Housing as a pathway to prevent maltreatment
The home is the wellspring of personhood. It is where our identity takes root and blossoms, where as children we imagine, play, and question, and as adolescents, we retreat and try.

- Matthew Desmond
  - Evicted
Well-Being in Child Welfare

A systems approach to improving child well-being

- Validated Screening
- Well-Being Assessment
- Functional Assessment
- Case Planning for Safety, Permanency, and Well-being
- Evidence-based/informed Intervention(s)
- Outcomes: Safety, Permanency, Well-Being

Progress Monitoring
social-emotional functioning
Assessing Well-Being in Child Welfare

- Reasons for Removal
- Mental Health Screening
- Trauma Screening
- Case Record Review
- Protective Factors
- Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
- Adverse Childhood Experiences

Child Assessment
- Emotional/Behavioral Functioning
- Cognitive Functioning
- Social Functioning
- Resilience
- Current Functioning
- Trauma History
- Physical Health & Development
- Physical Environment
- Protective Factors

Well-Being Assessment
- Housing Stability
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Current Mental Health Functioning
- Parent/Caregiver Assessment
- School Performance

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Neglect is the most common removal reason

2017 Removal Reasons

- Neglect: 75% (Virginia), 65% (US)
- Physical Abuse: 30%, 18%
- Sexual Abuse: 11%, 11%
- Medical Neglect: 2%, 2%
- Psychological Maltreatment: 1%, 6%
- Other: 0%, 7%

Legend: Virginia, US
Housing Instability in Child Welfare

81% of parents with children entering foster care report historical or current housing instability*

Prevalence of Housing Instability in Child Welfare

- Crowding: 75%
- Homelessness History: 45%
- Eviction History: 36%
- Homeless at Removal (mothers): 16%
- Homeless at Removal (all): 12%
ACEs & Housing Instability in Child Welfare

- 0-1 ACE:
  - % w/Eviction Hx: 26%
  - % w/Homelessness Hx: 31%
  - % w/Crowding Hx: 63%

- 2-3 ACEs:
  - % w/Eviction Hx: 34%
  - % w/Homelessness Hx: 34%
  - % w/Crowding Hx: 70%

- 4+ ACEs:
  - % w/Eviction Hx: 46%
  - % w/Homelessness Hx: 59%
  - % w/Crowding Hx: 83%
Parent ACEs: Home Visiting & Child Welfare

- One or more ACEs:
  - Milwaukee and Racine Home Visiting Sample: 81%
  - Milwaukee Child Welfare Sample: 84%

- Four or more ACEs:
  - Milwaukee and Racine Home Visiting Sample: 36%
  - Milwaukee Child Welfare Sample: 40%

Mersky, 2016
The response to stress in adulthood is based on the foundation of early childhood experiences.

Adversity in childhood undercuts bandwidth and impairs executive functioning, resulting in more automatic responses to stress.
“Stable housing is a foundation for family stability, not merely a reflection of it.”

Cunningham, 2014
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Families Homelessness on a given night</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless students</td>
<td>18,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Evictions</td>
<td>51,821</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:**
- *Community point-in-time counts* conducted on a given night in January 2018, as reported by Continuums of Care to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- **Children and youth who experienced homelessness at any point during the 2016-2017 school year, as reported by public schools to the U.S. Department of Education**
- ***This research uses data from The Eviction Lab at Princeton University, a project directed by Matthew Desmond and designed by Ashley Gromis, Lavar Edmonds, James Hendrickson, Katie Krywokulski, Lillian Leung, and Adam Porton. The Eviction Lab is funded by the JPB, Gates, and Ford Foundations as well as the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. More information is found at evictionlab.org.***
- **** National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2019 Annual Report, [https://reports.nlhh.org/gap](https://reports.nlhh.org/gap)
Programmatic interventions help people beat the odds.
Systemic interventions can help change their odds.

- Karen Pittman
Systems definition

A system is a configuration of interacting, interdependent parts that are connected through a web of relationships, forming a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts (Holland, 1998)
Systemic Interventions

Drivers
- Authority
- Ideas & Knowledge
- Structure
- Communications
- Policy & Regulation
- Relationships
- Resource Flows
- Competencies

Behavior Changes

Population Level Outcomes

Mark Cabaj, Here to There Consulting Inc
Starting in 2016, the HOMES Initiative vision was to increase awareness of the impact of housing instability on the health and well-being of children, making housing instability a children’s health issue. Collaboratively create evidence informed solutions that address housing needs of families in our programs.
HOMES Strategies

- **Authority**: Influence leaderships, raise awareness
- **Ideas & Knowledge**: Identify best available evidence-based practice and policies in the child welfare and children’s hospital systems.
- **Policy & Regulation**: Advocate for policy changes to support changes in resource flows.
- **Resource Flows**: Identify and obtain funding for new housing focused initiatives.
- **Structures**: Create relationship with existing actors in the housing system to inform activities, create collaborative projects, and/or jointly advocate for policy changes.
- **Communications**: Develop/adopt programs or practices that change practice on how we identify barriers to housing stability and work with families to resolve those barriers.
- **Relationships**: Make housing a child health issue, advance possible solutions, and garner support for implementing solutions.
- **Competencies**: Create best practices around assessing for housing instability, create norms around how housing instability impact executive functioning, and advance housing first principles.
Thank you!

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Co-Director, Institute for Child and Family Well-Being

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