

HOW WILL CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM (CCR) AFFECT EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR FOSTER YOUTH?

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CFYETF Summit, April 18-19, 2017

Myth Busting

All group homes are closing!

All kids have to be out of group homes by January 1st!

Many relatives will not be able to meet new approval standards!

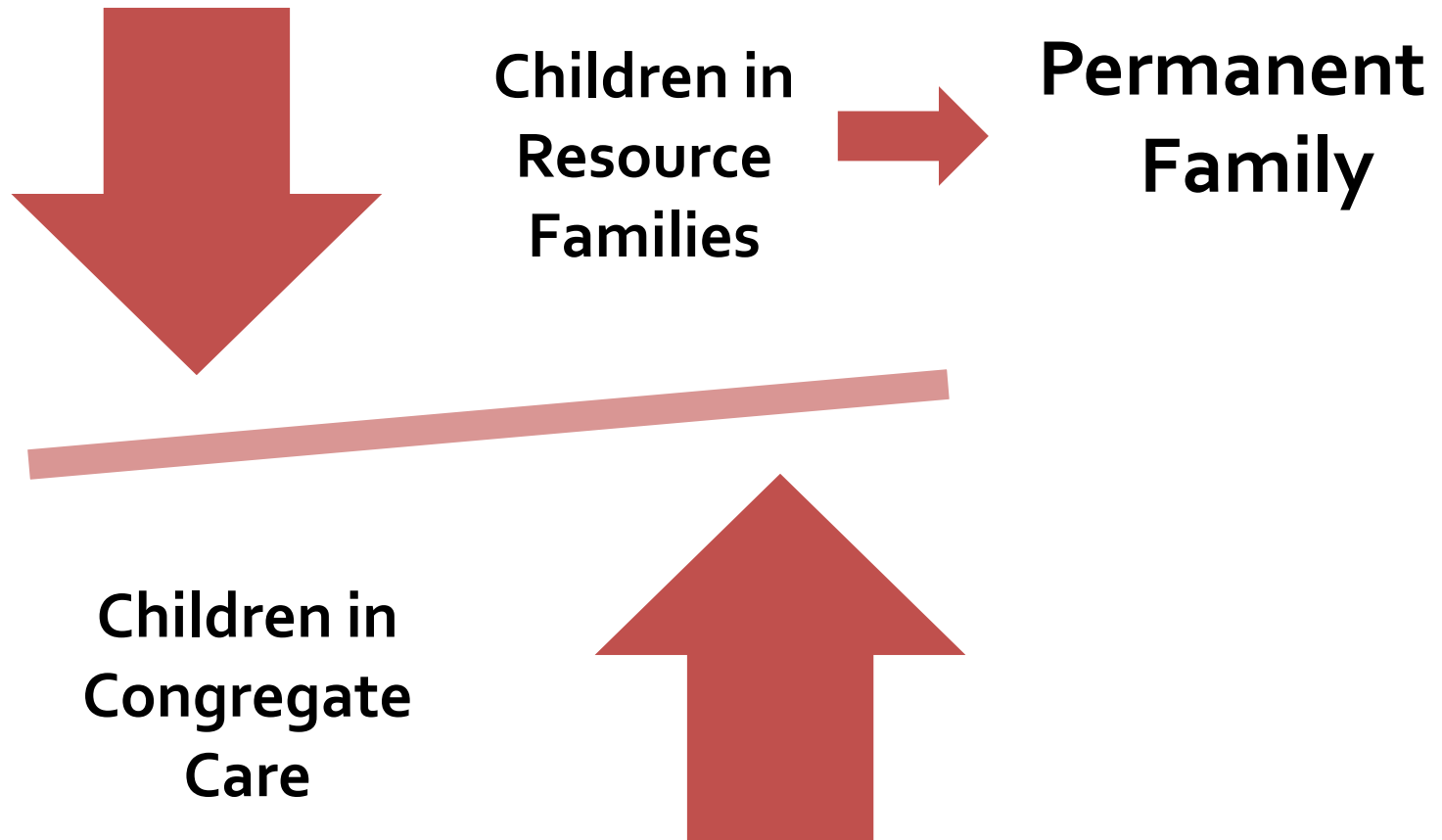
Congregate care placement is strictly capped at 6 months!



There will be no longer be emergency placements with relatives!

Nothing will actually change!

CCR: THE GOAL



CCR LEGISLATION

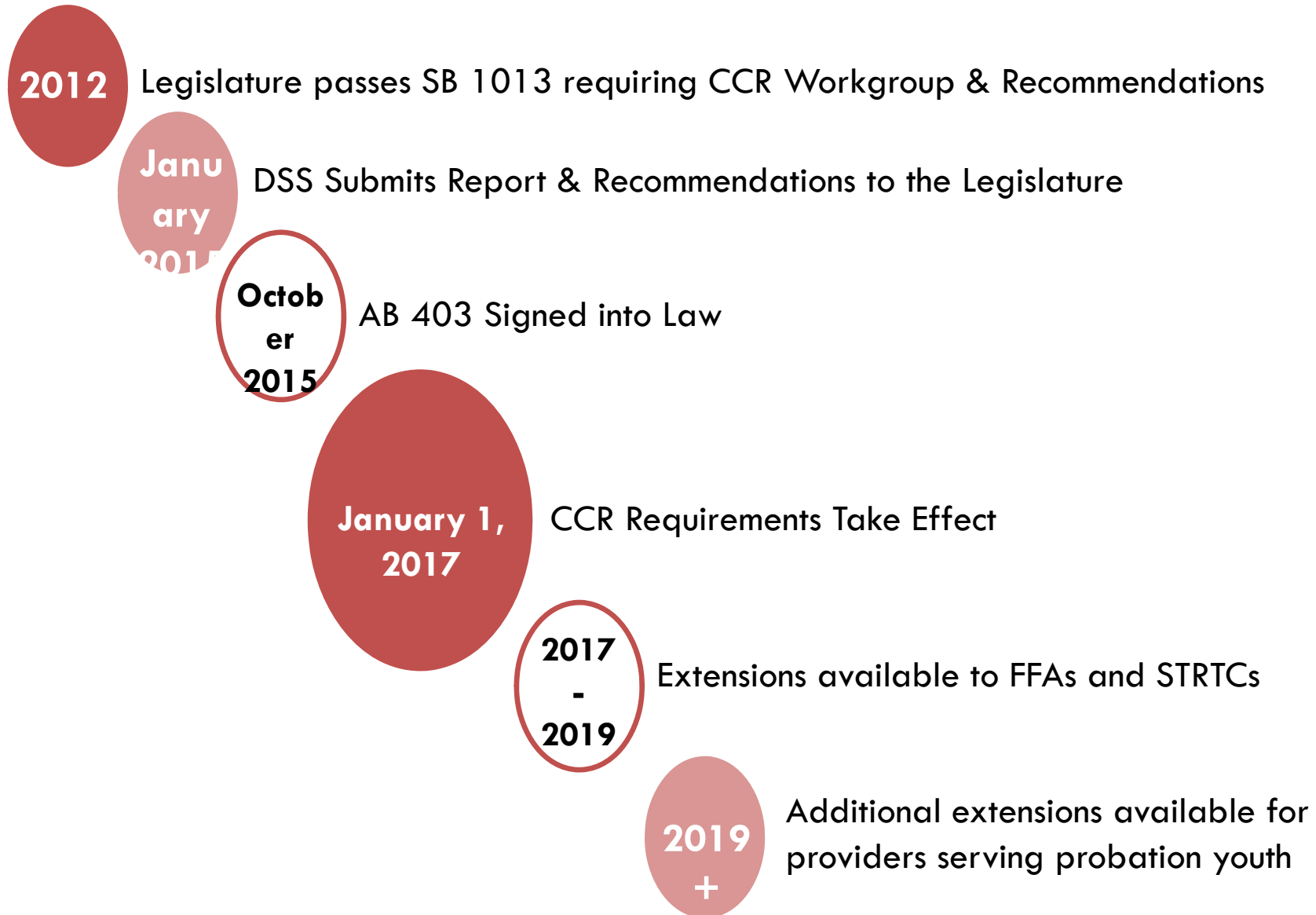
AB 403 (2015) & AB 1997 (2016)



GOALS:

- ❑ Comprehensive child assessments
- ❑ Increased use of, and supports for, home-based family care
- ❑ Reduced use of congregate care
- ❑ Core services available regardless of placement setting – child should not have to move to get services
- ❑ Faster paths to permanency

CCR ROLLOUT



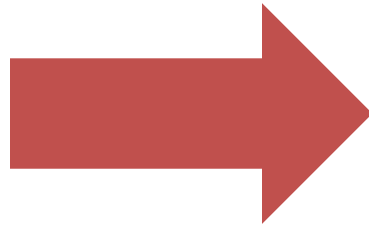


STRTPs

CCR: THE PARDIGM SHIFT



**Discontinue
Group Homes**



**Short-Term
Residential
Therapeutic
Placements
(STRTP)**

Children who cannot be safely placed in a family can receive short-term residential care with intensive therapeutic interventions that support transition to a family.

STRTPs & REDUCING CONGREGATE CARE



- STRTPs **only used** when child needs intensive 24-hr care for therapeutic or safety reasons that cannot be provided in a family setting.
- STRTPs must start **planning for transition to a home setting** at time of intake.
- STRTPs must provide “**core services**” to help transition.
- Providers must have capacity to **approve resource families** and to **continue supportive services** after children move to family setting (either directly, or through relationships with other providers).
- New **safeguards** to enforce limitations.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- **New group homes...**beginning 01/01/17, no new group home rate may be established
 - Exception: If there is a “material” risk to welfare of children due to inadequate supply of alternative placement options to meet children's needs

- **Current group homes...**
 - Can receive an extension for up to two years (12/31/18) if county requests it from CDSS and there is a “material” risk as described above

 - Might be extended even after that if “significant risk”

INCREASING CAPACITY for HOME-BASED CARE

- Additional **funding for support, retention, recruitment and training** of resource families & relatives for placing agencies (\$17.2 million General Funds)
- Updated and expanded **training requirements** across provider and caregiver categories
- Use of **Child & Family Teams** for case planning
- Provision of **core services** by Foster Family Agencies & STRTPs
- Streamlined home-based family approval process (**Resource Family Approval**) and training requirements
- New caregiver **rates**



CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM (CFT)



- CFT includes child and family members, social worker/probation officer, and other people identified by the family, such as family, friends, neighbors, CASA, school personnel, coaches, clergy, mental health staff, etc.
- The CFT's role is to develop a child and family-centered case plan and make recommendations about placement, services and supports needed to achieve permanency and to enable youth to be in the least restrictive, most family-like setting and to have normal childhood experiences

WIC § 706.6 & 16501.1

CORE SERVICES



FFAs and STRTCs must provide core services, including:

- ▣ Mental health services (specialty and non-specialty)
- ▣ Transitional support services for placement changes, permanency, aftercare
- ▣ Education, physical, behavioral and mental health supports
- ▣ Activities to support youth achieving a successful adulthood
- ▣ Services to achieve permanency & maintain/establish family connections

WIC § 11463

RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL (RFA)

- **One standard** – relatives and recruited families treated the same
- **One process** – approved for any child in foster care, approved in any county, and approved for guardianships & adoptions
- **Comprehensive assessment** required, includes:
 - Home Environment Assessment
 - Permanency Assessment
- Pre- and post-approval **training** required for all families
- Procedures for **expedited placements**





EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF CCR

LESSONS FROM RBS PILOT PROGRAM

- ❑ Residentially Based Services was pilot program in 4 counties – similar to STRTP model.
- ❑ Statewide RBS evaluation results showed that RBS programs had positive outcomes in many domains – but **not** educational progress.
- ❑ Important not to repeat this mistake as group homes convert to STRTPs!



STRTPs AND SCHOOL OF ORIGIN RIGHTS

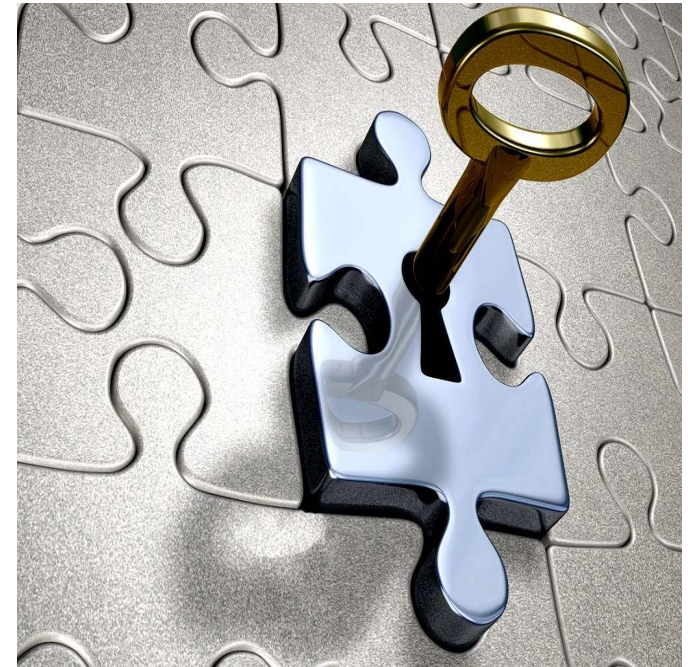


Time-limited STRTPs - will youth change schools when they enter STRTP and again when they 'step down' to a family placement?? The SOO dilemma:

- Attending SOO prevents disruption, but travel time, lack of contact between STRTP staff and distant school, and schedule conflicts may have negative impact.
- Attending local school makes coordination easier, but youth lose continuity and educational progress, and may have to change schools again when they leave the STRTP.

SCHOOL OF ORIGIN – BEST PRACTICES AND ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

- At each hearing, ensure youth have engaged and informed Education Rights Holders.
- If a youth moves, ensure that ERH makes decision whether to invoke or waive school of origin rights.
- Hold agencies, school districts, and placement providers to joint responsibility to work out transportation issues. (Every Student Succeeds Act)



STRTPs AND ENROLLMENT/ EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT RIGHTS

- ❑ Youth at STRTPs often have incomplete educational records – many transfers, attendance gaps
- ❑ Youth at STRTPs often have special education needs, but lack adequate/up-to-date IEP, or any IEP.

But ... they have a right to immediate enrollment in local school if not staying at School of Origin.



BEST PRACTICES/ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

- ▣ Ensure early and ongoing education assessments for all foster children
- ▣ Ensure agencies and school districts work with ERH to get special education assessments and IEPs promptly initiated and completed – even if youth change schools while assessment is pending!
- ▣ Hold agencies and placement providers accountable for any gaps in enrollment.



MENTAL HEALTH, TRAUMA, ATTENDANCE & DISCIPLINE

- ❑ Foster youths' mental health services are often not coordinated with school-based supports.
- ❑ Youth may need intensive support to avoid attendance problems, suspension, expulsion - especially when they change placements and/or schools.
- ❑ Attendance and discipline issues often indicate unaddressed trauma and/or learning disabilities



BEST PRACTICES/ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

- ❑ Coordinate school-based mental health supports with placement-based mental health services
- ❑ Ensure agency and placement provide intensive support when youth change schools mid-year – monitor attendance and behavior.
- ❑ Consider unaddressed special needs as possible cause of attendance, discipline problems – youth may need updated/ revised IEP.



ACADEMIC SUPPORT

- Foster youth in STRTPs may have intensive mental health and behavior issues – but they also need academic support to succeed in school:
 - ▣ Quiet space for homework, access to library and computer resources
 - ▣ Support and supervision -- tracking attendance, school assignments, homework completion, etc.
 - ▣ Literacy programs, tutoring, afterschool and summer enrichment, etc.
- Historically, group homes were not held accountable for educational progress.
- CCR requires performance and outcome measures for STRTPs – which should include educational progress measures.

CONTACT INFORMATION



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RESOURCES

□ CA Department of Social Services CCR Home -
<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/ccr/>

□ CCR and Education Report:

http://www.publiccounsel.org/useful_materials?id=0159

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