

Illuminating Legislative Policy

2022 POLICY AGENDA

For Colorado to remain one of the healthiest economies in the country we need to work together to build brighter childhoods.

Our future workforce, innovators, leaders and community members can only reach their full potential through thoughtful development and investment in services and policies that strengthen families and protect children. Investing in programs and policies that support families to overcome and bounce back from life's challenges enables children to achieve their potential and grow up to be good neighbors and productive community members.

Crafted to ensure our state's policies build brighter childhoods for all Coloradans, Illuminate's policy agenda offers a framework for advancing family strengthening now and into the future. However, Illuminate has prioritized 2022 policy solutions to be responsive to what Colorado families need today.

FIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS HAVE BEEN FOUND TO PREVENT CHILD MALTREATMENT.

The Illuminate Colorado 2022 policy agenda highlights policies that support the development of one or more protective factors in order to build brighter childhoods for Coloradans.



**PARENTAL
RESILIENCE**



**SOCIAL
CONNECTIONS**



**CONCRETE
SUPPORTS IN
TIMES OF NEED**



**KNOWLEDGE
OF PARENTING
& CHILD
DEVELOPMENT**



**SOCIAL &
EMOTIONAL
COMPETENCE
OF CHILDREN**

ILLUMINATING POLICY PREVENTS CHILD MALTREATMENT

Illuminate Colorado strengthens families, organizations and communities to prevent child maltreatment. The organization works across all levels of prevention—before child maltreatment has occurred, when families are in high stress situations, and after child maltreatment has occurred—to build research-based protective factors in families and communities and to ensure appropriate system and community responses.

Wondering how a policy prevents child maltreatment?

The Illuminate Colorado 2022 policy agenda highlights policies that build one or more protective factors in Colorado. To learn more about each policy priority and how we can help you can strengthen families in your community, visit [IlluminateColorado.org/2022Policy](https://illuminatecolorado.org/2022Policy).



PRIMARY PREVENTION

THIS STRATEGY BUILDS PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN ALL FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT CHILD MALTREATMENT BEFORE IT OCCURS--INCLUDING ADVANCING EQUITY BY ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO BUILDING PROTECTIVE FACTORS.

Policy Priority: Prioritize primary prevention in federal and state budgets by investing in proven services and professional education that support families and keep kids safe; Key focus areas include investments that promote access to:

- High-quality preschool    
- Nurturing and safe childcare    
- Evidence-based home visiting programs    
- Family resource centers    
- Safe, engaging after school programs and activities    
- Medical care and behavioral health services, including family planning    
- Evidence-based programs to prevent child sexual abuse    

Policy Priority: Strengthen economic security for families. Empowering families to meet their basic needs of food and shelter by strengthening household financial security is proven to reduce the risk factors for child abuse and neglect.^{1,2} These strategies support families through cash assistance, offsetting the costs of childcare and the impact of taxes, helping families to meet essential needs. Key focus areas include:

- Quality, affordable, and stable housing  
- Quality, affordable, convenient, and culturally-appropriate food (including through WIC, SNAP, and federal child nutrition programs)  
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)  
- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)  
- Tax Credits  

Policy Priority: Implement family friendly work policies. Workplace policies that support parents, such as implementing or expanding paid family and medical leave policies and increasing the minimum wage, yield significant benefits to an organization, individual, and their family and are associated with reductions in child abuse and neglect.³  



SECONDARY PREVENTION

THIS FOCUSED STRATEGY BUILDS PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN FAMILIES IN HIGH STRESS SITUATIONS TO PREVENT CHILD MALTREATMENT BEFORE IT OCCURS.

Policy Priority: Ensure and expand tailored, non-stigmatizing, and culturally responsive support for families impacted by:

- **Behavioral health**, including both parental and pediatric     
- **Intellectual and developmental disabilities**, including fetal alcohol spectrum disorders     
- **Intimate partner violence**⁴     



TERTIARY PREVENTION

THIS STRATEGY BUILDS PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN FAMILIES TO PREVENT RECURRENCE OF CHILD MALTREATMENT--INCLUDING ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO HEALING & RECOVERY.

Policy Priority: Ensure communities identify and support children and families when abuse and neglect has occurred; focusing on creating equitable access to services to support healing and recovery.     

¹Duva J, Metzger S. Addressing Poverty as a Major Risk Factor in Child Neglect: Promising Policy and Practice. Berkeley, CA: University of California. 2011.

²Forston B. L., Klevens, J., Merrick, M. T., Gilbert, L. K., & Alexander, S. P. (2016). Preventing child abuse and neglect: A technical package for policy, norm, and programmatic activities. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/can-prevention-technical-package.pdf>

³Ibid.

⁴<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/riskprotectivefactors.html>