

## **FRIENDS**

### **What prevention activities are funded around the country?**

States are involved in a number of prevention activities, some of which fall under CBCAP funding and some that fall under other Federal programs. CBCAP includes activities that work with the community and families to prevent child abuse and neglect. Examples include public awareness campaigns, home visiting programs for new parents, diversion programs for at-risk families, and parent support groups. Most professionals agree that there are three levels of prevention services; primary prevention, secondary prevention, and tertiary prevention. Primary and Secondary are allowable activities under CBCAP funding, while Tertiary activities are not funded under CBCAP dollars.

- **Primary Prevention**
  - Primary prevention consists of activities that are targeted toward the community at large. These activities are meant to impact families prior to any allegations of abuse and neglect. Primary prevention services include public education activities, parent education classes that are open to anyone in the community, and family support programs. Primary prevention can be difficult to measure because you are attempting to impact something before it happens, an unknown variable. This type of activity is a focus of CBCAP programs.
- **Secondary Prevention**
  - Secondary prevention consists of activities targeted to families that have one or more risk factors including families with substance abuse, teen parents, parents of special need children, single parents, and low income families. Secondary prevention services include parent education classes targeted for high risk parents, respite care for parents of a child with a disability, or home visiting programs for new parents. This type of activity is a focus of CBCAP programs.
- **Tertiary Prevention**
  - Tertiary prevention consists of activities targeted to families that have confirmed or unconfirmed child abuse and neglect reports. These families have already demonstrated the need for intervention, either with or without court supervision. These are families that qualify for services under child welfare programs and are not a focus of CBCAP programs.

## **Child Welfare Information Gateway**

### **Primary prevention**

*Primary* prevention activities are directed at the general population and attempt to stop maltreatment before it occurs. All members of the community have access to and may benefit from these services. Primary prevention activities with a universal focus seek to raise the awareness of the general public, service providers, and decision-makers about the scope and problems associated with child maltreatment. Universal approaches to primary prevention might include:

Public service announcements that encourage positive parenting  
Parent education programs and support groups that focus on child development, age-appropriate expectations, and the roles and responsibilities of parenting

Family support and family strengthening programs that enhance the ability of families to access existing services, and resources to support positive interactions among family members

Public awareness campaigns that provide information on how and where to report suspected child abuse and neglect

## Secondary prevention

*Secondary* prevention activities with a high-risk focus are offered to populations that have one or more risk factors associated with child maltreatment, such as poverty, parental substance abuse, young parental age, parental mental health concerns, and parental or child disabilities. Programs may target services for communities or neighborhoods that have a high incidence of any or all of these risk factors. Approaches to prevention programs that focus on high-risk populations might include:

Parent education programs located in high schools, focusing on teen parents, or those within substance abuse treatment programs for mothers and families with young children

Parent support groups that help parents deal with their everyday stresses and meet the challenges and responsibilities of parenting

Home visiting programs that provide support and assistance to expecting and new mothers in their homes

Respite care for families that have children with special needs

Family resource centers that offer information and referral services to families living in low-income neighborhoods

## Tertiary prevention

*Tertiary* prevention activities focus on families where maltreatment has already occurred (indicated) and seek to reduce the negative consequences of the maltreatment and to prevent its recurrence. These prevention programs may include services such as:

Intensive family preservation services with trained mental health counselors that are available to families 24 hours per day for a short period of time (e.g., 6 to 8 weeks)

Parent mentor programs with stable, nonabusive families acting as "role models" and providing support to families in crisis

Parent support groups that help parents transform negative practices and beliefs into positive parenting behaviors and attitudes

Mental health services for children and families affected by maltreatment to improve family communication and functioning