

**JOIN THE
XCHANGE!**



XCHANGE
Prenatal-to-Three Capacity-Building Hub
POWERED BY THE BUILD INITIATIVE

**CONNECT WITH 3,400+ LEADERS
ACROSS ALL 50 STATES**

**JOIN DISCUSSIONS ON POLICIES
AND SYSTEMS IMPACTING
PRENATAL-3 OUTCOMES**

**ACCESS RESOURCES AND
EVENTS FOR PN-3 INITIATIVES**

**LEARN FROM PEERS AND
EXPERTS ANYTIME, ANYWHERE!**

bit.ly/JoinPN3XChange 

Moving Away from Family Separation: Cross-systems Strategies to Support Young Children and Families at Risk of Child Welfare Involvement

Webinar #3: From Mandated Reporting to
Mandated Supporting: What Will It Take?

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

Friday, January 17, 2025



Objectives of the Webinar Series

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

Objectives for Webinar #3

1. To understand the data on Mandated Reporting and its impact on racial disparities in child welfare system involvement.
2. To learn about the Mandated Supporting Initiative in California.
3. To get a national perspective on why this matters and the importance of alternate pathways to assessing risk.
4. To hear about the role of Child Care Resource Center as a pilot for MSI.

Presenters



- Dr. Tamara Hunter, Interim Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Prevention and Promotion Systems Governing Committee



- Darneshia Allen, Training/Technical Assistance Integration Manager, Safe Babies, a program of ZERO TO THREE



- Dr. Susan Savage, Research Director, Child Care Resource Center in California



- Cynthia Verdugo, Supervisor, Home Visiting Program, Child Care Resource Center

Participants: Who are you?

- Over 1,000 registered
- 49 states and DC
- Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico

You are from...

- State agencies, including Departments of:
 - Early Care & Education
 - Economic Security
 - Children & Families (& CYF) Human Services
 - Health, Public Health, Mental Health, Maternal & Child Health, CCR&R
 - Public Instruction
- National, regional, state, and community organizations
- Formal and Family Child Care Center
- Universities
- Family Foundations

What participants want to learn more about...

- Child engagement and supporting mandated reporters of suspected child abuse
- Creative funding and partnerships for prevention efforts in early childhood
- True cost of quality childcare
- Impact of family separation and deportation on small children
- Mental health, teacher training, and philanthropic funds
- Infant mental health, secure attachment
- Paternal mental health, fatherhood/male engagement
- Universal Care for 0-3
- How child care settings can support children/family in the system who have experienced trauma
- How to help mothers reduce stress during pregnancy, impact of stress
- How to interact with CPS workers
- Supports for pregnancy and substance use disorder
- Rural mental health and available services

How to Participate

1. Introduce yourself in the chat
2. Put your questions for the panelists in the chat or Q&A
3. Complete the survey at the end



Changing Narratives to Transform Systems

Dr. Tamara N. Hunter

Los Angeles County Mandated Supporting Initiative



LA COUNTY MANDATED
SUPPORTING INITIATIVE

A process for alerting DCFS of vulnerable children
who may be unsafe is a necessity

The current model is deeply flawed, misguided, and harmful



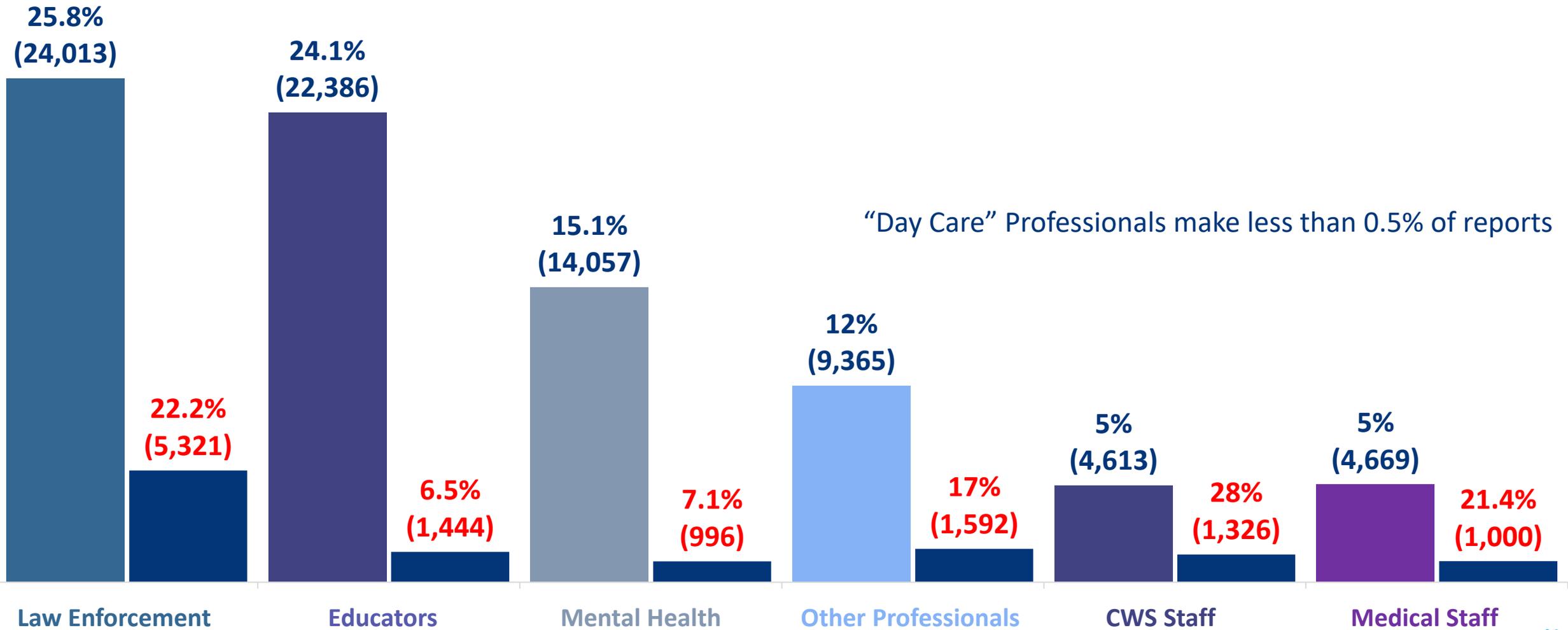
Most mandated reports of suspected child abuse and/or neglect are not substantiated



Los Angeles

Reporting and Substantiations by Reporter Type

2023



Overreporting has significant consequences



Fear + Trauma + Toxic Stress

- Weaponized family separation
- Generational trauma
- Compounding effect

Disrupted Trust

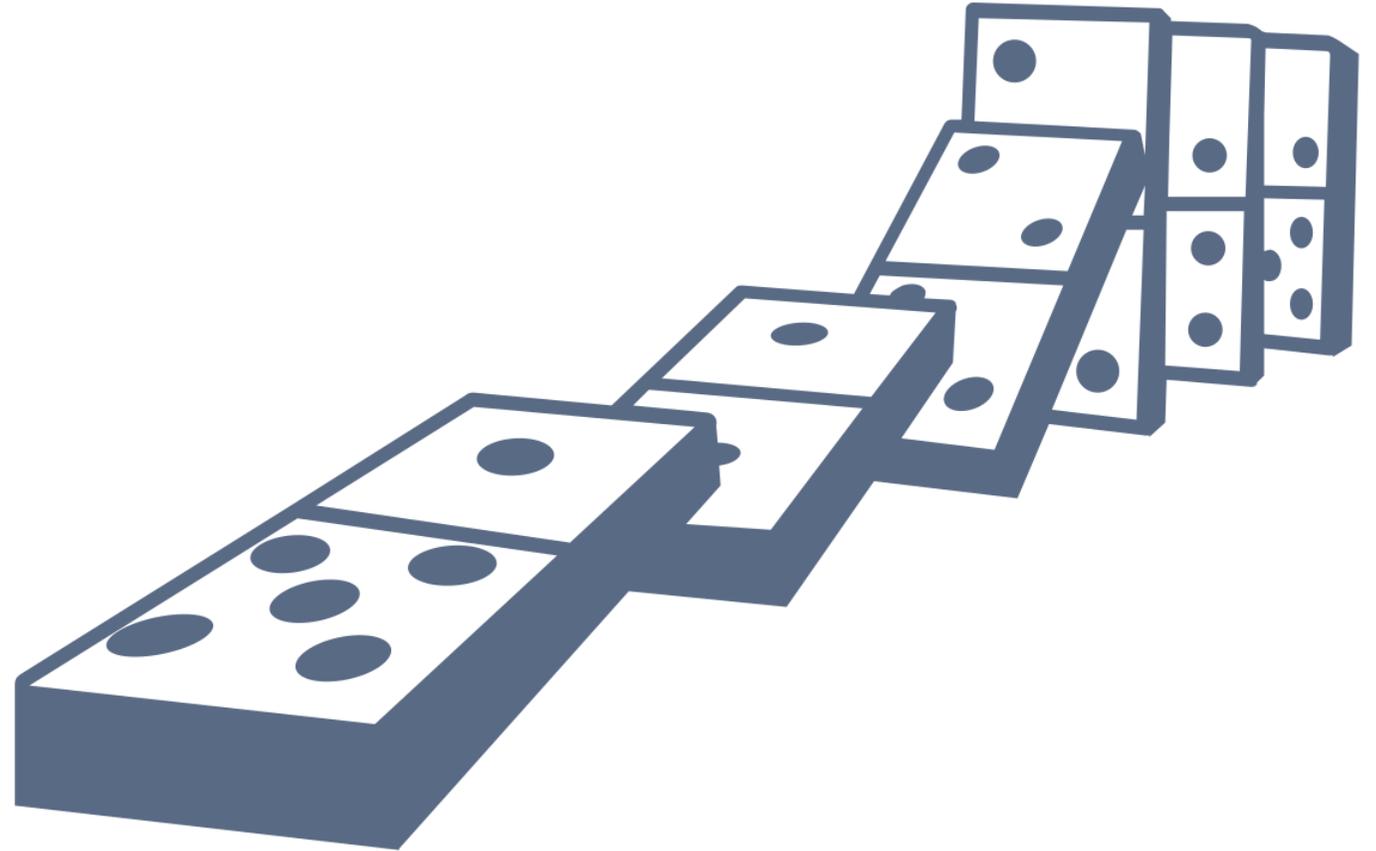
- Less likely to seek help

CPS Record

- Strike against the family

Overburdening the System

- Fewer resources for children who truly are unsafe

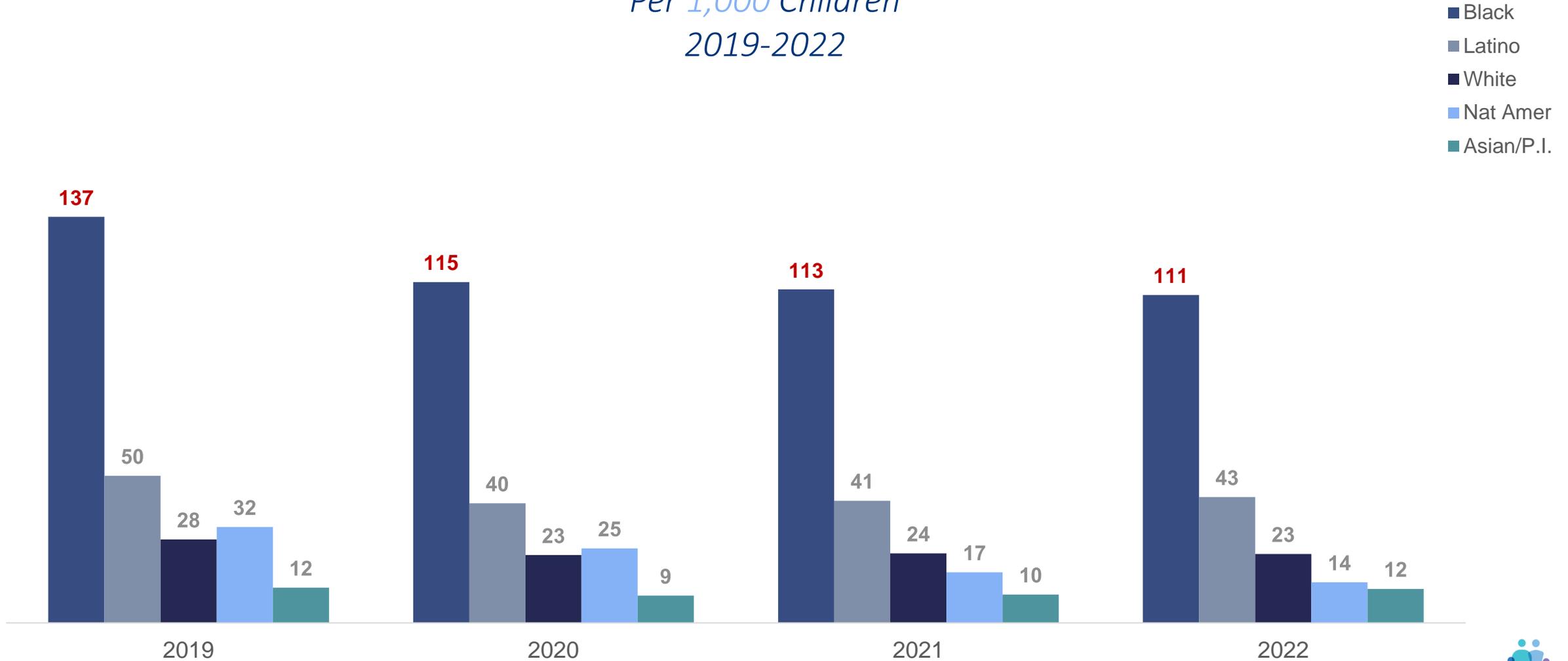


Mandated reporting is a driver of racial disproportionality in the child welfare system

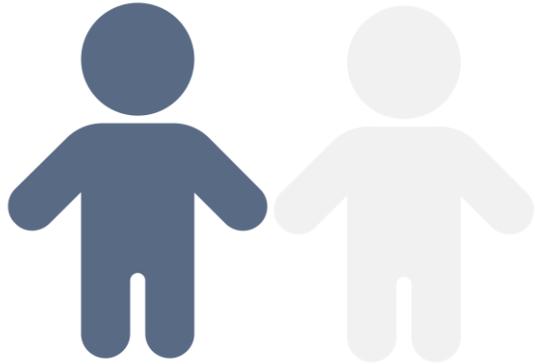


Los Angeles 0-5 Years Allegation Rates by Race/Ethnicity

*Per 1,000 Children
2019-2022*



In California,

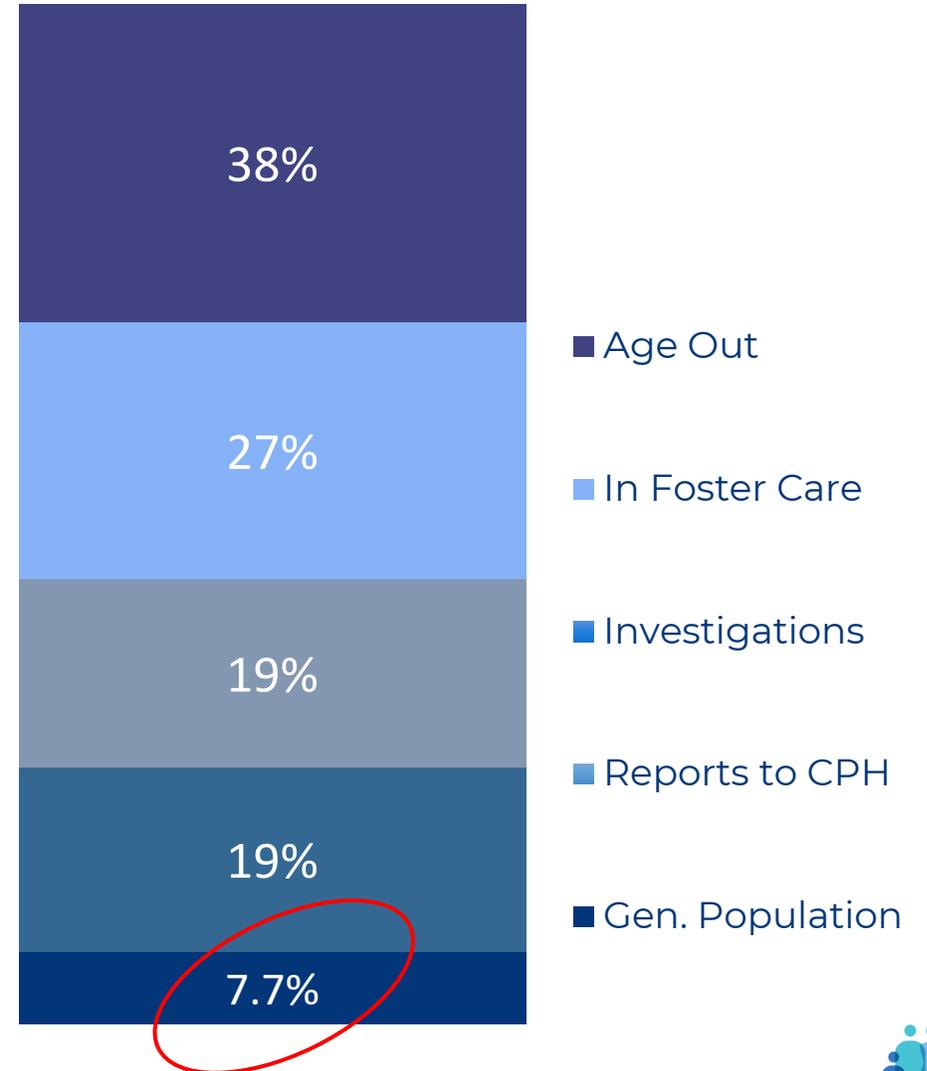


50% of Black and Native American children the the cohort were investigated by CPS by their 18th birthday



This compares to almost **25%** of White children

Black Children

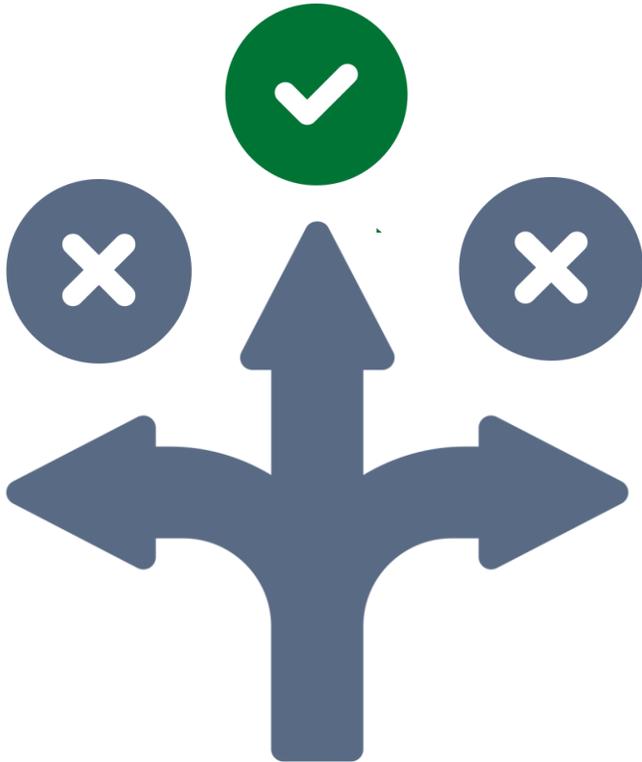


The current system of mandated reporting is not designed to prevent maltreatment by helping families in need



Current model of mandated reporting is reactive by design

- Offers a binary choice – report or don't report- **after** maltreatment is suspected to have occurred
- Misses critical opportunities to prevent future child abuse and neglect



65%

LA County mandated reporters *who made reports without suspecting child abuse or neglect* indicated that “Making a report was the best way to connect a family to needed services”

Mandated reporters need a third option



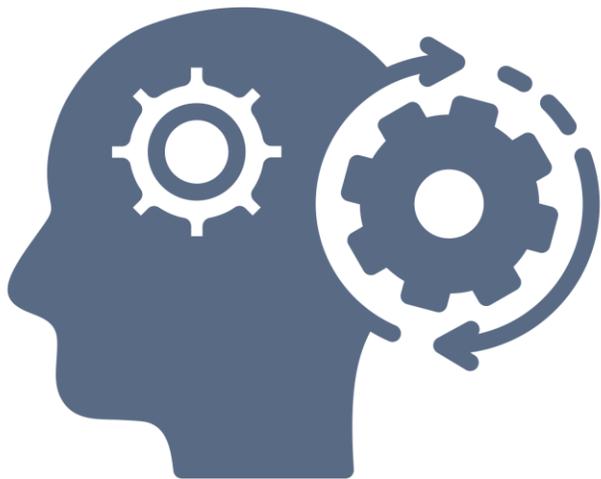
Many mandated reporters are and/or feel ill-equipped to make sound reporting decisions

*This results in overreporting **and** underreporting*



Training is Inadequate

- Doesn't provide a basic level of competence
Reasonable suspicion threshold is confusing
- Doesn't provide concrete guidance
- Fear based; prioritizes organizational risk aversion



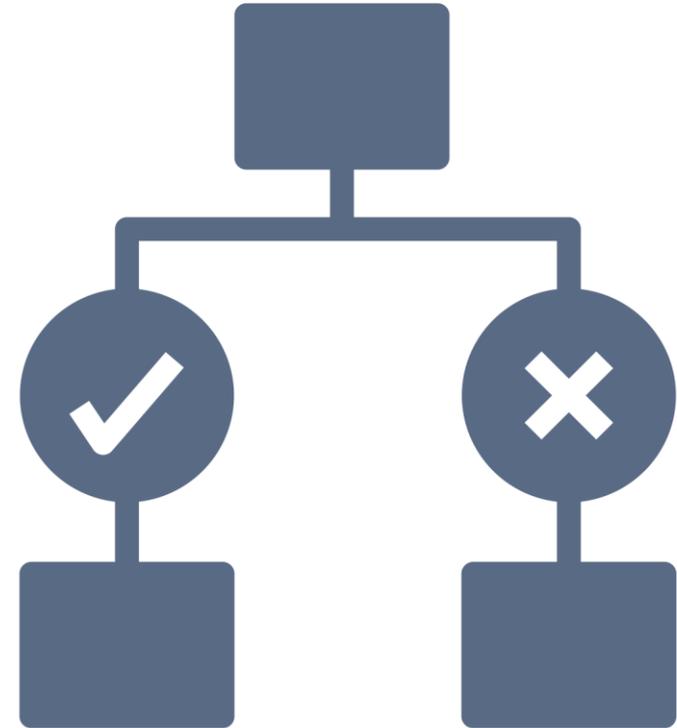
Multiple Factors Influence Reporting Decisions

- Bias, as traditionally conceptualized, e.g., *race, class, etc.*
- Additional cognitive biases, e.g., *personal experiences with maltreatment, perception of CPS, type and severity of perceived maltreatment, etc.*
- Fear of personal and organizational liability
- Conditioning to overreport/underreport



Evidence from the field of decision analysis or “decision science” has been disregarded

- Decision support processes and tools improve decision quality
- Consultation can be an effective strategy
 - Requires diversity of thought
 - Peer/colleague consultation
 - Multidisciplinary teaming models



Few professions expect consequential decisions to be made in isolation, *yet we expect this of mandated reporters*

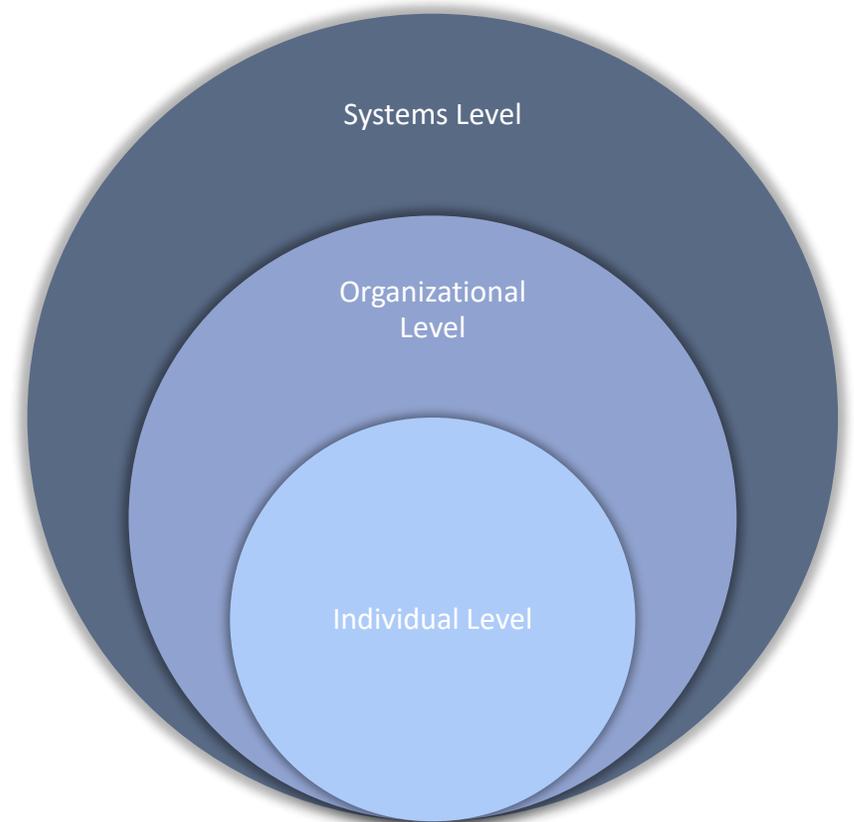


We've unintentionally created a system that pits the best interests of mandated reporters and their organizations *against the best interests of the families we serve*



- Problems cannot be solely attributed to individual-level reporting practices
- Transformation must occur at the individual, organizational, and systems-levels
 - Mental models
 - Reporting decisions
 - Organizational policy and norms
 - Content, tone, and tenor of training
 - Support for mandated reporters
 - Support for families in need
 - Regional and state policy and legislation
 - Investments in prevention

**We can all effectuate change
regardless of our positionality**

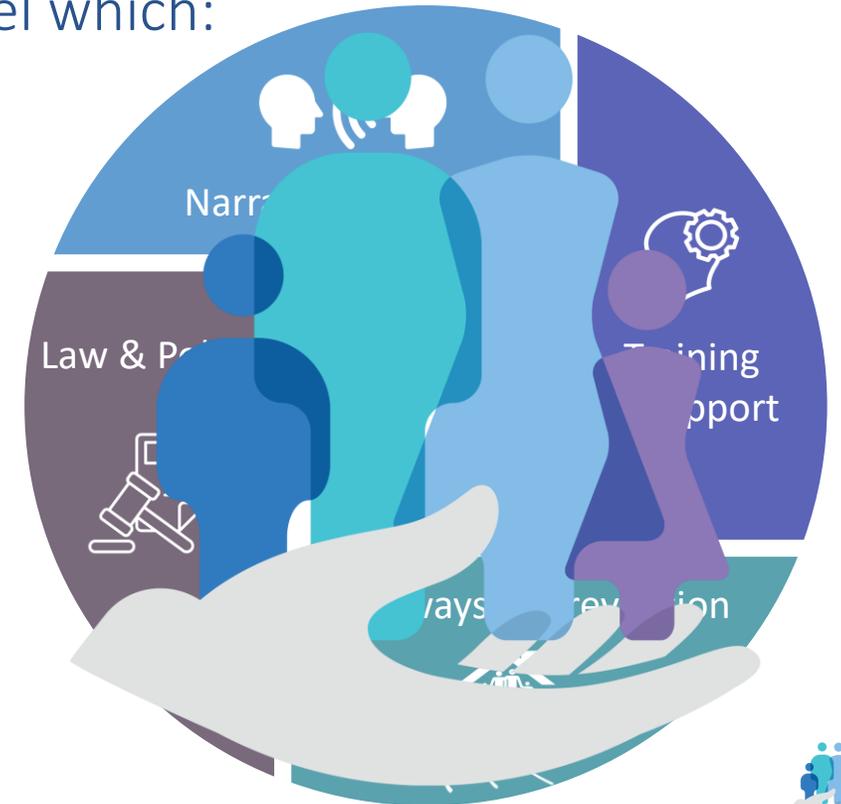


LA County Mandated Supporting Initiative (MSI)

In May 2023, the LA County Board of Supervisors passed the “*Moving from Mandated Reporting to Mandated Supporting*” motion, directing reform

Broad coalition of partners working to transform to a model which:

- *prevents* child harm and *promotes* family well-being
- *provides* high-quality *supportive services to families* in need to *prevent* maltreatment
- *eliminates* mandatory reporting as a driver of racial disproportionality



~~The status quo is a necessary evil to keep
certain children safe~~

There is a better way



Dr. Tamara N. Hunter
Email: msi@dcfs.lacounty.gov
Website: SupportingFamilies.lacounty.gov



LA COUNTY MANDATED
SUPPORTING INITIATIVE



Embracing Mandated Supporting

Susan Savage, Director of Research, Child Care Resource Center

Cynthia Verdugo, Supervisor of Home Visiting, Child Care Resource Center

CCRC cultivates child, family and community well-being.



Child Care Resource Center (CCRC)



- Incorporated in 1976
- Mission: Cultivate child, family and community well-being
- Vision: Healthy and strong children and families in thriving communities



CCRC Services

- **Subsidized child care** for over **50,000 children** each month
- **Head Start/ Early Head Start** for over **2,400 children**
- **Home visiting** for almost **450 families**
- **Workforce development:** over **2,500** individuals in training, coaching or apprenticeships
- **Technical assistance and community referrals** to over **40,000** individuals
- **Basic needs items** provided for over **100,000** people



Why CCRC?

- Values, including racial justice
- Leadership – agency and community
- Research, Communications/Outreach, Policy/Government Relations, Statewide Infrastructure





Lived experience: Cynthia Verdugo





Mandated Supporting Implementation

- Family Well Being (FWB) division enforced Mandated Reporting
 - Field Case Prior to Pilot Training
 - Home Visiting (in FWB) and Early Care & Learning (ECL) leadership selected as part of pilot
 - Leadership met frequently with Mandated Supporting Initiative Pilot Design Team leading up to training
 - FWB and ECL completed training on August 9, 2024
-



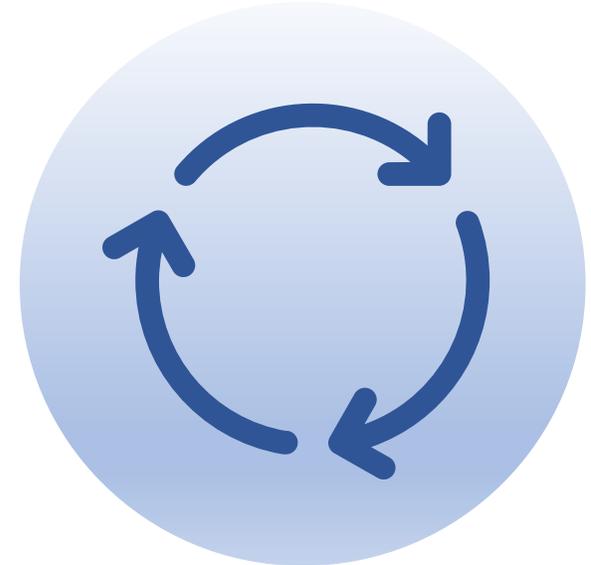
Training Outcomes

- Updating of Policies and Procedures
- Utilize Decision Tree
- FWB and ECL: Implement SCAR tracker spreadsheet
- Documentation: Stronger Families Database System/ ChildPlus
- Reflective Supervision
- Team Meetings (supportingfamilies.lacounty.gov)
- Onboarding new staff to changes



Resource Workflow Development

- Donation Requests to CCRC Communications Division
- One Degree/Unite Us
- Community Networking:
 - ▶ Advisory Committee
 - ▶ Service Area Leadership Team
 - ▶ Antelope Valley Home Visitation Coalition
 - ▶ Antelope Valley Health Neighborhood
 - ▶ Best Start Antelope Valley





Thank you!

Susan Savage, Director of Research
Child Care Resource Center
ssavage@ccrcca.org

Cynthia Verdugo, Supervisor of Home Visiting
Child Care Resource Center
cverdugo@ccrcca.org

CCRC cultivates child, family and community well-being.





From Mandated Reporting to Mandated Supporting: What Will It Take?

BUILD Child Welfare Series

January 2025



Safe Babies
A Program of ZERO TO THREE™

Why This Matters...

- 🌿 In the United States, every 7 minutes a baby or toddler is removed from their parents due to maltreatment and neglect and placed in out-of-home care.
- 🌿 Our brains grow faster between the ages of 0 and 3 than any later point in life, forming more than 1 million new neural connections every second.
- 🌿 More than ever before, there is a critical need to invest and engage in collaborative action across systems and local communities to meet the urgent needs of babies and toddlers at risk of removal from their families.



The Current Landscape

Poverty Rate Soared in 2022 as Aid Ended and Prices Rose

The increase in poverty reversed two years of large declines. Median income, adjusted for inflation, fell 2.3 percent to \$74,580.

The New York Times

With Pandemic Money Gone, Child Care Is an Industry on the Brink

Five months after the expiration of federal funds, running a child care business is more precarious than ever, and many parents struggle to pay tuition, surveys show.

Who's Looking Out for the Mental Health of Infants and Toddlers?

By Emily Tate Sullivan Feb 28, 2023

The US child care system is in crisis. It's hardest on moms without degrees.

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders Often Go Untreated for Parents on Medicaid

Among those with substance use disorders who have been referred to child welfare, less than half received medication or counseling.

By EMILY BAUMGAERTNER

New postpartum depression drug gets almost \$16,000 price tag, raising questions about access

By Meg Tirrell, CNN

There's a Mental-Health Crisis Among American Children. Why?

The pandemic is not the only reason.

Pathways for Addressing Responsiveness to Risk

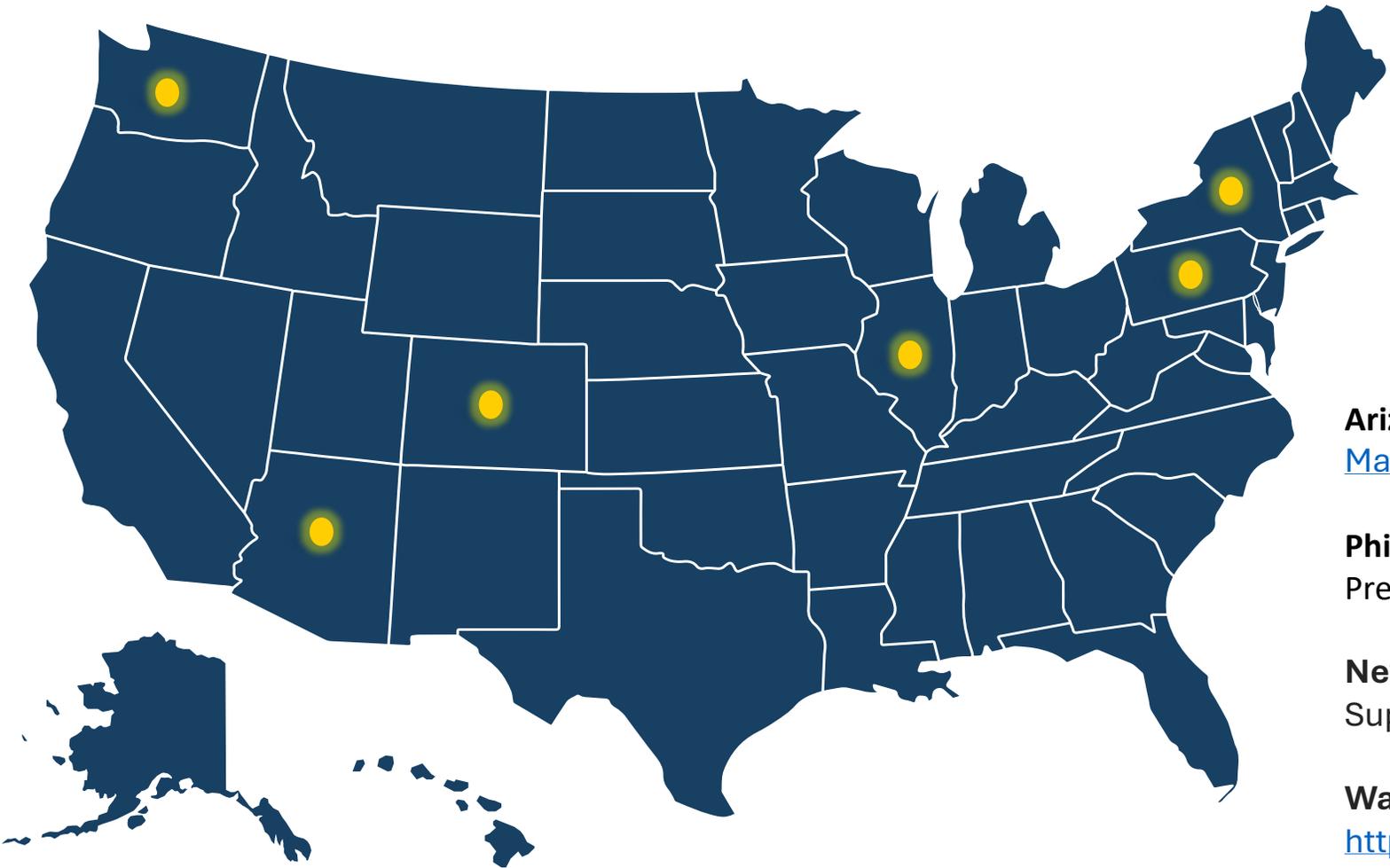
Investing our Energy and Resources



Minimizing and Counteracting Risk



Upstream Approaches to Child Welfare Promotion and Prevention



Illinois: Family Recovery Plans Implementation Task Force ACT ([2024 law](#))

Colorado: Mandatory Reporting Task Force ([CO HB 1240](#))

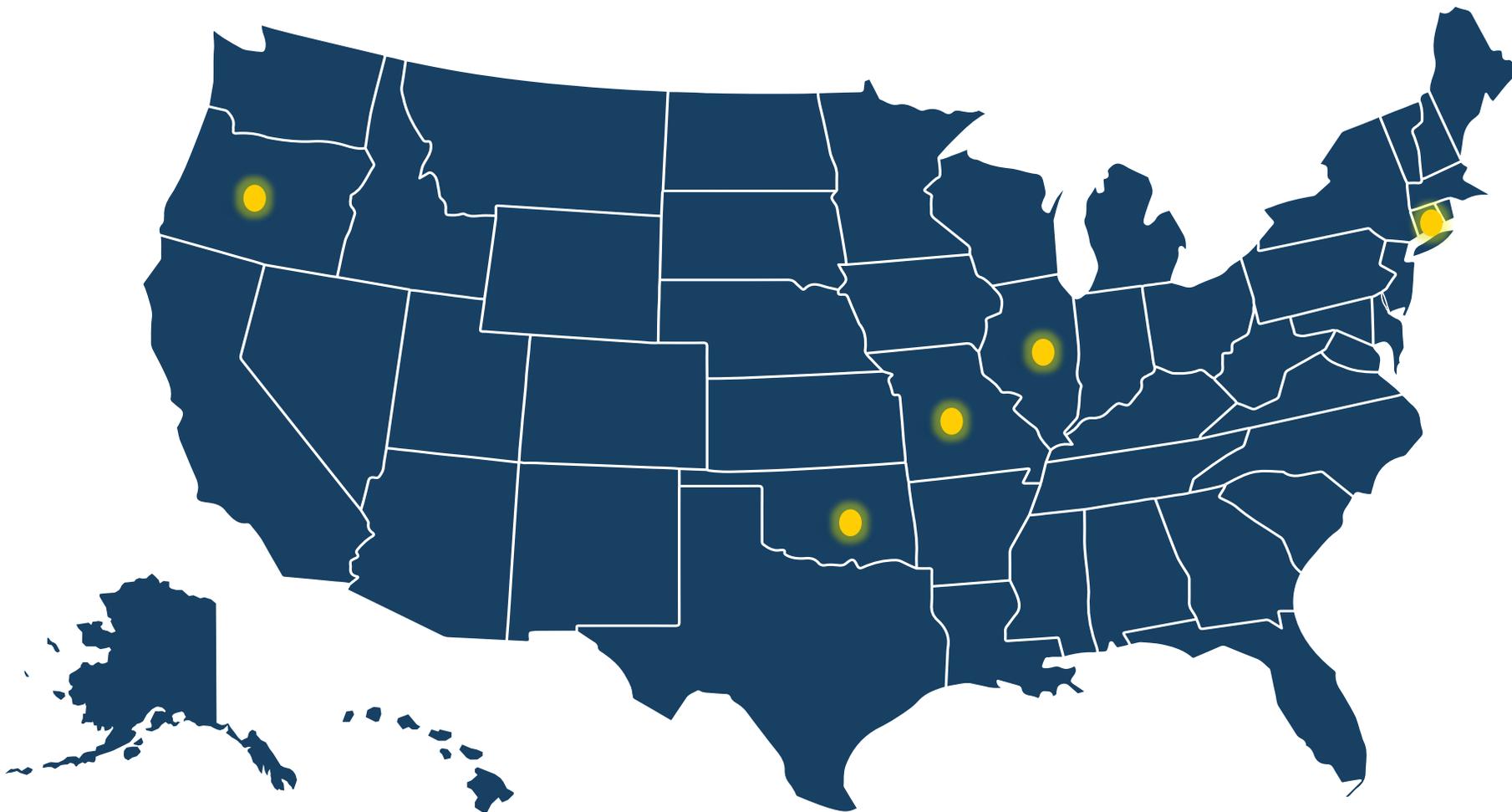
Arizona: Office of Prevention [Considering Yourself a Mandated Supporter](#)

Philadelphia, PA: Family Support through Primary Prevention [Philly Families CAN](#)

New York: Help, Empower, Advocate, Reassure and Support [HEARS\) line](#)

Washington: Mandated Reporter Toolkit <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/safety/mandated-reporter>

2024 Child Welfare Reform Legislative Highlights: Key States Shaping the Future



Illinois: [SB 3136](#)

Oregon: [HB 4086](#)

Missouri: [HB 2002](#)

Oklahoma: [HB 3367](#)

Connecticut: [Connecticut law](#)

Strengthening Families With Infants and Toddlers: A Policy Framework for States



Strengthening Families with Infants and Toddlers:
A Policy Framework for States
National Infant-Toddler Court Program

Authors: Torey Silloway and Jaclyn Szrom
June 2022

Copyright © 2022 ZERO TO THREE. All rights reserved.



Together, we have the power to create
transformative change in every child's journey

Thank you for being a part of the mission to improve the lives of all children



Darneshia Allen

Safe Babies - Training And Technical
Assistance Integration Manager

(202) 857-2626

Dallen@zerotothree.org



Safe Babies
A Program of ZERO TO THREE™



ZERO TO THREE
Early connections last a lifetime