



stepupforkin.org

Webinar Series, Part 3:

Continuum of Care Reform and What it Means for Kinship Families



How to Join the Webinar

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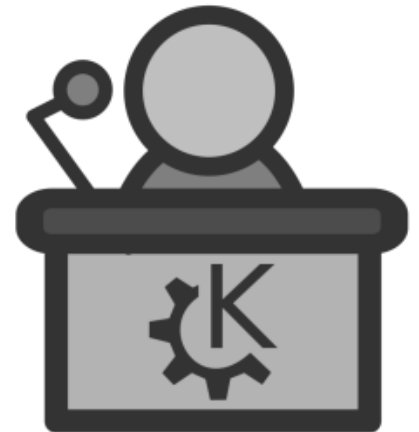
Webinar ID: 143-658-171

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 pausing for questions at 3 different intervals

Today's Presenters

- Angie Schwartz, Alliance for Children's Rights
- Sara Rogers, California Department of Social Services
- Kim Wrigley, CA Department of Social Services
- Diana Boyer, County Welfare Directors Association
- Cathy Senderling, County Welfare Directors Association
- Tracy Schiro, County of San Luis Obispo
- Numa Aubry , City and County of San Francisco
- Dina Smith, City and County of San Francisco
- Jackie Rutheiser, California Alliance of Child & Family Services



What We Will Cover Today



- Building on our last webinar – which focused on the current opportunities to recruit, retain and support kinship families
- Looking ahead – reforms that are in the works to expand those opportunities to support, recruit and retain families and improve quality and outcomes of family placements
- Overview of Continuum of Care Reform
- Resource Family Approval – what's new for kinship, what's the same, and what are the benefits of RFA
- Foster Family Agencies and new opportunities to support kinship families
- What's Next – how can you help shape these reforms?

OVERVIEW: CALIFORNIA'S CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM (CCR)

PRESENTED BY:

SARA ROGERS, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICE



Vision for Children in Foster Care

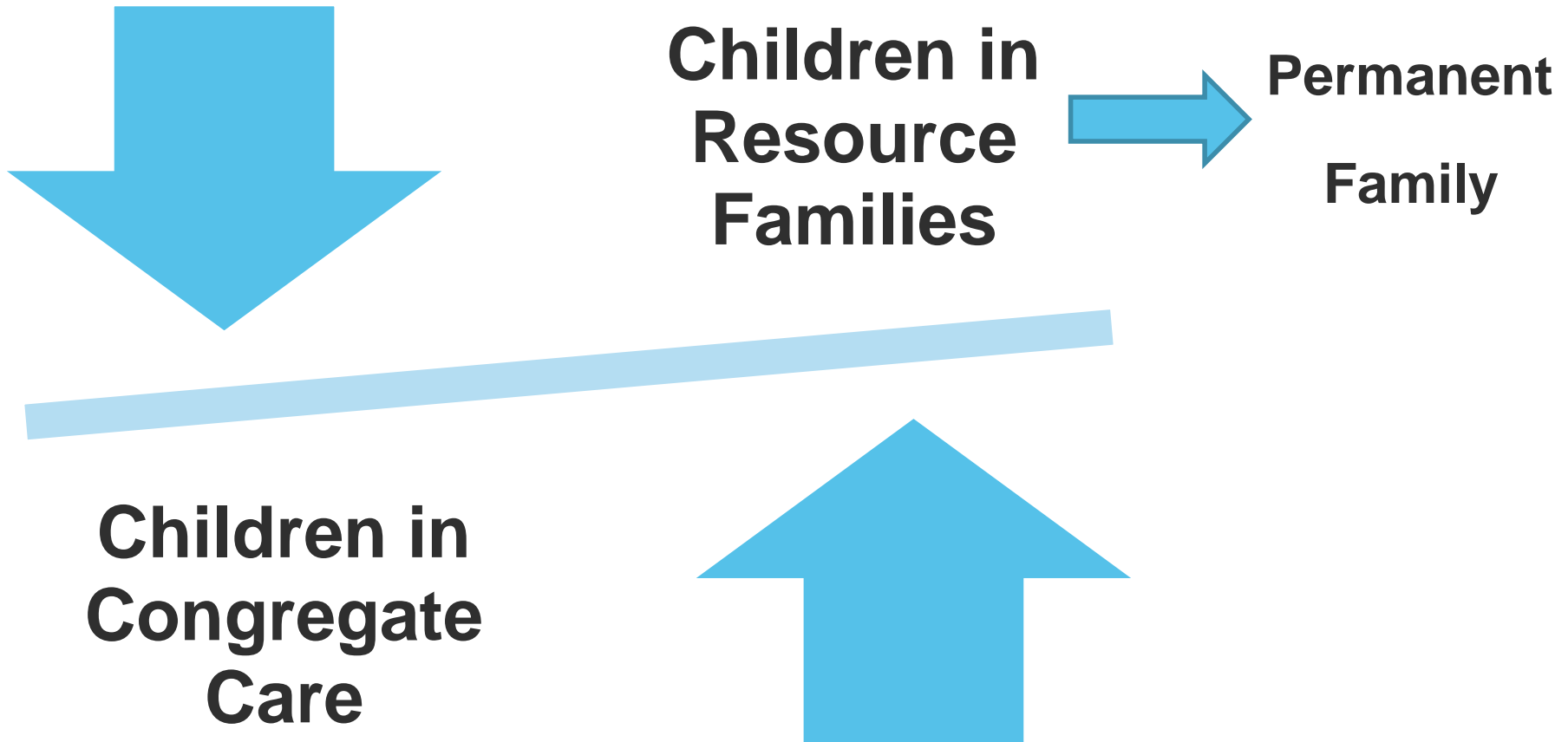
- All children live with a committed, permanent and nurturing family
- Individualized and coordinated services and supports.
- Focus on permanent family and preparation for successful adulthood
- When needed, congregate care is a short-term, high quality, intensive intervention that is just one part of a continuum of care available for children, youth and young adults.



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 differing needs of probation youth

The Goal:



Key Strategies



- Continuum of Care Reform: A comprehensive framework that supports children, youth and families across placement settings (from relatives to congregate care) in achieving permanency. Includes:
 - Increased engagement with children, youth and families
 - Increased capacity for **home-based family care**
 - Limited use of congregate care
 - Systemic and infrastructure changes: **rates, training, accreditation, accountability & performance, mental health services**

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

The “Paradigm Shift”

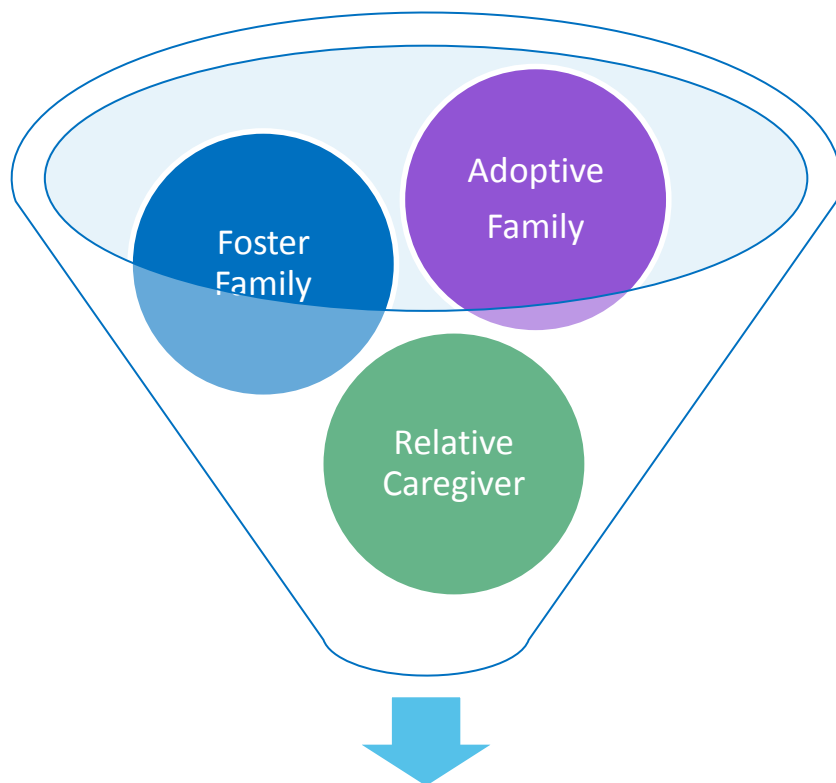
**Discontinue
Group Homes**



**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.

Foster Families → Resource Families



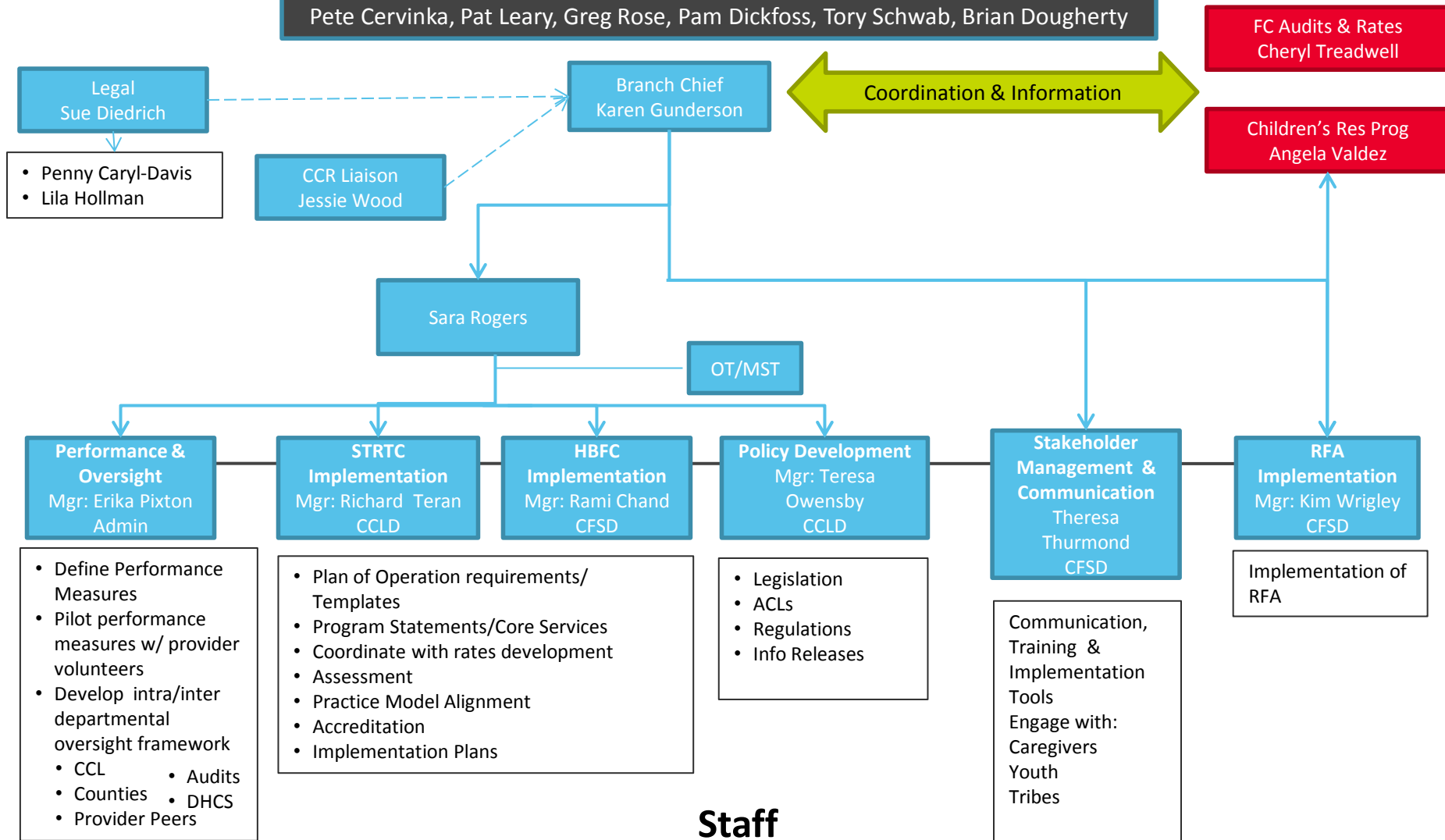
Resource Family

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

CCR Project Organization

Shared Management Structure
Pete Cervinka, Pat Leary, Greg Rose, Pam Dickfoss, Tory Schwab, Brian Dougherty



Staff

- Paula Ensele
- Gina Jones
- Anetria Turner

- Wendy Cook
- Amhed Nemr
- Happy Stewart RA
- Shawnee Humbert-Rico

- Irma Munoz
- Mai Yer Vang
- Emerita Godleski

- Marcus Cortez
- Lee Turner

- Tracy Urban
- Loretta Miller

- Rebecca Buchmiller
- Christina DeSmet
- Kendra Elmendorf

The Work Ahead...

Will take “a village”!

CDSS will be collaborating with a wide array of stakeholders in the implementation work

CCR
Report

AB 403

Preparation

- Policies
- Rates
- Outreach
- Orientations
- Tools
- Training
- Accountability
- Recruitment
- Performance measures

Pre-Implementation

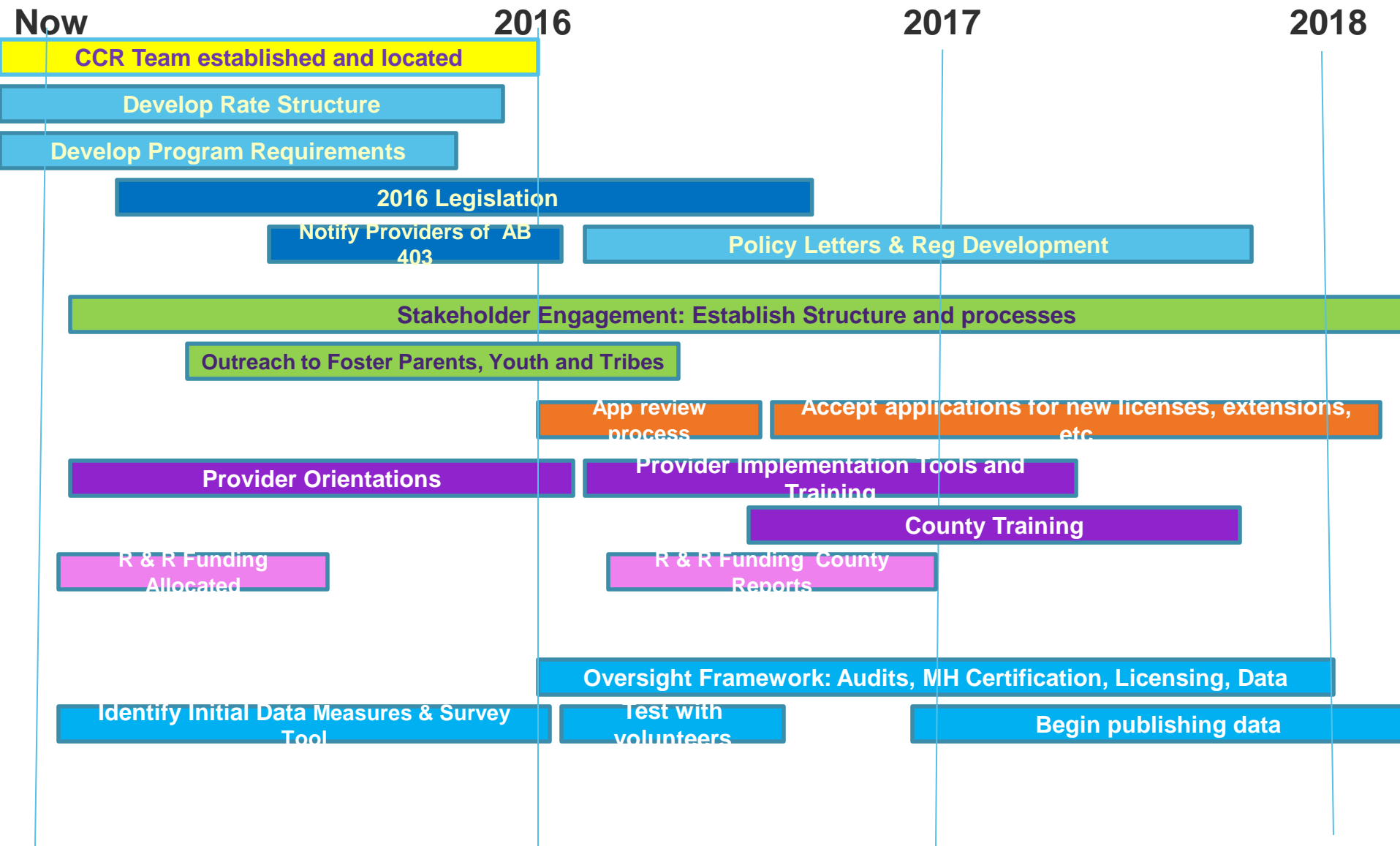
- Applications
- Reviews
- Licenses
- Data testing
- Training & TA

1-1-17

Implementation: Children & families served differently!

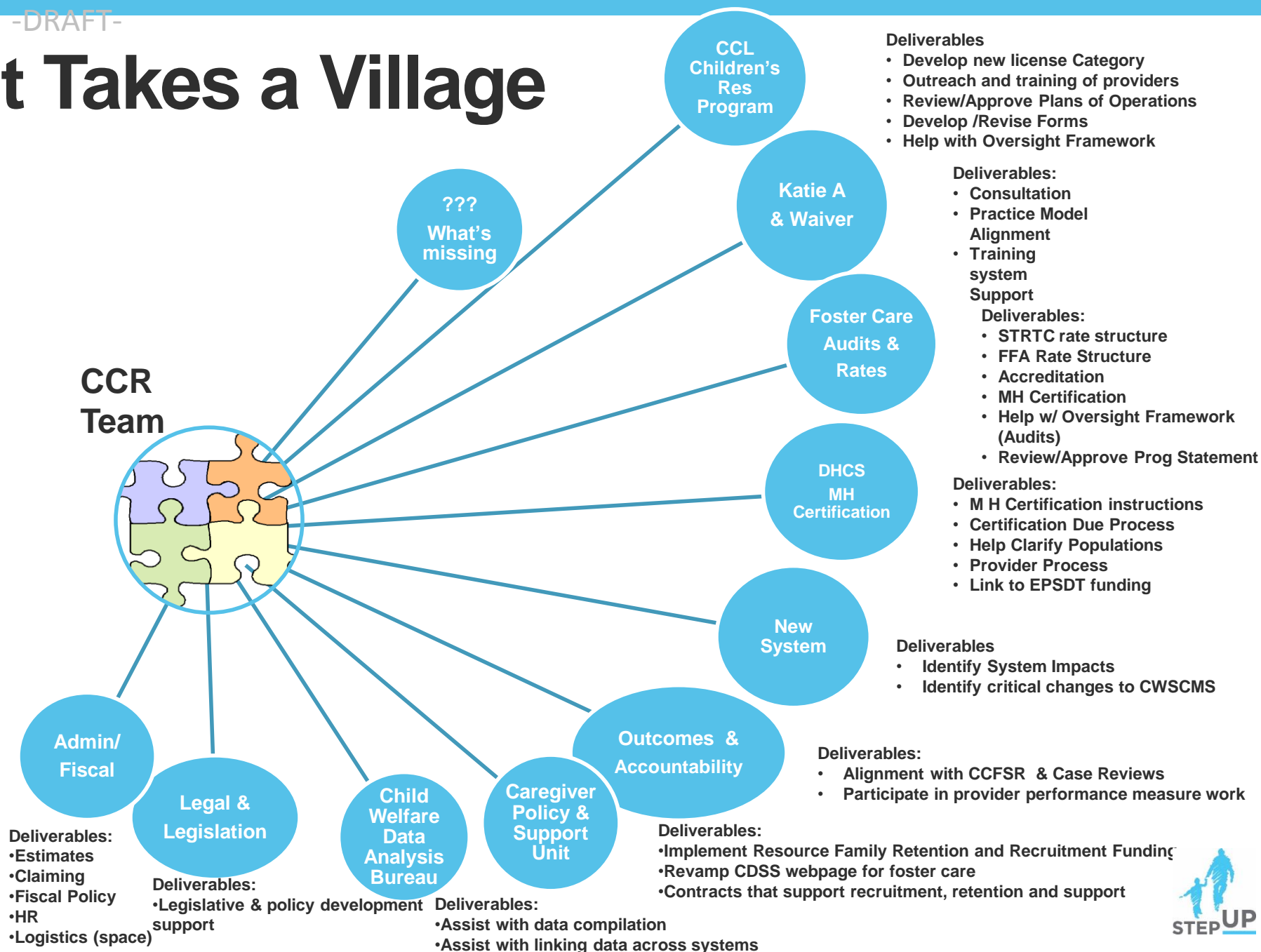
- Extensions
- Data collection
- Monitoring
- Technical Assistance
- Policy Revisi

Timeline



-DRAFT-

It Takes a Village



RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL PROCESS

Presented by:

Diana Boyer, County Welfare Directors Association

Tracy Schiro, County of San Luis Obispo

Numa Aubry & Dina Smith, City and County of San Francisco

Kim Wrigley, CA Department of Social Services

Resource Family Approval (RFA)

Legislative Intent*

Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16519.5:

“DSS, in consultation with county child welfare agencies, foster parent associations, and other interested community parties, shall implement a unified, family-friendly, child-centered resource family approval process to replace the existing multiple processes for licensing foster family homes, approving relatives and nonrelative extended family members as foster care providers, and approving adoptive families.”

* Authorized under AB 340 (2007), reauthorized under SB 1013 (2013) and modified under AB 403 (2015)

Resource Family Approval (RFA) Goals

- Eliminate duplication for caregivers
- Align standards across foster care, adoption and guardianship
- Assess caregivers up-front for **strengths and needs for support**
- Better prepare caregivers through training
- Enhance **child safety**
- Improve child matching to caregivers

Core Elements of RFA

One Approval Standard:

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



Approval Standards	Adoption (Existing)	Relative/NERF M (Existing)	Foster Home (Existing)	RFA
Criminal Records/Child Abuse Review	√	√	√	√
Standardized Criteria for Criminal Record Exemptions		√	√	√
Homes and Ground Safety Check	√	√	√	√
Training Required			√	√
Psychosocial Assessment	√			√
Screen for Risk Factors (DM, S, MH, PH)			MH and PH Only	√
Applicant References	√			√
Annual Review of all families		√		√

What's changing for Relatives?

Under RFA, relatives:

1. Complete both pre-approval and post-placement training – with flexible options to meet relative needs & child care during training
2. Health screening & TB Test
3. First Aid and CPR certification
4. Permanency assessment – Includes 4 face-to-face interviews
5. Three personal references
6. DMV record

RFA Standards – **what's changed:**

- 7. 90-days to complete the approval process
- 8. Enhanced due process for denials
- 9. Complaints investigated by county staff but with additional oversight by DSS.
- 10. Be approved to take all children, if a relative is willing, not just their relative children.

What RFA Doesn't Change?

Aspects of the Approval process that do NOT change include:

1. Preferential placement with relatives
2. Ability to place with relatives prior to approval
3. Home Inspection with ability to waive certain non-safety requirements (aka “Environment Assessment”)
4. Criminal background check with exemption process

The Permanency Assessment

The Assessment will review:

- Childhood upbringing/experiences
- Adult experiences
- Personal characteristics & risk assessment
- Marital status and significant relationships
- Children in and out of the home
- Health history
- Parenting approaches
- Social supports
- Employment/finances
- Motivations for caregiving
- Child matching
- Discussion of criminal history

Potential Caregivers will be assessed on the basis of their ability to

- Honor the child's or non-minor **dependent's natural connections.**
- Parent a child needing placement in a family setting.
- Provide a safe, nurturing, and stable home – emphasizing their ability to **ensure a child's rights are fully and consistently administered.**
- Provide permanence to a child or prepare a child for permanence, including reunification.

Terms of an RFA-Approved Home

1. Maximum capacity is six (6) children, including biological children, foster children, relative children, and adoptive children.
 - Exceptions allowed, including but not limited to, placement for sibling groups.
2. No application fee, no annual fee.
3. Perpetual approval (no expiration date) – only subject to annual updated approval:
 - 8 hour annual training completed
 - Home inspection for building/ground safety
 - Updating the psycho-social for any changes through a meeting of all those in the home

Challenges of Implementation

- 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.

Benefits of RFA

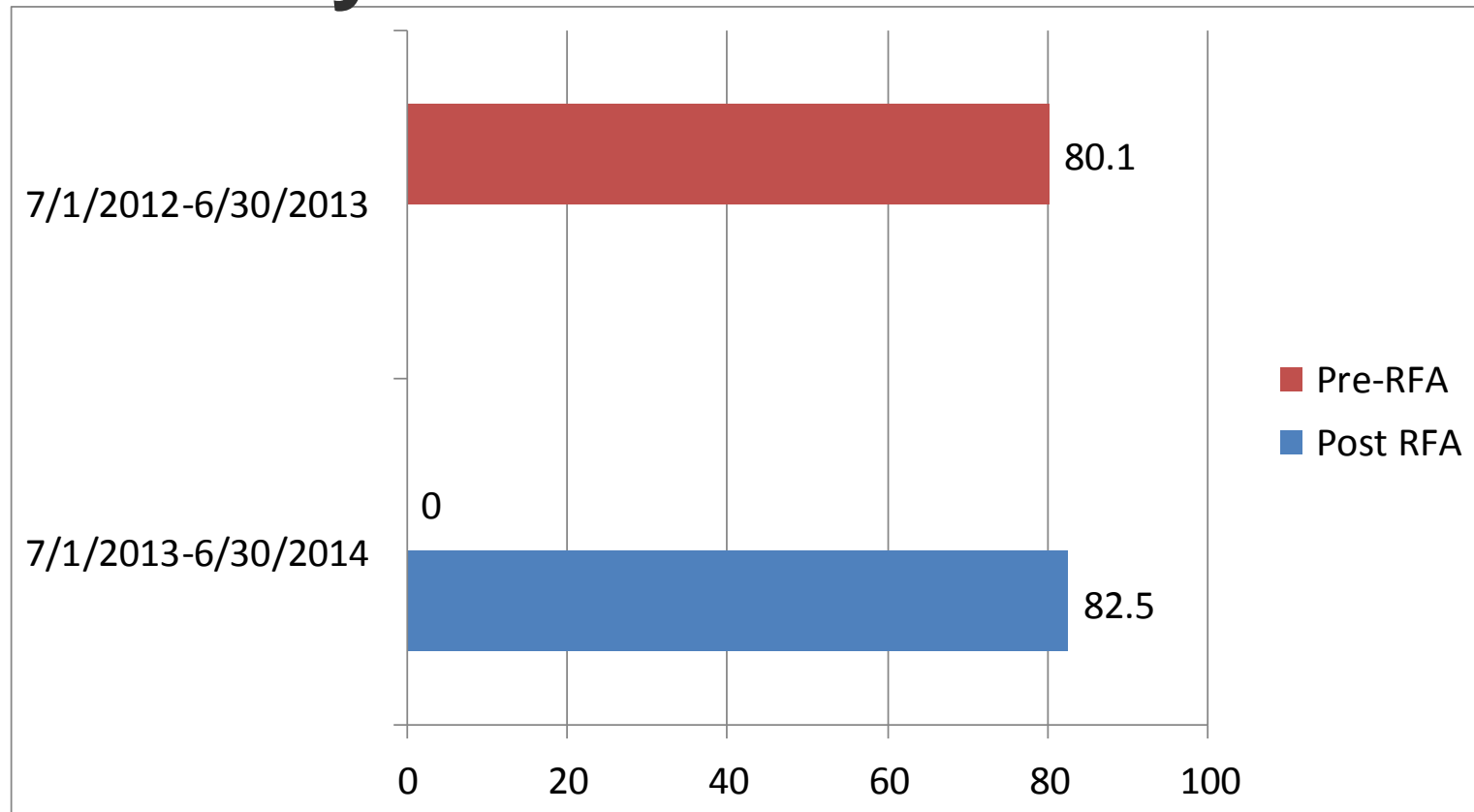
- Concurrent plans established with no concern that family won't be able to pass the adoption home study
- Better assessments **up-front** gives us more information at an earlier stage about caregivers and their support needs.
- Relatives have stated they really like the training they receive – participate jointly with foster parents.
- “A child placed with a resource family shall be eligible for AFDC-FC payments” (Welf. & Inst. Code § 16519.5(m))
- Caregivers especially relatives report feeling better prepared and more valued.
- A natural fit with QPI – **healthy families and strong connections**



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Placement Stability C.4-1

8 days to 12 months in care



Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) Statements

- San Francisco believes children deserve a childhood. Be a nurturing caregiver who affirms all children and makes a lasting commitment to children who need a safe and loving home. Be a valued and respected partner in building promising futures.
- In San Luis Obispo, Resource families nurture, love and advocate for children until their families are able to do so. They have the willingness and spirit to learn to support and embrace a child's family. They are valued and respected as expert partners in child welfare services.



Phase In Process

January 1, 2016: Cohort 1 FFA's

Optional/early implementation by foster family agencies.
New caregivers would undergo the RFA process.

January 1, 2017: Statewide Implementation

All new caregivers will go through the RFA process.

December 31, 2019: Date by which current caregivers (licensed, approved or certified) must complete the RFA process.

*Implementation dates specified in AB 403.

Phase In Process for RFA

2014/2015: Cohort 1 Counties

New county foster family home (FFH) and relative caregivers in both CWS and Probation in the following counties:

- *San Luis Obispo, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Kings and Santa Barbara*

2016: Cohort 2 Counties

- *Butte, Madera, Monterey, Orange, Stanislaus, Ventura, Yolo*

For additional information regarding the RFA process, including access to the Written Directives, visit: <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG3416.htm>

Questions?

FOSTER FAMILY AGENCIES, KINSHIP FAMILIES & CCR

Presented by:

Jackie Rutheiser, California Alliance of Child & Family Services

Diana Boyer, County Welfare Directors Association

AB 403 Begins to Breaks Down the Silos Between FFAs and Relative Caregivers

- To increase support for families and reduce placement changes, CCR is intended to allow FFAs to partner with the counties to serve all types of families:
 - FFA certified foster families
 - NREFMS
 - County licensed foster family homes
 - Approved relative caregivers
 - Approved Resource Families (NOTE: all families will be in this category by 2019)



Supports and Services Should be Individualized

- AB 403 states that:
 - Services and supports should be tailored to meet the needs of the individual child and family being served.
 - The individual needs of each child and youth will be assessed at the outset of his or her entry in foster care to identify and obtain the most appropriate services and placement setting to meet those individualized needs.

New Way for Private and Public Entities to Work Together

- In order to achieve a continuum of care for foster youth and families, counties can request an FFA to provide supports and services to the county approved or licensed relative caregivers, resource families and NREFMS.
- Children will **not have to be moved from one living situation to another in order to secure necessary services an supports.**
- FFAs can provide pre and post permanency supports and services (support groups, early intervention).
- By bringing the supports and services to the youth and family, instead of moving the child, children and youth will not be re-traumatized by multiple placements, increasing the likelihood of permanency.

How Will it Actually Work – Still in Process

- CDSS has convened [Stakeholder Workgroups](#) to consider the types of supports and services provided by FFAs to all Resource Families (certified, licensed, relative, approved).
- In addition to CDSS leadership, the stakeholders in the Workgroup include, but are not limited to, foster youth, legal advocates, counties, FFA providers, probation, and mental health.
- CDSS will release a series of “next steps” for the implementation of CCR which will include the process for FFAs to provide supports and services to relative caregivers.

Common Core Practice Model

- “The practice of public agencies, private agencies, and service providers should be aligned through a common core practice model, with county child welfare and probation agencies retaining their case management responsibilities.”



FFAS Must be Able to Provide Core Supports and Services

- AB 403 requires FFAs to demonstrate their capacity to provide core supports and services to children and nonminor dependents, by either directly providing the services and supports or by showing that the FFA has a formal agreement with other agencies to provide them.
- Formal agreements with other agencies could include, but are not limited to, the following entities:
 - Another FFA, adoption agency, or licensed provider
 - The county mental health department
 - A community based organization

What are the Core Areas of Supports and Services Identified by AB 403?



- Includes the following, as appropriate or necessary:
 - Specialty mental health services under EPSDT
 - Transitions for children, youth and families
 - Educational, physical, behavioral and mental health
 - Extracurricular and social activities
 - Services for transition age youth and nonminor dependents
 - Permanency including reunification, adoption and guardianship
 - Support for relationships with parents, siblings, extended family members, tribes and others important to the child or youth

Transition Support Services

- “Transition support services for children, youth and families upon initial entry and placement changes and for families who assume permanency through reunification, adoption or guardianship.”

WIC 11463(b)

- Early Intervention Services
- Family Finding and Engagement
- Support groups
- Preparing Needs and Services Plan
- Exit interviews and debriefing with the youth on the transition plan
- 24/7 emergency crisis intervention
- Post-permanency services



Educational and Physical Supports Services



- “Educational and physical, behavioral, and mental health supports, including extracurricular activities and social supports.” WIC 11463 (b)
 - Transportation to and from school and school-based activities
 - IEP supports/educational advocacy
 - Tutoring, mentoring, and homework assistance
 - Teaching how to access supports, fill out school forms, navigate enrollment/transferring credits
 - College and vocational education preparation
 - Family and school liaison and coordination

Transition Age Youth and Nonminor Dependents Supports

- “Activities designed to support transition-age youth (TAY) and nonminor dependents in achieving a successful adulthood.” WIC 11463 (b)
 - Transportation to school, work, ILP, other appointments.
 - Individualized ILP services
 - Preparation for THP+FC or a SILP
 - Academic, career, vocational or college education preparation
 - Pregnant and parenting support
 - Financial management and literacy
 - Job skills, interviewing, internships, time management

Permanency Supports

- “Services to achieve permanency, including supporting efforts to reunify or achieve adoption or guardianship and efforts to maintain or establish relationships.” WIC 11463 (b)
 - Family Finding and Engagement
 - Matching needs of youth with skills of relative caregiver
 - Post reunification/adoption/guardianship supports
 - Reunification services including supervising visits to the birth family
 - Coaching of birth family and birth family support
 - Supporting sibling placements
 - System navigation (courts, mental health, school, county, etc.)
 - Permanency Assessments/Psychosocial Assessments
 - Respite

Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) and Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC)

- Children and youth living with relatives will be able to receive intensive supports and services offered by ITFC and TFC without being removed from their relative caregiver's home.
 - In-home support counselors (could include 24/7 supervision)
 - Crisis intervention and crisis stabilization services
 - Intensive Wraparound
 - Care coordination
 - Higher level of respite
 - Intensive caregiver training
 - Intensive shadowing and mentoring

Many Questions Still to be Answered

- What assessment process will be used to individualize and tailor the supports and services to meet the strengths and needs for a child, youth and family?
- What are the types of supports and services FFAs will be providing relative caregivers and NREFMs?
- What are the best practices to ensure that the needs of special populations within the child welfare system are met in home based care?
- How will a payment structure be created to cover the costs of the supports and services FFAs could provide relative caregivers?
- What is the clean up language needed in new legislation next year to ensure that what CCR has proposed actually is enacted into law correctly?

Questions?

RECRUITING AND RETAINING KINSHIP FAMILIES

PRESENTED BY:

CATHY SENDERLING-MCDONALD, COUNTY WELFARE
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

DIANA BOYER, COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

SARA ROGERS, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
SERVICES



Continuum of Care Reform

County Imperatives:

- Greater emphasis on home- and family-based care in Continuum of Care Reform means counties must begin to build capacity now.
- Research shows that children do best when placed with relatives.
- Relatives need to be supported and have access to needed services for their children
- Long-standing Federal and State mandates to consider placement with relatives first

Tools for Kinship Support

- Kinship Support Service Programs (KSSP)
- Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI)
- AB 403 which includes:
 - Resource Family Approval Process
 - Training for all Caregivers
 - Child and Family Teams
- Approved Relative Caregiver Program (ARC)
- Therapeutic Foster Care

Funding to Build Capacity

Foster Parent & Relative Recruitment, Retention and Support Funding (ACL 15-76)

- 2015-16 State Budget provides \$17.7 million total State General Funds (which may be matched to federal funds)
- \$14.5 million for CWS
- \$2.7 million split between CWS & Probation
- State will retain \$500,000 for statewide activities

Allowable Uses of Funds

1. Staffing to:

- Provide and improve direct services and supports to licensed foster family homes, approved resource families, and relative caregivers
- Remove any barriers in those areas defined as priorities in the county implementation plan and subsequent reports on outcomes

Allowable Uses of Funds

2. Exceptional child needs **not covered** by the caregiver-specific rate that would normalize the child's experience, stabilize the placement, or enhance the child's well-being
3. Child care for licensed foster parents, approved resource families, and relative caregivers
4. Intensive relative finding, engagement, and navigation efforts
5. Emerging technological, evidence-informed, or other nontraditional approaches to outreach to potential foster family homes, resource families, and relatives
6. Other uses (list in Budget Act is not exhaustive)



County Requirements to Receive Funding

Completion of County Plans to DSS that include:

- Comprehensive needs assessment of current placement resources, gaps and target areas for improvement
- Strategies to be pursued (new or expansion of existing strategies)
- County plans due by Dec 1st to CDSS.

DSS Plan Reviews

Likelihood of Success

- Quickly implementable?
- Evidence-based?
- Successful elsewhere?
- Measurable goals?
- Obstacles anticipated?

Sustainability

- Able to deliver short-term improvements *and* take advantage of future funding?
- Innovative leveraging? (Public/private partnerships, other local funds, etc.)

R/R/S Funding - Future Years



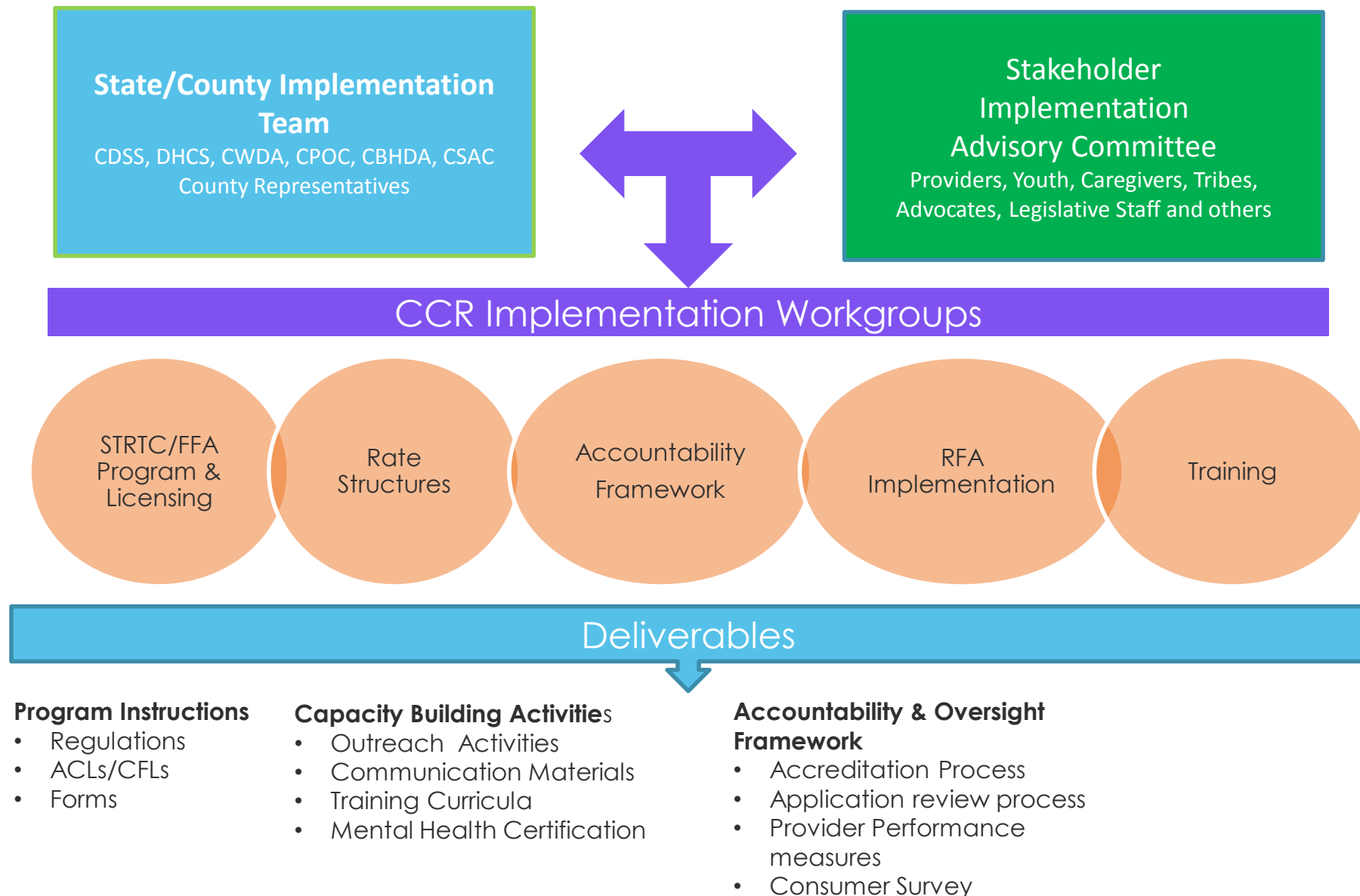
- Funding is not guaranteed – Subject to annual appropriation by the Legislature/Governor
- 2015-16 level of funding is likely **insufficient to meet needs to support family-based caregivers.**
- If funding continues, **AB 403 requires:**
 - Annual County plans due to DSS for approval by Sept 1st each year.
 - County reports on outcomes due to DSS by Sept 30th each year.

What's Next?



How can we support relatives?

1. Encourage collaboration and conversations locally between counties and caregivers to identify gaps and develop solutions (eg. QPI implementation, ensuring RFA is responsive to unique needs of kinship families)
2. Educate State policy makers on needs and gaps in services to relative caregivers and seek solutions
3. Build and expand on effective practices to recruit and retain relative caregivers



Questions?