FFTA 38TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WELCOME

July 7-10, 2024

HYATT REGENCY DENVER
AT THE COLORADO
CONVENTION CENTER

FFTA

EMPOWERING **FAMILIES** ELEVATING **COMMUNITIES**

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NATIONAL FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION

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Supporting Caregivers

ADDRESSING THE SHORTAGE OF FOSTER FAMILIES

Introductions

Kati Mapa, MSW

Director of Public Policy

Child Welfare League of America

Arnie Eby

Executive Director

National Foster Parent Association

Icebreaker Activity: Who is in the room?

RAISE YOUR HAND IF…

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The Problem

NATIONAL SHORTAGE OF FOSTER PARENTS

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (.gov)

Foster Care Coalition Launches Statewide Recruitment Campaign to Address Foster Parent Shortage

This unprecedented statewide effort to recruit foster care parents is funded by Aetna Better Health of West Virginia, whose investment ensures...

Mar 6, 2024

Nevada Current

Clark County offers fast-track licensure to address foster parent shortage • Nevada Current

In 2023, Nevada raised the reimbursement rates for foster care for the first time since 2007 from an average of $62.00 per day to $115.00.

Jan 19, 2024

The Oklahoman

A massive shortage of families for Oklahoma foster children exists. This is truly a crisis.

Few entities withstood the coronavirus pandemic unblemished. Restaurants struggled, personal care services were hurt and the travel industry...

Mar 10, 2024

WUNC

Facing a critical shortage, Wake County launches campaign aimed at recruiting foster parents

Over 400 youth in North Carolina have not been placed in foster homes. Wake County is working to change that by launching a video series...

1 month ago

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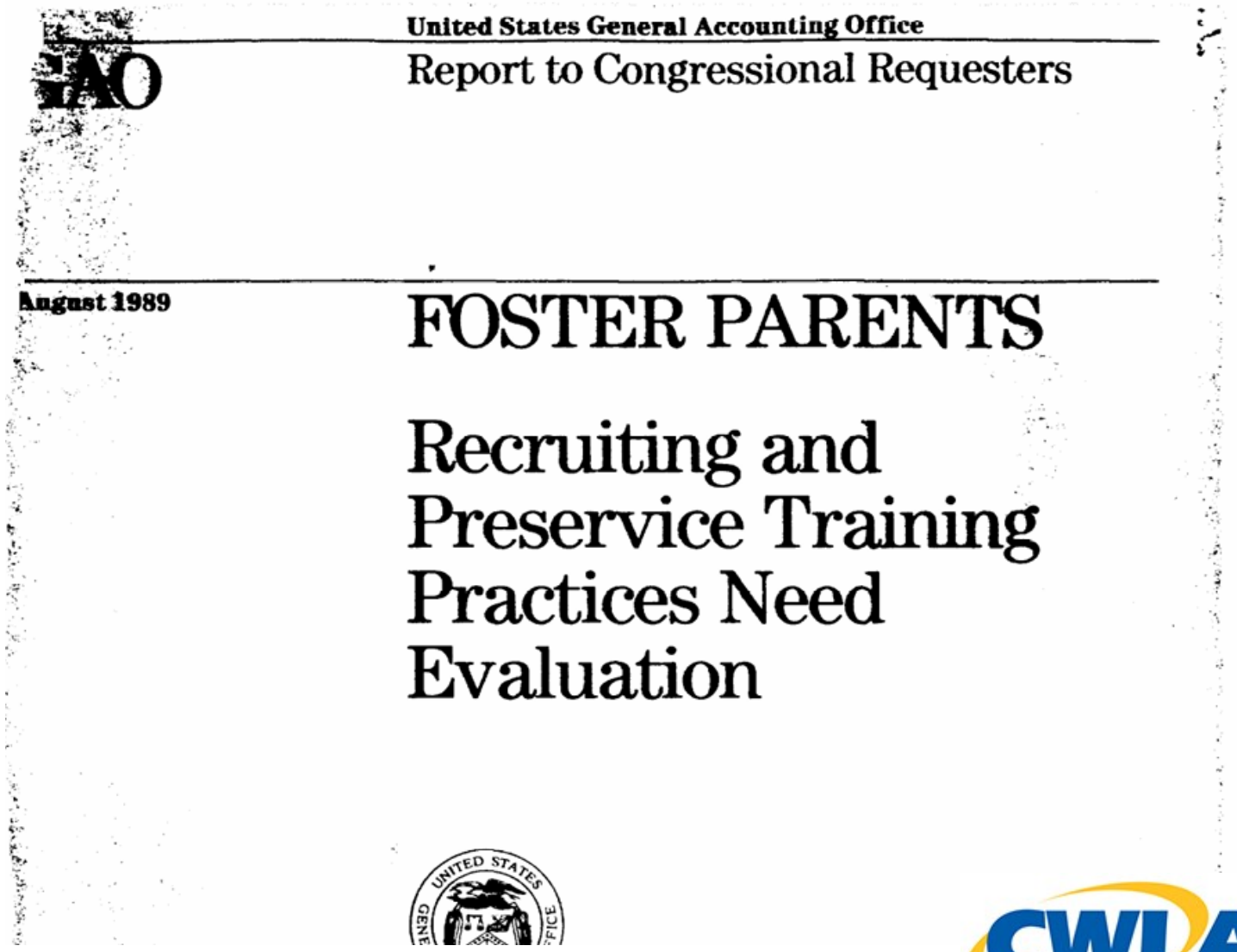
The Problem

HISTORICAL CONTEXT



United States General Accounting Office

GAO

Report to Congressional Requesters

August 1989

FOSTER PARENTS

Recruiting and Preservice Training Practices Need Evaluation

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The Problem: Historical Context

1937 - The first Child Welfare League of America initiative that distinguished minimum standards for permanent (adoptive) and temporary (foster) placements.

1947 - CWLA releases a survey on the rising costs of care for children in foster care at $30-$31.99 a month. The increased costs are attributed to both inflation and a lack of foster homers. The report states: *"It seems that more families become potential foster families as the monetary burden is removed from them, for they may then be able and willing to contribute an adequate and happy life for children in need."*

1950 - A 1950 report in the New York Herald-Tribune describes an effort by twelve Queens College sociology students who visited 3500 homes in a recruitment effort to address the shortage of foster homes. The effort resulted in hundreds of inquiries and 25 actual applicants. The results were considered a high percentage of responses.

The Problem: Historical Context

1967 - The first national Conference on Foster Care was held in New Orleans. Recommendations included creating a national association of foster parents, addressing recruitment, improving training and education for foster parents, and providing support for state foster parent associations.

1970 - Foster Care in Question: A National Reassessment by 21 Experts, published by CWLA, begins to call attention to issues for foster care. One of the experts, Ruby Kennedy, a foster parent from Los Angeles, CA, identified issues such as: strengths and weaknesses of foster care programs, attitudes toward board and care rates, salary for foster parents in addition to room and board, special training for foster parents, community attitudes, and new ways to improve the foster care program.

The Problem: Historical Context

1989 - A September GAO Report outlines the reasons for a shortage of foster parents: lack of respect from social service agencies, low foster parent reimbursement, limited respite for foster families, difficulty in liability insurance, insufficient training, and lack of access to agency social workers.

2014 - A GAO reporting on implementation of the Fostering Connections to Success Act found: "States reported major difficulties identifying appropriate placements for sibling groups, specifically finding available placements for large sibling groups (42 states), or sibling groups with exceptional needs (30 states) or with a wide age range (18 states)."

The Problem: Historical Context

2018 - A GAO report indicates that, “States reported various challenges with recruiting and retaining foster families in response to GAO’s survey. In recruiting families, over two-thirds of states reported challenges such as limited funding and staff, which can make prioritizing recruitment efforts difficult; extensive licensing processes; and difficulties finding families willing to care for certain children, such as those with high needs. In retaining families, 29 states reported concerns about inadequate support for foster families, which can include difficulties contacting child welfare agency caseworkers. In addition, 31 states reported limited access to services needed to care for children, such as child care.”

Information Gathering

NATIONAL SURVEY OF FOSTER PARENTS

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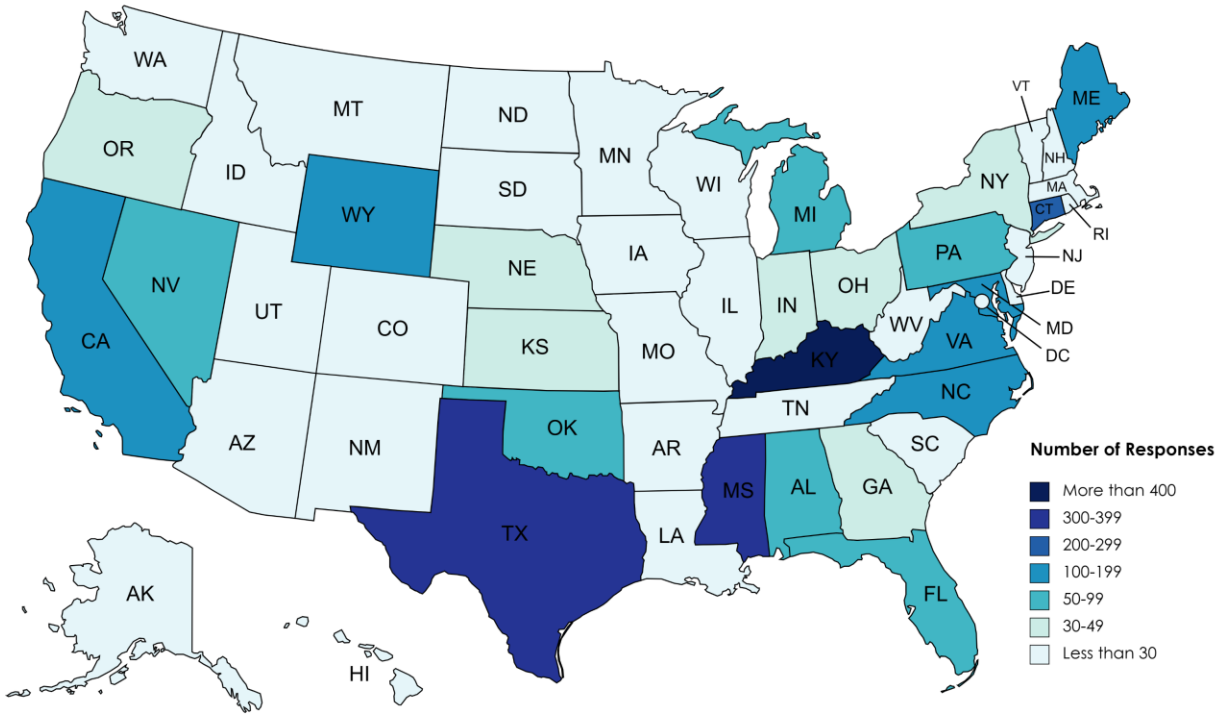
3,184 Responses

1,650 Comments*



Survey Results

RESPONSES

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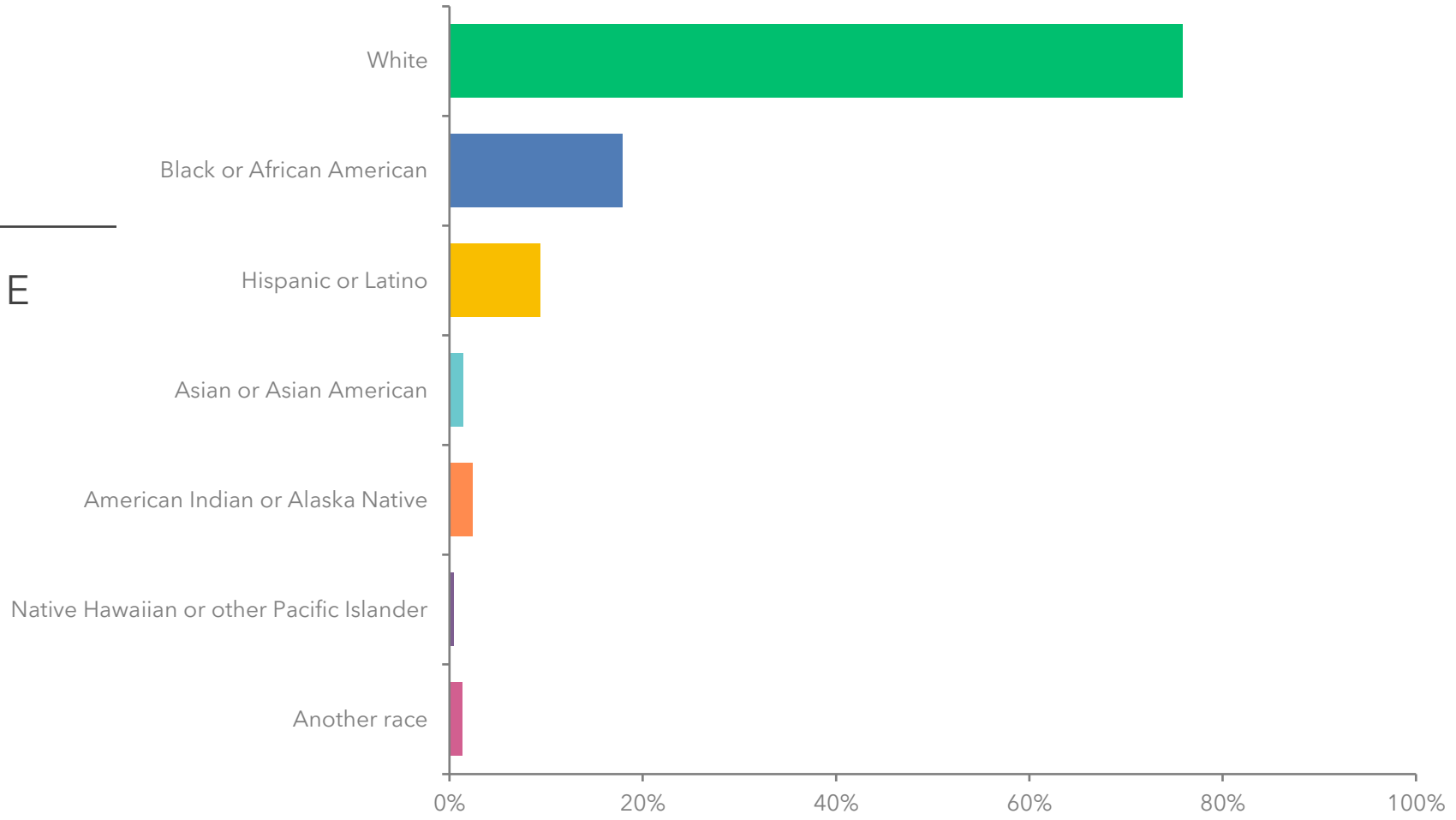
Survey Results

DEMOGRAPHICS: RACE



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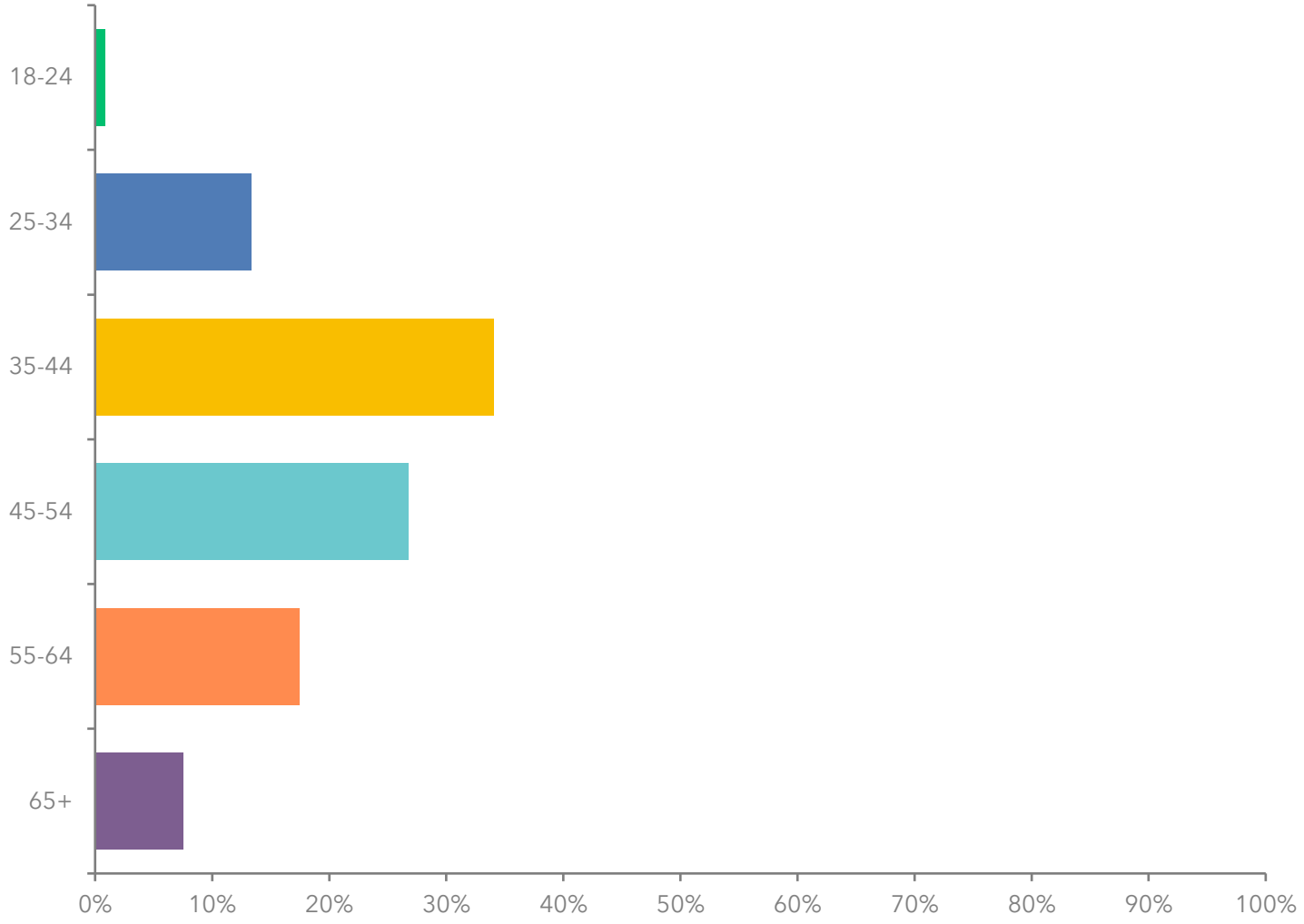
Survey Results

DEMOGRAPHICS: AGE



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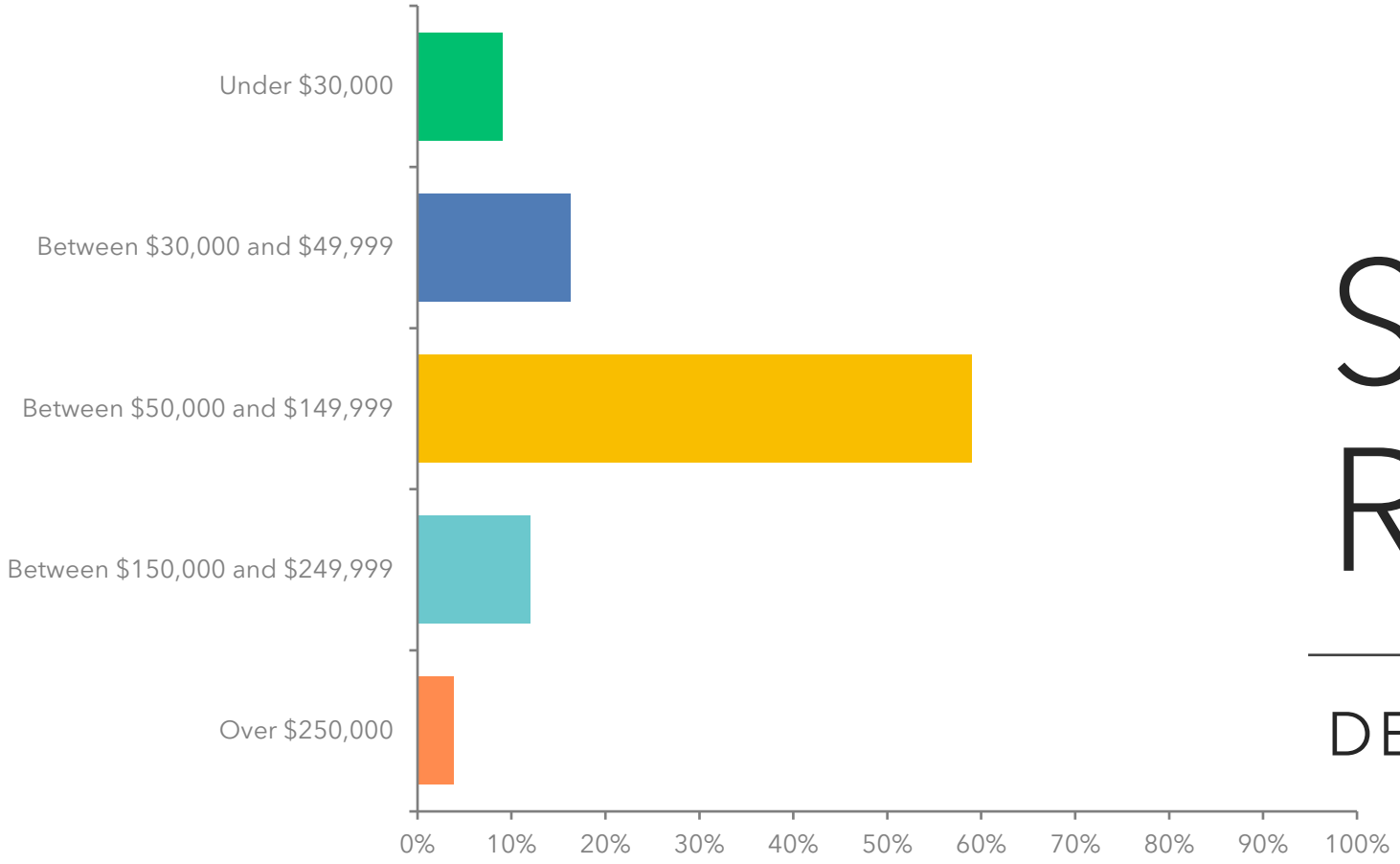

Survey Results

DEMOGRAPHICS: INCOME

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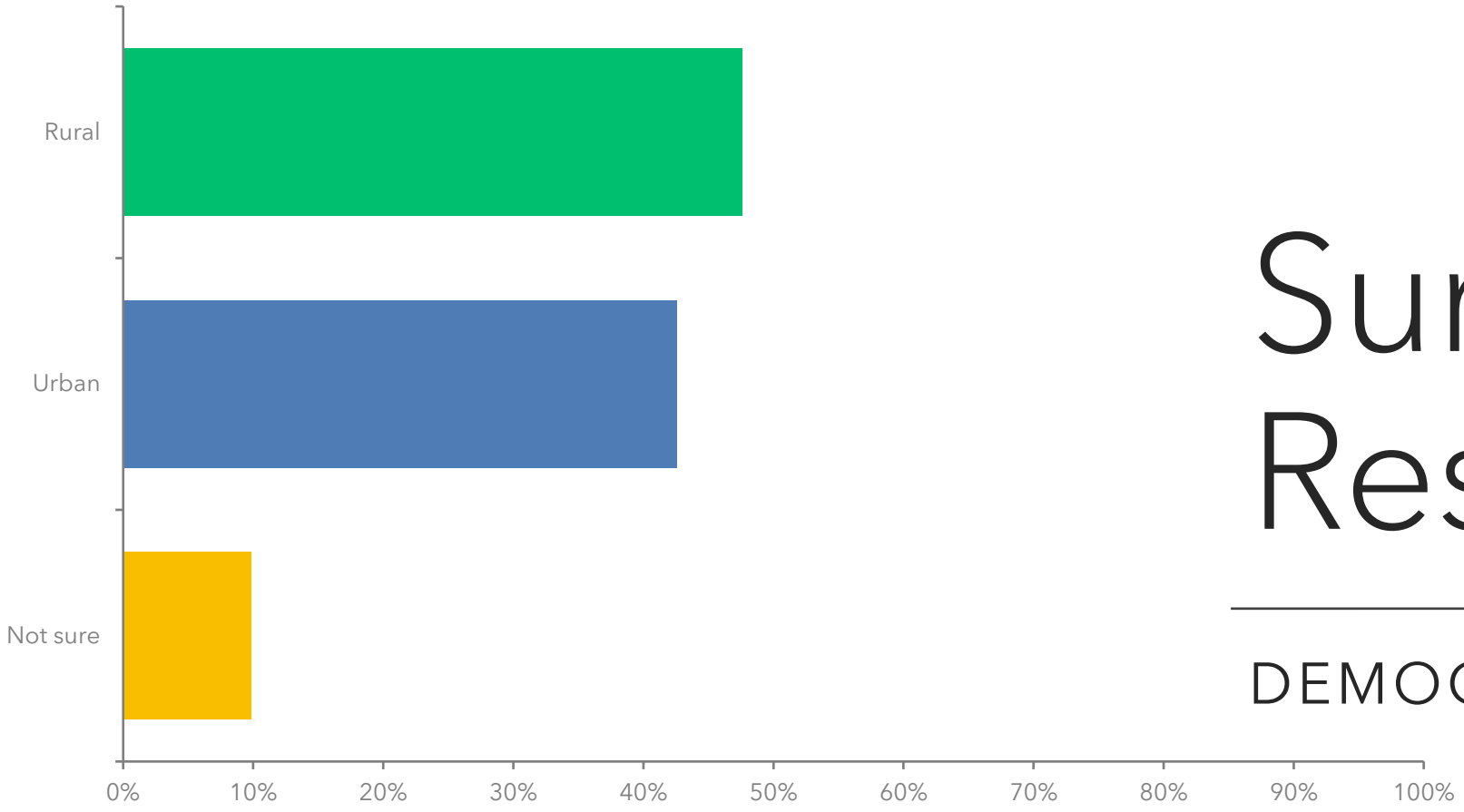

Survey Results

DEMOGRAPHICS: RURAL

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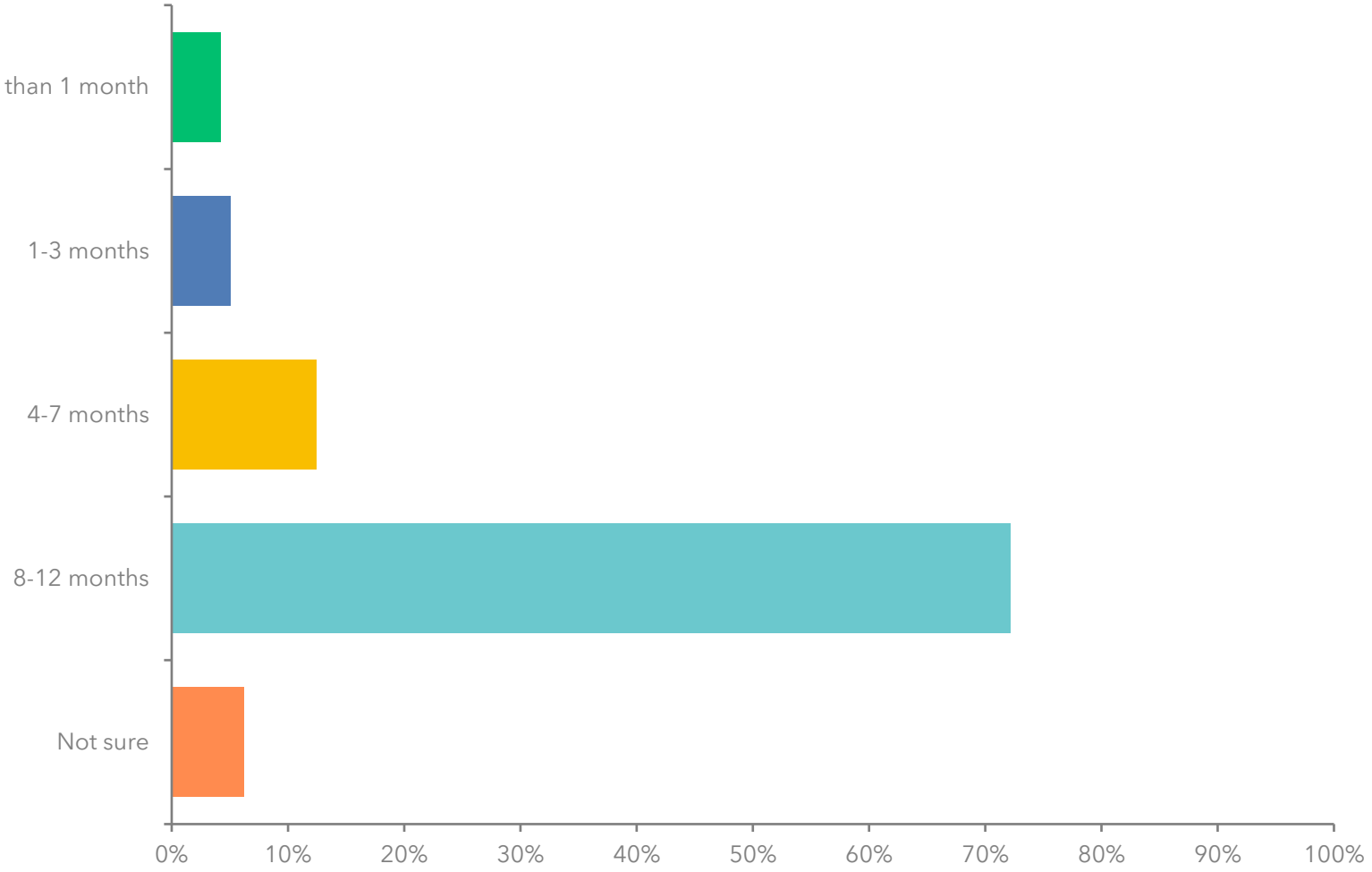
Survey Results

APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY MONTHS OUT OF THE YEAR DO YOU HAVE A FOSTER CHILD IN YOUR CARE?



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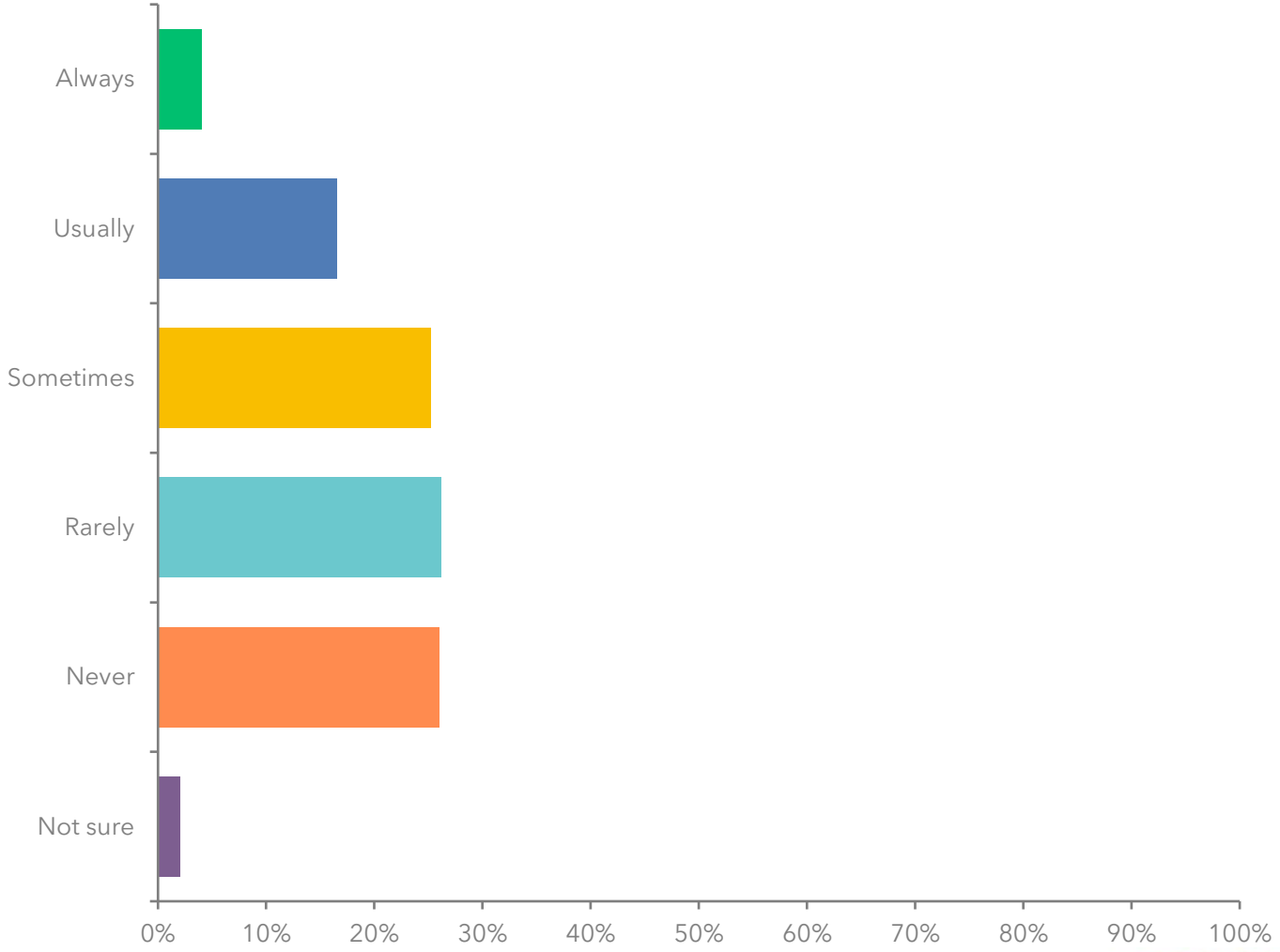
Survey Results

ARE THE FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS PROVIDED BY THE STATE SUFFICIENT TO COVER THE TOTAL COSTS OF CARING FOR THE FOSTER CHILDREN PLACED IN YOUR HOME?



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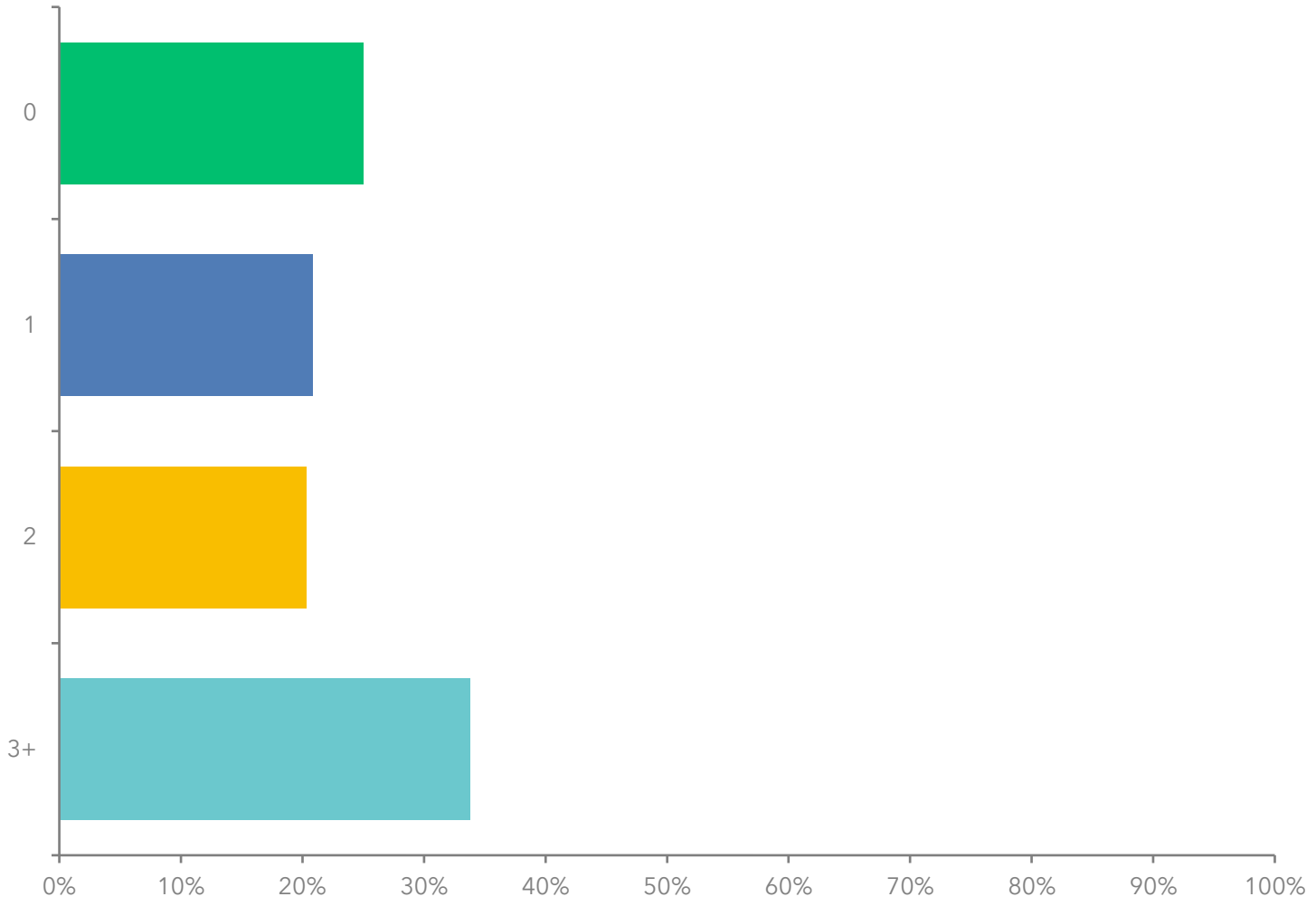
Survey Results

HOW MANY DEPENDENTS DO YOU HAVE (IN ADDITION TO ANY FOSTER CHILDREN) IN YOUR CARE?



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Survey Results: Comments

Financial Support – 576 comments (35%)

- Child Care (129 comments, 22% of category)
- Food Support (66 comments, 11% of category)
- Healthcare (40 comments, 7% of category)

"A tax credit for foster parents who provide short-term care is a great idea…"

"The pay for caring and the cost of groceries and the additional price for utilities is not a way to attract anyone. Everything is to high since Covid 19, think about leaving it too, but I love fostering."

Survey Results: Comments

General Support – 460 comments (28%)

- Respite (84 comments, 18% of category)
- Transportation (58 comments, 13% of category)
- Mental Health (51 comments, 11% of category)

"Provide support and respite for foster parents, have someone else transport children to visits."

"I believe it would be easier to keep foster parents if there were more support groups, easier access to the contact numbers needed, and respite care provided for them to be able to take a break every now and then."

Survey Results: Comments

Workforce Issues – 347 comments (21%)

- Communication (198 comments, 57%)
- Turnover (29 comments, 8% of category)

"Hire and pay state workers more to reduce turnover and reduce frustration and lack of consistency…"

"More caseworkers, better training for time management and documentation. How to maintain clear communication with the foster parents. Caseworkers who will actually listen to the foster parents who spend 24/7 with the children. Caseworkers who truly care and advocate for the children's best interests and not what time the clock reads."

What Next?

FEDERAL POLICY OPPORTUNITIES

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What Next: Federal Opportunities

- **S.1313 Recruiting Families Using Data Act**
- **H.R. 8815 Youth and Family Engagement in Child Welfare Act**
- **Foster Care Tax Credit**
- **Core Supports for Foster Parents**

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What Next?

STATE AND LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES

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Questions and Discussion

Kati Mapa, MSW

kmapa@cwla.org

202-878-9350

Arnie Eby

arnie@nfpaonline.org

800-557-5238

301-573-4326

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Thank You – Please Submit Session Feedback in your WHOVA App

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