Where Risk is Highest/
Potential Impact is Greatest:
Children Birth to Age 5

Christine Calpin
Managing Director - Public Policy
Casey Family Programs
Focus on healthy development

- During the first 3 years of life, experiences are shaping the brain and providing the foundation for later development.

- Negative experiences, such as maltreatment, interfere with healthy development.
Focus on healthy development

• Unfortunately, infants and toddlers at 35%, are the largest single group of children entering foster care.

• The good news is that intervention in the first 3 years can make a world of difference in the lives of these children to mitigate, or hopefully prevent, further trauma.
Most maltreatment-related fatalities involve very young children

Many (44%) are babies under the age of 1. Most (77%) are children under the age of 4.

What can we do to reduce child abuse and neglect fatalities immediately?

- Infants and toddlers are at high risk of abuse or neglect compared to other age groups and require special attention.

- A call to a child protection hotline, just the call occurring, is the best predictor of a later child abuse or neglect fatality. The initial decision to “screen out” is an important decision point.

- Coordination among agencies and involvement of health care and public health is vital for families.

- Access to real-time information is important.

- An accurate national count of child protection fatalities is critical.

Source: Within Our Reach: A National Strategy to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities.
Questions?

Christine Calpin
ccalpin@casey.org
202-728-2001