Family and Child Well-being System:

Economic & Concrete Supports as a Core Component

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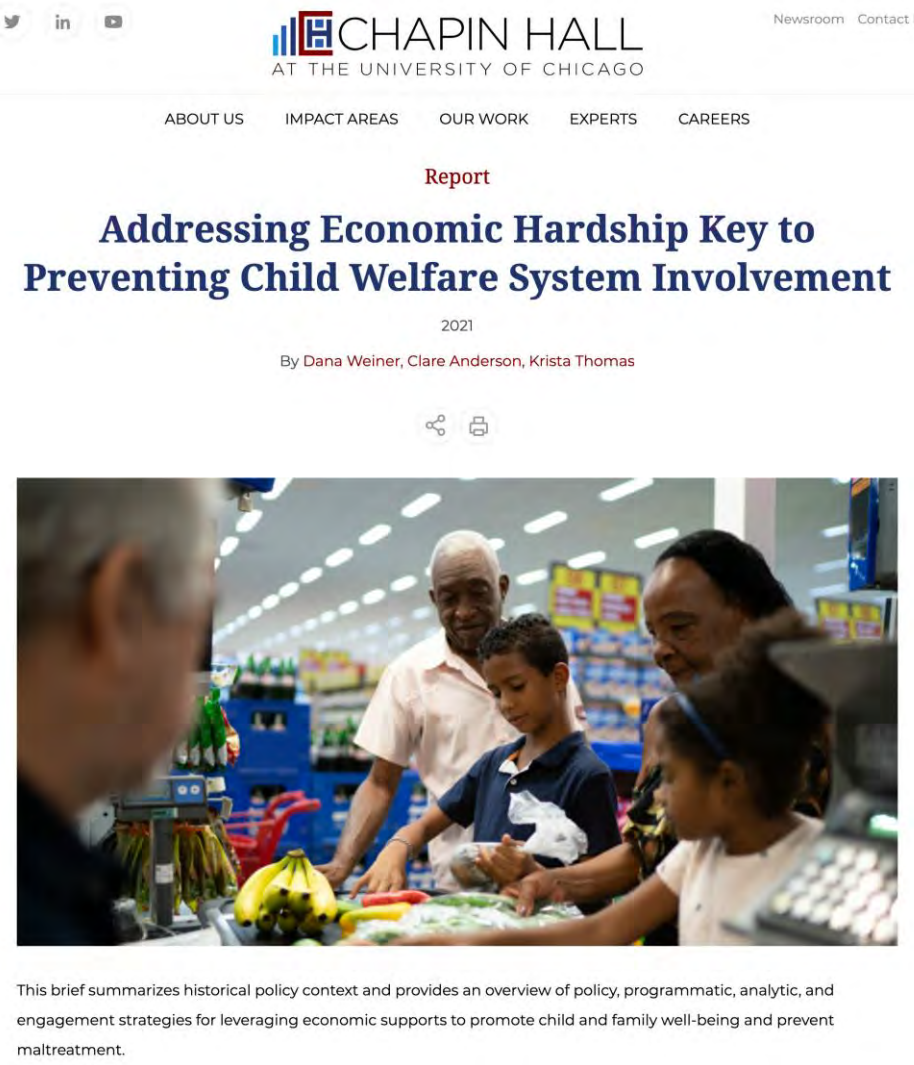
Chapin Hall Resources



https://www.chapinhall.org/research/economic-supports-child-welfare/

(Weiner, Anderson & Thomas, 2021)
(Anderson, Grewal-Kök, Cusick, Weiner, & Thomas, 2021)

Historical Policies & Choices: Repetition of Bifurcation

Early 1900s

Mother's Pensions for poor single mothers recognized the importance of financial supports to address economic hardship & promote family stability. However, these supports were largely limited to white, widowed mothers.

1935

Social Security Act bifurcates supports to families by nesting Aid to Dependent Children (ADC, later AFDC) under the Social Security Administration but social services under the Children's Bureau.

1960

Flemming Rule implemented in response to states denying ADC benefits to families, mostly Black, because their homes were deemed "unsuitable." It required states to either provide supports to these families or remove the children and place them in foster care.

1961

Social Security Act Amendments establishes title IV-E as an open-ended entitlement for foster care services without analogous funding for family support services.

1974

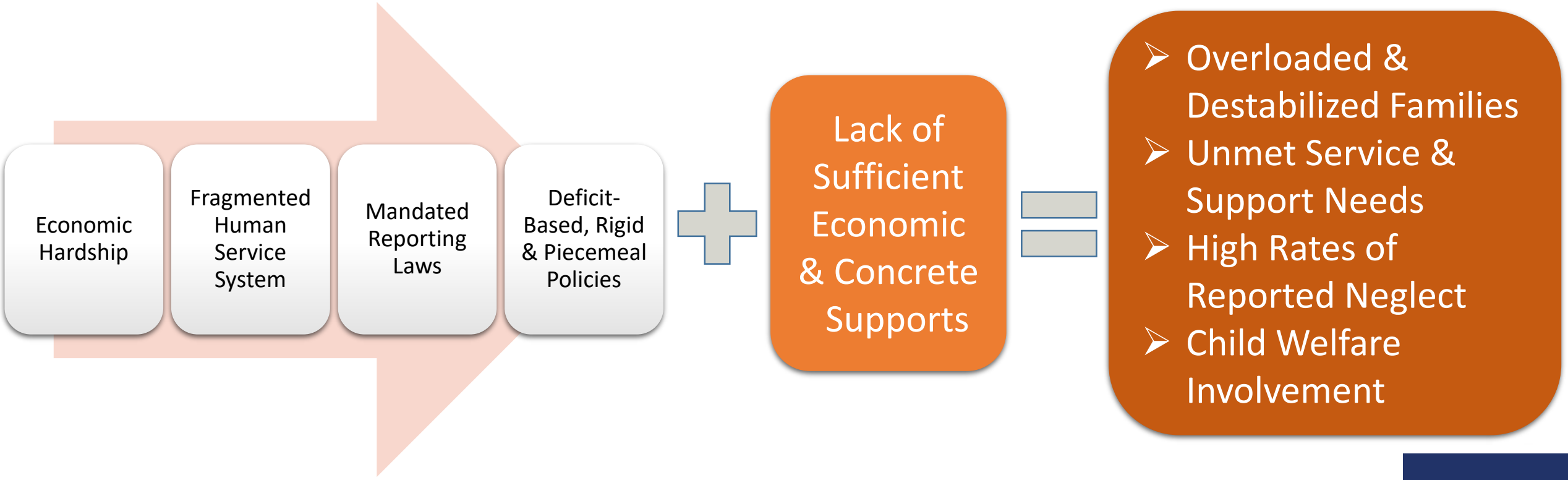
CAPTA requires state mandated reporting laws but does not include standard guidelines, training requirements or opportunities for reporters to explore alternative family support options. Implementation has resulted in high reporting rates by teachers.

2018

Family First Prevention Services Act does not include economic & concrete supports and focuses on treating the parent or child rather than the context.

(Anderson, in press) (Thomas, in press) (Feely, 2020) (Weiner, 2021) (Lawrence-Webb,

U.S Historical Policy & Choice Points



Revisiting Knowledge on the Intersection of Economic Insecurity & Child Welfare Involvement in 2022 Context

Family Protective Factors

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL POLICY'S strengthening families™ A PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK

Parental resilience

Social connections

Knowledge of parenting and child development

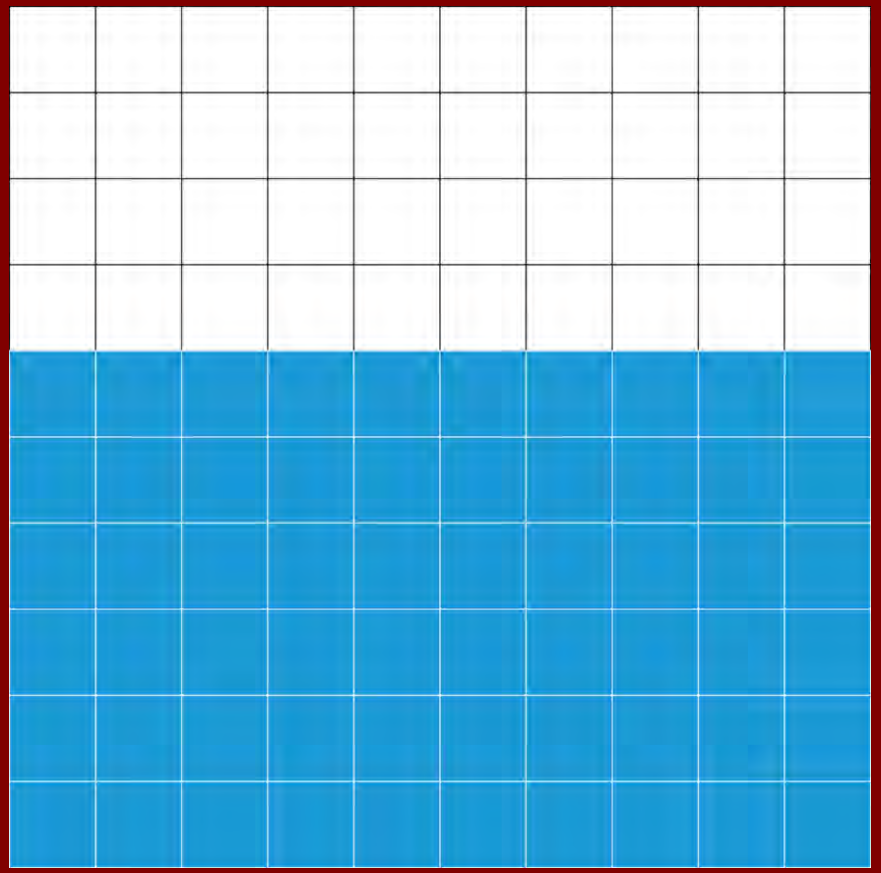
Concrete support in times of need

Social and emotional competence of children

How Does Economic & Material Hardship Impact Parenting and Child Well-Being?

Family Stress Model

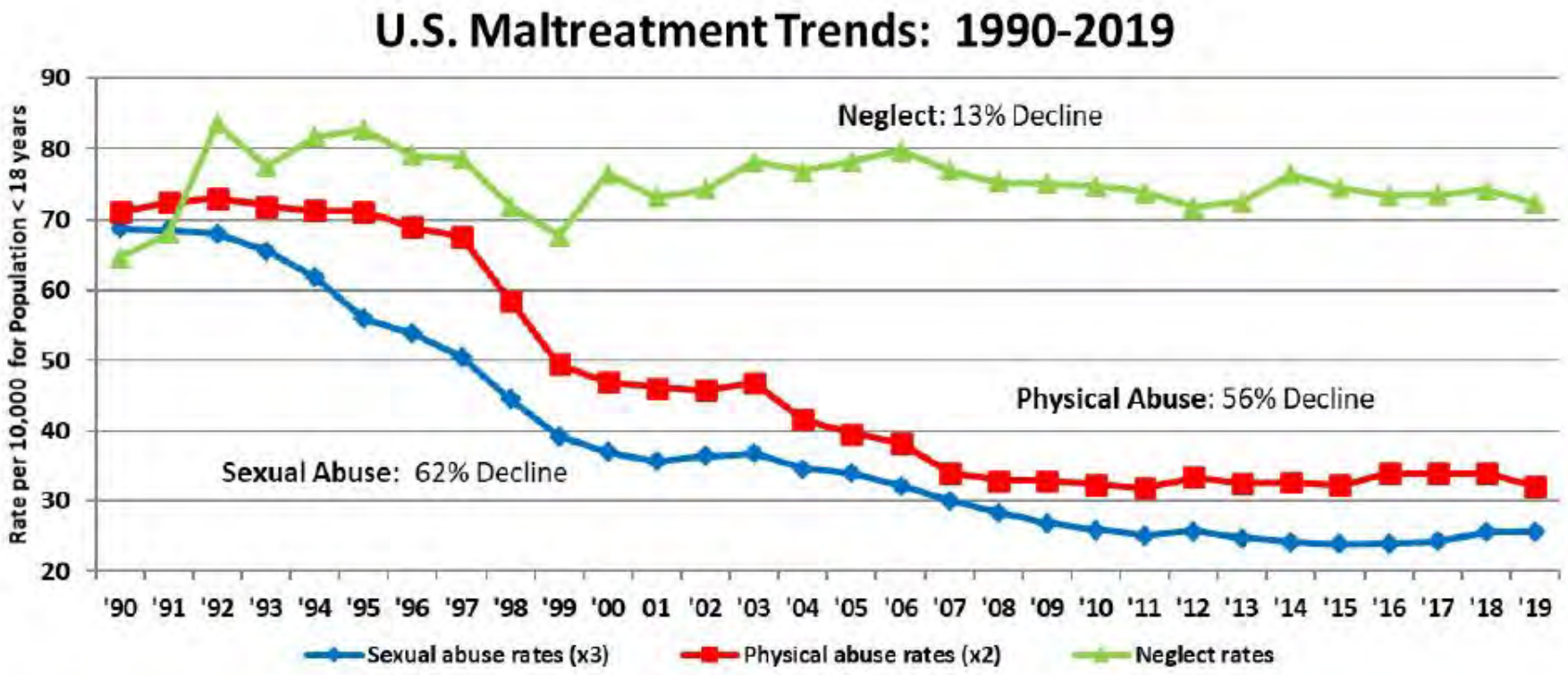
(Conger, 1994) (Neppl, 2016) (Duncan, 2014) (Mistry, 2002)



60%+

of substantiated CPS responses nationally involve neglect only

Rates of Neglect Remain Unchanged



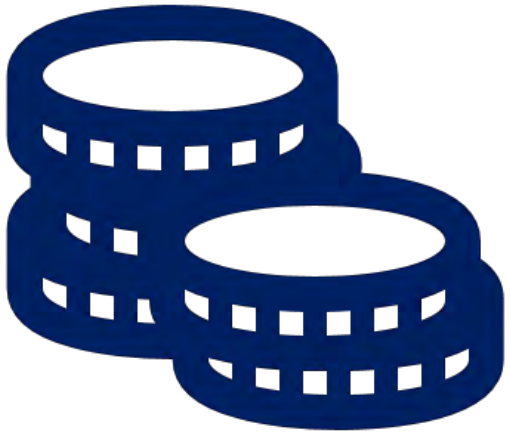
Note: Trend estimates represent total change from 1992 to 2019. Annual rates for physical abuse and sexual abuse have been multiplied by 2 and 3 respectively in Figure 1 so that trend comparisons can be highlighted.

[1] The statistics in Table 1 and Figure 1 concern substantiated cases of sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect. A substantiated case means a case that has been reported to a child protection agency, investigated and deemed to have occurred according to a "preponderance of evidence." The child maltreatment cases referred and investigated by state child protection agencies primarily involve abuse by caregivers. The cases do not include many involving stranger abusers, unless some element of caregiver neglect was involved.

Note: physical & sexual abuse are and continue to be a small percentage of child maltreatment relative to neglect. Trend lines in this table have been multiplied to emphasize reductions over time

(Finkelhor, 2021)
(Bullinger, 2019)

Intersection of Family Economic Insecurity & CPS Involvement



- Children in economically insecure households are:
  - ➢ **5x** more likely to experience maltreatment
  - ➢ **7x** more likely to experience neglect

  (compared to other children)
- Nearly **85% of families investigated by CPS** earn below 200% of the federal poverty line *($43,920 for a family of 3 in 2021)*
- Families living below the poverty line are **3x more likely** to be substantiated for child maltreatment

(Dolan, 2011) (Drake, 2014) (Sedlak, 2010)

Experiencing Material Hardship Is Strongly Associated with Increased Risk for Child Welfare Involvement

If families experience **at least one** material hardship

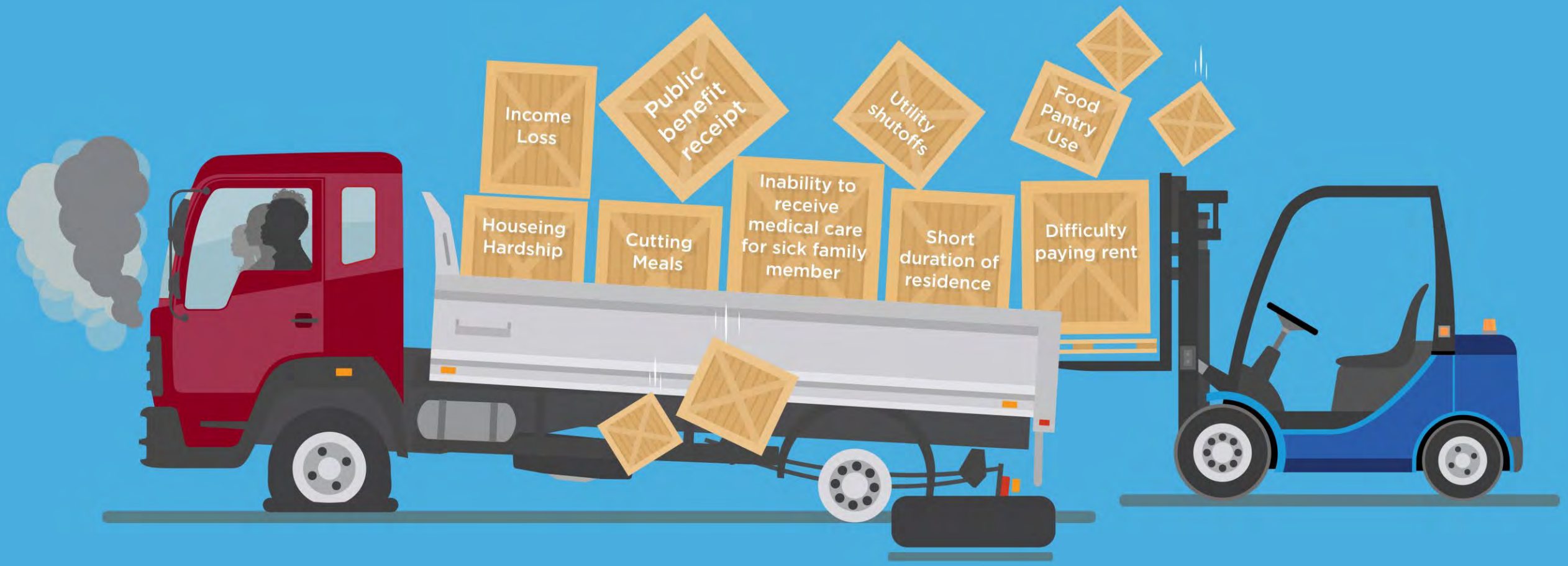
- **Likelihood of being investigated for neglect increases nearly 3x**
- **Likelihood of being investigated for physical abuse increases nearly 4x**

If families experience **multiple types of hardship** after experiencing no hardships

- **Likelihood of being involved in a CPS investigation increases 4x**
- **Likelihood of being investigated for physical abuse increases 7x**

(Yang, 2015) (Shook, 1999)

Multiple Material & Economic Hardships Can Overload Families and Increase their Risk for Child Welfare Involvement



Economic Shocks: Transitory & Turbulent

Families move in and out of poverty over time

- Almost 50% of those who become poor are out of poverty a year later
- **But more than 50% of those who previously left poverty will return to poverty within 5 years**
- Almost 50% of American families with young children are at risk of poverty before their child enters kindergarten
- More than 50% of all Americans will spend a year in poverty (by age 65)
- 84% of all Black Americans will spend a year in poverty (by age 65)

63% of TANF recipients are short-term
(participate from 1-12 months)
(2009-2012 data)

(Drake, 2014)
(Cellini, 2008)
(Mistry, 2002)
(Han, 2021)
(Irving, 2015)

The **turbulence created by entering & leaving poverty may create serious stress for parents** and impact parenting

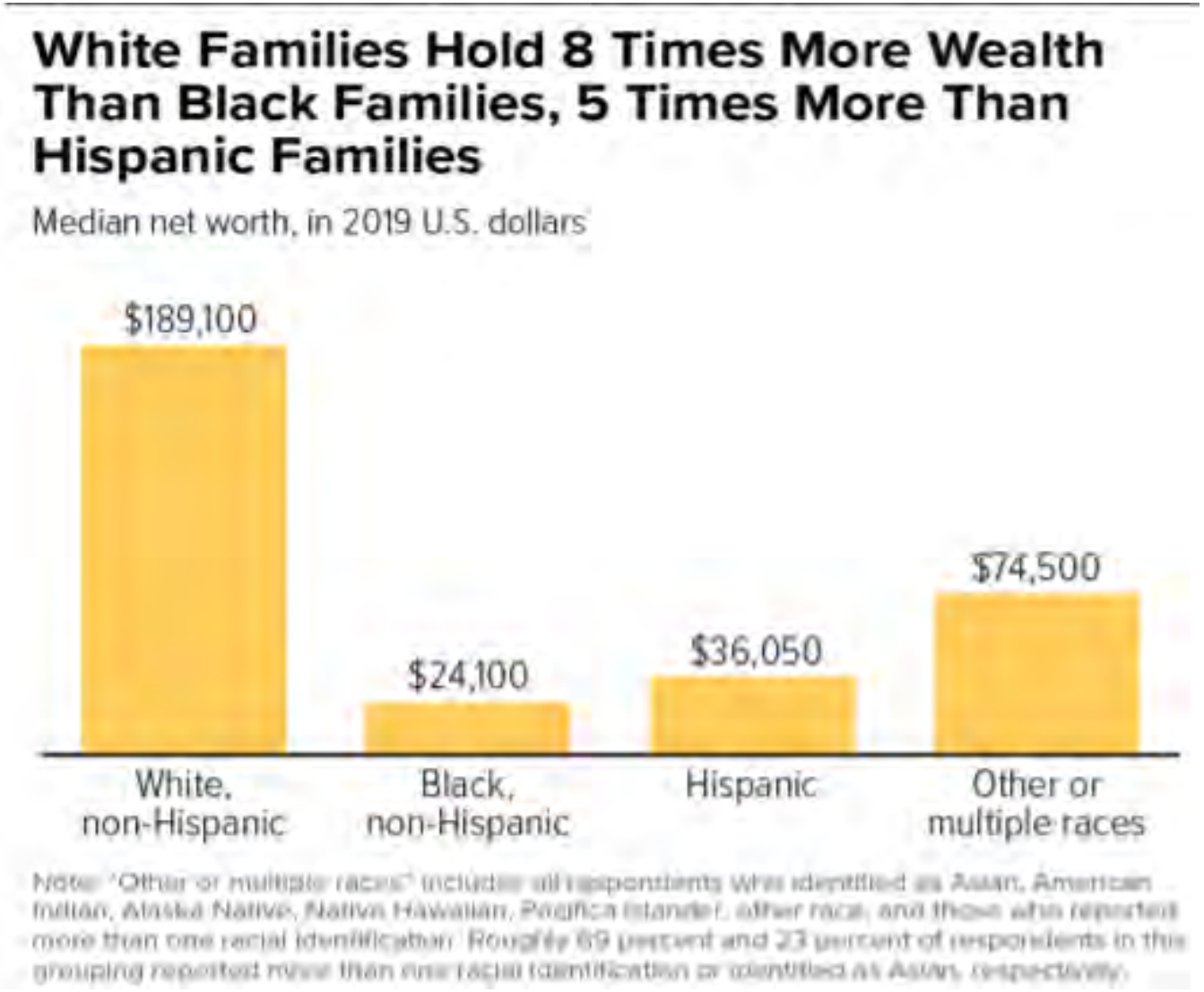
The Buffer is Thin

37%

of U.S. adults don't have $400 in the bank to cover an unexpected expense

(Federal Reserve, 2020)

The Racial Wealth Gap in the U.S.



- Black Americans represent **13%** of the U.S. population, but possess **only 4%** of the nation's household wealth
- Nearly **1 in 5** Black households has **zero or negative net worth**

(Federal Reserve, 2020)
(Moss, 2020)
(Prosperity Now, 2020)

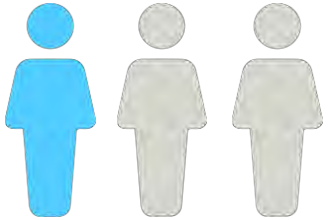
Role of Poverty and Economic Hardship in Racial Disparities & Disproportionality in Child Welfare

Poverty in the U.S. Disproportionately Impacts Children of Color

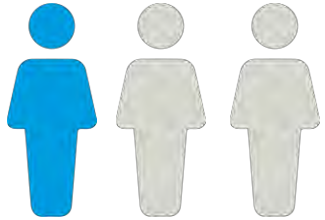
- Nearly **73%** of children in poverty are children of color

(CDF, 2020)
(Kids Count, 2020)
(Census Bureau, 2020)

Living in poverty:

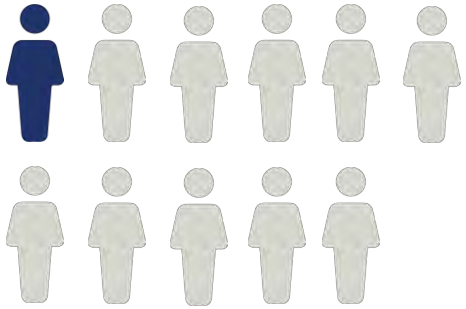


Nearly 1 in 3
Black children



Nearly 1 in 3 American
Indian/Alaska
Native children

Nearly 1 in 4
Latinx children



1 in 11 white children

- While 14% of U.S. children are Black, they make up **27%** of children living below the poverty line

Disproportionality and disparities are due to racism both internal and external to the child welfare system (Dettlaff, 2020)

Economic & Concrete Supports:

A Race Equity Strategy to Address Disparity & Disproportionality in Child Welfare

Children investigated for abuse and neglect

- **28%** of all white children by age 18
- **53%** of all Black children by age 18

Children determined to be "victims" of maltreatment

- American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) and Black children are determined to be "victims" of maltreatment at **almost twice** the rate of white children

(Kim, 2017) (Child Maltreatment 2019)

Economic & Concrete Supports:

A Race Equity Strategy to Address Disparity & Disproportionality in Child Welfare

Children placed in foster care

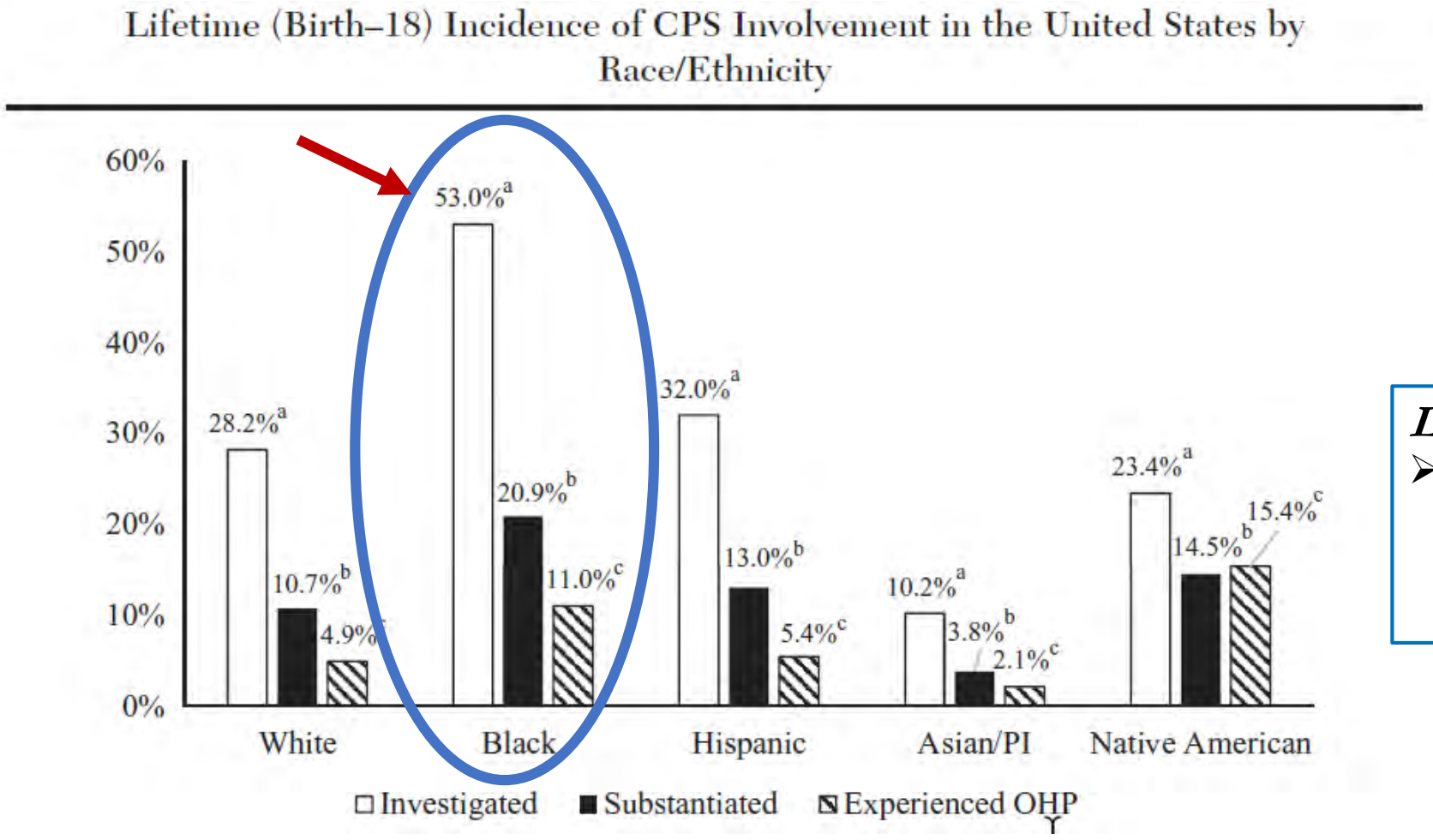
- Black children: 14% of general child population but 23% of children in foster care
- AIAN children: 1% of general child population but 2% of children in foster care

Children who experience termination of parental rights

- Compared to white children, AIAN children are **2.7 times** more likely and Black children are **2.4 times** more likely to experience termination of both parents' rights

(Child Maltreatment 2019) (Wildeman, 2020)

CPS Investigations Are Pervasive: Over Half of All Black Children Experience an Investigation



Annual CPS investigations

- **Almost 3.5 million children** subject to an investigation (FFY 2019)
- **80%** of child investigated are <u>not</u> found to be victims of maltreatment

Lifetime Incidence of Investigation

- **<u>37% of all children</u>** & **<u>41% of children</u>** in the 20 most populous U.S. counties experience at least one CPS investigation by age 18

(Berger, 2020)
(Child Maltreatment 2019)
(Kim, 2017)
(Edwards, 2021)

...But There Is Dramatic Variability in How CPS Systems Respond Across the U.S.

Confirmed Maltreatment

- 1 in 8 children in the U.S. (12.5%)
- *In the 20 most populous counties*: 9.1% of all children
  - **Variability** - 16.6% of all children in Wayne, MI vs. 2.7% in King, WA

Placement into Foster Care

- 1 in 17 children in the U.S. (6%)
- *In the 20 most populous counties*: 3.5% of all children
  - 20% of all Black children in Los Angeles County are placed into foster care
  - **Variability** - 9% of all children in Maricopa, AZ vs. 1.7% in Cook, IL

Termination of Parental Rights (TPR)

- 1 in every 100 children in the U.S.
- *In the 20 most populous counties:* 0.7% of all children
  - **Variability** - 2.8% of all children in Maricopa, AZ vs. 0.2% in NYC

Great variability in neglect findings across the US:

- 1.5% of all child maltreatment victims experienced "neglect only" in Vermont, compared to 92% in Montana

(Edwards, 2021) (Wildeman, 2014) (Yi, 2020) (Wildeman, 2020) (Child Maltreatment 2019)

Relationship Between Family Income & Time to Reunification

Children in foster care take longer to reunify with their families when:

- Their reason for placement is **neglect** *(compared to physical abuse)*
- Their mothers have **lower average monthly incomes** (cash assistance + earnings) post-placement
  - *Every $100 increase in a mother's post-placement income increases her child's speed of reunification by 6%*
- Their mothers **lose a significant amount of cash assistance** post-placement
  - *Percentage of children remaining in foster care after a year whose mothers lost a significant amount of income from cash assistance post-placement is more than double that of children whose mothers did not lose income from cash assistance post-placement (87% vs. 41%)*
- Their mothers must **pay child support to the state** to offset the costs of foster care
  - *A $100 increase in the monthly child support order amount is predicted to increase the months to reunification by 6.6 months*
- Their mothers had **lower earnings** prior to placement
  - *Children whose mothers earned up to $3,000 in the year prior to placement are associated with an estimated 1.4 month decrease in months to reunification*

(Wells, 2006) (Cancian, 2017)

Annual Costs of Child Maltreatment in the U.S.

- **$80 billion** = direct & indirect costs of child maltreatment (2012)
- **$428 billion** = economic burden due to *substantiated* child maltreatment (lifetime costs incurred annually) (2015)
- **$2 trillion** = economic burden due to *investigated* child maltreatment (lifetime costs incurred annually) (2015)

(Gelles, 2012) (Peterson, 2018)

Total Annual Public Expenditures on Child Welfare Systems in the U.S.

- **$33 billion** = total direct public expenditures by state & local child welfare agencies (SFY 2018)

- ***Find your state's prevention percentage in the Child Trends Financing Study***
- ***What would it take to flip this percentage?***

(Child Trends, 2021)

Evidence:

Economic & Concrete Supports, Child Maltreatment, CPS Involvement, and Child and Family Well-being

Sources of Evidence

How do we know about the impact of programs, policies and strategies for reducing child welfare system involvement through economic & concrete supports?

- Research designed to detect the impact of a specific strategy through randomized controlled trials
- Observations using decades of administrative data aligned with policy shifts
- Natural experiments to assess public benefit programs
- Theoretical models and studies that illustrate the processes by which material hardship leads to child maltreatment

Taken together, this vast body of science and growing preponderance of evidence informs our understanding of what has been effective and why *and* our hypotheses about the potential of policy shifts and new pathways.

What does the evidence suggest happens when economic & concrete supports or income are reduced?

Increased Economic Hardship Associated with Child Welfare Involvement

Reduced TANF benefits

Reduced employment

Lack of child care

Increased gas prices

Housing instability

Reduced income & income shocks

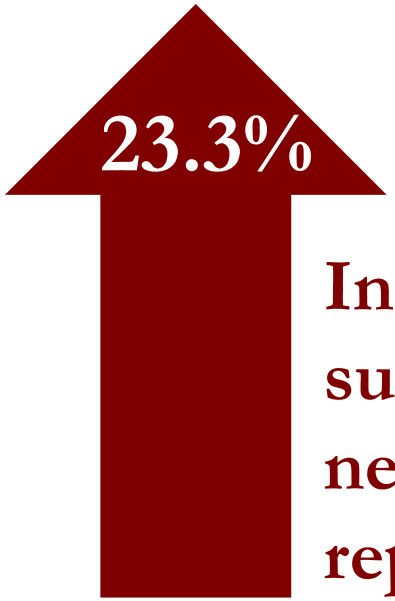
= **Increased child welfare involvement**

(Ginther, 2017) (Beimers, 2011) (Paxson, 2003) (Yang, 2016) (Cash, 2003) (Klevens, 2015) (Weiner, 2020) (McLaughlin, 2017) (Bullinger, 2021) (Berger, 2015) (Frioux, 2014) (Wood, 2012) (Cai, 2021)

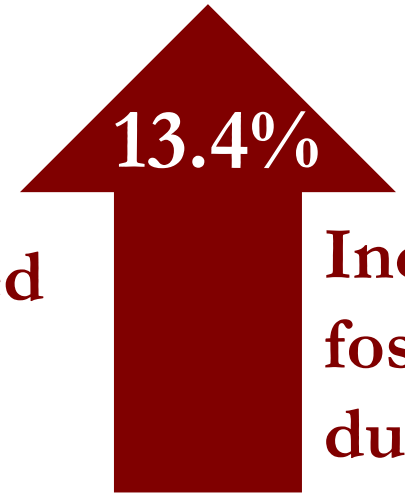
Reduced Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

States that implemented TANF sanctions of loss of all benefits for not working:

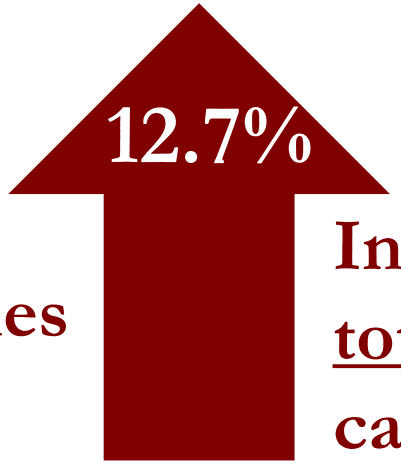
Reminder: First statutory goal of TANF is to support needy families so that children can remain safely at home or with relatives.



Increase in substantiated neglect reports



Increase in foster care entries due to neglect



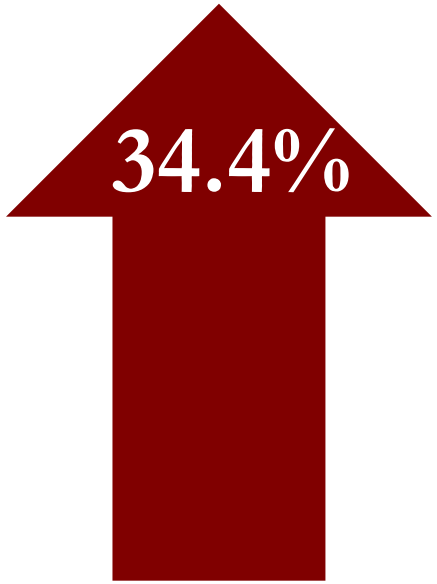
Increase in <u>total</u> foster care entries

(Ginther, 2017)

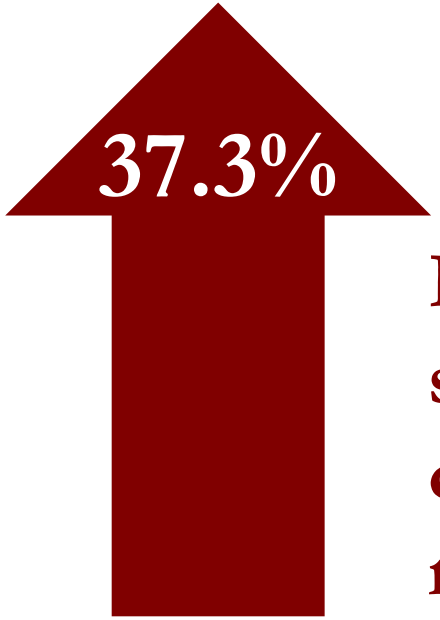
(Increases observed from 2004 to 2015)

Reduced TANF

States that implemented TANF time limits of less than 5 years:



Increase in substantiated maltreatment reports



Increase in substantiated child neglect reports

(Ginther, 2017)

(Increases observed from 2004 to 2015)

Reduced Economic Supports

Female-headed households that experience an <u>involuntary exit</u> from TANF *(due to sanctions, timelines or failed redeterminations)*:

- Have a **26% higher risk of a substantiated child maltreatment finding**
- Report, on average, **50% lower income** from employment

(compared to female-headed households who leave TANF voluntarily, in the 2-year period following exit)

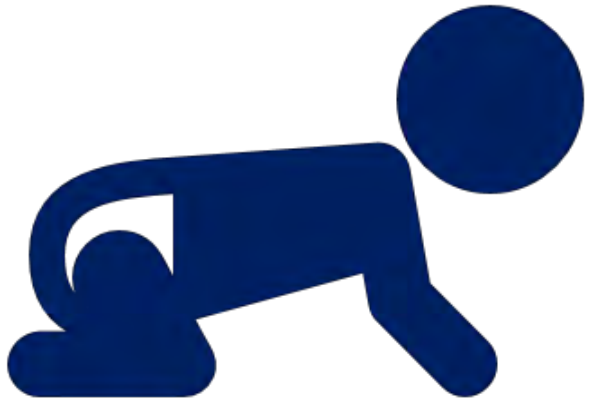
(Beimers, 2011)

Reduced State Public Benefits

- Reductions in state public benefit levels (AFDC/TANF plus the value of food stamps) are associated with **higher numbers of children in foster care**
- Lifetime limits on receipt of TANF benefits & sanctions for noncompliance are associated with **higher levels of substantiated maltreatment**

(Paxson, 2002, state-level data 1990-1996)
(Paxson, 2003, state-level data 1990-1998)

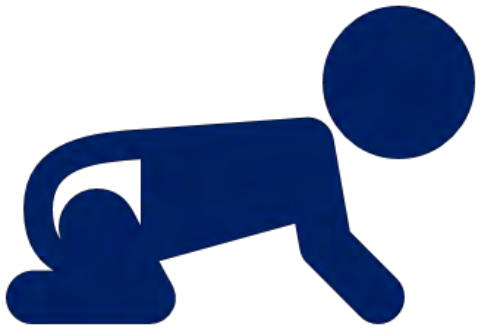
Lack of Access to Child Care



- For every additional child care concern reported by families receiving TANF, the **risk of supervisory child neglect increases by 20%**
- Mothers entering substance abuse treatment who have difficulty securing child care are **82% more likely to self-report child neglect** *(compared to mothers entering treatment who don't have difficulty securing child care)*
  - Difficulty finding child care was a stronger predictor of maternal neglect than almost any other factor measured in this study, including mental health, severity of drug use, history of abuse as a child & use of public assistance

(Yang, 2016) (Cash, 2003)

Lack of Access to Child Care Subsidies



Waitlists to access subsidized child care are significantly associated with an **increase in child abuse & neglect investigations**

- Only **1 in 6 children** eligible for child care assistance receives it
- Low-income families who pay for child care spend an average of **30%** of their household income on child care

(Klevens, 2015) (Rice, 2019)

Reduced Employment

A 1% increase in the monthly unemployment rate in an urban midwestern county is associated with an **increase of 61 screened-in reports** for child maltreatment *(excluding "neglect only" reports)*

(Weiner, 2020)

Reduced Employment

Higher county-level unemployment rates:

- Lead to **decreased expenditures on basic goods**—food, gas, energy & transportation
- Are significantly associated with **increased rates of substantiated child neglect reports**
  - A 1% increase in the unemployment rate is associated with a ***20% increase*** in substantiated neglect reports

(Brown, 2020, national data set 2004-2012)

Reduced Employment

During the Great Recession (2007-2009):

- Increases in local unemployment rates were associated with ***increased*** **risk of self-reported child abuse** but ***decreased*** **risk of neglect** *(supervisory & physical neglect only)*
  - Literature suggests high local unemployment rates may decrease likelihood of neglect as parents spend more time with their children
- The rate of abusive head trauma for children < 5 years old was **significantly higher** than during the period immediately before the recession

(Schneider, 2017, data from 20 large U.S. cities)
(Berger, 2011, data from 3 U.S. regions)

Reduced Male Employment

Declines in male employment are significantly associated with **increased child maltreatment**

- For every 10% decline in the male employment rate *(among 20 to 34 year-olds)*, the child maltreatment rate rises by 9.62%
- A 1% increase in the male mass layoff rate *(holding the female mass layoff rate constant)*, increases the maltreatment rate by 4.7 to 13%

Once poverty, male employment & single-parent households are accounted for, *race does <u>not</u> play a role on maltreatment rates*

(Cherry, 2016, state-level employment data 2000-2012)
(Lindo, 2018, California county-level data 1998-2012)

Reduced Income

About 10% of low-income adults with children have experienced an economic shock resulting in a **50% income drop** over one year

For low-income families with recently closed CPS investigations:

- Experiencing a negative earnings shock *(reduction of quarterly earnings by 30% or more)* **increases their risk for subsequent CPS investigation by 18% & physical abuse investigation by 26%**
  - Each additional negative earnings shock is associated with a **15% greater likelihood** of CPS involvement
  - ➢ The association **diminishes** when an earnings shock is compensated by receipt of public benefits *(cash and in-kind support)*
    - ➢ For children under 5 years of age, a negative earnings shock offset by receipt of public benefits is associated with:
      - **12% decrease** in risk for CPS involvement
      - **50% decrease** in risk for physical abuse investigation
- Each consecutive quarter with stable income is associated with a **5% lower risk** of CPS investigation

(Cai, 2021, Wisconsin administrative data)

Reduced Disposable Income due to Increased Gas Prices

A $1.00 increase in the price of gas for a state with 100,000 children would be associated with an **additional 642 child maltreatment referrals**

(McLaughlin, 2017)

Housing Insecurity

- Inadequate housing contributes to the risk of entering foster care for **1 out of every 6 children** involved in CPS investigations
- Housing instability in urban areas is significantly associated with **increased risk for neglect** *(above and beyond poverty)*

"The Children's Bureau affirms that working with families and young adults to secure housing and prevent eviction and homelessness is paramount to ***prevention****."*

(Fowler, 2013)
(Warren, 2015)
(ACF Dear Colleague Letter, 2021)

Housing Insecurity - Evictions

Each additional eviction filing *(per 100 occupied units in a block group)* is associated with a **2% increase in child maltreatment reports** (primarily neglect)

1 in 4 children born in large U.S. cities who are living in deep poverty will experience at least one eviction for nonpayment of rent by age 16

(Bullinger, 2021) (Lundberg, 2019)

Housing Insecurity - Foreclosures

- Households that will experience a foreclosure filing in the next 6-12 months are at **70% greater risk of a CPS investigation** than households that will not
- Increases in current and prior-year mortgage foreclosure rates are associated with **increases in investigated & substantiated child maltreatment**
  - *1% increase in the prior-year foreclosure rate is associated with a **7.3% increase** in substantiations*
- Increases in mortgage delinquency & foreclosure rates are associated with increases in hospital admissions for:
  - **Physical abuse of children** < 6 years old
  - **Traumatic brain injury for infants** <1 year old *(non-birth & non-motor vehicle crash related)*

(Berger, 2015, Wisconsin data 2008-2011)
(Frioux, 2014, Pennsylvania county-level data 2000-2010)
(Wood, 2012, data from 38 hospitals 2000-2009)

What does the evidence suggest happens when economic & concrete supports are increased?

Child Welfare Interventions Augmented with Economic & Concrete Supports

- Community Response
- Differential Response
- Family Preservation

Concrete Supports

- Medicaid
- Supportive Housing
- Paid Family Leave
- Child Care
- SNAP & WIC
- Legal Support

Economic Supports

- Minimum Wage Increase
- Earned Income
- Unemployment Benefits
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Public Benefits (TANF)
- Child Support Payments

Community Response with Economic & Concrete Supports (slide 1 of 2)

- Community Response (CR) programs seek to *voluntarily* engage families diverted from CPS by providing *short-term* support (12-16 weeks) to stabilize families & address stressors
- CR services are provided by community providers, not child welfare
- CR interventions include:
  - ✓ At least 1 home visit from the CR worker + biweekly contact
  - ✓ Assessment of family strengths, needs & stressors
  - ✓ Collaborative goal-setting between family & CR worker
  - ✓ Case management to help families access needed concrete supports
    - In-kind & cash benefits
    - Parenting supports
    - Mental health treatment
    - Child health & development services
  - ✓ Flexible funds to address immediate financial stressors

(Slack, 2020)

Community Response with Economic & Concrete Supports (slide 2 of 2)

Evaluations of CR programs have found:

- Participating families most often define their **primary needs as economic & material**
- Participation in CR services may **reduce the likelihood of future CPS involvement**
  - *Wisconsin evaluation* – compared to eligible but waitlisted families, participating families showed significantly lower rates of subsequent CPS involvement
  - *Colorado evaluation*
    - Pre-post tests showed significant improvement in protective factors & decrease in prevention needs
    - Compared to matched control group, participating families experienced significantly fewer subsequent founded assessments & out-of-home placements

(Slack, 2020) (Maguire-Jack, 2014) (Allan, 2008)

Differential Response with Concrete Supports (slide 1 of 2 revised)

Low-income families who received Differential Response (DR) with concrete supports, as compared to low-income families who receive DR with no concrete supports, were **less likely to experience a subsequent maltreatment report** (43.2% v. 52.7%)

Concrete supports may include housing, rent, utilities, food or clothing, appliances, furniture or home repair, and other financial help

(Loman, 2012)

Differential Response with Concrete Supports

(slide 2 of 2 revised)

Families with screened-in reports who are assigned to a Differential Response (DR) track and tend to receive more concrete supports, as compared to families assigned to the traditional track with fewer concrete supports provided, experience a lower risk of:

- **Subsequent accepted maltreatment reports**
- **Subsequent child removals and placements**

Concrete supports may include housing, rent, utilities, food or clothing, appliances, furniture or home repair, and other financial help

(Loman, 2012) (RCT)

Family Preservation with Concrete Supports

(slide 1 of 2)

Families with open child welfare cases (mostly neglect) who receive a home-based services program with concrete supports (averaging $314 per family) are **less likely to experience a child maltreatment report**

(compared to families who receive the program without any concrete supports)

(Rostad, 2017)

Family Preservation with Concrete Supports

(slide 2 of 2)

It was estimated that, on average, in the first year a family with an open child welfare case receives a home-based services program:

- Providing concrete supports costing $3,361 can **avert one maltreatment report**
- Providing any concrete support (vs. no support) **reduces the risk of a subsequent maltreatment report by almost 17%**

(Rostad, 2017)

Family Preservation with Economic Supports

Children in families with indicated allegations of inadequate food, shelter, clothing or environmental neglect who receive cash assistance from the child welfare agency:

- Are **less likely to be placed** into foster care (27% vs. 39%)
- If placed into foster care, have **shorter average lengths of stay** (174 days vs. 324 days)
- Are **more likely to be reunified** with their families (60% vs. 23%)

(Shook, 1997) (Eamon, 2004; interpreting Shook 1997 findings)

(compared to children in families with similar indicated allegations who do not receive cash assistance over a 15-month period)

Medicaid Expansion & Continuity of Benefits

States with **expanded Medicaid**, compared to those without, experienced a **decrease in reported neglect**

- 422 fewer cases per 100,000 children <age 6 for each study year

(baseline rate in 2013 of 3,944 cases per 100,000 children < age 6)

(Brown, 2019) (Klevens, 2015)

Continuity of eligibility for Medicaid/child health insurance (SCHIP) is significantly associated with a **decrease in child abuse & neglect investigations**

Supportive Housing

Children of child welfare-involved families who face housing instability and receive a supportive housing program (housing voucher + case management) experience:

- **Fewer removals** (9% vs. 40% in business as usual control group after 2 years)
- **Lower prevalence of substantiated maltreatment** (8% v. 26% in control group after 18 months)
- **Increased reunification** (30% vs. 9% in control group after 2 years)

(Farrell, 2018) (RCT)

Permanent Housing Subsidies (slide 1 of 2)

HUD's **Family Options Study** found that homeless families referred for permanent housing subsidies experienced:

- **50% reduction in foster care placements** (after 20 months)
- Lower rates of psychological distress
- Less intimate partner violence
- Fewer child behavior problems
- Greater housing stability & food security

(Gubits, 2015) (RCT)

(compared to a business as usual control group of homeless families)

Permanent Housing Subsidies (slide 2 of 2)

Homeless families referred for <u>permanent housing subsidies only</u> *(with no supportive services)* experienced **more positive outcomes** than homeless families referred for temporary housing + supportive services:

- Fewer child separations from family
- Better child well-being
- More housing stability
- More food security

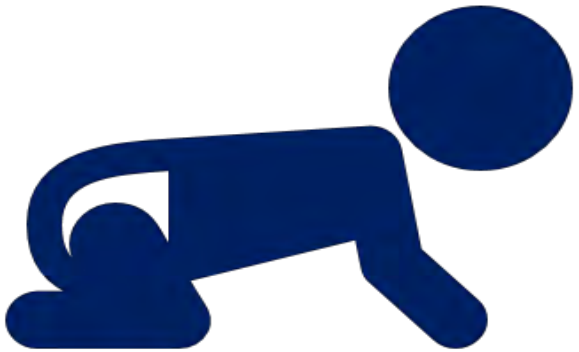
(Gubits, 2015) (RCT)

Paid Family Leave

Compared to states with no PFL policy, the implementation of California's 2004 PFL policy (up to 12 weeks of partially paid leave) was associated with a **significant decrease in hospital admissions for abusive head trauma** among children <1 year old and among children < 2 years old

(Klevens, 2016)

Child Care Subsidies

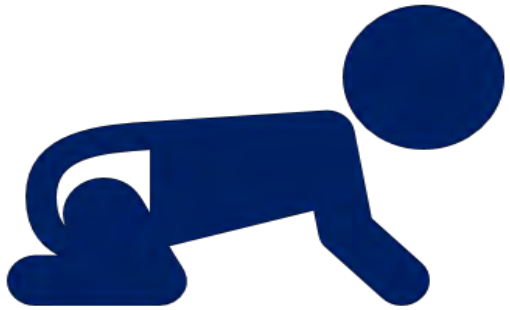


Child Care Subsidies have a Protective Effect

- States with more flexible Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) program polices regarding subsidies for child welfare-supervised children have, on average, **significantly fewer child removals** than other states
- Each additional month that low-income mothers receive a child care subsidy is associated with a **16% decrease in the odds of a neglect report** *(in the following 12 months)*

(Meloy, 2015) (Yang, 2019)

Child Care Subsidies



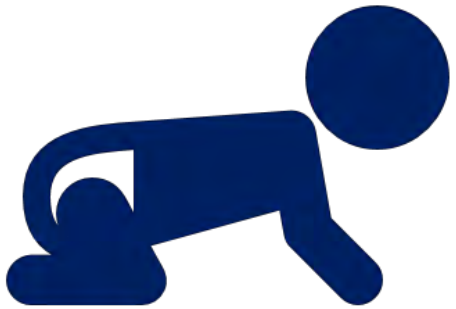
An additional $1,000 spent by states on child care assistance per person living in poverty is associated with a:

- **40% reduction** in child maltreatment reports
- **35% reduction** in substantiated child maltreatment
- **63% reduction** in foster care placements
- **50% reduction** in child fatalities due to maltreatment

(after controlling for federal spending)

(Puls, 2021)

High-Quality Child Care



- **Helps prevent child maltreatment**

✓ Children who participated in Chicago Child-Parent Center preschool were **52% less likely to be victims of confirmed maltreatment** by age 17 & experienced **significantly lower rates of reported neglect** than nonparticipating peers

- **Reduces likelihood of child welfare involvement**

✓ Children who attended Early Head Start had **significantly fewer child welfare encounters** between ages 5 and 9 than those who didn't attend

- **Reduces likelihood of foster care entry**

✓ Children (ages 0-5) who participated in Head Start and were referred to child welfare for suspected maltreatment were **93% less likely to enter foster care** than children who did not receive any ECE

Less than 1/3 of young children with child welfare supervision who live at home receive ECE services

(Reynolds, 2003) (Mersky, 2011) (Green, 2014) (Klein, 2017)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) & Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Children who participate in SNAP or WIC (jointly or alone) have a **lower risk of substantiated abuse and neglect reports** than children who don't participate in either program

(Lee, 2007)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Presence of <u>each</u> additional store accepting SNAP benefits in the least densely populated areas of a northeastern state is associated with:

- **11.3% decrease** in substantiated child maltreatment cases
- **4.4% reduction** in child maltreatment reports
- **6% reduction** in neglect reports

(Bullinger, 2021)

Legal Support

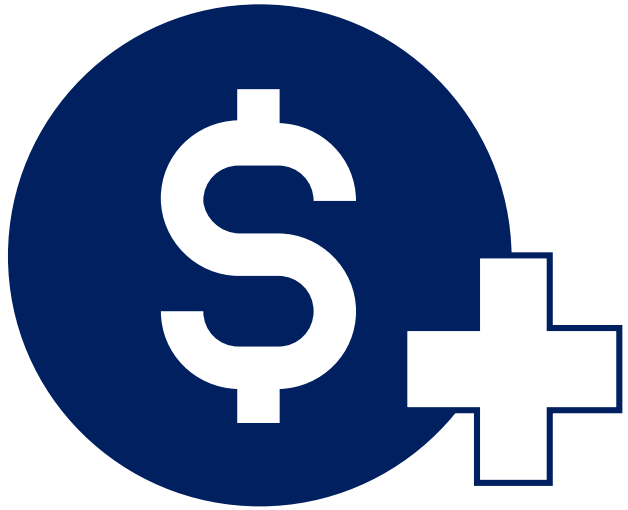
When families at risk of having their children placed into foster care were provided with legal & social work support to resolve collateral matters:

- **Housing**
- **Custody**
- **Domestic violence**
- **Special education**
- **Access to public benefits**

Not 1 of the 110 children served by the program entered the system *(over a 3-year period)*

(Sankaran, 2013)

Minimum Wage



- States that increased the minimum wage beyond $7.25 per hour experienced a **reduction in child maltreatment reports**
- For every $1 increase in the minimum wage, there was a **9.6% reduction in neglect reports** (primarily for children < 12 years)

(Raissian, 2017)

Earned Income

For female-headed households in an urban midwestern county who exit from TANF:

- Employment status alone is <u>not</u> a significant predictor of child maltreatment
- But for **each additional $100 per month in earned income**, the risk of a substantiated child maltreatment finding **decreases by 2.2%** *(during the month in which the income is earned)*
  - ➢The risk of having a substantiated finding is **two-thirds lower** for someone with a job earning $30,000/year compared to someone with no employment income *(holding other factors constant)*

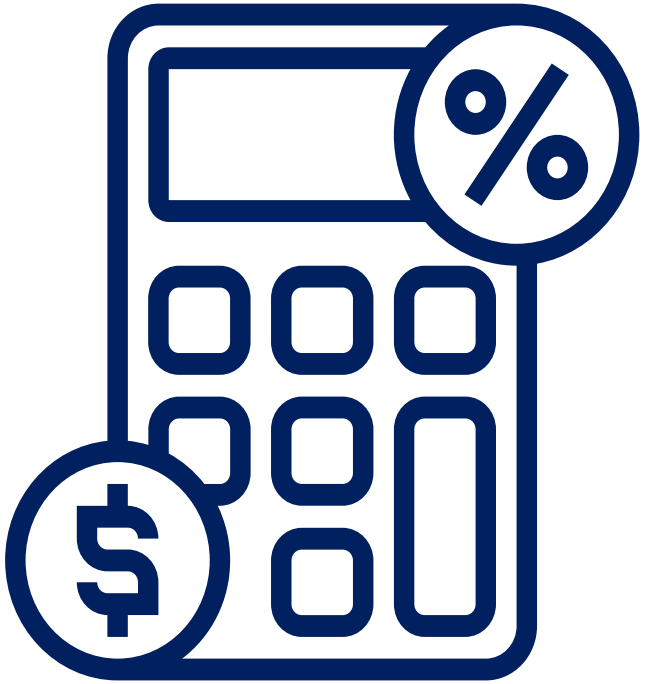
(Beimers, 2011)

Unemployment Benefits

States that **extended the duration of unemployment benefits** at the onset of the Great Recession saw **significantly smaller increases in substantiated reports of child neglect** *(as compared to states that didn't extend unemployment benefits)*

(Brown, 2020)

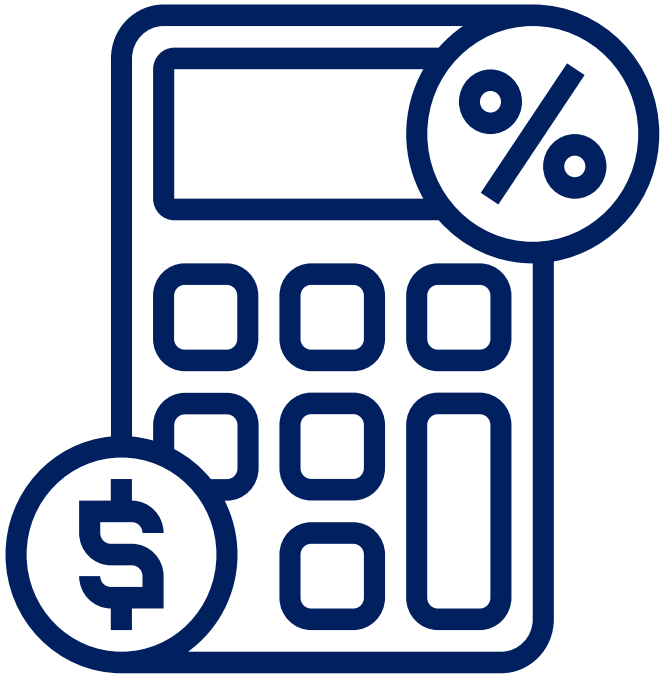
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)



- EITC is associated with significant reductions in self-reported CPS involvement, particularly for single-parent households & larger families
- A $1000 increase in income via EITC is associated with **8-10% reduction in self-reported CPS involvement** for low-income single-mother households

(Berger, 2017)

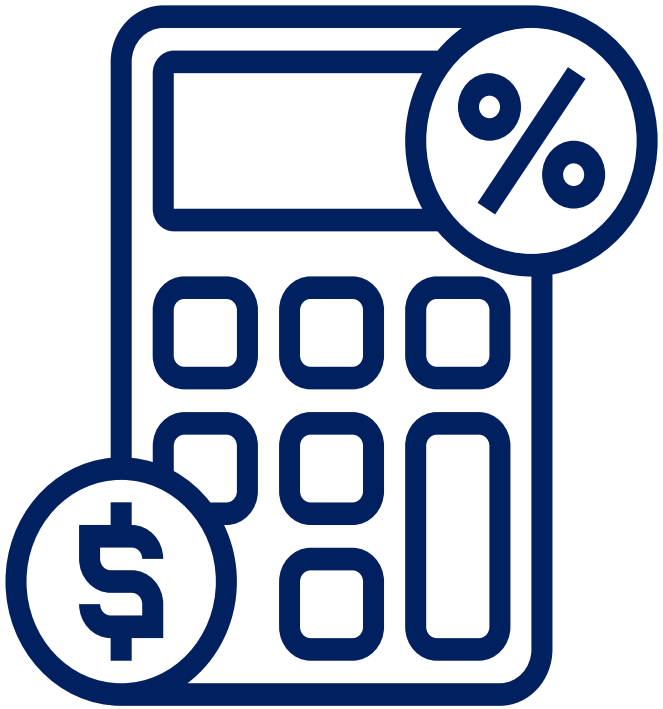
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)



- Expansion of EITC is associated with a **7.4% decrease in foster care entry rates** per year in states with a state-level EITC *(relative to those without)*
- States with state-level refundable EITC, compared to those without, had **11% fewer entries into foster care** *(even after controlling for poverty, race, education and unemployment)*
- If states without any EITC implemented a refundable EITC, an average of **668 fewer children would enter foster care** annually in each state

(Biehl, 2018) (Rostad, 2020)

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)



- 10% increase in refundable state EITC benefits is associated with:
  - **5% decline in rates of reported maltreatment**
  - **9% decline in rates of reported neglect**
- Refundable EITC (averaging $400 per year) is associated with a **decrease in hospital admissions for abusive head trauma** for children < 2 years *(decrease of 3.1 per 100,000)*, even after controlling for child poverty

(Kovski, 2021) (Klevens, 2017)

Public Benefits (TANF)

A 10% increase in state public benefit levels *(AFDC/TANF + the value of food stamps)* for a family of four is predicted to **reduce foster care placements by 8%**

(Paxson, 2003) (data from 1990-1998)

Child Support Payments

Mothers who participate in TANF and are eligible to receive full child support for their children (and child support is disregarded in determining welfare benefits) are **10% less likely to have a child subject to a screened-in maltreatment report** *(compared to mothers who are eligible to receive only partial child support payments)*

- Even a modest increase in child support payments – **averaging $100 per year** – results in a decrease in screened-in maltreatment reports

(Cancian, 2013) (RCT)

Relationship Between Macroeconomic Factors & Child Welfare Involvement Suggests the Need for a Population-Level Public Health Approach to Prevention

Individual Behavior vs. Family Context and Economic Factors

- Material hardship is associated with CPS involvement *beyond* caregiver psychological distress & parenting factors (Yang, 2015)

- The association of individual factors, such as caregiver substance abuse or mental health, with child maltreatment is *reduced after accounting for poverty* experienced by families
  - "Contextual factors like poverty are essential to understanding a family's needs when addressing child maltreatment" (Escaravage, 2014)

- Economic factors are associated with neglect outcomes *above* individual-level parenting behaviors & capacities (Slack, 2011)

Economic & Concrete Supports As a Population-Level Strategy for Prevention of Child Maltreatment

Each additional $1,000 that states spend annually on public benefit programs per person living in poverty is associated with:

- 4.3% reduction in child maltreatment reports
- 4% reduction in substantiated child maltreatment
- 2.1% reduction in foster care placements
- 7.7% reduction in child fatalities due to maltreatment

Public benefit programs included in this analysis:

- ✓ Cash, housing & in-kind assistance
- ✓ Low-income housing infrastructure development
- ✓ Child care assistance
- ✓ Refundable EITC
- ✓ Medical Assistance Programs (including Medicaid + CHIP)

(Puls, 2021, state-level data FFY 2010-2017)

Economic & Concrete Supports As a Population-Level Strategy for Prevention of Child Maltreatment

In 2017, if all states had increased their investment in public benefit programs by 13.3%, there would have been an estimated:

- 181,850 fewer child maltreatment reports
- 28,575 fewer substantiations
- 4,168 fewer foster care placements
- 130 fewer child fatalities due to maltreatment

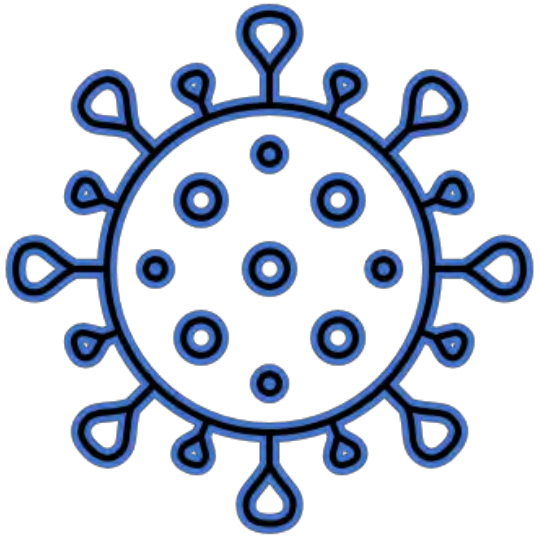
- 12 states have not expanded Medicaid
- Only 23 states have a refundable EITC
- Only 11 states have a refundable Child & Dependent Care Tax Credit
- Only 2 states have a refundable CTC

(from FFY 2010-2017)

Each additional **13.3%** that states invest annually in public benefit programs (which would total $46.5 billion nationally) would save up to **$153 billion** in the long term *(due to reduced maltreatment-related costs)*

(Puls, 2021, state-level data FFY 2010-2017)

Child Maltreatment Declined During the COVID Pandemic Despite Hardship



Child maltreatment declined during the pandemic

From April-Sept 2019 to April-Sept 2020:

- Screened-in referrals declined by 21%
- CPS investigations declined by 21%
- Child maltreatment **victims declined by 12.5%**
- Child **fatalities due to maltreatment declined by 4.4%** (FFY 2019 to FFY 2020)
  - Black child fatalities due to maltreatment ***increased 17%***

Government assistance to families in financial distress may be protective

- Although household finances worsened for 40% of American families, increased government assistance buffered financial distress *(American Academy of Pediatrics national survey)*

(Child Maltreatment 2020) (Sege, 2021)

Income Inequality & Child Maltreatment Rates

At the county level, higher income inequality—*independent of child poverty rates*—is significantly associated with **higher rates of substantiated child maltreatment**

- The impact of income inequality on child maltreatment rates is <u>greatest</u> in counties with the highest levels of child poverty

Who lives in high poverty neighborhoods?

- 44% of poor Black children
- 33% of poor Latinx children
- 15% of poor white children

(2000 data)

(Eckenrode, 2014, national data 2005-2009)
(Zhang, 2021, national data 2009-2018)
(Drake, 2014)

Intergenerational Income Mobility & Child Maltreatment Rates

Counties where children have a greater chance of moving up the income ladder have **lower child maltreatment report rates** *(even after accounting for income inequality and poverty rates)*

- 1% increase in the likelihood of moving from the bottom of the income ladder in childhood to the top in adulthood *(upward mobility)* is associated with **2.3% fewer maltreatment reports**

Black & Native Americans have **substantially lower rates of upward mobility** than whites, leading to persistent disparities across generations

(Bullinger, 2021) (Chetty, 2019)

Potential of Universal Home Visiting Programs to Achieve Population-Level Impact on Reducing Child Maltreatment

The Family Connects (FC) is a community-wide nurse home visiting program for newborns (starting at 3 weeks)

- **Short-term program:** 1-3 nurse home visits designed to identify family-specific needs—including an **assessment of material needs**—deliver education & intervention, and **connect families with community resources**
- **Randomized clinical trial** of all families who had births in two county hospitals in Durham, NC between 2009 and 2010
  - Compared to families who didn't receive FC, families assigned to FC experienced:
    - **39% fewer CPS investigations** (through age 5)

    (positive effect held across single-parent status and all racial/ethnic groups)
  - Findings suggest that, when implemented with high quality and broad reach, a brief postpartum nurse home visiting program can **reduce population rates of child maltreatment**

(Goodman, 2021) (RCT)

Considerations for Child & Family Well-being System

Cross-Systems Recommendations to Strengthen Economic & Concrete Supports to Families

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) - Reimagining Child Welfare: Recommendations for Public Policy Change (2021)

Build upon the goals of Family First by expanding the scope of services eligible for federal reimbursement to include:

- Time-limited cash assistance to help low-income families meet concrete needs and minimize poverty-related neglect cases
- Services that address behavioral health, housing instability and domestic violence

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: A Technical Package for Policy, Norm, and Programmatic Activities (2016)

- Evidence-based strategies to help prevent child abuse and neglect must include strengthening economic supports to families
- Policies that improve the socioeconomic conditions of families have the largest impacts on health

Tightening Legal Standards for Removal at State Level May Address Poverty-Related Neglect

New York – State Central Registry reform (2020)

Raises the standard of evidence needed for child protective services to indicate a report of child abuse or neglect from "some credible evidence" to a "fair preponderance of the evidence"

Tightening Legal Standards for Removal at State Level May Address Poverty-Related Neglect

Texas – House Bill 567 (passed 2021)

Before a child can be removed for neglect:

- Parent's actions (or lack thereof) must create an "immediate danger" of harm—rather than a "substantial risk" to the child's safety
- Parent must show "blatant disregard for the consequences" on the child for their action or inaction

Tightening Legal Standards for Removal at State Level May Address Poverty-Related Neglect

Washington State – Keeping Families Together (passed 2021)

- Tightens standards for removal by requiring child protective services to show that a child faces "imminent physical harm" from abuse or neglect rather than "serious threat of substantial harm"
- Prevents the state from removing children solely because of certain conditions in the home, including community or family poverty, inadequate housing, mental illness or substance use

Right to Counsel for Child Welfare-Involved Parents May Address Racial Disparities

Minnesota – HF 312 (introduced 2021)

All parents and guardians facing allegations of child maltreatment shall have the right to court-appointed counsel beginning "*prior* to the first hearing on the petition and at all stages of the proceedings," which means courts may appoint counsel when a family is being investigated by CPS

- Right to counsel laws have the potential to reduce family separation, address racial inequities in the child welfare system & reduce the foster care population
- New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma and Washington have similar right to counsel laws

Flexible Funds to Meet Economic & Concrete Needs of Families with Children at Risk of Removal

From SFY 2020 to SFY 2021

Prevention expenditures **increased by $3 million**

Out-of-home care expenditures **decreased by $27.6 million**

(decline in out-of-home expenditures includes decrease in number of children in foster care [900+ less] & reductions in congregate care placements)

Kentucky – SFY 2022 budget

State budget includes up to **$1,000 in flexible funds** for families with children at risk for removal to meet economic and concrete needs & support prevention

(Kentucky Interim Joint Committee on Health, Welfare & Family Services, July 21, 2021)

Continuation of Cash Assistance for Families Working to Reunify

California – AB 135 (enacted 2021)

Provides $9M in state funds to continue providing monthly cash assistance (for up to 6 months) to families who are working to reunify

Economic & Concrete Assistance to Address Poverty-Related Neglect

Illinois – Norman Services for Family Preservation

For families whose children are at risk of entering foster care due to lack of food, clothing, housing or other basic human needs:

- **Emergency cash assistance**

  Security deposit and/or first month's rent • Housing repairs • Utilities • Food • Clothing • Furniture and/or equipment • Transportation

- Assistance finding **housing**

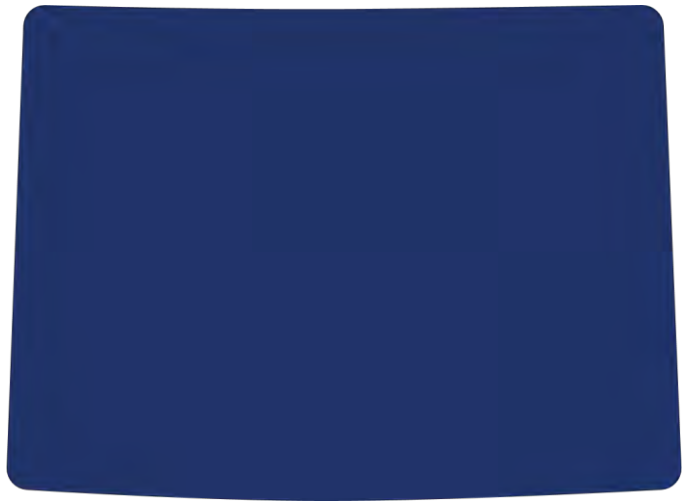
- A **waiver to allow families to apply for TANF** so that children in DCFS custody can be returned home within 90 days

Connecting Child Welfare-Involved Families with Community Partners to Provide Concrete Supports

Oklahoma - CarePortal

- CarePortal is a collaboration with Oklahoma DHS that connects child-welfare involved youth & families to community churches to provide needed resources and supports
- Concrete supports provided to families through CarePortal include **utility payments, rental assistance, transportation, beds & car seats**
- Impact of CarePortal *(SFY 2020)*
  - Children served: 2,733
  - Estimated value of resources provided: $276,328
  - Estimated economic impact of resources provided: **$1,062,755**
- Total estimated economic impact of CarePortal since it began in 2015 = **$3,539,037**

Family Resource Centers to Address Poverty-Related Neglect



Colorado – Family Resource Centers (FRCs)

FRCs connect families who have been screened out of child welfare to community resources & family support services and provides them with **one-time financial assistance**

- After a formal partnership between an FRC & Teller County child welfare was established, the county saw a **63% reduction in its child maltreatment rate** & saved an estimated **$2.5 million**

For each $1 invested,

the savings to child welfare in terms of Fewer cases of maltreatment

was $2.92 in Teller County, CO

Family First Prevention Plan Centered on Concrete Supports

Indiana – IV-E Prevention Plan (submitted 2021)

IV-E Waiver Demonstration findings informed the development of a Prevention Plan that proposes:

- **Indiana Family Preservation Services** as a parenting program *(evaluation pending)* – **includes concrete supports** offered to families when children would otherwise be removed due to unmet basic needs
  - ✓ Direct payments for rent, utilities, food, clothing and transportation assistance
  - ✓ Connecting families to community supports
  - ✓ Assisting families with applications for federal assistance
- **All children & families who receive Healthy Families America** as prevention candidates *(through child welfare and community providers)*

Housing Support Resources to Families Participating in Healthy Families America (HFA)

Maryland – HFA & Housing Supports

- Housing instability was identified as a **consistent barrier** for families seeking to engage in HFA
- In 2021, began pairing housing supports with HFA to focus on **addressing housing needs** of participating families
  - ➢HFA home visitors identify housing-related needs & provide housing support resources to <u>all</u> participating families
  - ➢More than 140 HFA participants in Baltimore were connected to housing supports in 2021

Family & Child Well-being System: Implications for Strengthening Families in Child Welfare Context

Identify and address poverty related neglect differently than current child welfare practice

- ***Policies and Investments***
- ***Data***
- ***Programs and Partnerships***
- ***People: Workforce, Communities & those with Lived Experience***

Family and Child Well-being System:
Use of Economic & Concrete Supports as a Prevention *and* Intervention Strategy

Supports for families **upstream of system involvement**

Assessment of economic instability and income shocks at all touchpoints

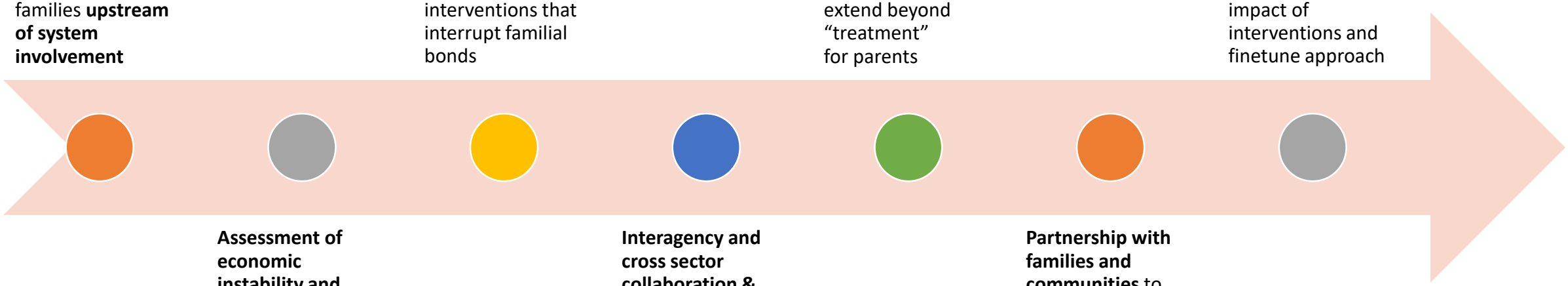
Reorientation of public benefits administered explicitly to reduce government interventions that interrupt familial bonds

Interagency and cross sector collaboration & integration to leverage supports beyond what child welfare systems can provide

Broad array of supports that extend beyond "treatment" for parents

Partnership with families and communities to develop responsive & accessible supports and services

Evaluation and monitoring of the effectiveness & impact of interventions and finetune approach



THEORY OF CHANGE: ECONOMIC & CONCRETE SUPPORTS

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

INPUTS

Policies: Systemic approach to supporting families, promoting well-being & preventing maltreatment

Data: Analytic framework & information to understand and address economic risk

People: Engagement with communities, providers & individuals with lived experience

Programs: Services, supports & collaboration among human service agencies

INTERVENTIONS

- Community pathways to support families without CPS hotline
- Data-driven strategies to identify economic risk & measure impact
- Improved availability & accessibility of economic supports
- Raise awareness among families of available economic supports

OUTPUTS

Responsive delivery of economic & concrete supports to families in need

OUTCOMES

Proximal:

- ⇧ Improve protective capacity of parents
- ⇩ Reduce familial stress

Distal:

- ⇩ Reduce unnecessary hotline calls
- ⇩ Reduce child maltreatment
- ⇧ Enhance child & family well-being

Contact

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Main slide deck available at:

https://www.chapinhall.org/research/economic-supports-child-welfare/

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CASA® GAL

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Guardians ad Litem
FOR CHILDREN

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latest schedule

Webinars
past session materials and recordings

February 17, 2022

- *Substance Use Among Native American Youth*

National CASA/GAL Book Club

The Lines Between Us: Two Families and a Quest to Cross Baltimore's Racial Divide by Lawrence Lanahan
Independent reading: January 3-February 4, 2022
Discussion groups: Week of February 7th
Author event: February 15, 2022

Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive by Stephanie Land
Independent reading: March 3-April 1, 2022
Discussion groups: Week of April 4th
Author event: April 11, 2022

Halfway Home: Race, Punishment, and the Afterlife of Mass Incarceration by Dr. Reuben Miller
Independent reading: May 9-June 3, 2022
Discussion groups: Week of June 9th
Author event: June 13, 2022

To register for the book club, go to:
https://nationalcasa.formstack.com/forms/national_casa_gal_book_study_registration_form

Walk Run Thrive

CASA GAL
Court Appointed Special Advocates
Guardians ad Litem
FOR CHILDREN

- On **April 30 - May 1, 2022**, join CASA/GAL supporters across the nation for **Walk Run Thrive**, a virtual event to help raise awareness for National CASA/GAL and its nationwide network of programs.

- National CASA/GAL is holding the second annual Walk Run Thrive event in 2022 in conjunction with our celebration of the 40th anniversary of the National CASA/GAL Association. **Join us!**

LEARN MORE:
nationalcasagal.org/walk-run-thrive

QUESTIONS? EMAIL:
events@nationalcasagal.org

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