

Opportunities for Prevention and Transformation Initiative



OPT-IN
For Families
An initiative of



DORIS DUKE
FOUNDATION

Presentation to the Oregon House Interim
Committee On Early Childhood & Human Services
May 29, 2024

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Supporting Children and Families From Day One: A New Model for Child Well-being

The current child welfare system, with surveillance at its center and maltreatment concerns as its trigger, too often causes lasting harm to children and families and misses the opportunity to support them in their community and help them thrive.

We believe there is a **better**, more **cost-effective**, **scalable** way to prevent abuse and neglect.

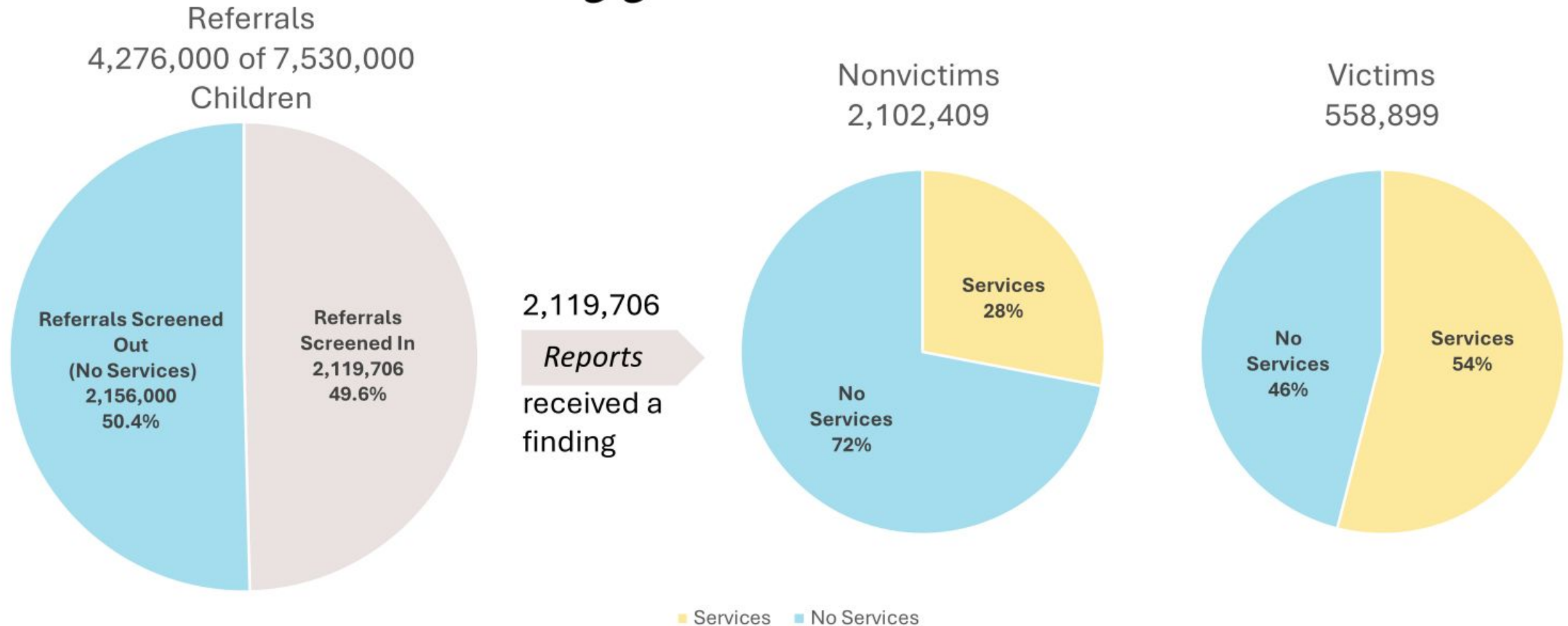


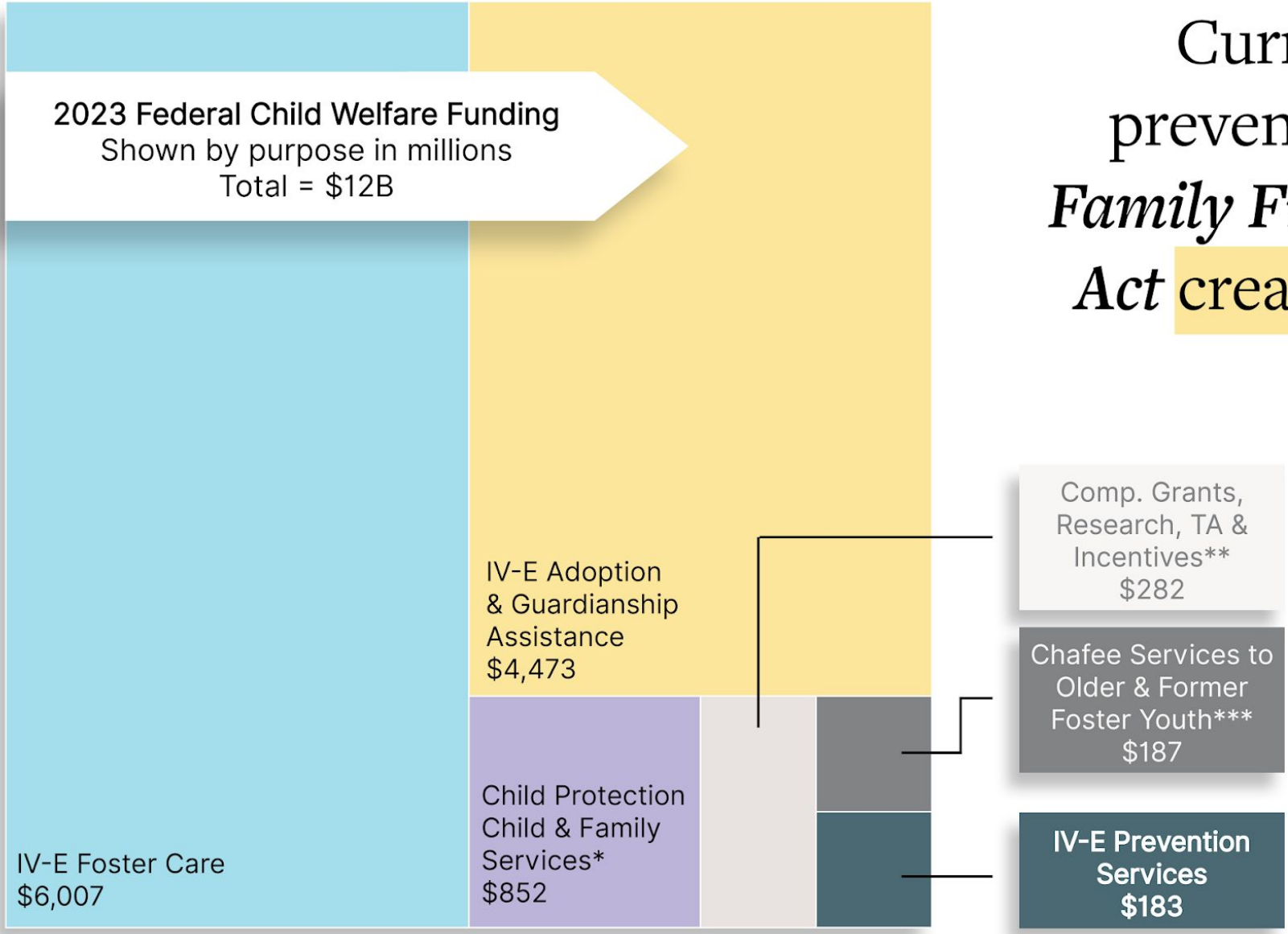
Roughly
28%
White children

More Than
50%
Black children

experience a CPS investigation by age 18, which, even when necessary, can be terrifying and traumatic.

In the current system of the 7.5 million children who are called into child protection hotlines, *more than 5.5 million receive no services*



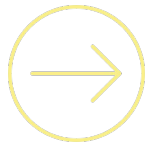


Current investment in prevention is small, but the *Family First Prevention Services Act* creates new opportunities

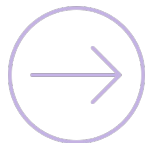
new opportunities

Creating Voluntary, Welcoming and Engaging Opportunities for Families

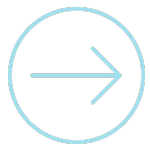
Opportunities for Prevention & Transformation Initiative, or Opt-in for Families:



Builds on nationwide work to create and test a **meaningful alternative** to the current child welfare system;



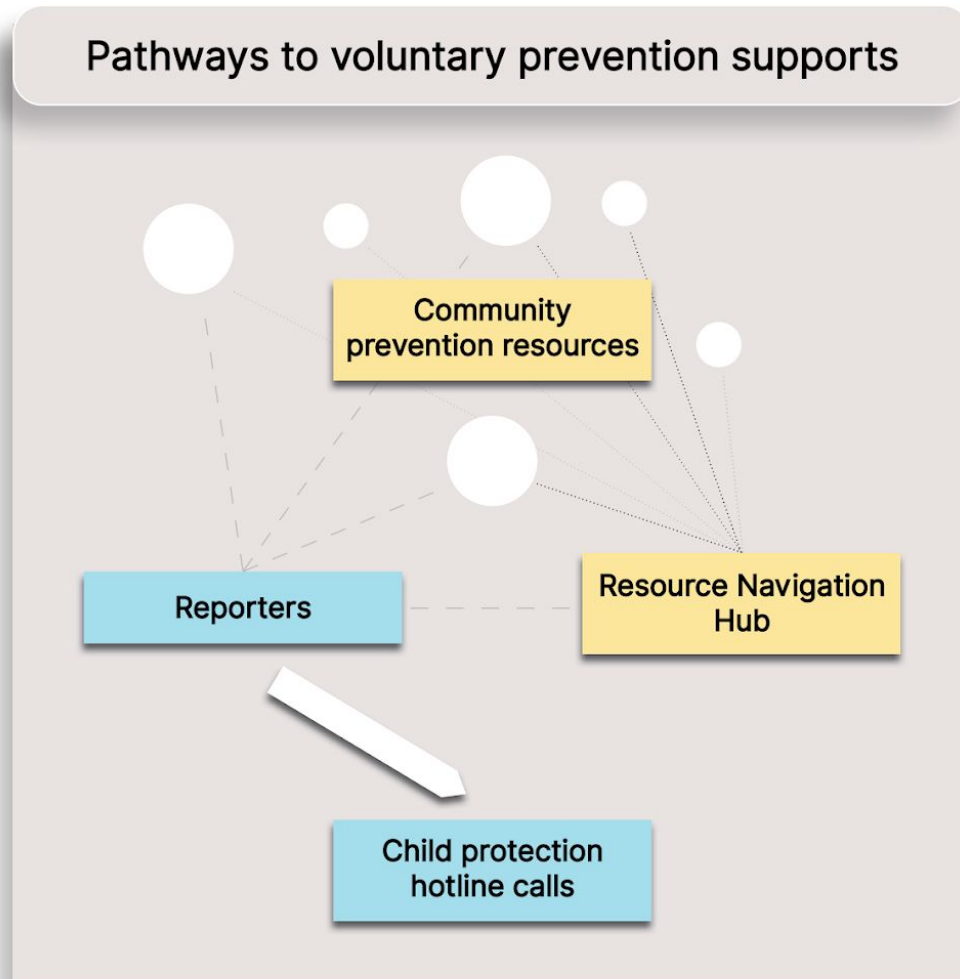
Works in **four jurisdictions** over the course of three years to show that meeting families where they are and connecting them to support services in their community is an effective way to prevent abuse and neglect.



The Doris Duke Foundation will provide each site with technical assistance and up to **\$3 million** in direct support for families.



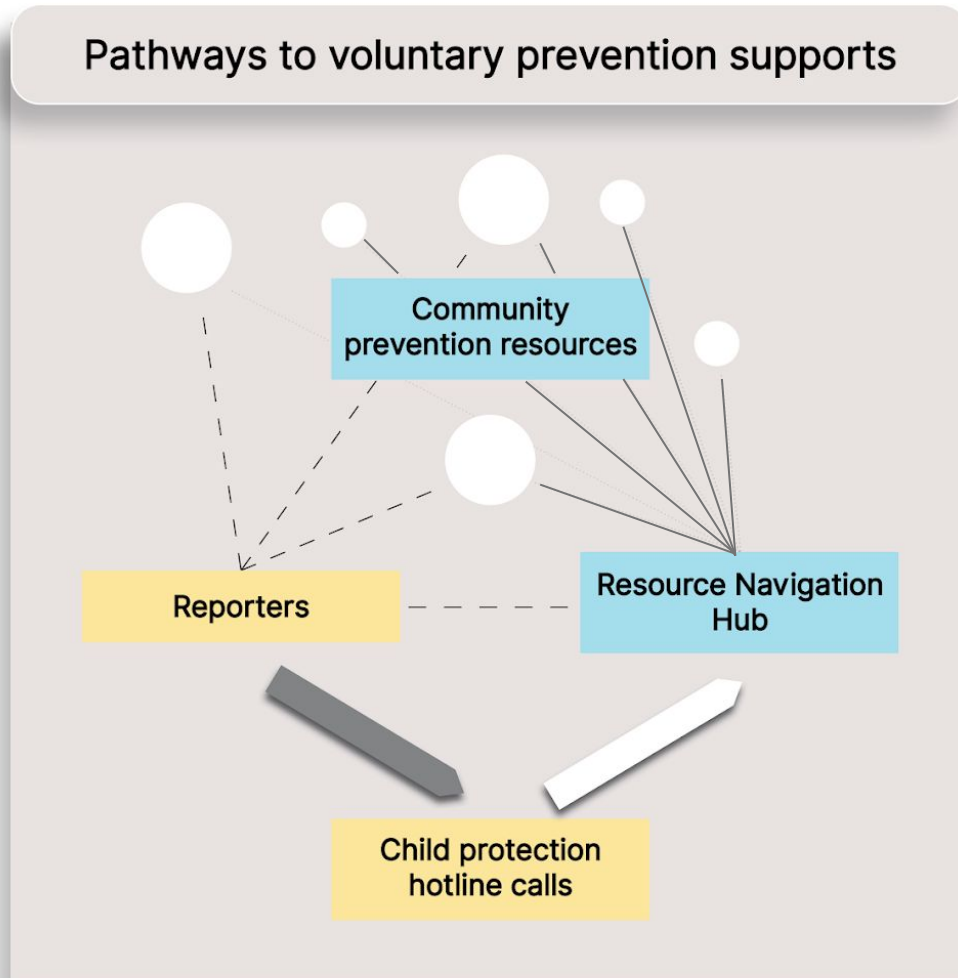
Current state | Reporters rely on CPS hotlines to elevate families' needs, often with no response



Typical System Today

- Families needing support are frequently reported to the hotline
- Approximately half of them are screened out and receive no support
- Limited formal connections to community resources

What we'll help jurisdictions test | Building out a referral pathway to connect screened-out families to voluntary services



Typical System Today

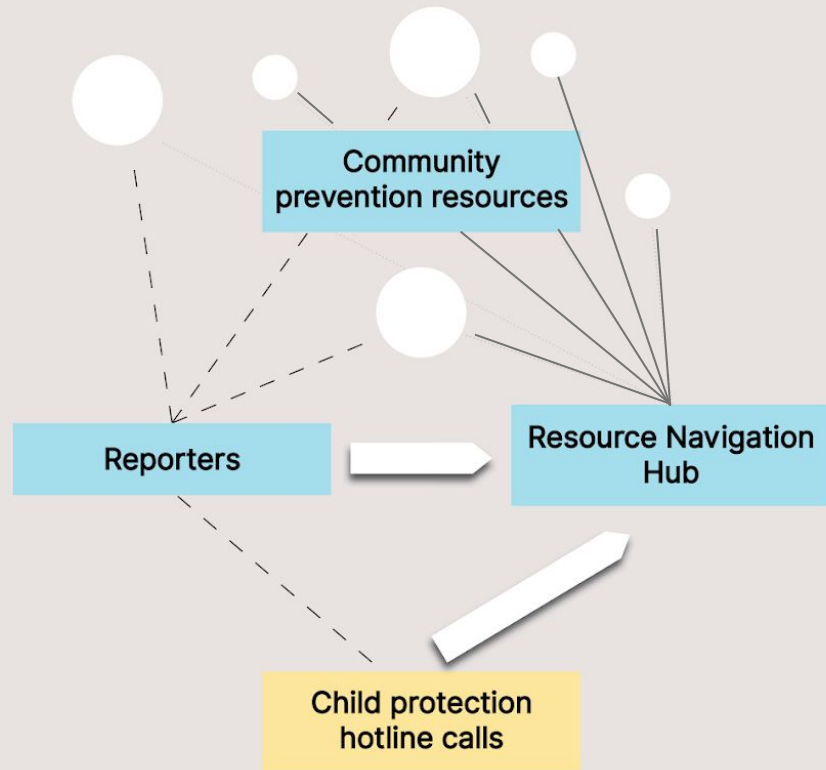
- Most families needing support are reported to the hotline
- Approximately half of them are screened out and receive no support
- Limited formal connections to community resources

OPT-IN for Families Approach

- Connect families that have been screened out to a resource hub that can offer voluntary, community-based supports
- Build evidence that these families can be served safely and effectively through community resources

Results | This pathway lays the groundwork for a meaningful alternative to the child welfare response

Pathways to voluntary prevention supports



Typical System Today

- Most families needing support are reported to the hotline
- Approximately half of them are screened out and receive no support
- Limited formal connections to community resources

OPT-IN for Families Approach

- Connect families that have been screened out to a resource hub
- Strengthen key community referral pathways
- Approximately half of them are screened out and receive no support

Future State

- Improve outcomes by connecting families at risk of child welfare involvement with needed supports
- Strong infrastructure to support families in effective, voluntary, responsive ways outside the child welfare system
- Over time, strengthen key community referral pathways to avoid the need for a hotline report in the first place

Prevent unnecessary child protection system interactions

Improve lives, so families and children thrive



Access

Each selected site will focus on families at an early signal of need.



Engagement

With compassion and respect, community-based programs that are outside the child welfare system will then reach out and engage these families.



Navigation

A trusted community-based person will help families navigate services, so the search for help doesn't itself become a hardship.



Support

Sites will provide services and concrete material support directly to families.



Co-Design

Created collaboratively with lived experts, community leaders, and intergovernmental partners.

The Investment

Each jurisdiction will benefit from an investment of a total of \$9 million over 3 years. In each site, this investment includes:

Flexible Resources

\$1 million per site each year* for three years in direct support for families (including the administrative costs of distributing the funding)

Dedicated Staffing, TA and Other Supports

\$1.75 million per site each year for three years supporting:

- dedicated staffing providing intensive technical assistance on key issues (e.g., data-driven performance management, designing service arrays and referral pathways, etc.) and expanding jurisdictions' capacity for project management, learning and community engagement;
- funding to compensate lived experts; and
- funding to support convenings/travel to share strategies and learnings

Evaluation

\$250k per site each year for three years supporting evaluation of the initiative

**Note: Each jurisdiction will receive \$3 million over the 3 years (including the cost of administering/distributing the funds). Actual usage may ramp up and may not be exactly \$1m per year.*

Our Technical Assistance Partners



<p>Overview</p>	<p>The Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab (GPL) supports state and local governments across the country in building just and effective service systems by developing hands-on tools for the design and implementation of reforms.</p>	<p>Foster America works with communities to transform systems that serve children, youth and families by innovating for a more just, equitable future.</p>	<p>Think of Us is led and guided by people with lived experience, partnering with leaders and practitioners across the country to create and implement disruptive, scalable solutions and policy reforms.</p>	<p>Chapin Hall is a nationally recognized leader in child welfare and human services policy, research, and implementation.</p>
<p>Role and Resources Provided to Jurisdictions</p>	<p>Implementation Technical Assistance The GPL serves as the overall lead entity coordinating Opt-in for Families. GPL provides intensive research and technical assistance to help selected sites design and implement their prevention initiative, including how to identify families that need support, effectively engage those families, and connect them to responsive, voluntary resources, including concrete resources for families. A full-time GPL fellow is dedicated to each jurisdiction and multiple GPL management and leadership staff are supporting the work.</p>	<p>Site facilitation and governance Foster America supports sites with overall coordination of the initiative; facilitation and support of a local advisory committee guiding the initiative; and coordination of the technical assistance that is provided. A full-time Foster America senior advisor is dedicated to each jurisdiction and multiple Foster America management and leadership staff are supporting the work.</p>	<p>Engaging individuals with lived experience Think of Us teams work with sites to meaningfully engage individuals with lived expertise in the design and implementation process.</p>	<p>Evidence-based interventions and evaluation Chapin Hall provides relevant information about evidence-based interventions that can inform the selected sites in the planning and design of their prevention initiatives. A team of Chapin Hall researchers are designing and implementing the evaluation in partnership with each jurisdiction.</p>

Investment in Flexible Resources for Families

Testing a promising strategy to prevent child abuse and neglect

The Doris Duke Foundation is making a total of **\$3M in flexible funds per demonstration site*** available to help meet the concrete needs of families. There is a growing body of research that suggests that this is a promising child abuse and neglect prevention strategy.

Flexible resources are intended to help meet the wellbeing needs of families earlier, preventing future crises that might lead to future child welfare involvement by:

- **Providing one-time or short-term support to meet families' material needs**, including to reduce the impact of economic shocks (e.g., security deposit, furnace repair, grocery assistance); and/or
- **Reducing barriers to engagement in other services or supports** (e.g., transportation, childcare).

A local design team will determine the criteria with support from the Harvard GPL and Impact Charitable, a national organization that specializes in designing and administering programs with flexible resources.

**Each jurisdiction will receive \$3 million over the 3 years (including the cost of administering/distributing the funds). Actual usage may ramp up and may not be exactly \$1m per year.*

Our North Star

Implement new pathway for families to receive voluntary services

New pathway becomes well publicized and trusted. We stop conflating poverty with neglect. Community members stop reporting poverty-related stressors to CPS.

Families receive needed services and supports and their children thrive.



What are we trying to do?

Develop a Prevention-Oriented Child and Family Wellbeing System



Pilot

Work with selected jurisdictions to test **alternative approaches** to identifying and serving at-risk families.

Selected jurisdictions will receive **comprehensive technical assistance and implementation support** from a range of expert partners.



Document

Assess and analyze the pilot – both through a cohort experience among selected jurisdictions – and through formal study of the interventions.

Share research and evidence widely through formal research papers as well as webinars and articles.



Advocate

Use the evidence built across demonstration sites to arm advocates at the state and federal levels to **promote policies and programs** that spread prevention-oriented child and family well-being systems.

Opt-In Sites



Key Site Selection Criteria

Strong leadership

Focus on race equity

Programmatic building blocks in place

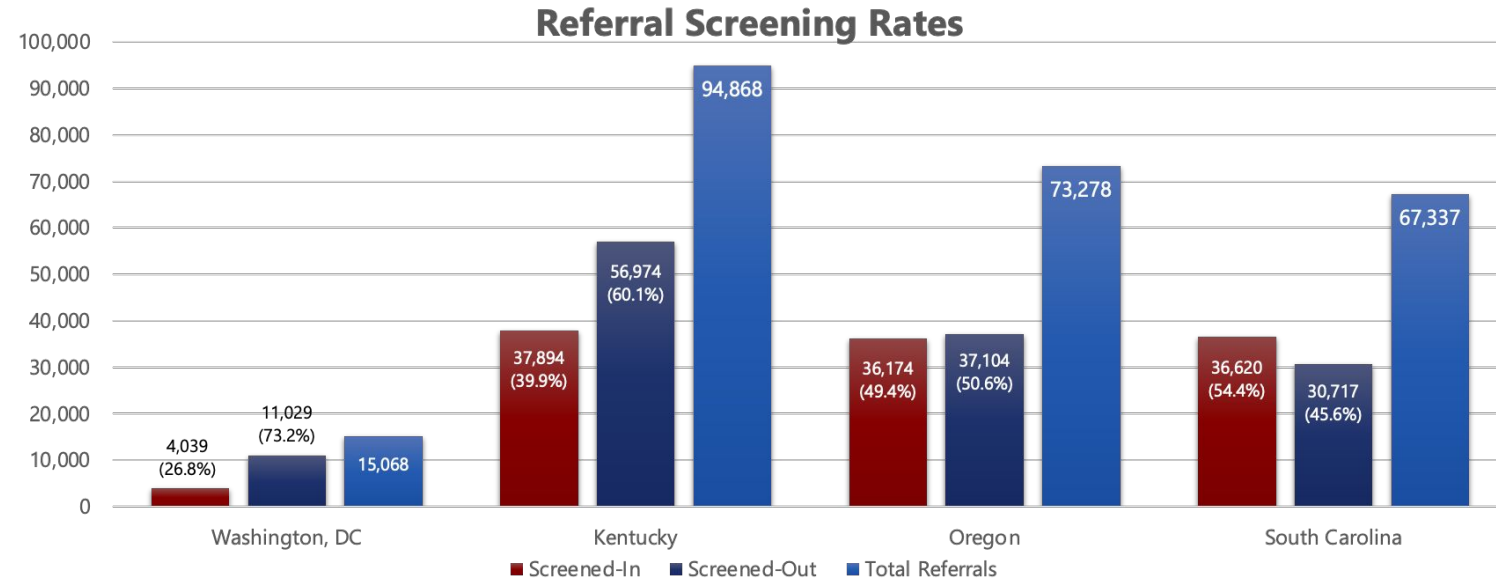
Commitment to meaningful engagement
of individuals with lived experience

Commitment to data analytics

Authorizing environment/local buy-in

Selected Site Stats at a Glance

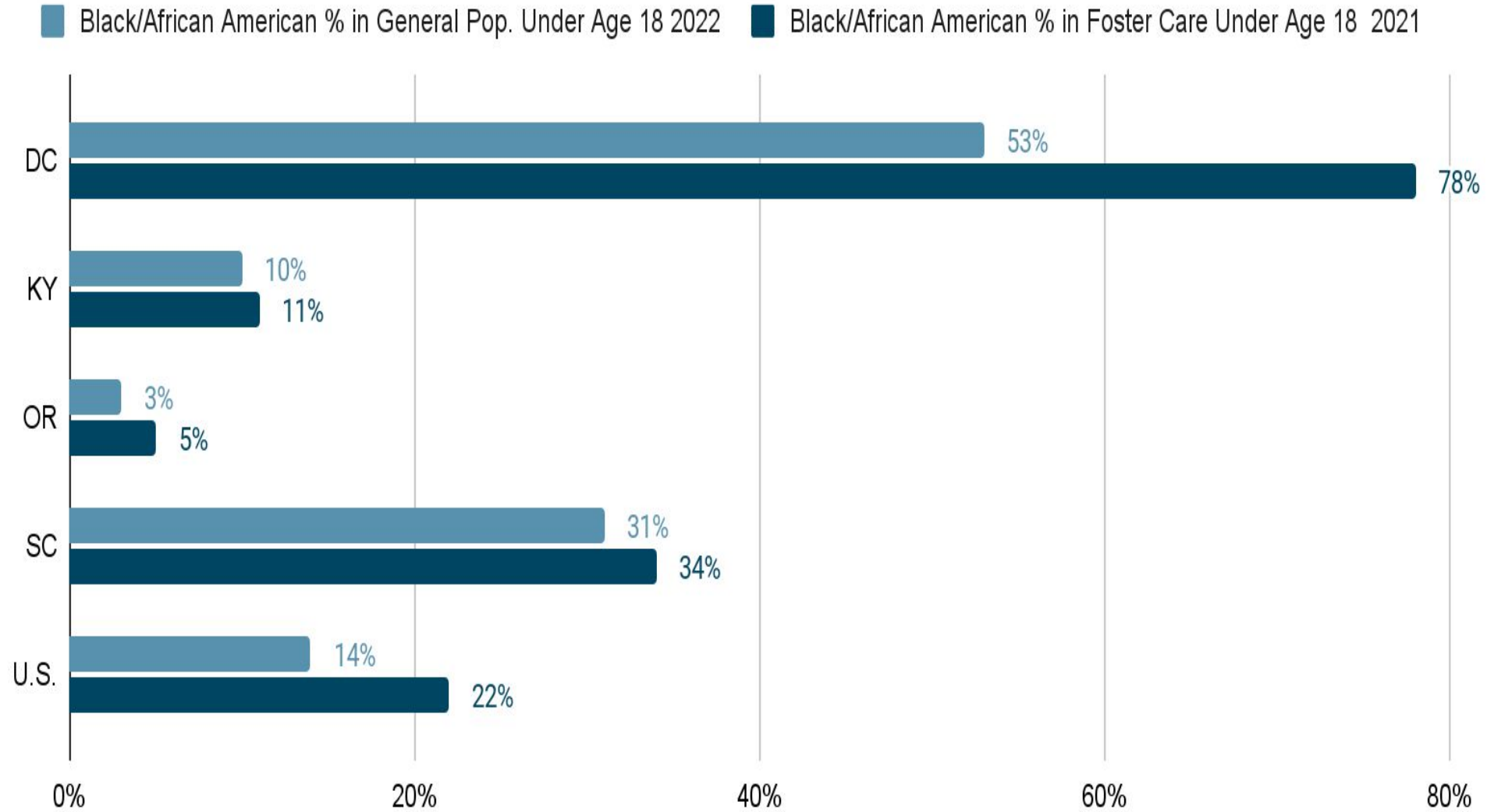
Site	General Pop.	Rate of entry into foster care 2021* **	# of children (under age 18) in foster care 2021	Change in foster care pop. 2017 -2021
DC	712 k	1.7	519	-32%
KY	4.5 million	5.0	8,412	+3%
OR	4.2 million	2.7	5,487	-32%
SC	5.1 million	2.4	3,932	-2%
U.S.	332 million	2.8	377,033	-12%



*Per 1,000 children in the general population

**Casey Family Programs 9/22/2023 NCANDS/AFCARS Analysis

Racial Disparity in the Child Welfare System



Date Source: Casey Family Programs

Advisory and Engagement Strategy

We are engaging lived experts, child welfare and other social service systems leaders, advocates, service providers and others in advisory bodies at both the national and local levels to inform the design, implementation and evaluation of Opt-In.

National Advisory Group

Evaluation Advisory Group



Oregon Local
Advisory Group

Kentucky Local
Advisory Group

DC Local Advisory
Group

South Carolina
Local Advisory
Group

Oregon

Serving Screened-out Families in Oregon

Oregon has been implementing **two pathways** to support families after a closed-at-screening call to the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH), one in Portland and one in southern Oregon.

- **Southern Oregon (Klamath):** leverages TANF Family Coaches and ODHS-contracted Peer Mentors to support these families.
- **Portland:** involves a referral to a community-based organization that offers families supports.

Oregon is continuing to assess and strengthen these models to learn what works best from families and communities and to inform possible future replication. OPT-In technical assistance is supporting this work.

Oregon currently screens out about 51% of child welfare reports to the hotline.*

- When a call comes into the statewide Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH), staff use a Structured Decision-Making (SDM) tool to reach a screening decision.
- Calls that “close-at-screening” may result in outreach to the family to offer voluntary, community-based supports through at least two mechanisms.

*<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/data-research/child-maltreatment>

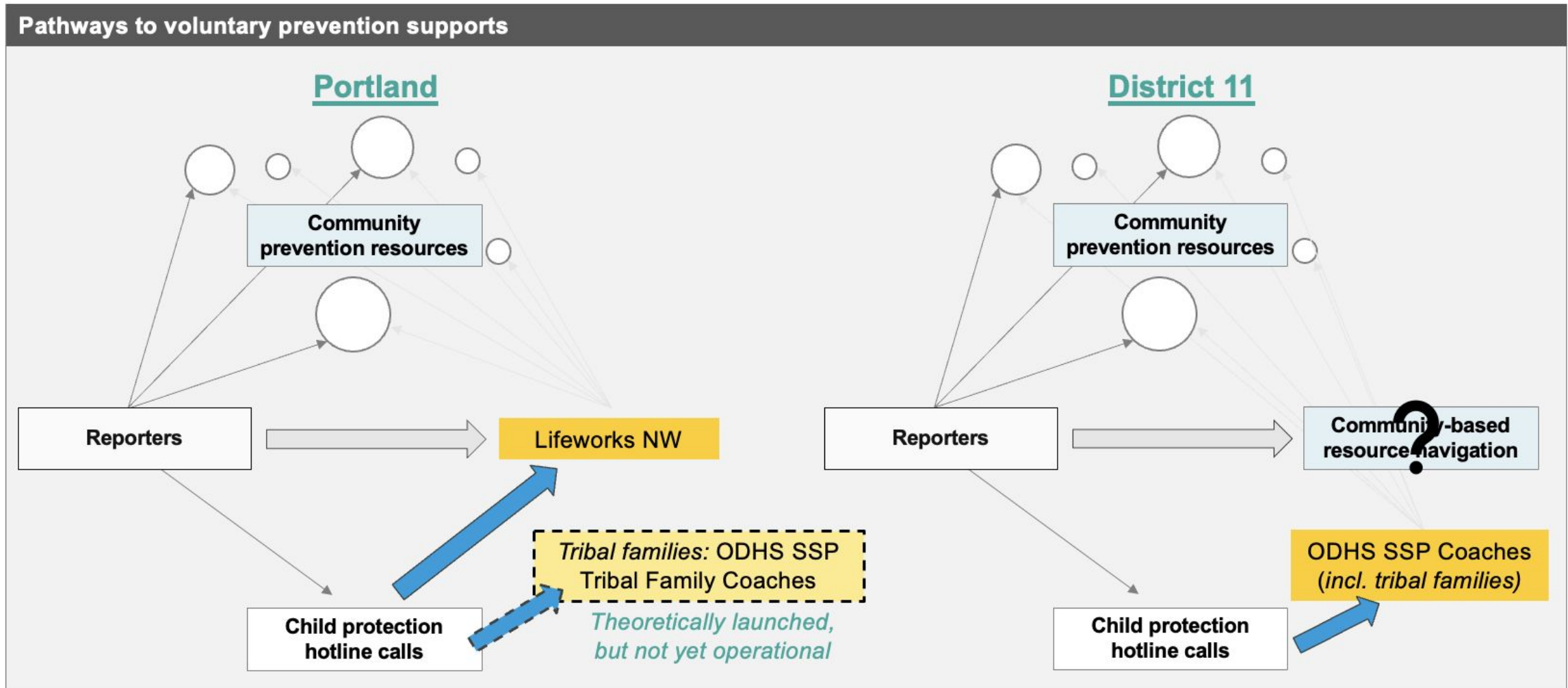
If the family resides in Portland:

- After decision to close-at-screening, ORCAH staff determine whether family is eligible for referral to **Lifeworks NW**, a community-based org. offering supports via its Family and Community Alliance (FCA) program.
- After receiving the referral, **an Outreach Specialist** at Lifeworks NW reaches out to offer families voluntary services.
- If a family wants to engage, they are matched to an **FCA Family Advocate** who will work with the caregiver for several weeks or months to help them navigate desired supports.

If the family resides in Klamath County:

- Each week, regional ODHS staff pull a report of all closed-at-screening cases, then assign many of those cases to a Family Coach.
- **Family Coaches work for ODHS' Self-Sufficiency Program (SSP)**, which is housed alongside ODHS' Child Welfare Program under the leadership of the same District Manager, facilitating information-sharing between the two programs.
- Family Coaches reach out to offer families **voluntary support** navigating services, including by facilitating benefits enrollment. Family Coaches will sometimes engage a Peer Mentor to offer additional support, via a local community-based org. called Transformations, under contract with ODHS.

Oregon | Two distinct, small-scale initiatives to support families after “closed-at-screening” call to the hotline



Thank you