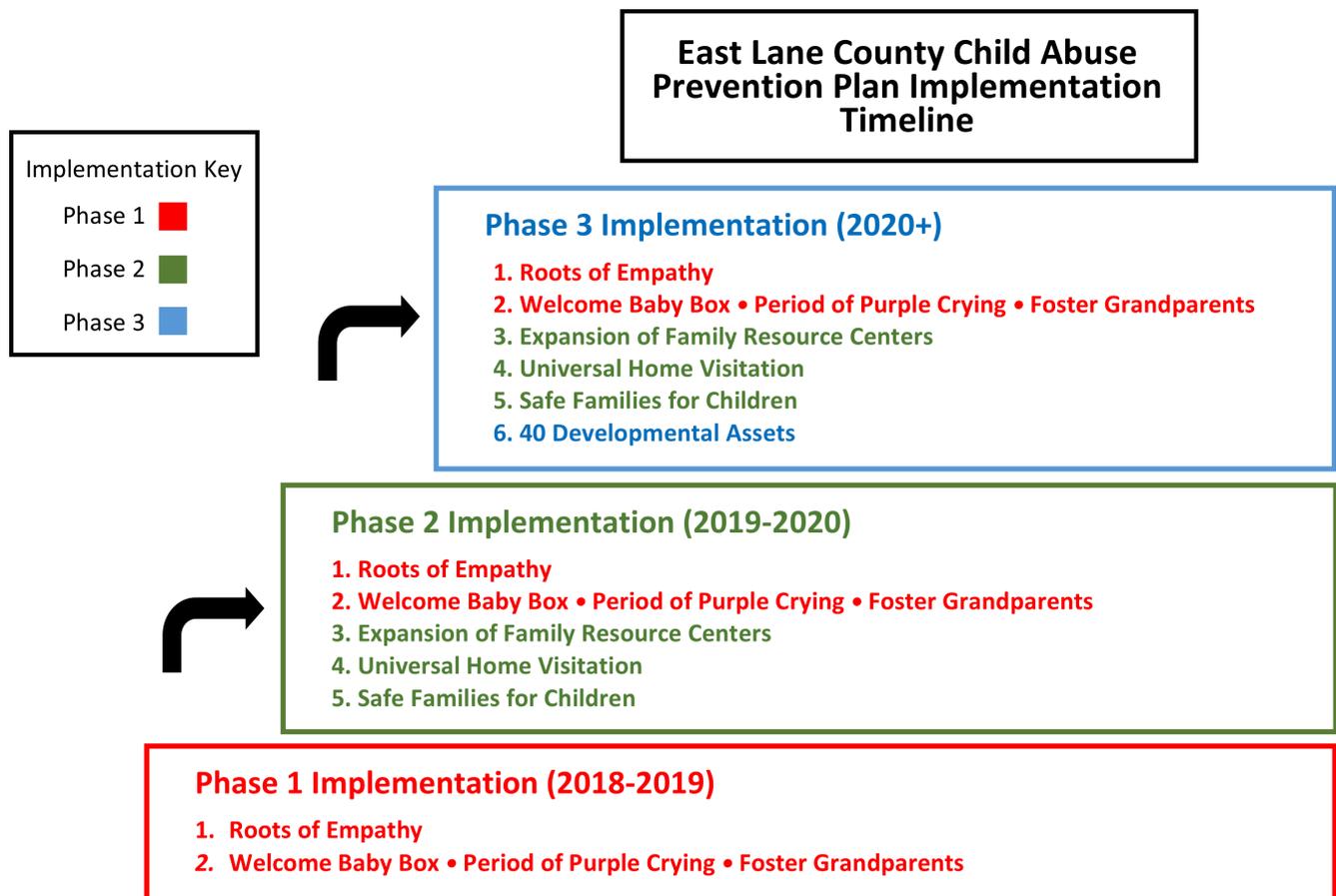




East Lane Region Child Abuse Prevention Plan: Executive Summary

If the East Lane Region is to meet the aspirational 90by30 goal of reducing child abuse and neglect in Lane County 90% by the year 2030, we must have a plan of action. That plan – and any successful prevention effort – must be led by community members and engage the community as a whole. There is a role for every person and group in protecting children. 90by30, a campus-community partnership housed at the University of Oregon College of Education, combines research on evidence-based strategies with grassroots level decision-making and implementation.

Many of those people and groups have come together to produce the East Lane Child Abuse Prevention Plan, which lays out the strategies we believe can make a difference in abuse and neglect rates in the East Lane Region.



Background

In Oregon, according to the Oregon Department of Human Services, there were nearly 70,000 reports of abuse and neglect received in 2015. In Lane County in 2015, there were 2,622 allegations of child abuse and neglect.

Although these reported rates are unacceptable, surveillance data indicate that actual rates of child abuse and neglect are much higher.

90by30's research in Lane County, including a randomized phone survey and thousands of questionnaires given to county residents, has informed the planning process. We learned, among other things, that:

- Lane County residents believe that child abuse can be significantly reduced, but reported discouragement about the likelihood of actual success.
- Many did not believe intervening in a situation of potential abuse or neglect would make a difference.
- Even fewer people had a clear sense of the key steps needed to reduce child abuse and neglect overall.

90by30 – and the plan set forward by East Lane – is a roadmap for change. It is an effective, actionable plan that the community can rally around.

The framework:

1. We take a strength-based approach, focusing on protective factors like social connections and knowledge of parenting and child development to help people deal more effectively with stressful events and mitigate or eliminate the risk of child abuse.
2. We focus on primary prevention and universal access, aiming to stop child abuse before it occurs and make our prevention strategies accessible to all people, not just a targeted group.

How were strategies selected?

1. To avoid duplicating efforts, we created an “asset map” by looking at the current organizations and efforts in the East Lane area that support a healthy, caring and nurturing environment for children and families. Could some of those services be increased? Could we reduce barriers to services, such as stigma/embarrassment, lack of knowledge of services, or lack of trust in the provider? The findings helped us to prioritize strategies that could address these gaps.



Team members table at Oakridge Elementary School

- a. The prime barrier to providing services that meet the needs of each protective factor is the distance not only between East Lane and the metro area of Eugene-Springfield but between population centers in East Lane itself. Without a private vehicle, money for gas, or reliable public transportation, parents are hard-pressed to access the services that provide help, education, and socialization opportunities. No protective factor can be met without first addressing the stresses of isolation.
- b. The vibrancy of the region's schools and its well-established faith community are two of East Lane's biggest assets. The Lowell and Oakridge school districts are touchstones for area residents, as are local places of worship. A strong tradition of volunteerism in the faith community, which provides concrete supports like low-income housing as well as less tangible supports like youth groups and counseling, will benefit East Lane as it implements the Prevention Plan. It is no coincidence that, out of the five strategies chosen in the plan, one is school-based (Roots of Empathy) and the other is rooted in the faith community.

The Five Protective Factors
(developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy)



Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development



Social Connections



Concrete Support in Times of Need



Parental Resilience



Social & Emotional Competence of Children

The Prevention Plan will implement strategies to strengthen the five protective factors: knowledge of parenting and child development, social connections, concrete supports in times of need, parental resilience, and social and emotional competence of children. The following strategies, as they are rolled out over a three-year implementation period (2018-2020), will bolster the resources currently promoting certain protective factors and introduce new programs to ensure all five factors are fully addressed.

The Plan

Phase 1 Implementation (2018-19)

1. **Roots of Empathy** – an evidence-based classroom program that has shown a significant effect in reducing levels of aggression and bullying among school children while raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy, will be implemented in the region’s elementary schools. An infant and parent, accompanied by a trained ROE facilitator, make multiple visit to the classroom over the year. Children gain insight into how others feel, develop a sense of social responsibility, and – when they become parents themselves in 15-20 years – are thought to be less likely to neglect or abuse their own children.
2. **Welcome Baby Box** – a community-based program that welcomes infants into the community by providing their families with a safe sleep system (the “box”) filled with essential items for newborns (e.g. diapers, clothing, informational books, toys). In Finland, the original Baby Box has helped the country achieve one of the world’s lowest infant mortality rates for more than 75 years; East Lane’s version will be available to all approximately 90 babies born in the region each year. The program provides not only the concrete resource of supplies but links parents to infant care options and offers parent education via informational books and videos like the **Period of Purple Crying**, which seeks to prevent “shaken-baby” syndrome by normalizing the crying that can frustrate new parents. The **Foster Grandparents** program connects children to “grandparents” age 55 and older, who serve as mentors and add an additional layer of support during crucial developmental years. By helping deliver Welcome Baby Boxes, the “grandparents” will establish an ongoing relationship with a family and child, becoming part of the family’s social fabric from day one.



Roots of Empathy founder and president Mary Gordon at the 2017 90by30 Conference

Phase 2 Implementation (2019-20)

In Phase 2, the plan will sustain the programs launched or expanded in Phase 1, and add the following:

1. **Expansion of the Oakridge and Pleasant Hill Family Resource Centers.** The region’s Family Resource Centers will serve as community hubs through which families can access existing supports and as well

as the new strategies put into place by the Prevention Plan. Supplementary funding to increase hours and staffing will allow the centers to become “one-stop shopping” for community resources and create a place where parents can interact and receive one-on-one assistance as well as register for other programs in the area, like the Welcome Baby Box.

2. **Universal Home Visitation** – a home visiting program available to all parents of children 0-3 in the region that will supplement the targeted efforts of Lane County Public Health’s Healthy Families. Home visits provide social connections for parents and integrate the family into the community; they are also a chance to provide timely and on-the-spot parent education and assistance with problems. With additional staff and awareness promotion in rural areas, 90by30 will be able reach families in the rural parts of the region that currently lack access to home visits.
3. **Safe Families for Children** - a faith-based program that offers respite care to families in crisis. Children stay with host families, who provide a network of support to the child and parents while they get back on their feet. This strategy would piggyback off services already offered by the faith community, simply formalizing the assistance model that has been in place for years in the region. The ability to model the local version on similar programs currently functioning in other areas of the county and state would ease implementation as well. Funding for a local coordinator of the program may be required to make it effective in more remote areas of East Lane.

Phase 3 Implementation (2020+)

In Phase 3, the plan will sustain the programs launched or expanded in Phases 1 and 2, and add the following:

4. **40 Developmental Assets** – a set positive experiences, behaviors, and qualities that promote healthy child development. This strategy from the Search Institute identifies 40 positive supports and strengths that young people need to succeed. Half of the assets are “external,” focusing on the relationships and opportunities youth need in their families, schools, and communities. The other half are “internal” and foster the social-emotional strengths, values, and commitments that healthy kids and teens develop from within.

90by30’s Commitment

To help the East Lane team succeed, 90by30 has pledged the following resources:

1. **People Power** – the expertise and resources of its staff, volunteers, Steering Committee, Coordinating Council and its Regional Leadership.
2. **A County-wide Strategy** – “K(no)w More,” a media campaign modeled on NAPCAN’s “Play Your Part” campaign in Australia, which sought to change social norms around child abuse prevention. 90by30 will also continue to support each region during Child Abuse Prevention Month.
3. **Funding** – financial backing for the specific strategies that are being implemented under the auspices of 90by30, support for the partners funding strategies being implemented by others, and collaboration with the Regional Team as it raises its portion of necessary funds.
4. **Commitment to Equity and Inclusion** – the commitment to eventually make all strategies implemented truly universal.



The East Lane team presents at the 90by30 Conference

5. **Evaluation** – a plan to evaluate the Child Abuse Prevention Plan, the media campaign, and other projects, so that we can draw on successes and learn from setbacks to adapt future efforts.

The East Lane Prevention Plan represents the work of hundreds of hours of collaboration among and between organizations, groups, and individuals committed to preventing child abuse and neglect. It will be reviewed and updated annually to adapt to changing circumstances and reflect the continuing commitment to make all strategies accessible to the entire population of the East Lane region.