

Alliance for Children's Rights 2022 Policy Priorities

To more effectively achieve our mission of stability, equity, and justice for all young people across the state, the Alliance identifies systemic issues and barriers that impact our clients, and advocates for broad solutions and improvements through ground-breaking child welfare policy reform.

A bold leader in the field, the Alliance has sponsored and co-sponsored bills that have positively impacted foster care throughout California, including:

- AB 12, extending foster care to age 21,
- AB 260, ensuring that probate courts and dependency courts work together in concert and protect the due process interests of parents and children and support information sharing to help inform decision making, and
- SB 354, removing barriers and creating more opportunities in the foster care system for children to be housed with relative and non-relative extended family member caregivers regardless of a prior criminal conviction, provided that the conviction does not endanger the child.

Current Policy Campaigns

Every year, the Alliance works with partners and policymakers to identify important opportunities to reform and improve foster care and child welfare.

Our current campaigns include:

- **Creating a child-centered, family-focused child welfare system for children who cannot remain safely in the home of a parent**
 - **Supportive Relative Placements**
 - **Expanding Emergency Child Care Bridge Funding Budget Request:** provides additional childcare capacity, trauma-informed training and navigator services. (Championed by Assemblymember Stone)
 - **Addressing Hidden Foster Care**
 - **AB 2309 (Friedman): Access to Guardianships in Juvenile Court Cases:** addresses families' and advocates reported challenges with the WIC Section 360(a) guardianship process to promote family decision making.
 - **Kin-GAP Program Expansion Budget Request:** ensures that all children who receive relative guardianships through juvenile court are supported through Kin-GAP funding. (Championed by Assemblymember Stone)
 - **Removing Systems Barriers**
 - **SB 1071 (Umberg): Clarifying Access to Juvenile Court Records:** clarifies that attorneys and judges participating in a Department of Social Services administrative hearing involving a minor in foster care may have access to the juvenile case file for purposes of that

confidential hearing, and establish timelines by which counties must make pertinent records available.

- **AB 1686 (Bryan): Reducing Barriers to Family Reunification:** increases the likelihood that children, especially children from very low income families, will be reunified with their parents from foster care by requiring counties to presume that the costs parents are required to pay are likely to pose barriers to family reunification.
- **Ensuring educational success for foster youth by increasing educational stability and opportunities for academic achievement**
 - **Expanding Educational Access Rights**
 - **SB 532 (Caballero): Expanding Access to Diplomas for Highly Mobile Students:** expanding and strengthening the rights for youth in foster care, youth experiencing homelessness, former juvenile court school students, children of military families, and migratory children.
- **Ensuring that all transition age youth who elect to participate in Extended Foster Care or are aging out of foster care are appropriately and safely housed and have access to appropriate supports and services**
 - **Ensuring Stable and Supported Transitions Out of Foster Care**
 - **SB 1300 (Durazo): Securing SSI Supports for Youth with Disabilities in Extended Foster Care:** ensures that counties link youth with disabilities in and exiting Extended Foster Care with federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) supports.
 - **AB 2189 (Friedman): Supporting Youth in Extended Foster:** expands eligibility for the expectant parent benefit to include minors and nonminor dependents (NMDs) who are transitioning between placements and prevents courts from exiting NMDs from Extended Foster Care if certain transitional independent living plan resources and services have not been provided to the NMD including housing transition planning.
 - **Creating TAY Housing Capacity**
 - **SB 234 (Wiener): The SUPPORT Act (Supporting Underserved Young People for Positive Resets and Transitions):** creates a forgivable loan program of \$100 million to be used to create new housing, or acquire existing housing, for youth between ages 16 and 26, who are currently or formerly in foster care, experiencing homelessness, or under probation supervision.