



Child Welfare Fellows & Youth Homelessness Fellows

June 25-27, Nashville, Tenn.





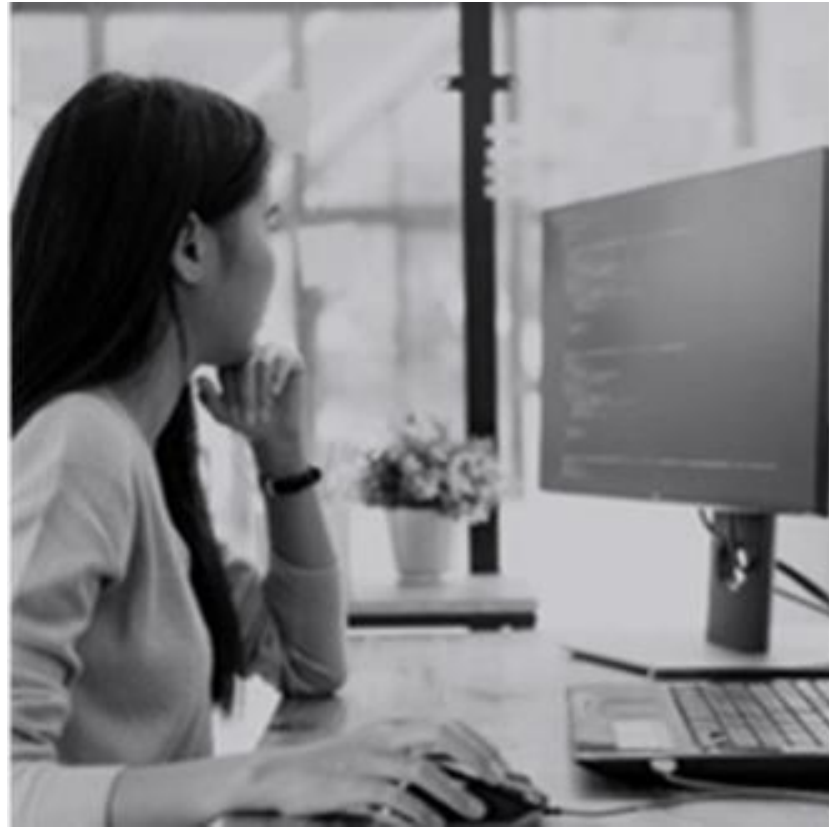
About NCSL



- Bipartisan membership organization
 - All 50 states, District of Columbia and U.S. territories
 - 7,386 legislators
 - All legislative staff (30,000+)
- Goals:
 - To improve the quality & effectiveness of legislatures
 - To promote policy innovation and communication among legislatures
 - To ensure states, DC and territories a strong, cohesive voice in the federal system
- Research, education, technical assistance
- Voice of the states, D.C. and territories in the federal system



How NCSL Strengthens Legislatures



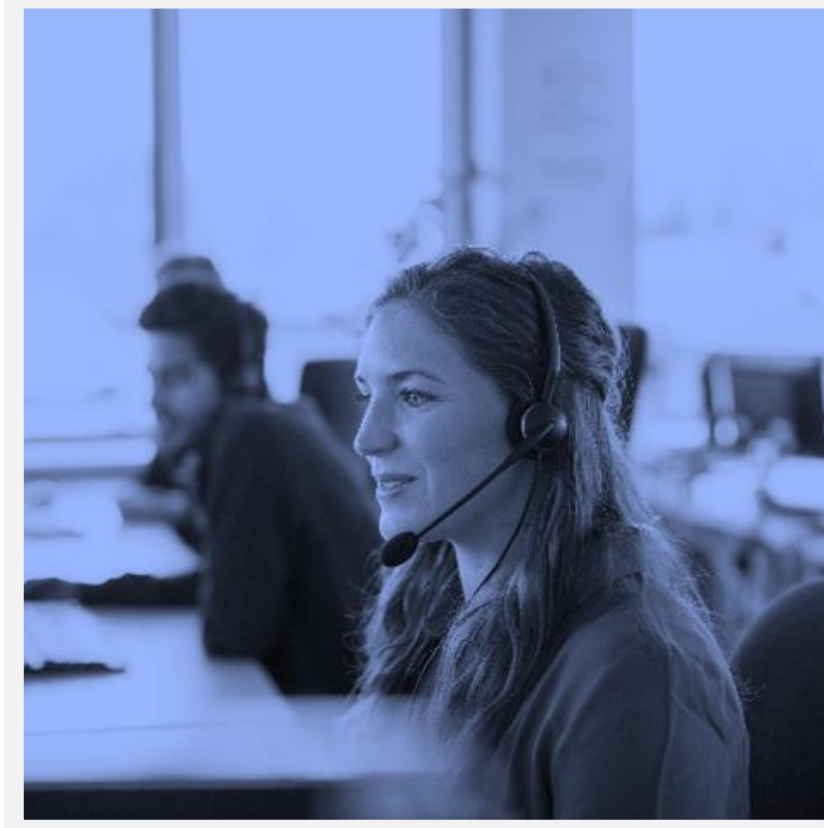
Policy Research

NCSL provides trusted, nonpartisan policy research and analysis



Connections

NCSL links legislators and staff with each other and with experts



Training

NCSL delivers training tailored specifically for legislators and staff



State Voice in D.C.

NCSL represents and advocates on behalf of states on Capitol Hill



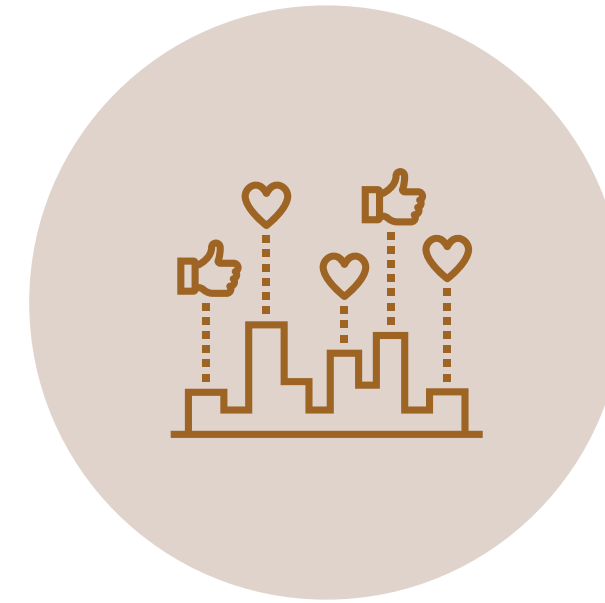
Meetings

NCSL meetings facilitate information exchange and policy discussions

Why are we co-locating?



Intersection of topics



Exchange policy options, successes and challenges



Foster relationships among more colleagues, more national experts and more NCSL staff



More opportunities to consider how to apply what is learned here back home



Ground Rules & Expectations



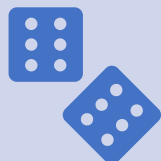
Engage and participate



Approach with open mind and assume best intentions



Take advantage of each other, experts, NCSL staff and other resources



Modified “Vegas rules”





Who is in the room?

Introductions, aspirations
and expectations



Thank You!



2023 Indy Legislative Summit

The logo features a stylized dome icon to the left of the text. The text is arranged in three lines: 'NCSL' in a bold, black, sans-serif font; 'LEGISLATIVE' in a smaller, black, spaced-out, sans-serif font; and 'SUMMIT' in a large, bold, teal, sans-serif font. Below 'SUMMIT' is 'INDY 2023' in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, light blue, curved rectangular shapes that resemble a stylized wave or a cluster of papers.

 **NCSL** LEGISLATIVE
SUMMIT
INDY 2023

Aug. 14-16, 2023

Joint Opening Plenary



Melissa Merrick, PhD

President and CEO, Prevent Child Abuse America





All children and families live a purposeful and happy life with hope for the future.

NCSL Child Welfare & Youth Homelessness Fellows

June 26, 2023





Mission:

To prevent the abuse and neglect of our nation's children.

Vision:

We envision a world where all children grow up happy, healthy, and prepared to succeed in supportive families and communities.

PCA America's Work to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

Our approach works at two levels – boots-on-the-ground programs and actions that impact systems-level change.



State Chapter Network

50-state chapter network that drives regional initiatives and policies.



Home Visiting

Healthy Families America is one of the leading family support and evidence-based home visiting programs in the U.S.



Research

Elevate lessons learned from the field and advance knowledge of what works.



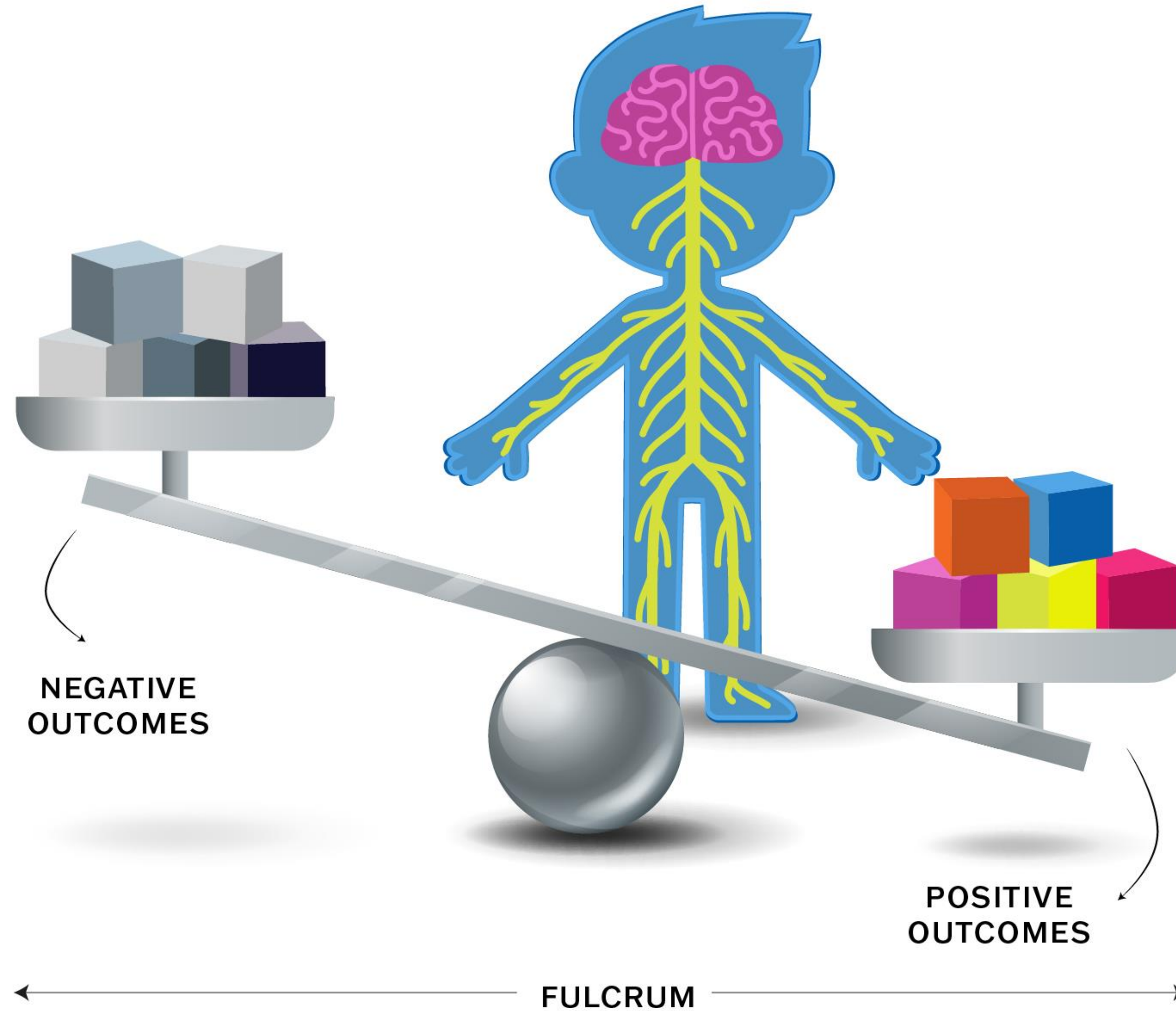
Public Policy

Mobilize national and state policy makers to adopt non-partisan policies that support families.



Public Awareness

Raise public awareness to increase individual and community action to prevent abuse.



National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2015). *Supportive Relationships and Active Skill-Building Strengthen the Foundations of Resilience: Working Paper 13.* <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

A Child's Health Affects All of Us

Stress and trauma can interrupt child development, putting children at risk for lifelong physical and mental health issues.

However, children with positive childhood experiences are more likely to become healthier, happier adults.

And healthy adults contribute to a more productive, prosperous, and flourishing society -- for all of us.



Evidence shows that stress and trauma can interrupt healthy child development, putting people at risk for lifelong health issues.



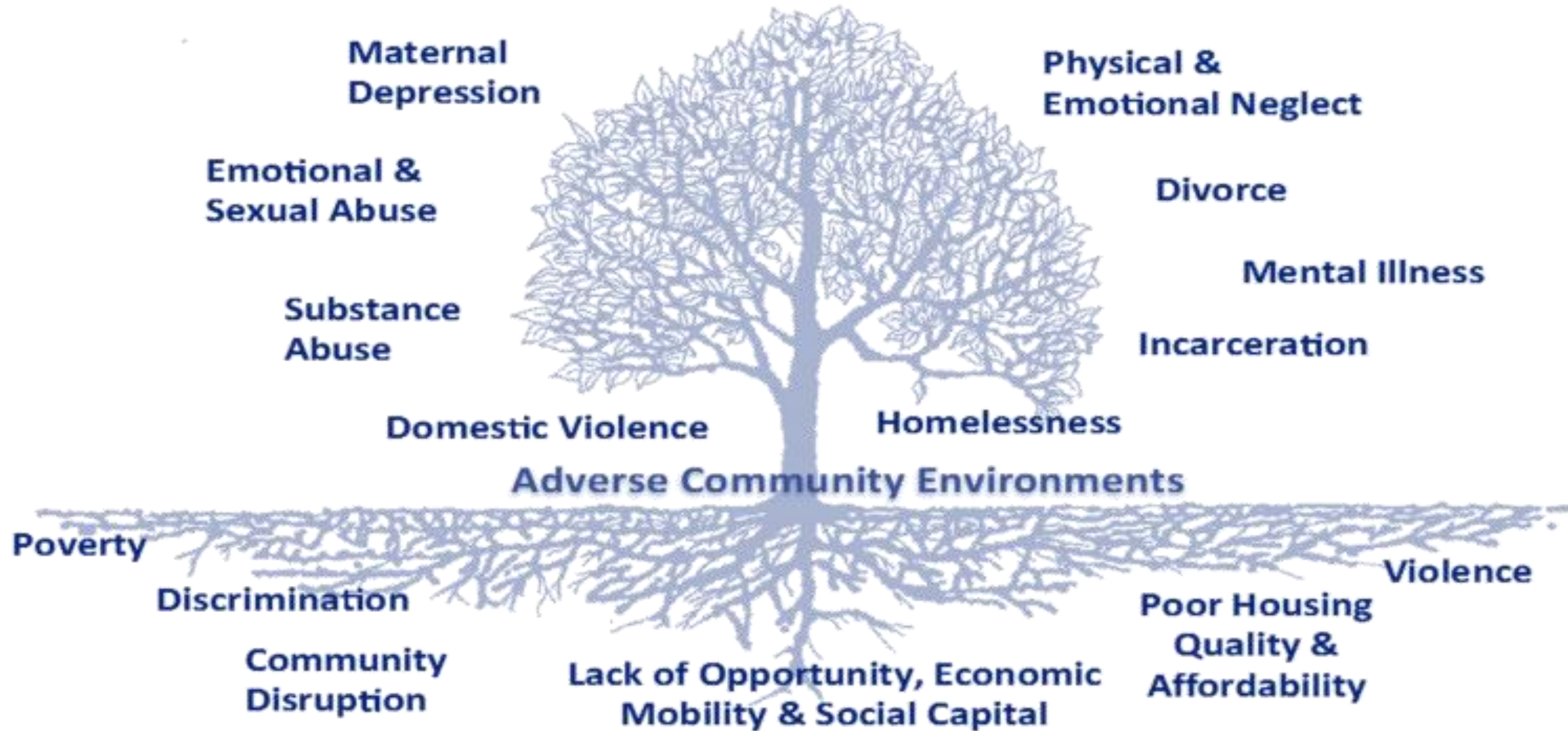
ACEs Can Accumulate and Their Effects Last Beyond Childhood

Toxic stress can disrupt **ORGAN, TISSUE, AND BRAIN DEVELOPMENT**. Over time this can limit a person's ability to process information, make decisions, interact with others, and regulate emotions. These consequences may follow a person into adulthood.



The Pair of ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences



Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. *Academic Pediatrics*. 17 (2017) pp. S86-S93. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011

Public health is what we, as a society, do
collectively to assure the **conditions** in
which (all) people can be healthy.

Institute of Medicine
The Future of Public Health, 1988 & 1997

Most parents want to be good parents, but overloads of stress, generational trauma, and systemic inequities can take their toll.

1 in 7

An estimated 1 in 7 U.S. children experience abuse or neglect annually.

5x

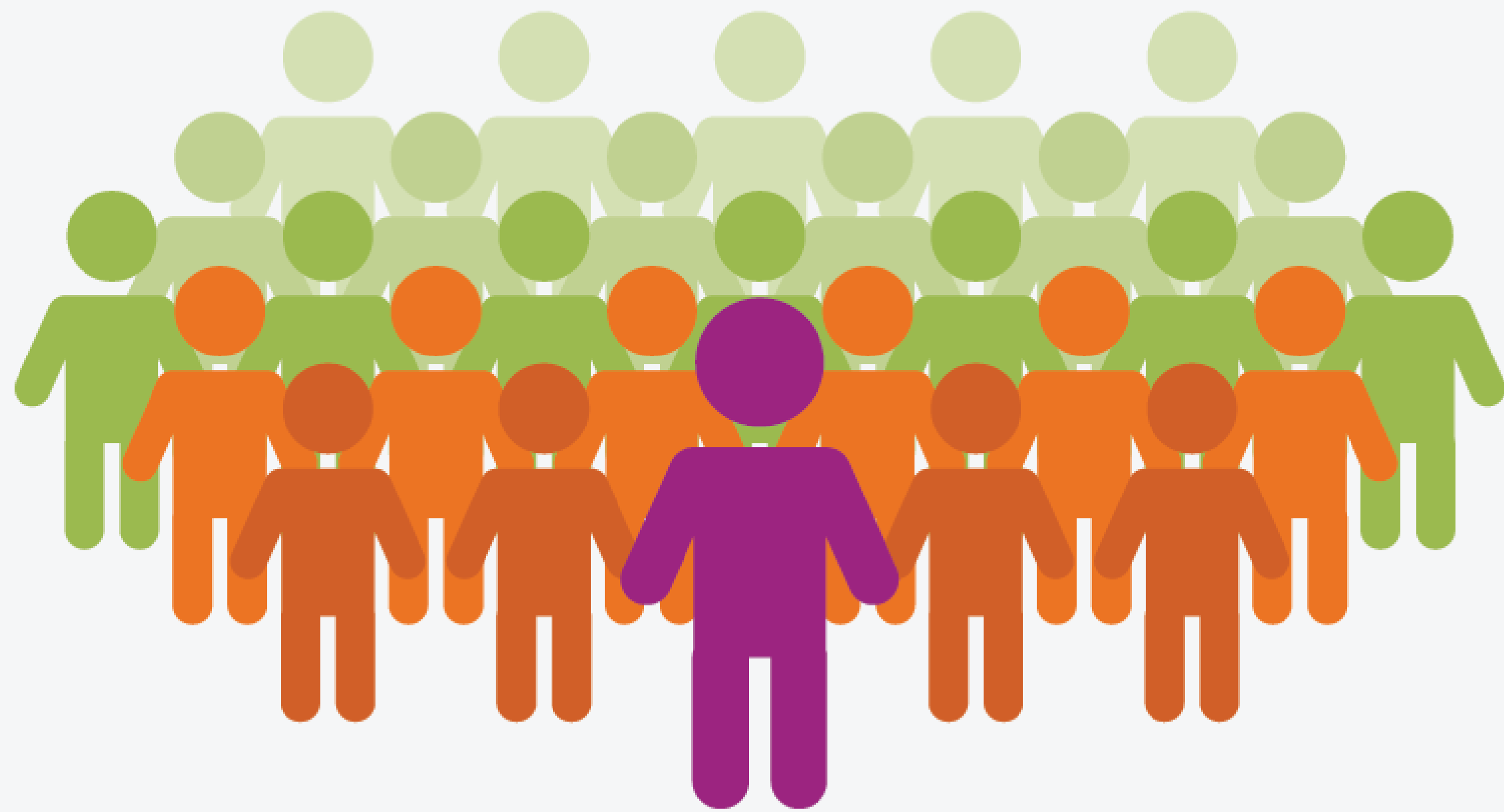
Rates of child abuse and neglect are 5x higher for children in families with low socio-economic status.

80%

80% of child welfare cases are for neglect. Neglect is often confused with poverty, as it relates to access to food, housing, etc.

2x

Black children are twice as likely as white children to be in foster care.



Family, Youth, and Young Adults: Homelessness in America

200%

Unmarried parenting youth had a 200% higher risk of reporting homelessness.

**1.1
Million**

Approximately 1.1 million children had a young parent who experienced homelessness during the past year.

162%

Youth reporting annual household income of less than \$24,000 had a 162% higher risk of reporting homelessness.

83%

Black youth had an 83% higher risk of reporting homelessness.

Source: Voices of Youth Count, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

The Why



By addressing root causes of ACEs, we can prevent significant health issues, risky behaviors and foster healthier, more equitable communities.

UNDERSTANDING PREVENTION

WHAT IS PRIMARY PREVENTION?

Stopping abuse *before* it occurs.

Primary prevention activities are **designed for the general population to provide support to prevent ACEs and minimize risks before they occur**

Preventing and mitigating Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) protects children, strengthens families and saves taxpayer dollars. Investing in prevention efforts upstream helps to prevent more serious problems in the future.

WHAT IS SECONDARY PREVENTION?

Targeted responses to at-risk populations.

Secondary prevention activities are **targeted at families that have one or more risk factors associated with ACEs (such as substance use or mental health conditions) to prevent and minimize challenges.**

WHAT IS TERTIARY PREVENTION?

Long-term responses to stop abuse and neglect and minimize consequences.

Tertiary prevention activities **focus on families of children who have already experienced ACEs in order to minimize impact, prevent further harm and help families heal.**



Roadmap to Child and Family Well-Being

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH ●

EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORTS ●

ECONOMIC & HOUSING STABILITY ●

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS ●

COMMUNITY EDUCATION ●



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE POLICY OPTIONS THAT STRENGTHEN FAMILIES?

Maternal & Child Health

- Evidence-based Home Visiting
- Prenatal Care
- Enhanced primary care

Community and Education & Awareness

- 1-800 warm lines
- Public education campaigns
- Family Resource Centers
- Child sex abuse prevention education

Mental Health Supports

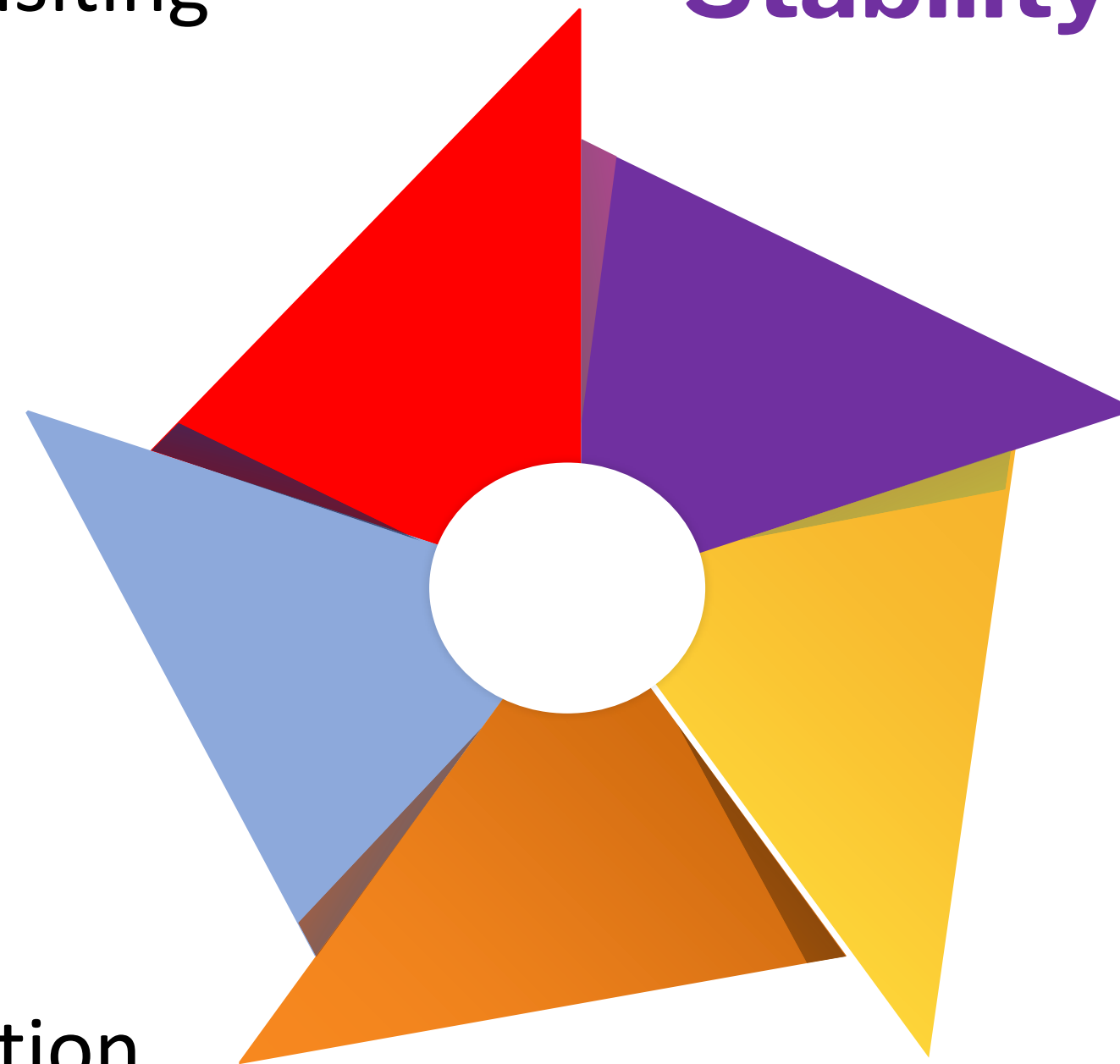
- Accessible mental health services
- Behavioral parent training programs
- Trauma informed care in schools and childcare centers

Economic & Housing Stability

- Child Tax Credit
- Earned Income Tax Credit
- Minimum Wage
- Housing supports
- Paid Leave programs
- Nutrition programs

Early Childhood Supports

- Pre-K & Afterschool programs
- Parent support and education
- Quality and affordable childcare
- Childcare Subsidies



Healthy Families America: Decades of research shows positive results and sustained impact with families



**Reduced
recurrence of
maltreatment
by 1/3**



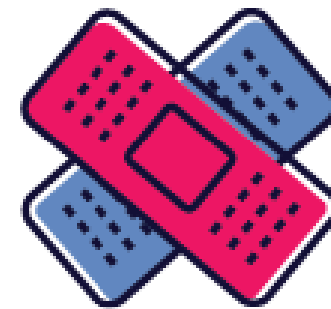
5x
more likely to
enroll in school or
training programs



27%
fewer families
were homeless



48%
fewer
low-birthweight
infants



30% fewer intimate partner violence incidents resulting in injury



26%
fewer children
receive special
ed services

For more information and citations, see HFA's Evidence of Effectiveness at <https://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org/our-impact/evidence-of-effectiveness/>

My Wish For You...

**CHILDHOOD
ADVERSITY IS
~~INEVITABLE~~
PREVENTABLE.**

**MOM
COMMUNITY
SOCIAL SERVICES
FRIENDS
SCHOOLS
FAITH GROUPS
FAMILY**



Prevent Child Abuse America®

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

———— BALTIMORE, MD ————

TOGETHER FOR PREVENTION

AUGUST 22 – 24, 2023

Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor



**You can be the
difference that lasts
a lifetime.**



Contact PCA America
policyteam@preventchildabuse.org

Learn more
preventchildabuse.org