

# National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome

[www.dontshake.org](http://www.dontshake.org)

Marilyn Barr  
Founder and Executive Director

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February 17, 2009

The State of Connecticut Legislative Appropriations Committee

Re: Support for the Connecticut Children's Trust Fund (CTF)

Dear Committee Members,

I am submitting this letter for your consideration as testimony on behalf of sustaining and supporting the continued existence of the Connecticut Children's Trust Fund. As the Executive Director of the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, I have many opportunities to work with various states and communities in the United States regarding their programs and efforts to prevent child abuse.

I am very impressed with the high quality of the programs, training and services available through the Connecticut CTF. The director, Karen Foley-Schain, is very well respected throughout the country. She was one of only four professionals invited last year to Washington DC to speak to a federal legislative committee from Health and Human Services about the state of child abuse prevention in the United States. She is highly regarded by her peers and the Connecticut CTF is considered to be one of the most effective in the country.

I have recently had the opportunity to become more intensely involved with the services and the philosophy of the Connecticut CTF. I am very impressed with their commitment to evaluate child abuse prevention programs, to insure they are tested and evidenced-based, and to research all the possibilities of use of these prevention programs. Their commitment to using only prevention programs that are evidence-based are, sadly, not typical of most intervention initiatives in the country. We commend them for this commitment.

Children's Trust Funds in the United States are unique as they are, by design, able to be autonomous and therefore can make objective, unbiased decisions not only regarding what are the most respected and effective, evidenced based child abuse prevention programs available in the country, but which of these are the most effective and, importantly for the state and public monies, cost effective. Because the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome (NCSBS) has one of these evidenced based programs, we have recently experienced the vigorous and impressive process the CTF takes in determining the best and most effective program before they consider it for use in Connecticut. It is a commendable process that others should model.

In these hard economic times, it is tempting to look at easy ways to amend services, reduce costs and let others take on services they have not done in the past. In some cases this may be a desirable and effective way to reduce overall costs. This is not the case in the consideration of eliminating the Connecticut Children's Trust Fund. They are one of at least 50 more CTFs in the United States that exist in every state, and have proven time and time again their value and importance. As a group, they

have been able to make objective decisions based on research and data. They have been incredibly effective in providing quality child abuse and prevention programs in our country.

The national and state agencies that have been made aware your consideration of eliminating one of the most effective entities in protecting children have great concern about doing that and especially for the very likely negative results for your state. I urge you to support the Connecticut CTF and ensure that it can continue to be as effective as it has been over the past ten years.

Thank you for your consideration of my input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "MBarr".

Marilyn Barr  
Founder and Executive Director  
National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome