

# Surely We Can Do Better?

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**Children's Caucus**

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*I wake up every day trying to shake off the shackles  
of the system*

*~16 Year Old Foster Youth*



# Problem and Prevalence in Colorado

- From January to September 2017, there were **77,276** referrals made to child welfare due to concerns of abuse and neglect in Colorado
- **28,142** of those referrals were accepted for assessment
- As of September 2017, there was **14,437** open cases for child maltreatment in Colorado
- Over **5000** of those youth were in out of home placements
- **42.3%** of youth in out of home placements will remain out of the home over one year

# Outcomes for Kids in Child Welfare are Unacceptable

Kids who age out can expect the following as adults:

- **47%** unemployed (<https://tinyurl.com/yawojhzv>)
- **<3%** who emancipate will attend college, 1 in 4 will not earn a high school degree (<https://tinyurl.com/ya5nzn8o>)
- PTSD **5X higher** than general pop. (<https://tinyurl.com/y9rgu3dl>)
- **40-50%** homeless within 18 months of emancipation (<https://tinyurl.com/yau2x823>)
- **~50%** incarcerated within 2 years of emancipation (<https://tinyurl.com/y7zfvuhy>)
- Significantly higher rates of drug and alcohol use than the general public (<https://tinyurl.com/yaz7yups>)

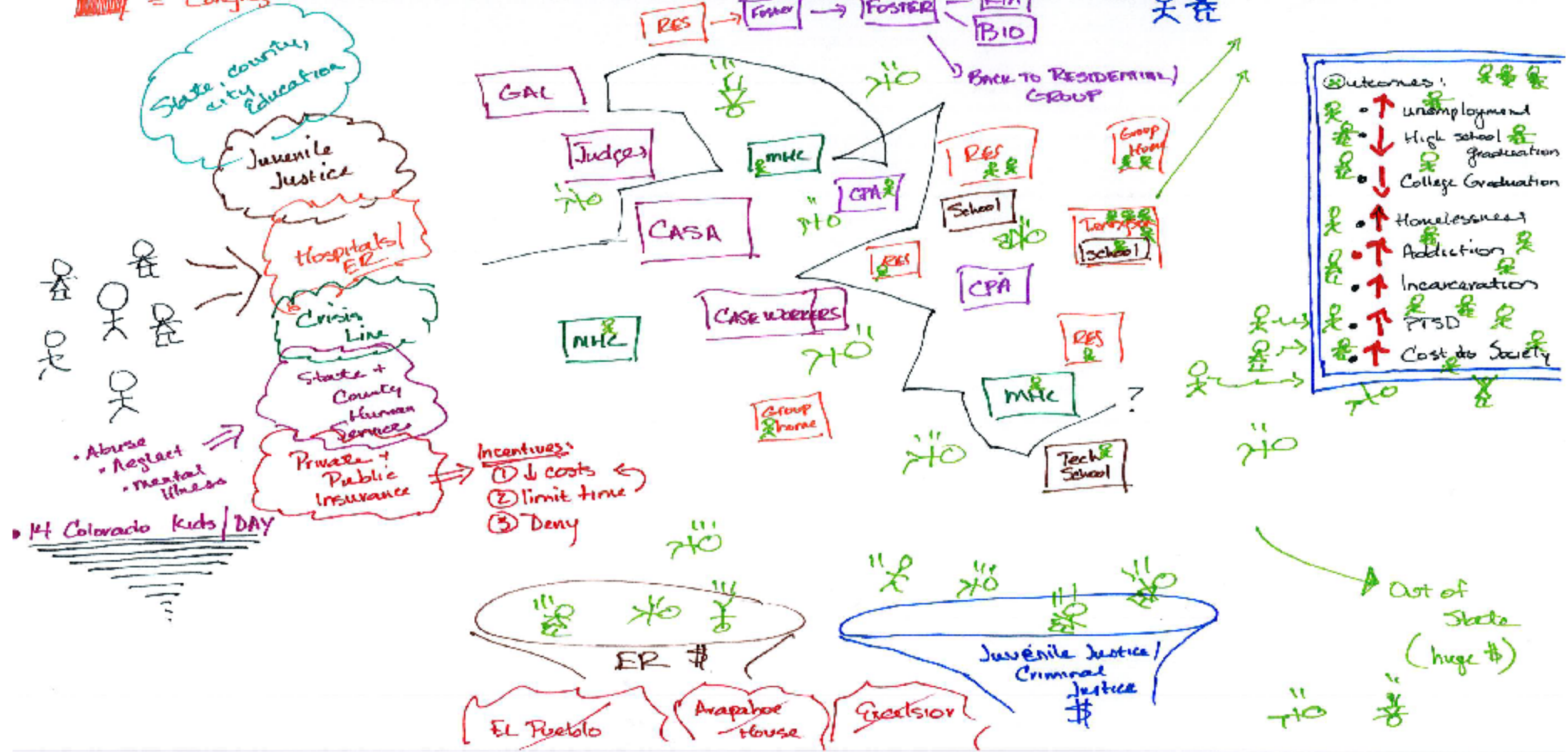


 = mental health centers

 = "Legal"

 = Child Placement Agencies (Foster | Adopt | Kin | Bio)

 = Congregate Care





*System needs to own up to how it is failing kids*

*~17 Year Old Emancipating in <6 Months*



## COLORADO

**41%** of CO kids entering foster care is due to parental substance abuse  
**36%** is national avg.

Of the CO kids experiencing maltreatment

**80% are neglected**  
(higher than the Nat. Avg.)

**10% are sexually abused**  
(higher than the Nat. Avg.)



**STANDING IN THE GAP WITH KIDS**



**\$2,980 PER KID/MONTH**

**HOMELESSNESS**

**\$40K**  
PER YEAR

**HOSPITALIZATION**

**\$74K**  
PER MONTH

**AGGRAVATED ASSAULT**

**\$87K**  
PER INCIDENT

**JUVENILE DETENTION**

**\$148K**  
PER YEAR

**DROP OUT/AT-RISK YOUTH TAXPAYER BURDEN**

**\$258K**  
OVER LIFETIME

**DROP OUT/AT-RISK YOUTH SOCIAL BURDEN**

**\$755K**  
OVER LIFETIME

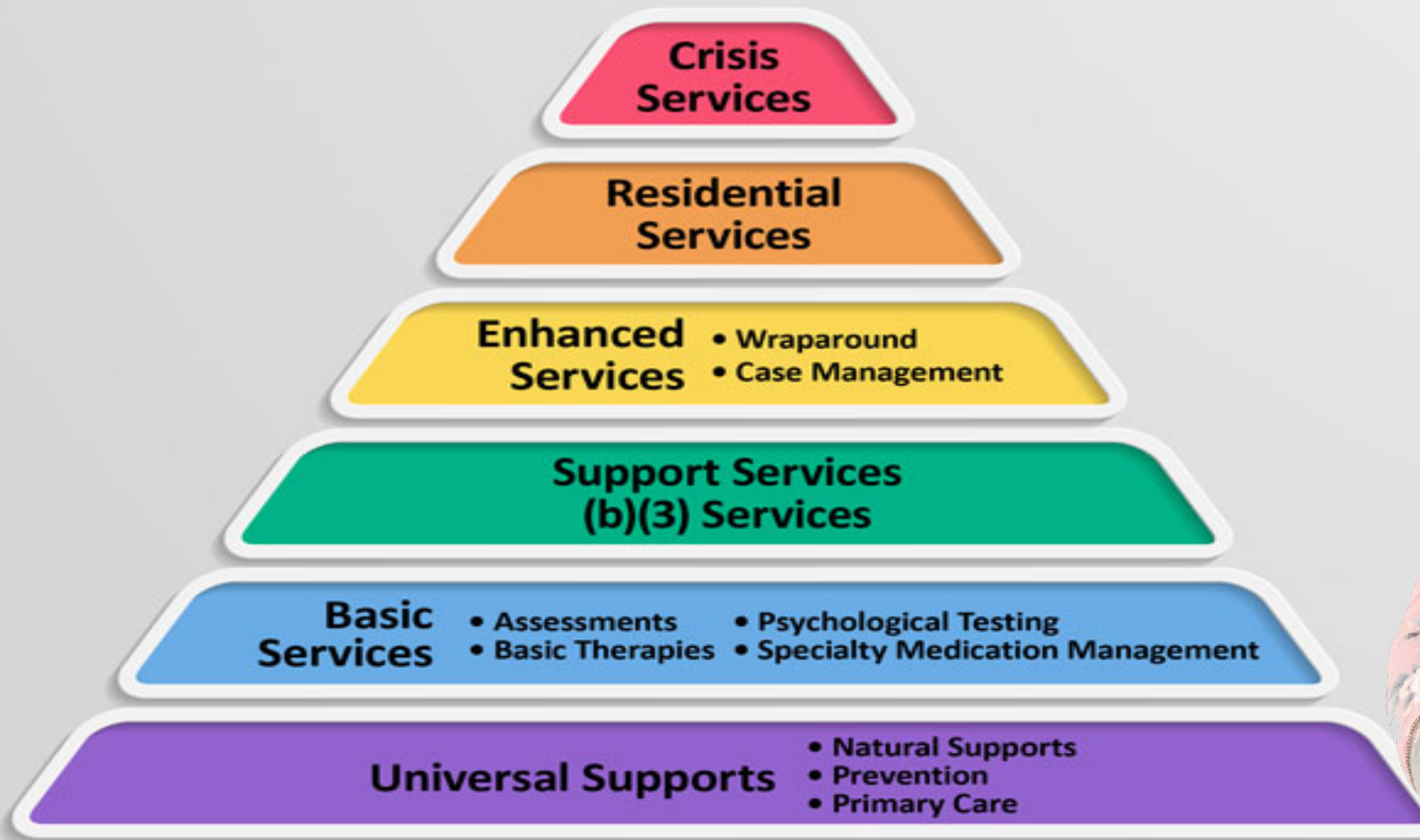
**SUICIDE**

**\$1.2M**  
PER KID

ONLY **32%** OF COLORADO CHILD MALTREATMENT VICTIMS ARE RECEIVING TREATMENT

**62%** OF CHILD MALTREATMENT VICTIMS ARE RECEIVING TREATMENT NATIONALLY



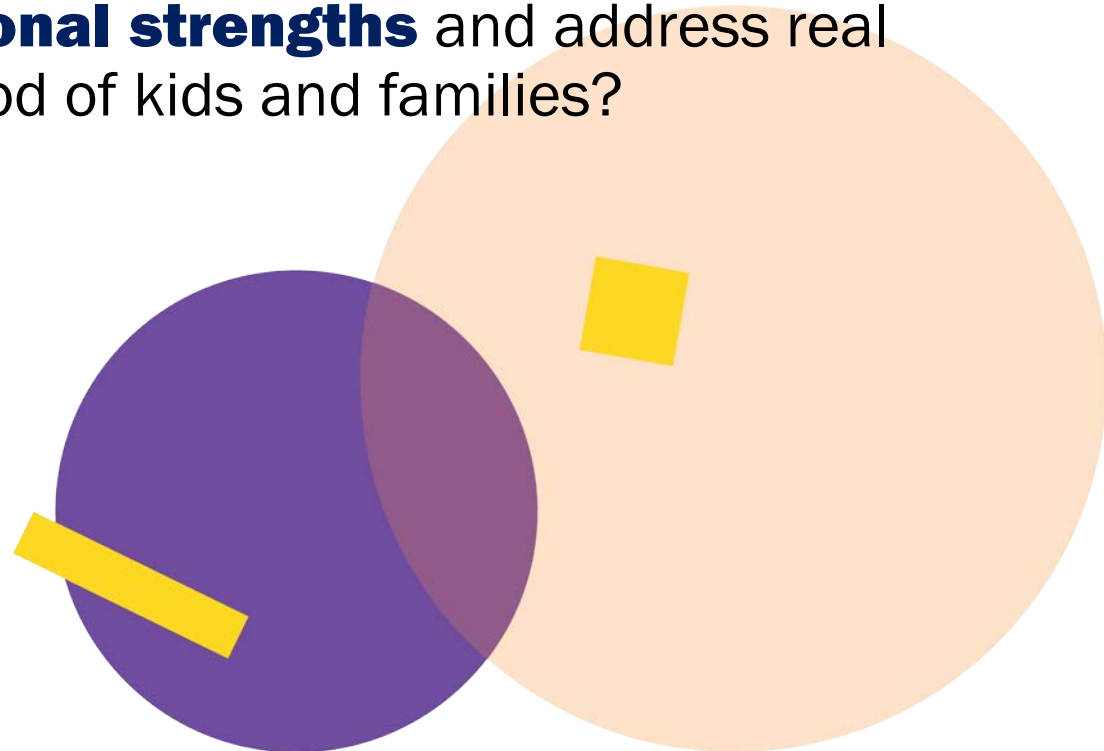




# Key Sector Questions

How can we **reboot the system** to get better results?

How can we **build on System/Organizational strengths** and address real weaknesses honestly... for the good of kids and families?



# **Key Themes to Constantly Remember**

- Keep Kids Out of the System
- If in the system, create true healing journeys, not holding journeys
- Transitions within the system are the real pain points – where kids and families relapse/fall most
- Get kids out of the system who should not be there

# **Sector Responds Too Late, Pushes Time Over Healing**

- Point of entry often after a crisis, which triggers reactive response in place of proactive interventions
- Not clear that broadly termed “prevention interventions” are effective because not tracking results clearly to know what works
- Costs escalate due to slow responses and the need for youth to “fail” at lower levels of care to access appropriate levels of care
- Sector pushes to move kids through services fast, to save costs, rather than effectively to reduce long-term costs
- Focused on current situation – with push to resolve quickly – rather than a thoughtful long-term plan to get kids to adulthood safely

# **Tennyson/Warren Village Partnership**

In-home support to at-risk families to test an outcome-based intervention with clear goals:

1. % of at-risk kids aged 0-5 that stay out of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems
2. % of at-risk kids who stay with their parent over time
3. % of at risk kids who stay on track educationally
4. Evidence that program tested at Warren Village spreads elsewhere, and methodology shared and used by others (replication strategy)





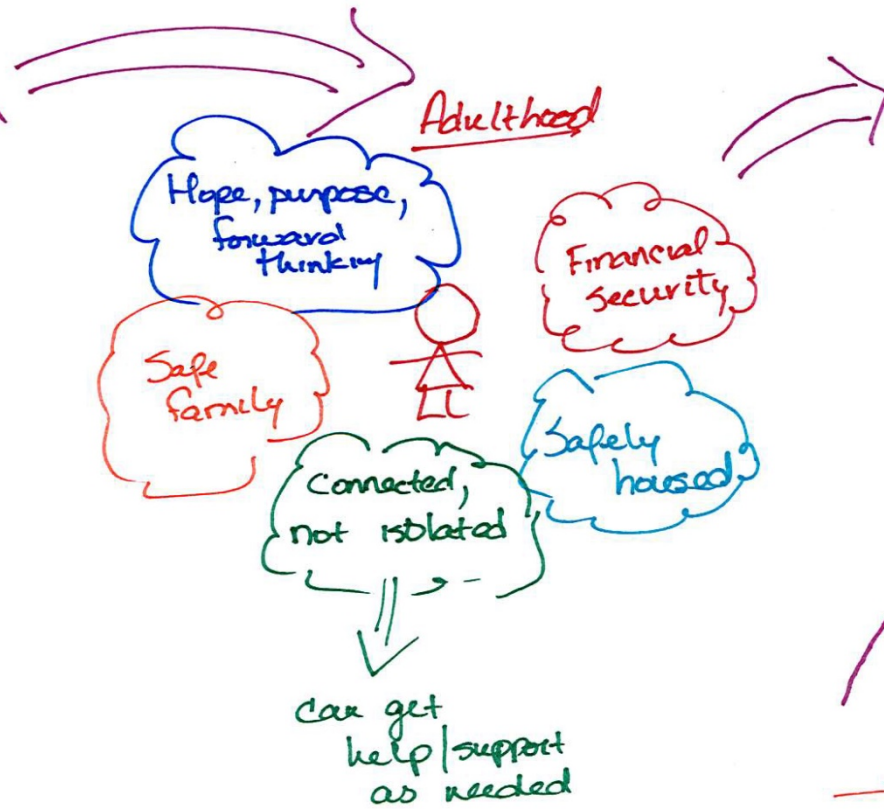
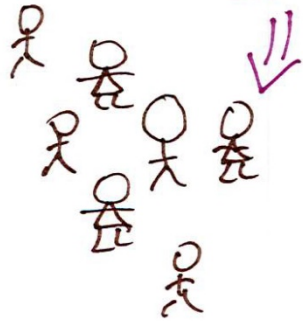
# Re-Imagine Monitoring for Impact

There is a **complete disconnect** between the on-going data that is collected, reported upon and generally drives the sector right now and actual outcomes outlined above (unemployment, homelessness...)

# NEW MONITORING FRAMEWORK

- Link DATA-SETS... 2018!
- Existing TRACKING CAN'T DO THIS
- 12 month windows NOT EFFECTIVE, ABANDON!

What Combination of Services + Support gets kids safely out of system



- Integrated, part of broader community
- Pays taxes, gets if needed to maintain journey
- Not in criminal justice system
- Not in ER

# **Movement on Monitoring For Impact at Tennyson Center**

## **Tennyson Center:**

- Has redesigned its impact framework to track kids and families into adulthood
- Has partnered with the University of Denver's Graduate School of Social Work on a longitudinal study tracking how various interventions help or hinder a child's healing journey to adulthood
- Results that do not meet expectations are opportunities for innovation, not to be feared
- Refuses to accept that if kids heal while at Tennyson but do not enter adulthood successfully then its somehow "not our fault". We are part of the system and bear responsibility for outcomes

# Re-Imagine Finance for Success

We need a **radically new discussion on finance** – starting with how can we use currently available resources for greater impact





# Financial Problems that Undermine the System

## – Not What You Normally Hear

- Need to harmonize, regularize and **rethink HOW money flows** through the system – disincentives to pay, one kid with multiple funding sources hurts children, narrow view on medical coding undermines efforts to actually heal kids with holistic/wraparound approaches, money not tied to kid in thoughtful, creative ways
- Funding is actually NOT linked to outcomes but rather services provided regardless of quality or lasting impact
- No creative funds used to test, push boundaries, and drive overdue and much needed change

# Rethinking Finance?

Create a statewide incentive fund that rewards agencies who:

- Get hard-to-place children adopted
  - Make adoptions/reunifications last
  - Keep kids out of the system who are on the verge of entering
  - Example: North Carolina Permanency Innovation Initiative - <http://www.practicenotes.org/v19n2/pii.htm>
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- Give counties/cities freedom and cover to innovate in child protection linked to clear outcomes
    - Example: Pittsburgh's efforts to use data to intervene more effectively - <https://tinyurl.com/yawz6r73>

# Rethinking Finance? Cont.

- Make an upfront investment in family preservation that will greatly reduce out-of-home care in the long-term
  - Example: Tennessee and Youth Village's Common Knowledge Project - <https://tinyurl.com/ybrmczwt>
- Move to creative and comprehensive block funding/managed care models focused on outcomes
  - Example: West Virginia moves to managed care for greater impact, creates space to move beyond narrow medical models - <https://tinyurl.com/y7fv58qr>
- Move to Pay-For-Success Opportunities in 24 months, with eye on how to allocate existing finance for greater impact
- Real investment in therapeutic foster parents



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