

2025 ANNUAL  
REPORT

# Prevention Starts Upstream

**Idaho**  
**Children's**  
**Trust Fund**

Preventing Child Abuse In Idaho

# STARTING upstream

The story we tell about prevention goes like this: In a small village there are fisherman throwing their nets in the water by the side of a river when suddenly a child come floating by screaming for help. One of the fishermen jumps in the water and saves her but then there is another and another. All the fishermen jump in the water and valiantly save the children.

In the midst of the rescues, one fisherman walks away. After a time, the children stop floating down the river and the fisherman who walked away comes back. He was confronted angrily by the other fishermen who ask how he could leave when they needed him desperately? The fisherman who walked away responded: "I wondered why all the kids were falling in the river, so I decided to go upstream and see what was happening. What I found was a bridge with some planks missing. The kids were trying to jump over the gap and were falling in the river. I gathered up some neighbors, and we fixed the bridge."

At the Idaho Children's Trust Fund, our job is going upstream to fix the bridge. We support efforts throughout Idaho that go upstream to strengthen families and communities to prevent child abuse and neglect before they ever occur. I like this story particularly because it centers a river—the lifeblood of Idaho. We fund vital family support work and provide education in communities along the Snake, the Clearwater, the Portneuf, the Salmon, the Boise and the Coeur d'Alene Rivers.

Our upstream work includes funding family resource centers, home visiting and parent support and education programs, training to prevent child sexual abuse, abusive head trauma, and education around brain development, ACES and Positive Childhood Experiences and engaging with parents through parent cafes, summits and fatherhood groups. When we go upstream, we strengthen families and communities and prevent child abuse and neglect before it occurs.

**- ROGER SHERMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



# Scoping the rapids is good prevention: We learn together

Training is at the core of the work that the Idaho Children's Trust Fund does year after year. Training helps organizations implement best practices to provide the best support to the constituencies they serve. ICTF stays on top of the research and training opportunities happening throughout the country so that we can bring them to groups working in communities throughout Idaho.

The Strengthening Families Training Institute is our largest training event focused on preventing child abuse and neglect held every year in March. This year Dr. Charlyn Harper Browne, a primary researcher and national expert on the Strengthening Families and the Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE) frameworks, presented the keynote. Over 250 people from throughout

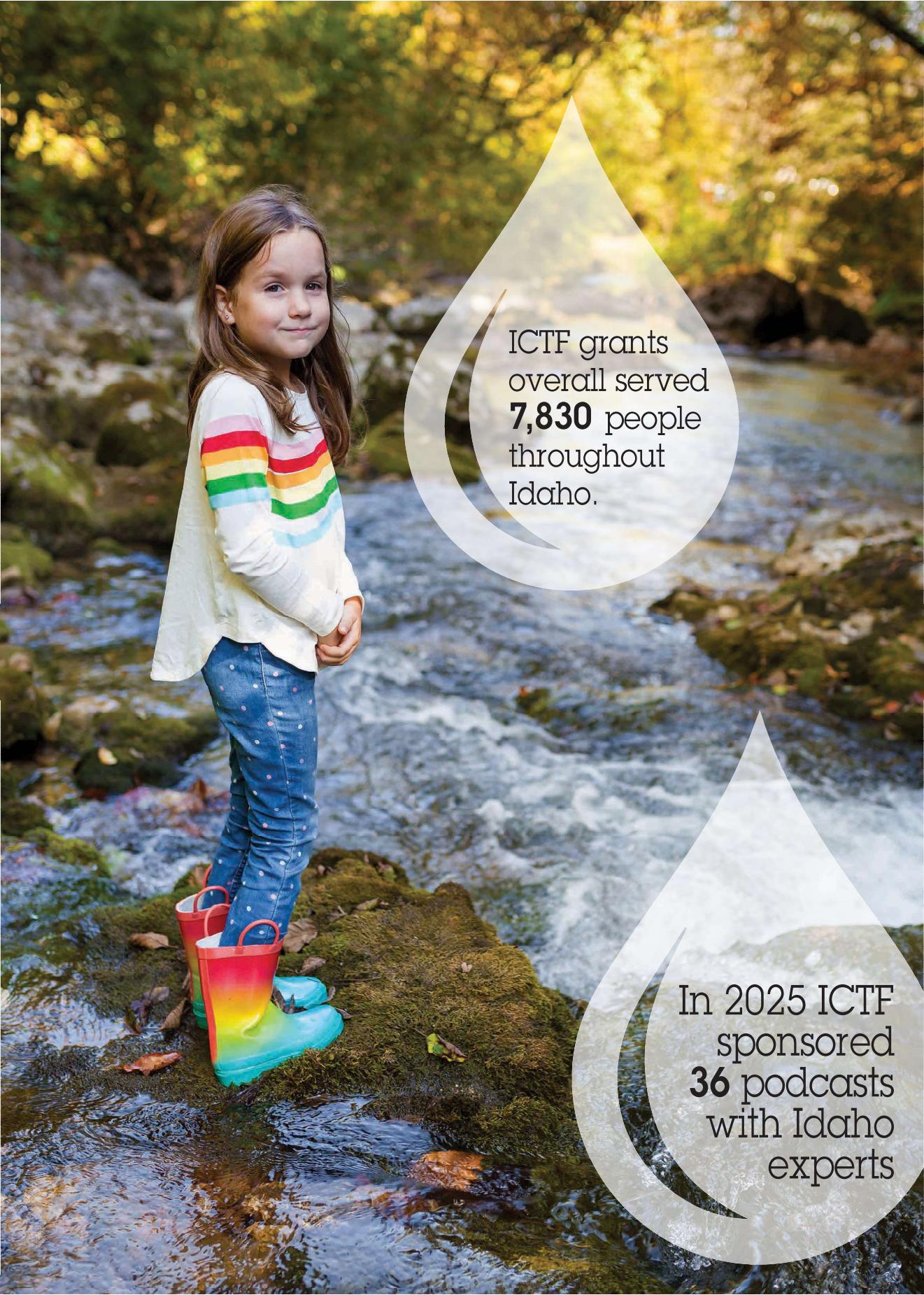
Idaho attended 20 workshops presented by Idaho experts and a final panel presentation by a group from American Falls who have built a strong community support system based on their Read Talk Play initiative. The Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children received the Ed VanDusen Award which is given each year to an organization that exemplifies extraordinary focus on prevention.

Throughout the year organizations were trained to prevent child sexual abuse and Abusive Head Trauma (formerly Shaken Baby Syndrome). Numerous organizations also learned about brain development and the impacts of both positive and negative childhood experiences on lifelong behavioral and physical health. These training are tied to concrete practices to intentionally build PCEs or positive childhood experiences to mitigate and prevent trauma.



DR. CHARLYN HARPER BROWNE





ICTF grants overall served **7,830** people throughout Idaho.

In 2025 ICTF sponsored **36** podcasts with Idaho experts

# While the river babbles we're busy Getting the Word Out

Three Family Resource Centers served **1,434** people

## Down by the Riverside: Every Place is a Good Place to Strengthen Families

Strengthening families to prevent child abuse and neglect can happen in unusual places. The Trust Fund's grants manager, Kim Hemmert, is also a cosmetologist who worked in salons before becoming a social worker. She has found opportunities for bringing the prevention message to local salons and beauty colleges.

"Stylists who are HOPE informed (i.e. those who understand how trauma can be mitigated by positive experiences) are better able to navigate hard conversations and provide research informed support to parents, building resilience and laying a HOPEful foundation for generations. Understanding HOPE can help stylists better relate to their clients and help their clients build and strengthen their relationships with their children. The salon environment is a model for parents to create a home environment where children feel safe and welcome."

The goal of understanding the HOPE framework is to see how you are already doing some of this foundational work that strengthens families and integrates the building blocks of HOPE (relationships, environment, social and civic engagement and emotional development) in a more intentional way into the work.

## We don't need to paddle back upstream if we start upstream: Developing community support systems

ICTF has been supporting the development of Family Resource Centers that provide community-based support for basic needs like diapers and food as well as support for parenting and child development.

- As a new mom, I was unaware of all kinds of needs my baby had and I felt overwhelmed. Having a home visitor come to my home and show me what my baby needed, reassured me that my baby was ok and normal, and be a general help in learning how to be a mother has made a difference for our family.  
– **Ignite Idaho FRC, McCall**
- We love coming to family events! It's so fun to get out and do fun activities with the community. I connected with neighbors and friends, teachers and resources too.  
– **United Way Eastern Idaho**
- These exchanges eased the loneliness in my parenting journey and helped me quiet the self-doubt that sometimes creeps in. The courses have been a bridge to discovering helpful resources.  
– **Family Advocates, Garden City**

The **Resilient Parenting Podcast** tackles challenges facing ANYONE in a parenting role. Every family is different. The Resilient Parenting Podcast explores the unique strengths of every child, family and community. Ken Bass, long-time radio personality and Michelle Bass, Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) host interviews with professionals in the field, and people with lived experience. The podcast seeks to build parental resiliency and hope by creating a supportive, healing, and learning community.





# Start at the headwaters

Idaho Children's Trust Fund provided grants to 29 organizations from Coeur d'Alene in the north to Salmon in the east throughout the year. Grants supported a wide range of programs from homevisiting and parenting classes to teen support and respite for families on the verge of crisis.

- With this support, a mother was able to focus on her health and return to her children stronger and more stable. – **Lutheran Community Services Northwest, Boise**
- These events make me feel like I'm part of something. I'm learning how to be a better mom and my kids are happier too. – **Upriver Youth Leadership Council, Kamiah**
- I have people who believe in me. – **Nampa Family Justice Center**
- Every child needs a champion. Someone who has relevant lived experience, someone to support them in troubled times and give them healthy coping skills, resiliency and to empower self-efficacy. – **Glen Allen Project, Pocatello**
- Karina has taught me so much about parenting and myself that I find myself reacting better to my kids. I feel more in control of my house now. She convinced me that I was smart enough to go to school, and she believed in me so much that now I'm in school! She makes me feel seen and heard. – **ICARE, Coeur d'Alene**

## Paddling together

We are involved with several groups around the state including Casey Family Programs, Idaho AEYC and Idaho Parents Unlimited, in developing opportunities for parents to have greater voice in decisions that affect their lives. Throughout Idaho, 97 people have been trained to facilitate Parent Cafes—a process for creating meaningful conversations that support greater connections among parents. Cafes help parents feel less isolated. Isolation is a key driver of family instability and increases the possibility for neglect or abuse.

The roles of fathers have been changing over time and Dads also feel a need for connection. ICTF is in the early stages of developing a statewide council to support fathers through increasing connection with their children and in co-parenting.

In early November, Parent Summits were held in Coeur d'Alene, Nampa and Idaho Falls with over 200 people attending. The summits were organized to provide parents with a forum to connect around the joys and struggles of parenting. The summits also focused on what communities can do to support and strengthen families.

## Sharing our resource: April is Strengthening Families Month

To focus attention on what we want to build rather than what we want to stop, Idaho has joined several states around the country in establishing Strengthening Families Month to replace Child Abuse Prevention Month. Strong families and supportive communities are the backbone of prevention and the work that we promote through our training and our funding. ICTF coordinates regional activities and provides funding to support Strengthening Families Month.



## president's message

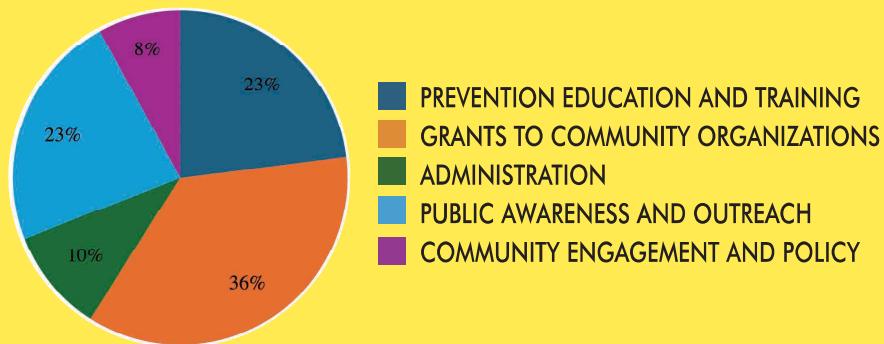
As we reflect on the past year, the Idaho Children's Trust Fund recognizes the meaningful progress made across our state to strengthen families and prevent child abuse. Despite ongoing challenges and divisions in our broader environment, the Trust Fund and its partners continued to advance evidence-based strategies, invest in community-driven initiatives, and support programs that help Idaho families thrive. This collective work reinforces a simple truth: prevention is most effective when communities come together with a shared commitment to children's well-being.

Even in difficult times, the efforts supported by the Trust Fund show what is possible when policy, funding, and local leadership align around empathy, resilience, and connection. The impact is visible in stronger support networks, improved family stability, and safer environments for Idaho's children.

Thank you to our partners, grantees, advocates, and communities for advancing this mission and helping build a safer, stronger Idaho for all children.

– Brenda Stanley, Board President

## WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?



## WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

**Revenues:** Grants and Donations ..... \$881,531  
Earned Revenue and Interest ..... \$88,621  
Total ..... \$970,152

(50% of donations received through the state income tax form are used for prevention work; 50% goes to an interest bearing trust fund. Interest earned on the trust also supports prevention.)

\*as of July, 2025. Details available upon request.

Created by the Idaho Legislature in 1985, the Idaho Children's Trust Fund is governed by a ten member board of directors appointed by the Governor and representing every region of the state as well as the offices of the State Department of Education, the Attorney General and the Department of Health and Welfare.



THANK YOU to all who made donations to the Idaho Children's Trust Fund in 2025!