### America’s Opioid Crisis: The Unseen Impact on Massachusetts Children

**A Growing Crisis**

- **28%** more opioid-related deaths nationwide since 2015.
- **86.4%** of people in Massachusetts suffering from drug dependence or abuse go untreated.
- **8.7 million children** nationwide have a parent who suffers from a substance use disorder.

**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.

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### A Devastating Toll on Children

**Foster Care Placements on the Rise**

- **6,654 Massachusetts children** were placed in foster care in 2016.
- **17%** were infants.
- In 23% 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**.

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### 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](http://www.aap.org/OpioidFactsheets).**