome – Strengthened Families

Measurement – Event surveys and community focus groups

Total Project Budget – \$56,651 (\$24,000 CH; \$32,651 ARPA)

- \$26,030.00 - Project management and coordination
- \$10,000.00 - Professional speakers/trainers fees
- \$2,000.00 - Venues
- \$12,356.00 - Supplies and Materials (audio/video equip., Let's Protect! swag, paper, printer ink, postage)
- \$2,000.00 - Marketing and Promotional Expenses
- \$1,000.00 - Insurance coverage
- \$3,265.00 - Indirect costs

HOPE Delivered

Connecting to the community to provide free essentials to bring HOPE and dignity to those in need.

For more than 30 years Child's Hope created many campaigns to spread child abuse awareness and facilitated training for child protection. When COVID hit, Child's Hope immediately pivoted to serving hundreds of families to meet their urgent basic needs through activities such

as a school supply drive and distribution, purchasing sleep sacks and Pack N Plays for newborns, and raising funds to purchase bedding for the Sleep in Heavenly Peace beds for kid's initiative.

To this day, recovery efforts are still necessary. Due to service budget cuts and inflation, at-risk families are still struggling to make ends meet. One of the needs that we have witnessed through our mentoring program is the families' lack of basic cleaning supplies. Children are wearing previously worn clothes that had not been cleaned; or children were out of uniform because the parents were unable to clean their children's uniforms.

HOPE Delivered is Child's Hope's way of providing necessary laundry essentials that most people take for granted. Approved and registered schools can make requests for families to receive a delivery of HOPE.

Responsible Person – Ramana Roberson

Partnerships – DWIHN, WCDHHS, Dearborn Kiwanis, Brownstown Police

Project Duration – January-July

Outcome – Schools will see an increase in children's attendance and compliance to uniform policies.

Measurement – Serviced schools will be asked to complete a survey.

Budget:

This project's costs include support for administration and distribution expenses. Other expenses necessary to fulfill this project are printing, copying, and assembly expenses. The forementioned costs will be covered by Child's Hope.

It is estimated that \$78 can provide a family of four a month's supply of laundry cleaning products. We are asking for financial assistance to purchase the supplies to support 200 households. That is a total ask of \$7,800.

BUDGET PLAN

All prevention activities cannot be implemented properly without the support of a primary operating system. This system requires funding and therefore the organization is continually seeking financial support through fundraising. Fundraising techniques include sponsored and non-sponsored events, grant-seeking, and community appeals.

Raised funds are used to support management, standard equipment, office space and utilities, insurance, and general marketing. Estimated annual operational budget needs:

Organizational Management (part-time) - \$24,615

Equipment - \$300

Office Rent/Lease - \$3,500

Insurance – \$500

Marketing – \$1,085

Child's Hope has been fortunate to have local partners that are willing to offer both space and interns as an in-kind helping to alleviate some expenses. These partnerships have an annual value of an estimated \$15,000.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Child's Hope is increasing its financial footprint through networking, fundraising, philanthropy, and grant funding to provide for the long-term sustainability of child abuse and neglect prevention work in Out-Wayne County. As we have added new board members, our board has become more resourceful. Our board includes a group of individuals who may come in direct

contact with children daily by way of their professions. These experts are now a part of our advisory board and have made themselves available to advise Child's Hope on projects that it is or is considering taking on. By reaching out to influential people in the community that champion the call to end child abuse and neglect, we can garner funding that is unrestricted.

Partners: We have been able to secure and maintain many partners that are committed to supporting us; and we will continue to build upon that by asking our partners for assistance with growing our partnership portfolio. These partnerships are a win-win as costs are shared by those in the partnership.

Board Participation: As we are rebuilding our board, the board members are committed to reaching out to their respective partners and community action networks to gather more support from outside resources, building our philanthropic footprint. As we continue to increase the board membership we will work diligently to recruit and accept new members who have the time, resources and/or connections necessary to create additional partnerships to increase funding; and/or volunteer the time necessary to plan, promote and actively participate on at least one project.

Finance and Fund Development Committee: This committee has been focused on applying for program-centered funding, and mini grants to address abuse and neglect. Moving forward, we will apply for more prevention program funding that supports operational expenses. We recognize that it is imperative to generate non-grant funding to cover expenses necessary to carry the costs of our day-to-day operations. Having a reserve built through fundraising to cover unexpected costs is also important as our existence is necessary.

Community Philanthropic: We are making a concerted effort to reach the community we serve and ask that they support us through in-kind services and monetary donations.

Training: An investment in educating both contractors and volunteers is imperative. Both must gain the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions and cultivate the behavior change that we are seeking. Those who receive the proper training tend to produce less waste and make fewer errors. This results in enhanced economic, social, and environmental outcomes for Child's Hope.

Evaluation: Depending on the activity, evaluations will be conducted bi-annually and annually. They can help to improve program activities, services and effectiveness, make judgments about the programs, inform future program decisions, promote program accountability and promote program sustainability.