



From Intervention to Prevention: A National Survey of Child Welfare Leaders on Economic and Concrete Supports

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Today's Panelists

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ECONOMIC AND CONCRETE SUPPORTS

National Reports

Perspectives on the use of economic and concrete supports (ECS) to prevent child welfare involvement.



National Peer Learning

Community of state and local practitioners exploring strategies to align upstream approaches to address poverty for families at risk of child welfare involvement.

National Policy Influence

Breaking the link: disrupting the connection between poverty and child welfare



The Role of Economic and Concrete
Supports in Child Maltreatment Prevention:
A National Survey of Child Welfare Leaders

November 2023



Survey Overview

OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC & CONCRETE SUPPORTS

Some examples include:

- ❖ Cash assistance
- ❖ Emergency funds
- ❖ Direct cash transfers
- ❖ Earned Income Tax Credit
- ❖ Child Tax Credit
- ❖ TANF benefits
- ❖ Employment
- ❖ Income

- ❖ Flexible funds
- ❖ In-kind benefits
- ❖ Child care
- ❖ Housing supports
- ❖ SNAP
- ❖ WIC
- ❖ Medicaid
- ❖ Unemployment benefits

- ❖ Legal support
- ❖ Rental assistance
- ❖ Utility assistance
- ❖ Furniture & equipment
- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ Food
- ❖ Clothing



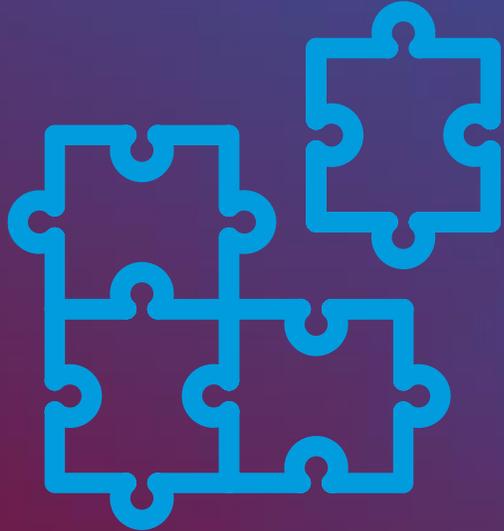
Research Question 1



What are child welfare administrators' **beliefs** about economic need and child welfare system involvement?



Research Question 2



What **approaches** are state child welfare agencies using to offer economic and concrete supports to families?



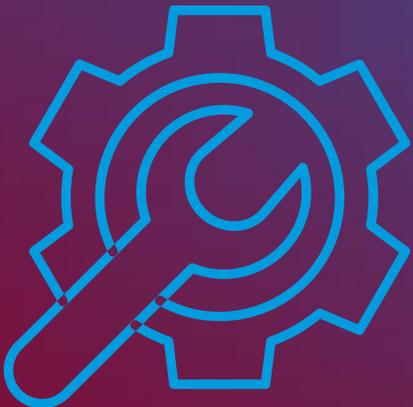
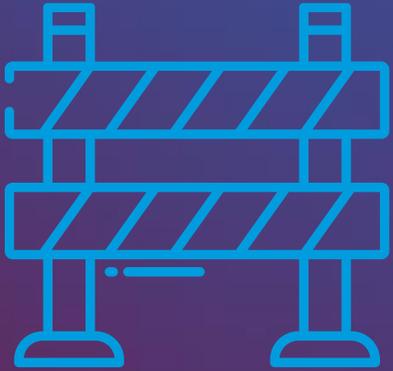
Research Question 3



How do state child welfare agencies **coordinate** with other human service systems to offer economic and concrete supports to families?



Research Question 4



What are the **barriers** to offering economic and concrete supports to families? What **solutions** do practitioners believe might address barriers?



Research Question 5



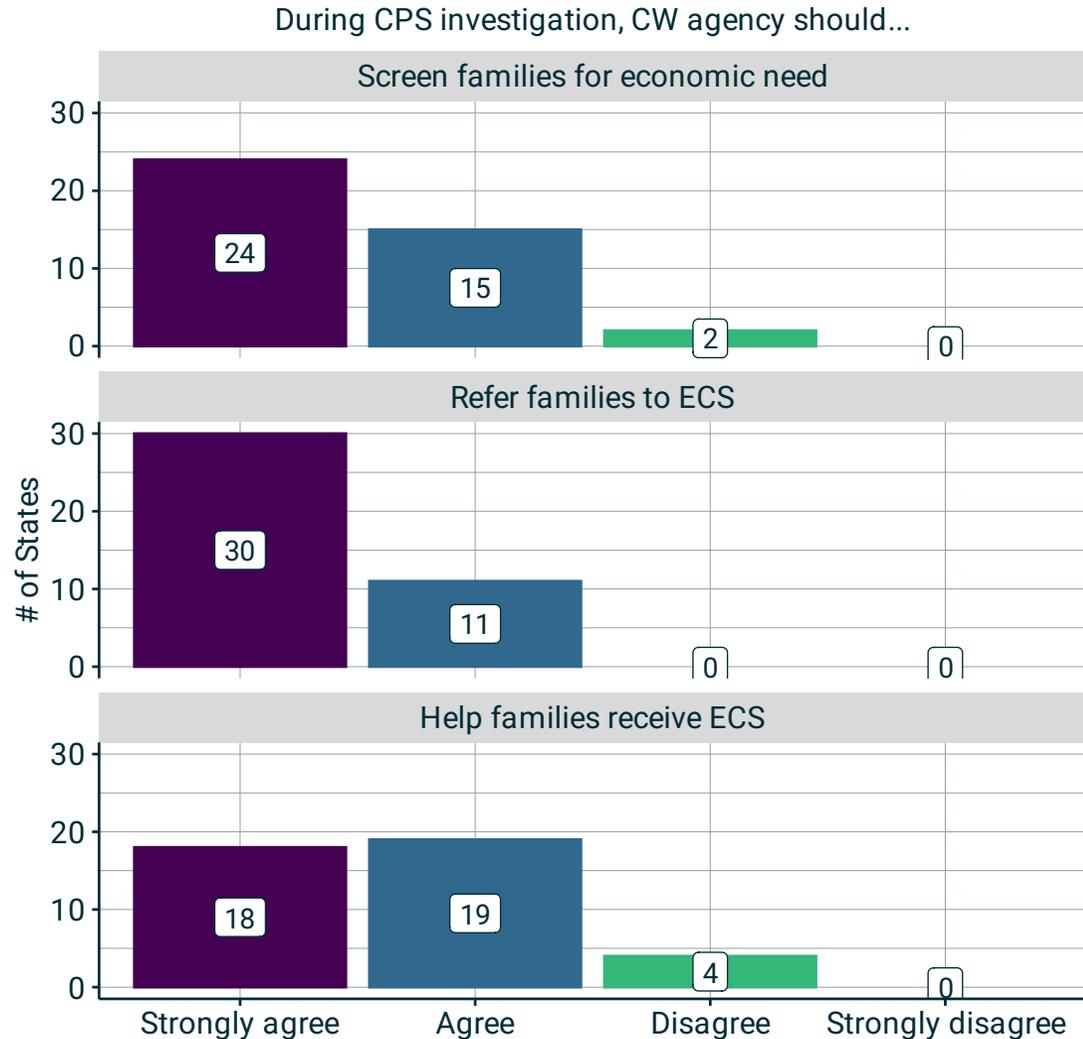
How is COVID-19 emergency federal assistance being used to fund economic and concrete supports?



Key Survey Findings

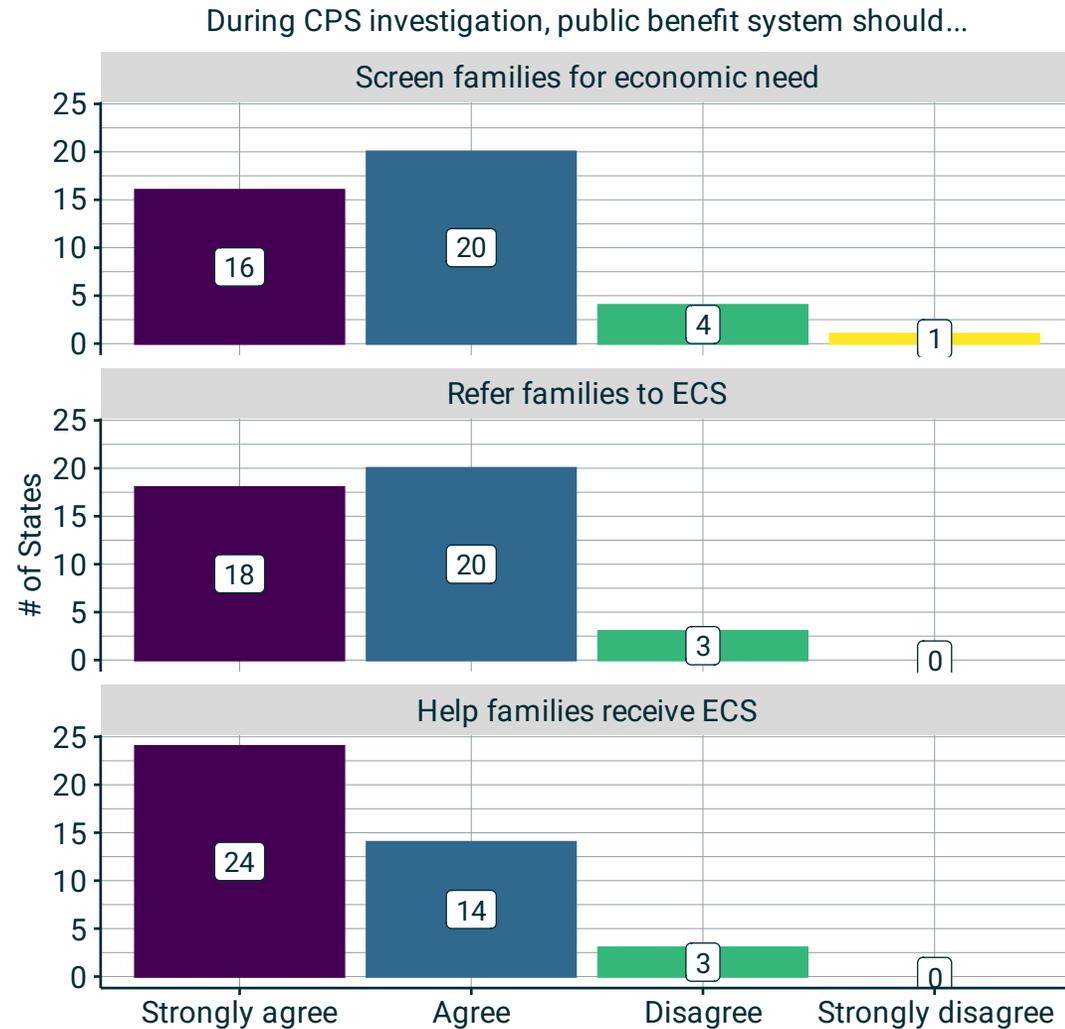
What are child welfare administrators' beliefs about economic need & CW system involvement?

- Respondents were more likely to agree that the **CW agency should screen and refer families to ECS** during a CPS investigation.



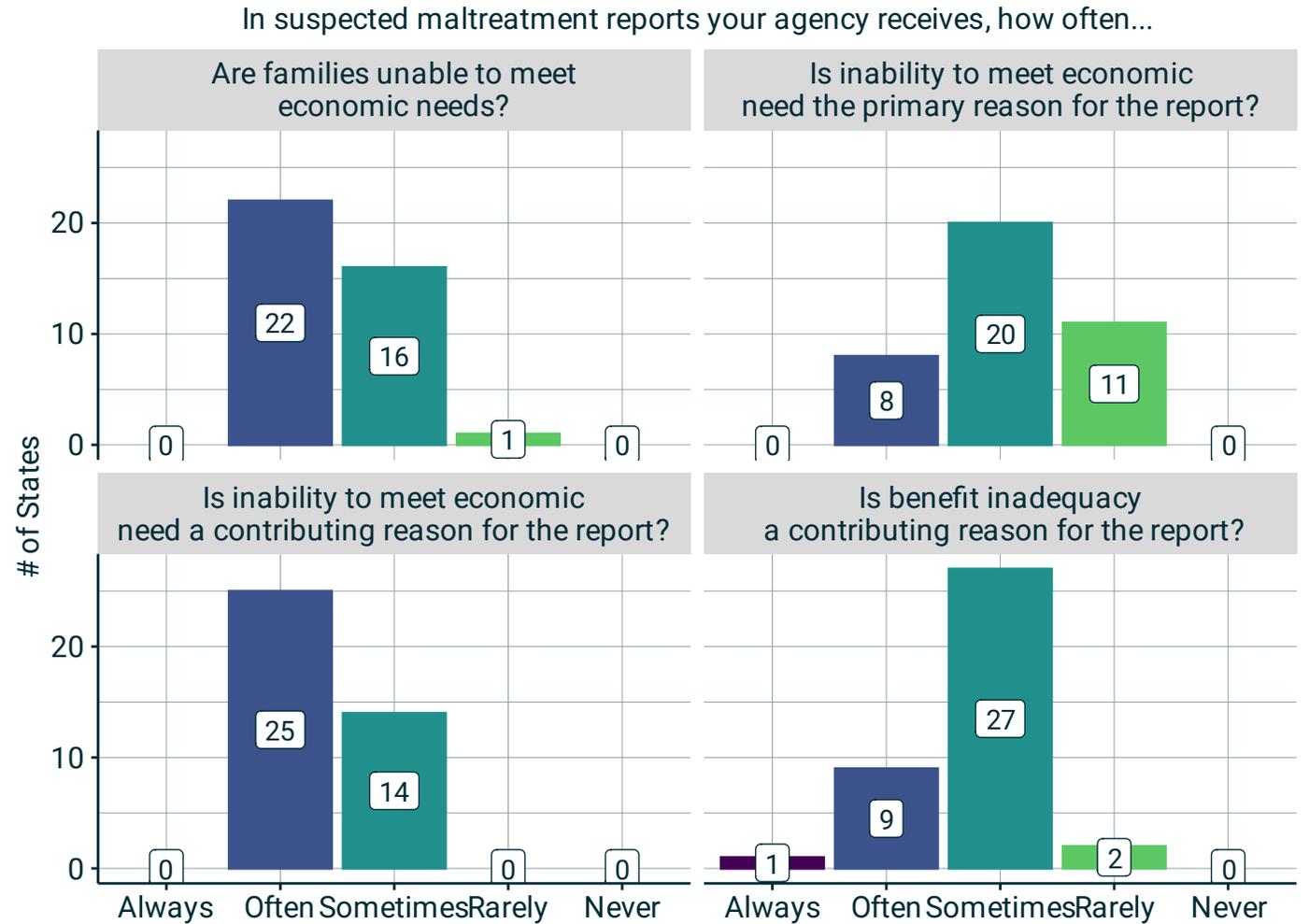
What are child welfare administrators' beliefs about economic need & CW system involvement?

- Respondents were more likely to agree than the **public benefit system should help families receive ECS** during a CPS investigation.



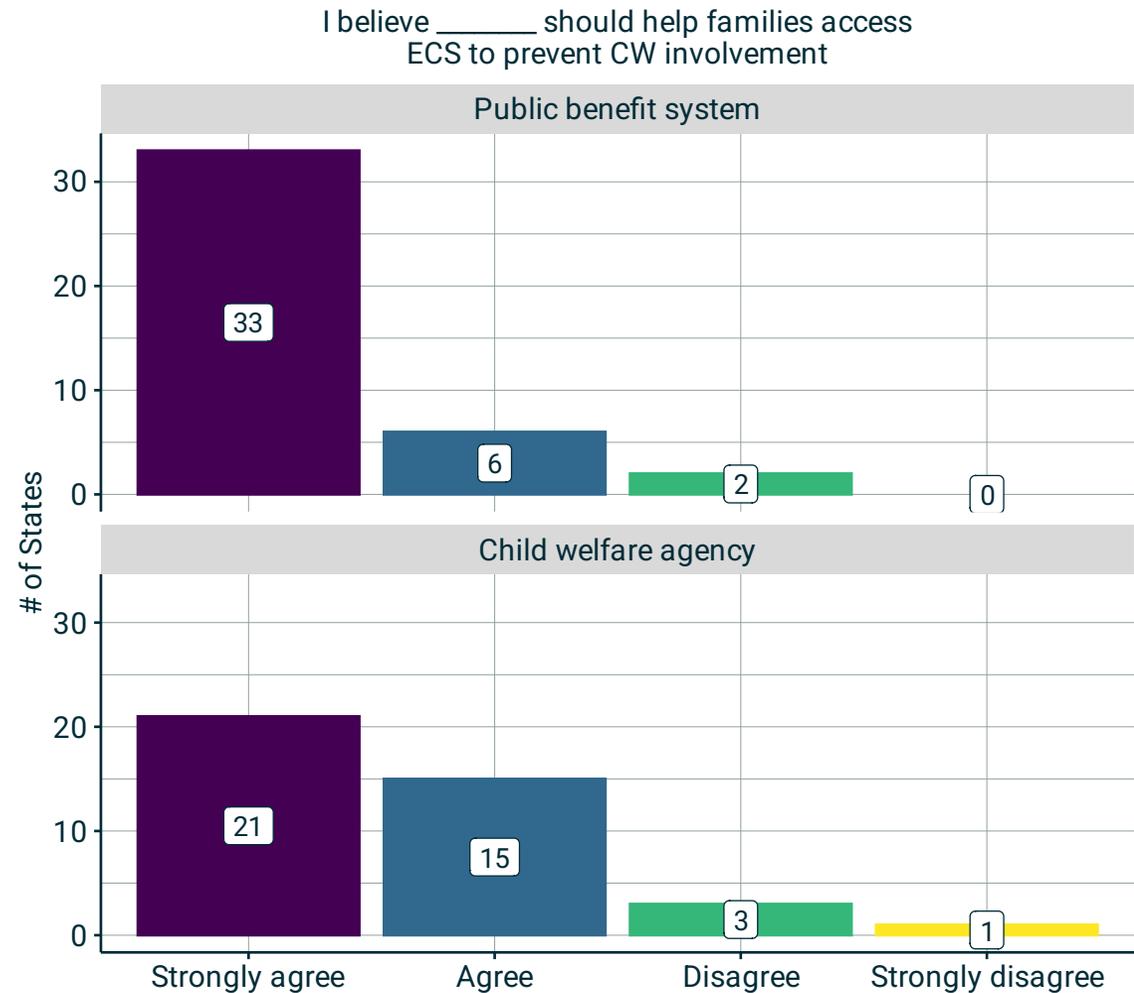
What are child welfare administrators' beliefs about economic need & CW system involvement?

- Respondents agree that **economic need is frequently a contributing reason of suspected maltreatment.**



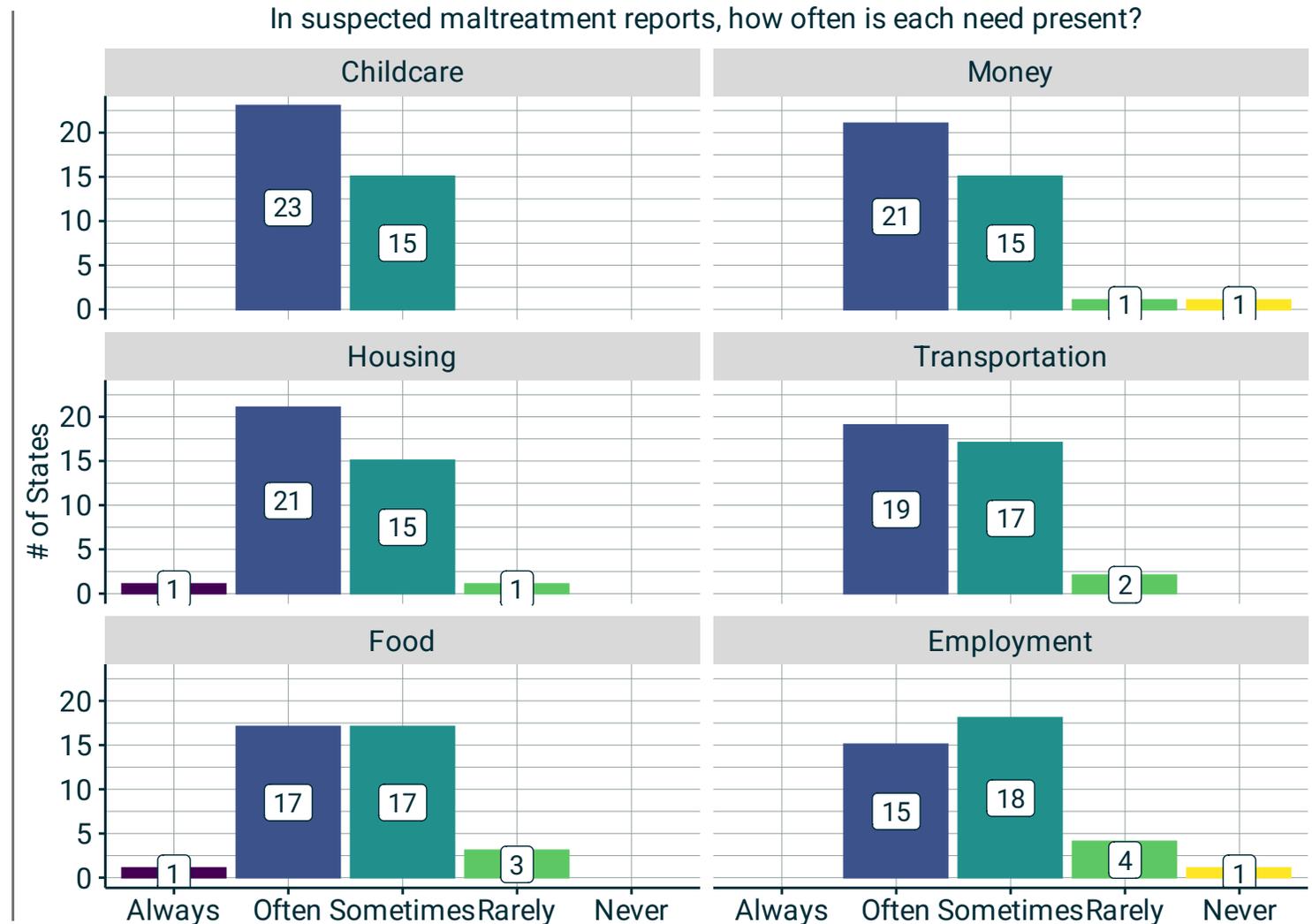
What are child welfare administrators' beliefs about economic need & CW system involvement?

- **Public benefit system and CW agency** should help families access ECS.
- **Prefer public benefit system** help families access ECS.



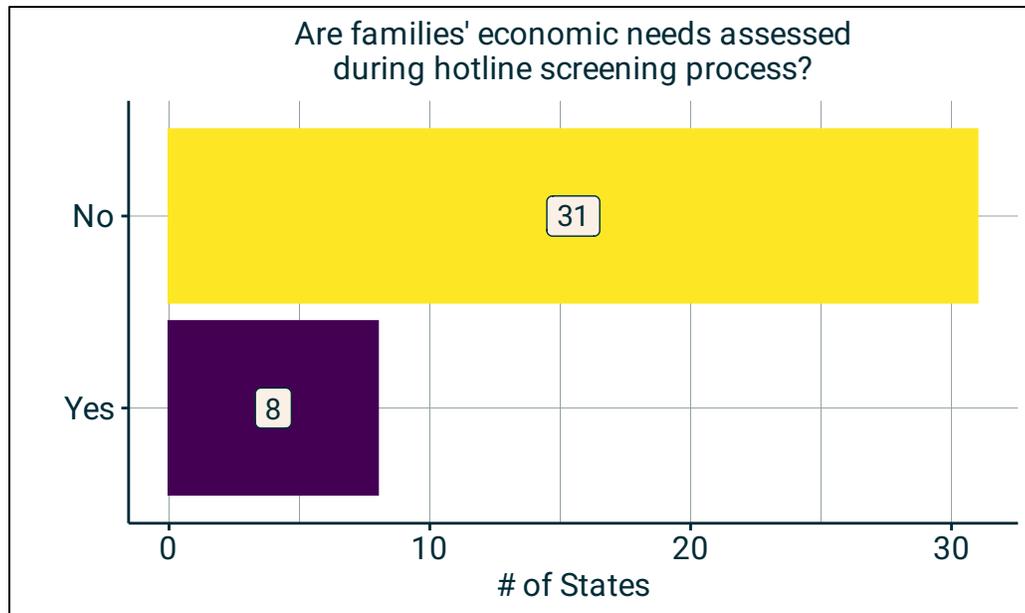
What are child welfare administrators' beliefs about economic need & CW system involvement?

- **Childcare, money, and housing needs** are frequently present in suspected maltreatment reports.

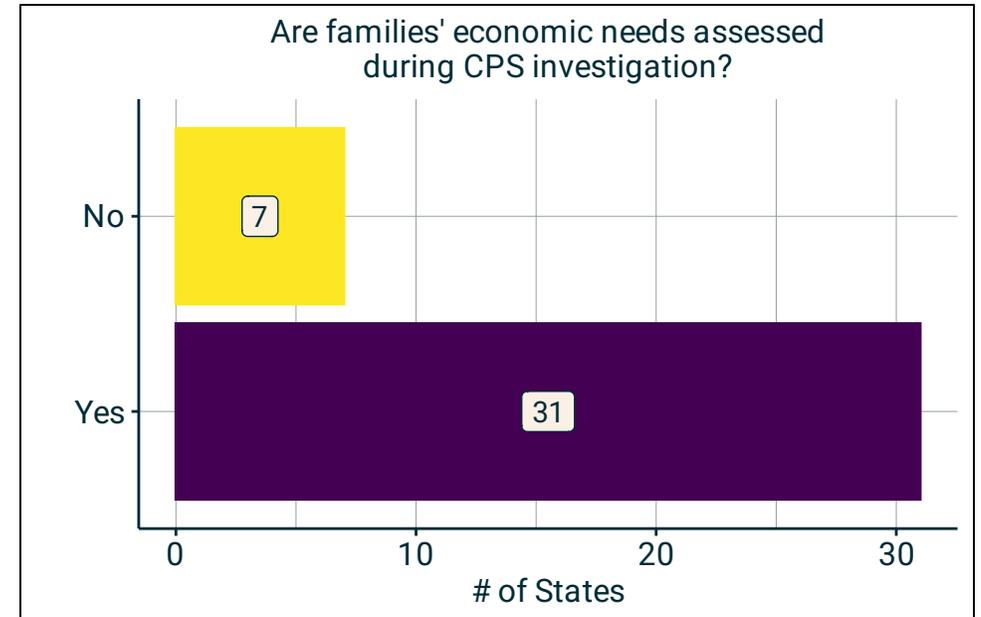


What approaches are state child welfare agencies using to offer ECS to families?

Most respondents report that families' economic needs are not assessed during the *hotline screening process*.

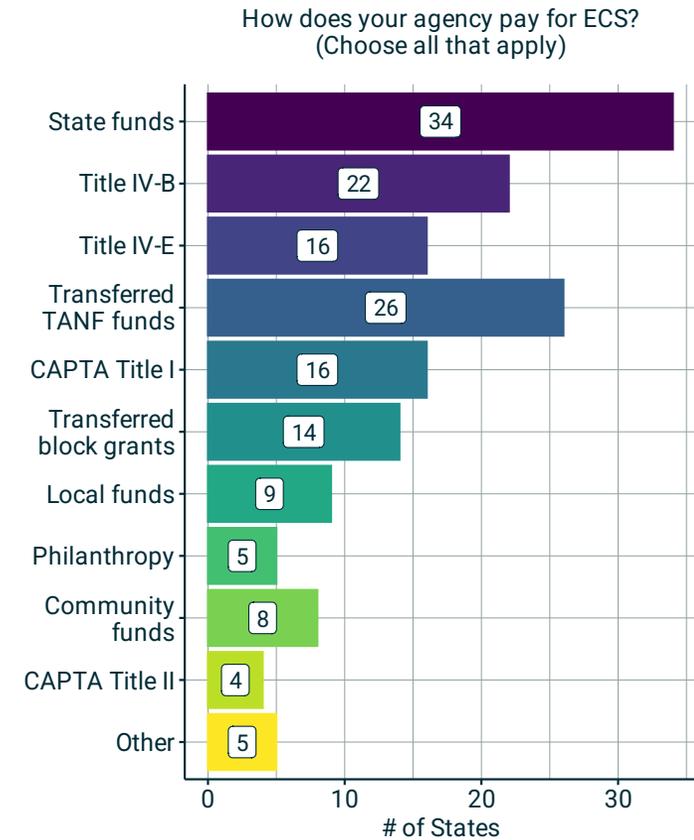
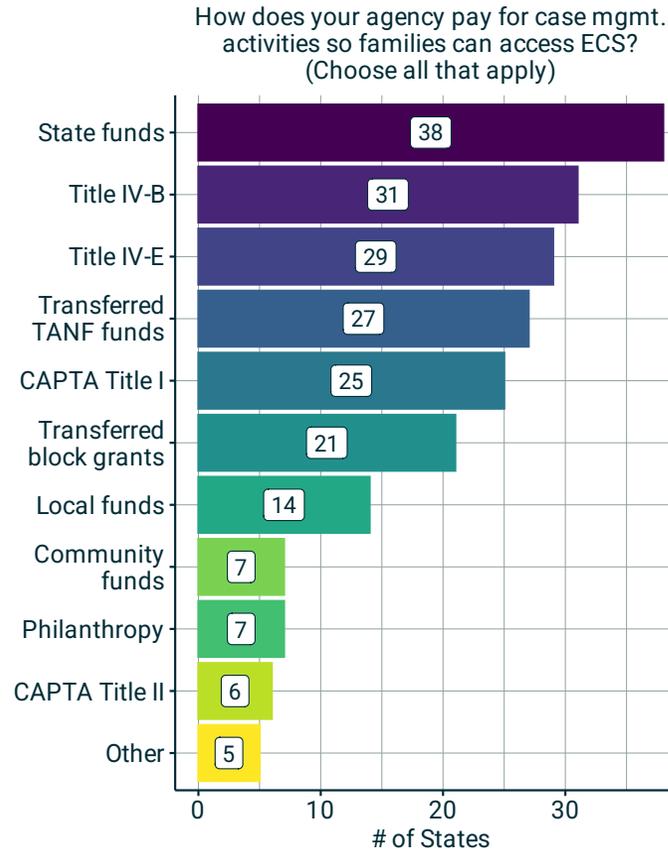


Most respondents report that families' economic needs are assessed during a *CPS investigation*



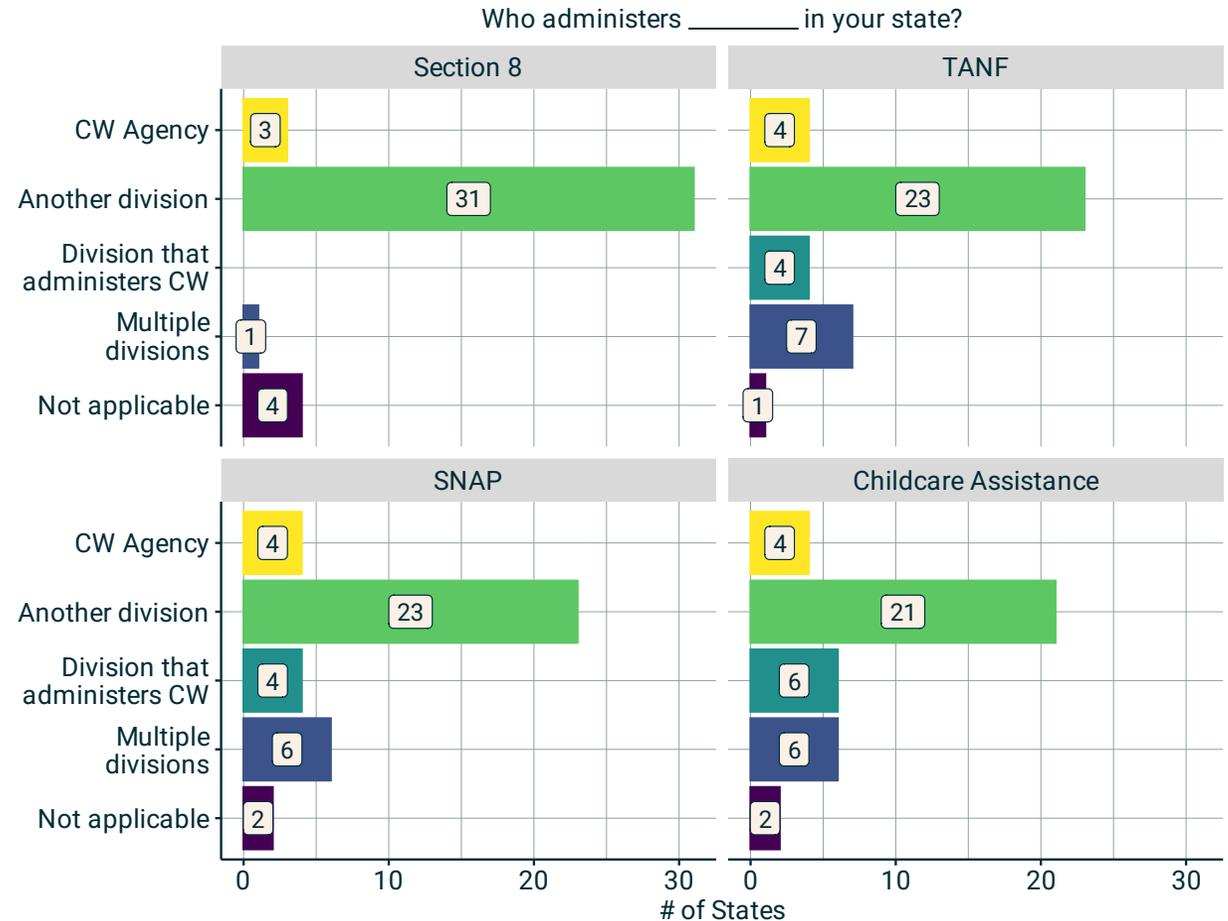
What approaches are state child welfare agencies using to offer ECS to families?

- **State funds are the most common** followed by **Title IV-B, Title IV-E & transferred TANF funds.**



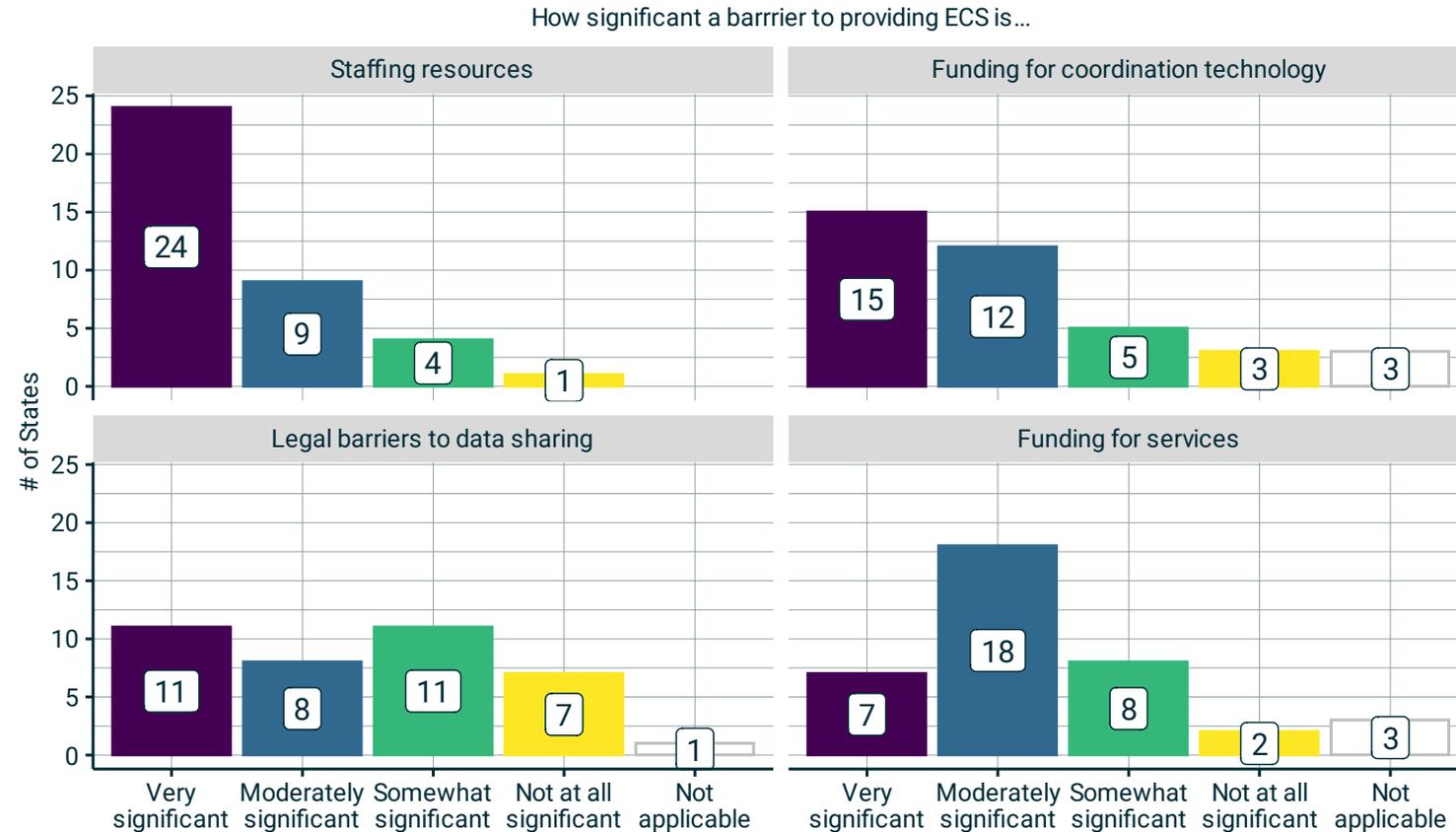
How do state child welfare agencies coordinate with other human service systems to offer ECS?

- Many programs are **administered by a different division** external to child welfare.



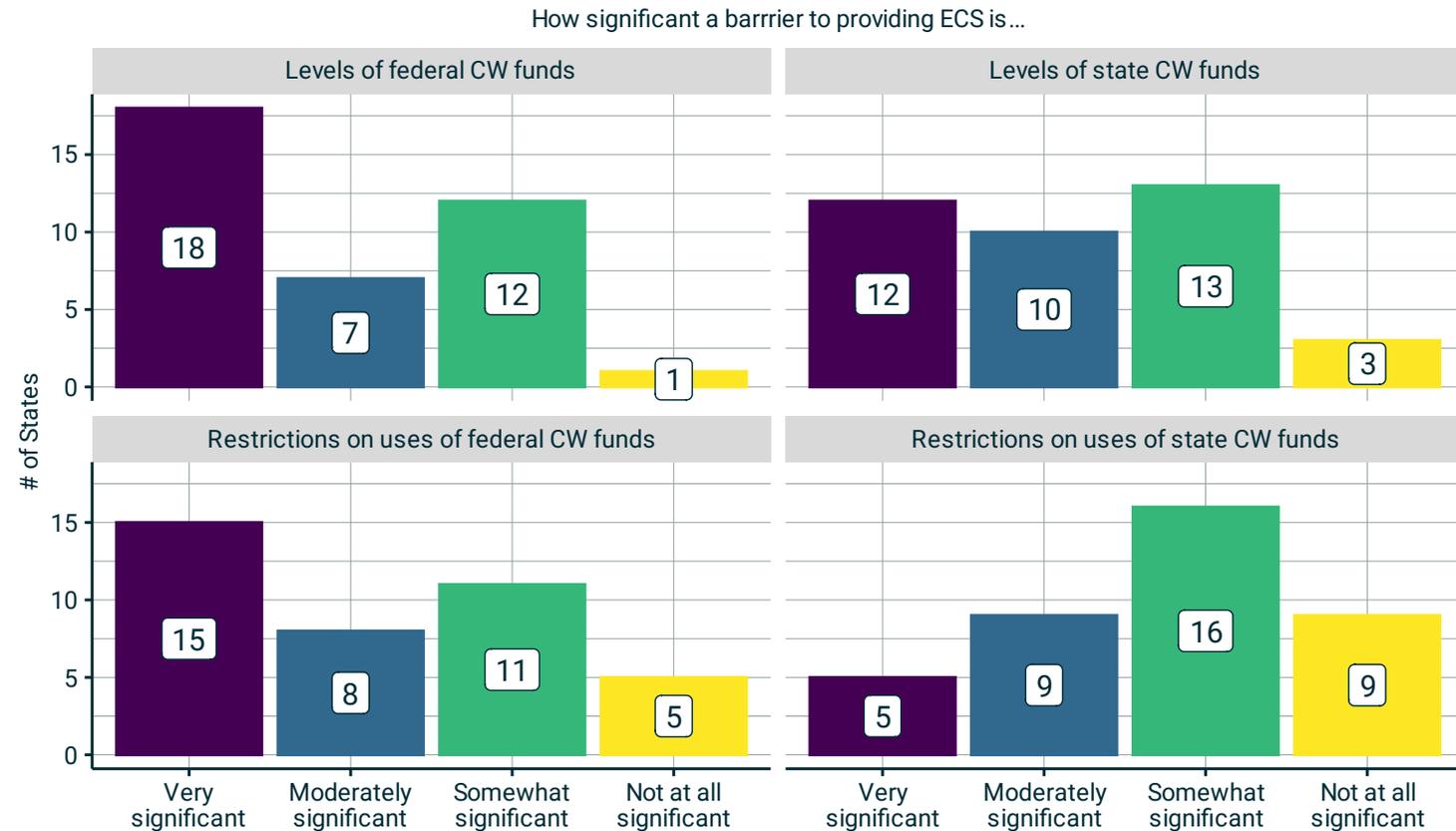
What are the barriers to offering ECS? What solutions do practitioners believe might address barriers?

- Respondents report varying **coordination barriers** to providing ECS.
- **Staffing resources** was the most problematic **coordination barrier**.



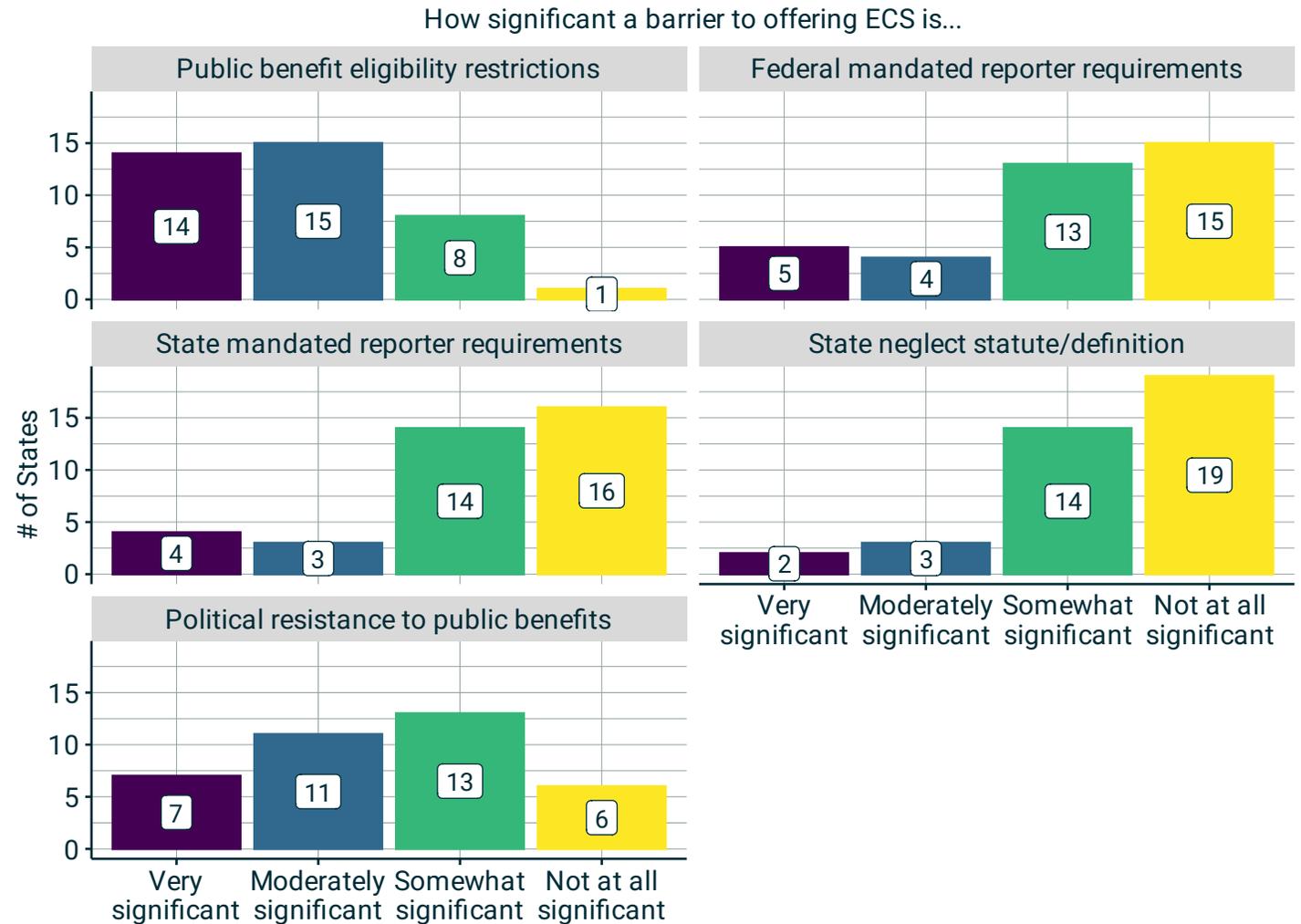
What are the barriers to offering ECS? What solutions do practitioners believe might address barriers?

- **Levels and restrictions of federal child welfare funds** were identified as **more significant barriers** than state funds.



What are the barriers to offering ECS? What solutions do practitioners believe might address barriers?

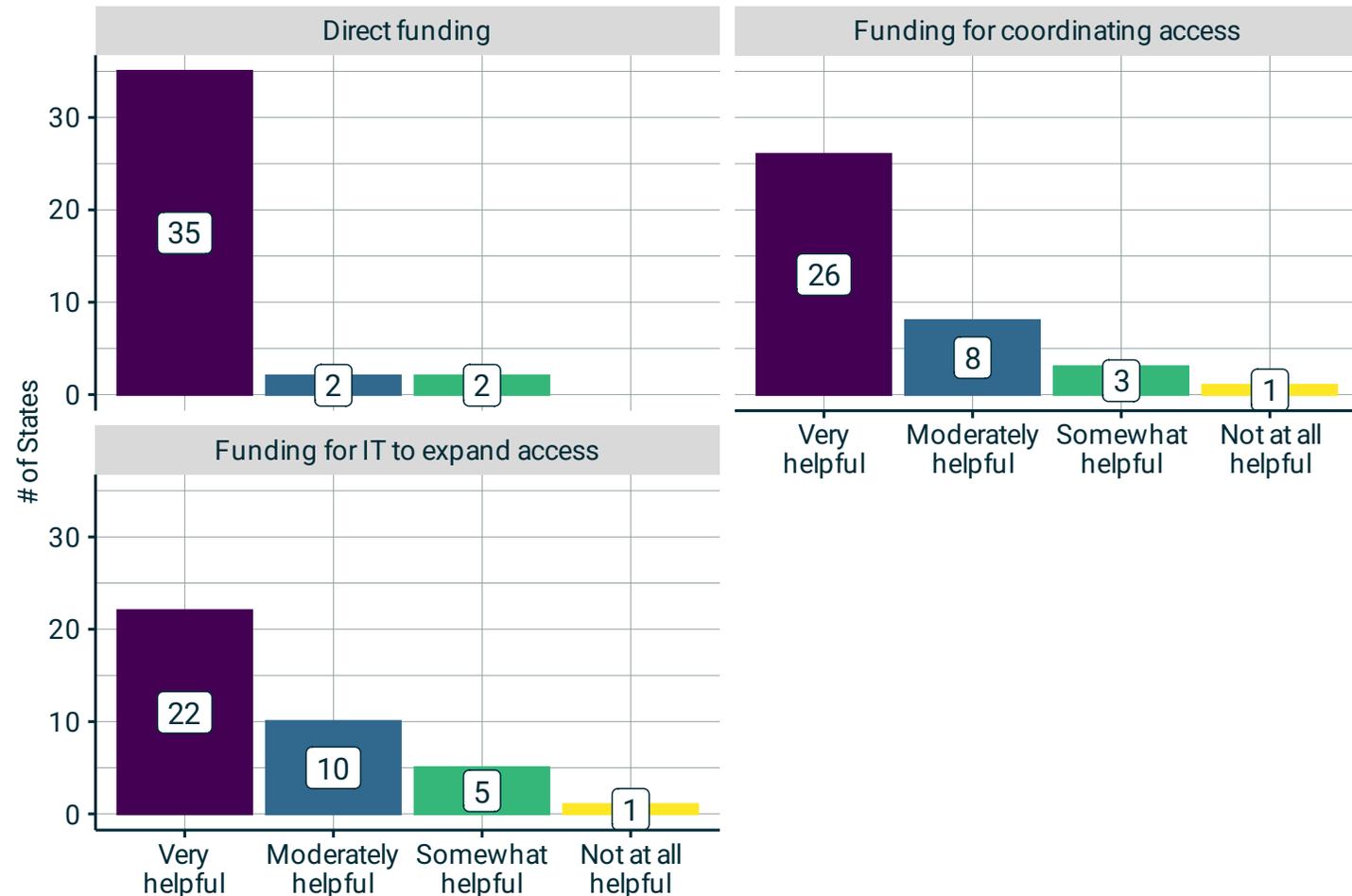
- Respondents identified **public benefit eligibility restrictions** as the most significant policy barrier.
- Other policy barriers were less significant.



What are the barriers to offering ECS? What solutions do practitioners believe might address barriers?

- Nearly all respondents report that **direct funding to expand access to ECS for child welfare involved families** would be very helpful.

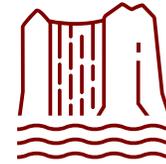
The top three most helpful options to expand ECS access for CW-involved families



31 Child Welfare Leaders Responded

“Based on your experience as a child welfare leader, what needs to be done to expand access to economic and concrete supports to prevent child welfare involvement?”

4 Themes



Upstream shared
responsibility



Direct and
flexible funding

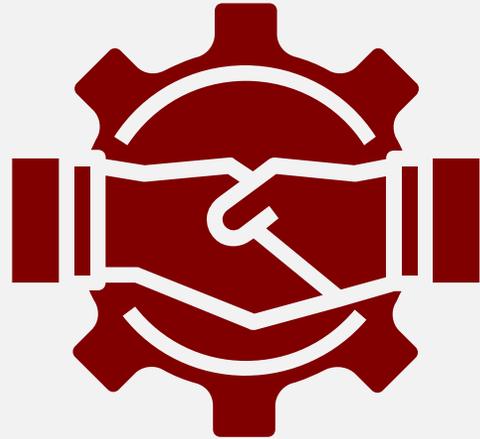


Policy changes



Awareness and
access

Final Recommendations Based on Survey Findings



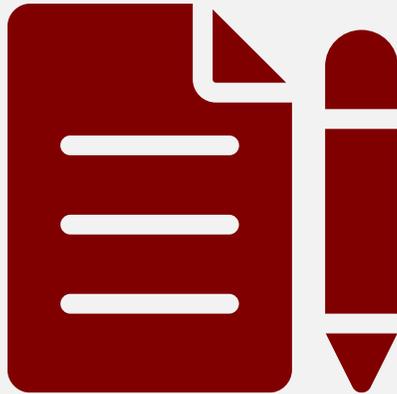
Establish joint human services leadership commitment to **shared responsibility for upstream prevention** of child maltreatment & child welfare involvement.

Final Recommendations Based on Survey Findings



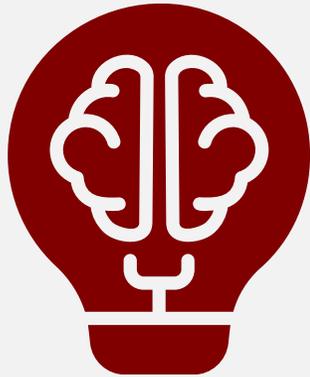
Increase direct & flexible federal funding to meet family economic and concrete support needs.

Final Recommendations Based on Survey Findings



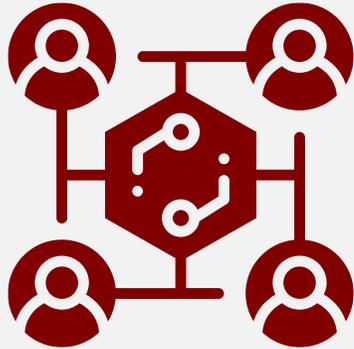
Revise policies & practices that contribute to unnecessary child welfare system involvement.

Final Recommendations Based on Survey Findings



Promote increased understanding of the relationship between access to economic and concrete supports & reduced child welfare involvement and enhanced family stability and well-being.

Final Recommendations Based on Survey Findings



**Engage in national learning communities
& innovative demonstration
projects** focused on effective ways to
redesign human service systems.

USING ECONOMIC AND CONCRETE SUPPORTS TO PREVENT CHILD WELFARE INVOLVEMENT POLICY BRIEF SERIES

PART 1: Child Welfare Leaders' Perspectives on Cross System Prevention



Economic and concrete supports are critical to ensuring the well-being and stability of families. These supports include a range of financial and tangible resources that reduce economic hardship and increase opportunity for economic mobility for families in need. Examples include food, clothing, housing, medical services, transportation, child care, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), WIC (Women, Infants, and Children), and cash assistance. Research demonstrates that increasing access to these supports is associated with reduced risk for child maltreatment and child welfare involvement ([Anderson et al., 2023](#); [ECS Policy Tool](#)).





Thank You!