

# Spotlight on National Substance Abuse Prevention Month

## How Opioid Use Affects Child Well-Being

Understanding the relationship between the opioid epidemic and child welfare—particularly how children are indirectly affected by the increase in opioid misuse—continues to be a priority. An article published in *Contemporary Economic Policy* found that increases in opioid-related mortality and emergency-department visits were associated with increased foster care entry, but there was no significant relationship between legal opioid distribution quantities and home removals. The article, "[What About the Children? How Opioid Use Affects Child Well-Being.](#)" explores the relationships between opioid use and child well-being and between opioid-related public policies and child welfare outcomes.

Results of the study show that there is a strong need for policies that mitigate the harmful—and sometimes indirect—effects the opioid epidemic has on children. It also notes that policies should focus less on reducing the amount of legal opioids available and instead focus on improving how we can predict prescription abuse risk and reduce illicit opioid use. Findings also suggest that reducing the impact of the opioid epidemic on children can lead to a substantial amount of public savings.

To learn more, read "[What About the Children? How Opioid Use Affects Child Well-Being.](#)"

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