



General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Joint State Government Commission
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House Resolution 163 (Pr.'s No. 1883) of 2013
**Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention
Programs in Pennsylvania: Staff Study**

SHORT SUMMARY

House Resolution 163 (Pr.'s No. 1883) directed the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a staff study to identify existing evidence-based child abuse and neglect prevention programs in this Commonwealth and nationwide, to evaluate the effectiveness and relative costs of these programs, and identify opportunities to integrate child abuse and neglect prevention methods and approaches into Commonwealth programs and policies.

Successful child maltreatment prevention involves a holistic approach. Reducing poverty, increasing support for families, and advancing education would all contribute to reductions in child abuse and neglect. Specific approaches addressing known risks can also play a significant role. Commission staff identified the broad range of established programs at federal and state levels and those operated by non-governmental agencies. Published empirical and observational studies reviewed by Commission staff describe a number of successful programs and initiatives; many of these currently operate in the Commonwealth. Of particular interest to staff were those child abuse prevention programs that were created through quantitative and qualitative analyses of best practices.

In recent years, agencies in Pennsylvania have been utilizing a number of evidence-based programs and practices that can be expected to continue bringing good results. Importantly, Commission staff noted that the best measures of a program's success may not be directly tied to the number of clients served per dollar spent. While it is generally true that dollars per consumer is an easy, familiar way to measure a program's efficiency, it is not necessarily true that such measures accurately portray a program's success. Experts in child abuse prevention emphasize that program success must be measured based on outcomes rather than on inputs.

This report is the Joint State Government Commission's response to HR163. A number of individuals who represent an array of resources and expertise in child abuse and neglect prevention were instrumental in providing information and advice during the compilation of this report. The Commission thanks them for the work they do for the residents of Pennsylvania, particularly those little ones who are most vulnerable.

The full report is available on our website: <http://jsg.legis.state.pa.us/>.