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April 4, 2011

Dear Friend,

204 children-most under the age of six! That is how many children are reported abused, EVERY DAY, in **Missouri-204!**

**** 81 children a day are confirmed as having been abused every day****

There are so many children across the region that need us to be their voice to help keep them safe. It's important that we do all we can to PREVENT abuse and neglect from happening.

The month of April is **National Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month** for that reason. Prevention truly is possible, and we encourage everyone in the community to raise awareness of this issue.

Before another unfortunate child abuse situation arises, we are sending you updated information about the Saint Louis Crisis Nursery and abuse prevention for your use. We hope that when you need information about this issue, you will contact us.

Please remember that the Saint Louis Crisis Nursery exists to keep children safe. I hope the enclosed information will be of value to you this month, and a useful resource throughout the year. Together we can remind the public that the Crisis Nursery is here 24 hours a day/365 days a year. More children will be kept safe, through a proactive approach.

Please contact me at dianne@crisisnurserykids.org should you like to do a story about the Crisis Nursery and ways to prevent child abuse! Thank you!

For the Children,

DiAnne Mueller, MS, LPC
Chief Executive Director
Saint Louis Crisis Nursery

Eight Locations Serving: St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles, Wentzville and beyond!
Regional Administrative Office: 11710 Administration Drive, #18 • St. Louis, MO 63146 • Phone: (314) 292-5770
www.crisisnurserykids.org



April is National CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION Month!

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*Visit our website at
www.crisisnurserykids.org
for ways you can become involved.*



Regional Administrative Office: 11710 Administration Dr., Suite 18, St. Louis, MO 63146
314-292-5770 voice 314-292-5776 fax

Saint Louis Crisis Nursery



Saving babies' lives, keeping kids safe, building strong families.

The Saint Louis Crisis Nursery provides a 24-hour safe haven for children, age birth through twelve, whose families are facing a crisis situation.

- Children are brought to the Nursery on a voluntary basis and all services are provided **FREE** of charge.
- Services for children may include: 24-hour care, medical exam, developmental assessment, clothing, art and play therapy, and age-appropriate activities.
- Services for parents may include: family support, referrals, in-home visits, teen parent education, and parent support groups.

Common reasons to turn to the Nursery:

- Overwhelming parental stress
- Domestic violence
- Lack of utilities, food or shelter
- Illness or death in the family

24-HOUR HELPLINE:

314-768-3201 (St. Louis City) 636-947-0600 (St. Charles)

314-953-8030 (St. Louis County) 636-947-0600 (Wentzville)



Saint Louis Crisis Nursery Administrative Office 11710 Administration Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146 **314.292.5770**

Crisis Nursery Centene Center 1928 Gravius Rd. St. Louis MO 63104 **314.768.3201**

Crisis Nursery North 11037 Breezy Point Lane St. Louis MO 63136 **314.953.8030**

Crisis Nursery St. Charles 315 First Capitol Drive St. Charles MO 63301 **636.947.0600**

Crisis Nursery West 330 S. 4th Street St. Charles MO 63301. **636.940-2504**

City Community Outreach Center 2401 N. Grand St. Louis MO 63106 **314.533.6900**

South County Community Outreach Center 8300 Morganford St. Louis, MO 63123 **314-629-1937**

St. Charles Community Center 328 S. 4th Street St. Charles, MO 63301 **636-940-0742**

Crisis Nursery Wentzville 700 Medical Drive, Wentzville, MO 63385. **636-887-3070**

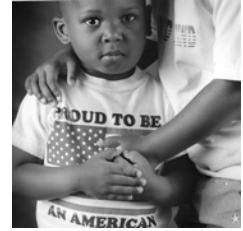
For Outreach Efforts in East St. Louis 314-533-6900





What does the Saint Louis Crisis Nursery do?

Saving Babies Lives, Keeping Kids Safe, Building Strong Families.



24-Hour Helpline: is a 24 hour, 365 day a year source of support for families at risk of abuse and/or neglect. Typically parents are at a critical point when they reach out for help and the Crisis Nursery is there to give them the helping hand they need. Through one phone call to the Crisis Nursery parents have immediate access to the Nursery and the many services available to them.

SOS For Kids: provides care for children, birth through age 12, whose families are at risk of abusing their child. This program focuses on preventing abuse and neglect from occurring by providing a safe, nurturing place for children and crisis counseling for parents. Each child receives:

24 hour individualized care by trained, professional staff and volunteers; **Health and Wellness care** including a medical examination, any needed medication, developmental assessment, therapeutic activities, and 3 well-balanced meals/3 snacks each day; **Take Home Supplies**, including clothing, toys, hygiene items, diapers and formula (when appropriate) stuffed animals, games and books.

Family Empowerment Program: assists parents in creating a stable environment for their children and addresses any concerns or needs identified while their children were at the Nursery. The Family Empowerment Program has several components:

Follow-up support services: provides caring counseling by phone, referrals to other resources, and advocate on behalf of the family with other agencies, when needed. The goal is to provide families with a source of support and information to ensure that they continue on the path towards wellness, safety and family stability.

Community Outreach Visits: offer an opportunity to gain crucial insights in a non-threatening environment into the family's dynamics, and of other factors impacting the family's ability to cope. SLCN Family Empowerment staff assesses the home environment, parenting skills, family dynamics; and provides parenting and child management education and community resource referrals.

Parent Education Groups: help parents build support networks, increase positive parenting skills, decrease unrealistic expectations of the child and reduce feelings of isolation. Family Empowerment staff also facilitates group meetings for Teen Parents/Pregnant Teens, providing basic parent information to increase parenting success and decrease the potential for child abuse/neglect.

Stay At Home Parent Program: provides home visits to promote the development of children, birth-36 months, though the use of age-appropriate books and toys to help ensure school readiness.

Family Emergency Fund: available to Crisis Nursery families who need assistance in obtaining the basic necessities of life, including a down payment on an apartment, prescriptions, a utility bill, food, diapers and other necessities.

Transportation Fund: provides bus passes, gas cards or cab vouchers for families who have no way to get to the Nursery.

Holiday Hearts Campaign: matches generous community sponsors with local struggling families. Assistance includes holiday gifts & much needed household supplies.

Back To School Drive: provides needed school supplies for school age children.

Community Outreach: provides information on child abuse prevention and Crisis Nursery services.

Advocacy: Crisis Nursery staff maintains contact with legislators to educate them on the importance of child abuse prevention and the Crisis Nursery's services.

Training and Consulting Institute: provides consultation and training on a variety of topics including crisis nursery development, child abuse prevention, expressive therapy, parent education and child development.

Speakers Bureau: provides Crisis Nursery staff to conduct presentations on the Crisis Nursery in a variety of settings: schools, corporate teams, church groups, etc.

www.crisisnurserykids.org

2010: A Year in Review



Saving Babies Lives, Keeping Kids Safe, Building Strong Families.

The Crisis Nursery Impact:

7,243 children were kept safe!

The Saint Louis Crisis Nursery provided a safe, therapeutic environment for children, birth through age 12, including 24-Hour care, medical attention, individualized therapeutic activities, clothing, nutritious meals and many, many hugs!



6,737 families in crisis called the Crisis Nursery 24-Hour Helpline!

99% of the children that were provided a safe haven at the Crisis Nursery, return to their natural family home; families like:

- The mother of two young girls who was having suicidal feelings and could no longer care for her daughters.
- An overwhelmed single mother, who just had a death in the family and was struggling to take care of her two sons while coming to terms with her loss
- The overworked mother, with no support system, who could not provide any gifts for her son during the holidays.
- The family of five who was involved in a severe car accident and had to stay in the hospital, and lost their primary source of income.



This past year.....

- The Crisis Nursery moved to a larger facility in St. Louis City. The new Crisis Nursery-Centene Center care for 30% more children.
- A new Outreach Center opened in South St. Louis County, increasing the Family Empowerment Program by 40%.
- The Family Empowerment Team made more than 3,000 Home Visits to families who have factors that place them at high risk for child abuse.



Proud member of

United Way
of Greater St. Louis





Top 5 Reasons

To support child abuse prevention
and the Saint Louis Crisis Nursery:

1. Over 86% of ALL revenue goes directly toward emergency care of children and family empowerment programs.
2. Every year more than 7,200 children find a safe-haven at the Crisis Nursery.
3. Every hour one child in Missouri child is abused or neglected.
4. The Nursery is there 24/7 to help children and families in need.
5. 99% of children do not experience abuse or neglect while their families are benefiting from Crisis Nursery programs and services.



- **Be a nurturing parent.** Children need to know that they are special and loved. Educate yourself about a child's development process so you can have reasonable expectations about what your child can and cannot do.
- **Help a friend, neighbor or relative.** Being a parent isn't easy. Someone you know may be struggling with his or her parenting responsibilities. Offer a helping hand.
- **Help yourself.** When the big and little problems of everyday life pile up to the point you feel overwhelmed and out of control, take time out. Don't take it out on your child. Take a deep breath, turn on some music. Know where you can turn for help when you need it.
- **If your baby cries...** It can be frustrating to hear your baby cry, especially when nothing you do seems to work. Learn what to do if your baby won't stop crying. But, NEVER shake a baby!
- **Get involved.** Advocate for services to families. Ask your community leaders, clergy, library and schools to develop services to meet the needs of children and families.
- **Monitor your child's television and computer use.** Watching violent films on TV or playing violent computer games can harm young children. Not only does it scare them, it also teaches children that aggression is a good way to handle frustration and solve problems.
- **Spend time playing with your children...** or read to them instead!
- **Report suspected abuse or neglect.** Keeping children safe is the responsibility of every adult in our community. If you have any reason to believe a child has been—or may be—harmed, call the Saint Louis Crisis Nursery.

(Prevent Child Abuse America)

Basics of Good Parenting:

Be a role model
Communicate
Delegate responsibilities
Discipline with love
Encourage social skills
Love unconditionally
Make your home safe
Show affection
Spend time together



What To Do If You See Child Abuse in a Public Place

Start a conversation with the adult to direct attention away from the child.

For Example:

She seems to be trying your patience.

My child sometimes gets upset like that, too.

Children can really wear you out sometimes. Is there anything I can do to help?

Divert the child's attention (if misbehaving) by talking to the child.

For Example:

That's a great baseball cap. Are you a Cardinals fan?

I like your t-shirt. Did you get that on vacation?

Look for an opportunity to praise the parent or child.

For Example:

He has the most beautiful eyes.

That's a very pretty shirt on your little girl Where did you get it?

If the child is in danger, offer assistance.

For Example:

If the child is left unattended in a grocery cart, stand near the child until the parent returns.

If the child is in immediate danger, call the police!

Avoid negative remarks or looks.

Negative reactions are likely to increase the parent's stress or anger, and could make matters worse for the child.

Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse affects children of every age, race, and income level. It often takes place in the home and comes from a person the child knows and trusts—a parent, relative, babysitter, or friend of the family.

Often abusers are ordinary people caught in stressful situations: young mothers/fathers unprepared for the responsibilities of raising a child; overwhelmed single parents with no support system; families placed under great stress by poverty, divorce, or sickness; parents with alcohol or drug problems; or people placed in a care giving role without the skills or desire to care for an infant or young child.

A first step in helping or getting help for an abused or neglected child is to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse. There are four major types of child maltreatment: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse:

Neglect is failure to provide for a child's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, or proper supervision.

Possible symptoms:

- The child shows signs of malnutrition or begs, steals, or hoards food.
- The child has poor hygiene: matted hair, dirty skin, or severe body odor.
- The child has unattended physical or medical problems.
- The child states that no one is home to provide care.
- The child or caretaker abuses drugs or alcohol.

Physical Abuse is intentional injury inflicted upon a child. It may include severe shaking, beating, kicking, punching, or burning that result in minor marks, bruising, or even death.

Possible symptoms:

- The child has broken bones or unexplained bruises, burns, or welts in various stages of healing.
- The child is unable to explain an injury, or explanations given by the child or caretaker are inconsistent with the injury.
- The child is unusually frightened of a parent or caretaker, or is afraid to go home.
- The child reports intentional injury by parent or caretaker.

Sexual Abuse refers to any sexual act with a child by an adult or older child. It includes fondling or rubbing the child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and using the child for prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.

Possible symptoms:

- The child has pain or bleeding in anal or genital area with redness or swelling.
- The child displays age-inappropriate play with toys, self, or others.
- The child has inappropriate knowledge about sex.
- The child reports sexual abuse.

Emotional Abuse may occur when a parent fails to provide the understanding, warmth, attention, and supervision the child needs for healthy psychological growth.

Possible symptoms:

- The parent or caretaker constantly criticizes, threatens, belittles, insults, or rejects the child with no evidence of love, support, or guidance.
- The child exhibits extremes in behavior from overly aggressive to overly passive.
- The child displays delayed physical, emotional, or intellectual development.

Thirty Days of Loving Your Children...

April 2011



www.crisisnurserykids.org



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>3 Share a sense of humor with your child</p> <p>10 Exercise with your kids. You burn stress! They are happy and in shape!</p> <p>17 Remember that sometimes parents need to say, "Subject Closed"</p>	<p>4 Teach your child limits through family rules</p> <p>11 Read to your children everyday.</p> <p>18 Rewards such as stickers for good behavior or doing chores can be a positive tool.</p>	<p>5 No Name Calling. No insults. No hitting!</p> <p>12 Say, "I love you" often and talk with your children about feelings.</p> <p>19 Nurture your children's self-esteem</p>	<p>6 Keep family rules simple and easy to understand.</p> <p>13 Teach your child to problem solve. Ask them, "What should we do?"</p> <p>20 Take time to pamper yourself and your children.</p>	<p>7 Take notice of positive behavior and celebrate it!</p> <p>14 Encourage and help your children make great friends.</p> <p>21 Teach your children to be independent, strong and in control.</p>	<p>1 Create Structure and Routines for your children</p> <p>8 Hug your child. Children need love and approval.</p> <p>15 Kids love getting their own mail. Take time to mail them something.</p> <p>22 You're the main role model. Exhibit the same behavior you want your children to take on.</p>	<p>2 Nurture your children's self-esteem</p> <p>9 Take a time-out for yourself too. Breathe and relax.</p> <p>16 Instead of watching television, go for a walk or play a game.</p> <p>23 Ignoring negative behavior will not eliminate it, in fact it can cause it to grow.</p>
<p>24 Dance or sing with your kids. Relieve stress and uncover hidden talent.</p>	<p>25 Don't compare yourself to others. Review your strong points and feel good. about</p>	<p>26 Remember, MORE EFFECTIVE rules are better than MORE rules.</p>	<p>27 Never shake, hit, or jerk any child.</p>	<p>28 Be sure to pay attention when your child is trying to share a story with you.</p>	<p>29 Take time everyday to praise yourself and praise your children.</p>	<p>30 Get together with support groups or other parents. Share experiences.</p>

SOOTHING A CRYING INFANT

One of the most stressful experiences for new parents is dealing with a crying baby. Babies cry for all sorts of reasons, and it's sometimes difficult to figure out why your baby is crying and how to soothe your baby. It's important to remember that crying is one of the main ways that babies communicate, and their crying can mean lots of different things. With a new baby, it may be difficult to distinguish different types of crying; as babies get older, parents may be able to tell "wet-diaper" crying from "I'm hungry" crying.

Here are some things to check for in a crying baby:

- Is the baby sick? Take the baby's temperature, and call a health care provider if there is a fever or if you're not sure about any other symptoms. If your baby cries for hours at a time, be sure to have him or her checked out by a pediatrician.
- Is the baby hungry? Try feeding the baby. Newborns like to eat frequently. Even if the baby isn't hungry, he or she may respond to sucking on a pacifier.
- Is the diaper wet or dirty? This is a common cause for crying.
- Is the room too hot or cold, or is the baby overdressed or underdressed?
- Is the baby lonely or afraid? Try holding the baby and comforting him or her.
- Is the baby over stimulated? Try turning down the lights and the noise level.

Calming the baby. Often, a parent has made sure that the problem is not hunger or sickness or a wet diaper—but the baby is still crying! What are some other ways to calm a crying baby?

- Swaddle the baby in a soft blanket and hold the baby next to you.
- Sing or hum to the baby.
- Rock the baby in a chair or swing, or gently sway your body while holding the baby close.
- Take the baby for a ride in the stroller or car. Motion often puts a baby to sleep.
- Distract the baby by making faces or quiet noises.
- Give the baby a warm bath to relax him or her.
- Use some "white noise" such as running a vacuum cleaner or hair dryer to help lull the baby to sleep.

Calming yourself. There are few things more stressful than a crying baby. It is normal for babies to cry—sometimes as much as 2 to 4 hours a day—and sometimes nothing parents try to soothe the baby will work. Coupled with a parent's own lack of sleep and the general adjustment to having a new baby in the house, a crying baby can seem overwhelming.

There are some things parents can do to maintain control over the situation, even when the baby continues to cry.

- Take a break. Put the baby safely in a crib, and take a few minutes for yourself in another room.
- Call a friend or relative who will listen to your problem and be sympathetic.
- Ask a trusted friend or neighbor to watch your child while you take a short break or a brief nap.
- **If you feel as though you are losing control and might hurt your child, call the Saint Louis Crisis Nursery hotline.**

It's normal for babies to cry sometimes, and it's certainly normal for parents to feel frustrated by the crying. Different babies respond to different soothing techniques, and parents will eventually learn what works best with their baby. In the meantime, it's helpful for new parents to have some support in the form of friends, relatives, and neighbors who can lend a sympathetic ear or even some babysitting help!

POSSIBLE REASONS WHY CHILD ABUSE HAPPENS

Individuals or perpetrator risk factors

- A history of child abuse as a child
- A lack of understanding about child development and parenting
- A poor self-image and low self-esteem
- A substance abuse problem
- Becoming parents at a young age
- Lack of emotional attachment to, or involvement with the child

Family and victim risk factors

- The presence of non-biological parent in the home
- A large-sized family
- Serious conflicts in the family (i.e., spousal abuse)
- An incompatible temperament between parents and child
- Low family income
- Socially isolated family unit
- Perception by parents that the child is different (i.e., child has a physical or developmental disability)

Community Risk Factors

- An economically depressed or impoverished area
- The presence of high unemployment or recent unexpected rise in unemployment

Societal Risk Factors

- Widespread acceptance of corporal punishment
- Society's reluctance to intervene in parent-child relationships
- Lack of understanding about the impact has on the future of our children



Long-Term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect

The impact of child abuse and neglect is far greater than its immediate, visible effects. These experiences can shape child development and have consequences that last years, even lifetimes. Research now shows that the physical, psychological, and behavioral consequences of child abuse and neglect impact not just the child and family, but the community as a whole.

Physical Consequences

The immediate physical effects of abuse can range from a bruise or cut, to more severe injuries, such as broken bones, internal bleeding, or even death. Longer-term consequences may include:

- Shaken Baby Syndrome (including blindness, learning disabilities, mental retardation, cerebral palsy, or paralysis)
- Impaired brain development
- Lifelong poor physical health

Psychological Consequences

The immediate psychological effects of abuse and neglect— isolation, fear, and a lack of trust— can spiral into long-term mental health consequences including:

- Depression and anxiety
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty establishing and maintaining relationships
- Eating disorders
- Suicide attempts

Behavioral Consequences

Studies have found abused or neglected children to be at least 25 percent more likely to experience problems in adolescence, including:

- Delinquency
- Teen pregnancy
- Drug use
- Low academic achievement

As adults, children who experienced abuse or neglect have an increased likelihood of criminal behavior, involvement in violent crime, abuse of alcohol and other drugs, and abusive behavior.

For more information, read *Long-Term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect*, from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, available at http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.cfm.