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

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

A GROWING CRISIS

- 28% MORE opioid-related deaths nationwide since 2015.
- 84.9% of people in Kansas 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
  - 3,879 KANSAS CHILDREN were placed in foster care in 2016.
  - 14% 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.

A NEED FOR FAMILY-CENTERED POLICIES

- KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER IMPROVES OUTCOMES AND LOWERS COSTS
- MORE THAN HALF of children placed in foster care go home to their families. Keeping families together from the start helps prevent further trauma and improves outcomes.

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

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.

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