Left Behind?

Continuum of Care Reform and Improving Education Outcomes for Foster Youth in Residential Programs

ALLIANCE for CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

STEP UP

Roadmap

- Myth or Fact: What have you heard about CCR & RFA?
- Overview of Resource Family Approval (RFA)
- Overview of the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR)
- Implications for Schools
- Myth or Fact Redux
- Questions

Los Angeles County RBS

five acres®

Status of LA County Foster Care

five acres®

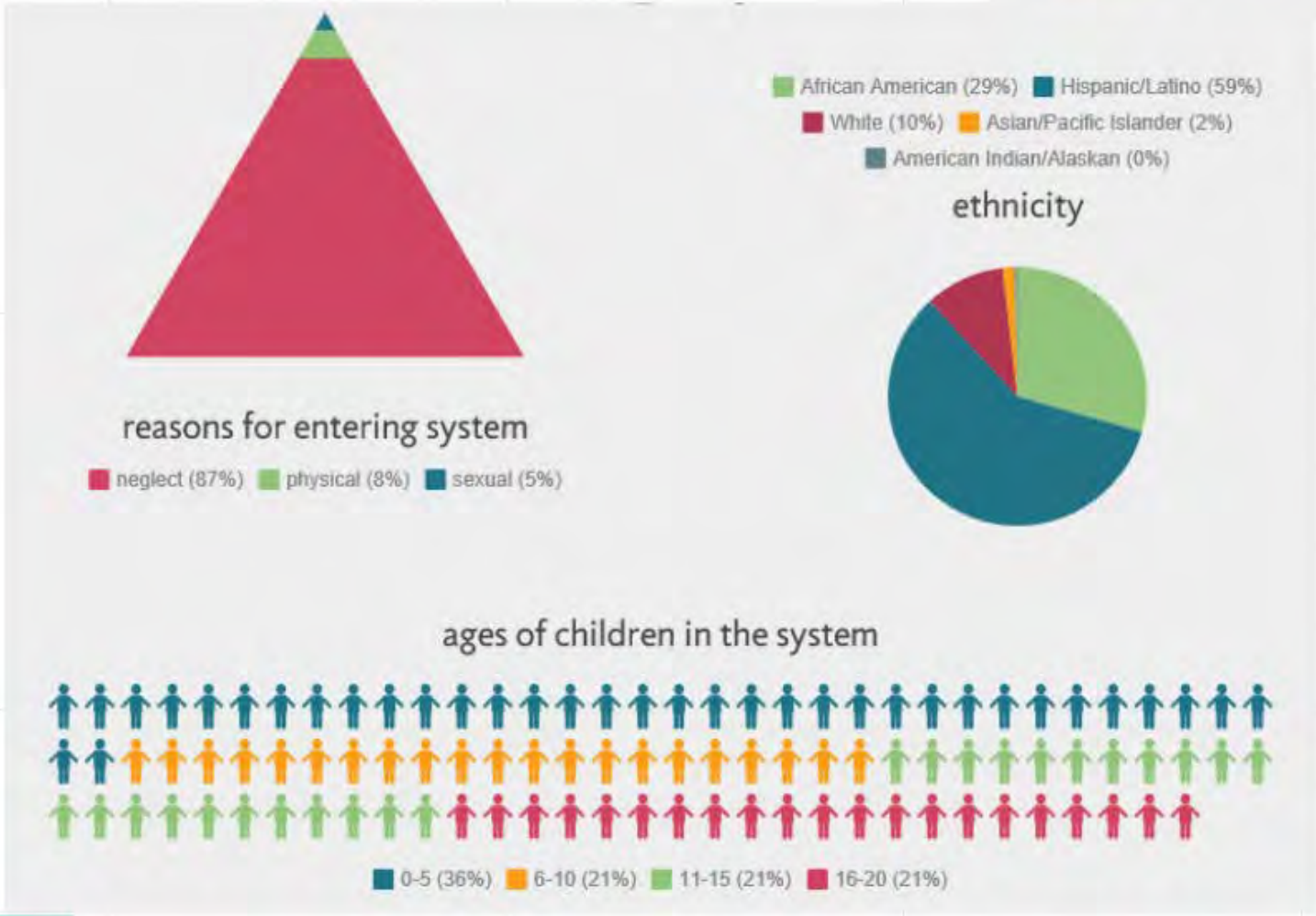
Data sources

The data sources includes: As cited on kidsdata.org, Webster, D., et al. California Child Welfare Indicators Project Reports, UC Berkeley Center for Social Service Research, California Residentially Based Services Reform Project: Final Evaluation Report and DCFS Biennial Report 2014-2015.

2015 Updates from CCWIP reports. Retrieved 4/8/2016, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL:<http:cssr.Berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare>

Current LA County Foster Child Demographic

Did you know that the largest population of foster children in the system are Latino/Hispanic children under the age of 5?



LA County Foster Care Trends

2000 2013

55% decrease in # of children in care, uptick since 2012

30% decrease length of stay in care, uptick since 2010

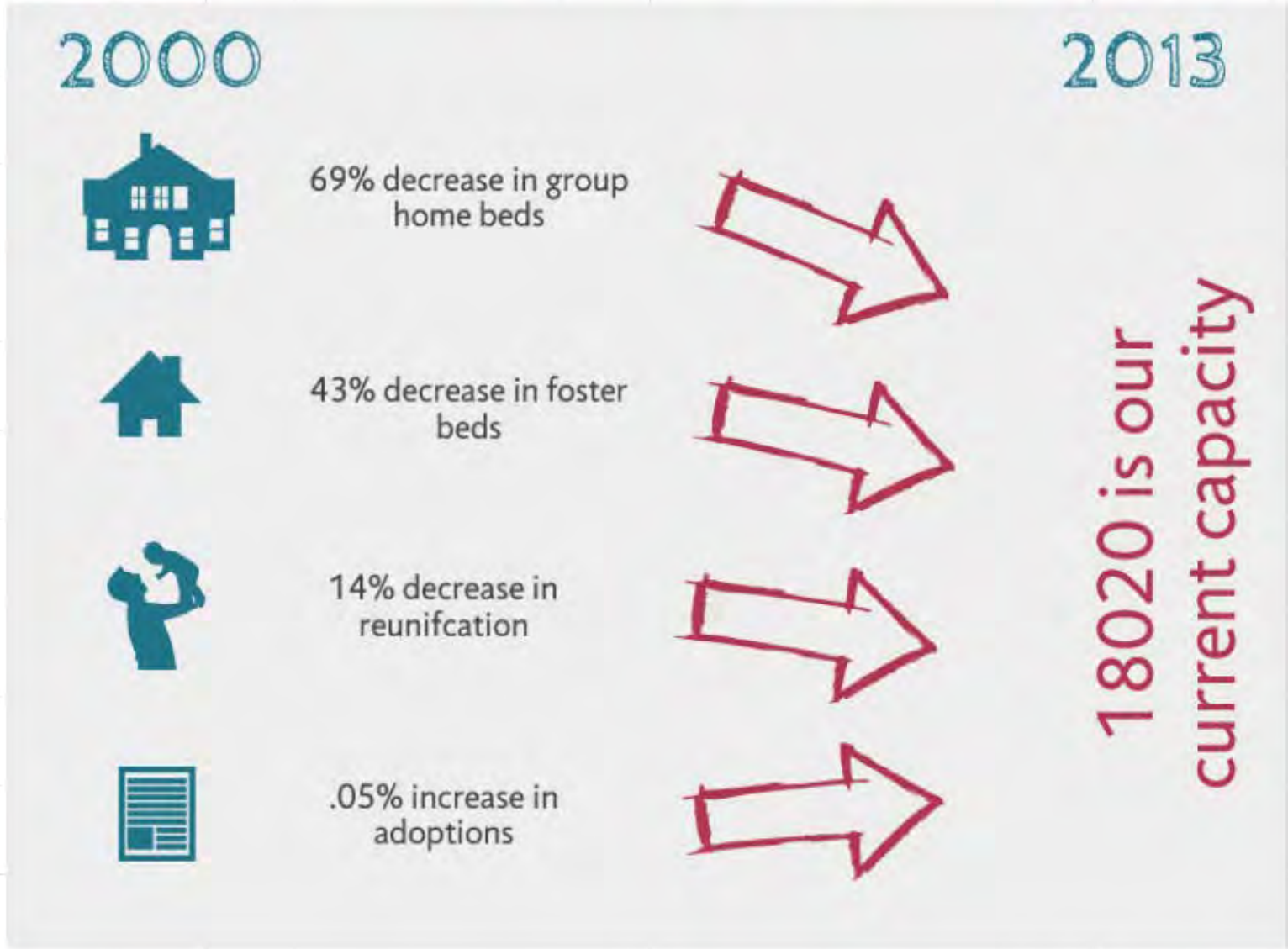
44% increase in re-entries

13% increase in new entries

19864 children in the system

infants are the highest rate of new entries 11.9 per 1k

LA County Current Capacity



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
CALENDAR YEAR 1998 THROUGH 2015

Calendar Year	Children Supervised	Age Birth to 2 Years	Ages 3 to 4 Years	Age 5 to 9 Years	Ages 10 to 13 Years	Ages 14 to 15 Years	Ages 16 to 17 Years	Ages 18 Years & Older
1998	65,659 ↓	8,635*	7,714*	29,375*			15,643*	
1999	64,656 ↓	7,444*	10,569*	25,586*		9,058*	5,047*	1,951*
2000	54,651 ↓	7,061 (12.9%)	5,595 (10.2%)	16,222 (29.7%)	12,922 (23.6%)	5,939 (10.9%)	5,074 (9.3%)	1,838 (3.4%)
2001	49,675 ↓	6,584 (13.3%)	4,748 (9.6%)	13,900 (28%)	12,147 (24.5%)	5,581 (11.2%)	4,989 (10.0%)	1,726 (3.5%)
2002	42,375 ↓	5,749 (13.6%)	3,927 (9.3%)	10,915 (25.8%)	10,373 (24.5%)	5,131 (12.1%)	4,603 (10.9%)	1,677 (4.0%)
2003	40,135 ↓	5,549 (13.8%)	3,701 (9.2%)	9,724 (24.2%)	9,517 (23.7%)	5,120 (12.8%)	4,752 (11.8%)	1,722 (4.4%)
2004	37,885 ↓	5,538 (14.6%)	3,599 (9.5%)	9,036 (23.9%)	8,685 (22.9%)	4,854 (12.8%)	4,424 (11.7%)	1,749 (4.6%)
2005	39,364 ↑	6,165 (15.7%)	3,675 (9.3%)	9,169 (23.3%)	8,519 (21.6%)	5,050 (12.8%)	4,832 (12.3%)	1,954 (5.0%)
2006	38,383 ↓	6,443 (16.8%)	3,718 (9.7%)	8,877 (23.1%)	7,966 (20.8%)	4,778 (12.4%)	4,665 (12.2%)	1,936 (5.0%)
2007	36,632 ↓	6,487 (17.7%)	3,757 (10.3%)	8,547 (23.3%)	7,170 (19.6%)	4,278 (11.7%)	4,425 (12.1%)	1,968 (5.4%)
2008	33,478 ↓	6,042 (18.0%)	3,570 (10.7%)	7,841 (23.4%)	6,357 (19.0%)	3,834 (11.5%)	4,051 (12.1%)	1,783 (5.3%)
2009	32,317 ↓	5,948 (18.4%)	3,630 (11.2%)	7,546 (23.3%)	5,966 (18.5%)	3,595 (11.1%)	3,841 (11.9%)	1,791 (5.5%)
2010	33,795 ↓	6,484 (19.2%)	4,074 (12.1%)	8,174 (24.2%)	6,005 (17.8%)	3,569 (10.6%)	3,858 (11.4%)	1,631 (4.8%)
2011	34,987 ↑	6,722 (19.2%)	4,335 (12.4%)	8,847 (25.3%)	6,190 (17.7%)	3,422 (9.8%)	3,797 (10.9%)	1,674 (4.8%)
2012	35,195 ↑	6,804 (19.3%)	4,310 (12.2%)	9,070 (25.8%)	6,047 (17.2%)	3,330 (9.5%)	3,663 (10.4%)	1,971 (5.6%)
2013	36,870 ↑	7,134 (19.3%)	4,435 (12.2%)	9,740 (26.4%)	6,295 (17.1%)	3,275 (8.9%)	3,541 (9.6%)	2,450 (6.6%)
2014	36,273 ↓	7,209 (19.9%)	4,506 (12.4%)	9,503 (26.2%)	5,948 (16.4%)	3,114 (8.6%)	3,276 (9.0%)	2,717 (7.5%)
2015	34,881 ↓	7,181 (20.6%)	4,260 (12.2%)	9,191 (26.3%)	5,678 (16.3%)	2,881 (8.3%)	3,080 (8.8%)	2,610 (7.5%)

*In the early years of CWS/CMS, child characteristics data differed from State-programmed CWS/CMS reports. Data from these reports did not reconcile with the count of total children under supervision; and there were variances between reports.

STATE-LICENSED HOMELIKE PLACEMENT RESOURCE CAPACITY																		
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
FH	2848	3026	3099	2861	2854	3043	3319	3305	2429	1880	1391	1143	998	814	540	586	650	723
FFA	5518	5553	5416	5008	5371	5096	4775	4656	4478	4577	4901	4290	3917	3102	2979	3016	3148	3163
SFH	120	134	181	172	178	172	156	154	113	104	96	85	72	69	62	59	59	55
TOT	8486 ↑	8713 ↑	8696 ↓	8041 ↓	8403 ↑	8311 ↓	8250 ↓	8115 ↓	7020 ↓	6561 ↓	6388 ↓	5518 ↓	4987 ↓	3985 ↓	3581 ↓	3661 ↑	3857 ↑	3941 ↑

Residentially Based State Reform Project (RBS)

Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Francisco and Sacramento Counties

The purpose of the project is to transform the current system of group care for children in foster care and children with serious emotional disorders into a system of residentially based services to improve outcomes, most notably a permanent family placement.

Data Sources

The RBS evaluation uses data collection procedures and instruments previously implemented by all participating counties. These include the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS), the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment for Children with Child Welfare Involvement (CANS-CW), the Youth Services Survey for Youth (YSS), and the Youth Services Survey for Families (YSS-F). Data is based on the period of June 2010 - March 2013 and 317 children.

Demonstration Site Requirements

Congregate Care

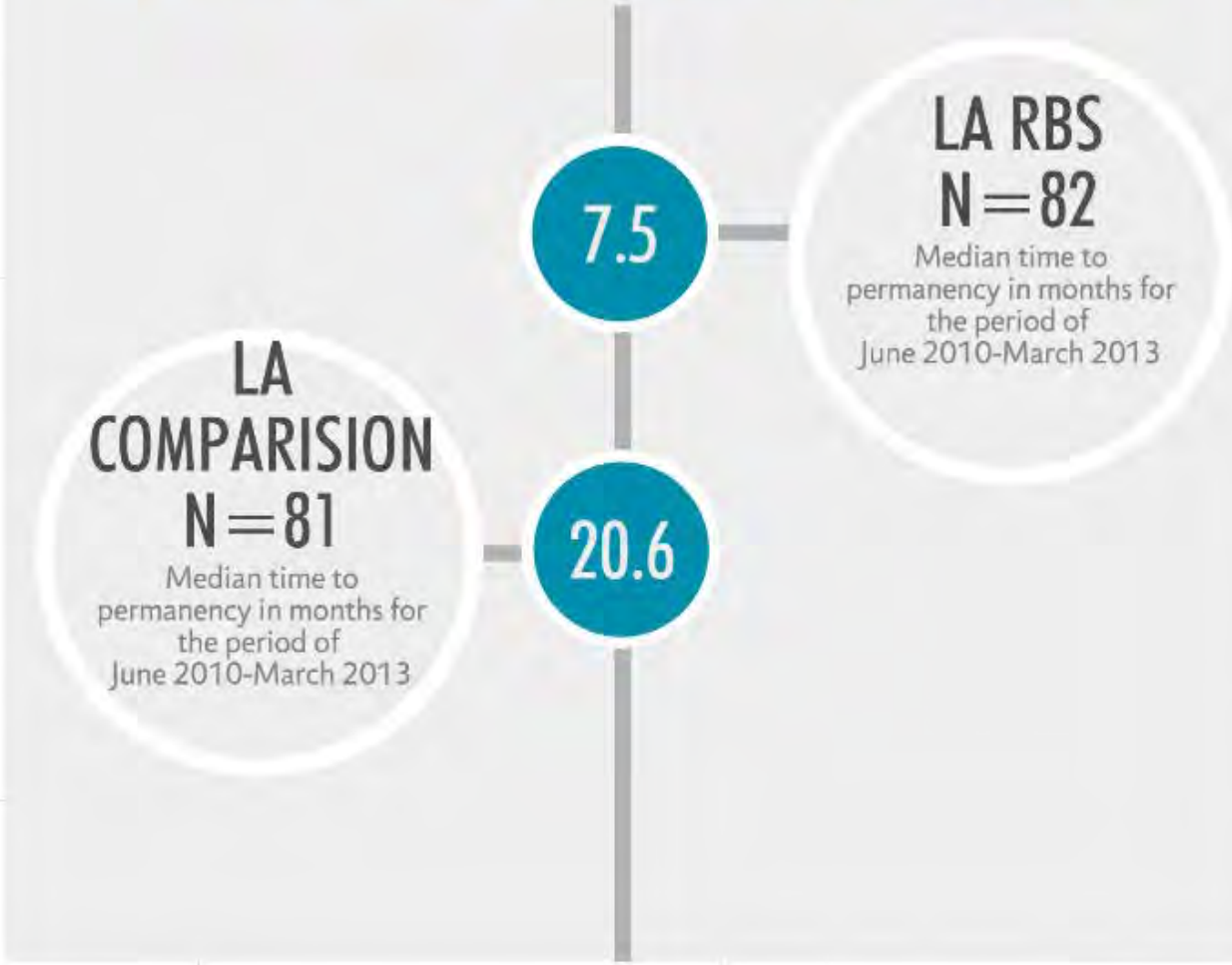
RBS wrapping a child with services from congregate to the community

Demonstration Site Requirements:

1. Aggressive family engagement
2. Portable multi-disciplinary team
3. Intensive treatment interventions
4. Crisis stabilization
5. Parallel community interventions
6. Aftercare services

Achievement of Permanency

Median time to achieve permanency was 8 months. The median and actual time to permanency was much shorter among the RBS group in Los Angeles than among the comparison group, although approximately the same number of youth achieved permanency in both groups.



Wellbeing Outcomes

Based on CANS-CW mean scores collected between the period of June 2010-March 2013.

Mean scores showed statistically significant positive changes

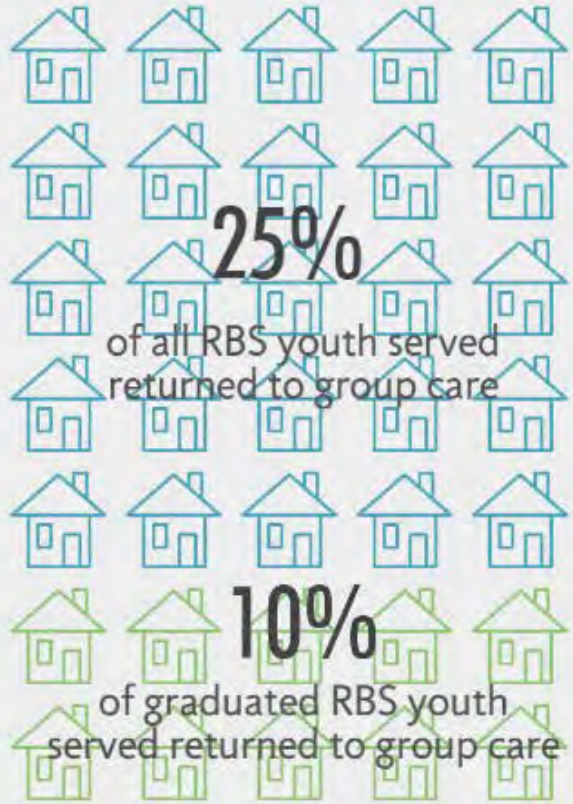
safety
mental health
risk behaviors
family/caregiver needs/strengths
child strengths
functional status
relationship permanence

Mean scores showed no change or deterioration

substance use complications
educational functioning

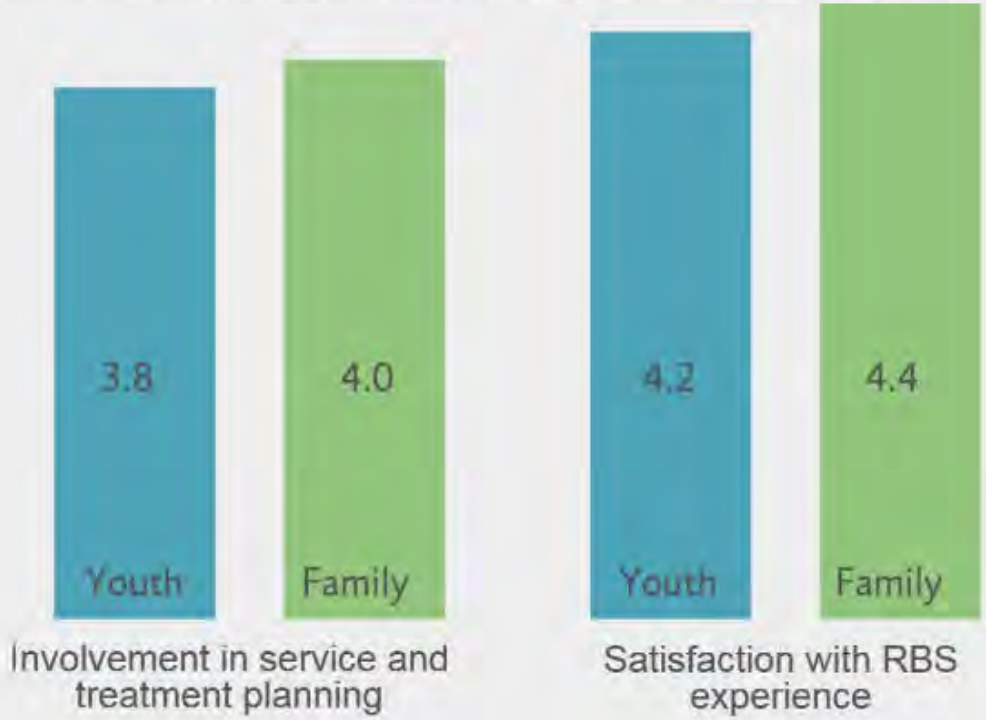
Re-Entry

Fewer RBS youth in Los Angeles than comparison youth returned to group home or residential treatment after moving to a lower level.



Child & Family Voice & Choice

Youth and family members rated their involvement in RBS service and treatment planning and satisfaction on a scale of 1 (low satisfaction) to 5 (high satisfaction) data was collected between the period of June 2010-March 2013.



Number of Placements

chance of achieving permanency decreases by 84% with each additional placement.

RBS LA County
Lessons Learned

364 clients served YTD in LA

Operational Challenges

1. You need a training plan to adequately implement and change the culture of the workforce
2. Develop a process of sharing pertinent client data between contractor and contracted
3. Clients were lost through the education/school system Majority of school aged children spent many hours in the education system that was not a part of the RBS pilot
5. Drug treatment not a part of the pilot
6. Parent readiness
7. Adoptions timelines
8. Lack of viable placements
9. Medically fragile clients

Bringing Everyone to the Table

He has had 4 visits so lets send him home.

I don't think this kids is ready to go yet. He is a danger to the community.

They are taking too much of our resources why cant we move them to the Sylmar district.

Why don't we just get them into the probation process.

My teachers are not trained or equipped to work with your clients.

I don't want another lawsuit.

We have started the IEP process but it takes time.

Why does he need our services, you all are serving him already ?

By the time we have an opening for an assessment she will probably leave your agency.

Meaningful Data Targets

arbitrary numbers and targets

or

safety, wellbeing and permamency

RBS Five Acres Secondary Gains

RBS Client Success Indicators

Statistical analysis of factors related to successful graduation (vs. 'disenrollment') from Five Acres RBS program showed a number of trends. Many of these may be considered actionable in that they could be addressed as part of the service delivery process, and would thus improve graduation rates. Factors are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Factors Related to RBS Success Rates (Graduation vs. Disenrollment)

Factor	Relationship with Successful Graduation from RBS	Statistically Significant? (sig. level)
Age of Child at Intake	Age had a significant relationship with outcomes, with younger children having outcomes that are more positive.	Yes (p<.002)
Ethnicity of Child	No difference was found in outcomes for African-American, Caucasian and Latino children.	No
Number of placements prior to RBS	The total number of previous foster care placements was negatively related to successful graduation: The greater number of previous placements, the lower the rate of graduation.	Yes (p<.04)
Length of Stay in RBS	Both overall length of RBS stay and length of stay in the Community Phase of RBS were strongly related to outcomes, with longer stays associated with more positive outcomes.	Yes (p<.003)
Availability of Permanency Resources	Children who, in the Community Phase of RBS, could be transitioned to potential permanency options (own biological parents/family, legal guardians, fost/adopt families) were more likely to later successfully graduate from RBS.	Yes (P<.03)
Child Behavioral/ Emotional Risks	Children with very high needs were somewhat less likely to graduate successfully. This was most evident when high levels of child oppositional behavior were present.	Trend (p<.09)

Transforming Culture

50% of children in the child welfare system are diagnosed with a mental health disorder.

well-being

83%

Over the course of working with Five Acres, 83% of all children showed improvement in their physical and mental well-being.

permanency

In L.A. County, there are more than 20,000 children living in the foster care system and waiting for a permanent family.

60%

of children who are served by Five Acres residential programs leave to a safe, permanent and loving family.

Five Acres has a 30% higher permanency rate than the state average.

Average Actual Cost Per Client Per Month

rate based on a/c report 2010-2012

epdst based on actual billing 2011-2015

Residential

$12,203.60 per month per child RATE

$4,079.83 per month per child EPDST

Community

$4,814.00 per month per child RATE

$2,475.00 per month per child EPDST

2010-2012 Savings to County

$1,678,276.00

Questions?

five acres®

For more information contact
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Continuum of Care Reform: Overview

Myth or Fact

All group homes are closing!

All kids have to be out of group homes by January 1st!

Many relatives will not be able to meet RFA approval standards!

Group home placement is strictly capped at 6 months!

There will be no longer be emergency placements with relatives!

My county isn't going to place with relatives after January 1st!

CCR Background

Context for Change:

- Proportion of children in Group Homes has remained fairly constant despite efforts to reduce it.
- Poor outcomes for children placed in group homes for long periods of time.
- Lawsuit settlement increased Group Home rates by 33% with no new requirements

Legislative mandate*:

- Reform Group Homes & FFAs with robust & diverse stakeholder input
- Legislative report with recommendations
- Builds on previous reform efforts: SB 933, RBS Reform

* Senate Bill 1013 (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2012)

CCR Legislative Intent

- Improve California's child welfare system and its outcomes by:
  - using comprehensive initial child assessments
  - increasing the use of home-based family care and the provision of services and supports to home-based family care
  - reducing the use of congregate care placement settings
  - creating faster paths to permanency resulting in shorter durations of involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems

It is the intent of the Legislature to maintain children's safety, well-being, and healthy development when they are removed from their own families by placing them, whenever possible and appropriate, with relatives or someone familiar, or, when this is not possible or appropriate, with other caregiving families that are able to meet their physical, social, and emotional needs until they can return home.

AB 403 (2015)

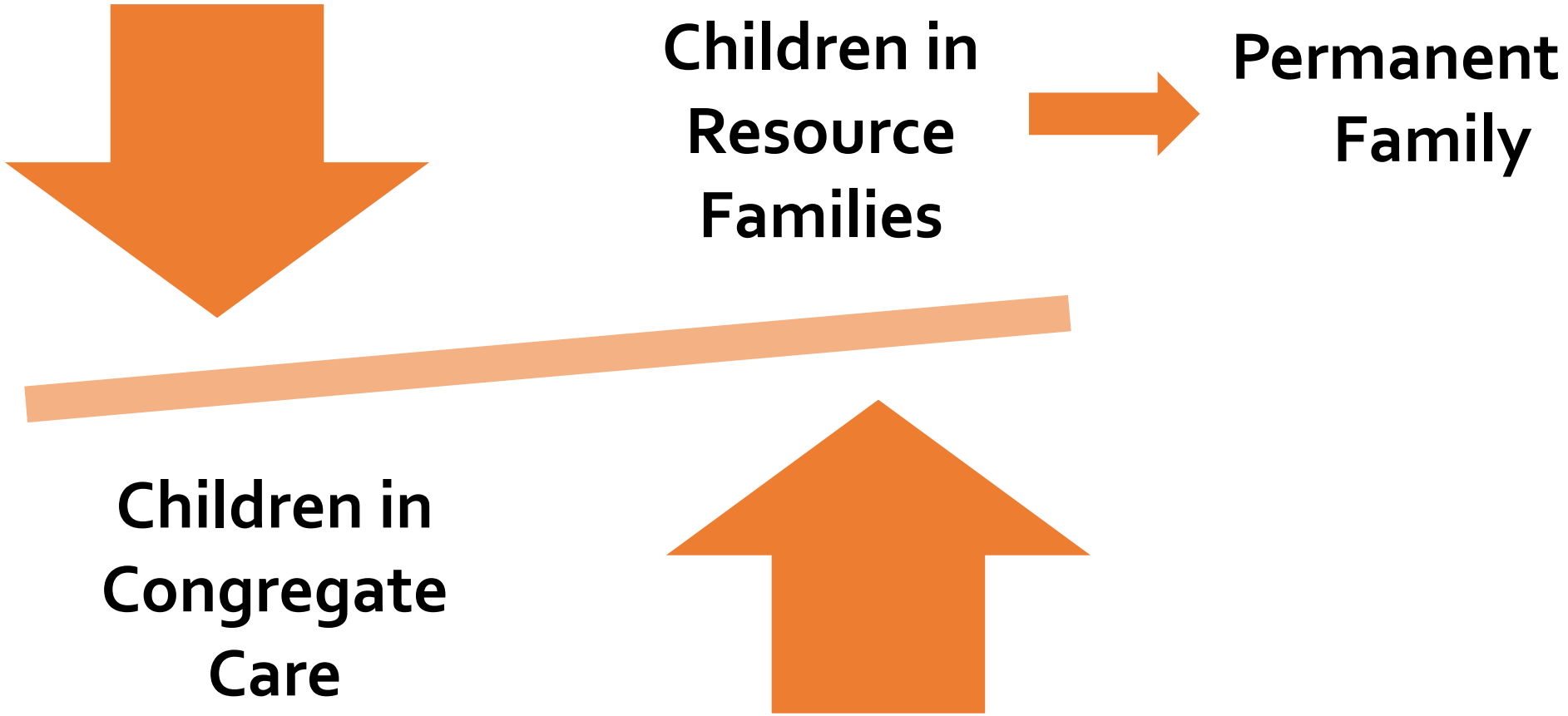
CCR Vision

- All children live with a committed, permanent and nurturing family
- Services and supports should be individualized and coordinated
- System focus is on achieving a permanent family and preparation for successful adulthood
- When needed, congregate care is a short-term, high quality, intensive intervention that is just one part of a continuum of care available for children, youth and young adults

CCR Guiding Principles

- The child, youth and family's experience is valued in:
  - Assessment
  - Service planning
  - Placement decisions
- Children shouldn't change placements to get services
- Cross system and cross-agency collaboration to improve access to services and outcomes
- Recognizing the differences in the probation system

CCR: The Goal


Children in Resource Families
Permanent Family
Children in Congregate Care

CCR Key Strategies

- Continuum of Care Reform is a comprehensive framework for changing the continuum of services that support children, youth and families across placement settings (from relatives to congregate care) in achieving permanency.
- Pillars for this framework include:
  - Increased engagement with children, youth and families
  - Increased capacity for home-based family care
  - Limited use of congregate care
  - Systemic and infrastructure changes: rate structures, training, accreditation, accountability & performance, mental health services

CCR: The Paradigm Shift

Discontinue Group Homes

Short-Term Residential Treatment Center (STRTC)

Children who cannot be safely placed in a family can receive short-term residential care with individualized care plans and intensive therapeutic interventions that support transition to a family.

CCR: Increasing Capacity for Home-Based Care

- Advancing **Resource Family Approval** statewide implementation.
- Additional **funding for support, retention, recruitment and training** of resource families & relatives for placing agencies ($17.2 million GF)
- Foster Family Agencies provide **Core Services**:
  - May provide core services to children in county approved families
- Updated and expanded training requirements across provider and caregiver categories
- Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) Funding Option Program (2014: $30 million investment)

CCR: Reducing Congregate Care

- Licensed residential care is re-envisioned to provide short term therapeutic care including "core services" that are designed to transition children quickly to a home setting.
- Residential care should only be used when intensive 24-hr care is required that can not be provided in a home based setting.
- Providers must immediately begin planning for a safe transition to a home based setting.
- Providers must have the capacity to approve resource families and to transition children and youth to a home setting safely (either directly, or through relationships with other providers).

CCR: Core Services

- FFAs and STRTCs make available core services either directly or through formal agreements:
- Services shall be trauma informed and culturally relevant
- Ensure the delivery mental health services (specialty and non-specialty)
- Transitional support services for placement changes, permanency, aftercare
- **Education, physical, behavioral and mental health supports**
- Activities to support youth achieving a successful adulthood
- Services to achieve permanency & maintain/establish family connections

CCR Rollout

2012 Legislature passes SB 1013 requiring CCR Workgroup & Recommendations

January 2015 DSS Submits Report & Recommendations to the Legislature

October 2015 AB 403 Signed into Law

January 1, 2017 CCR Requirements Take Effect

2017 - 2019 Extensions available to FFAs and STRTCs

2019+ Additional extensions available for providers serving probation youth

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Solutions – Accounting for the Educational Needs of Youth in Residential Settings

Los Angeles RBS Education Working Group

- Los Angeles was one of four Residentially Based Services pilot counties.
- Statewide RBS evaluation results – and local experience – showed that RBS programs had positive outcomes in many domains – but not educational progress.
- LA RBS providers, child welfare agency, school districts, and youth advocates formed working group to discuss experiences, issues, and potential solutions, both locally and statewide.

STRTPs and School of Origin Rights

Time-limited STRTPs - will youth change schools when they enter STRTP and again when they 'step down' to a family placement?? The SOO dilemma:

- Attending SOO prevents disruption, but travel time, lack of contact between STRTP staff and distant school, and schedule conflicts may negatively impact youth.
- Attending local school makes coordination easier, but youth lose continuity and educational progress, and may have to change schools again when they leave the STRTP.

Potential Solutions

- Engaged and informed Education Rights Holders – case-by-case decisions
- STRTP intake processes – take into account School Of Origin rights
- STRTPs - build capacity to transport youth to School of Origin
- Coordinate school district, County Office of Education, and child welfare agency transportation resources (as required by Every Student Succeeds Act)

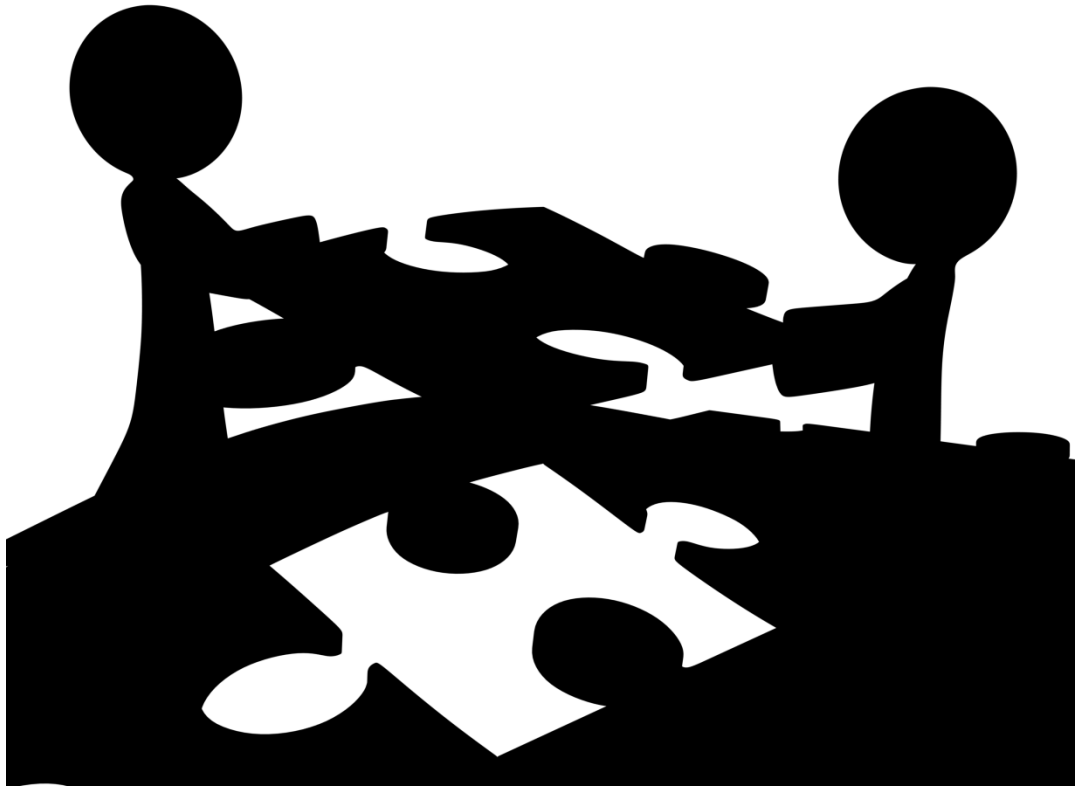
STRTPs and Enrollment/Educational Placement Rights

- Youth at STRTPs often have incomplete educational records – many transfers, attendance gaps
- Youth at STRTPs often have special education needs, but lack adequate/up-to-date IEP, or any IEP.

But … they have a right to immediate enrollment in local school if not staying at School of Origin.

Potential Solutions

- Early and ongoing education assessments for all foster children
- CCR uniform assessment
- CCR CFT requirements
- Electronic data-sharing to enable prompt enrollment in correct classes/educational program.
- Child welfare/probation agencies, STRTPs, LEAs -- work with ERHs to get special education assessment/IEP promptly initiated and completed.
- Need to respect enrollment rights, and also ensure youth's safety and meaningful access to education, while assessment is pending.



Academic Support for Youth in STRTPs

STRTPs could improve educational outcomes for youth by …

- Transportation to SOO or local school, including access to extracurricular activities and sports,
- Staff liaisons - checking in with school and monitoring progress,
- Facilities and supervision for homework, tutoring, other supports.

Potential Solutions

- Performance measures for STRTPs should include educational progress
- Child welfare/probation agencies -- set expectations for educational support in contracts with STRTPs.
- Collect and analyze educational outcome data for youth in STRTPs.

Mental Health, Education, and STRTPs

- STRTPs must have capacity to provide mental health care.
- Many STRTP youth will need education-related mental health services (ERMHS)
- Currently, foster youths' mental health services are often not coordinated with school-based supports.

Potential Solutions

- Coordination between STRTP mental health providers and school staff.
- Districts -- consider contracting with STRTPs for on-site ERMHS
- Districts – increase school-wide competence in trauma-informed practice.

Attendance and Discipline issues for Youth in STRTPs

- STRTPs should provide intensive support when youth change schools mid-year – monitor attendance and behavior.
- Consider unaddressed special needs as possible cause of attendance, discipline problems – youth may need updated/revised IEP.
- School- and district-wide PBIS, restorative justice, and trauma-informed practices may be of special benefit to STRTP youth.

Questions