Violence against children and youth is a serious public health problem:

- In 2010, approximately 435,000 cases of child maltreatment (CM) were identified by child protective services; this means that each hour about 50 children were victims of substantiated CM.
- In one year, violence sends more than 977,000 children and youth to hospital emergency departments—that’s more than 110 children every hour.
- An estimated 1,770 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in 2009; of these more than three-quarters (80.8%) were younger than 4 years of age.
- Victims of teen dating violence (TDV) are more likely to do poorly in school, and report binge drinking and suicide attempts. Experiencing violence during the teen years increases the risk of victimization later in life.
- The total lifetime estimated financial costs associated with just one year of confirmed cases of child maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, and neglect), is approximately $124 billion.

While other federal agencies are focused on supporting youth after violence has occurred, the CDC Injury Center is unique in that it seeks to prevent violence against children and youth before it begins by:

- Developing rigorous data collection and monitoring methods to document the prevalence of violence against children and youth and identify risk and protective factors.
- Strengthening the evidence-base by developing and evaluating prevention strategies and ensuring widespread adoption of effective programs.
- Engaging state and local public health agencies to build their capacity to implement, evaluate, and sustain evidence-based approaches.

Many prevention efforts to date have been successful:

- Counties in South Carolina that implemented the Positive Parenting Program, Triple P, had decreased rates of emergency department visits and hospitalizations due to CM by 18% and out-of-home placements due to CM decreased by 12%.
- An evaluation of Safe Dates, a middle and high school curriculum designed to stop or prevent psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, showed 56% to 92% less dating violence among students who received the program compared to students who did not.

NASHIA supports an increase of $26.4 million for the CDC Injury Center to strengthen child and youth violence prevention efforts by:

- Identifying indicators of SSNRs and outcomes of violence against children at the community-level.
- Conducting and supporting research to better understand the effectiveness of high level prevention strategies, programs, and policies.
- Assessing the effectiveness of and disseminating multi-faceted, evidence-based prevention approaches to prevent youth violence.
- Enhancing capacity for prevention at federal, state, and local levels and disseminating evidence-based strategies to use to prevent youth violence.
- Identifying the economic efficiency of prevention programs and strategies, including costs, required resources, and return on investment.
- Leveraging and enhancing partnerships and frameworks to facilitate access to cities and communities poised to use a public health approach to prevent youth violence.

By supporting child and youth violence prevention programs, we can help people live to their full potential.

For additional information, contact the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA) at publicpolicy@nashia.org