

POLICY WEBINAR | MARCH 2021

# Child Welfare Advocate Proposals

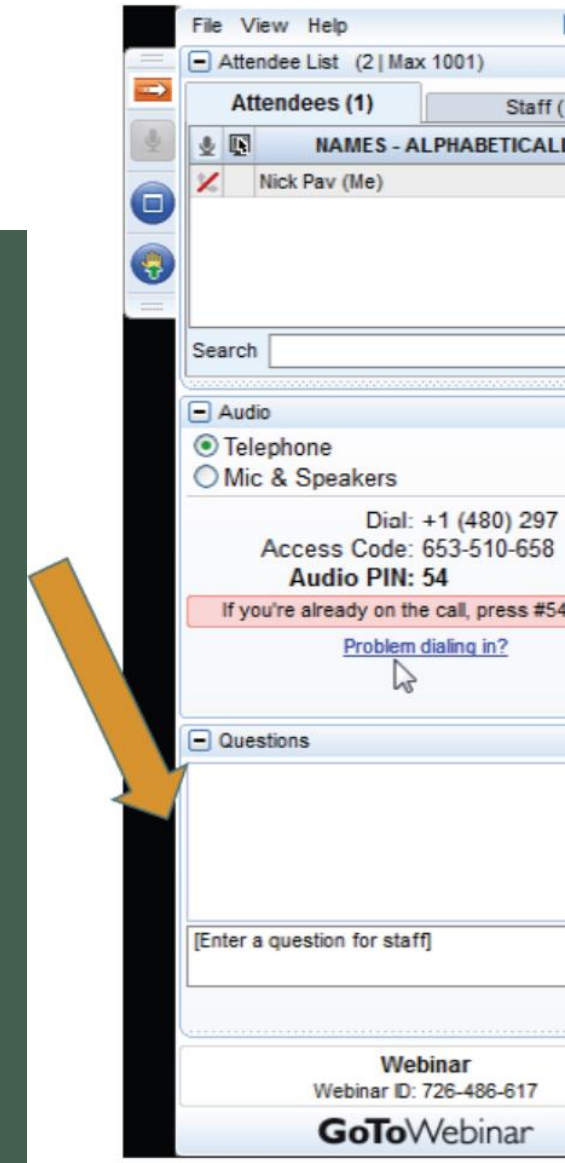
2021 California Child Welfare  
Bills and Budget Requests

ALLIANCE  
*for* CHILDREN'S  
RIGHTS



# LOGISTICS

- Webinar resources, including recording and supplemental materials, will be posted at <https://allianceforchildrensrights.org/resources/>
- All attendees are muted during webinar.
- Please submit questions using the “Questions” function on your GotoWebinar dashboard.
- Email Ines Rosales at [irosales@alliancecr.org](mailto:irosales@alliancecr.org) if you experience technical difficulties.



# AGENDA

- *2021 Bill & Budget Proposals Supporting Children and Youth in Foster Care, Families and Caregivers*
  - *Placement Stability & Supporting Families*
  - *Housing Stability*
  - *Education Stability*
  - *Youth Voice*
- *Q & A*

# PRESENTERS

## *Susanna Kniffen*

Senior Director, Child Welfare Policy  
Children Now

## *Julie McCormick*

Policy & Training Director  
Children's Law Center of California

## *Diana Boyer*

Director of Policy, CWS & Older Adult Services  
County Welfare Directors Association of California

## *Amy Lemley*

Executive Director  
John Burton Advocates for Youth

## *Kim Lewis*

Advocate  
Lewis Advocacy for California Coalition for Youth

## *Jessica Maxwell*

Deputy Director, FosterEd  
National Center for Youth Law

## *Kristin Power*

Vice President, Policy & Advocacy  
Alliance for Children's Rights

# FY 21-22 GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

- COVID-19 Related Supports for Child Welfare Services - \$61 million
- FFPSA Implementation - \$61.1 million (\$42.7 million General Fund)
- Delay Suspension of Various Children's Issues - \$54.5 million
- Youth Returning from Out of State - \$5.2 million

A stack of four smooth, light-colored stones is positioned in the upper right corner of the image. Below the stones, a dark, textured surface, possibly sand or gravel, is visible. A horizontal band with a dark green background and white text is centered across the image. The text reads "PLACEMENT STABILITY".

# PLACEMENT STABILITY

# EMERGENCY CHILD CARE BRIDGE EXPANSION

Budget proposal includes:

- \$28 million to expand the amount of funding available to counties to be able to provide **additional vouchers** to children in care,
- \$5 million to support **additional navigators** who are working to find child care for foster children, and,
- \$4 million to deliver **additional trauma-informed training for child care providers** as they care for foster children in their local early childhood programs.





Providing a \$100/month stipend per child for calendar year 2021.



In addition to the \$100/month stipend for all foster children, an additional \$100/month for all K-12 foster students.

## PANDEMIC STIPEND



# AB 656 (CARRILLO) – BLIND REMOVAL PILOT

- requires CDSS to establish a pilot project to address racial disparities in the child welfare system, and
- requires pilot programs that receive funding to utilize a blind removal strategy when deciding whether a child should be removed from their parents' home.



## AB 670 (CALDERON) - STRENGTHENING THE FAMILIES OF YOUNG PARENTS IN FOSTER CARE

- strengthens families and disrupts intergenerational involvement in the child welfare system by providing important protections for parenting foster youth.



SB 354  
(SKINNER) –  
RELATIVE  
PLACEMENT

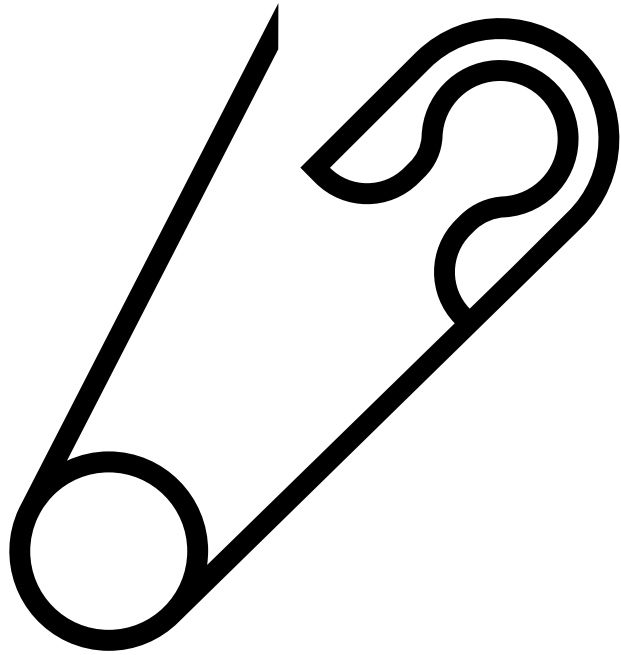
- Addresses California's shortage of foster care homes by reforming state regulations to make it easier to place children with family relatives.



## AB 829 (LEVINE) – ACCESS TO IMMIGRATION COUNSEL FOR YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

improves access to legal immigration services for  
undocumented children in foster care.

# AB 366 (RUBIO) – HEALTHY FUTURES FOR FOSTER YOUTH



AB 366 improves upon existing law by:

- **extending the infant supplement three months prior to the expected delivery date of the child;**
- requiring county social workers to include already required information in reports to the juvenile courts; and
- requiring CDSS, in collaboration with DHCS, and DPH, to report health outcome and performance data on implementation of youths sexual and reproductive health education, rights, and barriers to care.

# AB 549 (GIPSON) – SUPPORTING VULNERABLE MINORS IN EXTRAORDINARY TIMES

- narrow and temporary solution to ensure youth are able to appropriately access the supports and services available in foster care when deemed in their best interest

A black and white photograph of a group of people jumping joyfully in a grassy field. The scene is captured from a low angle, showing the people in mid-air with their arms raised. The background features a bright sky and a distant horizon line. A semi-transparent dark blue horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'SUPPORTING FAMILIES' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

# SUPPORTING FAMILIES

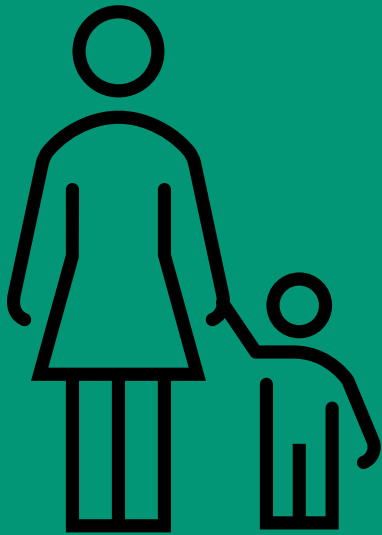
# BUDGET PROPOSAL - STRENGTHENING FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

## Funding Prevention Through Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) - \$50 million 1<sup>st</sup> year and \$100 million on-going:

- ✓ ***Local, Community-Driven Programming:*** \$45 million SGF in FY 2021-22 and \$90 million SGF ongoing for counties to invest in front-end services and supports to safely prevent entries into foster care and improve family well-being for families who come to the attention of the child welfare system
- ✓ ***State Infrastructure:*** \$4 million SGF for state-level operations necessary to meet federal requirements.
- ✓ ***Training:*** \$1 million SGF to build-up skills and knowledge of service providers to deliver evidence-based prevention services.



# CalWORKs CASH ASSISTANCE FOR PARENTS IN FAMILY REUNIFICATION



State Budget Proposal \$9.0 million SGF:

- Would **continue cash benefits to parents who are working to reunify** when their children are placed into foster care, for a period of 6 months (which can be extended).
- SB 1341 (Hurtado) in 2020 passed the Legislature unanimously but was vetoed by the Governor due to lack of funding in the State Budget.
- Parents in reunification currently have access to continued CalWORKs services such as employment services, mental health, substance use, etc. but lose their cash assistance. This puts them at substantial risk of losing their housing and can be destabilizing to their effort to reunify.

# AB 260 (STONE) – LIMITING HIDDEN FOSTER CARE & BETTER SUPPORTING DEPENDENCY GUARDIANSHIPS

AB 260 will ensure that probate courts and dependency courts work together in concert and protect the due process interests of parents and children by:

- Clarifying that the probate court's granting of a temporary guardianship is not a bar to the dependency court taking jurisdiction of the case, and
- Ensuring that juvenile court judges review decisions by the child welfare agency not to file a petition with the juvenile court after a case is referred by a probate judge for a child welfare investigation;
- Ensuring that all children who receive guardianships through juvenile court are supported through Kin-GAP funding.

*Research reveals that many children are being diverted to care by a relative at the urging of a child welfare worker who fails to file a petition with the dependency court or follow state-sanctioned voluntary placement procedures. Instead, the child welfare worker identifies and instructs a relative to secure a guardianship through probate court.*

An aerial photograph of a city skyline at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with a few clouds. A dark green horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "HOUSING STABILITY" in white, uppercase, sans-serif font. Below the band, the city buildings are visible, with some illuminated by the setting sun. The overall scene is a dense urban environment.

# HOUSING STABILITY



## AB 413 (TING) – PREVENTING & REDUCING FOSTER YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

- \$5 million annually for the Housing Navigators Program;
- \$8 million annually for the Transitional Housing Program;
- establish a housing supplement for the THP-Plus program in counties with the highest rental costs.

# SB 234 (WIENER) – THE SUPPORT ACT

Bill and budget request establishes:

- \$100 million forgivable loan program to be used to **create new housing for youth under the age of 26**, who are currently or formerly in foster care, experiencing homelessness and under probation supervision.



## AB 592 (FRIEDMAN) – PROMOTING STABLE & POSITIVE HOUSING IN EFC

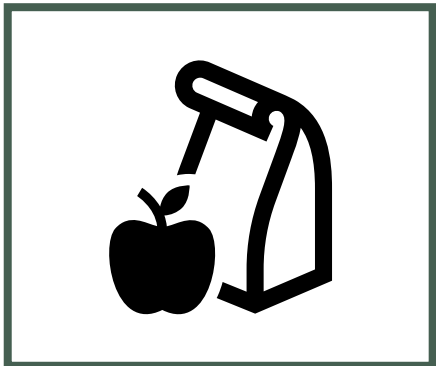
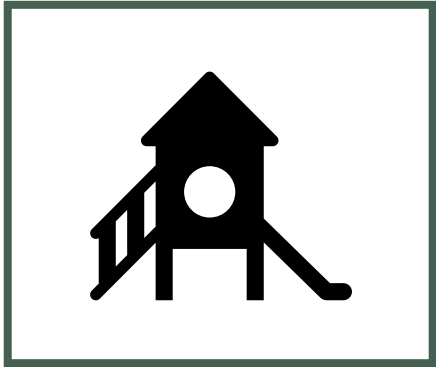
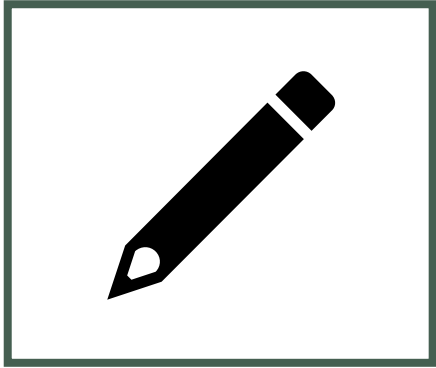
*Promotes placement stability and a positive, supported transition to independence for youth in EFC by:*

- restructuring host family transitional housing model to allow families already licensed as a resource family to be eligible to serve as a host family and to divide the THP payment between caregiver, non minor dependent and provider, and
- providing targeted safe and appropriate housing and supports to young adults who need additional supportive services, including youth of color and who identify as LGBTQ.





# EDUCATION STABILITY



## AB 740 (MCCARTY) – SUSPENSION & EXPULSION

- Requires that the minor's attorney and the appropriate representative of the county child welfare agency have the same rights as a parent or guardian of a child has to receive suspension and expulsion documents and related information, and to attend suspension and expulsion meetings and conferences.



# SB 228 (LEYVA) – IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

SB 228 promotes community college enrollment by:

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modifying eligibility to enable students who were in foster care **after age 13** to participate,

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**creating flexibility around income requirements** for students transitioning from full-time employment to school,

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**specifying that existing funds can be used** to provide support to enrolled students as they are matriculating,

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**and clarifying that programs should create streamlined systems for application and entry.**

# SB 532 (CABALLERO) – HIGHLY MOBILE STUDENTS

- Clarifies the education code to require LEA's to inform students in foster care or those experiencing homelessness of their right to remain in their school of origin if they opt into a 5<sup>th</sup> year
- Allows highly mobile students to opt into a 5<sup>th</sup> year to complete either the LEA coursework requirements or be exempted and complete only the statewide coursework requirements for a diploma
- Allows unaccompanied minors to act as their own educational decision maker for these exemptions
- Requires LEA's to reevaluate students for eligibility of the exemption, if they were previously not eligible
- Requires LEA to report annually the number of students that graduate with an exemption from LEA coursework requirements
- Extends exemption to students that are enrolled in an Adult Education program, if they were eligible while in high school, and regardless of their age



# PROMOTING YOUTH VOICE

The commission's mission is to empower underrepresented youth with formal opportunities to engage in California's civic process.



## AB 46 (RIVAS, L.) – CALIFORNIA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT ACT

- Establishes a 25-person commission in the state government of youth ages 14-25
  - at least half of the commission members have experienced homelessness, foster care, disabilities, or juvenile incarceration.

# FAMILY URGENT RESPONSE SYSTEM




**24/7 SUPPORT**

Are you a current or former foster youth? Having problems at home? Frustrated? Need someone to talk to? The 24/7 FURS hotline is here to help.

**CALL OR TEXT: 1-833-939-FURS | 1-833-939-3877**

Family Urgent Response System (FURS) is a free 24/7/365 hotline for current or former foster youth and your caregivers to call and get **immediate** help for any big or small issues you may be having.

- You will be connected to a trained counselor or peer who will listen to you.
- FURS is a **safe, judgement-free, and private** space to talk about your worries and vent.
- If you want more support, a team can come directly to where you are to help you work on the problem and to create a plan to help stabilize your situation and keep you safe.
- The team will follow-up by helping connect you and your caregiver to local services and support.





**CHECK OUT: CAL-FURS.ORG**





[www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/foster-care/furs](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/foster-care/furs)





Are you a caregiver of a current or former foster youth? Are you feeling frustrated? Would you like additional support?

**Family Urgent Response System**


The Family Urgent Response System (FURS) includes a statewide hotline as well as local mobile response teams to provide immediate trauma-informed support to current and former foster youth and their caregivers.

Local mobile response teams are comprised of compassionate, trained professionals who are available to provide face-to-face support during critical moments.

Both the statewide hotline and local mobile response teams are available 24/7/365.

**FURS Support is Always Available**


- 24/7 hotline support via phone, text, and chat.
- Local mobile response support with COVID-19 precautions in place.
- Personalized support and stabilization at the hotline and local level.
- Relevant aftercare support and follow-up.



FURS Provides Support When Needed Most

Call or Text:  
1-833-939-FURS

Online:  
CAL-FURS.ORG



[www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/foster-care/furs](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/foster-care/furs)

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FURS

# RESOURCES

- Governor's Budget - <http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/budget/2021-22/#/BudgetDetail>
- LAO Analysis of Child Welfare Proposals - <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2021/4364/Analysis-Child-Welfare-Proposals-021121.pdf>
- Alliance for Children's Rights - <https://allianceforchildrensrights.org/policy/>
- Children's Law Center of California - [Legislation and Policy | Children's Law Center of California \(clccal.org\)](#)
- National Center for Youth Law - <https://youthlaw.org/case/expanding-access-to-diplomas-for-highly-mobile-students-2021/>

# THANK YOU

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



**Children**  
**Now**



**CWDA**

Advancing Human Services  
for the Welfare of *All* Californians



**Children's Law Center**  
**of California**  
*Excellence In Advocacy*



**JOHN**  
**BURTON**  
Advocates for Youth

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**N C Y L**