# Caregiver Supports Project

Project Update Presentation

November 30, 2023

www.dcyf.wa.gov

# Welcome

- **Caregiver Supports Project:** Implement a continuum of placement resources that enable safe, stable, and supported placements for children and youth in foster care.

- Part of the [Thriving Families campaign](Thriving Families campaign).

- Today's presentation
  - Project history and background

# Caregiver Supports Project Background

- Rate Study May 2018-October 2019 leads to recommendation to review rate assessment process
  - Rates are insufficient
  - Significant gap between Level 4 and BRS
- August 2019 completed evaluation of the Foster Care Rate Assessment Tool
  - Lack of sensitivity
  - Subjective
- Developed proposal for Caregiver Supports Project to start, 1/1/2020

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# Current System Pain Points

- Current rate assessment process is 20 years old and needs to be reviewed and modified
- Current process is subjective and not transparent
  - Reliability is difficult to establish without objectivity
  - Unfair
  - Caregiver time spent caring for a child does not identify a child's needs
  - Cannot evaluate systemic bias
- The current process does not identify a child's needs
  - Hard to link caregivers with supports for the child's needs
  - Cannot focus recruitment efforts on meeting needs of children in care
  - Difficult to develop contracted resources structured to support caregivers in caring for children
- Substantial gap between BRS and foster care basic (82%)
  - Risk of kids failing up into more intensive services
- Resource inequity for kinship caregivers

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# Caregiver Supports Project Goals

- Create a transparent and data-driven payment methodology for reimbursement
- Make resources available at the time of placement
- Identify caregiver skills and abilities that can meet needs of all foster children
- Resources based on needs of children and youth, serves diverse population all the way up to BRS needs
- Increase placement stability
- Continuous array of placement supports that collaborate with other child-serving systems
- Create mechanisms for evaluating resource allocation inequity and system bias to be able to effectively reduce it
- Clear definition of services needed and service level expectations from contracted providers
- Parity in resource support

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# Developing the Caregiver Supports Project

- DCYF relied on the expertise and input of many different partners to develop the framework for the Caregiver Supports Project
  - Foster Care Alumni
  - Regional meetings with DCYF staff
  - Foster Parents, including CPA licensed and state-licensed
  - Kinship Caregivers
  - Child Welfare Service Providers
  - Foster Parents Focus groups: BIPOC, Youth with high needs
  - Allied Services such as Public Mental Health Service, Apple Health / Coordinate Care
  - Tribal Partners
  - Kinship Advisory Committee
  - Legal Child Advocates, Office of Public Defense, Office of the Attorney General
- Recommendations Workgroup (Jan – Sept 2021)
  - DCYF staff, kinship caregiver, foster parent, two CPA staff
- Project Information sessions where DCYF presented results of recommendation workgroup in many different forums
  - 1624 meetings, ICW meetings, open meetings inviting listserv distribution, revisited stakeholder groups above
- DCYF project implementation team
  - Fiscal, Program, Regions / Field Ops, Recruitment & Retention, Licensing, Office of Tribal Relations

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# Project Timeline

**Project Start**
Jan 2020

**Workgroup**
1/1/2021–
Sept 2021

**2020**

⭐ = where we are today

**RDA Report**
Dec 2021

**Stakeholder Presentations & Input**
Jan –July 22

**2021**

**Submit DP**
Sept 2022

**Project Planning**
Sept 2022-
April 2023

**2022**

**DP Approved**
May 2023

**Implementation**
May 2023 – Dec 2023

**2023**

**Phase 1 Go-Live**
Jan 2024

**2024**

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# DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division

RDA provides high-quality data analysis to **inform policy conversations**, and support research activities by sharing subject matter expertise and providing secure access to data to authorized external research partners. Our analyses are **sophisticated and trustworthy**—built on statistical standards and research methods.

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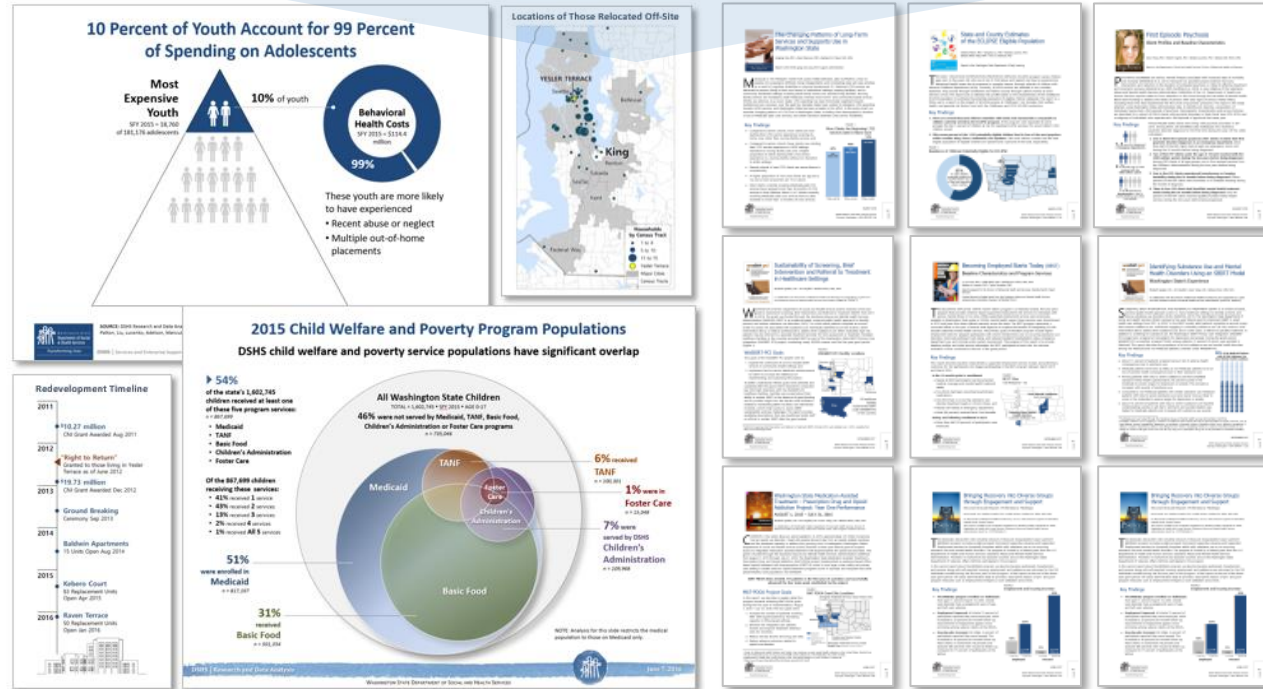


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# Informing the Placement Continuum

- DCYF contracted with DSHS Research and Data Analysis (RDA) to research the needs of children at the time of placement into out-of-home care
  - Medical claims and administrative data for 25,638 children who were in care from 2015 to 2018
  - Analyzed how observed variables cluster together in order to identify subgroups within a population
- RDA Research report available at [research-7-124.pdf (wa.gov)](research-7-124.pdf)
- RDA findings informed the current model that identifies 7 distinct categories of support needs

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# Caregiver Supports Model

**Project Website: https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting/caregiver-supports-project**

| | LEVEL 1 | LEVEL 2 | LEVEL 3 | LEVEL 4 | LEVEL 5 | LEVEL 6 | LEVEL 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Support Levels | Basic Maintenance Foster Care | Support Needs: Adolescent Low Needs | Support Needs: Chronic Physical Health | Support Needs: Developmental Disability | Support Needs: Developmental Disability & Chronic Physical Health | Support Needs: Moderate Mental Health | Support Needs: Complex Mental Health |
| | Placement Supports for Licensed and Unlicensed Caregivers – includes Case Aides for levels 3-7 | | | | | | |
| | Rates for Caregiver Support Levels Based on Age (Licensed Caregivers) – *Level Rates include Basic* | | | | | | |
| Age: 0-5 | $722 | N/A | $1,407 | $1,749.50 | $2,092 | $2,434.50 | $2,777 |
| Age: 6-11 | $846 | N/A | $1,531 | $1,873.50 | $2,216 | $2,558.50 | $2,901 |
| Age: 12+ | $860 | $1,202.50 | $1,545 | $1,887.50 | $2,230 | $2,572.50 | $2,915 |

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# Upcoming Communications

- Check out the project website for up-to-date information: https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting/caregiver-supports-project
- Visit the DCYF Rules Filing page for information about WAC changes (see Foster Care Rate Assessment)
- Caregiver Supports Contract RFI open until December 7, 2023 on WEBS site https://pr-webs-vendor.des.wa.gov/home.html
- Caregiver Connections messages
- Thriving Families communications
- Pre-recorded project update webinars will be posted on the Caregiver Supports Project website on the last Thursday of each month
  - December 28th

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# Tribal Engagement

- Tribes have the option to do their own rate assessments on tribally dependent children (Phase 1) and to provide placement supports to their own members instead of using a contracted provider in their catchment area (Phase 2)
- DCYF will engage in a formal consultation with Tribes to determine project impacts and engage Tribes in project implementation
  - Roundtables were held on November 14th and November 28th
  - Consultation on Dec. 12, 2023 from 2 - 4 p.m
  - For more information about the Tribal Consultation, email the Office of Tribal Relations at tribalrelations@dcyf.wa.gov.
- If you would like to meet with DCYF to discuss the Caregiver Supports Project and impacts to your Tribe, email Mandy Morlin at mandy.morlin@dcyf.wa.gov
- View the Caregiver Supports Project Presentation for Tribes on the project website

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# Thank you!

Please send all questions and comments to: DCYF.CaregiverSupports@dcyf.wa.gov

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