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Calls to Action



Ask the Legislature to Establish Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children

The Alliance for Children's Rights is requesting your support of a budget request to the state legislature to establish the Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children. Access to affordable child care is crucial for our youngest foster children. It is needed to recruit and

retain loving foster families, stabilize foster placements, and to help children heal from trauma. Unfortunately, foster families struggle to access child care, especially at the time of placement when it is most critical. The Bridge Program, developed by a broad coalition of leading child care and child welfare advocates, would ensure foster families can access child care at the moment of placement by providing them with a 6-month emergency voucher to meet their immediate child care needs and the support of a child care navigator who will assist them in accessing long-term child care through the state's subsidized child care system. Additionally, the Bridge Program will promote trauma-informed early care through a training program for child care providers. [A fact sheet describing this \\$31 million budget proposal can be found here.](#)

Please support this budget request by:

1. [Emailing your organizational logo to m.dunn@kids-alliance.org](mailto:m.dunn@kids-alliance.org) to be added to the fact sheet.
2. Adapting the sample support letter ([found here](#)) and submitting it to the Assembly Budget Subcommittee no later than March 29th and to the Senate Budget Subcommittee no later than April 13th. You may send your letter directly to Committee staff & members or to m.dunn@kids-alliance.org.
3. Coming to the Budget subcommittee hearings to voice your support on April 6th at 3pm (Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Health and Human Services) and on April 21st at



Support AB 2597 to Ensure Resource Family Approval Works for Relative Caregivers

The Alliance for Children's Rights, along with the Step Up Coalition, is calling for your support of AB 2597 which will ensure the new Resource Family Approval process doesn't leave relative caregivers behind.

California is starting statewide implementation of a new, unified process of approving foster families - called Resource Family Approval (RFA) - that will apply to both relative and non-relative foster homes. By 2017, the only way to be approved as a new foster parent will be to go through RFA; families already approved prior to January 2017 will have additional time to convert to the new RFA standards. While RFA has positive facets, the new approval standards were not written with relative caregivers in mind which could lead to unintended consequences, such as a reduction of the number of relative caregivers overall. Under RFA, relatives - like non-relative foster parent applicants - will be required to complete training hours, a psychosocial assessment, and risk assessment. Unlike non-relative foster parents, many relatives will be attempting to meet these requirements while simultaneously responding to the needs of traumatized already residing in their home, and navigating the complexities of the foster care system, courts, schools, and health care systems. Compounding these difficulties, caregivers are not eligible for foster care payments until they have been approved as a resource family, which can take many months.

AB 2597 would amend the Resource Family Approval statute (WIC 16519.5) to account for the unique needs of relatives and ensure these families have the support they need to complete the new approval standards and help the children in their care thrive. [To learn more about AB 2597 please read the fact sheet.](#)

If you would like to support AB 2597, **please download, adapt, and send a letter to Assemblymember Susan Bonilla, Chair of the Human Services Committee.**

[DOWNLOAD SAMPLE AB 2597 SUPPORT LETTER](#)



Support AB 885 to Allow Foster Youth to Petition for Reentry

In 2014, legislation was signed into law (AB 2454) to youth who exited to permanency prior to age 18 to re-enter foster care after the age of 18 if that permanent plan failed. Although a rare occurrence, a failed adoption or guardianship can be devastating to a young adult who had anticipated having support in those early years of adulthood.

Unfortunately, AB2454 included an unintended bar to re-entry for these youth by requiring the youth to demonstrate that Adoption Assistance or subsidized guardianship funding had been terminated in order to be permitted to file a petition with the dependency court to re-enter foster care. Youth have no ability to terminate a adoption or guardianship payment and no way of ascertaining whether the funding is still continuing, leaving youth without recourse until the county has investigated the case and terminated the funding. AB 885 would eliminate this requirement, allowing a youth to petition the juvenile court without first determining if the funds had been terminated. This provides youth access to a forum and judge to hear the evidence and make a determination as to whether re-entry is necessary. AB 885 has passed out of the Assembly and now heads to Senate Human Services and Senate Judiciary. [To learn more about AB 885 please read the fact sheet.](#)

The Alliance for Children's Rights needs your support to ensure this important piece of legislation is passed. **Please download, adapt, and send the sample support letters to Senate Human Services Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee.**

[DOWNLOAD SAMPLE AB 885 LETTER FOR SENATE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE](#)
[DOWNLOAD SAMPLE AB 885 LETTER FOR SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE](#)

Upcoming Webinars

April 20th: Permanency Options for our Older Youth

The primary goal of our child welfare system is to reunify children with their families or, if that's not possible, to connect children to permanent and loving families through adoption or guardianship. Recent reforms have focused on how to enhance permanency outcomes for older foster and probation youth, even into adulthood. Please join us for a webinar detailing these reforms and best practices that promote permanency for older youth in the foster care and probation systems.

[Please follow this link to register.](#)

May 25th: Voices of Kinship Caregivers

Despite being the backbone of our foster care system, the unique circumstances and needs of kinship caregivers are often not considered and the voices of these unsung heroes are rarely heard. Please join us for a very special webinar

that will feature multiple kinship caregivers sharing their experiences and stories, as well as their ideas for how our child welfare system could be improved.

[Please follow this link to register.](#)

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