

**Protecting Innocence**

**Building Trust**

**Providing Hope**



**State Plan for the Prevention of**

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

*TURNING BACK THE TIDE*



## Michigan's Fight Against Child Abuse and Neglect

The numbers are staggering. Each day, more than 300 possible cases of child abuse and neglect are reported in Michigan. Statistics tell us many more go unreported.

Statistics also paint an even sadder picture: More than 85 percent of these children were abused or neglected by a parent and 95 percent of the incidents took place in the home.

And, the saddest part yet: Statistics suggest all children are potential victims of abuse or neglect, regardless of age, gender, race, or family income.

The youngest children in our society suffer the most, representing two-thirds of Michigan's 21,073 confirmed victims in 1996. That's double the number from 1976.

The suffering doesn't end when the abuse or neglect stops. Victims suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome, drug and alcohol abuse, and are far more likely to become involved in crime, including violent crime. Today's abuse and neglect inflicts a devastating toll that the victims and society pay for many years.

Perhaps most tragic, the cycle of abuse and neglect continues when the victims of child abuse and neglect become parents. They tend to inflict the same physical, emotional, and psychological damage on their children.

Yet, this tide can be turned back. Studies show coordinated community family support services can prevent 85 percent — yes, 85 percent! — of child abuse and neglect.

Nature gives each of us the ability to become a mother or a father, but becoming a good parent is an ongoing learning process for everyone.

The Michigan Children's Trust Fund was established to help turn back this tide of abuse and neglect. This report, officially known as the State Plan for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, 1997-1998, describes the current fight against child abuse and neglect and what lies ahead.

This tide can be turned back. It must be turned back. We must do everything we can to provide better lives to thousands of children and for their parents. There is no better way to safeguard the future of our society and our state, and we ask you to join us.

Sincerely,



Candace Sorensen  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Michigan Children's Trust Fund

Deborah Strong  
Executive Director  
Michigan Children's Trust Fund

*The Children's Trust Fund  
provides information,  
resources, technical  
assistance and support  
about prevention to the  
general public, local  
councils, providers, policy  
makers, and others.*

## **Making a Difference Since 1982: The Children's Trust Fund**

The Legislature established the Children's Trust Fund in 1982 as a nonprofit organization to provide permanent funding for child abuse and neglect prevention.

An early pioneer in the field, Dr. Ray Helfer, developed the idea for the independent organization and its innovative funding approach: a check-off donation on the state income tax form.

The annual check-off allows taxpayers to donate by marking the amount they wish to contribute on their state income tax forms. Other sources of financial support include direct tax deductible donations, fundraising, state and federal grants, and interest from the trust account.

By law, half the funds collected through the tax check-off are allocated to local prevention programs across the state. The other half goes into the trust account to be invested. This even split between saving and spending will continue until the assets in the Children's Trust Fund's trust account reach \$20 million. Currently, \$6.8 million is in the trust account.

After that, the check-off will stop and the Children's Trust Fund will pay for programs and its operations with fundraising and the interest earned from the trust account.

Since it was created, the Children's Trust Fund has generated more than \$24 million for the prevention of child abuse and neglect and through its local partners has provided badly needed services to more than 2.5 million children and 500,000 families.

*Since 1982, the Children's Trust Fund  
has served over 500,000 families in Michigan  
and 2.5 million children.*



## Working With Local Partners: Helping Communities Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

The Children's Trust Fund pursues and supports efforts of developing community response to child abuse and neglect through its local councils and direct funding to community programs. Michigan has 69 local prevention councils serving 79 of its 83 counties. The local councils play an essential role in the fight against child abuse and neglect, developing and facilitating coordinated community prevention strategies.

The Children's Trust Fund also provides financial support for programs such as educational workshops for local councils, conferences on special child abuse and neglect prevention topics.

The local councils are strongly involved in the Children's Trust Fund grant award process for direct service programs. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis, through a state and local team review. Local councils also provide technical assistance and support to those applying for or receiving grants. In awarding grants, the Children's Trust Fund Board of Directors evaluates a number of factors, including the quality and type of program, needs of the area, and the amount of grant money available. The goal is to support as many qualified programs as possible, and develop a community-based prevention system.

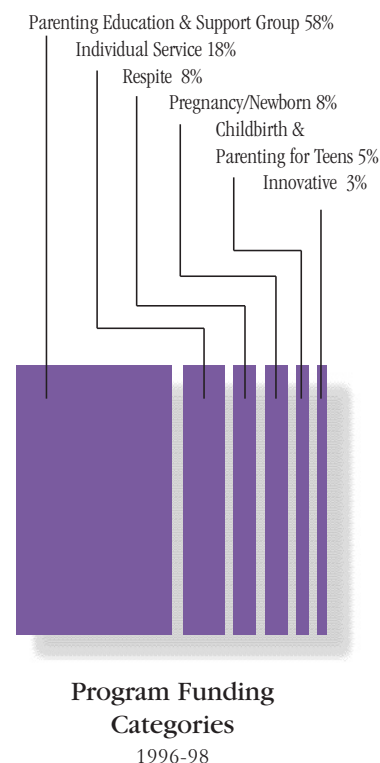
Another goal is to have these community programs become self-sufficient. Children's Trust Fund grants typically serve as "start-up" money with future funding coming from a variety of sources. Local funds must equal at least half of the Children's Trust Fund grant. Programs are funded for multiple years on a declining funding basis. Funding priorities of the Children's Trust Fund are:

- Primary and secondary prevention services
- New programs/services, enhanced or expanded services, or services coordination
- Services to families that do not have an active Protective Services case (no tertiary or crisis intervention programs)

Primary prevention services are available to all members of the general population and seek to promote wellness. Secondary prevention focuses on the early identification and support of individuals with risk factors for a specific problem or disorder. Both types of services are voluntary and seek to prevent child abuse and neglect. In addition to the above, other funding priorities are:

- Parenting skills training and support programs which are designed to educate and/or provide peer support (to individuals and families) in the areas of child development, child care, coping skills, stress management, general advocacy and support.
- Programs and services within or connected to family resource centers (e.g. parent support, education, outreach, information and referral, etc.)
- Programs which include the meaningful the involvement of parents/consumers in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program and services.
- Programs which demonstrate the collaboration and coordination of efforts as part of a local comprehensive plan.
- Services that include, but are not limited to, pre/postnatal programs, teen parenting, in-home support services, mentoring, grandparent support programs, family support, referral services, early childhood, parent education, and respite care.

*The Children's Trust Fund funds 69 local Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Councils that serve 79 Michigan Counties. Local councils are community-based organizations that identify needs and facilitate collaborative prevention programs in their community.*



*“If we know that 85% of all child abuse and neglect can be prevented.... there is no reason it shouldn't be. I believe each of us can do something to make that a reality”.*  
 — Gail Nugent (Educator)  
 Children's Trust Fund Board

## **Growing to Meet the Challenge: The Evolution of the Children's Trust Fund**

The Children's Trust Fund has matured and evolved over the past several years as it faced growing challenges. With self-examination and foresight, it has strengthened and enhanced itself. These changes include:

- Evolution from an advisory, to working Board of Directors
- Reframing itself as Board-guided, rather than director-driven
- Switching to full-time staff from university interns
- Initiating 1995 legislative changes that allow the Children's Trust Fund to raise money independently
- Taking an active role in shaping Michigan's prevention policy, rather than simply serving as a steward of the trust fund

## **Setting the Course for the Children's Trust Fund: Organization of the Board and Staff**

The Children's Trust Fund is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors that reports directly to the Governor. Ten of those members are appointed to three-year terms by the Governor. The other board members represent the state departments of:

- Community Health
- Education
- Family Independence Agency
- State Police

### **THE BOARD'S DUTIES INCLUDE:**

- Developing a state plan for the prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Distribution of resources
- Oversight and monitoring of expenditures
- Public awareness and training
- Performance evaluation
- Budget and policy recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature

Each Board member chairs or serves on one or more of the standing committees. The Board committees that meet regularly are:

- Budget Planning and Evaluation
- Local Councils and Partnerships
- Prevention Projects
- State Plan
- Communications
- Executive
- Fund Development

Many Board members also are involved in external fund development, public awareness, and outreach activities. The Board meets seven times a year and each standing committee meets monthly, or as needed by the committee.



*Our Mission —  
We serve as a voice for all  
children and families to promote  
their health, safety, and welfare  
by supporting and funding  
effective collaborative programs  
and services that prevent child  
abuse and neglect.*

## **BOARD MEMBERS**

Candace Sorensen, Chair  
Grand Rapids

Grenaé Dudley, Ph.D.  
Detroit

Gail Duncan-Campagne  
Sterling Heights

Marybeth Hicks  
Okemos

Mark Jasonowicz  
Family Independence Agency

Larry Julian  
Lennon

Christopher Lewis  
Department of State Police

Gratia Lousma  
Ann Arbor

Monsignor James Murray  
Lansing

Gail Nugent  
Frankfort

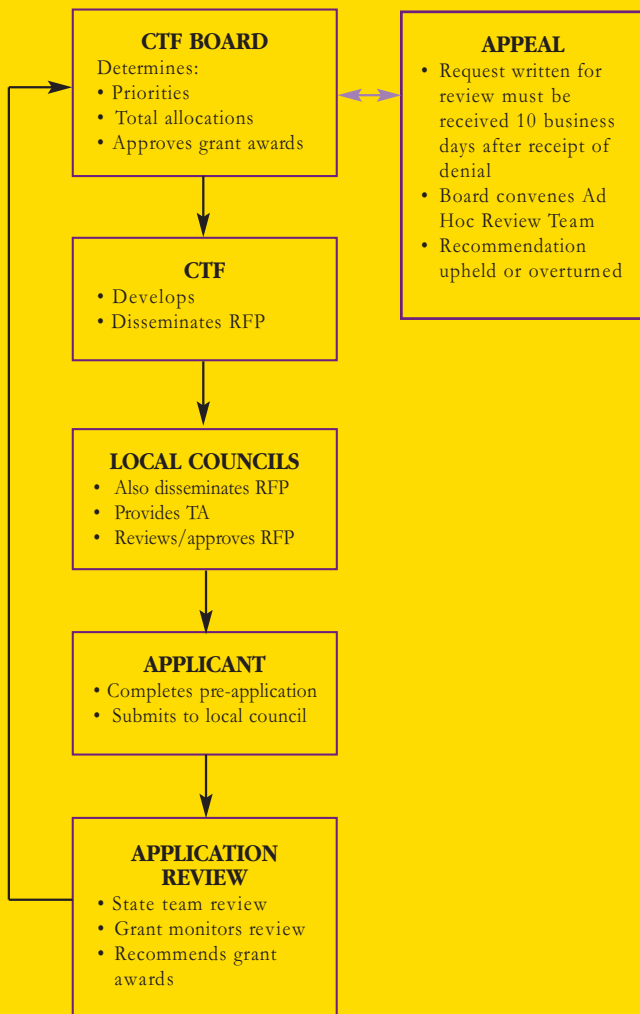
Pamela Posthumus  
Alto

Robert Scranton  
Department of Community Health

Stephen Thomas, Jr.  
East Lansing

Ena Weathers  
Ypsilanti

Carol Wolenberg  
Department of Education



### Children's Trust Fund Granting Process

*The Children's Trust Fund currently funds over 50 local direct service prevention programs across the state. These provide a range of services to families which help them understand the developmental stages of children, how to cope with the stresses of parenting, support and linkages to other resources.*





## The Rising Tide of Child Abuse and Neglect: A Tragic American Epidemic

Child abuse and neglect have reached startling levels in the United States. Experts describe the problem as a national epidemic.

The number of children suspected as being victims of abuse or neglect rose to 3,140,000 in 1994 from 677,000 in 1976, an increase of 463 percent.

Most of this abuse and neglect is inflicted by parents and occurs mainly in the child's home. The abuse and neglect threaten the safety, development, and even the lives of the young victims. Nearly four children a day, or about 1,300 a year, die from child abuse and neglect.

Today, in America, children younger than 2 years old are more likely to die from abuse than by car accidents, drowning, or fires. And, the full extent of child abuse and neglect is unknown. Study after study shows significant numbers of child abuse and neglect cases aren't even reported.

One conservative estimate is that one out of every five children will suffer abuse or neglect before his or her 18th birthday.

Abuse and neglect have grave consequences that reach beyond the individual child and families. Child abuse and neglect victims are at higher risk for problems throughout their lives, primarily:

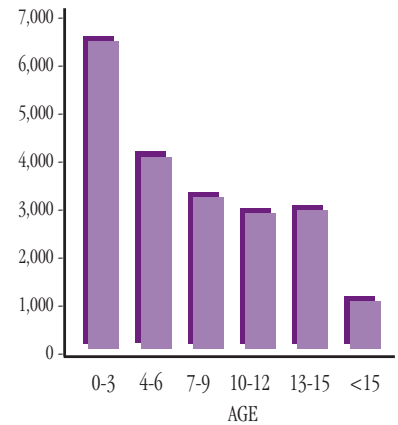
- Mental illness
- Behavioral disorders
- Disabilities
- Poor performance in school
- Delinquency
- Depression
- Substance abuse
- Suicide
- Teen pregnancy
- Domestic violence
- Criminal violence

Of the 22.3 million adolescents (ages 12 through 17) in the United States today, 1.8 million, or 8 percent, have been victims of a serious sexual assault and 3.9 million, nearly 18 percent, have been victims of a serious physical assault.

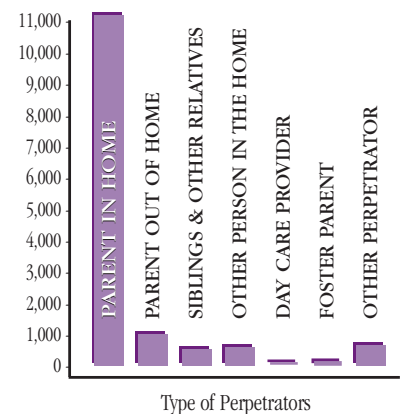
Unfortunately, most sexual child abuse escapes detection. Based on existing data, patterns of childhood sexual abuse appear to depend on the gender and age of the victim.

The bulk of the victims — 75 percent to 80 percent — are female and have an average age of 7 to 8. A high percentage, 75 percent to 85 percent, are abused by an adult male or minor, whom they know. The perpetrators are most often a family member such as the father, stepfather, mother's boyfriend, or an uncle or other male relative.

Victims of unknown assailants tend to be older than children who are sexually abused by someone they know and are usually only subjected to a single episode of abuse. Sexual abuse by family members or acquaintances usually involves multiple episodes over periods ranging from one week to years.



Age of Abuse and Neglect Victims  
Michigan 1993-96



Types of Perpetrators  
Michigan 1997

*Research has proven that for every \$1 spent on prevention, \$19 is saved in crisis-oriented programming such as foster care, protective services, special education, low-birth weight babies, counseling and other such costs.*

## **Michigan's Share of the Rising Tide: Child Abuse and Neglect in Our State**

Unfortunately, child abuse and neglect is on the rise in Michigan, just as it is on a national scale. Over the past four years, more than 120,000 cases of suspected child abuse and neglect have been reported in our state.

Even these large numbers don't tell the entire story of this widespread human tragedy. Every indicator points to one inescapable conclusion: The actual number of children suffering abuse and neglect in Michigan is substantially higher.

## **Turning Back the Tide: The Work of the Children's Trust Fund**

The problem of child abuse and neglect is serious, widespread, and growing in Michigan and across the nation. But the tide can be turned back. How? By giving parents and families the help they need prevents child abuse. It's that simple.

Yet, finding the way to get them help isn't always simple. Neither is coordinating services from a variety of disciplines or encouraging collaboration among agencies that provide services to children and families. Adequately funding early intervention and prevention programs also is a challenge.

As government budgets shrink, the urgency grows for agencies to work together and for building communities that are caring and supportive of families needing help.

The Children's Trust Fund supports a wide variety of effective prevention services for children and families in all parts of Michigan. While each targets different populations and parts of the problem, all the programs attack the root causes of child abuse and neglect and focus on giving families the tools and help they need to care for children.

Best of all, the investments in these programs pay a significant dividend by improving lives. For example:

- *Barry, young father, saw the mother of his four children had a drug problem and was neglecting the children. He wanted to take custody and turned to Kalamazoo County's Brother-to-Brother program, which encourages and helps fathers to care for their children. Brother-to-Brother provides parenting education, monthly support groups, and advocacy in the probate courts. As a result of his involvement in the program, he was able to gain custody of his children. Barry says, "this program has provided me with the tools to be a good father and provide a stable home for my children."*
- *Three teen parents — Rhonda, Holly and Alicia — recently spoke about how the Teen Outreach Program Enhancement Project helped them become better parents and high school graduates instead of dropouts. All three have gone on to further education and are working.*

*They described how they were able to stay in school and get the educational foundation that will allow them and their children to have a bright future, thanks to the Genesee Intermediate School District program.*

- *The Lansing Area Parents Respite Center (LAP) has contributed significantly to the quality of the Smith's family life. The Smith's have two sons, 11 and 7. The 7 year old has a severe seizure disorder, little language and is autistic and severely mentally impaired. He must be watched constantly. Before LAP, Mr. and Mrs Smith rarely had time alone and had to take turns doing things with their older son...because they couldn't take the younger one along.... and working outside the home was impossible for Mrs. Smith. They said, "life, at times, seemed unbearable and we didn't realize how much stress this situation was causing our marriage and family until we began getting respite through LAP. Having weekly dates, participating in events with our son together and being able to work outside the home consistently has made our marriage stronger, our family happier, and our financial situation more stable. Without respite this would not have happened."*

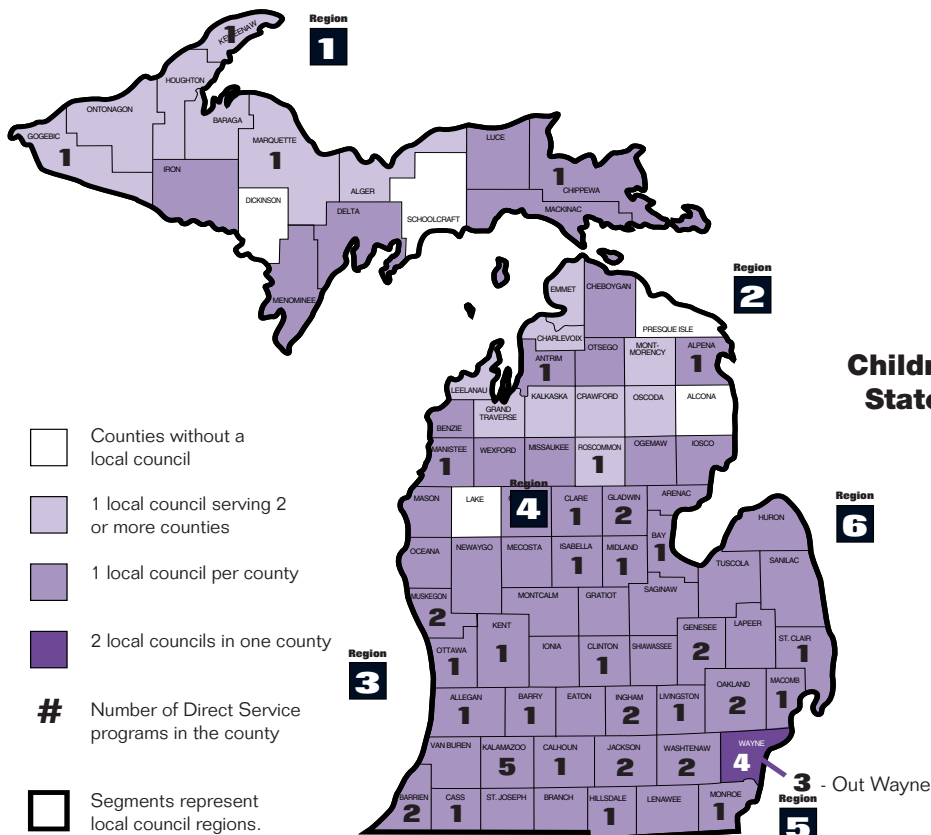
- *When the parents of three children died in an accident, their grandparents, John and Jill, became temporary guardians. They faced a heated custody battle with one family member and claims that the children were not getting adequate care. They got help and support from the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program in Grand Rapids. Now, they say, "Without the support of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, we would not have been able to win permanent custody of our grandchildren and give them a good home".*

*"This program has provided me with the tools to be a good father and provide a stable home for my children."*

— Barry,

Brother to Brother

Program



*Our Vision for 2002 —*

*The Children's Trust Fund will be recognized as the leading collaborative organization for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. We will educate and obtain the resources necessary to effectively promote a safe environment for all children in Michigan.*



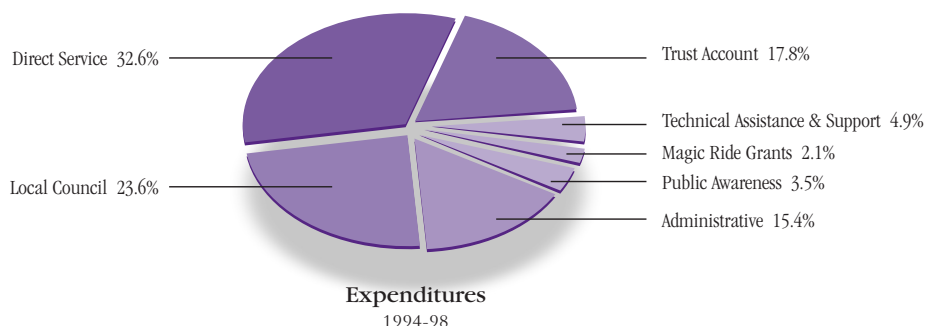
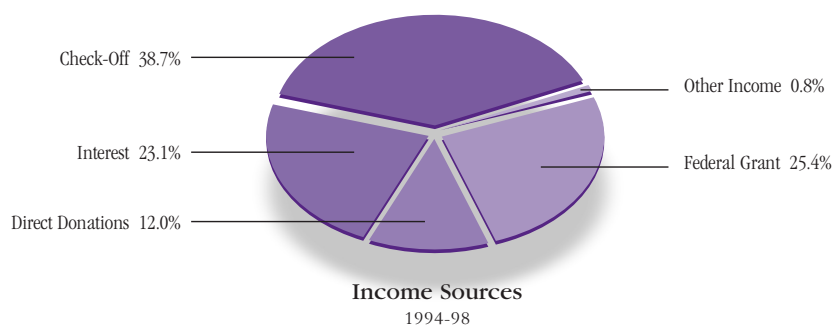
## Charting the Course of Success: The Michigan Children's Trust Fund Strategic Plan

The Board of Directors has crafted and implemented an aggressive strategic plan to guide the Children's Trust Fund into the 21st Century.

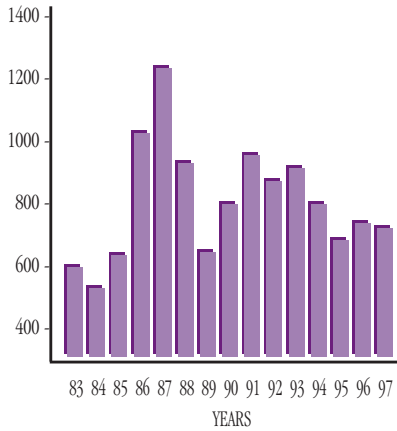
The plan focuses on a number of key areas:

- Raise the public awareness about child abuse and neglect and the need for ALL suspected cases to be reported.
- Develop an overall prevention strategy for the state.
- Promote the awareness of effective prevention programs.
- Boost public awareness on the Children's Trust Fund and its work.
- Increase the use of technology statewide to fight child abuse and neglect.
- Work with lawmakers and other leaders to enhance financial resources and public policy on child abuse and neglect.
- Step up the research about child abuse and neglect and its causes and the evaluation of prevention programs.
- Strengthen local child abuse and neglect prevention councils.
- Foster collaboration with community groups.
- Publicize the importance of the income tax checkoff and how it helps each community.
- Seek out new funding sources for the Children's Trust Fund's prevention activities.

This strategic plan is continually being reviewed, evaluated and updated to make sure it is a dynamic and forward-looking guide for the Michigan Children's Trust Fund and its work.



## Standing Together For Children: We Need to Do More to Prevent Abuse and Neglect



**Check-Off History  
for CTF**  
dollars shown in thousands

Much is being done to prevent child abuse and neglect, yet Michigan and other states must do more. As long as a single child is abused or neglected, this struggle cannot end.

Our efforts must rise to the level needed to turn back this alarming increase in the abuse and neglect of children. These children need our help. Their families need our help.

Many of the prevention and family strengthening strategies in use today are based on two assumptions: First, if given the means to do so, most parents will provide safe homes for their children. Second, one of the best ways to prevent delinquency and crime is to foster strong, nurturing families.

Every dollar spent on preventing child abuse and neglect saves society \$19 on dealing with later problems, according to a recent Michigan study.

But no study can gauge the human toll that abuse and neglect inflict on these children. Most physical injuries will heal in time. The emotional and psychological injuries can last a lifetime, leaving victims to ask time and again: "Why was I hurt so badly by those who were supposed to love and protect me?"

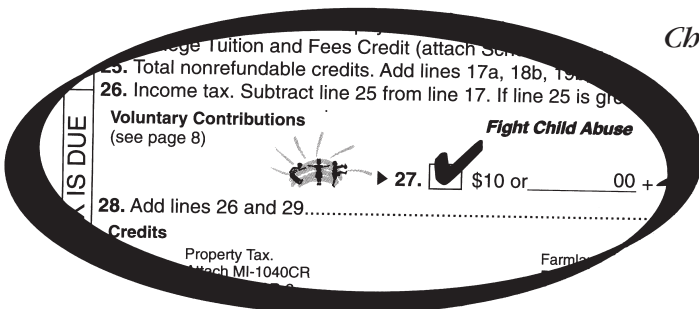
There is no good answer.

The Children's Trust Fund is working for the day when no child has to ask that question.

Every step we take toward that goal will improve the quality of life for children, families, and communities and provide a better future for our state.

*If you would like more information about the fight against child abuse and neglect or about the Children's Trust Fund and its work, please feel free to call us at (517) 373-4320.*

### Put Your Money Where Your Heart It



*Check the Children's Trust Fund box on your state income tax return to help prevent child abuse and neglect in Michigan.*





P.O. Box 30037 • Lansing, Michigan 48909 • 517-373-4320, Fax 517-241-7038