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**UAMS-Based Commission Awards \$318,756
to 5 Nonprofits for Child Abuse Prevention Programs**

LITTLE ROCK — The Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence (ACCARDV), a statewide organization based at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), recently awarded \$318,755.56 to five nonprofit groups for projects aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect.

The grants provide up to \$100,000 a year, for two years, to help develop or expand programs that reflect recommendations in the 2025 Arkansas Infant and Child Death Review Report. The annual publication examines all unexpected infant and child deaths in Arkansas for the purpose of developing interventions, recommendations, community education, and policy.

The programs that received funding focus on early interventions for families experiencing trauma; substance misuse prevention for parents and caregivers; parenting education, with a focus on men caring for infants; and education about the increased risk of infant mortality when parents or caregivers use, misuse, or abuse drugs or alcohol.

Laura A. Robertson, executive director of the commission, which is headquartered in the UAMS Division of Academic Affairs, said this is its fourth year to put out a request for proposals. She said a funding committee made up of current and former state employees who are experts on child abuse, sexual assault, or domestic violence evaluated all 17 applications before selecting five projects to receive partial funding in amounts ranging from \$47,023 to \$80,989 each year.

She said the committee reviewed budgets to determine where cuts could be made to extend the funds to as many nonprofits as possible.

The recipients and amounts they received this year are listed below, with second-year funds to be determined at the end of the first year, though they won't exceed the first-year amounts:

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- **Arkansas Children's** received \$47,023 to fund three programs: "Growing Together: Shared Conversation and Infant Safety Education," which develops public service announcements aimed at fathers and male caregivers; "For My Safety," which helps caregivers cope with frustration when caring for crying babies; and "Safe Start to Parenting," which teaches caregivers about sleep-related risk factors, the use or misuse of drugs and alcohol, and the prevention of abusive head trauma.
- **Carter's Crew** received \$80,989.32 for "Fathers First," a program to educate fathers and male caregivers of children 0-3 about early bonding and nurturing attachment, infant and toddler development, and safe supervision, as well as safe and stable home environment practices.
- **Central Arkansas Library System Foundation** received \$65,000 for "Early Literacy Promotes Protective Factors," which focuses on enhancing parenting skills, strengthening parent and child bonds, and promoting literacy through evidence-based skills training for staff. The award also funds a partnership with Teach My Kid to Read, to install literacy hubs at three CALS branches.
- **OneCommunity** was awarded \$75,192.30 for the expansion of a two-tier Spanish language mental health training initiative. "Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid" promotes using a structured approach to mental health challenges before a situation escalates, while "Invitation to Change" educates families about substance use and challenging behaviors within families. This grant will also fund the development of three Spanish-language public service announcements focused on infant safety and mental health.
- **White County Domestic Violence Prevention** received \$50,550.94 for "The Stronger Families Project," a prevention initiative designed to provide structured parenting education and family support services in White County. The project will focus on both at-risk families and families involved in the child welfare or judicial system, including parents working toward reunification with their children.

The state Legislature created the commission in 1991 to enhance the investigation, prosecution, treatment, support, and prevention of child abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence through educational programs and services in Arkansas. Commission staff have extensive experience administering and overseeing state and federal funds in programs to reduce child abuse, rape and domestic violence, freeing the funded organizations to focus on their projects.

The 22 members of the commission are appointed by the governor and serve in an advisory capacity to the staff, who are employed by UAMS. Commissioners include representatives of victim service agencies and service providers in the fields of law enforcement, medicine, and mental health.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; a hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P.

Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute, and the Institute for Community Health Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 3,553 students and 1,030 medical residents and fellows, and two dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with about 12,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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