

State Child Welfare Policies and Practices That Support Infants and Toddlers

**ZERO TO THREE & Child Trends Webinar
November 18, 2013**

Agenda

- Welcome
- Survey methodology
- Three main themes revealed by survey
- Survey findings and conversation with states
- Questions

Today's PowerPoint presentation
is available at:

www.zerotothree.org/policywebinars

The survey report and companion
briefs are available at:

www.zerotothree.org/cwsurvey

and

<http://www.childtrends.org/changing-the-course-for-infants-and-toddlers>

Survey Methodology and Themes



Elizabeth Jordan
Child Trends

Survey Development Process

Goal of the survey: to identify and share innovations in policy and practice, and highlight key challenges, gaps, and barriers that child welfare agencies across the country face in meeting the needs of very young children who have experienced maltreatment



Survey Topic Areas

1. Assessments and services for maltreated infants and toddlers and their families
2. Infants and toddlers in foster care and their families
3. Post-permanency services for infants and toddlers in foster care and their families
4. Training in early childhood development and developmentally-appropriate practice
5. Data collection and analyses
6. Additional initiatives targeting maltreated infants and toddlers and their families



Three Themes Revealed

Few states differentiate services or timelines for infants and toddlers versus older children.

- Policies requiring more frequent caseworker visits
- Policies requiring more frequent visitation with birth parents
- Policies requiring training on infant-toddler development for child welfare staff and other stakeholders

Three Themes Revealed

Relatively few states have implemented promising approaches to meeting the unique developmental needs of infants and toddlers.

- Policies prohibiting placement of young children in congregate care
- Policies requiring daily visitation between infants and toddlers and their birth parents

Three Themes Revealed

Child welfare agencies have a long way to go in aligning policies and practices to ensure that the unique needs of infants and toddlers are met.

- Screenings for all maltreated infants and toddlers – not just those in foster care
- More supports for birth parents to deal with their own trauma, improve interaction with their children, and support services post-reunification

Key Survey Findings and Conversation with State Presenters



Jamie Colvard
ZERO TO THREE



Rachel Thorburn
Hawaii Department of
Human Services



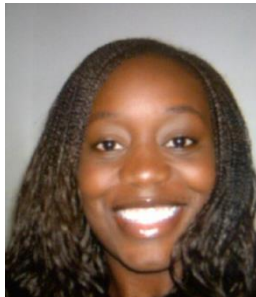
Melinda Cox
Colorado Department of
Human Services



Michelle Bogart
Washington Department of
Social and Health Services



Lorendia Schmidt
Colorado Department of
Human Services



Nelly Mbajah
Washington Department of
Social and Health Services

Assessments and Referral to Services for Maltreated Infants and Toddlers

- Few states have policies requiring adherence to screening or visit schedules for **ALL** maltreated infants and toddlers.

	Physical Health/ Immunizations	Dental Health	Mental/ Behavioral Health	Developmental Monitoring/ Screening
Only For Children in Foster Care	33	32	27	30
For All Maltreated Infants and Toddlers	12	10	8	14
Varies by county	0	0	4	0

- The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requires that states have procedures for screening and, if necessary, referring young children to Part C early intervention evaluation and services.



Assessments and Referral to Services for Maltreated Infants and Toddlers – Hawaii

- DOH Screening & Services at Birth (Healthy Start)
 - Screened for risk factors for child maltreatment
 - Families are offered free, in-home services (developmental screenings, hands-on parenting education, securing medical home, liaison to community resources)
- 0-3 Home-Visiting Program for all CWS families (Enhanced Healthy Start)
 - Similar to Healthy Start, but with enhanced services for CWS families (increased emphasis on safety, e.g. proper supervision and non-physical discipline)
- Differential response



Assessments and Referral to Services for Maltreated Infants and Toddlers – Washington

- All children who remain in out-of-home placement longer than 30 days receive a Child Health & Education Tracking (CHET) Screen.
- When a developmental concern is identified, a referral must be made within two working days to Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT).
- Concerns identified during the EPSDT are referred as appropriate. If needed, children may receive care coordination for their health, mental health, and dental care through the Fostering Well-Being program.

Supporting Maltreated Infants' and Toddlers' Social-Emotional Health

- Few states provide the social-emotional support services needed to address the trauma young children experience from maltreatment.





Supporting Maltreated Infants' and Toddlers' Social-Emotional Health – Colorado

IV-E Waiver demonstration project: Trauma-informed system of support

- Capacity-building: Increase training among child welfare staff and community partners on the effects of trauma
- Screening and referral: Complete age-appropriate screening on any child/youth receiving services and then refer all screened-in children/youth and their adult caretaker for assessment
- Assessment: Trauma-informed assessment completed by behavioral health organization or community mental health center
- Treatment: Trauma-focused, evidence-based treatment for both children and adults



Supporting Maltreated Infants' and Toddlers' Social-Emotional Health – Hawaii

Attachment Behavioral Catch-up Program –

An evidence-based, parent-child bonding promotion intervention

- Optional service within CWS' home visiting program
- Specially-trained practitioners
- 10-week curriculum, video-taped sessions
- Highly strengths-based
- Built-in clinical supervision
- Excellent outcomes:
 - Improved caregiver sensitivity to child
 - Improved caregiver involvement with child
 - Improved child attachment

Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Birth Parents

- Fewer than ½ of states have policies requiring that birth parents be offered services and supports to overcome their own:
 - trauma
 - mental health
 - substance abuse
 - domestic violence issues





Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Birth Parents – Washington

- A family assessment is initiated for all cases accepted for investigation. Information gathered during this process is used to develop a family driven and centered case plan.
- When available and appropriate, families are referred to state or community funded evidence-based practices and additional assessments.
- Social workers meet with parents on a monthly basis to review case plan and progress.



Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Birth Parents – Colorado

Core Services Program:

- Intensive family therapy
- Home-based intervention
- Mental health services
- Substance abuse services
- Life skills
- Sex abuse treatment
- Day treatment
- County-designed programs

Prevention:

- Core Services available to families without an open case
- Nurse Family Partnership – Home visitation model for first-time mothers
- SafeCare – Home visitation model for families with children age 0-5
- Community Response Program – Systematic method of following-up on screened-out referrals



Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Birth Parents – Hawaii

Women's Way –

A residential drug treatment program for women and their 0-3 children

- Comprehensive drug treatment program
- Incorporates parenting education
- Up to two 0-3 year old children can live in the residential center full-time with mom
- On-site nursery cares for child(ren) when mom is in class. When mom is not in class, she cares for her children full-time.

Frequency and Timing of Case Reviews and Hearings for Children in Foster Care

- Very few states routinely hold any proceeding on a more frequent or expedited basis for infants and toddlers in foster care compared to other age groups:
 - Case reviews – 4 states
 - Permanency hearings – 6 states
 - Court review hearings – 3 states





Frequency and Timing of Case Reviews and Hearings for Children in Foster Care – Hawaii

Keiki Placement Project –

Focused efforts to place young children with relatives

- Statewide weekly teleconferences to discuss every 0-3 child in foster care who was not placed with a relative
- Administrators from each geo-area, branch-level administrators, and staff from Family Findings and Family-Decision Making ('Ohana Conferencing) contracts participated
- Children were never removed from the list until they were placed with relatives or every option had been explored
- Incorporated successfully into daily practice

Permanency Planning for Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care

- Concurrent planning seeks to promote timely permanence for children in foster care by considering reunification and another permanency option at the earliest possible point after a child's entry into foster care.
- 40 states have policies requiring concurrent planning, but only 1/3 of those begin during the early stages of a case.





Permanency Planning for Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care – Colorado

- Expedited Permanency Planning (EPP) – Intensive concurrent planning practice aimed at reaching permanency within 12 months of initial placement for children under the age of 6 and sibling groups with at least one child under the age of 6
 - Hearings and reviews are held more frequently
 - Delays are not permissible unless a delay is determined to be in the best interest of the child
- Examples of EPP at work:
 - Family Integrated Treatment Courts
 - Best Practice Court Teams



Permanency Planning for Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care – Washington

- Permanency planning starts with the first contact the department makes with the family.
 - Family Team Decision Making meetings are held prior to placement or no later than 72 hours after placement. Relative search initiated at or before meeting.
 - A permanency planning goal must be identified within the first 60 days of a child’s original placement date. Concurrent planning continues until a permanency planning goal is achieved and the case is closed.
 - Permanency planning staffings are held within in the first 6 months of original placement date, prior to permanency planning hearing and every 12 months until permanency is achieved.

Visitation Between Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care and Their Birth Parents

- Daily or weekly face-to-face visitation with birth parents is usually not required.
 - 1 state requires daily visitation.
 - 12 additional states require visitation at least once a week.
- States lack clear policies related to services to improve the interaction between birth parents and their children who are in foster care.

Visitation Between Infants & Toddlers in Foster Care and Their Birth Parents – Colorado

- State rule outlines the requirement for a visitation plan that includes:
 - Growth and development of the child
 - Child’s contact with siblings, parents, and other family members
 - Visitation should increase in frequency and duration
- Counties are creative and flexible with supporting visitation.
- Counties have increased visitation shortly after placement and ended the practice of postponing visitation until the child has “settled into placement.”
- Visitation is frequently addressed in family engagement meetings.
- Development of Treatment Foster Care Model



Visitation Between Infants & Toddlers in Foster Care & Their Birth Parents – Hawaii

- Family Visitation Policies (‘Ohana Time)
 - Minimum 3 hours per week in natural settings
 - Foster parents are involved as much as possible
- 0-3 Specially-Trained Foster Parents (Project First Care)
 - Intended for placements of 60-days or less, where reunification or relative placement is highly likely
 - Frequent visitation (sometimes daily for many hours) supervised by foster parents who serve as mentors
- Specially-Trained Foster Parents for Medical Fragile 0-3 (Hale Malama)
 - Foster parents are mentors to birth parents and teach them special medical care needed during visits.

Post-permanency Services and Supports

- The majority of states require development of post-permanency plans.
- Some services and supports are offered to adoptive parents in more states than they are offered to birth parents post-reunification:
 - Mental health services
 - Health care services
 - Support groups





Post-permanency Services and Supports – Washington

- Children who return home receive intensive in-home services for at least six months post-reunification.
- Adoption-support benefits are available to children who meet state or federal eligibility requirements.





Post-permanency Services and Supports – Colorado

- Post-permanency is seen as part of Colorado's continuum, from prevention to intervention to services to post-permanency support.
- Funding is available and collaborative management systems are in place to wrap-around families as children reunify.
- HB1451 – County-implemented multi-disciplinary collaborative management process

Training for Child Welfare Staff and Others Involved with Very Young Children

- Only 3 states **require** training on developmentally appropriate practices for maltreated infants and toddlers for **all** child welfare staff, including case workers, supervisors, administrators, and other staff.





Training for Child Welfare Staff and Others Involved with Very Young Children – Hawaii

- Mandatory CWS new staff training and foster parent training includes:
 - Infant-toddler development
 - Trauma-informed services
 - 0-3 resources
- In-service CWS staff training as needed: e.g., Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) training
 - Identified need (high rate of prenatal exposure in one geo-area)
 - Brought in mainland expert trainer to train staff statewide



Training for Child Welfare Staff and Others Involved with Very Young Children – Washington

- WA Children’s Administration contracts with the University of Washington for professional development for staff and caregivers.
- Trainings help Children’s Administration staff on all levels and caregivers attain skills in identified competencies.



Data Collection and Analysis

- Although the majority of states are collecting data related to infants and toddlers, over half of respondents do not analyze disaggregated data within the maltreated infant-toddler population.





Data Collection and Analysis – Colorado

- IV-E Waiver demonstration project
 - Strong outcome-based evaluation
 - Will analyze outcomes based on race, age, etc.
- Colorado practice model
 - Data-driven
 - Continuous quality improvement
 - Can look at regional trends, as well as specific measures in each county

Contact Information

Barbara Gebhard

bgebhard@zerotothree.org

Elizabeth Jordan

ejordan@childtrends.org

Jamie Colvard

jcolvard@zerotothree.org

Melinda Cox

melinda.cox@state.co.us

Lorendia Schmidt

lorendia.schmidt@state.co.us

Rachel Thorburn

rthorburn@dhs.hawaii.gov

Michelle Bogart

bogm300@dshs.wa.gov

Nelly Mbajah

mbne300@dshs.wa.gov

Webinar Materials

Changing the Course for Infants and Toddlers: A Survey of State Child Welfare Policies and Initiatives

3 short companion pieces:

- Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Birth Parents
- Ensuring Critical Assessments and Services for All Maltreated Infants and Toddlers
- Achieving Prompt Permanency for All Maltreated Infants and Toddlers



Download report and companion pieces at: www.zerotothree.org/cwsurvey
or <http://www.childtrends.org/changing-the-course-for-infants-and-toddlers/>

A recording of the webinar and a copy of the slides will be posted at:
www.zerotothree.org/policywebinars