AMERICA'S OPIOID CRISIS: THE UNSEEN IMPACT ON ALABAMA CHILDREN

AS ALABAMA FAMILIES STRUGGLE WITH ADDICTION, CHILDREN ARE CAUGHT IN THE FRAY.

A GROWING CRISIS

28% MORE opioid-related deaths nationwide since 2015.

90.4% of people in Alabama 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

3,769 ALABAMA CHILDREN were placed in foster care in 2016.

17% WERE INFANTS.

In **42%** of these placements, parental substance use was a factor.

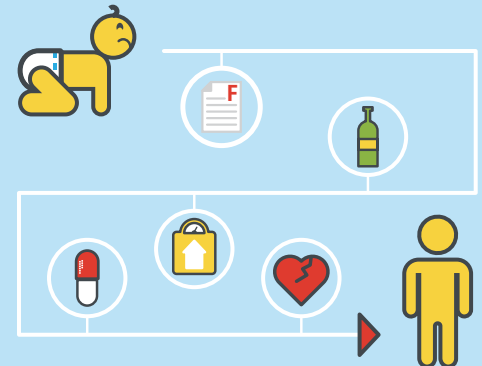**MORE BABIES BORN EXPOSED TO OPIOIDS**

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.
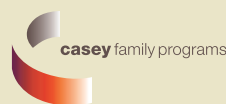
Left unaddressed, early childhood adversity can lead to **school failure**, risky behaviors like **alcohol and drug use**, and increased chance of health conditions like **obesity and heart disease**.

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.