



MS 3085, PO Box 1997  
Milwaukee, WI 53201-1997  
Phone (414) 266-6300  
Fax (414) 266-1721  
[www.capfund.org](http://www.capfund.org)

Contact  
Renee Prink, senior public relations specialist  
Children's Hospital and Health System  
(414) 266-5421

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **First-of-its-kind project aims to measure effectiveness of child abuse prevention programs**

MILWAUKEE (June, 2010) – The [Child Abuse Prevention Fund](#) will begin groundbreaking work to develop a home visitation assessment tool to measure the quality of child abuse prevention programs. This effort is part of the [Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project of Wisconsin](#), which is supported solely by the Child Abuse Prevention Fund.

The project was piloted by eight home visitation agencies that serve at-risk families who are expecting babies or have preschoolers at home. The agencies focus on keeping children healthy, ensuring age-appropriate development and helping prevent child neglect and abuse by providing education and connecting parents to support systems. Before starting the outcomes project, all eight agencies were using different tools to measure results of their work. For this reason, they could not accurately compare their results to state and national benchmarks. In 2009, outcomes showing agencies are making an impact with their prevention programs became available for the first time through the project.

The development of the Child Abuse Prevention Fund's new home visiting assessment tool is made possible by a two-year commitment of financial support from the [Pew Center on the States](#). The tool may be used by any home visitation program or funder to determine whether their services are meeting quality child abuse prevention benchmarks.

“This data is a baseline that will help us measure the impact of these programs over time,” said Jennifer Hammel, director, Child Abuse Prevention Fund. “Findings already show that home visitation programs are making positive changes for families in the state. As time goes on, I expect this data will help us identify trends and improve quality and effectiveness of home visitation programs in Wisconsin. Pew's support will help us continue our work and give those policy makers that support these programs a way to measure their quality. Intensive, comprehensive home visiting services are critical in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.”

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“Although there is much we know about the effectiveness of home visitation, some policy-relevant questions remain. Our research will further build the evidence required to inform sound public policy decisions,” said Pew Home Visiting Campaign Director John Schlitt. “The work of Children’s Hospital and Health System’s Child Abuse Prevention Fund will give policymakers the information needed to improve the efficiency and success of these services and assure they are providing a good return on taxpayer investment.”

The [Erikson Institute](#) based in Chicago will provide research support for the project, and Performance Works based in Green Bay will provide project management support.

The [Pew Center on the States](#) is a division of The Pew Charitable Trusts that identifies and advances effective solutions to critical issues facing states. Pew is a nonprofit organization that applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improve public policy, inform the public and stimulate civic life. The Pew Home Visiting Campaign’s research agenda is made possible through the generous support of the [Doris Duke Charitable Foundation](#) and the [Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County](#). Learn more at [pewcenteronthestates.org/homevisiting](http://pewcenteronthestates.org/homevisiting).

[Children’s Hospital and Health System](#) is the region’s only independent health care system dedicated solely to the health and well-being of children. Children’s Hospital, the health system’s flagship member, is recognized as one of the leading pediatric health care centers in the United States, rated among the best pediatric hospitals in the nation by *Parents* magazine and named one of America’s Best Children’s Hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report*. Other health system entities include [Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin-Fox Valley](#), [Children’s Hospital and Health System Foundation](#), [Children’s Medical Group](#), [Children’s Physician Group](#), Children’s Specialty Group, [Surgicenter of Greater Milwaukee](#), [Children’s Service Society of Wisconsin](#), [Children’s Health Education Center](#), Children’s Research Institute and [Children’s Community Health Plan](#). In 2008, the health system invested more than \$114 million back into the community to improve the health status of children through medical care, advocacy, education and pediatric medical research. For more information, visit the Web site at [www.chw.org](http://www.chw.org).

The nation’s only graduate school to focus exclusively on child development from birth to age 8, [Erikson](#) is an independently accredited institution that prepares a wide variety of child development professionals for leadership in the field. The school’s academic programs, applied and policy research, clinical services, and work with public and private agencies advances the ability of educators, practitioners, researchers and decision-makers to improve the lives of children and their families.

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