



# Voices of Kinship Caregivers

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# Logistics

- Webinar will be recorded and archived at [www.stepupforkin.org/trainings](http://www.stepupforkin.org/trainings)
- All attendees will be on mute – type any questions you have into the chat box or if you experience technical difficulties email Will Smith at [w.smith@kids-alliance.org](mailto:w.smith@kids-alliance.org)
- A certificate of participation will be posted online after the webinar at [www.stepupforkin.org/trainings](http://www.stepupforkin.org/trainings)
- We will be answering your questions – please submit questions using the “chat” function on your GotoWebinar dashboard



# Linda's Story

# My Family

- Husband
- Step Son
- Daughter – who has two children, Kaylin and Kyah

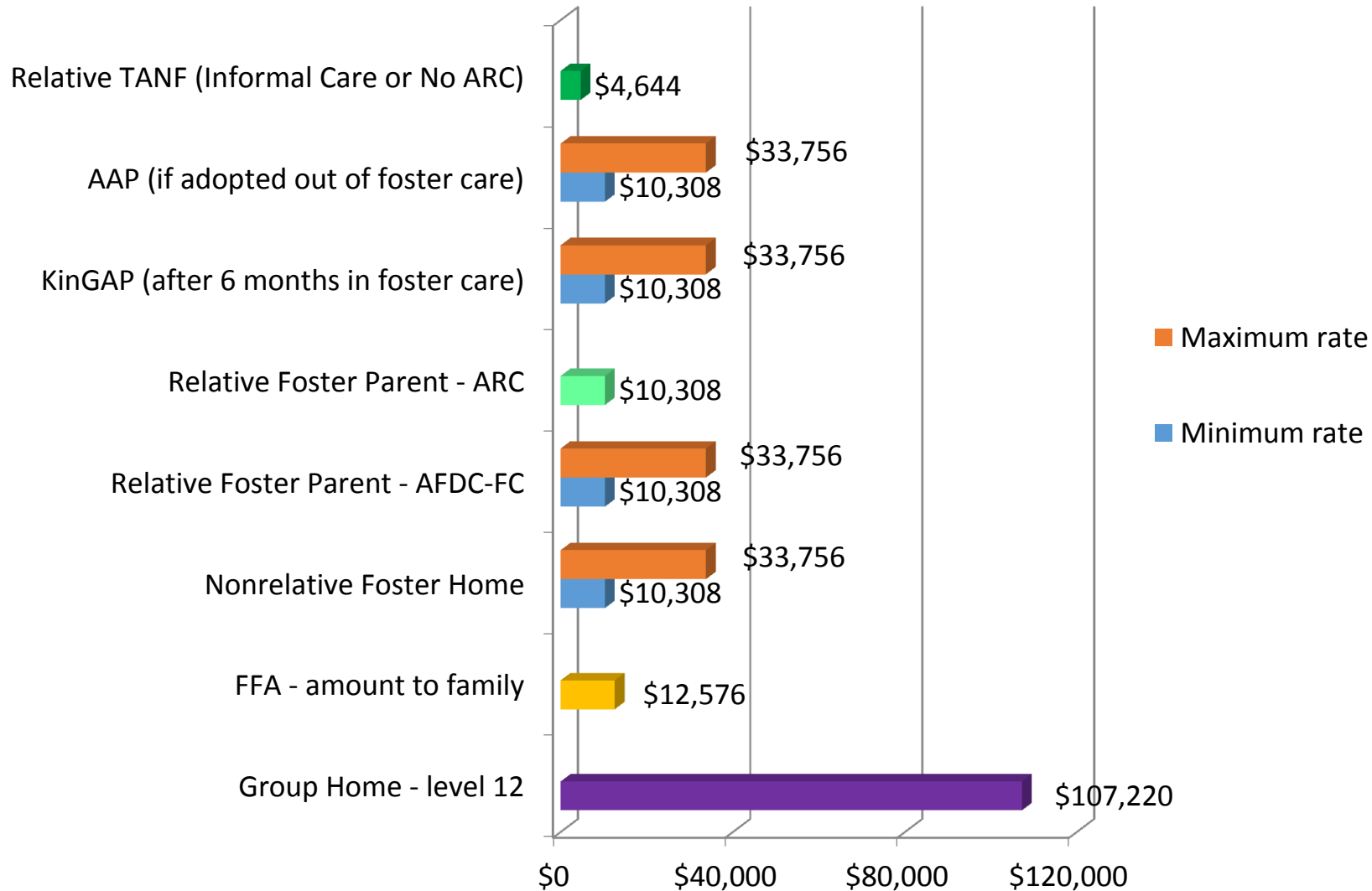


# Our Path to Guardianship

- My daughter and her children, my granddaughters, lived with me off and on prior to CPS getting officially involved in our lives
- My daughter struggled with substance abuse and mental illness – she needed help with the girls
- CPS was involved a few times before the girls were detained and placed in our care
- In August 2005, at the prompting of CPS, we agreed to take guardianship so that our granddaughter would not be adopted out of foster care



# Financial Implications of Diversion

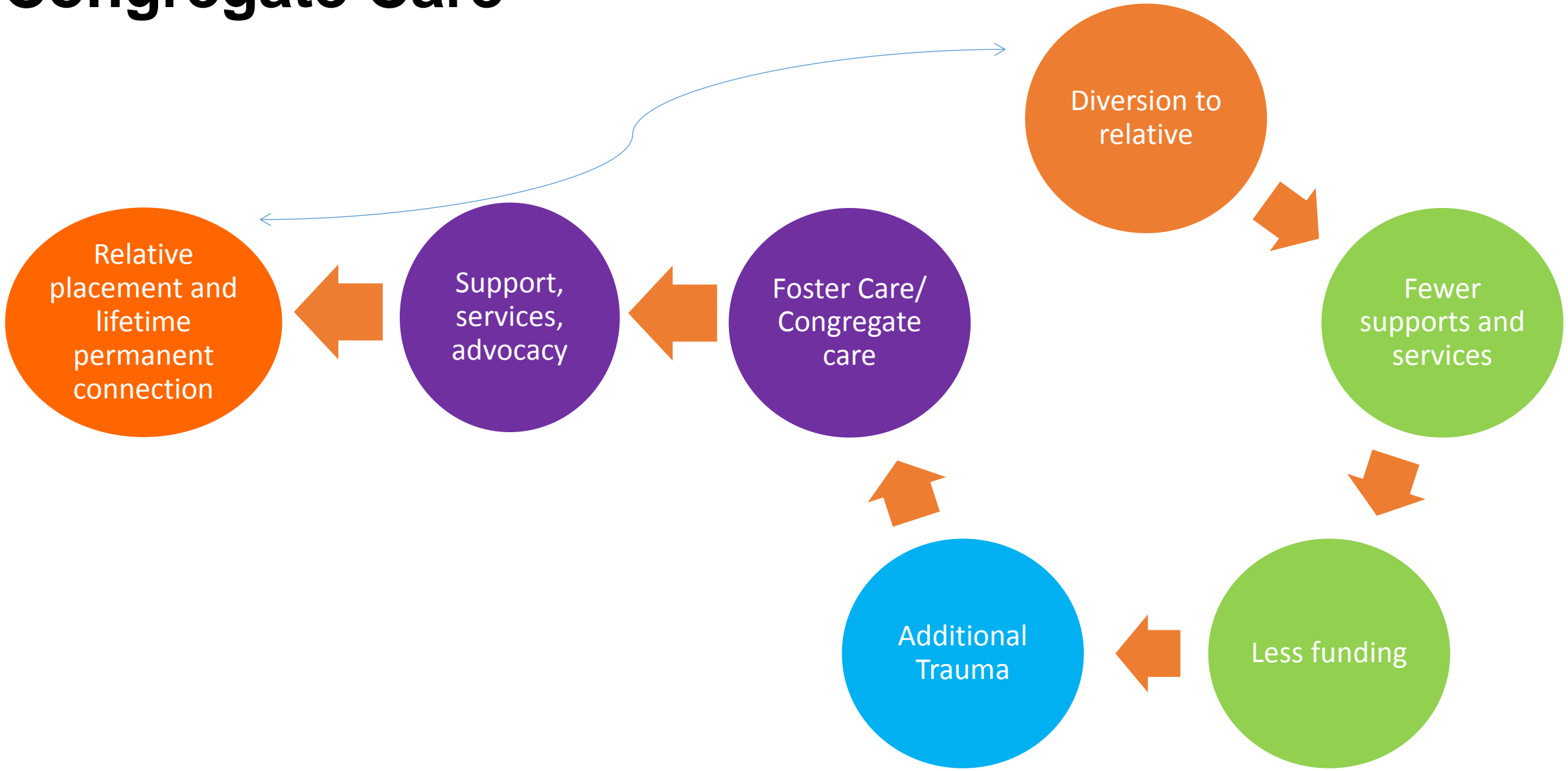


- Due to being pushed into guardianship from the beginning, Linda was ineligible for KinGAP.
- Only funding available was TANF (or CalWORKs)
- Additionally, one of her granddaughters had special needs which would have entitled her to SCI, if Linda had qualified for AFDC-FC or KinGAP.



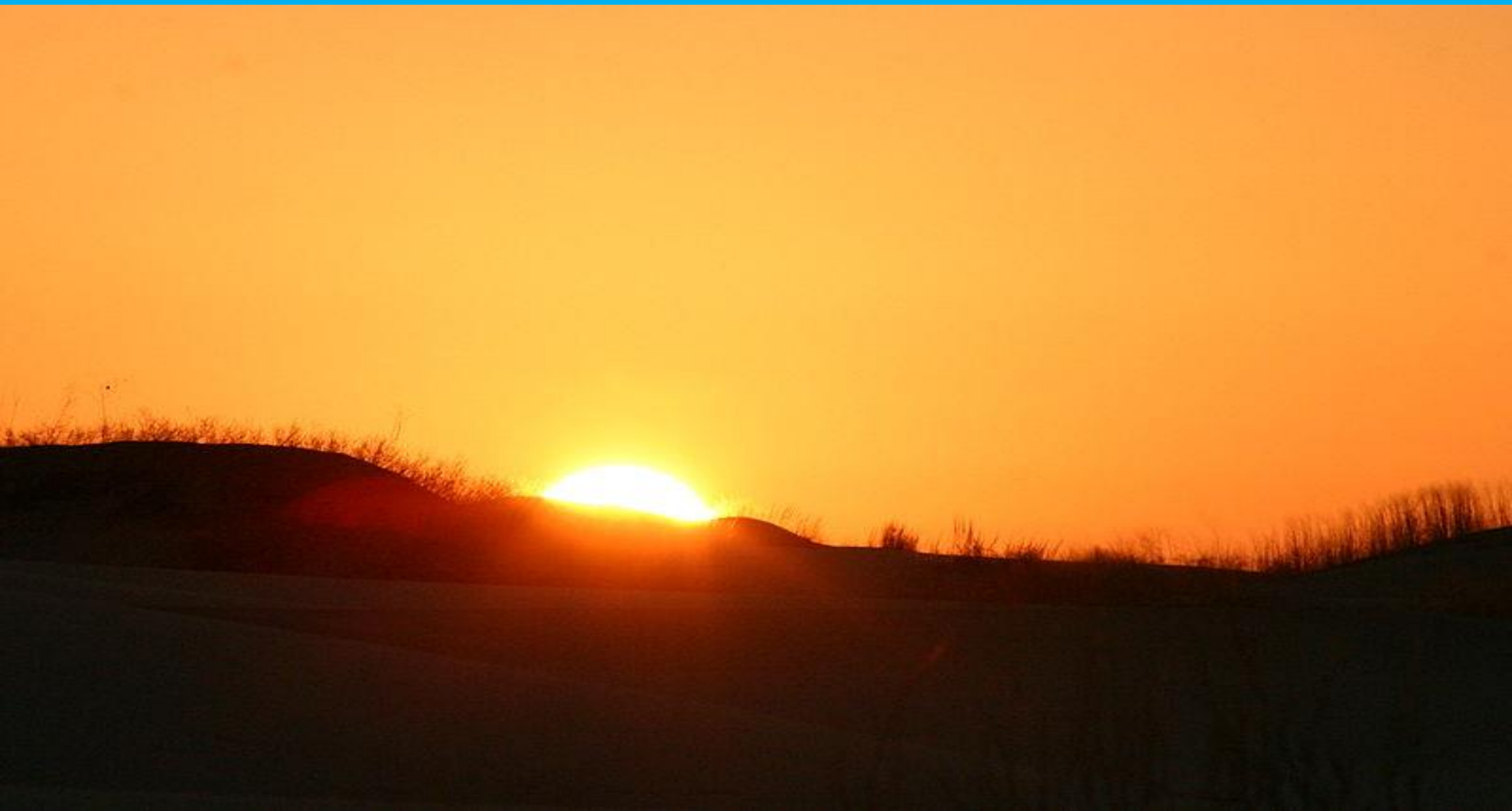


# Congregate Care



# Reflections and Recommendations







# Cherie's Story

# How it began

- Oldest son, Justin, had suffered physical injuries that led to dependence on pain medication.
- Him and his partner were expecting their first child.
- She had an history of alcoholism that continued while pregnant with the baby, Jasmine.



# The Call



“Kin, unlike non-kin foster parents, usually receive little if any advanced preparation in assuming their roles as caregivers. They may not have time to prepare mentally for their new roles and may not have adequate space, furniture (for example, a crib), or other child-related necessities (for example, toys or a car seat). Because most kinship caregivers are grandparents, they may not have had parenting duties for some time and may be apprehensive about raising a child at this stage in their lives.”

# Getting Ready for Jasmine

- Had to spend the next day flying around getting necessary supplies
- Drained the minuet savings that I had saved.
- Was not told Jasmine may need special care.
- I was just handed a card by DCFS worker and left on my own.



# Kin historically get less services

Service	Non-Kin	Kin
Respite Care	23%	16%
Support Group	40%	9%
Training	76%	13%
Specialized Training	71%	17%
Child Care	Less than 10%	Less than 10%
Mental Health Services	48%	28%
SW Contact within last month	81%	73%
<i>Average # of Services on 0 to 6 Scale</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>0.53</i>



# Caring for a Baby with Special Needs

- Jasmine suffered heart failure and temporarily died in the hospital.
- Still could not get the funding and services I needed.
- Was spending money out of pocket for parking at hospital and over 1,000 dollars a month on the necessary medications alone.



# Help at last

**ALLIANCE**  
*for* **CHILDREN'S**  
**RIGHTS**



# Reflections and Recommendations





## Marcy's Story

# Our Family

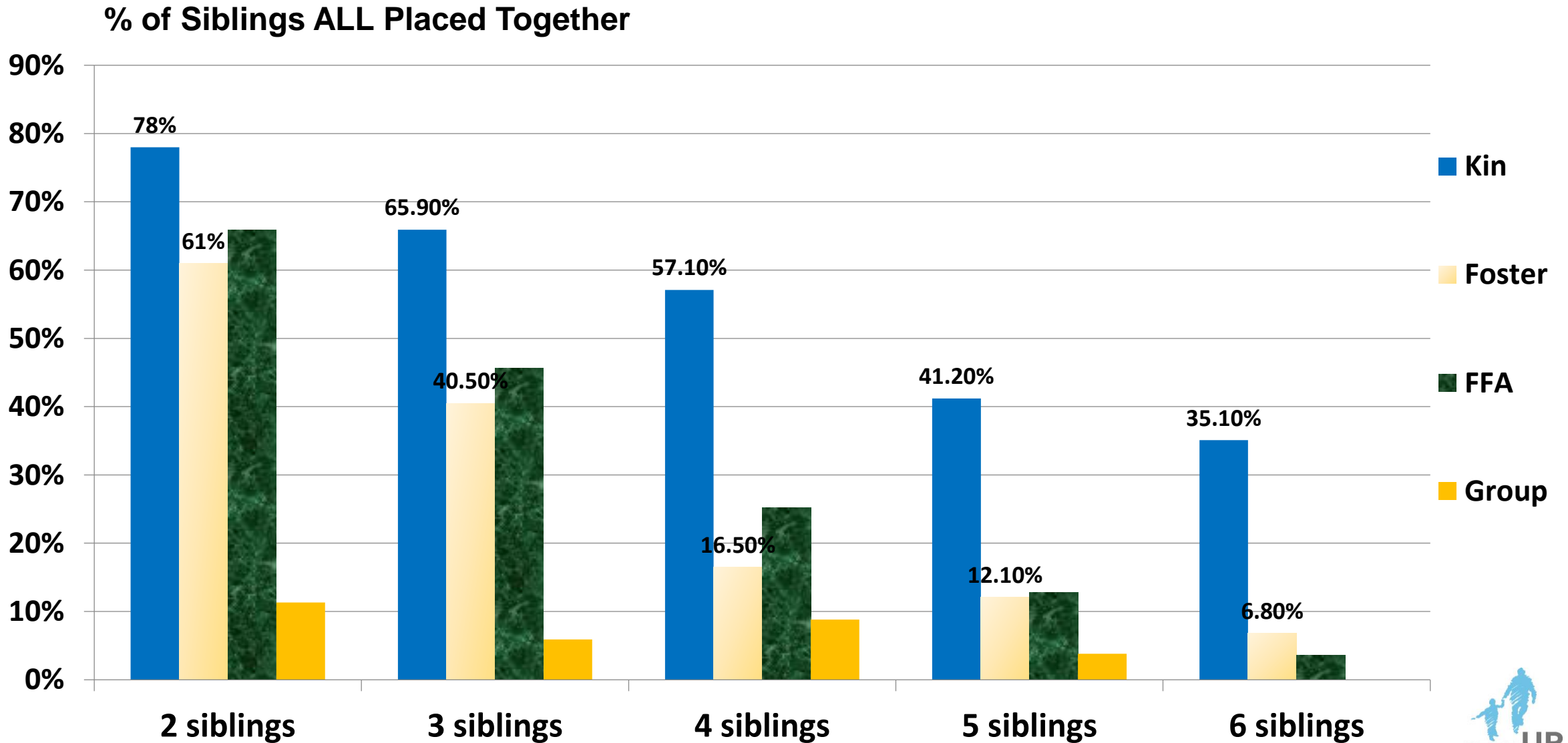
- My three younger siblings, like myself, had been in and out of foster care for most of their lives.
- In August of 2012, they reentered foster care for the 4<sup>th</sup> time. This time they were placed with my older sister.
- Unfortunately my sister was unable to care for them all and they were eventually split up into different foster homes.



# Stepping Up



# Kin Placements Keep Sibling Groups Together



# Need for Funding, Supports and Services





# Staying Connected





# Moral of the Story



**never  
never  
never  
give up**



# Mary Lee's Story

# Finding my Granddaughter



# Search for services and funding

- Kinship caregivers are “substantially less likely than foster caregivers to receive financial support, parent training, peer support groups, and respite care”
  - Less than 12% receive TANF (even though nearly 100% are eligible)
  - Only 42% receive SNAP benefits
  - Only 42% receive Medicaid (nearly 100% are eligible)
  - Only 17% of low-income working kinship families receive child care assistance
  - Only 15% of low-income kinship families receive housing assistance

# To adopt or not to adopt?

CUSTOMARY CARE  
 LEGAL CUSTODY KINSHIP CARE  
 RETURN TO FAMILY CARE ADOPTION  
 RETURN TO FAMILY CARE  
 KINSHIP CARE ADOPTION  
 CUSTOMARY CARE  
 LEGAL CUSTODY KINSHIP CARE  
 RETURN TO FAMILY ADOPTION



*There are many paths to lifelong connections.*

# My Second Granddaughter








# Early Intervention Services



A photograph of a dirt road leading towards a sunset over a field. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The road is in the foreground, leading the eye towards the horizon. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, hand-drawn font.

TAKE A DEEP BREATH.

START AGAIN.

# Reflection and Recommendations





# Bob's Story

# Stepping Up to Protect My Niece

"I had assumed I had completed my job with the 911 call!"





# No Financial Support



Federal eligibility?

ASFA

CalWORKs application



ARC?

Linkage

1996 Lookback?



Non-Needy Relative Grant?



# Guardianship



# Case Closed



# Reflections and Recommendations





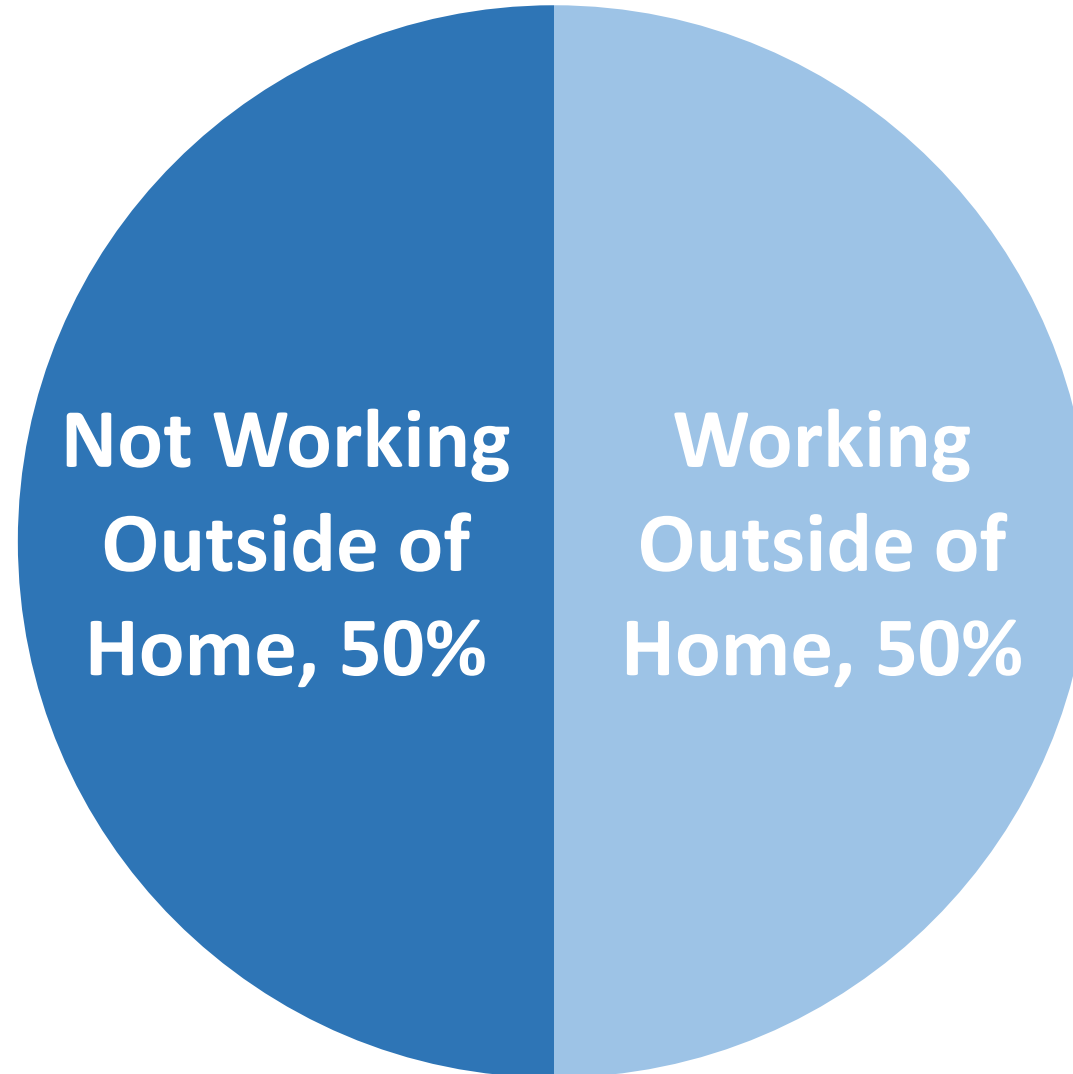


# Lydia's Story

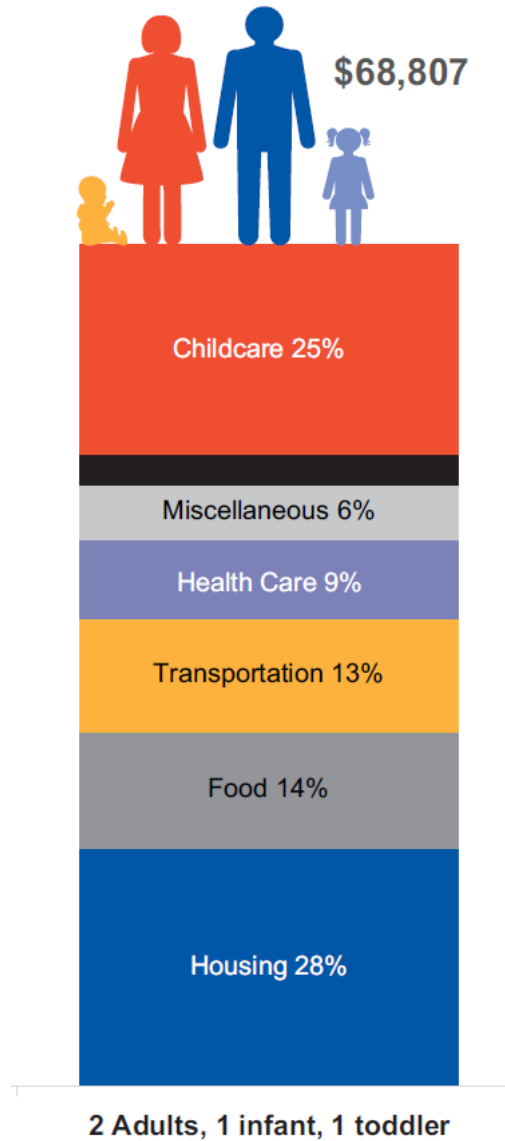
# My Family



# The Myth of the Stay-at-Home Foster Parent



# High Cost of Child Care





# The Child Care Timing Gap

Foster parents experience a “Timing Gap” between the moment a child is placed with them and the moment—often months later—that they are able to access subsidized child care. This is a major barrier to finding foster homes, especially for very young children.



# Budget Proposal: Child Care Bridge Program



## Emergency Child Care Voucher

- Provided immediately upon placement
- For up to 6 months
- For children 0 through 3
- \$22M



## Child Care Navigator

- Facilitate use of the emergency voucher
- Work with the family to transition or stabilize the child in a long-term, high quality, licensed child development setting
- Administered by Resource & Referral Agencies
- \$4M



## Training in Trauma-Informed Care

- Support and training in the area of trauma-informed care for child care providers
- \$5M

Clothing, diapers, school supplies

Social Worker

Court

Getting CW Certification for Child Care

Going to R&R

Getting on child care waitlist #2



Counseling

Background Check

Emergency Home Approval

Getting on child care waitlist #1

Medical Appointments

School Enrollment

Visitation

Training

Transportation School/Visits

psycho-social

Risk Assessment

Resource Family Approval

Work School

Getting on waitlist for APP

Getting on child care waitlist #3

# Foster Care Payments Don't Cover Child Care

Foster care payments are not income. They cover the costs of

- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter
- Daily Supervision
- School Supplies
- Child's Personal Incidentals
- Liability insurance with respect to the child
- Reasonable travel to the child's home for visitation
- Reasonable travel for the child to remain in his or her school of origin

