

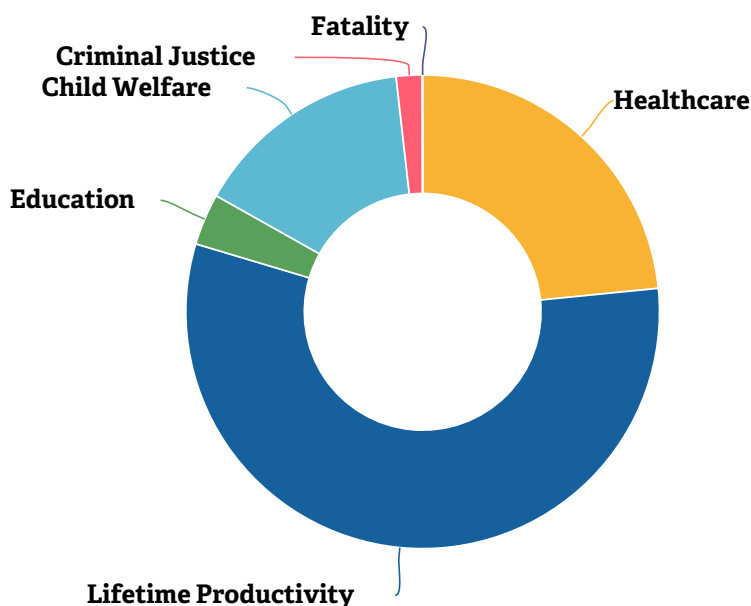
The Economics of Abuse Report: A Study of Contra Costa County

Child maltreatment is a persistent problem within Contra Costa County. Although it is a hidden social ill, its impact is significant. Child maltreatment impacts not just the child, but the family, the community, and society at large. In California, as many as one out of every 19 children is suspected of being maltreated. The impact of maltreatment not only morally degrades our society, it significantly hurts our economy. In fact, the physical, mental, and emotional effects of maltreatment persist long after child maltreatment occurs, and result in ongoing costs to every sector of California.

Child maltreatment is a core underlying factor in many of California's ongoing struggles, such as high rates of school dropout, homelessness, incarceration, and chronic health issues. This report shines a light on this largely ignored issue, with a specific focus in your county, and the negative impact it has on all of us.

The Financial Impacts of Child Abuse

The cumulative financial impact to Contra Costa County for the **815** verified survivors of maltreatment in 2019 is **\$372,000,000**. Though these costs are accrued over the course of the victim's life, the community will continue to occur the same cost each year until we are able to reduce and ultimately end child abuse.



HEALTHCARE - \$87,115,399

Victims may require hospital care, mental health services, and other medical services during childhood, and have a higher incidence of physical and mental health issues throughout adulthood.

LIFETIME PRODUCTIVITY - \$209,027,245

Victims are more likely to be unemployed and rely on public assistance which lead to diminished earning potential.

EDUCATION - \$13,079,693

Abused children are 77 percent more likely to require special education.

CHILD WELFARE - \$55,938,440

Victims may require intervention services, foster care, and counseling services.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE - \$6,676,833

Abused children are 59 percent more likely to be arrested as juveniles, and 28 percent more likely to have an adult criminal record.

FATALITY - \$0

Lost wages and costs incurred by the healthcare system due to fatal incidents of abuse.

Protective Factors in Contra Costa County

Individual Protective Factors

Communities can support vulnerable children and families by fostering the five protective factors. By helping families to enhance their protective factors, they will be better equipped to combat risk factors (history of abuse, isolation, substance abuse, and others) and prevent incidences of child abuse. Research shows that healthy and safe families share these five commonalities:

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN

Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions, and establish and maintain relationships.

KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Understanding parenting strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development.

PARENTAL RESILIENCE

Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges, adversity, and trauma.

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, and spiritual support.

CONCRETE SUPPORT

Access to concrete support and services that address a family's needs and help minimize stress caused by life's challenges.

Community Protective Factors

Strong families - and communities whose conditions nurture strong families - protect our children. Every community has Community Protective Factors, or characteristics that are linked to lower rates of child maltreatment. We know the presence of any single protective factor is not sufficient. Rather, factors work in concert with each other and with each family's unique strengths to create safe environments for children to grow up.

Institutional racism and systemic oppression over generations have prevented many families of color from accessing these social and economic factors. We believe that initiatives that promote racial equity are critical to promoting Community Protective Factors that mitigate maltreatment.

ECONOMIC SUPPORTS

Policies and programs that provide economic support and help families develop some security in their finances are a protective factor against child maltreatment.

PARENTAL SKILLS AND EDUCATION

There is an abundance of evidence on the importance of programs that develop parenting skills and strengthen bonds between parents and their children.

POSITIVE SOCIAL NORMS AND INTERVENTIONS AGAINST VIOLENCE

When maltreatment does occur, intervention at schools or in physicians' offices can help to prevent further harm from occurring. Policies and educational campaigns can also influence changes in the social norms that perpetuate violence against children.

SUFFICIENT CHILDCARE

Higher quality childcare is linked to reduced risk for child maltreatment as it provides a more nurturing and stable environment for the child.

COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES

Family social connections are formed and maintained through institutions like schools, churches, community centers, and family resource centers.