

Final Report
Child Care and Child Welfare Advocates Convening
January 23 and 24, 2017

Overarching Charge

- Senator Mitchell: Bring resources to the table collaboratively so all CA children can thrive
- Assemblyman Thurmond: All of our communities need prioritizing; current doubt and uncertainty should bring us together

Next Steps: Key Points of Consensus

- Siloed systems between and within ECE and CWS do not reflect family realities or needs. Children and families are served by both systems
- More money is needed to meet the needs of all families and children – we commit to work together on a unified ask
- Adopt a statewide emergency response Bridge Model for children in foster care
- When a child is placed in Foster care and the optimal placement requires child care, it should be available on demand.
- When a Parenting Foster Youth or Non-Minor Dependent requires child care it should be available on demand.
- Continuity of Care needs to be a priority for all children and families
- ECE contributes to prevention, lack of ECE access creates downstream risk for families
- Lack of available child care for infants and toddlers is a critical issue across both systems
- We need cross-training and communication and Navigators for child care
- Data Analysis based on shared information to identify needs and intersections should be expanded
- Support cohorts of providers trained and coached on Trauma Based Care and learn from models such as Napa Therapeutic Nursery
- Bias exists across and within systems based on race, gender and poverty. It must be eliminated and we have many tools if we have the will
- Bias against recipients means we must intentionally ensure real representation not tokenism in decision-making and policy development

Next Steps: Communication and Collaboration Agreements

- Invitations and attendance in existing Coalitions and Associations at state and local level
- Child Welfare seat on State Advisory Council and Child Care seat on Child Welfare Council
- Seek money for dedicated staff/consultant to convene ongoing collaboration
- We must keep youth and parents in the policy process - recommend Parent Advisory Council with real decision-making power including ECE, CWS and CalWORKs families.

Themes, Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Highlights/Lessons from Stories of Parents and Providers

- A former parenting foster youth was asked by Senator Mitchell how she defines thrive: “my children will not worry about my job, about being low income, about special needs. They will grow up to take their places at these tables, in the Legislature, as Governor. The system should work to benefit families like mine... My kids are future leaders and they are your kid’s friends, future coworkers and partners. This should be your fight not my children’s fight”
- As a former parenting foster youth, I am still on waiting lists and now homeless, I lost at least two recent job opportunities because I did not have child care
- The system is rigid and penalizes work – “I work retail and when I get extra hours for a brief period at the holidays, I lost my eligibility”
- People aren’t silos, yet the child care system is in silos
- Can easily drop in and out of eligibility, not user-friendly
- Long waiting lists
- Need a home address to access services
- Policies change at the state and county level that have a huge impact on people’s lives
- People don’t understand how to access or continue in the system, especially those connected to child welfare
- Lack of child care is a major barrier for kin resource families, “I want to take my niece but I received no warning and had to go to work tomorrow”
- Lack of access to child care is a barrier to placing children with resource families in their own communities

2. Funding

- The ideal is universal access to child care
- Consensus is that both systems are underfunded
- More money is needed – we commit to work together on a unified ask
 - Explore more effective IV-E leveraging
 - ECE administered by CDE should return to Prop 98
 - Additional revenue sources needed
- Prioritization due to current inadequate funding
 - Clarity needed from state agencies
 - Work toward common definitions in the field
 - Clarify countable and non-countable income

3. Systemic

- Adopt a statewide emergency response Bridge Model for children in foster care
 - CCRC pilot will serve as model
 - Legislation will be introduced again this Legislative Session
- Simplify rules for parenting Foster Youth and Non-Minor Dependents
- Address access barriers for kin resource families
- Support cohorts of providers trained and coached on Trauma Based Care
 - Training across systems
 - Access to training for ECE providers is needed
 - Coaching and support must accompany training
 - First 5 state and local is a key funding source
 - Learn from models such as Napa Therapeutic Nursery and CCRC Bridge
- Navigators for child care
 - Warm Handoffs
- Explore change to more flexible funding based on family's needs
 - Ensure continuity of care in transitions from biological family to resource family and from resource family to biological family

4. Meeting the Needs of Families

- When a child is placed in Foster care and the optimal placement requires child care, it should be available on demand.
- When a Parenting Foster Youth or Non-Minor Dependent requires child care it should be available on demand.
- Siloed systems between ECE and CWS and within ECE do not reflect family needs

- Learn from San Francisco integrated model
- Move to a strength based system from a deficit system
- Children need to know how to have healthy relationships with other kids, peers, parents, and adults in their life - trauma from foster care leaves many kids not “recess ready”
- We need a single application with no wrong door
- Lack of 0-3 care for all
- Long waiting lists
- Continuity of care needs to be a priority
- Need for home address
- ECE contributes to prevention, lack of ECE access creates downstream risk for families
- Utilize the 5 protective factors for parents
- Child care should be seen as part of supportive services
- Income cut off needs to be reassessed – it has been about 10 years since it has been evaluated even though the cost of living has gone up
- We provide more benefits for those who have a low wage job than those who are receiving an education- this does not lead to self sufficiency
- Elevate training/education for parents in both systems
- Consider expanding Parent Voices to include CWS and CalWORKs
- Systems should be family focused (holistic) rather than primarily parent or primarily child focused
- Housing affordability and homelessness exacerbate barriers

5. Race/Gender/Poverty/Bias

- Bias exists across and within systems
 - Bias among mandated reporters/callers
 - Importance for each person to discover your own bias: AAUW has a tool. Also recommended was the Implicit Association Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
 - increase awareness of bias towards individuals and systems
- Bias is focused on:
 - People needing assistance even though we all benefit from Safety Net
 - Children in Foster care
 - Children and families in poverty
 - Immigrants and communities of color
 - Resource families
 - Caregivers

- Disproportionality (over representation of people of color and boys in CWS; disproportionate expulsion rates in ECE) is a result of system bias, individual bias and informal policies
 - Learn from Fresno CWS model: thorough audit identified and changed bias resulting in reduction of disproportionality.
- We need cultural brokers to advocate for recipients
- Everyone needs training
- Bias against recipients means we must intentionally ensure real representation not tokenism in decision making
- Recommend analysis of legislative and budget proposals in terms of disproportionate impacts on people of color, gender or socioeconomic status

6. Data Needs

- Measure outcomes to understand what is working
- Share data CDE/DSS to assess need and overlap
- Ensure state agencies are responsive to data sharing requests

7. Closing Session Report – Response by Senator Mitchell

- Thank you for thinking differently you exceeded my expectations. This is a process and the Legislature will benefit from this ground-up shift in thinking.
- Encourage joint Budget Subcommittee Hearings in both the Senate and Assembly
- Human Services and Education Standing Committee could do joint hearings.
- Parent Voices, Community Voices and CYC can bring the two areas together and convene and lead meetings on these issues
- Ask Legislative Women's Caucus for place on Agenda to present findings
- Implicit bias very important to assess see online tools such as AAUW
- Bryan Stevenson of the Innocence Project spoke recently on the need to be proximate – in close proximity - you need to stay proximate to the issue, which is what empowers us to come up with the solutions families need.