AMERICA’S OPIOID CRISIS: THE UNSEEN IMPACT ON CONNECTICUT CHILDREN

AS CONNECTICUT FAMILIES STRUGGLE WITH ADDICTION, CHILDREN ARE CAUGHT IN THE FRAY.

A GROWING CRISIS

- **28% MORE** opioid-related deaths nationwide since 2015.
- **79.9%** of people in Connecticut suffering from drug dependence or abuse go untreated.
- **8.7 MILLION CHILDREN** nationwide have a parent who suffers from a substance use disorder.

A DEVASTATING TOLL ON CHILDREN

FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS ON THE RISE
- 2,038 CONNECTICUT CHILDREN were placed in foster care in 2016.
  - **24%** WERE INFANTS.
  - In 37% of these placements, parental substance use was a factor.

MORE BABIES BORN EXPOSED TO OPIOIDS
- Every 25 minutes in America, a baby is born suffering from opioid withdrawal, which can mean:
  1. LOWER BIRTHWEIGHTS
  2. RESPIRATORY CONDITIONS
  3. FEEDING DIFFICULTIES
  4. SEIZURES
  5. LONGER HOSPITAL STAYS

A LIFELONG IMPACT
- Children dealing with traumatic experiences can face social, emotional, physical, and mental health challenges that last into adulthood.
- Left unaddressed, early childhood adversity can lead to school failure, risky behaviors like alcohol and drug use, and increased chance of health conditions like obesity and heart disease.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

RETHINK OUR APPROACH: SUPPORT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN HEALING TOGETHER

- **Create policies that prioritize prevention** and allow children to remain safely with their families during treatment.
- **Give providers tools** to recognize, treat, and support children and their parents affected by trauma to lessen the lifelong impact and promote healthy families.
- **Ensure families have real and timely access to services** through Medicaid and other prevention and treatment programs.

MEDICAID PAID 81% OF THE $1.5 BILLION that hospitals billed for treating babies suffering from opioid withdrawal in 2012.

Sources for this document are available at www.aap.org/OpioidFactsheets.