

WHEREAS, child abuse remains a horrific public health and social problem in the U.S.:

WHEREAS, in 2001, 3 million referrals concerning the well-being of approximately 5 million children were made to Child Protective Services (CPS) throughout the U.S.;

WHEREAS, child fatalities are the most tragic outcome of maltreatment, with young children being the most vulnerable;

WHEREAS, in 2000, nearly four children died each day as a result of child abuse or neglect;

WHEREAS, abused and neglected children suffer from a wide range of medical, emotional, psychological, and behavioral problems that negatively impact their quality of life and future potential;

WHEREAS, the cost of this human suffering is immeasurable;

WHEREAS, conservative estimates reveal that the U.S. spends approximately \$94 billion per year on direct and indirect costs of child maltreatment;

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect is a highly complex issue requiring multifaceted ecological interventions;

WHEREAS, schools play a critical role in the identification and prevention of child abuse and neglect;

WHEREAS, schools have a significant responsibility in protecting children and helping to connect the family and community into a social network for the child;

WHEREAS, schools should send messages to maltreated children that the school environment is a safe place to make an outcry about abuse;

WHEREAS, school staff and child care providers have a responsibility to adhere to federal and state law regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse;

WHEREAS, the Coordinated School Health Program (CSHP) can serve as a springboard for prevention efforts by protecting and promoting the health, safety, and wellness of children and adolescents;

WHEREAS, the CSHP is in a prime position to provide students with evidence-based child abuse prevention instruction from preschool through grade 12;

WHEREAS, the CSHP provides an excellent opportunity to implement evidence-based parenting education and training programs that promote knowledge and life skills development in areas such as healthy child development, positive discipline approaches, anger and stress management, and coping with conflict and aggression;

WHEREAS, the school nurse and other school health service personnel can take leadership in developing individual health plans for maltreated children that focus on restoring health, promoting wellness, and minimizing/removing barriers to learning;\

WHEREAS, counseling, psychological, and social services are in a key position to help with the prevention, detection, intervention, and treatment of abuse and neglect;

WHEREAS, schools must become more pro-active partners with the family and community to address the health needs of children;

WHEREAS, schools have multiple opportunities to create an ethos of caring and support where all children feel safe, valued, and loved;

WHEREAS, the American School Health Association is committed to promoting the health and safety of all American children and youth; and

WHEREAS, the American School Health Association supports the coordinated school health program as a foundation for school success.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that the American School Health Association:

- 1) Champions the right of all American children to grow up feeling safe, secure, loved, and wanted;
- 2) Promotes interdisciplinary collaboration among all who work to protect and promote the health, safety, and well-being of children, youth, families, and communities;
- 3) Advocates for the prevention of child abuse and neglect in schools and childcare centers across America;
- 4) Recommends that all school and childcare personnel (including regular volunteers) participate in ongoing prevention training that includes, but is not limited to, the following areas: (a) physical and behavioral indicators of the four major types of child maltreatment;

- (b) how to report suspected child abuse and neglect; and (c) what to do in the case of emergence (e.g., the child's immediate safety is in peril);
- 5) Recommends that all schools and childcare centers adopt and implement policies and procedures for reporting suspected abuse and neglect, including specific information regarding who is responsible for making the report to CPS and what to do in case of an emergency;
 - 6) Recommends that schools provide student with evidence-based child abuse prevention instruction from preschool through grade 12;
 - 7) Recommends that schools and child care centers offer parenting education that promotes knowledge and life skills development in areas such as Shaken Baby Syndrome, healthy child development, anger and stress management along with other coping skills, and resources for where to go for help;
 - 8) Recommends that schools and childcare centers regularly provide parents and other caregivers with information on how to prevent child maltreatment and where to go for help;
 - 9) Encourages quality research to strengthen the prevention of child maltreatment; and
 - 10) Supports a multifaceted, ecological approach to the prevention of child abuse and neglect that encompasses the magnitude of the problem.

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