



PREVENTION • EDUCATION • TREATMENT

## WHO WE ARE

April 2005  
(813) 673-4646

### Child Abuse Statistics

- Hillsborough County ranks **third in the state** for reported incidences of child abuse and neglect with 13,468, according to the Florida Child Abuse Hotline.
- The National Center of Child Abuse and Neglect estimates that the actual rate of child abuse is possibly **three times greater** than reported.
- Abused or neglected children are at a much greater risk of becoming abusive and neglectful parents.

## CHILD ABUSE COUNCIL, INC.

The Child Abuse Council is a private, non-profit 501(c) (3) agency that provides consultation, education and direct service programs in the areas of child abuse and neglect. Working within Hillsborough County, the Child Abuse Council assists thousands of families every year to break the cycle of abuse. In 2004, our programs served 38,216 children and adults.

Established in 1977 as an outgrowth of a social service project of the Junior League of Tampa, the Child Abuse Council has grown to be a valuable resource for the community with numerous life-saving programs for children and their families. The Council works closely with public agencies and other private organizations.

The Council is guided by a voluntary Board that meets monthly (excluding June and July). The Council has an 87-member staff, and several of its programs also benefit from the time and talents of specially trained volunteers. Executive Director is Paul A. D'Agostino, LCSW, ACSW; Associate Director is Brian McEwen, Ph D., LMHC, LMFT.

The agency is funded by the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County; the United Way of Tampa Bay; the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners; the Healthy Start Coalition; Florida’s Commission on Marriage and Family Support Initiatives; School District of Hillsborough County; Hillsborough Kids, Inc. Because the Council also receives generous support from special events, individuals, corporations, and charitable foundations, services are offered free or at nominal fees to any child or family within Hillsborough County.

Since the Council’s inception, thousands of families have been helped through these programs, each of which was conceived and developed in response to documented needs within the community. Children and their families may seek assistance directly from the Council, or they may be referred through other social services agencies, court programs, schools, or medical and mental health facilities. Clients often participate in several Child Abuse Council programs, which include:

Baby Bungalow	Kids on the Block
Breakaway	Parents as Teachers
Family Learning Stations, Community Childcare	Rainbow Family Learning Centers
Fathers Resource and Networking Center	Visitation Program
Healthy Start	Heart to Heart Volunteer Program

Baby Bungalow - All parents want the perfect beginning for their babies. **Baby Bungalow** is devoted to assisting parents with this most important, most demanding job. As an early childhood resource center for parents and caregivers, children’s needs from birth to age 5 are at the heart of Baby Bungalow’s creation. It provides parents with the building blocks to face the challenges and enormous pleasures of raising happy, well-adjusted children. New and experienced parents benefit from a wide variety of classes, support groups, information and enrichment activities. Baby Bungalow is an “any baby, any family” enrichment program of the Child Abuse Council in collaboration with the Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County and Children’s Board of Hillsborough County. Founded in 1999, Baby Bungalow’s bright yellow headquarters is located at 3106 West Azele St. in Tampa. In 2003, Baby Bungalow began offering its many services throughout Hillsborough County’s Family Support & Resource Centers. Baby Bungalow services include developmental playgroups, baby sign language, parent support groups, infant massage, child development workshops, infant and child CPR classes, RIE-based parenting courses and creative art and music classes. In addition, Baby Bungalow serves as a parenting hotline to hundreds of parents each month. Parents and caregivers receive answers to their questions and concerns. Baby Bungalow’s staff retains the most helpful and current county resources to refer to clients. To learn more about Baby Bungalow, visit [www.babybungalow.org](http://www.babybungalow.org) or call (813) 356-1293, Ext. 247.

Breakaway - Maternal prenatal alcohol and drug use affects 10% of all newborns in Florida. These infants often suffer intense neurological problems, physical abnormalities and lifelong developmental difficulties. The problem of substance abuse also interferes with a mother’s ability to provide a nurturing, safe environment for her child. Tragically, studies reveal that these children are at a significantly higher risk for abuse and neglect. **Breakaway** was designed to

meet the special needs of these babies and their mothers, who are often illequipped to form positive relationships with their own children or deal with the demands of child-rearing. Siblings of substance-exposed newborns are also served through this developmental childcare program. Breakaway, established in 1990, centers around a special developmental nursery that offers loving, supportive, therapeutic care to children of mothers who are enrolled in drug and alcohol treatment programs provided by the Drug Abuse Comprehensive Coordinating Office (DACCO) and the Centre for Women. This partnership is known as Family Centered Substance Abuse Services and is funded primarily by the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County. In addition, parent-education and child-assessment services are geared to improving the skills of developmentally delayed children, strengthening the bonds between parent and child, and developing skills for healthy long-term relationships. Breakaway’s primary focus is to foster a strong bond between mother and child.

### Family Learning Stations, Community Childcare

Fathers Resource and Networking Center - **The Fathers Resource and Networking Center** is a multi-functional service center that serves as a hub for community-wide fatherhood initiatives, activities and programs. The mission of FRANc is to make available the resources, support, information and education that will enable all dads to address the challenges and celebrate the joys of positive fathering and involvement with their children. FRANc services are for **all** dads from any scenario... married, single, divorced, foster, surrogate, expectant and mentors. All services are offered regardless of race, economic status, age, educational background, or fathering status. FRANc is a universal access resource center with services available to anyone. **FRANc’s services include:**

- *Nurturing Dads Program* (NDP) is a nationally recognized fathering course that assists dads to be the “best father they can be.” Discussion topics include nurturance, fathering without fear or violence, the roots of fathering, discipline, fathering sons versus fathering daughters, and co-parenting.
- “*Boot Camp for New Dads*” is a nationally acclaimed program offered through FRANc and local hospitals that uses veteran fathers to orient “rookie” dads who are expecting their first babies. Veteran dads bring their one- to eight-month-old babies to teach rookies how to feed, burp, diaper, and care for infants. Boot Camp for New Dads focuses on bonding, forming a parenting team, staying safe, preventing child abuse, and dealing with relatives.
- *Dads Dinners* are informal, monthly gatherings that offer a venue for dads to hear about important fathering topics, to receive advice and support from one another, and to plan recreational outings with their children.
- *Nurturing Parent Program* (NPP) is a nationally recognized parenting series that is designed to strengthen families with children ages 5-12 by encouraging empathy and caring, responsibility and discipline, and family growth. The NPP is both a philosophy and a practice that adheres to raising children in a non-violent environment and has been validated as effective in interventions for the treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

FRANc is funded by Florida’s Commission on Marriage and Family Support Initiatives, the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County, Hillsborough Kids, Inc. and private foundations. To learn more about FRANc, visit [www.franccenter.com](http://www.franccenter.com) or call (813) 356-1293, Ext. 232.

Healthy Start - In order to reduce the incidence of low birth weight and to improve health and developmental outcomes for babies, the **Healthy Start Program** provides direct, home based services to expectant and new mothers. Services are provided by social service coordinators, nurses, family counselors, and Healthy Start educators, and are offered to the entire new or expectant family. Clients are usually referred to Healthy Start by their medical provider. Once a patient is referred, Healthy Start provides assessment to determine an ongoing plan of care, which includes in-home counseling. Through home visits by social service coordinators, expectant and new families receive general parent education, case management services and social service referrals. Clients and families are taught about health issues related to:

- Prenatal and Infant Nutrition
- Childbirth
- Family Planning
- Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Breastfeeding
- Infant Care
- Stress Management
- Smoking Cessation

Healthy Start places a strong focus on the importance of early parent and child attachment. Based upon their specialized needs, Healthy Start staff link families to other agencies and organizations in Hillsborough County. Driven by the Child Abuse Council's emphasis on prevention, the program's goal is to offer education and referrals before birth to provide children with a positive, healthy family environment. Healthy Start provides services in partnership with the Hillsborough County Health Department and the Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County.

### Kids on the Block

Parents as Teachers - **Parents as Teachers (PAT)** is a nationally acclaimed child development program that uses the most current brain research to promote school readiness. It is based on the belief that the parent is the child's first and most influential teacher. Parents are empowered to work directly with their children to help them develop to their fullest potential. There are no predetermined criteria or assessments required to become a PAT family. It is an "any baby, any family" service. The components of PAT are:

- In-home visitation by certified Parent Educators trained in child development who teach families according to the "Born to Learn" curriculum developed by the Washington University School of Medicine
- Parent group gatherings with other PAT families
- Screening of the overall health and development of the child, including vision and hearing
- Referrals to link families to needed services not provided by PAT

The Child Abuse Council remains committed to offering the program county wide, integrating PAT with other agencies and programs, and making the program accessible to all parents maintaining the "any baby, any family" philosophy. Parents as Teachers is funded by the United Way of Tampa Bay, the Children's Board of Hillsborough County, private donations and foundations.

Rainbow Family Learning Centers - Reports of child abuse and neglect capture our attention through newspaper headlines with heartbreaking regularity. But little is mentioned about the

careful healing process that must take place if a child is to thrive and family members are to rise above their shared tragedy. The goal of the **Rainbow Family Learning Program** is to provide a therapeutic setting for children at-risk for abuse, an alternative to foster care for children who are victims of abuse, and a means of transition from foster care to home for those children who have already been separated from their families. The Rainbow Family Learning Program offers specially designed therapeutic childcare for abused or neglected children (infants to 5 years old) and their parents. Families receive intensive services — training and support to parents, security and protection in a highly structured growth-oriented atmosphere for children. The Rainbow Family Learning Program is the only non-residential service in Hillsborough County exclusively designed to provide therapeutic childcare to abused children and their families simultaneously and in a single setting. The Council's three Rainbow Centers are located in Tampa, Plant City, and Ruskin and serve a diverse population. Enrollment at each of the Centers is 15 children and their parents; the average length of time a family stays in the Rainbow program is five months. Used as a model by other communities, this therapeutic childcare program has a variety of outcomes. Children are assessed for developmental readiness and are more likely to enter kindergarten ready to learn. Parents are assessed for parenting knowledge and are more effective in managing future life stressors, particularly those that impact the safety and welfare of their children. After completing the Rainbow Program, families are tracked for up to one year in order to measure recidivism. Rainbow Family Learning Centers are funded by the United Way of Tampa Bay, Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners, Children's Board of Hillsborough County, the Rainbow Ball, private donations and foundations.

#### Visitation Program

#### Heart to Heart Volunteer Program

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