

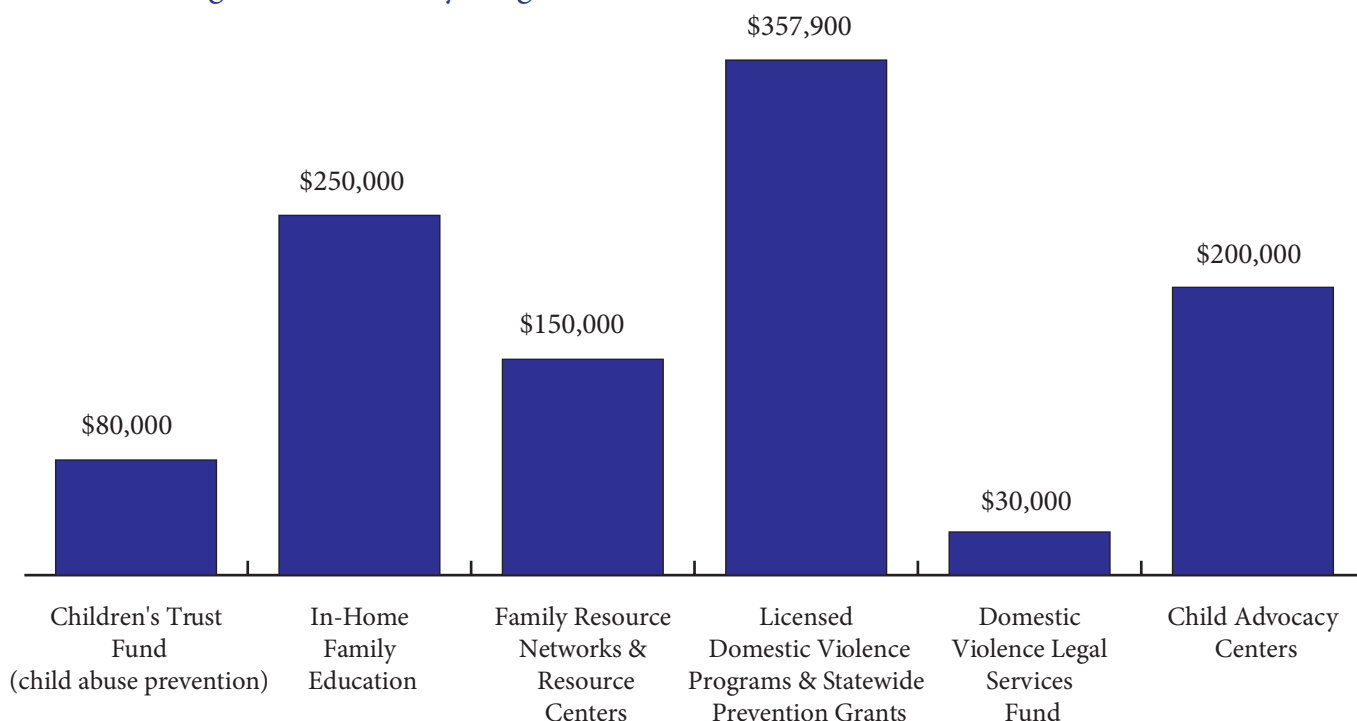
# Restoring Budget Cuts Will Help More Children & Families



## Introduction

On March 23, Governor Tomblin used his line-item veto power to cut several early childhood and domestic violence programs from the FY2015 budget passed by the legislature. This included over \$1 million in cuts to In-Home Family Education, Family Resource Networks and Starting Points Family Resource Centers, Child Advocacy Centers, domestic violence programs and services, and child abuse prevention. Many of these programs have seen cuts in prior years or have not had any funding increases for years, while the cost of services and the increase in the number of families needing assistance has continued to rise, making it impossible to serve as many families and children.

### FY 2015 Budget Cuts to Family Programs



The good news is that it is not too late to restore these cuts. Governor Tomblin has indicated he plans to call a Special Legislative Session on May 19 and that a supplemental appropriations bill to restore these cuts could be part of that agenda.

This report looks at the important family support programs that were cut, the important communities they serve, the money they leverage, and the strong support they have in West Virginia.

### Key Findings:

- From preventing child abuse to giving parents the tools they need to raise healthy children, these programs are a vital piece in making the state's communities strong and safe.
- Altogether, these programs leverage over \$14 million in federal and private funds.
- These programs are not only efficient, but they are a sound investment. For example, every \$1 invested in In-Home Family Education programs returns \$5.70 to the community.
- These cuts will hurt families and kill jobs. The cuts to In-Home Family Education could mean 75 fewer families receiving vital services to help their children, while at least 560 victims of domestic violence will not receive services. Cuts to domestic violence grants also mean that between seven and 14 people will lose their jobs.
- These programs have tremendous support, including the faith community, child-policy experts, and among both Democrats and Republicans.

## These Programs are Important

These family support programs are a vital part of the community. Below is a brief description of each program and the communities it serves:

*The West Virginia Children's Trust Fund* raises money for innovative programs in communities across the state that help children have the safe, healthy and happy childhoods that they deserve. More than 68,000 West Virginia parents, children, professionals and community members receive face-to-face support or training. More than 70,000 educational materials will make it into the hands of parents, professionals and the public.

*In-Home Family Education* (home visiting) uses three research-based models and evidence-based practices to provide parenting education and support (Parents as Teachers, Healthy Families America, and Maternal Infant Health Outreach Worker) to families to improve child health, increase school readiness and to educate parents. Currently, 21 organizations serve 1,200-1,500 families per year in 30 counties.

*Family Resource Networks* (FRNs) are local coalitions working to improve services for children and families in their communities. FRNs assess community needs, develop local plans, promote changes, evaluate results, and assist agencies in improving the service delivery system. They increase community awareness of local and state issues that affect children and families, support local partnerships to maximize community investments, promote coordination of services, and promote opportunities for families to impact decisions that affect them. There are 46 FRNs representing all 55 counties in the state.

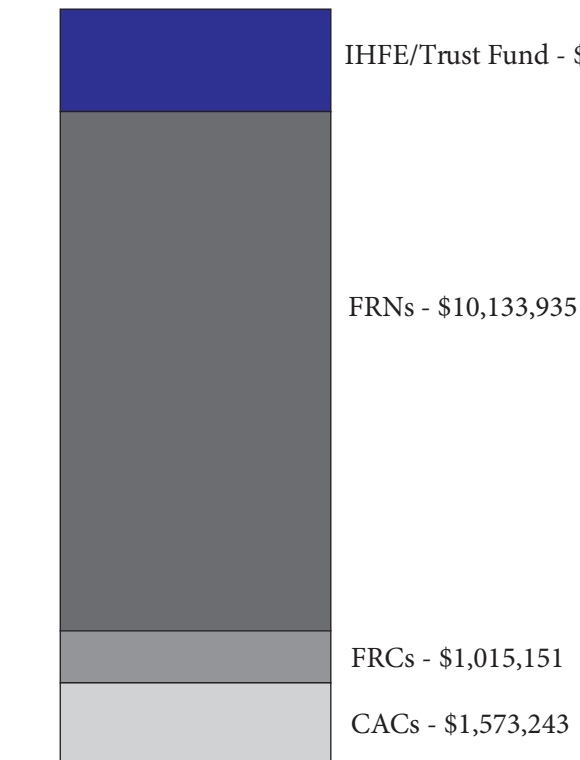
*Starting Points Family Resource Centers* bring together existing services in a single location such as a school or other neighborhood building. This comprehensive approach increases the accessibility of services, brings resources together in one place, provides family support and education, and allows the Centers to meet the community's needs. Twenty-three Starting Points Family Resource Centers serve families with children aged prenatal through eighteen years.

*Grants for Licensed Domestic Violence Programs and Statewide Prevention/Domestic Violence Legal Services Funds* provide services to victims of domestic violence and work to prevent it throughout the state. There are 14 licensed domestic violence shelters operating in all 55 counties of the state that provide free, confidential 24/7 life saving services that include: emergency shelter, crisis hotline, legal advocacy, court accompaniment, domestic violence education and outreach, support groups, individualized safety planning, and community referrals and advocacy with courts, law enforcement, CPS/APS, attorneys and other community agencies. Approximately 16,000 women, children and men are served every year.

*Child Advocacy Centers* serve children throughout the state by helping local professionals investigate, prosecute, and treat child abuse. There are 20 local children's advocacy centers (CACs) serving children throughout West Virginia that provide a child-friendly, safe environment where children and their families can be interviewed, receive treatment and education, and where children and families can begin to heal. CACs saw 2,633 children last year, resulting in a direct cost savings of \$2,633,000 to Child Protective Services and law enforcement.



## Family Programs Leverage Millions



Early childhood and family programs generate more dollars than they receive from the state budget - in private donations, from foundations, from in-kind contributions, and from federal government dollars. Cutting these programs puts at risk these leveraged dollars. Altogether, Family Resource Networks (FRNs), Family Resource Centers (FRCs), Child Advocacy Centers (CACs), In-Home Family Education (IHFE) and revenue from the Children's Trust fund leverage \$14.7 million.

### Family Programs Save Money and Lives

There is an oft-cited statistic from Nobel laureate James Heckman that early childhood programs save \$7 long-term, for every dollar they spend today. And it is no wonder why. These programs keep kids from ending up in the criminal justice system, and keep parents employed. These programs are also efficient.

- In-Home Family Education programs not only increase high school graduation rates and literacy scores, they also lead to positive birth outcomes and decrease rates of abuse and neglect.[1] According to a recent review, "Economists have found that, over time, when well designed and well implemented home visiting programs can return up to \$5.70 per taxpayer dollar invested by reducing societal costs associated with poor health and academic failure." For example, breastfeeding results in healthier outcomes for children and their mothers. In 2013, breastfeeding among families receiving In-Home Family Education in West Virginia increased 7.8 percent.
- Domestic violence costs families, communities, and businesses. The range of costs include personal costs, such as health care, lost workdays, and decreases in productivity and lifetime earnings, while the societal costs include increases in welfare and criminal justice expenditures and lost economic growth.[2] Children can also suffer from birth defects, as well as child abuse and neglect that often result in foster care placement. Fortunately, domestic violence prevention programs can mitigate these costs and consequences. A recent study of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 found that the \$1.6 billion it provided in various prevention programs saved \$14.8 billion in net social costs that would have otherwise occurred.[3]
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates the average lifetime cost per victim of nonfatal child maltreatment is \$210,012. These are costs for health care, foster care services, and special education, to name a few. Investment in effective local programs has helped significantly reduce the number of child maltreatment victims in West Virginia from over 8,000 in 2005 to just 459 in 2012.
- In 2012, 42 otherwise healthy babies died while sleeping in West Virginia due to suffocation and other unsafe sleeping

environments. These are completely preventable deaths. It is the leading cause of death for children under age one in the state. Investing in prevention can save West Virginia infants.

- By building upon existing resources, supporting local professionals to meet best-practice standards, and avoiding duplication in services, a CAC investigation of child abuse saves an average of \$1,000 per case compared to a non-CAC community. CACs saw 2,633 children last year, resulting in a direct cost savings of \$2,633,000 to Child Protective Services and law enforcement.
- In a very comprehensive audit by Public Works of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services in 2013, it found no inefficiencies or duplications in grants to FRNs, FRCs, In-Home Family Education, Domestic Violence Prevention or Child Advocacy Centers.[4]

### **Program Cuts Will Hurt Children and Families**

- Cutting In-Home Family Education by \$250,000 this year could mean 75 fewer families being served. Program vacancies are not being filled, with reduced hours for program staff likely and possible layoffs. These cuts will also reduce the resources available to FRCs to provide home visiting across the state.
- Cuts to domestic violence grant programs and legal services by \$387,900 mean between 560 and 1,120 victims of domestic violence may not get their needs met in a number of areas, including court accompaniment, safety planning, domestic violence education, and community referrals. Already underserved rural areas may see a further reduction in services or may lose a regular presence in the county. Licensed domestic violence programs estimate losing 7-14 positions or reductions of 7-14 full to part-time staff and reduction in benefits.
- A cut of \$80,000 to the Children's Trust Fund will result in significant funding cuts of over 25% for Partners in Prevention grants to support community teams in 44 counties across the state. Each community stands to lose \$2,000 in funding for training programs that prevent child sexual abuse, parenting classes, parent support groups, shaken baby prevention and promote infant safe sleep. It is estimated that 17,000 fewer people will benefit from Children's Trust Fund supported programs, if these cuts are enacted.
- The reduction of \$200,000 for Child Advocacy Centers means fewer accredited CACs in our state and less funding for the ones that are already funded.
- Cutting \$150,000 from Family Resource Networks and Starting Points Family Resource Centers will mean hours will be reduced and some FRN directors will have to become part-time employees or seek outside employment. These cuts will also mean a higher turnover rate for FRN directors.

### **Family Programs have Strong Support!**

- After a rigorous process, the Our Children, Our Future Campaign to End Child Poverty - which is made up of over 1,100 organizations and advocates in West Virginia - voted to make fully funding these family programs its #1 policy goal in 2014.
- These programs have strong support from the faith community. Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball with the West Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and Bishop Rev. Michie Klusmeyer of the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia each wrote newspaper editorials asking the governor to restore cuts to these vital programs and services.
- In January 2014, Governor Tomblin's Taskforce on Early Childhood Planning recommended expanding In-Home Family Education to every county in the state.

- These family programs have strong bi-partisan support. By a vote of 82 to 13, the West Virginia House voted to restore cuts to these programs in the FY 2015 budget. This included 30 Republicans and 52 Democrats.[5]

## Conclusion

The programs that comprise these cuts – In-Home Family Education, Family Resource Networks and Starting Points Family Resource Centers, Child Advocacy Centers, Domestic Violence Prevention Programs, and the Children’s Trust Fund – represent the best hope for many of our most vulnerable families to break the cycles of violence and poverty. We have seen the value of these programs in our own backyards. They provide steady jobs to dedicated counselors and social workers, they operate on shoestring budgets, and they are enormously efficient – leveraging millions of dollars every year in private donations, federal grants, and foundation support.

The governor has an enormous opportunity this May to restore these small but deeply harmful cuts to vital programs in our state. It isn’t a matter of money; it is just a matter of priority.

## End Notes

[1]The Pew Center on States, “Policy Framework: To Strengthen Home Visiting Programs,” November 2011., pp.3.

[2 ]U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, “Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States,” March 2003.

[3] Kathryn A. Clark, Andrea K. Biddle, and Sandra L. Martin, “A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994,” Violence Against Women, April 2002, vol.8 no 4.

[4] “Creating a Sustainable, Strategic Health Care System in West Virginia,” Public Works LLC, February 27, 2013.

[5] Senate Bill 306, Roll Number 502 <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/legisdocs/2014/RS/votes/house/00502.pdf>.

## Appendix A

### FY 2014 and 2015 Budget Changes

	FY 2014 Final Budget	FY 2015 Governor's Proposed Budget	FY 2015 House/ Senate Budget	Final FY 2015 Budget	FY 2015 Cuts
Children's Trust Fund (Child abuse prevention)	\$300,000	\$220,000	\$300,000	\$220,000	-\$80,000
In-Home Family Education (home visiting)	\$1,000,000	\$750,000	\$1,000,000	\$750,000	-\$250,000
Family Resource Networks/ Starting Points and Family Resource Centers	\$1,762,464	\$1,612,000	\$1,762,464	\$1,612,000	-\$150,464
Grants for Licensed Domestic Violence Programs and Statewide Prevention	\$2,500,000	\$2,142,100	\$2,500,000	\$2,142,100	-\$357,900
Domestic Violence Legal Services Fund	\$400,000	\$370,000	\$400,000	\$370,000	-\$30,000
Child Advocacy Centers	\$1,502,466	\$1,390,558	\$1,702,466	\$1,502,466	-\$200,000
TOTAL	\$7,464,930	\$6,484,658	\$7,664,930	\$6,596,566	-\$1,068,364