

# Preventing Crime Through Home Visiting

Voluntary home visiting programs prevent crime by reducing child abuse and neglect

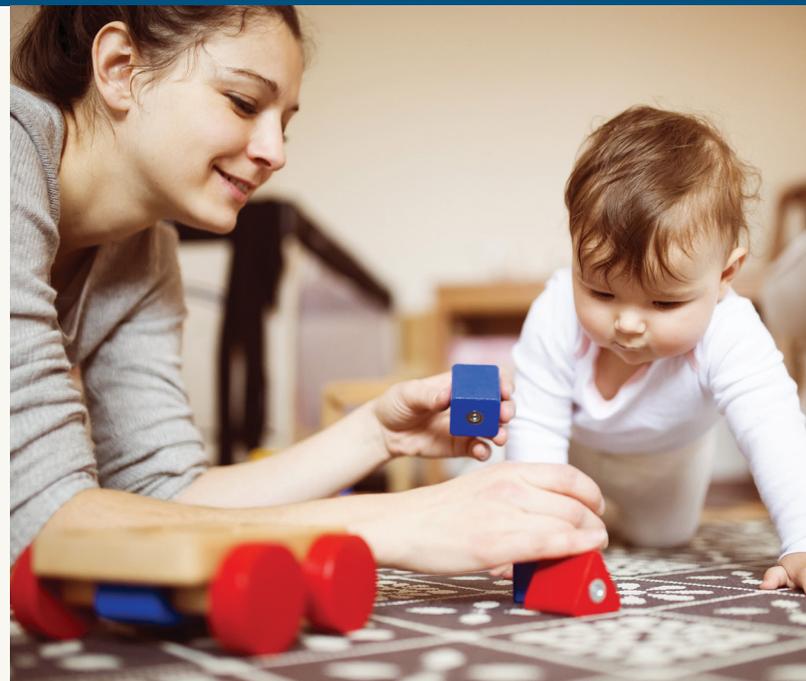
Being abused or neglected as a child doubles the risk of future criminal behavior. The federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program supports voluntary home visiting programs that have been proven to cut child abuse and neglect in half and prevent crime.

## Child abuse and neglect increases the risk of crime

There were more than 683,000 confirmed cases of child abuse or neglect in the U.S. in 2015, most neglect-related.<sup>1</sup> Neglect and abuse have lifelong repercussions for children, including a higher likelihood of involvement in crime. Research shows that children who experience abuse or neglect are twice as likely to commit a crime by age 19 compared to similar children who haven't been abused or neglected.<sup>2</sup>

## What is voluntary home visiting?

Voluntary home visiting is a program offered to pregnant women and new mothers with risk factors such as poverty, substance abuse, or a history of child abuse or neglect.<sup>3</sup> Parents gain access to a qualified professional who provides home-based coaching during pregnancy and infancy, including infant health and safety advice, and education and employment goal-setting.<sup>4</sup>



**“ If we can prevent child abuse and neglect, that’s a win for families and will mean less crime in the years to come.”**

— Sheriff Rand Henderson  
Montgomery County, Texas

## Quality home visiting programs:

**Reduce child abuse and neglect:** The Nurse-Family Partnership home visiting program cut child abuse and neglect by 50 percent.<sup>5</sup> Another home visiting program found a 60 percent reduction in infant mortality rates—which can be related to abuse and neglect.<sup>6</sup>

**Prevent crime:** By age 19, girls in the control group of the Nurse-Family Partnership had nine times more convictions than girls who participated. Similarly, mothers in the control group averaged three times more convictions than mothers who participated.<sup>7</sup>

**Save money:** A cost-benefit analysis found that high-quality home visiting saves \$5,000-\$6,000 over the lifetime of each child.<sup>8</sup> One program, Healthy Families America, achieved savings by reducing the need for special education.<sup>9</sup>

## Reauthorize MIECHV to prevent crime

The MIECHV program reaches nearly 150,000 parents and children in 50 states. MIECHV is an evidence-based program, allocating 75 percent of funding to proven home visiting programs and 25 percent to programs undergoing rigorous evaluation.<sup>10</sup>

Without reauthorization, many children will be at a higher risk for abuse and neglect, with lasting consequences for our nation's public safety.

<sup>1</sup> Administration for Children and Families 2016.

<sup>2</sup> 2.8 percent vs. 1.4 percent. Currie et al. 2012.

<sup>3</sup> HRSA 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Olds et al. 1997.

<sup>6</sup> Donovan et al. 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Eckenrode et al. 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> HRSA 2017.

**To learn more about the benefits of home visiting programs, visit [www.StrongNation.org/Home-Visiting](http://www.StrongNation.org/Home-Visiting)**

### Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

Thousands of police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors and violence survivors protecting public safety by promoting solutions that steer kids away from crime

**Council for a Strong America** is a national, bipartisan nonprofit that unites five organizations comprised of law enforcement leaders, retired admirals and generals, business executives, pastors, and prominent coaches and athletes who promote solutions that ensure our next generation of Americans will be citizen-ready.

1212 New York Avenue NW / Suite 300 / Washington, DC 20005 / 202.464.7005



COUNCIL FOR A  
**STRONG AMERICA**

[StrongNation.org](http://StrongNation.org)