

2022 WV POLICY AGENDA

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES, PREVENTING CHILDREN FROM ABUSE & MALTREATMENT

ADVANCE

Family-friendly policies that are shown to protect children from abuse and maltreatment including:



- Increase access to **QUALITY AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE** and other early childhood programs that promote children's development, health, and well-being.
- Pass policies that advance **RACIAL EQUITY** and address inequities, which result in over-representation of children of color in the child welfare system.
- Enact **PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE** legislation at the state level, so no worker has to choose between their job and caring for a child or other family member.
- Increase state & federal funding for **IN-HOME FAMILY EDUCATION** programs that work alongside parents so that children grow up healthy, strong, and ready to learn.
- Support policies that **PREVENT ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF CHILDREN** in schools, youth serving organizations, childcare programs, and other institutions.
- Advocate for **FEDERAL ACTION** to enact policies that make life bearable for families who need childcare, paid family medical leave, and the expanded Child Tax Credit.
- Support **FEDERAL ACTION** to reauthorize and fund federal programs including Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visitation (MIECHV).

PRESERVE

Critical investments that West Virginia has made into programs & resources that support families including:



- Continue funding for **FAMILY SUPPORT** programs.
- Expand access to and continue building support for **FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION** programs.
- Continue supporting **COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE** efforts in local communities to protect health, safety, and wellbeing of their families, friends, and neighbors.
- Support continued implementation of recommendations from the **"ERIN MERRYNS LAW"** State Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children.

OPPOSE

- **"COOKIE-CUTTER" APPROACHES** to child custody laws or policies that do not consider the best interests of the child.
- **INCOME TAX CUT (HOUSE BILL 4007)** which disproportionately benefits top earners and ultimately results in cuts to critical programs like Early Childhood Programs.
- Policies that **REDUCE FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES**. Research shows that financial supports reduce child abuse and neglect by reducing stressors on families and enabling families to better access resources and address their own basic needs.