



Child Welfare and Early Childhood: Cross-Systems Collaboration to Improve Outcomes for Young Children and Their Families

Webinar 4: Head Start and Child Care
for Children in Child Welfare

Moderator: Cynthia L. Tate, Ph.D.
The BUILD Initiative

Wednesday, April 20, 2022



Objectives of the Series

- Raise awareness about young children and their families encountering or involved with the child welfare system.
- Promote opportunities and strategies for prevention for families and communities.
- Educate participants about the racial disparities in family separation with child welfare involvement.
- Provide examples of cross-systems collaboration on behalf of our youngest children.

Webinar 4 Objectives: Head Start and Child Care

- To understand the benefits and challenges of enrolling foster children into Head Start programs.
- To hear from a Head Start parent leader about her experience with Head Start in West Virginia.
- To learn about California's Emergency Child Care Bridge Program.
- To discuss how staff of all three systems can work together to successfully provide these beneficial programs to especially vulnerable children.

Presenters

- Tommy Sheridan, Deputy Director, National Head Start Association
- Susan Savage, Ph.D., Research Director, Child Care Resource Center, CA
- Andria Zaverl, Research Manager, Child Care Resource Center, CA

How to Participate

1

Introduce yourself in the chat

2

Answer the poll questions

3

Put your questions for the panelists in the chat or Q&A

4

Complete the survey at the end



Head Start for Children in Child Welfare

BUILD Child Welfare and Early Childhood Webinar | April 20, 2022



NHSA's Vision

To Lead

To be the untiring voice that will not be quiet until every vulnerable child is served with the Head Start model of support for the whole child, the family, and the community.

To Advocate

To work diligently for policy changes that ensure all vulnerable children and families have what they need to succeed.

NHSA's Mission

To coalesce, inspire, and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education.

We are compelled to fulfill this mission by the promise of all possible outcomes:

- One powerful, united Head Start voice
- A collegial, collaborative Head Start field
- Nonpartisan support of an increased federal commitment to Head Start
- Healthier, empowered children and families, and stronger, more vibrant communities

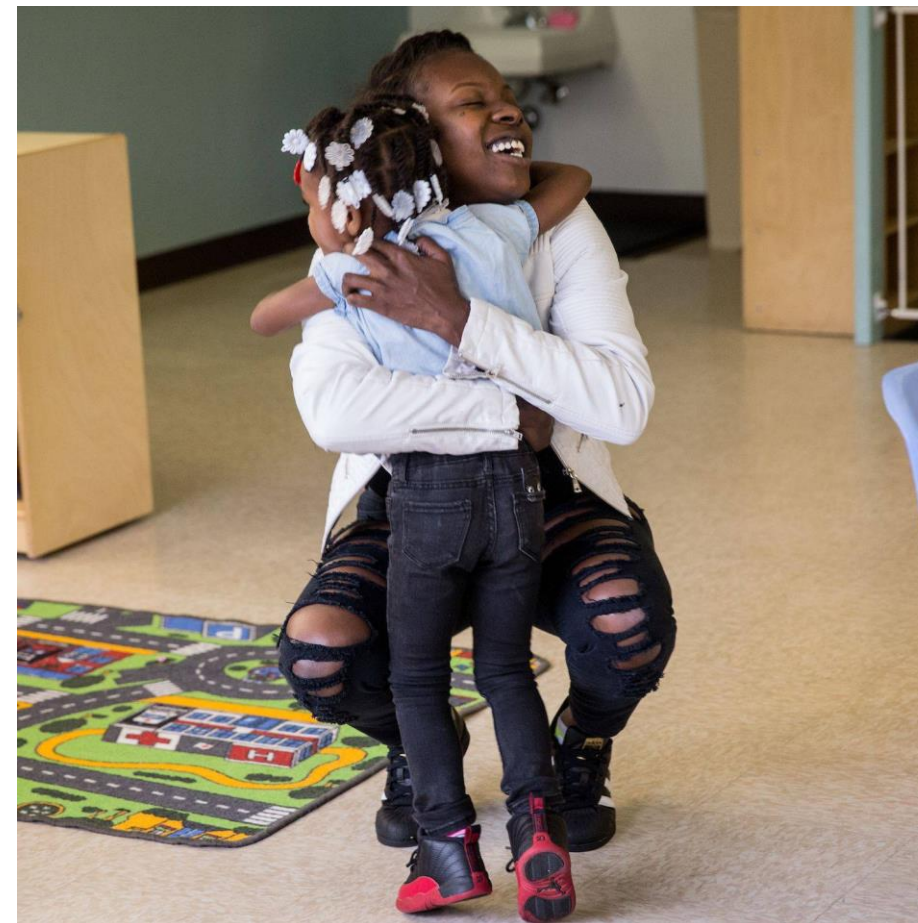


“We must open the doors of opportunity. But we must also equip our people to walk through those doors.”

- President Lyndon B. Johnson

The Basic Facts

- **Scope** - In 2018-19, Head Start served more than 35,000 children in foster care. More than 22,000 children were referred from CW agencies
- **Eligibility** - Per HSPPS 1302.12(c)(1)(iv), children are eligible if “the child is in foster care.”
- **Grants** - Applicants must include how they plan to meet the needs of children in foster care
- **Reservation of Slots** - Programs can reserve up to 3% of their slots for children in foster care
- **Partnerships and Kinship Care** - Information Memoranda released by HHS to encourage HS to serve children in foster care



How is Foster Care Defined?

“Foster care means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the state agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child-care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes. A child is in foster care in accordance with this definition regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and payments are made by the state or local agency for the care of the child, whether adoption subsidy payments are being made prior to the finalization of an adoption, or whether there is federal matching of any payments that are made.”

- Head Start Program Performance Standards 1305.2

The Impact - HS & Child Welfare

- HS/EHS programs provide opportunities for children to receive developmental, health, and nutrition screenings. Approximately 50 percent of all young children in foster care exhibit developmental delays—as much as five times the rate seen in children in the general population (Houshyar, 2018)
- Early Head Start children (0-3) have significantly fewer child welfare encounters during their elementary school years (Green et al., 2014)
- Head Start children are 93% less likely to be removed from their homes and placed in foster care than those with no ECE. (Klein et al., 2017)
- Head Start provides parent training opportunities, improves parent involvement and relationships, and decreases caretaker distress



Proof of Head Start Success

Scylar Jones & Courtney Tomes

Head Start Parents,

Community Action of South Eastern

WV

Outstanding Challenges

- How can we better identify and support children in informal kinship care arrangements?
- What changes to Head Start eligibility will allow for better services?
- How can child welfare agencies better gather information on what programs children are being served in and directly connect/refer them to Head Start?*
- How can Head Start better align and connect with Family First?



*From Klein, S., Fries, L., and Emmons, M. M. (2017). Early care and education arrangements and young children's risk of foster placement: Findings from a National Child Welfare Sample. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 83, 168-178. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chldyouth.2017.09.006>

Thank You!

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California Emergency Child Care Bridge Evaluation

BUILD Initiative Series: Child Welfare and Early Childhood:
Cross-Systems Collaboration to Improve Outcomes for
Young Children and Their Families

Child Care and Head Start for Children in Child Welfare

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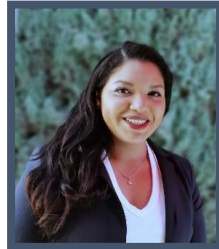


Meet the Research Team



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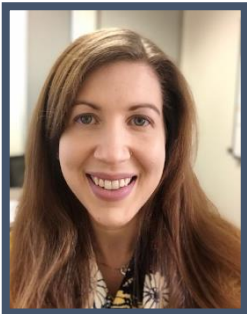
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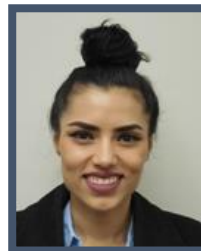


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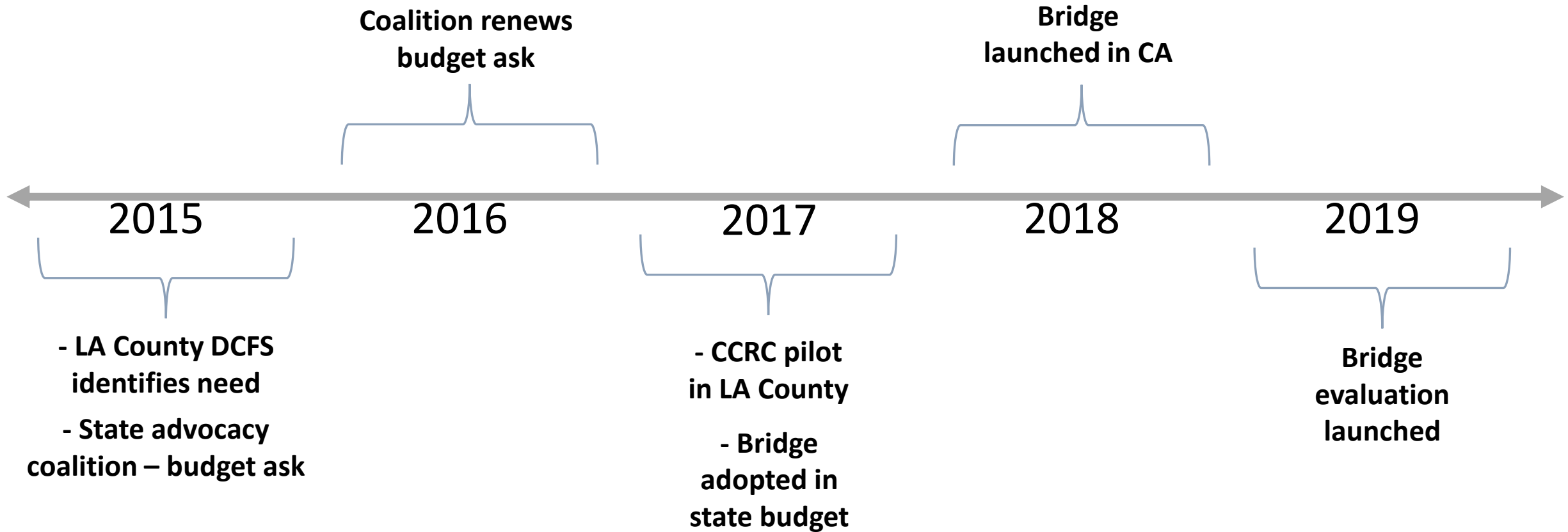
Sandy Southivilay



Mackenzie Wright



Creating a statewide program





Intersecting barriers – child care and foster care

- Children aged 0-5 are difficult to place
 - Sibling sets or multiple children are difficult to place
 - Most require 12-month, full-time care
 - Many need care for non-traditional hours
 - Many child care programs have limited enrollment time periods or waitlists
-



3 Components of Bridge

Emergency Child Care Vouchers



Child Care Navigators



Trauma-informed Care Training and Coaching





Statewide Bridge Evaluation

2020-2022



12 Participating Counties





Evaluation by the numbers

124

Admin
Interviews

52

Caregiver
Interviews

57

Provider
Interviews

346

Caregiver
Surveys

607

Provider
Surveys



Statewide Bridge Evaluation: Caregiver Findings



Bridge increased the likelihood of accepting a child

40% of caregivers would not have accepted the foster child without the Bridge Program.

Would Not

“We would not have been able to take four kids or an infant because we both work.”

-San Benito

Unsure

“It would have been hard. I would have had to turn down any child that wasn’t old enough to go to school.”

-San Diego

Would

“I would have [still accepted the child], but I don’t know how I would have done it, because they were family.”

-Riverside



Bridge was a stress relief to caregivers

Caregiver Stress Measure	Percentage
Access to Child Care Overall	96%
Economic Stress	76%
Emotional Stress	70%



Caregivers noticed positive changes in their child

- **93%** said maintaining a consistent **routine** was helpful for the child
 - **90% built strong bonds** with their child care provider
 - **78%** noticed a positive change in their child's well-being
 - **Thrived** socially, cognitively, and physically
-



Providers reported increase in the child's well-being

82% agreed that the program increased the child's well-being

*" I would say that having a **consistent schedule, and a consistent routine** with a child, I think that the transition from going in between their home life to a foster care program or a foster parent, and then maintaining the consistency with the foster home. And then also having a place where they're **able to explore with their peers, and still have a social life**, I believe, ideally, **helps with the process of any trauma** that children may encounter or experience. Maintaining some **normalcy** for the child. When you have so many different things that are, even as adults, when there's so many things that are out of whack or not, you know, in alignment, or within routine, they can cause chaos."*

-Sacramento child care provider



Child care navigator (CCN) was key to family success

- **90%** agreed CCN coordinated **timely placement** with a child care provider
 - **84%** agreed CCN **reduced their stress** levels
 - **88%** agreed CCN provided **quality child care referrals**
 - **87%** agreed **enrolling** in Bridge was easy.
-
- Navigator - should include experience with child care voucher program, Child Care Resource & Referral, Head Start, etc.
 - Multi-disciplinary team
-



Statewide Bridge Evaluation: Administrative Findings



Partnerships and relationship-building

Top 4 most valuable traits when building relationships

- Establish relationships with partner agency and external agencies
 - Open communication
 - Mutual understanding of goals
 - Clearly defined roles
-



Statewide Bridge Evaluation: Trauma-Informed Care



TIC training improves provider capacity to care for children

Scale was 1-5, with 5 representing "Very High."

Provider knowledge of how trauma affects a child

3.8

4.3

Provider ability to care for a child who experienced trauma

3.7

4.3



TIC coaching improves provider capacity to care for children

Scale was 1-5, with 5 representing "Very High."

Provider willingness to accept a foster child into their care

4.1

4.4

Provider ability to care for a child who experienced trauma

3.9

4.3

Provider knowledge of how trauma affects a child

3.8

4.3



Statewide Bridge Evaluation: Recommendations



Recommendations from counties

- **Extend the voucher timeframe** (beyond 6 months; out of county; at reunification/adoption)
 - **Increase funding to allow for expanded eligibility** (e.g., more age groups, child care provider types, sibling sets, out-of-county placements)
 - **Fund administrative support** needed to ensure a strong Child Welfare-ECE collaborative relationship
-



Recommendations from counties

- Given the tremendous stress reduction due to the **Navigator and TIC** – **increase resources to these components**
 - Provide additional support in **marketing, outreach, and advertising** for TIC training and coaching
 - **Bridge program training** for CCNs, social workers, and child care providers to increase awareness
 - **Statewide tracking system** or database
-



Implications for Head Start

- Child Welfare and Head Start relationship building is essential
 - Enrollment dates for school years need to be communicated to CW
 - Champions on both sides are needed
 - Full-day hours and summer care needed for children in foster care
-



Thank you!

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