



# Using Implementation Science to Scale-Up the Prevention and Intervention Work of the Children's Bureau

**Congressional Briefing**

**Moving Successfully from Prevention Science to Policy:  
Practical Lessons Learned**

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# Presentation Overview

- Overview of the Children's Bureau
- CB and Implementation Science Timeline
- Discretionary and Formula Grant Programs
- Technical Assistance and Capacity Building
- Opportunities and Challenges



# Children's Bureau (CB)

- Partners with federal, state, tribal and local agencies to improve the overall health and well-being of our nation's children and families.
- Provides support and guidance to programs that focus on:
  - **Strengthening families** and preventing child abuse and neglect
  - **Protecting children** when abuse or neglect has occurred
  - Ensuring that every child and youth has **a permanent family** or family connection

[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb)



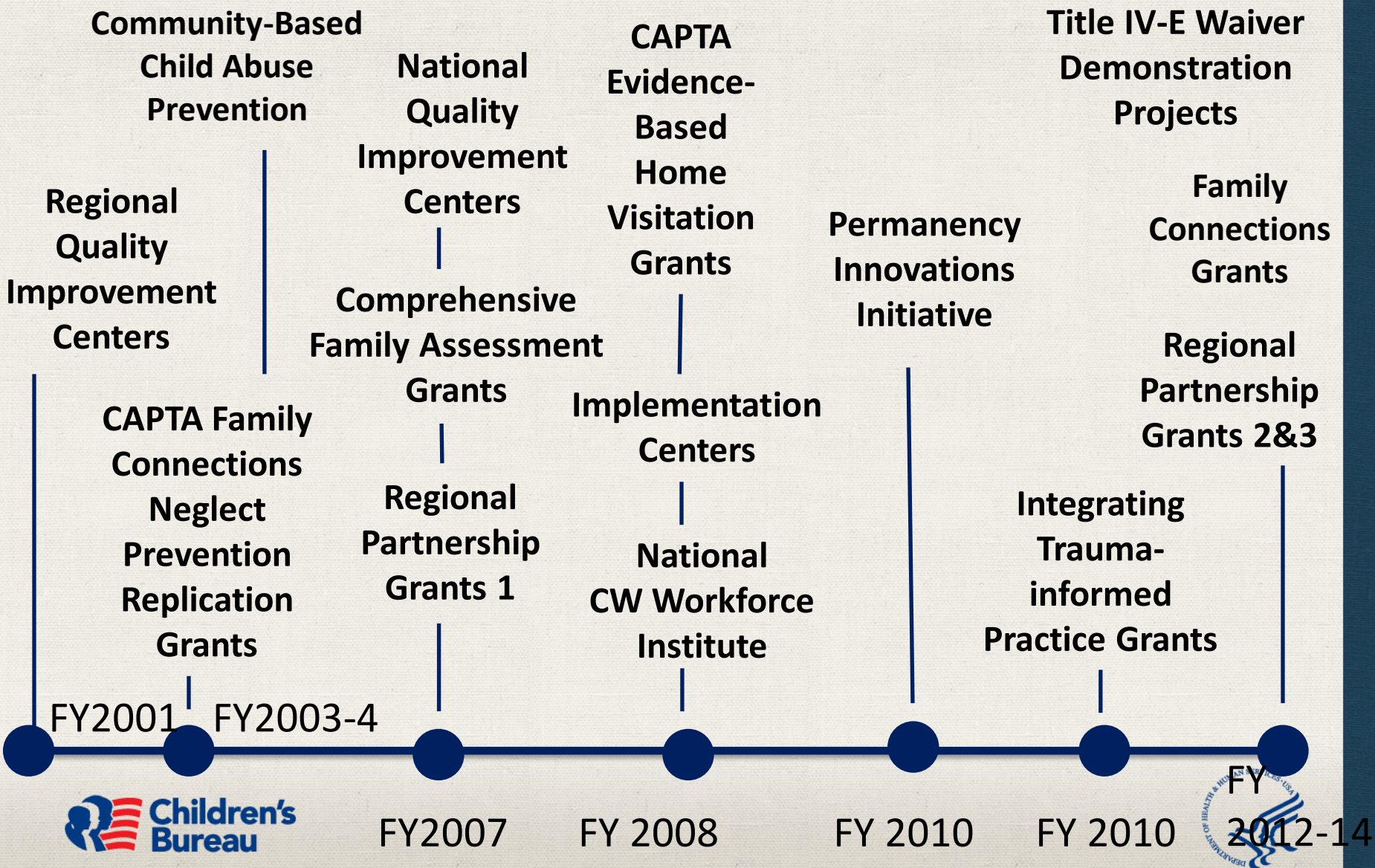
# Children's Bureau

To achieve our goals, we participate in a variety of projects, including:

- **Providing guidance** on federal law, policy and program regulations
- **Funding essential services**, helping states and tribes operate every aspect of their child welfare systems
- **Supporting innovation** through competitive, peer-reviewed grants for research and program development (more than 200 different grant programs)
- **Offering training and technical assistance** to improve child welfare service delivery
- **Monitoring child welfare services** to help states and tribes achieve positive outcomes for children and families
- **Sharing research** to help child welfare professionals improve their services

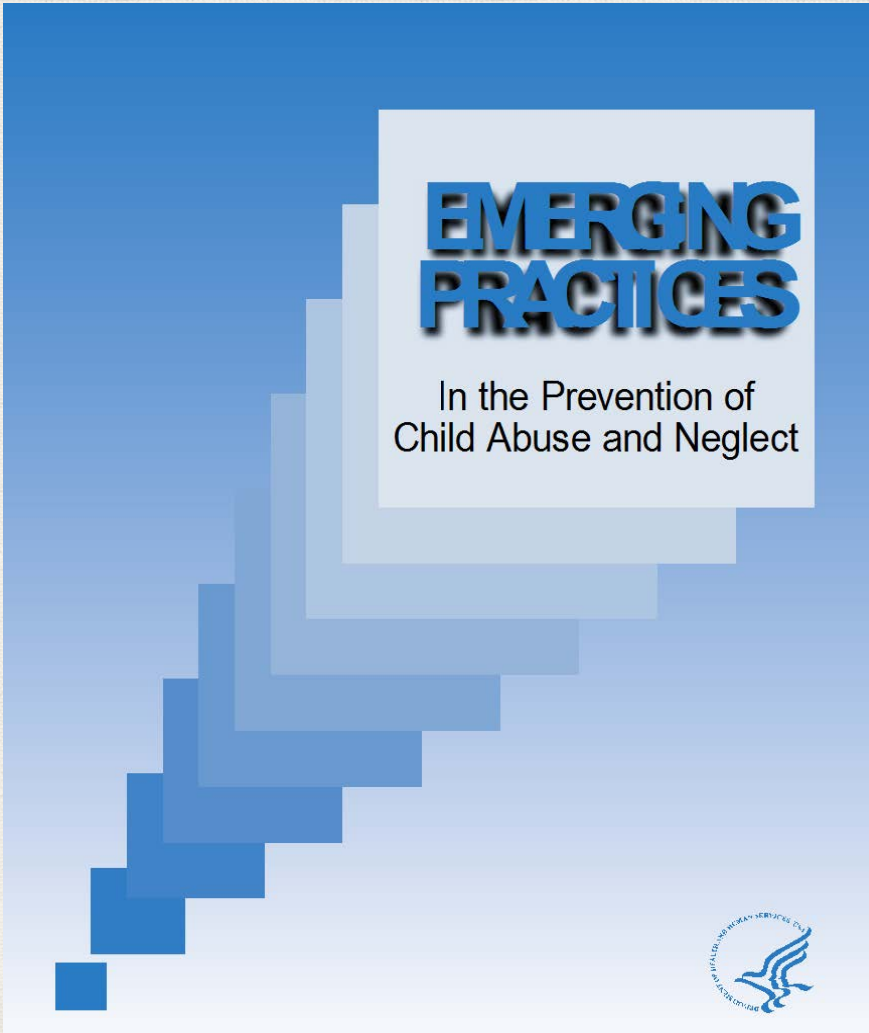


# CB and Implementation Science Timeline





# Family Connections Neglect Prevention Replications



Report was initial effort to identify best practices/model child abuse prevention programs

- Demonstrated Effective Programs
- Reported Effective Programs
- Innovative Programs

## Family Connections Neglect Replication Grants (2003)

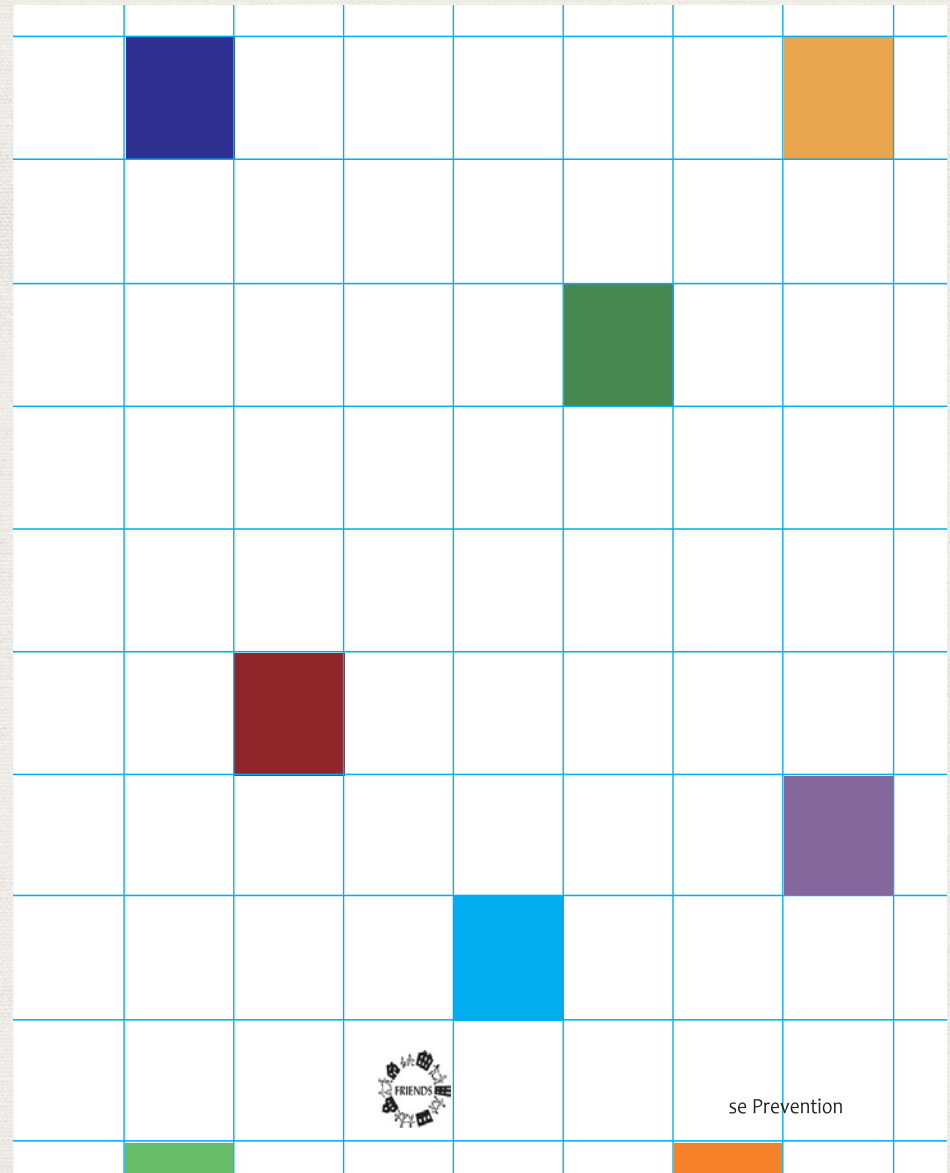
- 8 grants awarded nationwide
- Replication of prevention program with fidelity measures
- Cost evaluation and cross-site evaluation

# Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program

*Performance Measure (since 2005):*

- Increase the percentage of CBCAP total funding that supports evidence-based and evidence-informed child abuse prevention programs and practices.

Visit: [www.friendsnrc.org](http://www.friendsnrc.org)







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## Supporting Evidence-Based Home Visiting to Prevent Child Maltreatment

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### *Cross-site Evaluation Questions*

1. **Systems Change:** How did grantees build infrastructure capacity to implement with fidelity, scale up, and sustain EBHV programs?
2. **Fidelity to the Evidence-Based Model:** Were the home visiting programs implemented and delivered with fidelity?
3. **Costs of Home Visiting Programs:** How much does the delivery and support of each home visiting program cost?
4. **Process Study:** How did grantees plan and implement their grant initiative activities?

For more information, visit: [www.supportingebhv.org](http://www.supportingebhv.org)

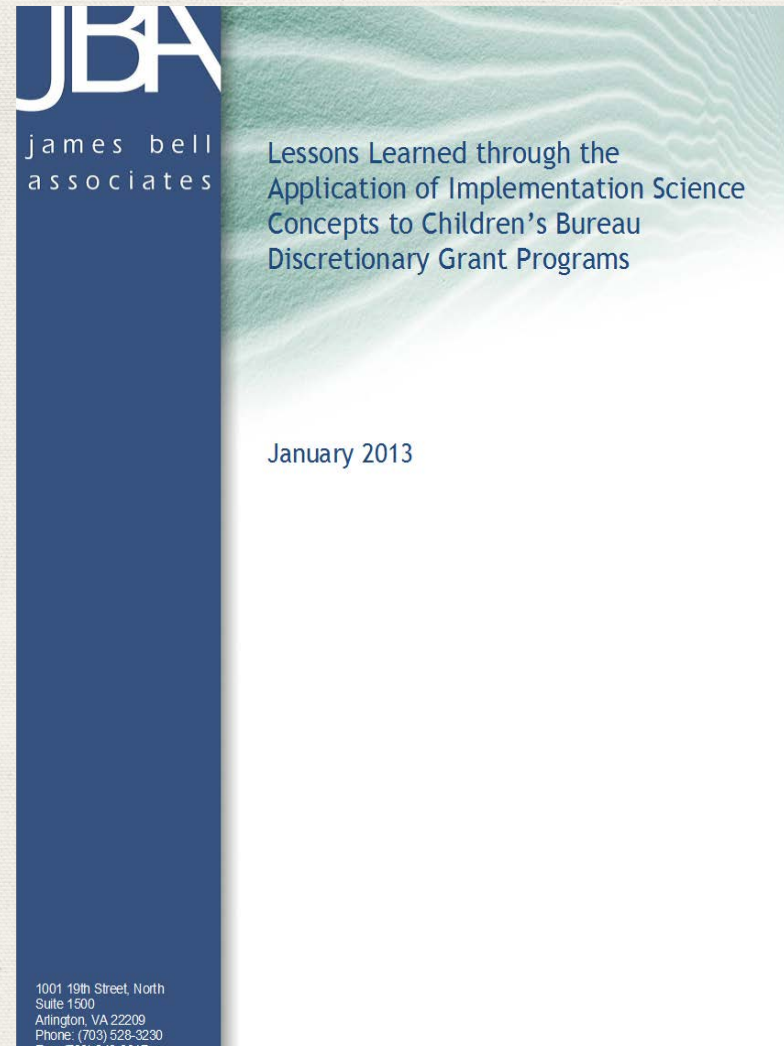


# Implementation and Discretionary Grants

A qualitative study in 2011 that involved document reviews, site visits, and conference calls with 17 CB grantees that demonstrated initial evidence of successful program implementation.

See:

[http://www.jbassoc.com/ReportsPublications/CB\\_ImpScienceReport\\_Final\\_012413.pdf](http://www.jbassoc.com/ReportsPublications/CB_ImpScienceReport_Final_012413.pdf)





# Factors for Implementation Successes

- Identify and Empower a Project Champion within the Grantee Organization
- Build New or Enhance Existing Community Partnerships and Commitment
- Hire or Assign Project Staff Members with Appropriate Skills and Characteristics
- Build Sustainability into the Project Design and Implementation Process



# Child Welfare Implementation Centers (FY2008-2013)

“The principal goal of each [center] is to facilitate the institutionalization of principles, policies, and proven or promising practices that a State or Tribe has adopted.”

-- Cooperative Agreements for Child Welfare Technical Assistance Implementation Centers [HHS-2008-ACF-ACYF-CO-0058] FY2008

- 5 regional Implementation Centers (IC) to work with States and Tribes
- ICs supported 25 “implementation projects” that were designed to build the capacities of states and tribes to implement change initiatives more effectively.
- Since 2010, most of CB’s national TA providers have been tracking and coding their service delivery by implementation stage and/or by implementation driver for internal purposes to better understand its service delivery and identify areas that need improvement.



# Permanency Innovations Initiative (PII)

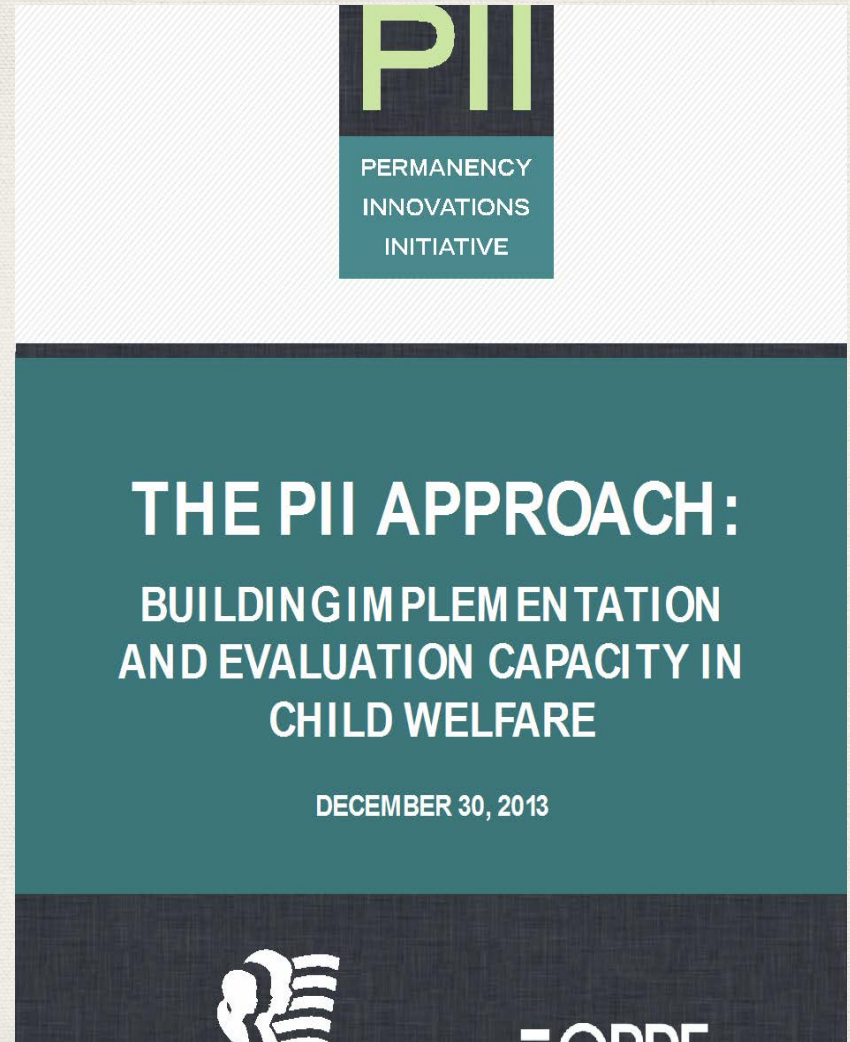
## Six Cooperative Agreements

Implement innovative intervention strategies to reduce long term foster stays and improve child outcomes

## Technical Assistance Contract (awarded to JBS with NIRN as subcontractor)

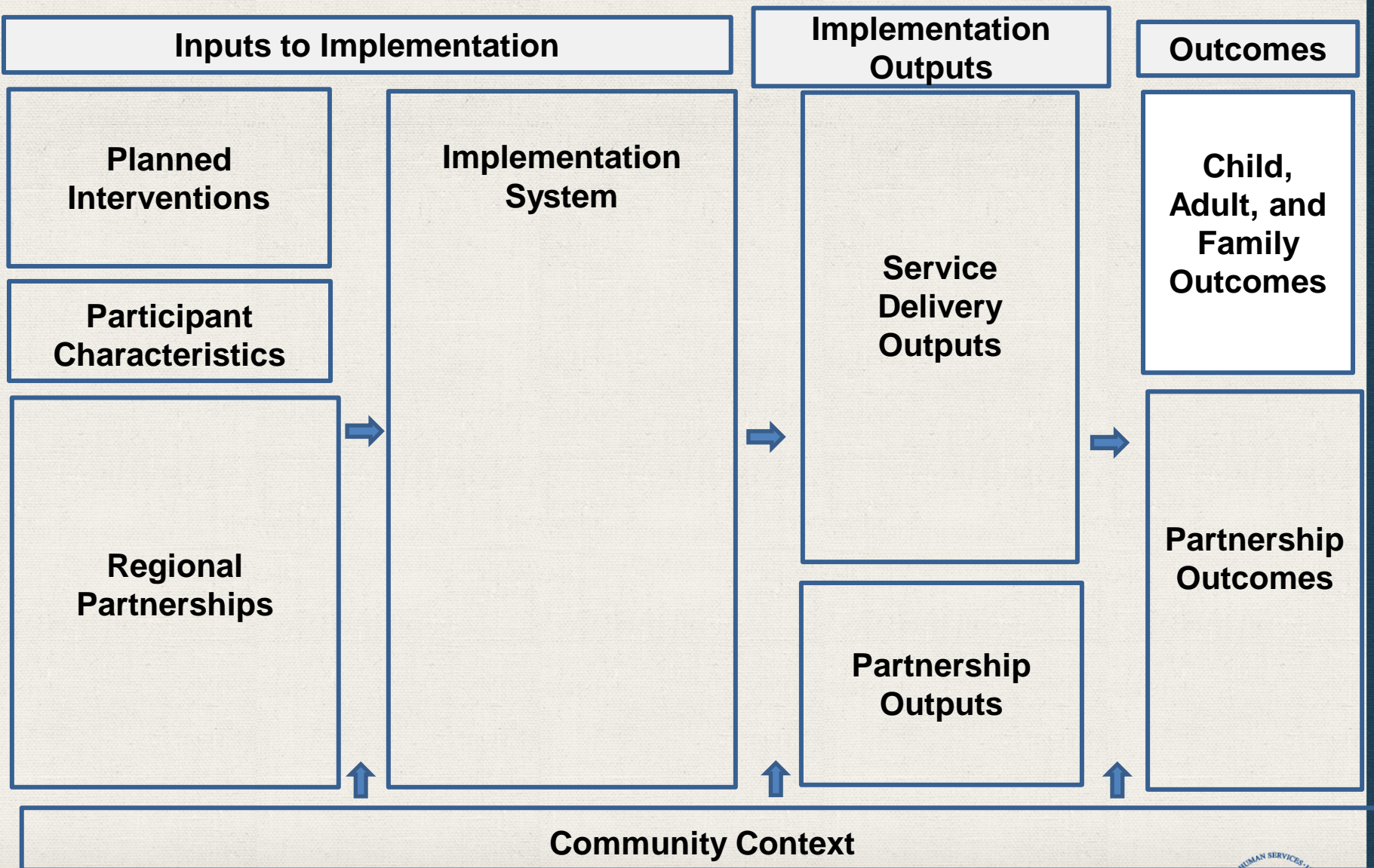
Use tenets of implementation science, combined with child welfare programmatic expertise, to improve implementation, effectiveness, fidelity and sustainability of PII interventions

## Evaluation Contract





# Regional Partnership Grants Evaluation Framework





# Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

Improving capacity building investments:

- Using evidence-informed strategies
- Moving from reactive TA to proactive and strategic consultation
- Building capacity in a series of implementation science-informed processes and steps to facilitate and support improvements in child welfare practice
- Devoting greater attention and resources to implementation milestones, outcomes and evaluation



# Opportunities and Challenges

- Need for model adherence (fidelity) *and* adaptability at local level (flexibility)
- Push for evidence-based programs *and* limited research in critical areas of child welfare practice
- Meeting the immediate needs of the service population (program-driven projects) *and* urgency to build evidence about effective practice for the broader field (research-driven projects)
- Assessing outcomes/impact of individual programs *and* outcomes of collaborative efforts and systems change initiatives



# Opportunities and Challenges

- Need for sufficient time and resources to test promising interventions *and* pressure to scale evidence-based or promising practice to improve performance
- Multiple conditions (including readiness) and capacities upon which successful implementation is believed to be dependent *and* limited consensus about which to prioritize and how to best assess them
- Demands for implementation-focused technical assistance (TA) *and* sparse evidence for effective TA approaches, few proven implementation strategies, and limited consultant capacity (expertise and resources for implementation) in the field



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[www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov)

