AMERICA’S OPIOID CRISIS: THE UNSEEN IMPACT ON VERMONT CHILDREN
AS VERMONT FAMILIES STRUGGLE WITH ADDICTION, CHILDREN ARE CAUGHT IN THE FRAY.

A GROWING CRISIS

- **28% MORE** opioid-related deaths nationwide since 2015.
- **83.5%** of people in Vermont 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.

A DEVASTATING TOLL ON CHILDREN

- **FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS ON THE RISE**
  - **775 VERMONT CHILDREN** were placed in foster care in 2016.
  - **17% WERE INFANTS.**
    - In 24% 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.

Sources for this document are available at [www.aap.org/OpioidFactsheets](http://www.aap.org/OpioidFactsheets).