

Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey
Corporate/Business Outreach Campaign 2003

Rationale:

Child abuse and neglect is one of the most pressing problems of our time. According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, "There is no disease or natural disaster or trauma that is killing more children under four than child abuse and neglect". There are more than three million reported cases of child abuse and neglect every year in America, and more than three children die each day as a result of maltreatment. In New Jersey 40,000 cases of child abuse and neglect are reported each year to the Division of Youth and Family Services. Another 35,000 cases are reported annually where family problems place children's well-being at risk but do not meet the legal definition of abuse. National studies indicate that the real incidence of child abuse may be as much as three times the number of reported cases.

Child victims of maltreatment suffer from disrupted growth and development. As they get older, children who have been abused or neglected are more likely to perform poorly in school; to commit crimes; and to experience emotional problems, sexual problems, and substance abuse problems. Recent studies point to a high correlation between child abuse and neglect and serious health problems such as heart disease in adulthood.

The short term and long term consequences of child abuse are costly to society. The New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services spends nearly 505 million dollars each year to investigate and treat child abuse and neglect cases. In addition, there is the cost of medical and psychiatric treatment of victims of maltreatment, and police and judicial expenditures. Indirect costs of child abuse and neglect include remedial education, medical care, substance abuse treatment, mental illness, criminal activity, and incarceration. There is great loss to the economic base in terms of future lack of productivity and tax revenues. Estimates put the total cost of child abuse and neglect in the U.S. at **\$94 billion** annually.

The cost in terms of human suffering is incalculable.

There are proven methods of *preventing* child abuse and neglect which are easily implemented, cost-effective and perhaps most importantly humane. This is what we do every day at Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey.

The highly publicized death of Faheem Williams and the discovery of his two brothers severely abused and neglected in a Newark basement served to remind us that we have much to do to ensure that all our children are safe and can grow to be healthy, productive adults. This responsibility falls not on government or DYFS, but on each one of us. The business community has much to contribute to this effort. Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey invites corporate/business leaders to join in our efforts to eliminate child abuse and neglect from New Jersey.

Corporate/Business Outreach:

Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey seeks to reach out to the business community in two ways: by mail campaign and in person, through a series of informational sessions.

Mail Campaign:

Providing basic information on child abuse, child abuse prevention, Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey and soliciting support for child abuse prevention in terms of (1) contributions to Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey, (2) participation in activities for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, and (3) opportunities to inform and educate employees on child abuse prevention, parenting and/or other related topics of interest.

An honorary chairperson will sign the appeal letter. The chair will have input in the style of the appeal and may furnish lists of contacts to be included in the campaign. Corporations and small businesses that are current and past supporters of Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey will be the main targets of this campaign.

Informational Sessions:

Hosted by individual corporate and business leaders, this will provide an opportunity for colleagues and friends of the host to learn more about child abuse and its prevention, and the work of Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey. The informational sessions will be 30-40 minutes in length, held at a location convenient for the host and the invitees, and will include light refreshments.

The agenda for the session is as follows:

- 1) Brief welcome by the host; why he or she is interested in child abuse prevention
- 2) Child abuse in New Jersey; why the business community should care
- 3) Supporting child abuse prevention and PCA-NJ
- 4) What PCA-NJ can provide businesses/employees

Job Description for Informational Session Hosts:

- 1) With PCA-NJ, identify location for event; schedule date and time
- 2) Invite colleagues, friends
- 3) Provide light refreshments
- 4) Prepare brief introductory remarks
- 5) Provide guidance/assistance on follow up with attendees

