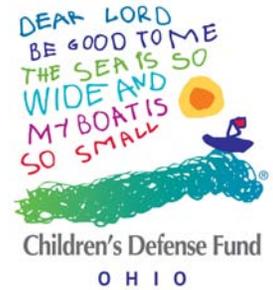


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PRESS RELEASE

Children's Defense Fund-Ohio Urges Ohio Schools to Provide Trauma-Informed Care

Columbus, OH –Exposure to trauma, such as community or domestic violence, abuse, neglect, an accident, or the loss of a parent, has a profound negative impact on Ohio children, according to a new Children's Defense Fund-Ohio issue brief. Trauma impacts children's physical, mental, behavioral, and emotional well-being and is a significant risk factor for a host of bad outcomes for children, including alcohol and drug abuse, disease, disability, and social problems. In fact, current brain research shows that trauma damages the structure and function of children's brains.

Trauma-informed intervention and care is critical to prevent a lifetime of health, learning, and behavioral issues. Trauma-informed services must: 1) Identify; 2) Assess; and 3) Treat.

"Too many Ohio children are suffering because of circumstances beyond their control," says Renuka Mayadev, executive director of Children's Defense Fund-Ohio. "We must implement evidenced based practices to identify and better serve our children, many of whom are coping with severe daily trauma - homelessness, neighborhood gun violence, or a parent or guardian abusing alcohol or drugs."

Ohio school districts would experience positive results across the continuum of student care by implementing trauma-informed practices. For example, many students' behavior problems stem from current or past traumatic experiences. Providing staff training aimed at identifying those students who need intervention would drastically improve schools' ability to keep Ohio students in the classroom. "School is often the only safe place for children and recognizing trauma can reduce the need to remove children from school for misbehavior" says Sarah Biehl, policy director at Children's Defense Fund-Ohio. "One school principal in Washington saw an 85 percent drop in out of school suspensions after implementing a trauma-informed approach to discipline."

The issue brief from Children's Defense Fund-Ohio highlights the research explaining the impact of trauma on children and makes specific recommendations for Ohio child-serving organizations to implement trauma-informed practices. The brief points out the high cost of failing to recognize and treat child trauma. Ohio's families, communities, and economy stand to greatly benefit from examination of the root cause of our children's problems rather than the symptoms.

The issue brief is available at <http://www.cdfohio.org/research-library/building-trauma-informed.html>

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The Children's Defense Fund Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.