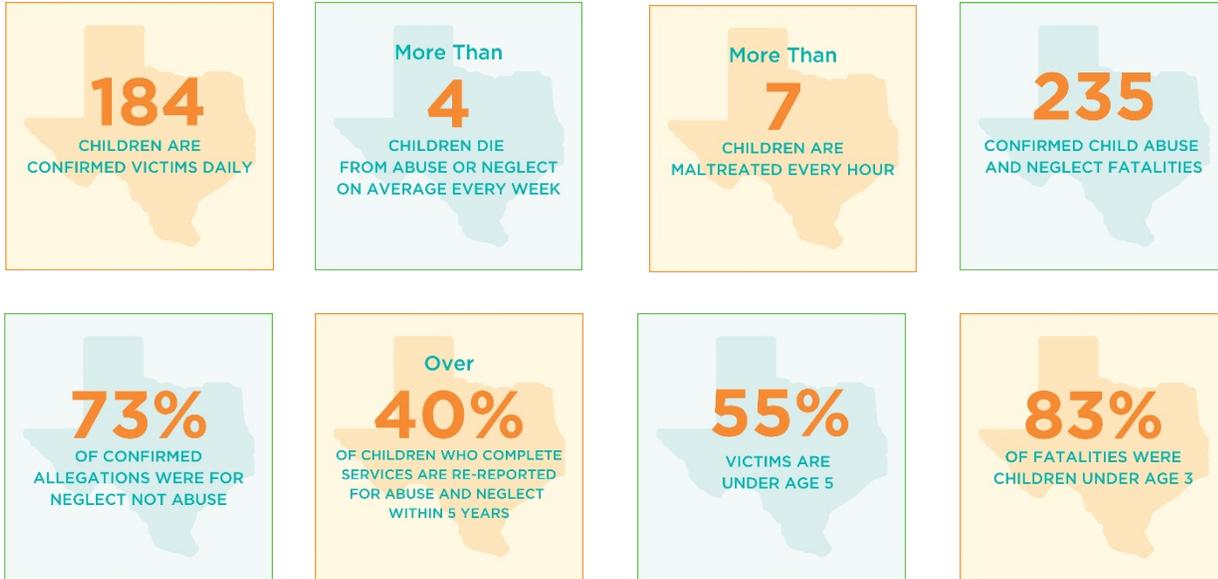




# Child Maltreatment Prevention

**We must stop asking Texas children and Texas citizens to pay the price for problems we have the power to prevent.**

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), child maltreatment is a public health epidemic—and it is one of Texas’ costliest social issues. Leveraging community strengths and proven strategies to increase child safety and family stability *before* a crisis not only produces the best outcomes for children, families, and communities but also saves the state from other downstream costs. Below are the 2019 Texas statistics.



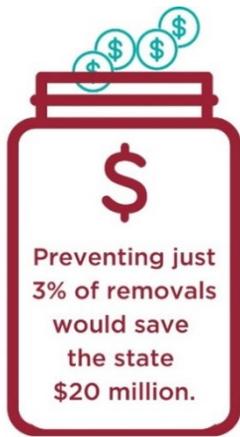
## Prevention Costs Less and Works More

The cost of child abuse and neglect is paid across a lifetime and impacts the healthcare systems, child welfare system, education system, criminal justice system, and economic productivity. Costs to address child abuse and neglect far exceed the costs of prevention.

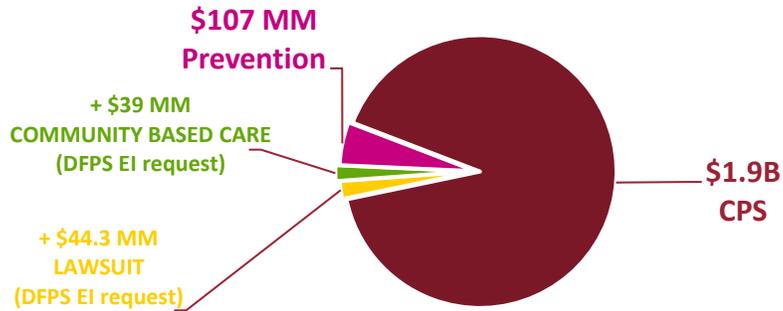
**In 2019, 67,313 confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect cost \$830,928 each. A total \$55.9 billion lifetime costs accrued from a single year of abuse and neglect in Texas.**



AREA	# ENTRIES	COST PER EACH	2019 TOTAL COST
FOSTER CARE	18,615	\$32, 904	\$612.5 MM
FAMILIES IN FBSS	18,067	\$3, 868	\$69.8 MM
INVESTIGATIONS	163,029	\$1,403	\$228.7 MM



## Only 5% of the Department of Family and Protective Services budget is Spent on Prevention.



## Increased Risk for Child Abuse and Neglect During COVID-19

Economic recessions, unemployment, family violence increases, mental health challenges, substance use, and parental stress have been correlated to increases in child abuse and neglect. Research during the Great Recession found that *for every percent increase in unemployment, physical abuse increased 15% and emotional abuse increased 12%.*

COVID-19 has added social isolation, lack of access to services, and physical health challenges to the mix of stressors for families. Research shows that without a dramatic shift in our state family support and prevention programs, we project dramatic increases in child abuse and neglect now and in the upcoming years.

Preventing child abuse and neglect requires cross-sector coordination and investments upstream. This strategy ensures that families can access the *right supports at the right time* so that they can remain safe, healthy, and together.

### Recommendations



**Budget Action:** Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect - Invest \$20 million additional dollars in PEI to stabilize and strengthen primary child abuse prevention programs for children under age 5 through Project HOPES (C.1.4) and Texas Nurse Family Partnership (C.1.5). This action would support DFPS Exceptional Item #4, DFPS Exceptional Item #7, and Texas Nurse Family Partnership.

**Budget Action:** Prevent entries into foster care - Ensure available Family First Transition Funds are spent to increase access to evidence-based prevention services to families at imminent risk of entering foster care.

### For More Information

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