

Meeting Families' Basic Needs

Professionals' Role in Improving Economic Stability & Concrete Supports for Families



National Center on
Substance Abuse
and Child Welfare



Acknowledgment

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National Center on
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and Child Welfare

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Learning Objectives

- Describe how economic stability improves child safety for families involved in child welfare and affected by substance use disorders (SUDs).
- Identify key concrete supports that advance child safety and promote family well-being.
- Explore practical strategies to improve system responses to economic hardship.



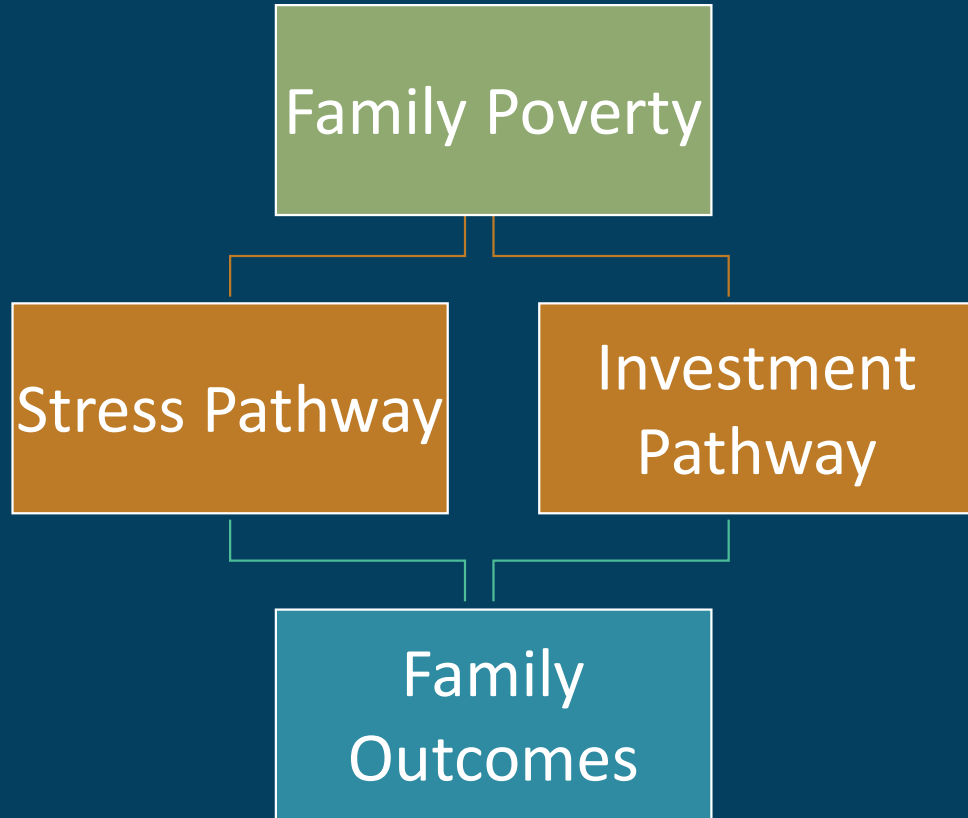
**What comes to mind
when you think of
'economic stability' in
child welfare?"**



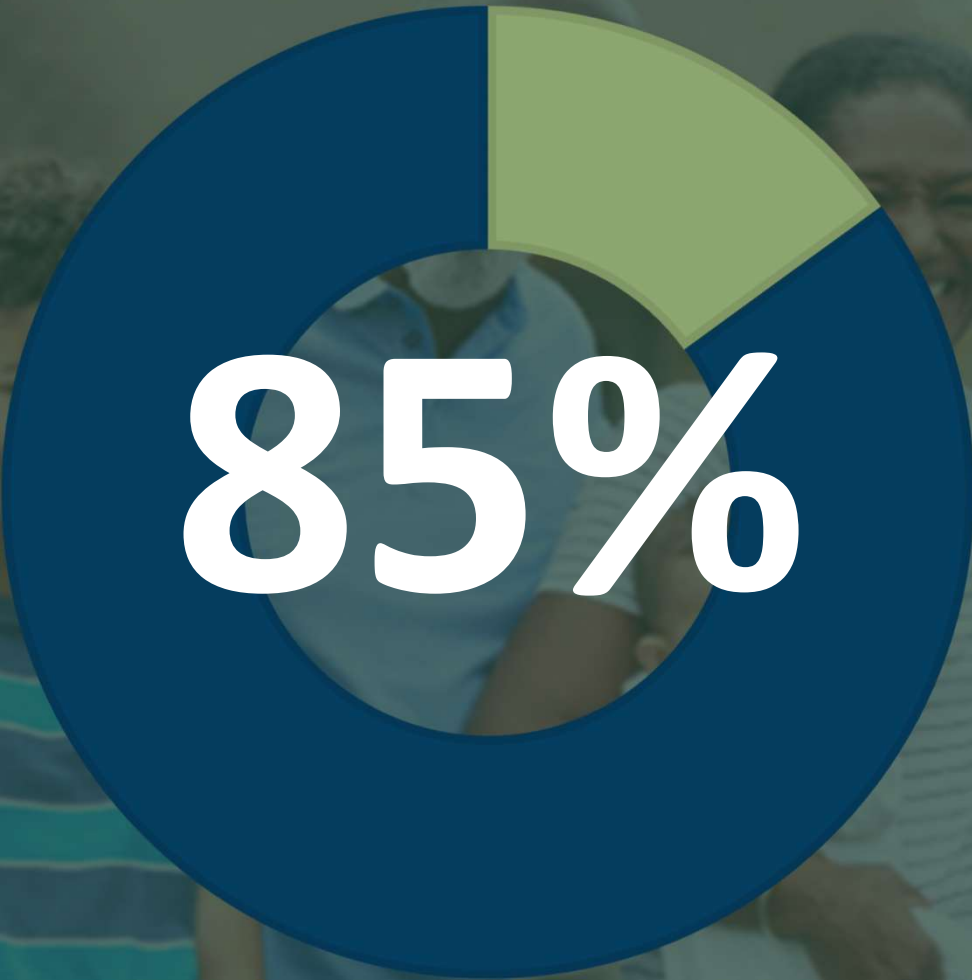


WHY ECONOMIC STABILITY MATTERS

Family Poverty & Family Outcomes



(Rollins et al., 2024; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2019)

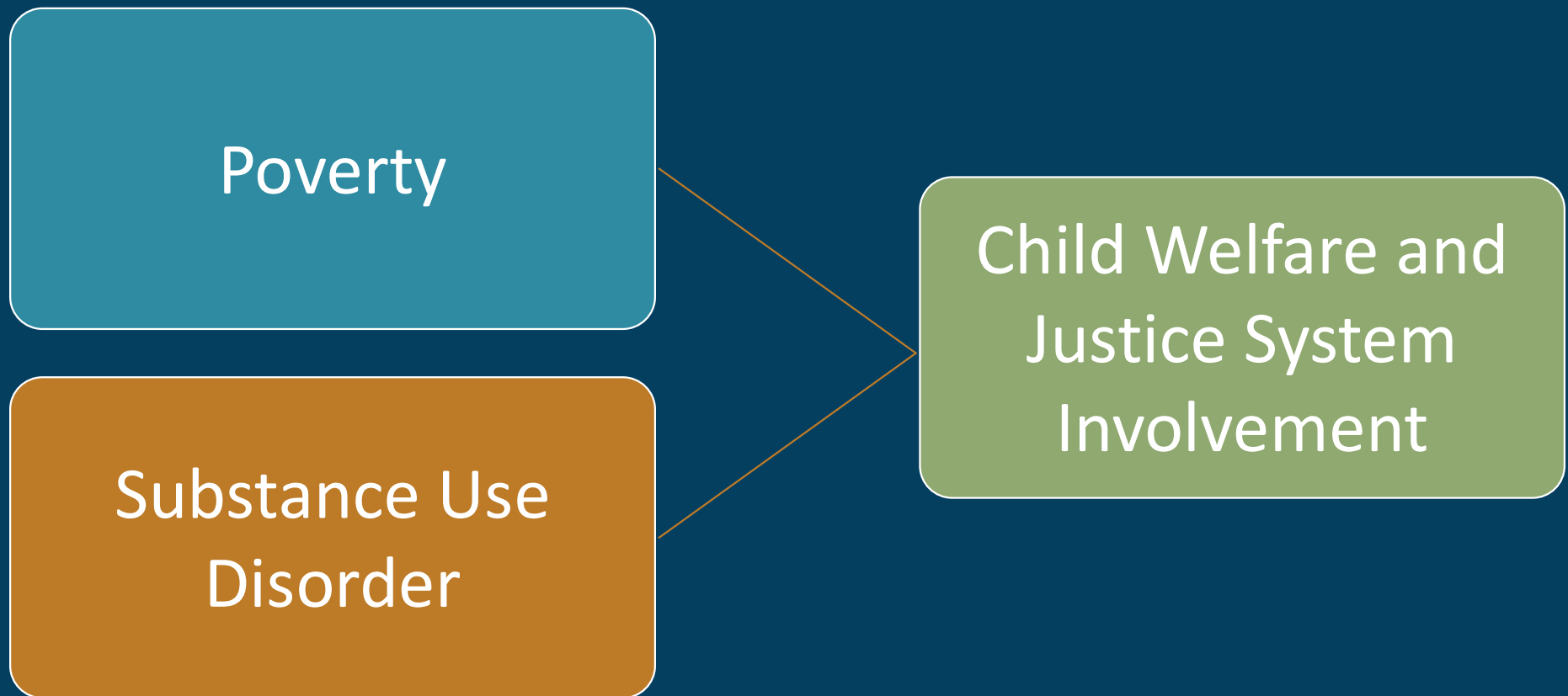


85%

*of families investigated by child protective services (CPS) have incomes **below 200% of the federal poverty line.***

(Dolan et al., 2011; Bywaters et al., 2022)

The Link Between Economic Hardship & Substance Use Disorder



(Bywaters et al., 2022; Grinspoon, 2021)



What are some of the most common economic challenges faced by the families you serve?

CONCRETE SUPPORTS TO ADVANCE CHILD SAFETY



Effects of Environmental Stressors on Family Functioning

- Higher levels of stress
- Cognitive overload
- Depression
- Parental aggravation
- Strain on family relationships



(Redd et al., 2024)

80%

of an individual's health outcomes are determined by factors such as...



Education Access

Health Care and Quality

Neighborhood and Environment

Social and Community Context

Economic Stability

(Hood et al., 2016; Healthy People 2023, n.d.)

What Are Concrete Supports?

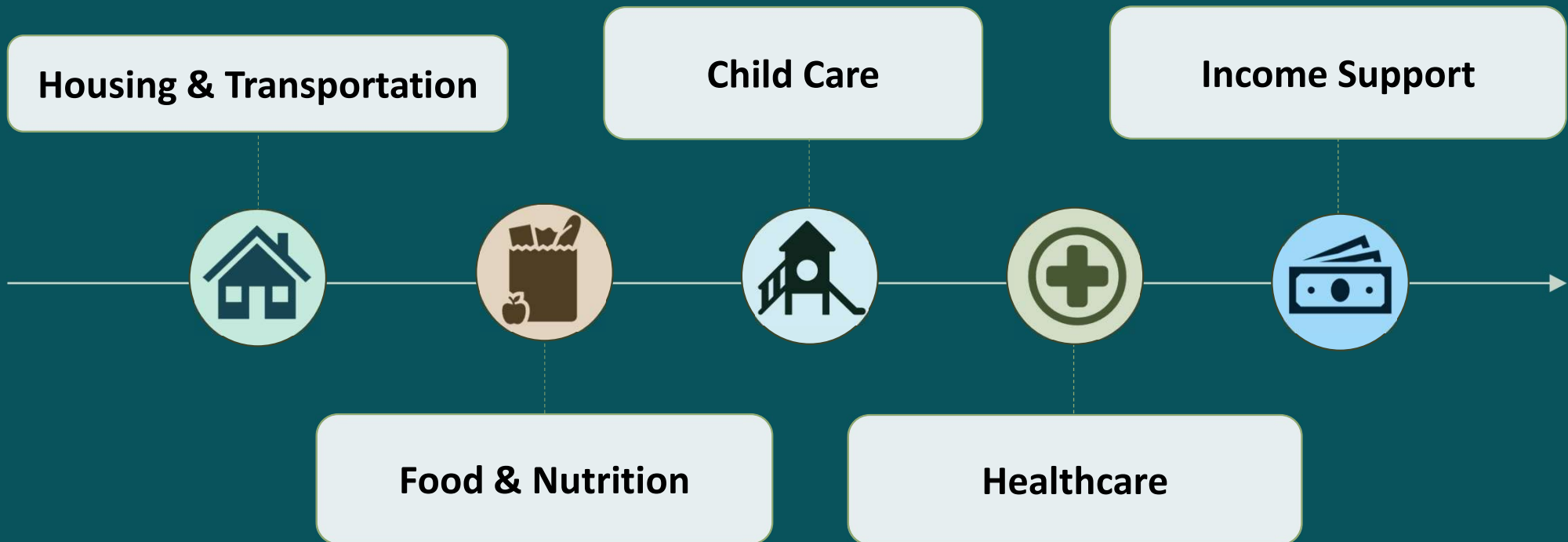
Income support (cash or cash equivalent)



Non-cash support for basic needs



Key Areas of Concrete Supports



(Cusick et al., 2024; Healthy People 2023, n.d.)

Economic & Concrete Supports Reduce Child Maltreatment & Improve Family Outcomes

Tax Credits

Linked to a 5% drop in child maltreatment reports

Health Care

Expanded Medicaid resulted in fewer neglect referrals

Child Care

Improved access to childcare associated with lower child removal rates

Housing Support

Fewer foster care removals; Lower substantiated maltreatment; Higher reunification rates

(Kovski et al., 2022; Brown et al., 2019; Meloy et al., 2015; Farrell et al., 2018; Loman & Siegel, 2012; Monahan et al., 2023)

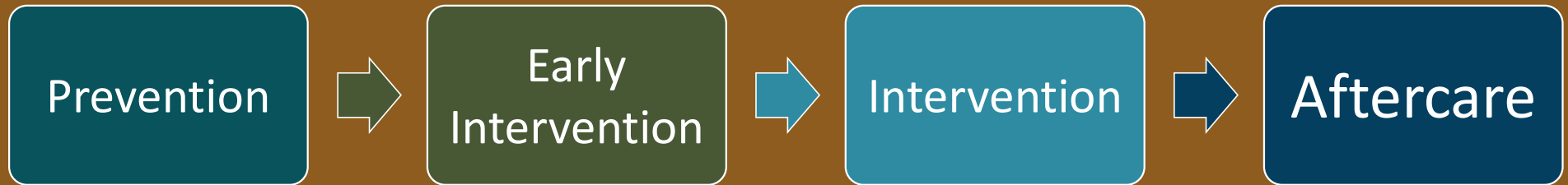
Which supports have you seen work well?
What's missing?



SYSTEM-LEVEL STRATEGIES



Improving Basic Needs Across the Continuum



Strategies Across the Continuum

Acknowledge the structural barriers and avoid blame

Codesign strategies with the community and peers

Emphasize a family-centered approach

Engage a wide range of community partners



Prevention

- Create systems change where families are not afraid of the consequences of asking for help.
- Offer supportive, trustworthy, and non-punitive responses to family challenges and crises.



Communities in Action!

Kim Peterson

Division Manager

Department of Children, Family, and
Adult Services

Sacramento County, CA

How can judicial officers and court teams advocate for the use of Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) funds to meet families' basic needs as part of a prevention strategy?

What role can the court play to integrate these supports into case planning?

Early Intervention

- Recognize, assess, and engage the family to establish a helping relationship.
- Get parents into quality substance use disorder treatment as soon as possible.





Communities in Action!

Kim Peterson

Division Manager

Department of Children, Family, and
Adult Services

Sacramento County, CA



How can meeting basic needs reshape the relationship between family service agencies and the communities they serve?

What strategies do you think could help include community voices in identifying needs and shaping services?



Intervention

- Work as part of a collaborative to meet needs and make resource connections.
- Break down silos through collaboration, communication, and coordination.



Communities in Action!

Dr. Jocelyn Gainers

Executive Director

The Family Recovery Program, Inc.

Baltimore, MD

What are your thoughts on the Housing Services Plan that Dr. Gainers spoke of?

How do the systems in your jurisdiction work collaboratively to meet the housing needs for families you serve?

Aftercare

Help parents create a stronger safety net for their family.

Key Questions:

- Who's in their corner, and who could/should be in their corner?
- Who's following up?
- What are the safety plans?
- Is strong recovery capital in place for those recovering from an SUD?





Communities in Action!

Dr. Jocelyn Gainers

Executive Director

The Family Recovery Program, Inc.

Baltimore, MD



How can the strategies discussed by Dr. Gainers help improve basic needs for families?

What aftercare strategies would you like to implement in your systems?

Reflections & Discussion



Contact the NCSACW TTA Program

This offers training and technical assistance to support collaboration and systems change

Provides the opportunity to connect with programs that are developing tools and implementing protocols to support their collaborative practice



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Resources



National Center on
Substance Abuse
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HELPING NAVIGATE THE INTERSECTION OF SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL DISORDER TREATMENT AND CHILD WELFARE SERVICES



WHO WE ARE

For more than 20 years, the **National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW)**, has been a resource center providing information, expert consultation, workforce development resources, and technical expertise to child welfare, dependency court, and substance use treatment professionals to improve the safety, permanency, well-being and recovery outcomes for children, parents, and families.

NCSACW is a *cohesive team of subject experts* with a deep understanding of and experience in collaborative practice and the systems we serve. Our staff and consultants, many with personal experience, have worked as policymakers in state and local governments, held clinical and administrative leadership positions in substance use disorder and mental health treatment agencies, worked on the front lines of child welfare practice, and served as court administrators.

The National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare enhances cross-agency collaboration based on a shared understanding of the needs and challenges of children, parents, and their families—and a sincere appreciation for the workforce serving them.

Learn more about the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) including:

Our goals

Where we
make a
difference

How we can
help

Our
specialized TA
programs

“Each system that serves children and families operates under its own goals. Yet the overarching objective for each system is undisputedly the same: **Provide the best service possible to children and families.**”

—Nancy K. Young, Executive Director, Center for Children and Family Futures



Scan the QR code or click the link to access @

<https://cffutures.org/files/NCSACW%20Who%20We%20Are.pdf>

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**PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH FAMILIES AFFECTED BY
SUBSTANCE USE, CO-OCCURRING DISORDERS, AND
INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM WILL**

- Improve their skills with trauma-informed and evidence-based practices
- Enhance engagement with families and collaborative partners
- Gain insights into substance use and mental health disorders
- Learn key child welfare and court policies that affect families served
- Understand child and family needs to support recovery and well-being



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