



Exploring Opportunities to Improve Child Welfare in Idaho

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Foster Care Study Committee

Idaho Voices for Children

- Idaho Voices for Children advances policies that improve the lives of Idaho kids and their families in four key areas of focus:



1. Child Safety & Welfare
2. Health & Access to Care
3. Education & School Readiness
4. Family Economic Stability

Improving the Welfare of Idaho Kids

Reduce the number of children entering foster care in Idaho:

- Invest in promising prevention efforts
- Build strong community support systems

Strengthen the foster care system and ensure kids receive support to:

- Process and heal
- Build lasting relationships
- Reach their full potential

REDUCING THE NEED FOR FOSTER CARE



Proven Prevention Efforts

- By promoting positive parenting practices and supporting parents in times of high stress, we can reduce the number of children entering foster care



Home Visiting Programs in Idaho

- The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program:
 - Provides family support and coaching
 - Is a voluntary program
 - Offers evidence-based services & referrals
- Available Home Visiting Programs:
 - Parents as Teachers
 - Nurse-Family Partnership
 - Early Head Start Home-Based



Benefits of Home Visiting Programs

- Studies have shown multiple benefits for Home Visiting Program participants:
 - A **48%** reduction in child abuse and neglect
 - **22%** fewer birth complications
 - A **56%** reduction in ER visits for accidents and poisonings
 - Mothers are **five times** more likely to enroll in school or training
- **Every \$1 invested in Home Visiting saves \$5.70 in future costs for families and communities**

48%

Reduction in
**child abuse
& neglect**

Investing in Idaho's Future

- Increasing state investments in Home Visiting Programs across Idaho will:



Prevent child abuse and neglect



Improve family economic security



Enhance child development and school readiness



Result in overall cost savings for taxpayers

Hillarie's Story



STRENGTHENING THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM



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[Idaho Voices for Children video](#)

Sibling Bonds Promote Healthy Development

- Maintaining sibling bonds in foster care is proven to:
 - Help children achieve developmental milestones
 - Provide emotional support
 - Ensure a shared history, culture, and sense of community
 - Spare children the experience of yet another loss in their lives



National Efforts to Preserve Sibling Bonds

- Over half of states have legislation that addresses sibling relationships in foster care and adoption. Most policies stipulate:
 1. Consideration of siblings in foster placement
 2. Efforts to facilitate visitation or ongoing contacts with sibling groups not placed together*
 3. Consideration of siblings in permanency planning decisions
 4. Efforts for maintaining sibling contact post-adoption



** Unless it is contrary to the safety or well-being of any of the siblings to do so*

Chalyce's Story



PRESERVING SIBLING CONNECTIONS



THANK YOU!

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