



Safe Start CENTER

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We cannot expect children to overcome danger on their own. There is no magic here. Resilient children have been protected by the actions of adults, good nurturing, by their assets, and by their opportunities to succeed.”

~Anne Masten

Safe Start Initiative

The Safe Start Initiative is funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The goal of the Safe Start Initiative is to broaden the knowledge of and promote community investment in evidence-based strategies for preventing and reducing the impact of children's exposure to violence. Eleven demonstration sites were funded from 2000 to 2006 to create a comprehensive service delivery system to improve the accessibility, delivery, and quality of services for children exposed to violence and their families at any point of entry. A national evaluation broadened our understanding of how communities can successfully implement a comprehensive system of care with policy and practice interventions to minimize the negative consequences of exposure to violence.

Fifteen Promising Approaches pilot sites, funded in 2005, are focusing on implementing and measuring developmentally appropriate services for children exposed to violence within the context of the systems that serve them. A national evaluation of these sites will broaden our understanding of the impact of specific intervention strategies on outcomes for children and families.

Safe Start Center

The Safe Start Center is a resource center designed to support the Safe Start Initiative on a national level. The goals of the Center are:

- To broaden the scope of knowledge and resources on hand for responding to the needs of children exposed to violence and their families
- To provide and disseminate information about the Safe Start Initiative and emerging practices and research concerning children exposed to violence
- To raise national awareness about issues concerning children exposed to violence

Children's Exposure to Violence

Every year, millions of children and adolescents in the United States are exposed to violence in their homes, schools, and communities.

Exposure to violence can seriously impact a child's functioning, compromising his or her ability to grow, feel secure, and learn. However, research has found that early identification, intervention, and continued followup are valuable strategies to prevent or decrease the impact of exposure to violence.

Families, teachers, policemen, judges, pediatricians, mental health professionals, child protection workers, and many other professionals who interact with children have a responsibility in creating environments, both physical and psychological, that decrease or prevent the negative impacts of exposure to violence.

