

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
HUMAN RESOURCES**

**US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**HEARING ON “PROTECT OUR KIDS ACT”**

**December 12, 2012**

**MADELINE MCCLURE, LCSW**

**FOUNDING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TEXPROTECTS, THE TEXAS  
ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

Chairman Paulsen, Ranking Member Doggett and Subcommittee Members, it's an honor to be invited to testify today on Child Maltreatment in the US and specifically, on this important legislation.

I serve as the E.D. of TexProtects, the Texas Association for the Protection of Children, which I founded in 2004 to organize stakeholders across Texas to build consensus on the best public policy solutions for reducing child abuse and neglect and to improve our child proactive services and healing systems based on solid, rigorous, best practice research. Over a period of 4 TX legislative sessions, we have provided the blueprint and facilitated passage of over 26 bills and provided input into 2 other omnibus reform bills and raised over \$45 million in private and public investments in evidence-based child abuse prevention programs. Prior to founding TexProtects, I worked as a clinician providing therapy to child and adult victims of severe child abuse.

Texas has the dubious distinction of having the highest rate of child maltreatment fatalities in the nation, increasing from 103 to 281 deaths, a 124% increase over a 15-year period, while the child population grew at only 19% over this same period. Given that child maltreatment deaths stem from child neglect and mostly, child physical abuse, my testimony will focus on the root causes of child abuse / neglect (CA/N). Because my background is in Finance and Economics as well as Social Work, I believe I may be helpful on this subject with a focused presentation on projected costs of CA/N and cost-benefits of child maltreatment prevention, and how we can get in front of this problem.

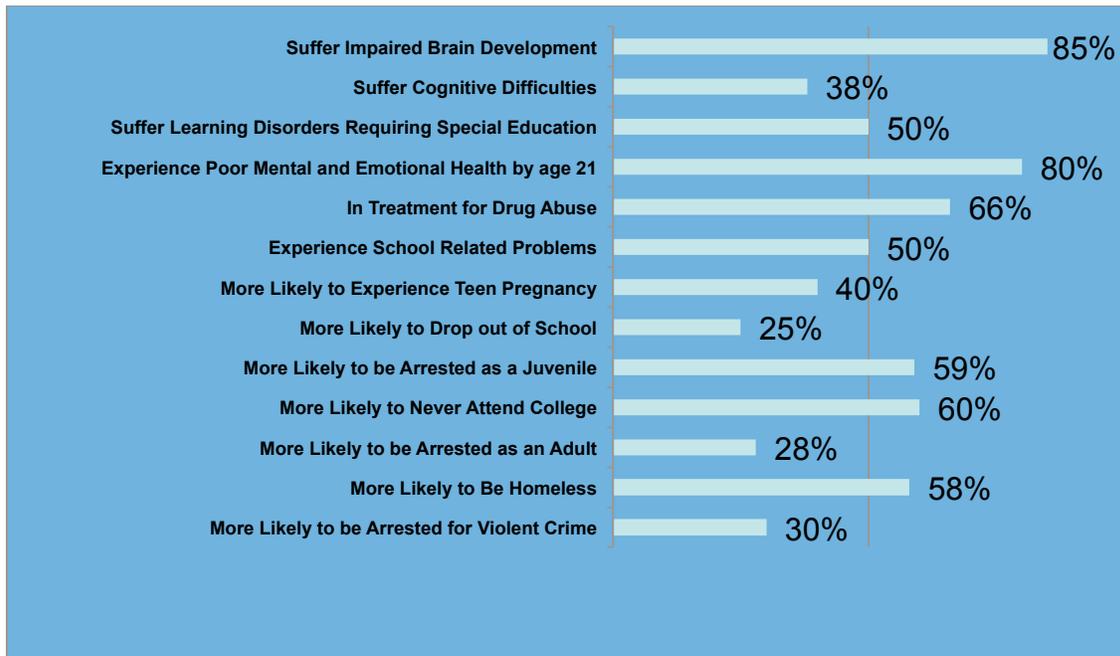
To understand costs, we need to understand actual incidents and incidence rates. The National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV) from 2008 was the first national study to examine children's exposure to violence in homes, schools, and communities across all age groups (Finkelhor, Turner, Ormrod, & Hamby, 2009). In terms of maltreatment, NatSCEV found that more than 1 in 10 children surveyed (10.2%) suffered some form of maltreatment during the past year and nearly 1 in 5 (18.6%) did so during their lifetimes (Finkelhor et al., 2009).

However, the incidents of child abuse/neglect that are actually reported, investigated and subsequently substantiated by our state's CPS systems, which are subsequently reported to

the NCANDS, tell a different story, which is that 1% of our child population is abused in a given year. US Department of HHS ACF's Fourth National Incidence Studies concluded that CA/N are underreported by 50%. That would indicate that the actual incidence of child/abuse and neglect is 2% of our population.

Whether 1%, 2% or 10%, one abused child is one too many, let alone the 753K that reflect the 1% figure. To put the lowest estimated incidence in context, consider the following: Imagine an aerial view of the entire: Hubert Humphrey Metro dome, Dallas Cowboy Stadium (80K-TX), The Cotton Bowl (100K-TX), Yankee Stadium (50.3-NY, Sanford Stadium (92.7 –GA), Neyland Stadium (102K-TN), Tiger Stadium (92.5K- LA), Century Link Fields (67K-WA), and the Rose Bowl (92.5) all filled to capacity crowds. Imagine in your mind an aerial view of all 9 of these enormous stadiums, completely packed with fans, all at once. Now, picture each of all those seats filled with children-abused and neglected children, 40% who are under the age of 4. All those seats combined are still 11,000 seats short of the 753K children that are severely neglected, sexually molested, or physically brutalized every year in the greatest nation on earth. This is a national epidemic, and that is why this task force is so desperately needed.

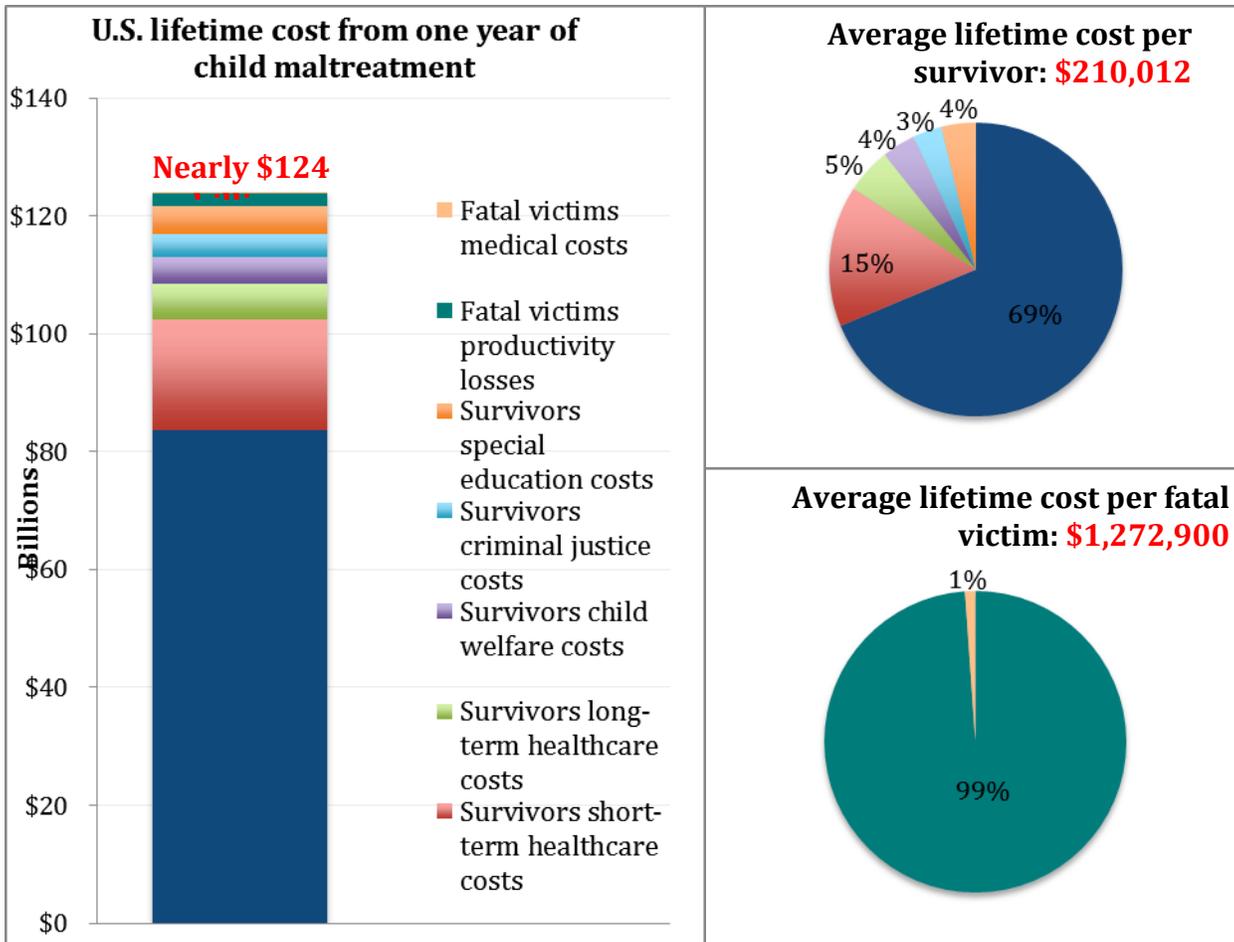
The consequences of child abuse and neglect have been well documented from vast volumes over multi-decades of research. In brief, abused and neglected children, compared to their non-abused counterparts, are significantly more likely to:



Impaired Brain Development<sup>i</sup>; Cognitive difficulties<sup>ii</sup>; Learning difficulties requiring special Ed<sup>iii</sup>; Poor mental health and emotional health, especially depression<sup>iv</sup>; Abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs<sup>v</sup>; School related problems<sup>iii</sup>; Teen pregnancy<sup>vi</sup>; School drop out<sup>iii</sup>; Juvenile delinquency<sup>vii</sup>; Under and unemployment<sup>viii</sup>; Adult incarceration<sup>vii</sup>; Homelessness<sup>ix</sup>; and Violent crimes<sup>vii</sup> (in about that order).

Society pays a high price for child abuse, including but not limited to the costs from: Law enforcement, CPS/Child Welfare Costs, judicial system, hospital and health care costs, mental health treatment, direct costs stemming from substance abuse outcomes and from treatment, juvenile delinquency and criminal justice costs, lost productivity, et. al.

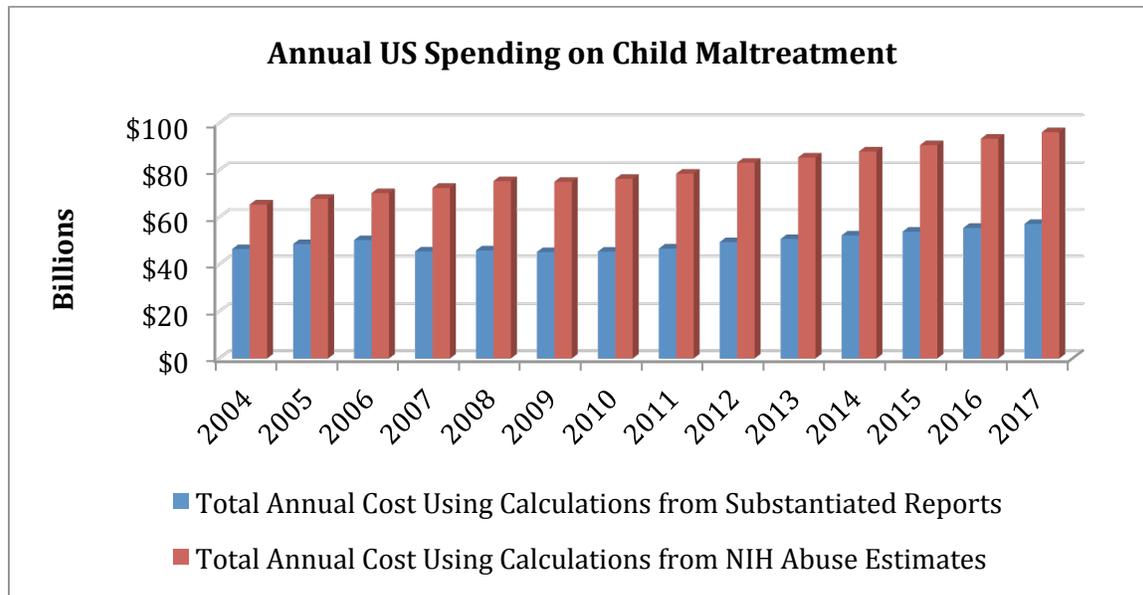
The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recent study monetizing these consequences found that the lifetime financial cost for just one year of new confirmed cases of child maltreatment (75% of confirmed cases) is about \$124 billion; we spend about \$1.3 million for every child that dies from abuse and over \$210 thousand for an abused child who lives.



Inflation adjusted, the lifetime cost per CA/N victim is \$222,785 and for every child fatality, the cost is \$1,350,317 in 2012 dollars.

This is actually a conservative estimate because the CDC only considered costs of abuse for ages 6-64, and we know that the most serious injuries – and costs – occur to children under 6, and health related costs continue to accrue past age 64. In addition to the NIH findings that actual occurrences of abuse are 50% higher than confirmed, research shows that between 50-60% of child *fatalities* due to maltreatment are not recorded as such on death certificates. Therefore, the CDC fatality victim costs are under-calculated by a factor of 2.

Another study published in PCAA calculated the annual costs per victim as \$63,871 by combining direct costs (i.e., child welfare and law enforcement) with indirect costs (i.e., special education, early intervention, emergency housing, mental/physical health care, juvenile delinquency, adult criminal justice, lost worker productivity).<sup>xi</sup> They did not use a different cost for children who die from abuse, which, as the CDC showed, means this cost per child is likely higher if a child dies. Nevertheless, we used this annual cost per child to project annual spending (adjusting for inflation and population growth and assuming a steady rate of abuse in future years).

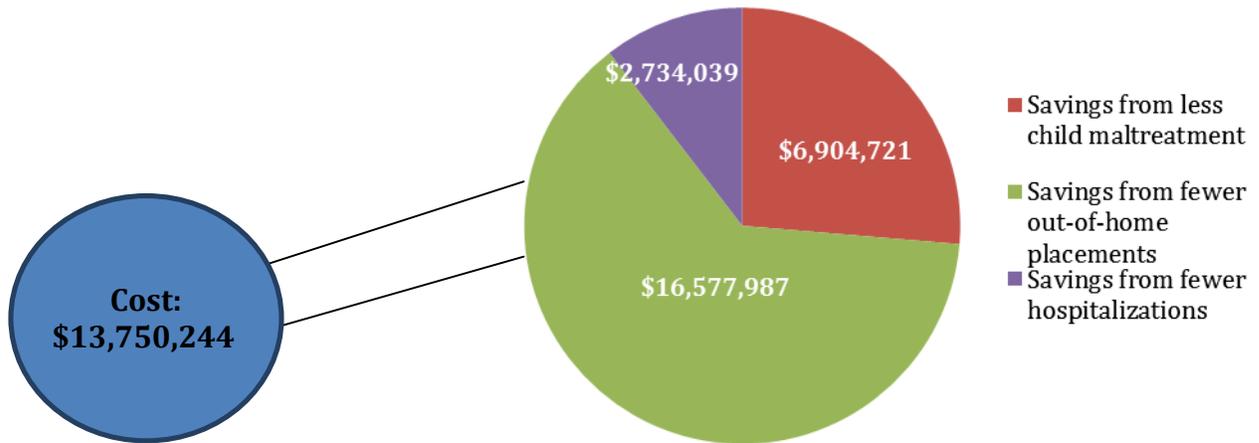


Therefore, we have spent over \$83 Billion on the calculable financial consequences of CA/N in 2012 alone. **We cannot continue to hoist this enormous financial burden on the back of taxpayers. These costs are not only unacceptable for a society, they are unsustainable. And yet, they are preventable.**

The social sciences has evolved to a level such that experimental research trials, such as the double blind studies used by drug companies, are able to isolate proposed interventions from other variables so that we can now *identify and measure hard outcomes between demographically matched intervention groups and control groups*. This “emerging” area of evidence in social sciences-while in use for several decades is still in its infancy-has allowed us to test the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of a myriad of social programs, including child abuse prevention programs.

In monetizing the benefits of the best prevention programs, we have found a net cost savings ranging from \$1.18 to \$14.65 for every dollar invested. To illustrate more clearly, one prevention program (Positive Parenting Program, a.k.a.: Triple P) is estimated to return over \$6 for every \$1 invested, and the cost of the program can be recovered in a single year.<sup>xiii</sup> It is estimated that the pilot program in Houston, Texas will show almost a 2:1 return in just two years.<sup>xiiii</sup>

**TOTAL BENEFITS FROM TRIPLE P  
IN TWO YEARS: \$26,216,746**



However, even the best calculations cannot begin to monetize the incalculable costs of not only lives lost, but the unseen scars of potentials quenched, spirits extinguished and souls murdered. But there is a way to offset the billions we can quantify that we are currently wasting on CA/N consequences – we need to invest and bring to scale the cost savings of CA/N prevention programs. But we need a well designed, well thought out implementation strategy with continual evaluation for Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement, as well as impact outcomes, which will provide a toolkit that the states can access and if desired, implement depending upon their unique population needs, culture and best fit.

For a modest investment, not only will we break the intergenerational cycle of abuse and the myriad of negative social outcomes, we can reduce an enormous economic burden on taxpayers immediately and in the long term.

### **Need for a task force**

Texas Experience: Blue Ribbon Task force

Our research over 3 years has shown that if states have child abuse/neglect prevention strategies, they lack evaluations showing outcome data. None of the existing National organizations as shown in the appendix, have developed nor distributed a child abuse prevention strategy blueprint for use at the state or local level. That is a glaring missing critical gap that I believe this task force must address.

### **Conclusion**

**For a minimal investment in a National Commission, as outlined in the Protect Our Kids Act, we can encourage states to adopt proven preventative measures that can create a big impact: Saving lives and saving scarce resources. As a result, we can significantly change the trajectory and realize positive outcomes for our children, our families, our communities and ultimately, our great country.**

## APPENDIX I

Website	URL	Goals/Summary	Other Notes
National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN)	<a href="http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/">http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/</a>	To facilitate secondary analysis of research data relevant to the study of child abuse and neglect	This site lists a variety of other data sets available: <a href="http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/NDACAN/Datasets_List.html">http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/NDACAN/Datasets_List.html</a> and support documents for some of those data sets (e.g., Longscan): <a href="http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/NDACAN/UserSupport.html">http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/NDACAN/UserSupport.html</a>
National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS)	<a href="http://www.nrcwdt.org/ncands/">http://www.nrcwdt.org/ncands/</a>	NCANDS consists of two components: (1) Summary Data Component (SDC) is a compilation of key aggregate child abuse and neglect statistics from all states, including data on reports, investigations, victims, and perpetrators; (2) Detailed Case Data Component (DCDC) is a compilation of case-level information from those child protective services agencies able to provide electronic child abuse and neglect records	Here is a helpful summary of NCANDS: <a href="http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/ndacan/Datasets/Related_Docs/NCANDS_Fact_Sheet.pdf">http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/ndacan/Datasets/Related_Docs/NCANDS_Fact_Sheet.pdf</a>
<b>Child Welfare Information Gateway</b>	<a href="http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/">http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/</a>	Provides access to print and electronic publications, websites, databases, and online learning tools for improving child welfare practice, including resources that can be shared with families  On this website, you can review recent publications and other reports on CAN, but it is not the website to actually analyze data and/or track specific outcomes of interest; it also links people to other clearinghouse locations; see <a href="http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/statistics/stat_natl_state.cfm">http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/statistics/stat_natl_state.cfm</a> for an example:	This site also is useful in that it allows a comparison of state statues on child welfare topics To note: there are other websites that compile references/ publications on the topic (e.g., U.S. Department of Justice, Crimes against Children Research Center, Kempe Foundation, Prevent Child Abuse America, etc.), but I am not listing all of those as well – none provide data or exactly what we are looking for here
Child Welfare Outcomes Report Data	<a href="http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/overview">http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/overview</a>	Child Welfare Outcomes is a report that is published annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and provides information on the performance of States in seven outcome categories (e.g., reducing reoccurrence of CAN, reducing CAN in foster homes, increase permanency, etc.) Through this site, you also can view the data before the full report is published	This website does have an easy-to-use map for state-by-state comparisons of child victim rates and other data, and you can create a state profile of these rates - broken down by age, race, maltreatment type, etc. You also can look at other outcomes measures for the state such as reoccurrence of maltreatment; It is a useful and easy-to-use website for summarizing <i>some</i> of the data; see the data table as well: <a href="http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/downloads/pdfs/texas.pdf">http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/downloads/pdfs/texas.pdf</a>
Child Maltreatment	<a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resources/child-maltreatment-2010">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resources/child-maltreatment-2010</a>	This site has a report and various national data (broken down by state as well) on CAN known to child protective services agencies in the United States during a particular federal fiscal year (currently 2010 is posted)	This is a useful site for obtaining the various data sets from CPS across the country, but it is limited to that type of data (imagine each state's DFPS databook compiled and focused exclusively on CAN)
National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data & Technology (NRC-	<a href="http://www.nrcwdt.org/">http://www.nrcwdt.org/</a>	NRC-CWDT is comprised of a diverse group of consultants with a range of skills and experience from State Child Welfare agencies and technical information technology firms; technical	Again, this site does not provide the actual data or analyses options, but it does provide links to other useful websites and databases (e.g., NCANDS,

CWDT)		assistance is available at no charge to States, Courts and Tribes to improve the quality of data reported to other groups (i.e., AFCARS, NCANDS, SACWIS, and NYTD)	NYTD, CSFRm etc.); see: <a href="http://www.nrcwdt.org/federalreporting/">http://www.nrcwdt.org/federalreporting/</a>
Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)	<a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/afcars">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/afcars</a>	AFCARS collects case-level information on all children in foster care and those who have been adopted with title IV-E agency involvement	On this site you can see state-by-state statistics, trends, and other information, but it does not contain information specific to abuse
Children's Bureau (CB)	<a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/monitoring">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/monitoring</a>	The CB monitors state child welfare agencies through a number of assessments and reviews (Child and Family Service Reviews, Title IV-E Foster Care, Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, and the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System reviews. Through this website you can gain access to all reports.	Not a very useful website if you want specific child abuse statistics, but useful if you want to see how state child welfare agencies are doing at achieving positive outcomes for their children and families in their systems
KIDS COUNT	<a href="http://datacenter.kidscount.org/">http://datacenter.kidscount.org/</a>	KIDS COUNT data center is a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.	Quick and easy website if you are looking for basic child abuse statistics for states or communities
Longitudinal Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect (LONGSCAN)	<a href="http://www.iprc.unc.edu/longscan/">http://www.iprc.unc.edu/longscan/</a>	LONGSCAN is a consortium of research studies. Each site conducts separate and unique research projects on the etiology and impact of child maltreatment. While each project can stand alone, through the use of common assessment measures, similar data collection methods and schedules, and pooled analyses, LONGSCAN is a collaborative effort. The goal of LONGSCAN is to follow children and their families until children become young adults. Comprehensive assessments of children, their parents, and their teachers are scheduled to occur at child ages 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, and 18. Maltreatment data is collected from multiple sources, including record reviews, at least every two years. Yearly telephone interviews allow sites to track families and assess yearly service utilization and life events. NDACAN makes a restricted dataset available to members	You can also search through data sets on this site; for instance, I did a search of domestic violence as reported by the child (you can select caregiver, CPS, Interviewer, or Teacher) at ages 6, 8, 12, 14, and 16; the website provides a link to that data output; this is more useful to a researcher, though (not in user-friendly format - I have to use the codebook to know the labels, etc.); the measures manual is a little easier to use, but it is still targeted at a research audience; plus, a lot of data have restricted access for members only; on this website, you also can view publications and reports from these data

## APPENDIX II: Annual US Spending on Child Maltreatment

*Data for Bar Graph Titled: Annual US Spending on Child Maltreatment*

Year	Total Annual Cost Using Calculations from Substantiated Reports	Total Annual Cost Using Calculations from NIH Abuse Estimates
2004	\$46,473,544,260	\$65,364,475,657
2005	\$48,587,344,020	\$67,763,436,732
2006	\$50,266,009,710	\$70,234,862,834
2007	\$45,457,333,700	\$72,431,068,542
2008	\$45,894,805,560	\$75,313,730,193
2009	\$45,198,380,360	\$75,045,777,066
2010	\$45,376,896,797	\$76,276,390,219
2011	\$46,633,611,066	\$78,472,060,187
2012	\$49,406,598,277	\$83,138,265,835
2013	\$50,727,949,679	\$85,361,751,523
2014	\$52,237,077,850	\$87,901,215,954
2015	\$53,827,514,908	\$90,577,501,785
2016	\$55,462,810,526	\$93,329,272,734
2017	\$57,111,989,984	\$96,104,406,521

### Annual Cost Using Calculations from Substantiated Reports

- Cost = Number of Confirmed Victims \* Cost Per Victim
- Number of Confirmed Victims:
  - For 2004 – 2010: data compiled from 2008 – 2010 Child Maltreatment Data Report (from US Children’s Bureau)
  - For 2011 – 2017: calculated the average rate from 2004 -2010 (confirmed victims/child population); used that average rate and the projected child population for each year until 2017 (from childstats.gov) to project number of victims each year
- Cost Per Victim:
  - Equals \$63,871 in 2012 dollars (from Gelles & Perlman 2012)
  - This value was adjusted annual for inflation/deflation (<http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>)
    - For example, this amount equates to \$52,159 in 2004 and \$62,110 per victim in 2011
    - Inflation for 2013-2017 was assumed at a linear rate of increase from 2004-2012 rates

### Annual Cost Using Calculations from NIH Abuse Estimates

- Cost = Total Number of Victims as Estimated by NIS \* Cost Per Victim
- Total Number of Victims as Estimated by NIS:
  - NIS-4 showed a total of 1,257,600 victims of child abuse in 2005 compared to the 901,000 substantiated cases of abuse shown by the Child Maltreatment Data Report
  - We calculated the difference in the abuse rate (total victims/child population), between NIH and substantiated cases for this year, and applied that difference across each year to determine the number of children likely to have been abused each year
- All other projections of cost, population growth, and inflation adjustments were completed as previously described

- 
- <sup>i</sup> Dallam, S.J. (2001). The long-term medical consequences of childhood maltreatment. In K. Franey, R. Geffner, & R. Falconer (Eds.), *The cost of child maltreatment: Who pays? We all do*. San Diego, CA: Family Violence & Sexual Assault Institute.
- Perry, B. D. (2002). Childhood experience and the expression of genetic potential: What childhood neglect tells us about nature and nurture. *Brain and Mind, 3*, 79-100.
- <sup>ii</sup> Perry, B.D. (2002). Childhood experience and the expression of genetic potential: What childhood neglect tells us about nature and nurture. *Brain and Mind, 3*, 79-100.
- <sup>iii</sup> Barnett, W.S., & Masse, L.N. (2002). A benefit-cost analyses of the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research. Retrieved from [www.ounceofprevention.org](http://www.ounceofprevention.org).
- <sup>iv</sup> Silverman, A. B., Reinherz, H. Z. & Giaconia, R. M. (1996). The long-term sequelae of child and adolescent abuse: A longitudinal community study. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 20*(8), 709-723.
- <sup>v</sup> Swan, N. (1998). Exploring the role of child abuse on later drug abuse: Researchers face broad gaps in information. *NIDA Notes, 13*(2). Retrieved from [www.nida.nih.gov/NIDA\\_Notes/NNVol13N2/exploring.html](http://www.nida.nih.gov/NIDA_Notes/NNVol13N2/exploring.html).
- Widom, C., Marmorstein, N. R., & White, H. R. (2006). Childhood victimization and illicit drug use in middle adulthood. *Journal of Psychological Addictive Behavior, 20*(4), 394-403.
- <sup>vi</sup> Campbell, F. A., Ramey, C. T., Pungello, E. P., Sparling, J., & Miller-Johnson, S. (2002). Early childhood education: Young adults' outcomes from the Abecedarian project. *Applied Developmental Science, 6*, 42-57.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2006). Long-term consequences of child abuse and neglect. Child Welfare Information Gateway: Washington, D.C. Retrieved from [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long\\_term\\_consequences.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.cfm).
- <sup>vii</sup> Widom, C., & Maxfield, M. (2001). An update on the "Cycle of Violence." *Research in Brief*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice.
- <sup>viii</sup> Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2008). Long-term consequences of child abuse and neglect. Retrieved from [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long\\_term\\_consequences.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.cfm).
- <sup>ix</sup> Cook, R. (1991). A national evaluation of title IV-E foster care independent living programs for youth. Rockville, MD: Westat, Inc.
- <sup>x</sup> Fang, X., Brown, D. S., Florence, C. S., & Mercy, J. A. (2012). The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States and implications for prevention. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 36*(2), 156-165.
- <sup>xi</sup> Gelles, R. J., & Perlman, S. (2012). *Estimated Annual Cost of Child Abuse and Neglect*. Chicago, IL: Prevent Child Abuse America.
- <sup>xii</sup> Foster, M. E., Prinz, R. J., Sanders, M. R., & Shapiro, C. J. (2008). The costs of a public health infrastructure for delivering parenting and family support. *Children and Youth Services Review, 30*, 493-501. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2007.11.002
- <sup>xiii</sup> Correa, N., Quintal, L., Sanborn, R., Begley, C., Franzini, L., Giardino, A., . . . Tortolero, S. (2012). *The state of parent education in Houston, Texas: An opportunity to strengthen family well-being, prevent child maltreatment, and prepare children for a brighter future*. Houston, TX: Children at Risk. Retrieved from <http://childrenatrisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/The-State-of-Parent-Education-in-Houston-Report.pdf>.