



From Research to Practice

What results tell us about the needs of relatives and how to translate findings into effective practice

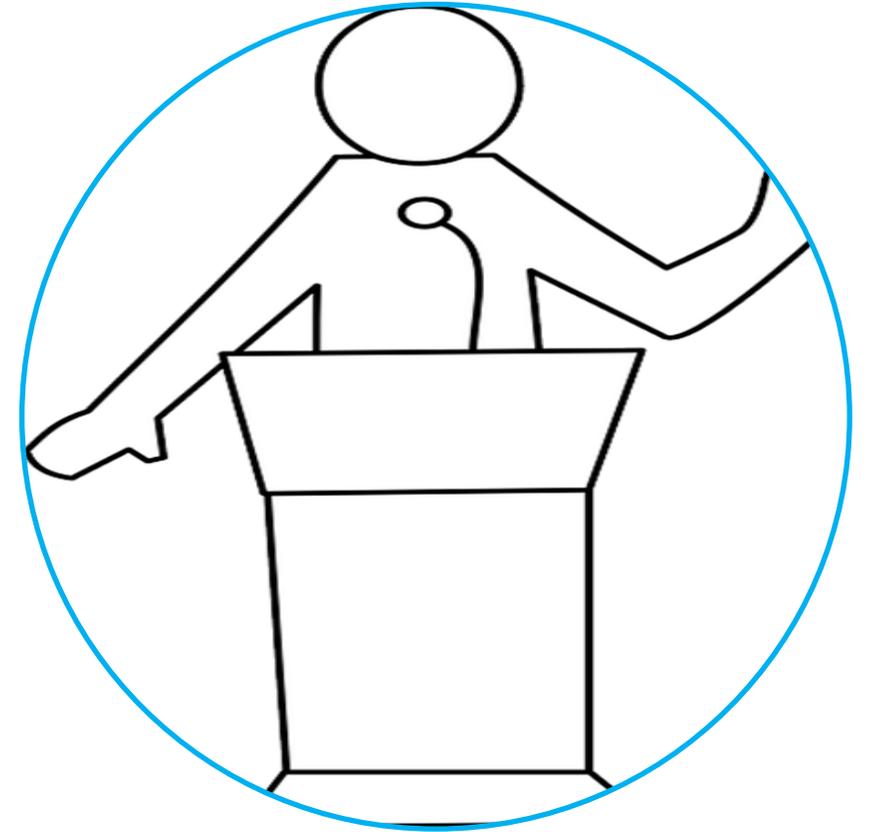
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Logistics

- Webinar will be recorded and archived at www.stepupforkin.org/trainings
- All attendees will be on mute – type any questions you have into the chat box or if you experience technical difficulties email Will Smith at w.smith@kids-alliance.org
- A certificate of participation will be posted online after the webinar at www.stepupforkin.org/trainings
- We will be answering your questions – please submit questions using the “questions” function on your GotoWebinar dashboard

Today's Speakers

- Jill Duerr Berrick, University of California, Berkeley
- Angie Schwartz, Alliance for Children's Rights
- Karen Alvord, Lilliput Children's Services
- Arlicia Lorentty, Lilliput Children's Services



Findings:

THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF KIN AND NON-KIN CAREGIVERS: COMPARING FINANCIAL RESOURCES, PAYMENT LEVELS, AND SERVICE SUPPORTS

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University of California, Berkeley

School of Social Welfare

Goals for today

- Review what we know about kin policy
- How kin are paid
- Findings from a recent study
- Implications for policy and practice



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Acknowledgements

- Caregivers
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- Melissa Martel
- Dominic Uyeda



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A quick review of the kinship care landscape

- Federal preferential policies favoring kin placement
- 29% of all children in care nationwide living with kin
- Limited federal direction to states regarding financial supports for kinship foster care except for Title IV-E-eligible children
- Significant state variation in policy
- Significant state variation in prevalence of kin utilization
- Significant state variation in funding for kin



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California funding for caregivers

Prior to 2015:

A 2-tiered payment structure

Type of Caregiver		Type of Subsidy
Non-kin foster parent	Kinship foster parent w/ Title IV-E eligible child	Foster care subsidy
	Kinship foster parent w/ Title IV-E ineligible child	Non-needy caregiver (TANF)

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California funding for caregivers

Nothing is ever that simple

Type of Caregiver		Type of Subsidy
Non-kin foster parent	Kinship foster parent w/ Title IV-E eligible child	Foster care subsidy
	Kinship foster parent w/ Title IV-E ineligible child	TANF-Family Grant
		TANF-Child only

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What does this translate into in REAL money?

Type of Caregiver		Type of Subsidy	\$\$
Non-kin foster parent	Kinship foster parent w/ Title IV-E eligible child	Foster care subsidy	\$657-\$820/mo ++
	Kinship foster parent w/ Title IV-E ineligible child	TANF-Family Grant (family of 3)	\$788/mo total
		TANF-Child only (1 child)	\$351/mo

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TANF-Child only (1 child)		\$351/mo total	
No subsidy		\$0 /mo	

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Along comes the ARC

- Approved Relative Care Funding Option
- Signed by Governor Brown in 2014 for 2015 implementation
- Allows for county opt-in
- Allows for foster care payment parity between all kin and non-kin
- Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of counties participate

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Service differentials also prevail

- Kin less likely to request services from child welfare agencies
- Kin less likely to be offered services from child welfare agencies
- Service differential for training: 1:4
- Service differential for respite care or support groups: 1:7

The work is hard

- High levels of caregiving “burden”
- High levels of stress
- More likely to feel tangible and intangible effects of financial strain

And the need is high

- “Fostering competence” may be compromised in some kin settings.

What else did we want to know?

And how can what we learn inform practice and policy?



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What is the financial well-being of caregivers?

Is there a relationship between subsidies and child or caregiver characteristics?

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Approach

- 2 Bay Area counties
- Kin & Non-kin caregivers
- Children new to care
- Children age 3+
- Survey
- \$25.00 gift card
- \$100 raffle

Measures:

- Financial supports
- Financial strain
- Receipt of services
- Informal supports
- Foster parenting attitudes
- Acceptance of child's unique characteristics
- Child well-being
- Caregiver needs

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Characteristics

	Non-kin – 60%	Kin – 40%
Married / co-habiting	62%	48%
Number of children	3	2
Caregivers of color	>60%	
Attended college	>50%	
Working	>60%	
Mental / emotional health	Very good	
Physical health	Very good	
Religious/ spiritual	80%	
Foster parenting attitudes	Positive	
Acceptance of child	Positive	
Informal support	More	Less

Financial support

Type of subsidy	Non-kin	Kin
Foster care	~94%	~68%
TANF (family or child-only)	0%-3%	12%-24%
No subsidy	6%-10%	4%-34%
Unknown	0%	8%
Average subsidy amount	\$815 (SD \$183)	\$675 (SD \$175)

Financial & service well-being

- 25% living on less than \$25,000 / year – kin & non-kin
- 60% living on less than \$50,000 / year – kin & non-kin
- Kin describe significant “financial strain”
- Equally likely to receive services for caregiver
- Equally likely to receive services for child

Subsidies & caregiver characteristics

Foster care subsidy	TANF/ No funding
	Caregiver poor health
	Caregiver attachment to child
	Child w/ challenging peer relationships
Caregiver respite care	
Caregiver support groups	
Caregiver training	
Child receiving educational supports	
Child receiving therapy	
Child receiving summer camp / school	
CASA assignment	

A few take-home points



- Kin & non-kin are becoming more similar.
- Caregivers are economically vulnerable.
- Stark differences in subsidy amounts for kin & non-kin
- ARC will address some of these inequities, but not all.
- Differences between kin & non-kin not -as salient as foster care vs. not-foster care.

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What's to be done?



- Variability is the hallmark of kinship policies.
- Policy should be uniform, coherent, and transparent
- Efforts to revise subsidy policies based on the *needs* of the *child* rather than the characteristics of caregivers is an important step forward.

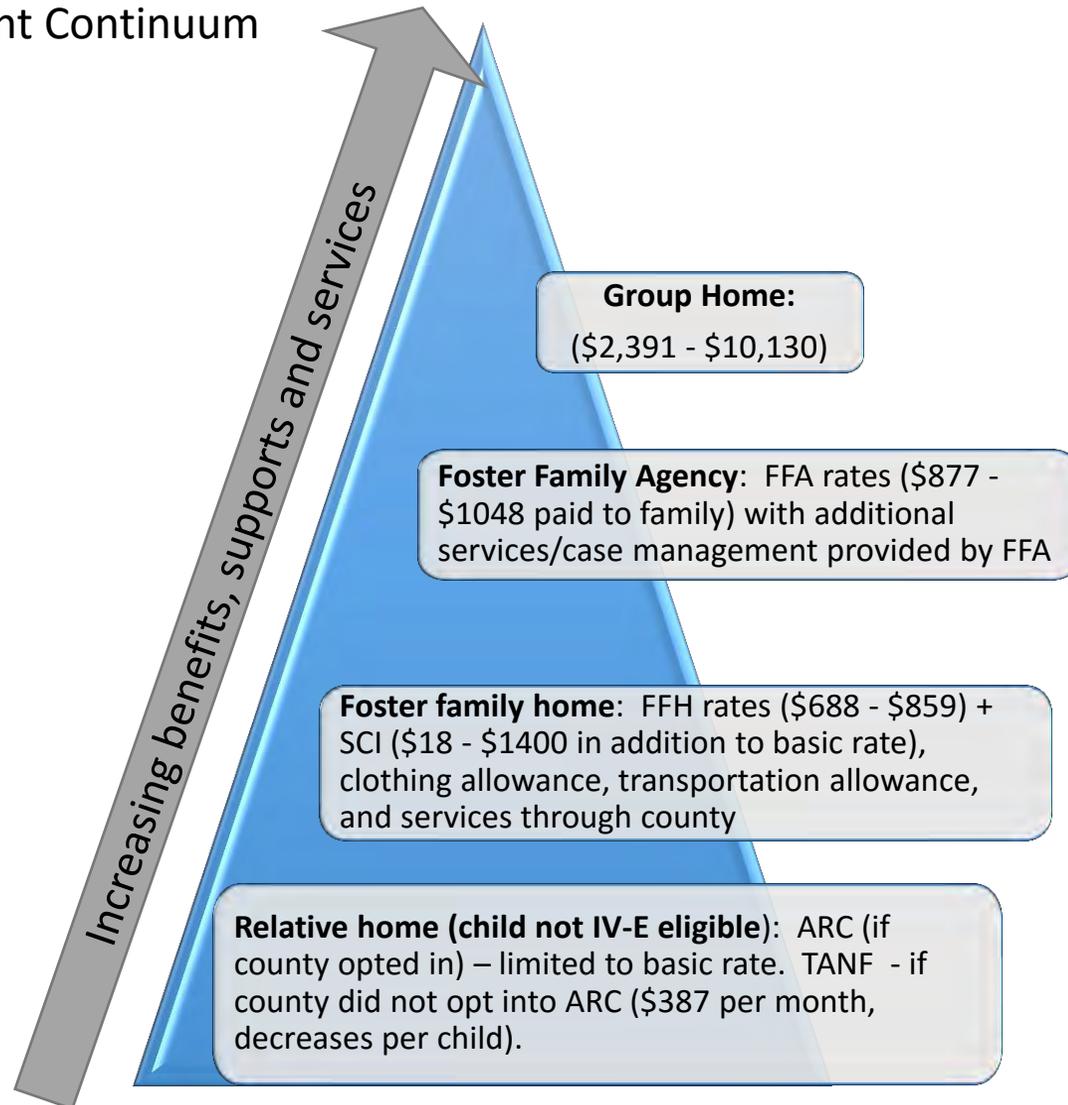
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Continuum of Care Reform and Pending Policy Changes

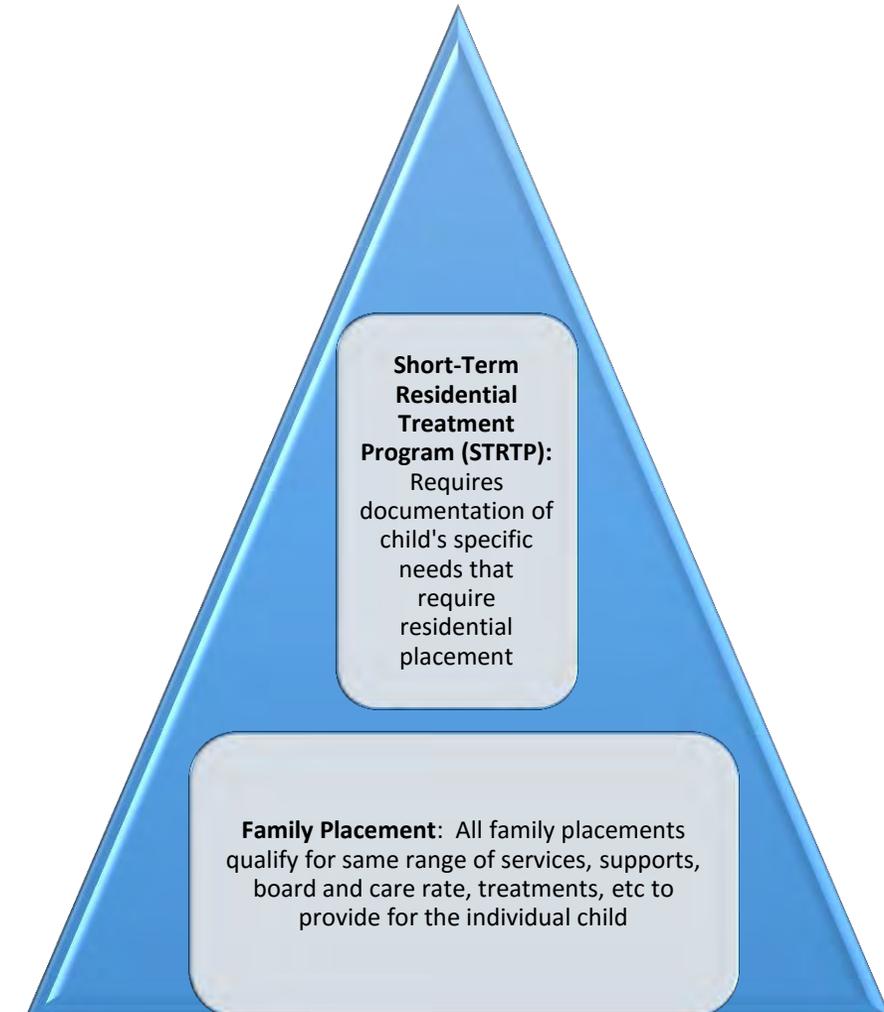
Angie Schwartz, Policy Director
Alliance for Children's Rights

Continuum of Care – Towards a Child-Centered System

Current Continuum

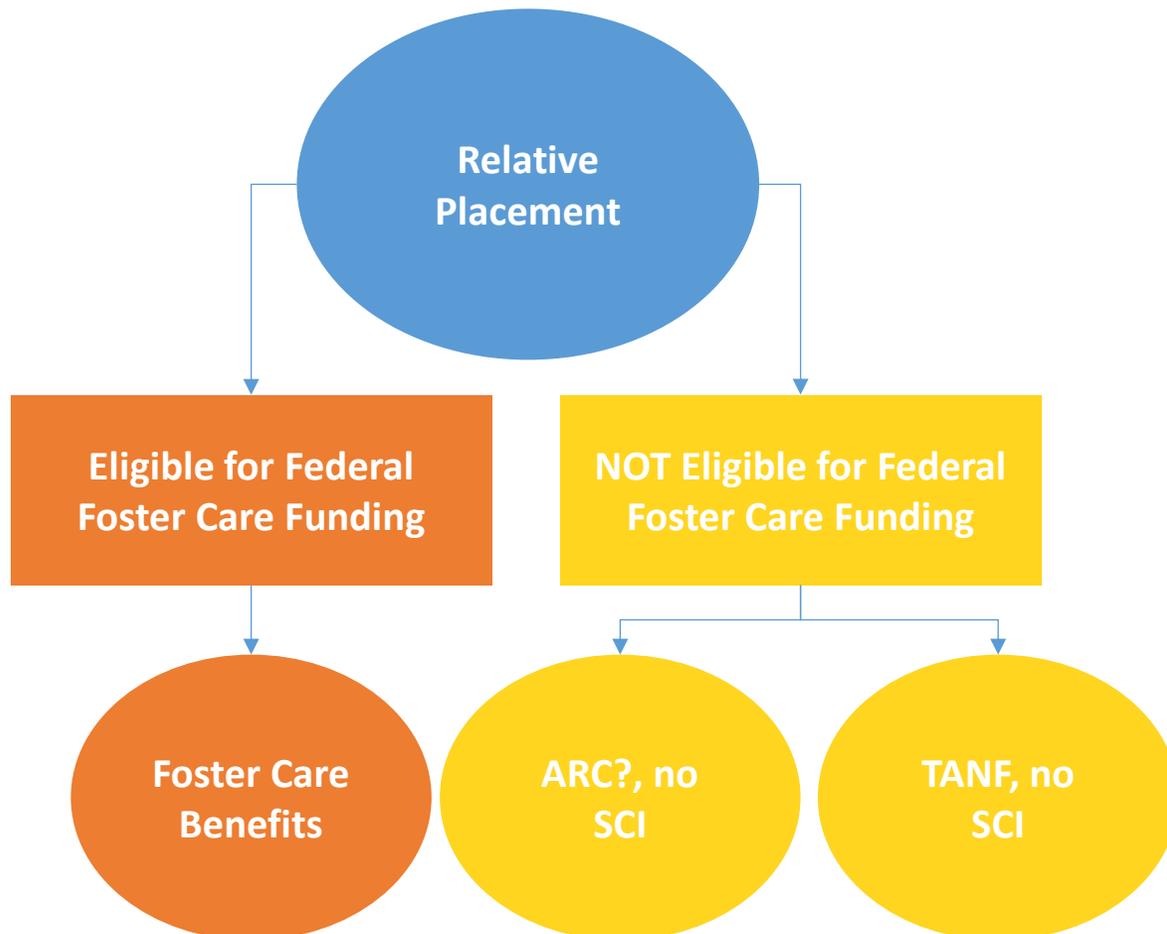


Vision of CCR

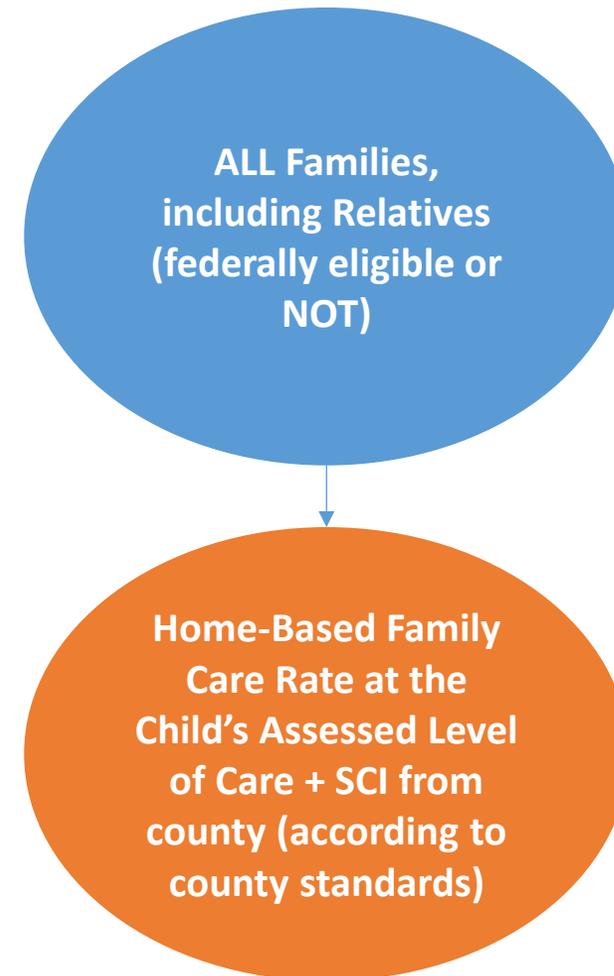


Child-Centered Foster Care Payment Available to All Families

Current Rate System



Child-Centered Rate System



Proposed Rates: Governor's May Revise

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ALL families (including relatives) receive a home-based family care rate at the child's assessed level of need
- Relatives are able to be approved as Treatment Foster Care, if they complete the requisite training
- Services-only rate allows counties to contract with the Foster Family Agencies to provide services and support to families outside of the FFA

QUESTIONS:

- Budget Conference Committee requiring a stakeholder group to discuss adequacy of proposed rates and report back to the budget committees by August 10, 2016
- No funding for services/supports at Level of Care-1
- Elements of the assessment to determine LOC not yet known

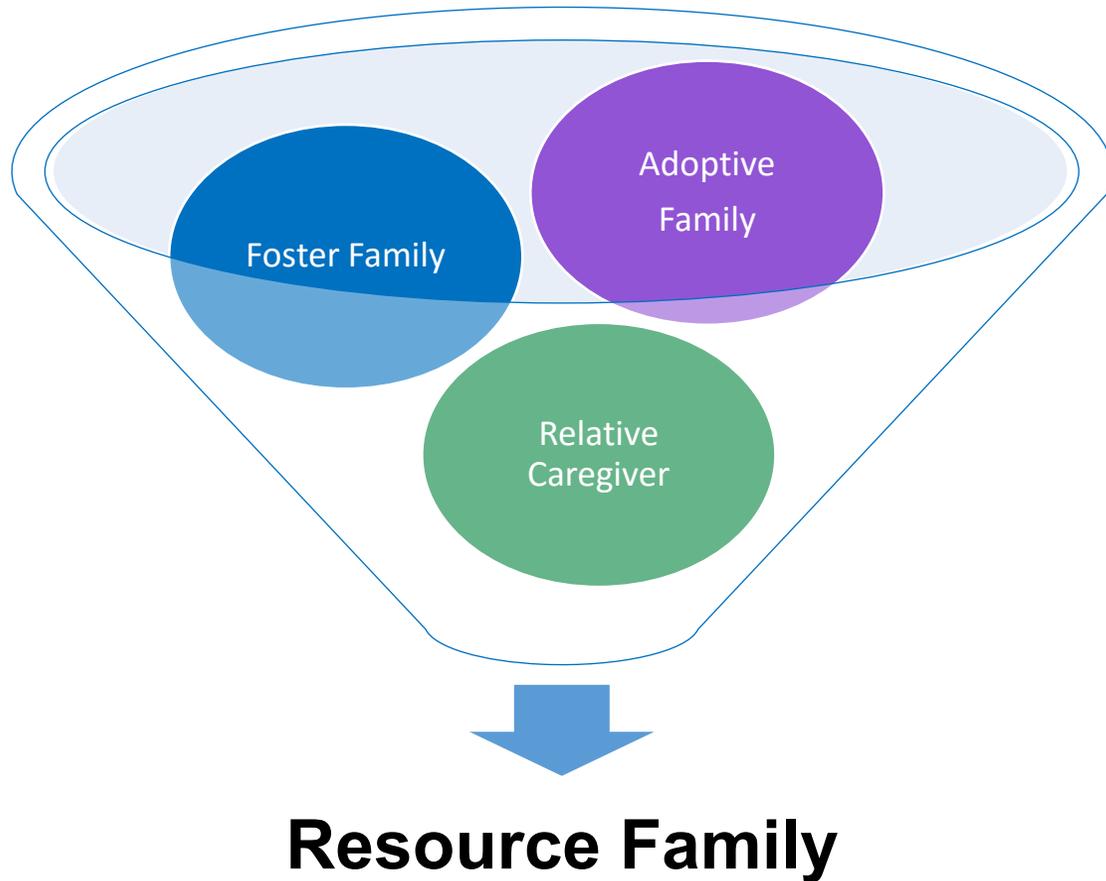
Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) Summary*

Home-Based Family Care Rate Structure
Based on Level of Care (LOC)

A Pay to Resource Family for Basic Rate		LOC-1	LOC-2	LOC-3	LOC-4
Basic Rate		\$889	\$989	\$1,089	\$1,189
B Pay to Foster Family Agency (FFA)		LOC-1	LOC-2	LOC-3	LOC-4
Social Worker		\$340	\$340	\$340	\$340
Social Services & Support		\$0	\$200	\$244	\$323
Resource Family Approval		\$48	\$48	\$48	\$48
Administration		\$672	\$672	\$672	\$672
Total		\$1,060	\$1,260	\$1,304	\$1,383
C Pay to Resource Family for Treatment Foster Care (TFC)					
TFC Rate		\$2,259			
Pay to FFA including TFC Admin					
TFC Administration		\$3,482			
TFC Social Services & Support		\$200			
Total		\$5,941			
D Pay to Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP)					
STRTP Rate		\$11,770			

E Pay to FFA For Services Only		LOC-1	LOC-2	LOC-3	LOC-4
Social Worker		\$0	\$340	\$340	\$340
Social Services & Support		\$0	\$200	\$244	\$323
Administration		\$0	\$200	\$200	\$200
Total		\$0	\$740	\$784	\$863

Foster Families → Resource Families



Resource Family Approval:

- **Related and non-related families**
- **Training for all families**
- **Resource Families still choose the role they play in the system: temporary or permanent**
- **Prepared for permanency-no additional approvals necessary**

Core Elements of RFA

One Approval Standard:

- One Application
- One criminal background check
- Combined home environmental and permanency assessment
- Pre- and post-approval training for all families
- Procedures for expedited placements—emergency placement & compelling reason



Benefits of RFA

- Concurrent plans established with no concern that family won't be able to pass the adoption home study
- Better assessments **up-front** gives us more information at an earlier stage about caregivers and their support needs.
- Relatives have stated they really like the training they receive – participate jointly with foster parents.
- All families will receive funding and support based on the assessed needs of the child
- Caregivers especially relatives report feeling better prepared and more valued.
- A natural fit with QPI – **healthy families and strong connections**

Challenges of RFA

- Finding the middle ground between relative approval and adoption standards
- Helping staff navigate the challenge of changing how we approve homes
- **Motivating & assisting** caregivers who have a child placed with them on an emergency basis to complete all RFA requirements in a timely manner
- **Continuously refining RFA policies** to prepare for statewide implementation.

Bottom Line

- CCR presents a **real opportunity** and the foundation on which to build a supportive, child-centered, family-friendly child welfare services and supports.... BUT, implementation and development of best practices is key



Putting Research to Practice: Resource Family Approval and Relative Support

Karen Alvord, CEO

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Our Journey into Kinship Care

- History of kinship partnership
 - 2007 Kinship Support Services Programs
 - 2009-2012 Kinnections Initiative
 - 2013 Family Finding & Foster Certification of Relatives



Guiding Principles

- Prevention and early intervention
- Relatives considered *first*
- Strength-based with a strong value to keep children safely in their families of origin
- Shared decision-making
- QPI concepts



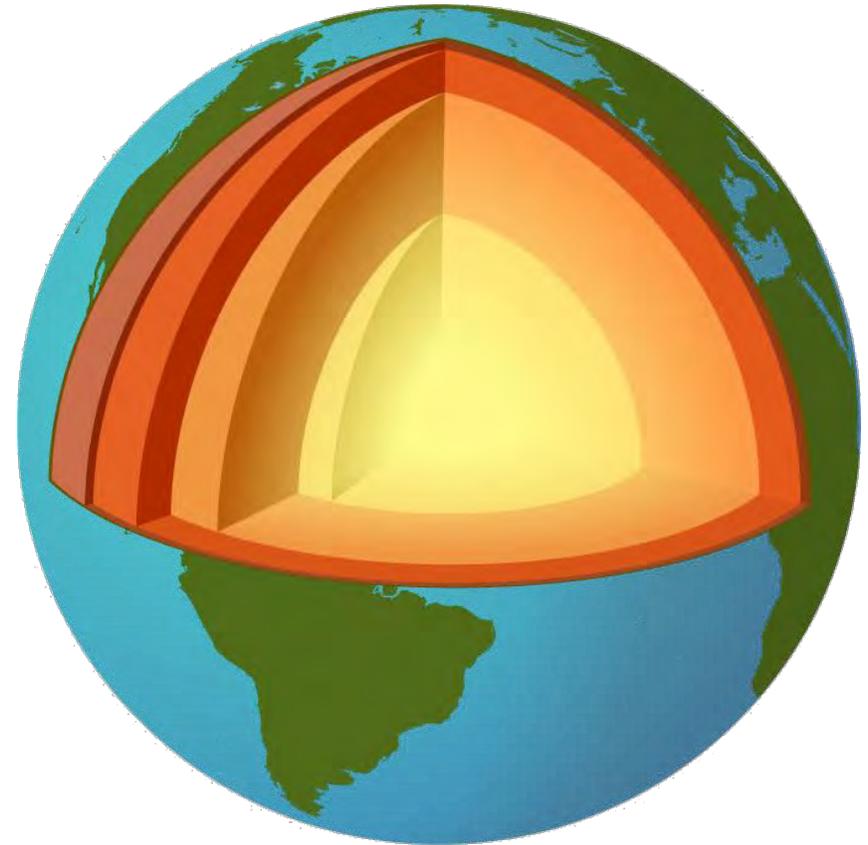
Foster Certification of Relatives

- Sacramento County 18-month pilot (October 2013)
- Foster Certifying Kinship Families
 - 50 children/youth initial entry into care
 - Time-limited
 - 30 children have discharged as of March 2016



Lilliput Kinship Program Model

- Intensive Family Finding (Pre-placement)
- Kinship Assessment & Supports (Pre- or Post-placement)
- Relative Certification (Post-placement)



How do we increase our placements with kin?

- Family Finding & Engagement with a Front-End Focus
 - Family teaming
 - Information & education about the process
 - Supports *before* child is placed
 - Resource linkages & identified supports within their family & community



What do kinship families need to support stability, permanency, & well-being?

- Kinship Assessment & Supports & Relative Certification
 - SAFE: Structured Analysis Family Evaluation
 - Kinship-specific training
 - Care Coordination
 - All licensing requirements are met
 - CANS: Child & Adolescent Needs & Strengths Tool
- Permanency supports (reunification/adoption/guardianship)



What do kinship families need to support stability, permanency, & well-being?

- Family voice
- Ongoing information-sharing – being in the loop
- Resource linkages in family's community
- Training/education with a flexible approach (in home coaching)
 - Kinship-specific (core clinical issues in kinship care)
 - Trauma-informed
 - Protective factors framework
- In-home support (respite/support groups)
- Linkage to mental health treatment for children/youth



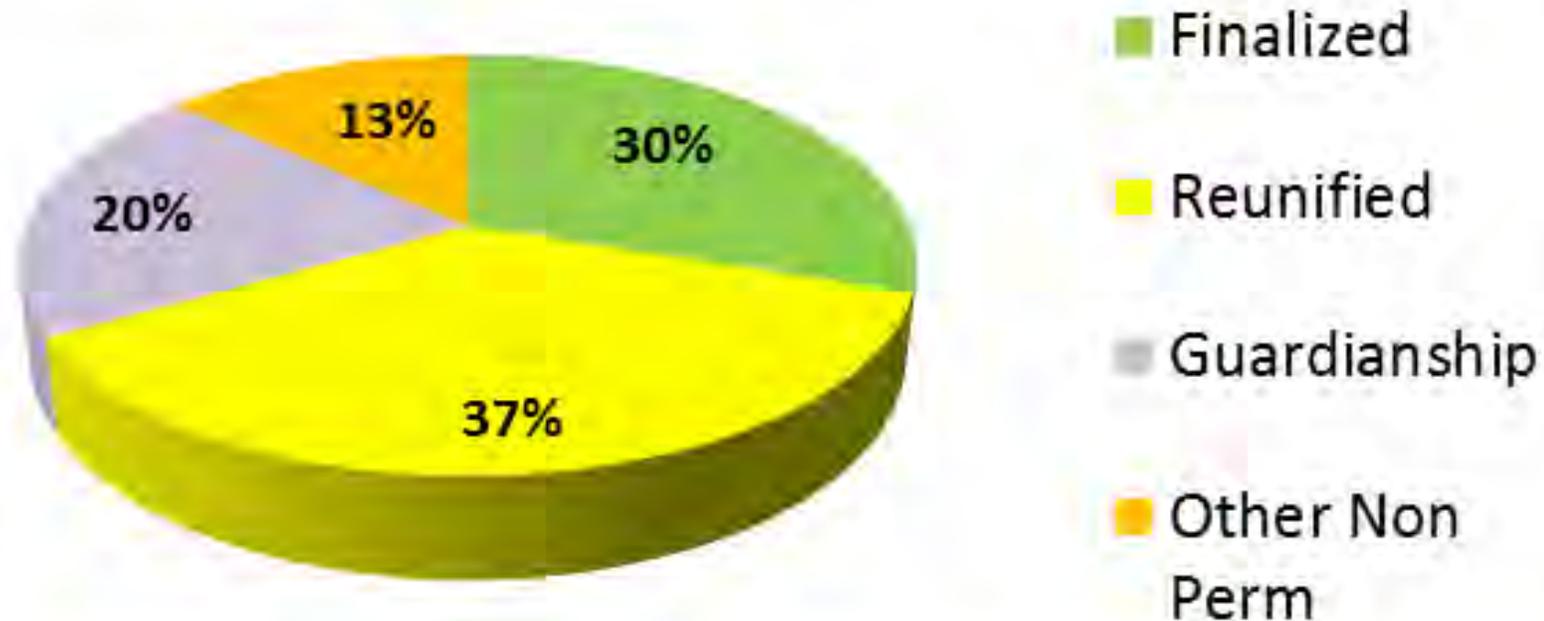
Results

- Relatives accept support & training
- Families receive emotional/physical supports
- Healthier relationships (extended family)
- Children's mental health needs are addressed
- Understand how to access the resources the family needs to participate in child's treatment
- Connection to other kin caregivers
- Understanding of permanency options

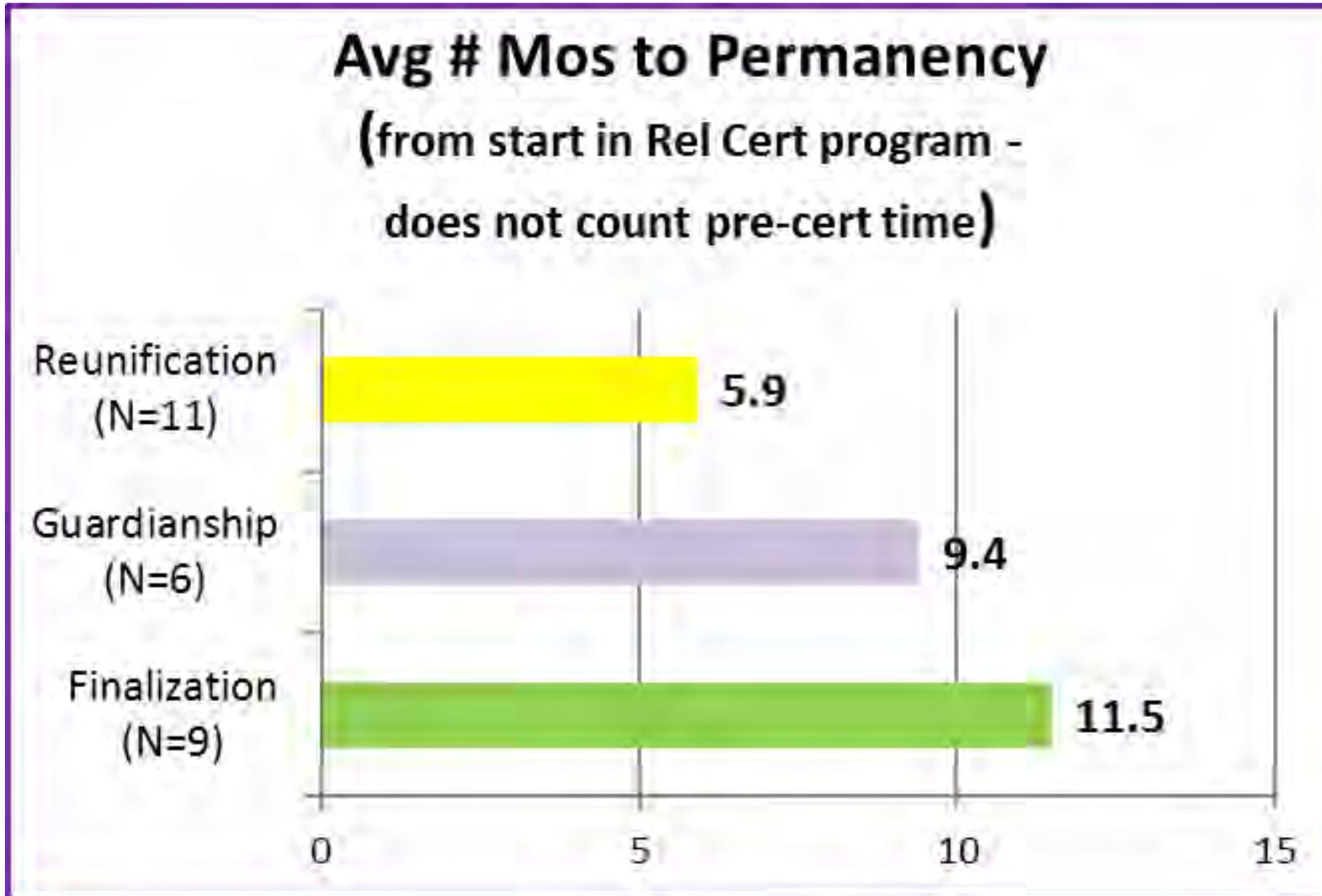


Promising Outcomes

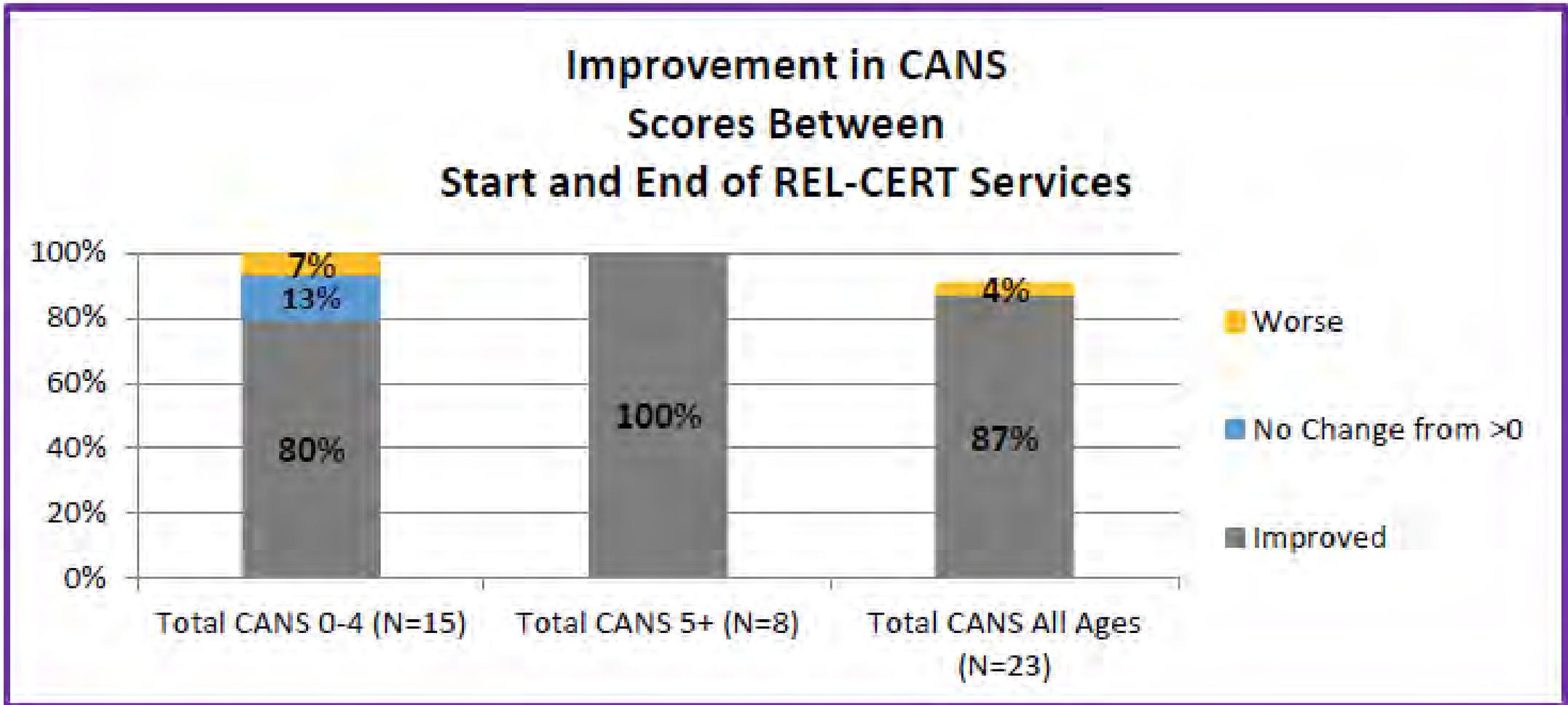
**Permanency Outcomes of
Rel-Cert Youth Served
Inception to March 17, 2016 (N=30)**



Promising Outcomes (cont'd)



Promising Outcomes (cont'd)



~~Reactive~~

Proactive



CCR Partnership Opportunities

County	FFA/Adoption Agency
Comprehensive Assessment/RFA approval	Psychosocial only
Refer to FFA for RFA	Comprehensive Assessment/RFA approval (FFA placement)
Out-of-County RFA – county of residence completes psychosocial	Out-of-county RFA – FFA/RFA approval and placement
RFA approval and placement	Supports and Services only
Step down from group home into kin placement	RFA approval and ITFC readiness and placement
Adoption preparation	Cooperative APA and finalization support
Emergency placements with kin when possible	Intensive family finding and engagement work with families

“I don’t know what would have happened to my nephew had it not been for the support I received through Lilliput.”

-Aunt