

DIGITAL DIALOGUE



Putting

Economic and Concrete Supports

At the Center of a Family Well Being System





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Family Protective Factors

CENTER FOR THE STUDY
OF SOCIAL POLICY'S

strengthening families™
A PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK

Parental resilience

Social connections

Knowledge of
parenting and child
development

Concrete support in
times of need

Social and
emotional
competence of
children

Policies & Administration Are Contemporary Choices

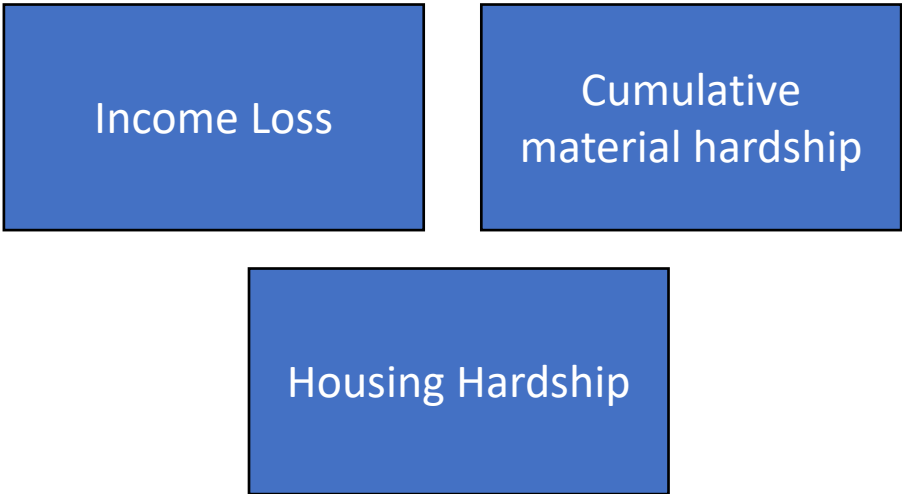
- Policy makers **repeatedly separate programs** designed to address poverty from programs designed to protect children as if unrelated
- Economic & concrete support policies and programs are administered as if unrelated to child welfare
- ***Flexibilities do or could exist in how these programs are administered and are our choice points***

Historical Policies & Choices: Repetition of Bifurcation

- Early child welfare system leaders recognized the **importance of financial supports** to address economic hardship and promote family stability and integrity (*e.g.*, Mother's Pensions)
- **The Social Security Act of 1935** bifurcated supports by nesting Aid to Dependent Children (later AFDC) in the Social Security Administration whereas social services were administered by the Children's Bureau
- **Flemming Rule/Social Security Act Amendments in 1961** established title IV-E as an open-ended entitlement for foster care services without analogous funding for family support services
- **Mandated reporting laws** (CAPTA, 1974) do not include standard guidelines, training requirements, nor opportunities or expectations for reporters to explore alternative family support options; implementation results in high reporting rates by teachers
- **Family First Prevention Services Act** does not include economic & concrete supports and focuses on treating the parent rather than the context

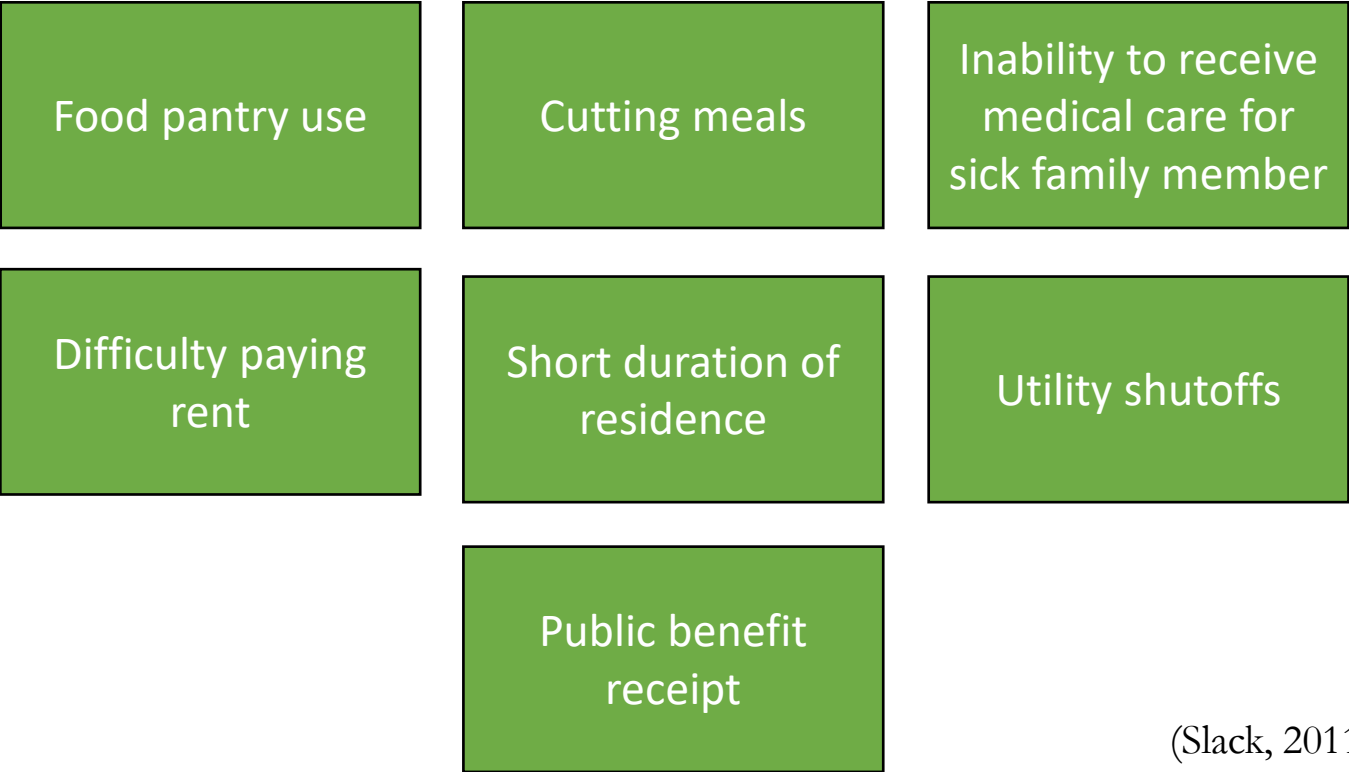
Family Economic Insecurity & Child Welfare Involvement

Most reliable economic predictors of child welfare involvement



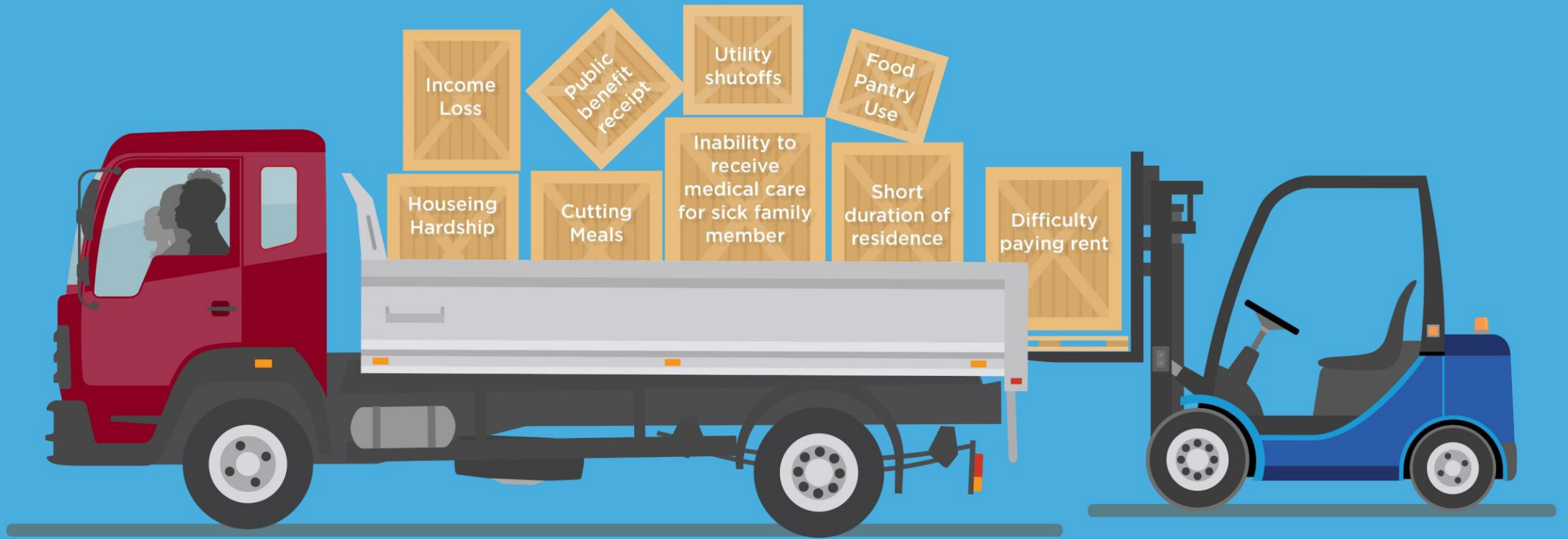
(Conrad-Hiebner, 2020)

Strongest predictors of investigated neglect reports



(Slack, 2011)

Multiple Material & Economic Hardships Can Overload Families and Increase their Risk for Child Welfare Involvement



(Conrad-Hiebner, 2020) (Slack, 2011) (Sweetland, 2021)

Effect of Material Hardship on Child Welfare Involvement

Experiencing any type of material hardship (*food, housing, utilities or medical*) is **strongly associated with an elevated risk** for CPS involvement

If families experience at least one material hardship

- Likelihood of being investigated for neglect increases nearly 3x
- Likelihood of being investigated for physical abuse increases nearly 4x

If families experience multiple types of material hardship

- Greater likelihood of being involved in a CPS investigation than families who experience a single type of material hardship

If families experience multiple types of hardship after experiencing no hardships

- Likelihood of being involved in a CPS investigation increases 4x
- Likelihood of being investigated for physical abuse increases 7x

(Yang, 2015)

Economic & Concrete Supports As a Population-Level Strategy for Prevention of Child Maltreatment

Each additional \$1,000 that states spend annually on public benefit programs per person living in poverty is associated with:

- 4.3% reduction in child maltreatment reports
- 4% reduction in substantiated child maltreatment
- 2.1% reduction in foster care placements
- 7.7% reduction in child fatalities due to maltreatment

In 2017, if all states had increased their investment in public benefit programs by 13.3%, it is estimated that there would have been:

- 181,850 fewer child maltreatment reports
- 28,575 fewer substantiations
- 4,168 fewer foster care placements
- 130 fewer child fatalities due to maltreatment

Public benefit programs included in this analysis:

- ✓ Cash, housing + in-kind assistance
- ✓ Low-income housing infrastructure development
- ✓ Child care assistance
- ✓ Refundable EITC
- ✓ Medical Assistance Programs (including Medicaid + CHIP)

(Puls, 2021, state-level data FFY 2010-2017)

Each additional **13.3%** that states invest annually in public benefit programs (which would total \$46.5 billion nationally) would save up to **\$153 billion** in the long term (*due to reduced maltreatment-related costs*)

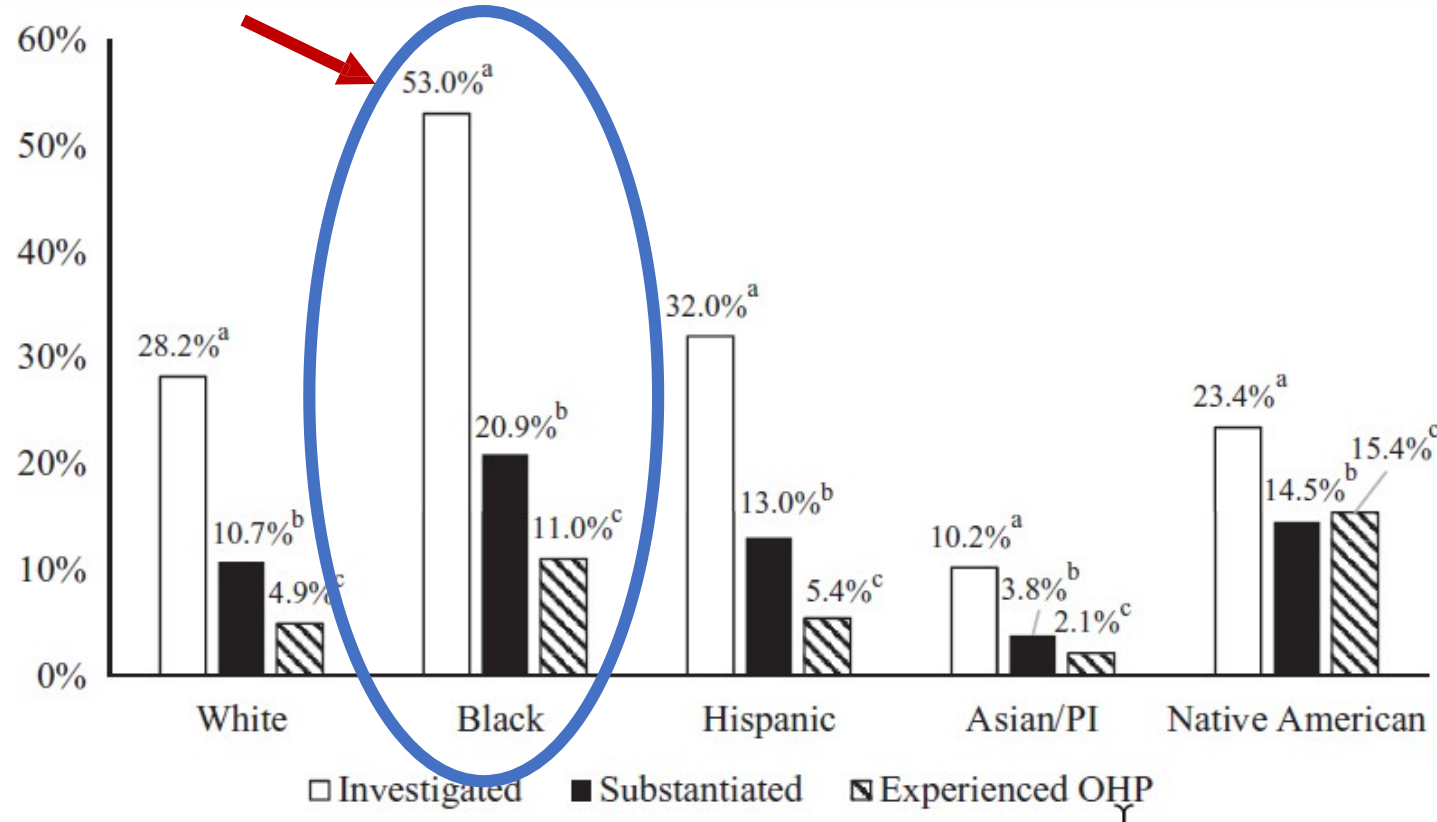
Relationship Between Family Income & Time to Reunification

Children in foster care take longer to reunify with their families when:

- ❑ Their reason for placement is **neglect** (*compared to physical abuse*)
- ❑ Their mothers have **lower average monthly incomes** (cash assistance + earnings) post-placement
 - *Every \$100 increase in a mother's post-placement income increases her child's speed of reunification by 6%*
- ❑ Their mothers **lose a significant amount of cash assistance** post-placement
 - *Percentage of children remaining in foster care after a year whose mothers lost a significant amount of income from cash assistance post-placement is more than double that of children whose mothers did not lose income from cash assistance post-placement (87% vs. 41%)*
- ❑ Their mothers must **pay child support to the state** to offset the costs of foster care
 - *A \$100 increase in the monthly child support order amount is predicted to increase the months to reunification by 6.6 months*
- ❑ Their mothers had **lower earnings** prior to placement
 - *Children whose mothers earned up to \$3,000 in the year prior to placement are associated with an estimated 1.4 month decrease in months to reunification*

Lifetime Incidence of CPS Involvement by Race/Ethnicity: Over Half of all Black Children Experience Investigation

Lifetime (Birth–18) Incidence of CPS Involvement in the United States by Race/Ethnicity



Annual Investigations

➤ **3.66 million children** received an investigation disposition in 2019

Lifetime Incidence of Investigation

➤ **37.4% of all children** experience at least one CPS investigation by age 18

(Berger, 2020)

(Kim, 2017)

(Child Maltreatment, 2019)

Evidence:

Economic & Concrete Supports,
Child Maltreatment, CPS Involvement,
and Child and Family Well-being



Sources of Evidence

How do we know what we know about the impact of programs, policies and strategies for reducing child welfare system involvement through economic & concrete supports?

- Research designed to detect the impact of a specific strategy through randomized controlled trials
- Observations using decades of administrative data aligned with policy shifts
- Natural experiments to assess public benefit programs
- Theoretical models and studies that illustrate the processes by which material hardship leads to maltreatment

Taken together, this vast body of science and growing preponderance of evidence informs our understanding of what has been effective and why and our hypotheses about the potential of policy shifts and new pathways.

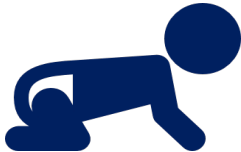
Increased Economic Hardship Associated with Child Welfare Involvement



**Reduced
TANF
benefits**



**Reduced
employment**



**Lack of
child care**



**Increased
gas prices**



**Increased child
welfare involvement**



**Housing
instability**

(Ginther, 2017) (Beimers, 2011) (Paxson, 2003) (Yang, 2016)
(Cash, 2003) (Klevens, 2015) (Weiner, 2020) (McLaughlin, 2017)
(Bullinger, 2021) (Berger, 2015) (Frioux, 2014) (Wood, 2012)



Child Welfare Interventions Augmented with Concrete Supports

- Differential Response
- Family Preservation

Concrete Supports

- Medicaid
- Supportive Housing
- Paid Family Leave
- Child Care
- SNAP & WIC
- Legal Support

Economic Supports

- Minimum Wage Increase
- Employment
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Public Benefits (TANF)
- Child Support
- Sustained Income Support

Family Preservation with Concrete Supports



Families with open child welfare cases (mostly neglect) who receive a home-based services program with concrete supports (averaging \$314 per family) are **less likely to experience a child maltreatment report**

(compared to families who receive the program without any concrete supports)

(Rostad, 2017)

Medicaid Expansion & Continuity of Benefits



States with **expanded Medicaid**, compared to those without, experienced a **decrease in reported neglect**

- 422 fewer cases per 100,000 children <age 6 for each study year

(baseline rate in 2013 of 3,944 cases per 100,000 children < age 6)

Continuity of eligibility for Medicaid/child health insurance (SCHIP) is significantly associated with a **decrease in child abuse & neglect investigations**

(Brown, 2019) (Klevens, 2015)

Permanent Housing Subsidies

HUD's Family Options Study found that homeless families referred for permanent housing subsidies experienced:



- **50% reduction in foster care placements (after 20 months)**
- Lower rates of psychological distress
- Less intimate partner violence
- Fewer child behavior problems
- Greater housing stability & food security

(compared to a business as usual control group of homeless families)

(Gubits, 2015) (RCT)

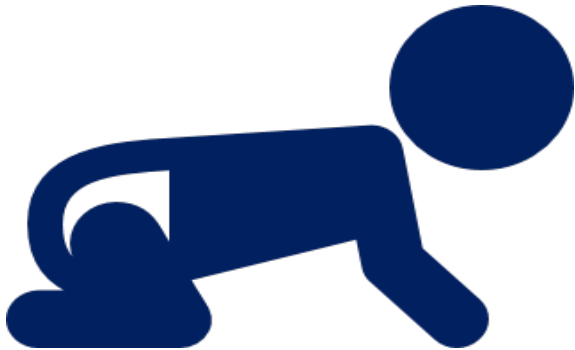
Paid Family Leave



Compared to states with no PFL policy, the implementation of California's 2004 PFL policy (up to 12 weeks of partially paid leave) was associated with a **decrease in hospital admissions for abusive head trauma** among children < 2 years old

(Klevens, 2016)

Child Care Subsidies



- States with more flexible Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) program polices regarding subsidies for child welfare-supervised children have, on average, **significantly fewer child removals** than other states
- Each additional month that low-income mothers receive a child care subsidy is associated with a **16% decrease in the odds of a neglect report** (*in the following 12 months*)

(Meloy, 2015) (Yang, 2019)

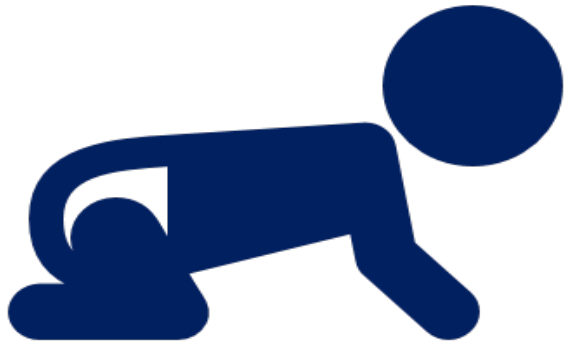
Child Care Subsidies

An additional \$1,000 spent by states on child care assistance (per person living in poverty) is associated with a:

- **40% reduction** in child maltreatment reports
- **35% reduction** in substantiated child maltreatment
- **63% reduction** in foster care placements
- **50% reduction** in child fatalities due to maltreatment

(after controlling for federal spending)

(Puls, 2021)



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

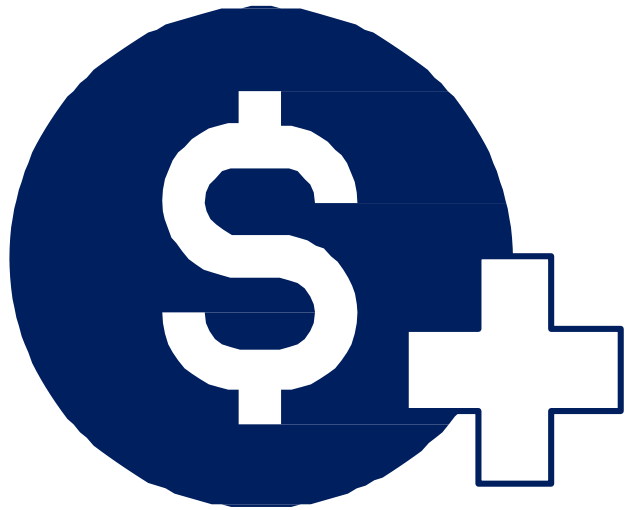


Presence of each additional store accepting SNAP benefits in the least densely populated areas of a northeastern state is associated with:

- **11.3% decrease** in substantiated child maltreatment cases
- **4.4% reduction** in child maltreatment reports
- **6% reduction** in neglect reports

(Bullinger, 2021)

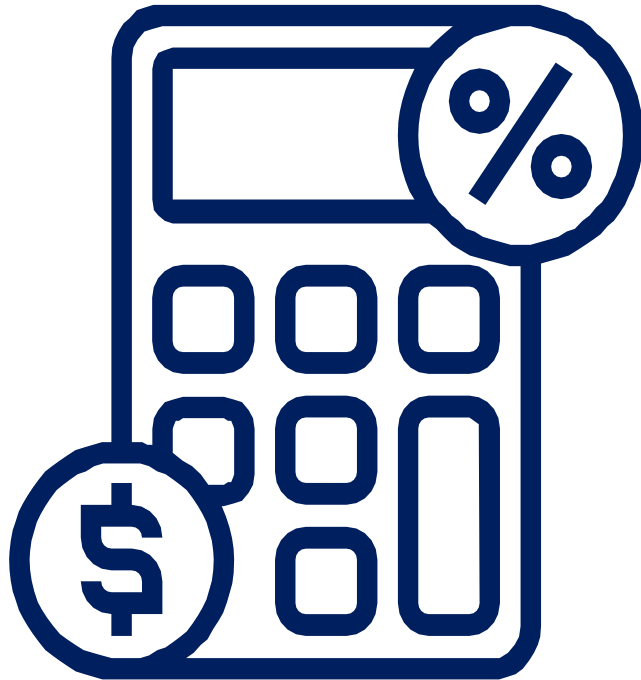
Minimum Wage



- States that increased the minimum wage beyond \$7.25 per hour experienced a **reduction in child maltreatment reports**
- For every \$1 increase in the minimum wage, there was a **9.6% reduction in neglect reports** (primarily for children < 12 years)

(Raissian, 2017)

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)



- EITC is associated with significant reductions in CPS involvement, particularly for single-parent households & larger families
- A \$1000 increase in income via EITC is associated with **8-10% reduction in CPS involvement** for low-income single-mother households

(Berger, 2017)

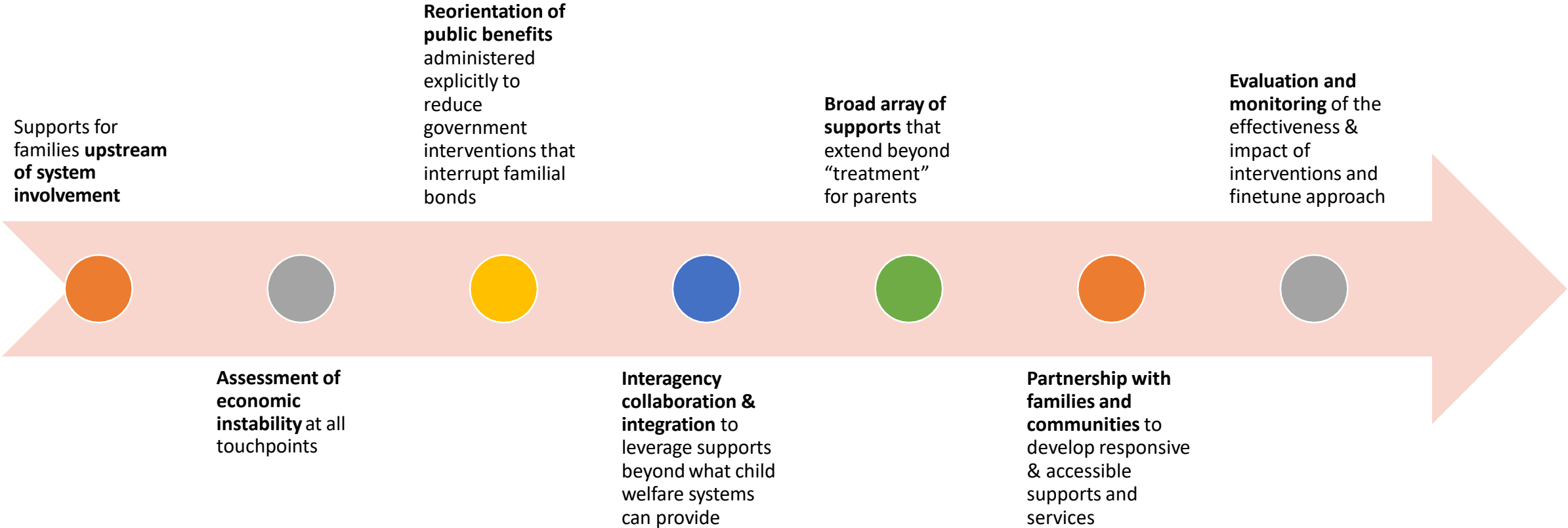
Child Support Payments



- Mothers who participate in TANF and are eligible to receive full child support for their children (and child support is disregarded in determining welfare benefits) are **10% less likely to have a child subject to a screened-in maltreatment report** (*compared to mothers who are eligible to receive only partial child support payments*)
 - Even a modest increase in child support payments – **averaging \$100 per year** – results in a decrease in screened-in maltreatment reports

(Cancian, 2013) (RCT)

Family and Child Well-being System: Use of Economic & Concrete Supports as a Prevention *and* Intervention Strategy





Discussion

Please type your questions into the chat box.



Report

Addressing Economic Hardship Key to Preventing Child Welfare System Involvement

2021

By Dana Weiner, Clare Anderson, Krista Thomas



Resources

- **[Chapin Hall Report](#)**
 - <https://www.chapinhall.org/research/economic-supports-child-welfare/>
- **[Economic Supports Can Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect in North Carolina.](#)**
 - https://www.preventchildabusenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Economic-Supports-Final.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3v6pfq_qS55-LtL3yso7N2ko3XEyz-14MKgCGQQG_UkjcjsNICKP8Sk
- **[Stabilizing Families Through TANF \(podcast\):](#)**
 - <https://www.childwelfare.gov/more-tools-resources/podcast/episode-26/>
- **[Self Sufficiency Research Clearinghouse:](#)**
 - <https://selfsufficiencyresearch.org/>

Thank You!

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