

Northstar Care for Children

Supporting safe, permanent families for children

Child Welfare Overview

Leech Lake Band
White Earth Nation
November 20, 2014



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Questions

- Ask any of us at any time.
- If you aren't able to get your questions answered now, please send them in.
- We sometimes post the answers to questions on the DHS website under:

Northstar Care for Children FAQ

- Send questions to:
northstar.care@state.mn.us



Will this affect my work?

- **Intake/screening**
- **Placing Worker**
- **Case manager**
- **Licensing worker**
- **Supervisor**
- **CMH Worker**
- **Developmental Disabilities Worker**
- **Juvenile Corrections Officer**
- **Accountant / Fiscal staff**



YES

Agenda

1. Background

2. What's changing?

- Eligibility Determination
- Resource Families
- Permanency
- Uniform Assessment (Minnesota Assessment of Parenting Children and Youth or **MAPCY**)
- Unified Benefits for Children
- Federal, State and Local Fiscal Shares

3. Agency Responsibilities

4. What's next?

Agenda

NEXT

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Why this? What for? How do we know?

1. BACKGROUND



BACKGROUND

Previously benefits went down

- Northstar Care for Children is designed to increase the likelihood that young people who can't be reunified can acquire a new permanent family.
- Previously, when Minnesota foster parents wanted to become a child's permanent family through adoption or transfer of legal custody, the benefits went way down.
- Generally to half or less.



BACKGROUND

Northstar Care addresses the barrier

- The benefit discrepancy was a serious barrier, particularly American Indian children, African American children, sibling groups, and older children.
- Northstar Care eliminates that benefit discrepancy for young people age 6 and over – same benefits for foster care, kinship, and adoptions.
- It unifies benefits for children age 5 and younger as well, although the benefits are not uniform.



BACKGROUND

Moving toward permanent families



- Northstar Care is about assisting young people who can't be reunified in getting a new permanent family.
- As a result, it deals with *family foster homes* and *supervised independent living* settings.
- It makes no changes in group homes, residential treatment, or other similar out-of-home placement settings.

Northstar Care...

- **Effective January 1, 2015**
- **One program**
 - **Focuses on the needs of children**
 - **Supports permanency for children**
- **Consolidates**
 - **Child Family Foster Care**
 - **Northstar Kinship Assistance**
 - **Northstar Adoption Assistance**
- **Unifies**
 - **Unified structure of payment**
 - **Uniform assessment for determining additional benefits**

Northstar Care Goals

Improve Permanency Outcomes

- **Reduce**

- number of children who leave foster care without a permanent family
- racial disparities among the children who remain in long-term foster care
- benefit discrepancies between permanency options
- length of stay for children in out-of-home care

- **Increase**

- percentage of children adopted within two years
- monthly basic benefit for most children who enter the foster care system

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- **Unified Benefits for Children**
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3. Agency Responsibilities

4. What's next?

What's different? How is it different?

2. WHAT'S CHANGING?





**Northstar Foster Care
Northstar Kinship Assistance
Northstar Adoption Assistance.**

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION



Legacy Benefits

- **Children currently receiving benefits from a Legacy program continue to receive those benefits**
 - **Legacy Child Foster Care**
 - **Legacy Adoption Assistance**
 - **Relative Custody Assistance**
 - **Minnesota Permanency Demonstration Project**

Moving into Northstar

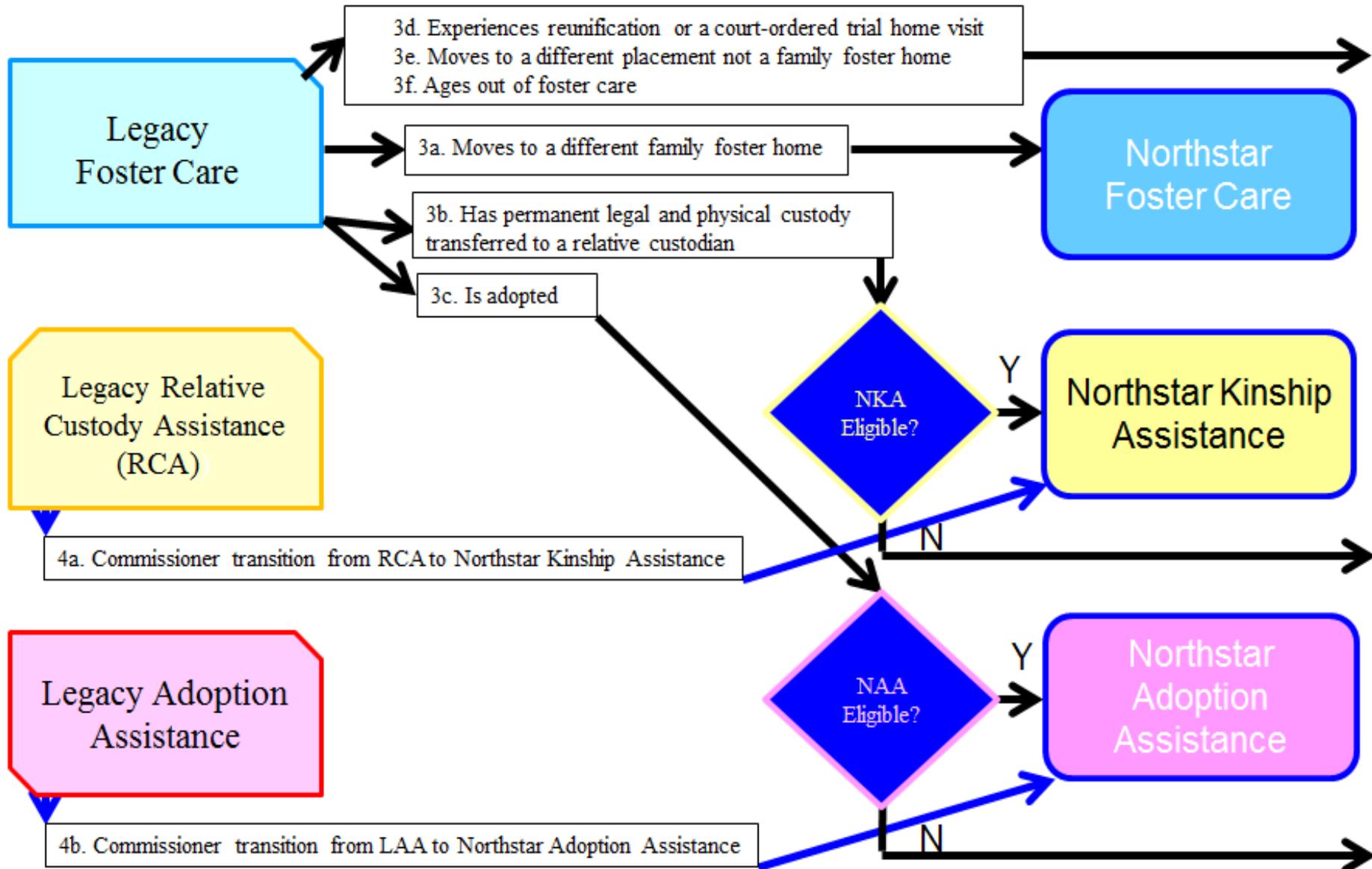
- **New placements after 01/01/15**
- **Status Changes**
 - **Foster home to foster home**
 - **Foster home to NKA**
 - **Foster home to NAA**
 - **Foster Home to EFC-SIL**
 - **NKA to NAA**



Commissioner Transitions

- **A limited number of children will transition each quarter onto Northstar Care from a legacy permanency program**
 - **No Leech Lake or White Earth kids will transition during 2015 while we study it**
 - **Must be by agreement of tribe and DHS**
 - **RCA kids will transition first**
 - **Legacy Adoption Assistance next to the extent funding is available**
 - **Minnesota Permanency Demonstration Project last**

4 Phase-in Processes: Status & Commissioner Transitions



Northstar Eligible

- **Child Foster Care setting**
 - Family foster homes (tribal or state licensed)
 - Shelter in family foster homes
 - Therapeutic foster homes
 - Foster homes licensed through a private foster care agency
 - Corporate foster homes (not group homes)
 - Youth (18 up to age 21) in extended foster care
 - with a caregiver
 - In a supervised independent living setting (EFC-SIL)
- **Permanency Dispositions**
 - Permanent transfer of legal and physical custody to relative custodian(s)
 - Adoption by adoptive parent(s)
 - Including customary adoption and transfer of legal custody in tribal court

Northstar Ineligible Settings

- Respite care
- Northstar Care for Children ***never*** includes group homes, residential treatment centers, and similar settings
 - *In these settings, rates paid to the setting are determined by contract rather than through the MAPCY, and they will not be included in Northstar Care for Children.*

Key Points for Eligibility in the 3 Components

- ***Foster Care***

- Home must be licensed or getting licensed (6 months) or other special status situations

- ***Kinship Assistance***

- Child lived with the prospective relative custodian as a licensed foster parent for six months.

- ***Adoption Assistance***

- Northstar Care doesn't change eligibility
- special needs determination

Eligibility is Specific

- Northstar Care eligibility is based on Federal Title IV-E regulations
- Title IV-E regulations vary eligibility
 - Northstar Foster Care
 - Northstar Adoption
 - Northstar Kinship



Eligibility is Specific cont.

- Eligibility for one program does not guarantee eligibility for another
 - Northstar Foster Care eligibility \neq Northstar Kinship Assistance
 - Northstar Foster Care eligibility \neq Northstar Adoption Assistance.
- Some children will be eligible for Northstar Kinship Assistance but not for Northstar Adoption Assistance, or vice versa.

Northstar Foster Care Eligibility

- **The home must meet *at least one* of the following criteria:**
 - **Child Foster Care license**
 - Tribal or state license
 - Currently licensed
 - in the process of becoming licensed (6 month time allotment)
 - **Pre-Adoptive Placement**
 - **Extended Foster Care - Supervised Independent Living setting**

Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility

- Northstar Kinship Assistance is for children ***leaving foster care*** due to a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to a relative.
 - Relative definition according to MN Statute Section 260C.007, subd.27
- The financially responsible agency typically completes eligibility for Northstar Kinship Assistance, but the eligibility determination is approved or denied by DHS.
 - *Eligibility determination process is built into SSIS*

Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility

- A young person must have lived with the prospective relative custodian for six consecutive months while that custodian has been licensed for child foster care
- If there are disqualifications as a result of a background study:
 - Both county and DHS must expedite any requests for set-asides or variances for relatives
 - Tribes may wish to consider similar provisions for tribal licensing (they may already be in place)

Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility

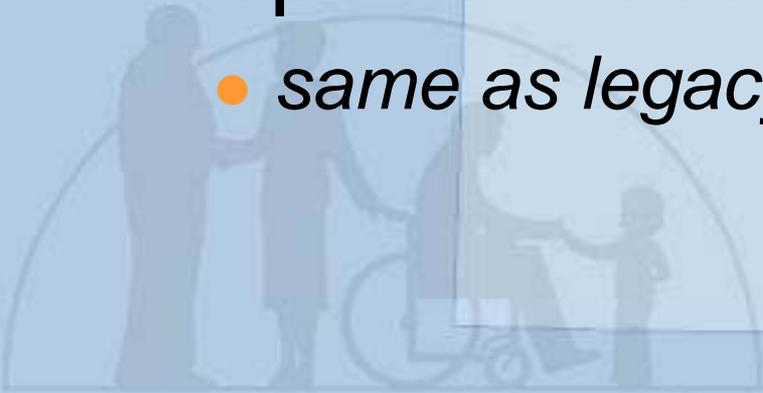
- DHS may grant an **exemption** to the requirement that the young person must have lived with the prospective relative custodian for six consecutive months while that custodian has been a licensed foster parent
 - Will be *unusual*
 - An exemption can **never** be granted for a background study or for a permanent barrier due to a background study.
 - If granted an exemption, and otherwise eligible for Title IV-E, child would be not get non-Title IV-E NKA

Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility

- Final court action must be ***after*** the Benefit Agreement is fully signed
- For eligibility, the court must include required findings in the court order
- The court may order a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody *even if the child will not be eligible for Northstar Kinship Assistance*

Eligible for Northstar Adoption Assistance

- The prospective adoptive parent(s) must meet the background study requirements.
- The young person **must** have a “special needs” determination
 - *same as legacy Adoption Assistance*



"Special needs" determination for NAA

- **Cannot or should not return home**
- **Barrier to Adoption:**
 - **Has a specific factor or condition that makes it reasonable to believe the child cannot be adopted without providing adoption assistance**
- **Reasonable efforts were made to place the child for adoption without providing adoption assistance**



**Licensing Issues. Background checks.
Relatives. Matching. Support.**

RESOURCE FAMILIES



Placement Matters

- **The placement of a child is critical decision**
- **Collaboration is needed**
- **Changes**
 - **Background Study**
 - **Home Study**



Background Check Changes: Relatives

- Background Study results
 - If the results are a ***disqualification*** but ***not a permanent barrier***
 - the county and DHS ***must*** expedite any requests for a set-aside or variance.
 - Tribes may wish to consider similar provisions for tribal licensing (they may already be in place)

Background Check Changes: Relative and TPLPC

- When a relative is a licensed child foster parent **and** moving toward a transfer of legal custody of a young person placed in their home:
 - The background study completed for foster care licensing may be used for Northstar Kinship Assistance eligibility.

NOTE: The background study must have been completed on or after July 1, 2007. (Adam Walsh)

Background Check Changes: CFC to Adoption

- The background study completed for foster care licensing may be used for **both** the Adoption Placement Agreement **and** for Northstar Adoption Assistance eligibility.
 - The background study must have been completed on or after July 1, 2007

No New Background Study Needed at Adoption (with some conditions)

No new background study at adoption is required when a prospective adoptive home is a licensed foster home, if:

- Commissioner's designated format or tribal equivalent was used for the home study for foster care, including a background study on each prospective adoptive parent and all required household members.
- License holder was licensed after July 1, 2007.
- Home is in good standing (for state licenses, this means that the commissioner has not issued a licensing sanction in the last three years).
- The agency determines the individual needs of the child are being met by the prospective adoptive parent.



**Northstar Kinship Assistance
Northstar Adoption Assistance**

PERMANENCY



Adoption Preferred to Kinship

- Adoption is the preferred permanency option for a child who cannot return home
- The court can order transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to a relative when adoption is not in the child's best interests.

Kinship Placement Agreement (KPA)

- The Kinship Placement Agreement is a new requirement.
- The specified DHS format is now built into SSIS.
- That's the simplest way to proceed.
- However, DHS is open to proposals for alternative formats from tribes.
- Would need to cover all the needed points.
- So far no alternate formats have been proposed or approved.

Kinship Placement Agreement (KPA)

- KPA documents:
 - that reunification and adoption are not appropriate permanency options
 - that there is a strong attachment between the child and the prospective custodian and the prospective custodian has a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child
 - the prospective relative custodian's understanding of the legal and financial difference between adoption and transfer of permanent legal and physical custody
 - if the child is age 14 or older, that the child was consulted about the permanency options

TPLPC Petition and KPA

- Petition for TPLPC filed with tribal or state court must be accompanied by a signed Kinship Placement Agreement (KPA)
- KPA must be signed by
 - Legally responsible agency
 - Prospective relative custodian(s)
 - Does NOT require DHS signature

Northstar Assistance Benefit Agreements Requirement

- The Northstar Assistance Benefit Agreement ***must*** be signed
 - prior to the finalization of adoption by the court OR the TPLPC.
 - *Or the child will not be eligible to receive Northstar Care*

Court May Defer TPLPC Order

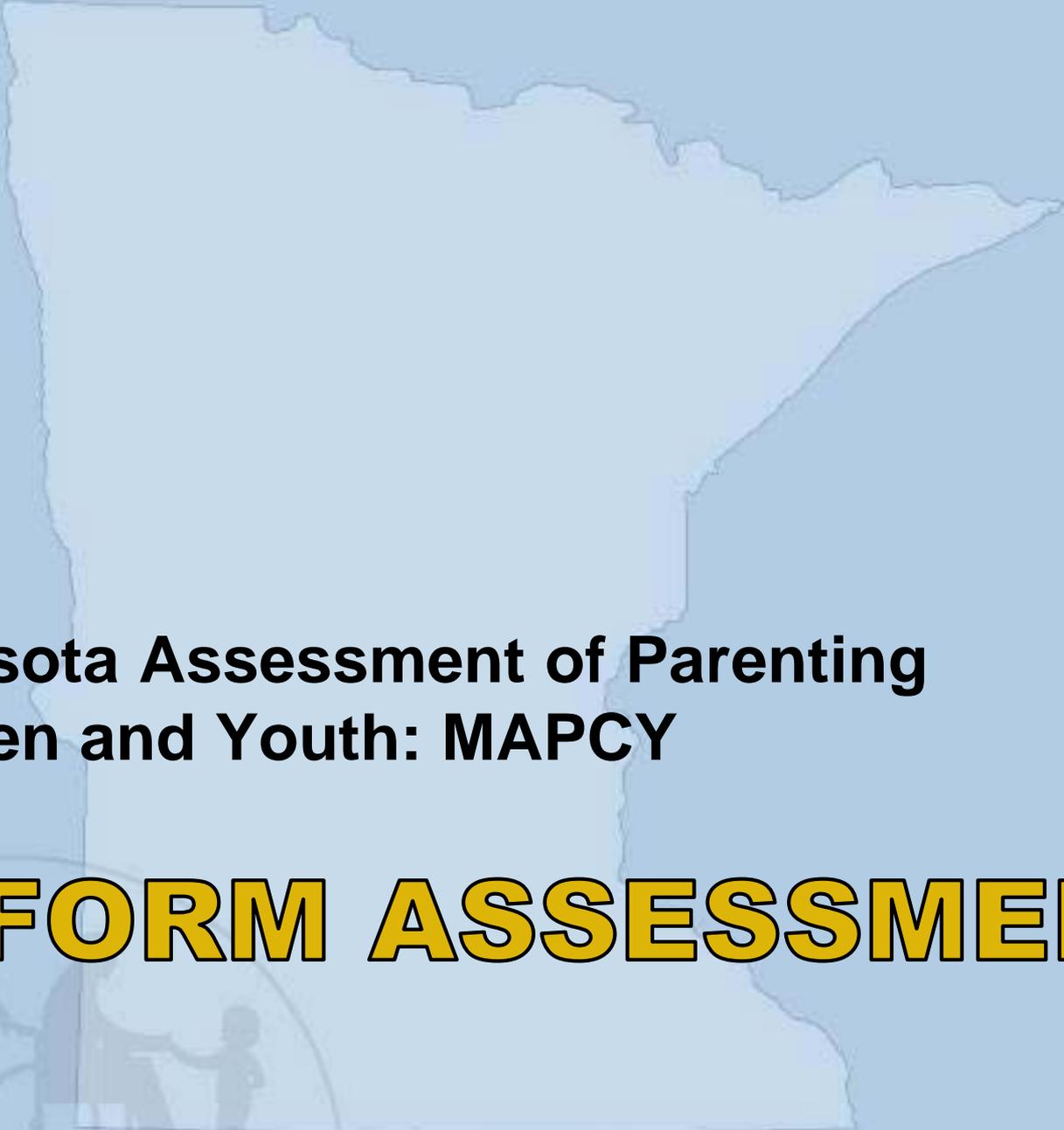
- The court may defer entering the order for transfer of permanent legal and physical custody when deferring is necessary to determine
 - Eligibility for Northstar benefits and
 - To obtain a fully executed Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreement

TPLPC Required Court Findings

1. The relative(s) are fit, willing, and suitable for the transfer of permanent legal and physical custody of this child;
2. Transfer of permanent legal and physical custody is in the child's best interests;
3. Adoption is not in the child's best interests based on the determinations in the kinship placement agreement required under Minnesota Statutes, section 256N.22, subdivision 2;
4. Either:
 - a. The agency made efforts to discuss adoption with the child's parent(s), or
 - b. The agency did not make efforts to discuss adoption and the reasons why efforts were not made;
5. The reasons to separate siblings, if applicable.

No Findings, Not eligible, Court can order TPLPC

- **If required findings are not a part of the court documents**
 - **the child is not eligible for Northstar Kinship Assistance, even if otherwise eligible**
- **The court may order a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody**
 - **even if the child will not be eligible for Northstar Kinship Assistance *for any reason***



**Minnesota Assessment of Parenting
Children and Youth: MAPCY**

UNIFORM ASSESSMENT



Minnesota Assessment of Parenting Children and Youth

- **Uniform Assessment**
 - **Consistent & less subjective assessment tool**
- **1 tool determines supplemental benefit level for:**
 - **Northstar Foster Care**
 - **Northstar Kinship Assistance**
 - **Northstar Adoption Assistance**

MAPCY Assessment

- **Shifts the focus away from how “sick” the child or youth is**
- **Focus on what the young person needs and the parenting provided to meet those needs**
 - **child’s well-being, development, safety, and permanency**
 - **Parenting needed unique to the child**

MAPCY Timeframes

- **30 days**
- **6 months later**
- **Annual (foster care only)**
- **Change of legal status**
 - **Not required if only change is adoption or transfer of permanency legal and physical custody (TPLPC)**
- **Upon request**
- **No required reassessments in permanency**

Initial MAPCY Process

Child Foster Care Placement occurs

Entry of Placement in SSIS

Collaboration to Assess MAPCY

Entry of MAPCY into SSIS

Approval process of MAPCY

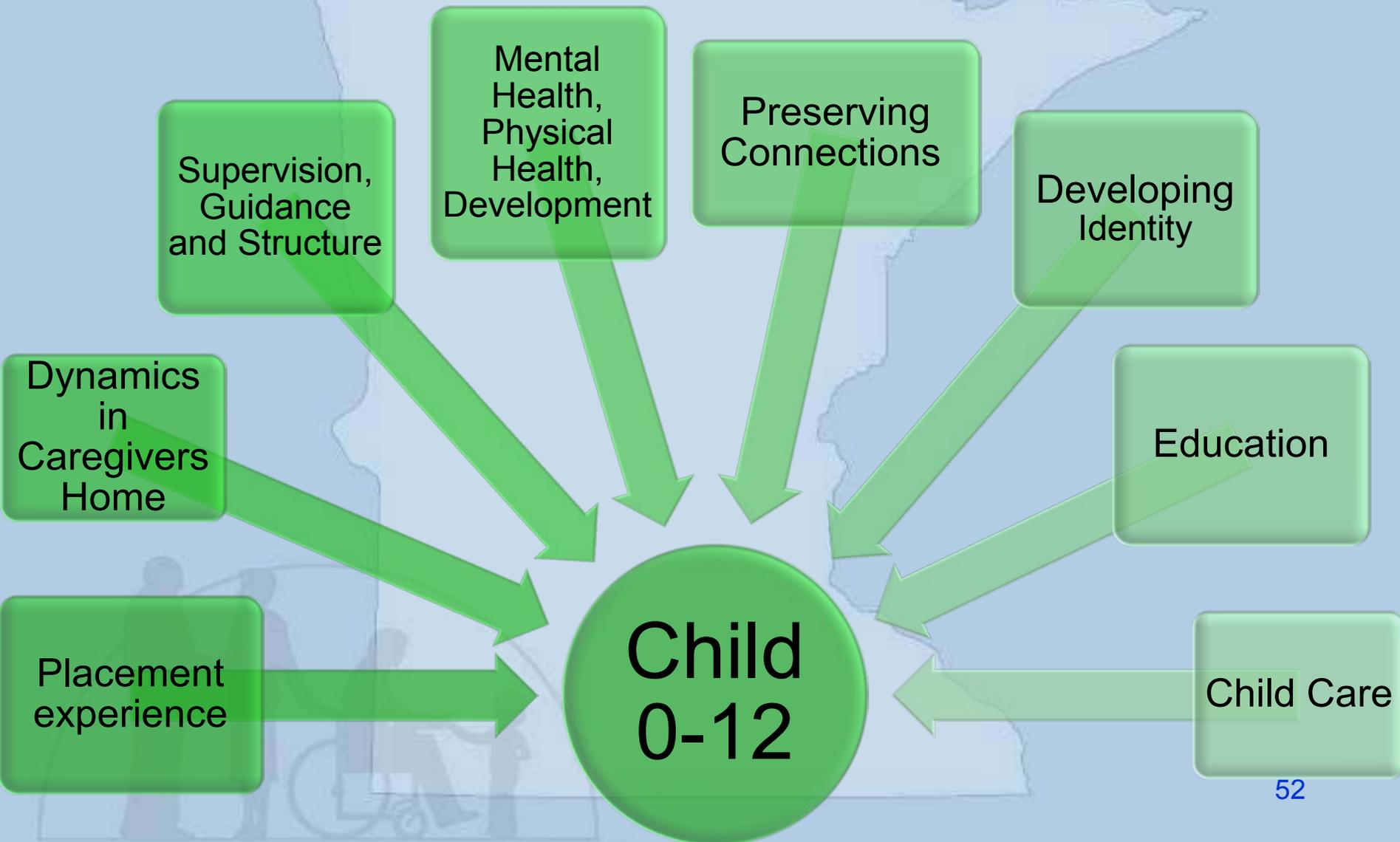
Assessment Structure

- **Domains**

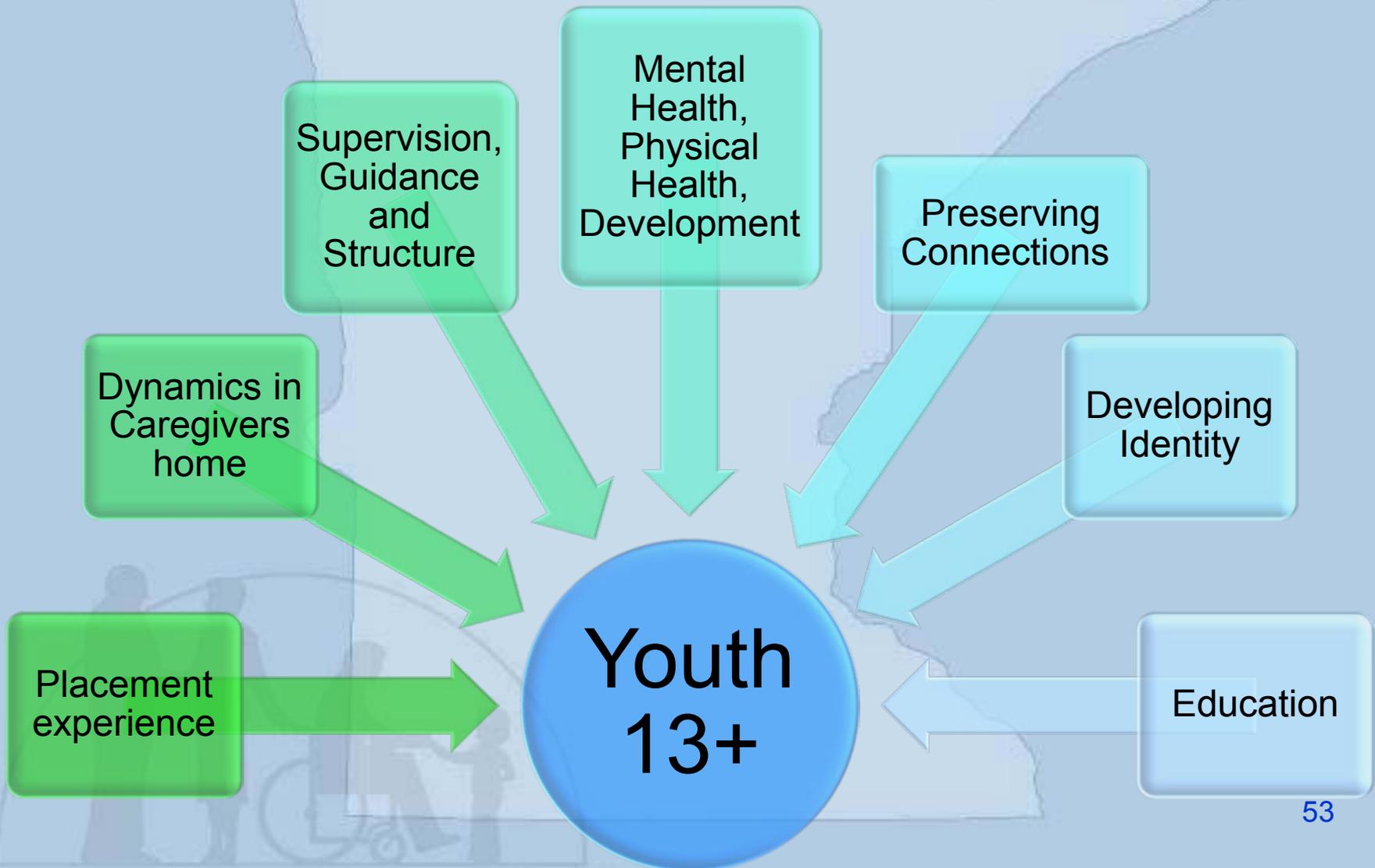
- **Needs of the young person**
- **Parenting provided to meet those needs**



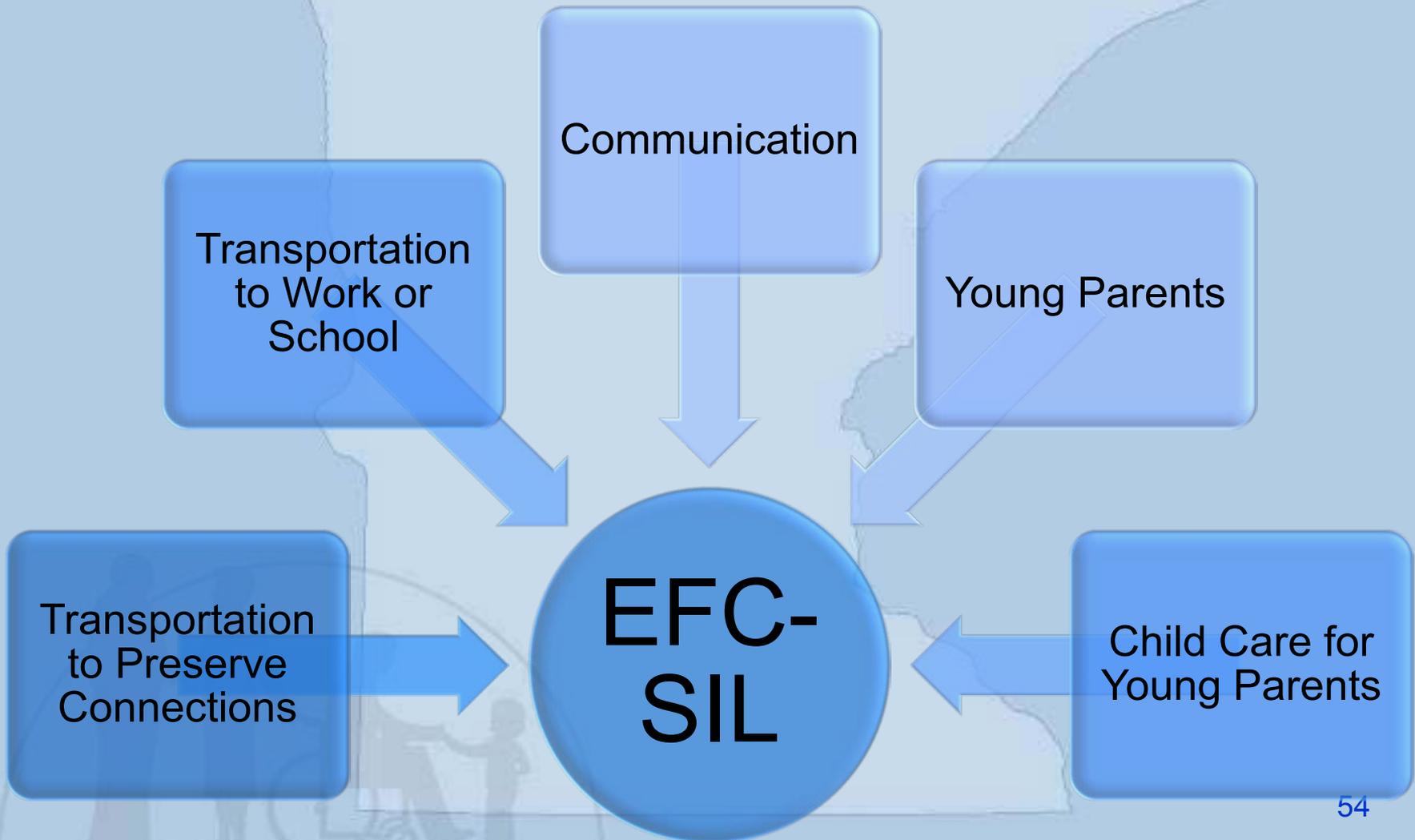
Assessment Domains



Assessment Domains



Assessment Domains



MAPCY Assessors

- **A MAPCY Assessor is not a paperwork processor**
- **Assessors...**
 - **Are responsible for accurately completing the MAPCY tool to reflect the needs of the young person and the parenting that is occurring**
 - **Should have significant knowledge about the child, their needs, parenting provided, and other important information about the situation.**
 - **Should gather Input from the young person's team (caregivers, licensing worker, GAL's, parents, child, etc. is necessary**
- ***Case Workers may be in the best position to complete a MAPCY assessment, or a Specialized Assessor***

Assessor Issues

- **An agency should have at least one Assessor and one “backup” Assessor (more may be useful)**
- **An individual staffer cannot assess and approve the same assessment**
 - staff may have both roles in SSIS, but cannot perform both for one MAPCY
- **Suggested best practice time frames**
 - Assess within 30 days of placement
 - Approvers review within 5 days

MAPCY Approvers

- **Approvers should not just rubber stamp the paperwork**
- **Approvers Should be:**
 - Should be in a position to disagree with an assessor
 - Be able to exercise good judgment
- **Approvers:**
 - Review the child's needs and parenting indicators
 - To ensure the child's well-being needs are met, and establishes consistency within the agency ratings to support similar value
 - Provide support, guidance and can question the Assessor
 - Ensures documentation of high child-needs, high parenting

Approver Issues

- **An agency should have at least one Approver and one “backup” Approver**
- **Quality assurance begins with the MAPCY Approver**
 - **Be able to work toward agency-wide consistency among all Assessors and with other Approvers**
 - **Approver should be able to identify agency system issues related to the MAPCY**

Assessment in SSIS

Case Tree (Left):

- Young Sara S, SSIS Case #203579897
 - Case Details
 - Young George G CP Assessment 9/6/2013
 - Staff Assignments
 - Associated Workgroups
 - Child Maltreatment Report - FA
 - WG Change Log
 - Chronology
 - Participants
 - George G Young
 - Address/Phone/Email/State Detail
 - Adolescent Services
 - Name/Race
 - Relationship
 - Employment
 - Disability/Diagnosis/Substance
 - Health/Insurance
 - Medication/Checkup
 - CWB/Education/Infant and Toddler Intervention
 - CMH Screenings and Assessments
 - Court Actions
 - Permanency

Assessment Table (Top Right):

Type	Name
MAPCY Assessment	MAPCY - 08/01/2014
MAPCY Assessment	MAPCY - 08/02/2014
DOC Assessment	DOC Assessment - 07/01/2014

Assessment Form (Bottom Right):

Setup | Document | Scoring | Properties | Comments

No required fields needed to complete.

MAPCY: Youth Domains (Ages 13 and older, not EFC-SIL)

Description: Youth Assessment #1

Status: Agency approved | Complete Date: 07/22/2014 | Agency Approval Date: 07/22/2014 | Revision: 0

Extraordinary Levels

Status: Clarification needed | Complete Date: 07/22/2014 | Certification Date: 07/22/2014 | State Approval Date:

Document

Document: Youth Assessment #1

Agency

Agency: Test County Family Services

Agency name: Test County Family Services

Assessment Entry

Effective Date	Complete Date	Bus Org/Provider	Caregiver 1	Caregiver 2	Benefit Level	Status	Assessor
01/31/2014	01/15/2014	Annika & Lars Andersson Child Foster Care	Andersson, Lars L	Andersson, Anikka A	D	Pending agency approval	Woessner, Wendy A

Setup | Document | Scoring | Properties

A: Placement Experience

- Introduction
- Youth Needs
- Parenting Care and Attention

B: Dynamics in the Caregivers Home

- Introduction
- Youth Needs
- Parenting Care and Attention

C: Supervision, Guidance and Structure

- Introduction
- Youth Needs
- Parenting Care and Attention

D: Mental Health, Physical Health and Develop...

- Introduction
- Youth Needs
- Parenting Care and Attention

E: Preserving Connections

- Introduction
- Youth Needs

Introduction

YOUTH DOMAIN A: Placement Experience

Scope: This domain measures the actions and efforts of the caregiver(s) to provide a stable family for the child, making the young person part of the family, and improving the caregivers' parenting skills. This domain considers the number of foster homes, residential facilities, shelters, group homes, or correctional facilities the young person has been placed in while receiving mental health, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities or child welfare services. Placement does not include paid services provided to the young person, nor does it consider camp, informal family arrangements or respite as a placement.

Focus: Because the young person came to the caregivers' family, through the child welfare system, they have been removed from their family and need a sense of stability and home.

Parenting: For all young people, entering foster care disrupts daily life, home and family relationships. Young people who have experienced placement instability or re-entry need caregiver(s) who commit to the additional support, reassurance and understanding of the traumatic effect multiple moves have on a young person's development, ability to trust, and future family relationships. In this domain, parenting is about providing a stable home with long-term family relationships.

Special points: There are no special points available in this domain.

<< >>

MAPCY Levels

Monthly Supplemental Payment

- Most young people on Northstar Care receive a monthly *Supplemental* payment based on their current MAPCY Assessment Level.
- This is the replacement for difficulty of care in legacy foster care.

Level S	FC and Enter Perm 6+	Enter Perm 0-5
A	\$0	\$0
B	\$0	\$0
C	\$100	\$50
D	\$200	\$100
E	\$300	\$150
F	\$400	\$200
G	\$500	\$250
H	\$600	\$300
I	\$700	\$350
J	\$800	\$400
K	\$900	\$450
L	\$1000	\$500
M	\$1100	\$550
N	\$1200	\$600
O	\$1300	\$650
P	\$1400	\$700
Q	\$1500	\$750

MAPCY Levels

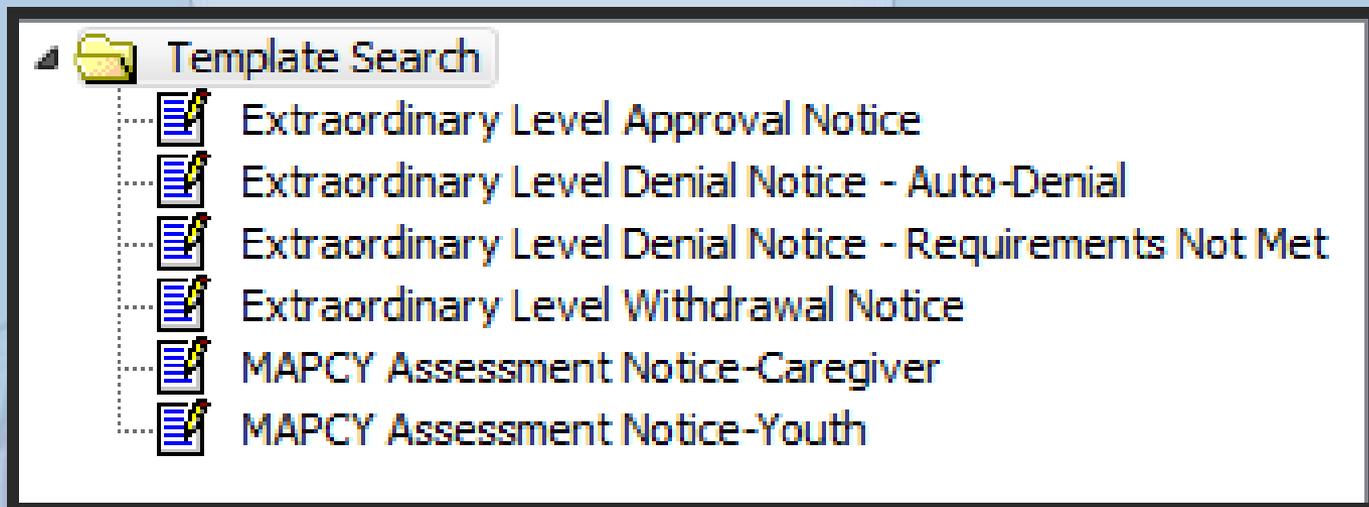
Monthly Supplemental Payment

- **17 Benefit Levels**
- **Standard MAPCY Benefit Levels**
 - Approval at local agency
- **Extraordinary Levels**
 - Additional support for children with the highest needs
 - Extraordinary Level increase can add up to five additional levels from the standard benefit level
 - Certified by local agency, approval by the State

Level S	FC and Enter Perm 6+	Enter Perm 0-5
A	\$0	\$0
B	\$0	\$0
C	\$100	\$50
D	\$200	\$100
E	\$300	\$150
F	\$400	\$200
G	\$500	\$250
H	\$600	\$300
I	\$700	\$350
J	\$800	\$400
K	\$900	\$450
L	\$1000	\$500
M	\$1100	\$550
N	\$1200	\$600
O	\$1300	\$650
P	\$1400	\$700
Q	\$1500	\$750

Notification to Caregivers

- **Agency: Standard assessment**
- **State: Extraordinary Level**



Assessment Appeals

- **Appeals happen**
- **Processes have not changed**
 - **To the Agency**
 - **To the State**
- **Appeal rights**
 - **MAPCY Rating Report**
 - **Caregiver notifications**

Two Agencies

- **Legally Responsible**
- **Financially Responsible**
 - Must work together
 - Assessor is with the legally responsible agency
 - Approver is with the financially responsible agency
 - *This is the typical situation*
- **We'll talk more about this a little later**



Unified. Uniform. Eligibility.

**BENEFITS FOR
CHILDREN**

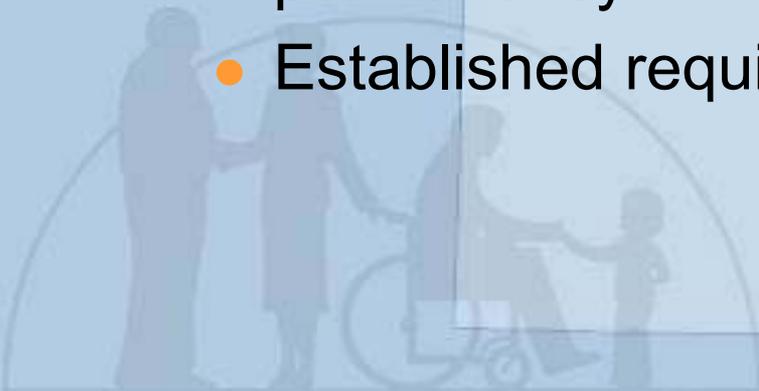


Legacy and Northstar



Title IV-E Determination

- Important for all young people who are receiving Northstar Care benefits
- Federal program
 - help provide safe, stable out-of-home care for children until the children are safely returned home, placed permanently with adoptive families or placed in other planned arrangements for permanency
 - Established requirements reimbursement



Consequences of *Not* Being Eligible for Northstar



Consequences of *Not* Being Eligible for Northstar

- **If the child is in out-of-home placement**
 - then the agency still needs to pay the foster parent or provider, but there will be no state share through Northstar Care
- **If the child has gone through a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody or adoption**
 - then DHS will not pay benefits for a child who is not eligible

Unified Benefits

Medical Assistance

Medicaid Federal Program

Monthly Basic Payment

Age based

Supplemental Difficulty of Care

Minnesota Assessment of Parenting Children and Youth

Unified Benefits

Medical Assistance

- Most kids eligible!
- non-Title IV-E or living outside of Minnesota may be exceptions
- Kids on Northstar Kinship Assistance non-Title IV-E may need to meet MA eligibility on their own

Monthly Basic Payment

- Most kids eligible!
- Kids on Northstar Adoption Assistance “at-risk” are the exceptions (MA only)

Supplemental Difficulty of Care (MAPCY)

- Most kids eligible!
- Kids on Northstar Adoption Assistance “at-risk” are the exceptions (MA only)

Special Reimbursement

- Non-recurring expenses for NAA and NKA
- Home and vehicle modifications for NAA

Decrease Benefit Discrepancy in Permanency

- **Legacy Adoption Assistance
and Legacy Relative
Custody Assistance**
 - **Benefits for the child reduced
from Foster Care rates**
 - **40% to 70% or even more**



Unified Benefits

- **Benefits determined using the same age ranges, method of assessment, and rules**
- **SSIS will track at what age a young person achieved permanency**



Uniform Benefits

**6 and Older
at permanency**

Northstar Foster Care

= Northstar Kinship Assistance

= Northstar Adoption Assistance

= Extended Foster Care for
Supervised Independent Living

Pre-School Age Rate based on Age of Permanency Finalization

5 and Younger
at permanency

Northstar Foster Care x 50%

= Northstar Kinship Assistance

= Northstar Adoption Assistance

If child enters permanency at age 5 or younger,
the pre-school age entry rate follows the child
through end of Benefit Agreement

Basic Payment

Other than the at-risk children, all young people on Northstar Care receive a *Monthly Basic Payment* based on their age.

Northstar Care Monthly Basic Payment Rates	All Foster Care and entering permanency ages 6+	Entering permanency ages birth-5
Basic: Ages 0-5	\$565	\$283
Basic: Ages 6-12	\$670	\$335
Basic: Ages 13+	\$790	\$395

MAPCY Levels

Monthly Supplemental Payment

- As we discussed earlier, most young people on Northstar Care also receive a monthly *Supplemental* payment based on their current MAPCY Assessment Level.
- This is in addition to the age-based Basic payment.

Level S	FC and Enter Perm 6+	Enter Perm 0-5
A	\$0	\$0
B	\$0	\$0
C	\$100	\$50
D	\$200	\$100
E	\$300	\$150
F	\$400	\$200
G	\$500	\$250
H	\$600	\$300
I	\$700	\$350
J	\$800	\$400
K	\$900	\$450
L	\$1000	\$500
M	\$1100	\$550
N	\$1200	\$600
O	\$1300	\$650
P	\$1400	\$700
Q	\$1500	\$750

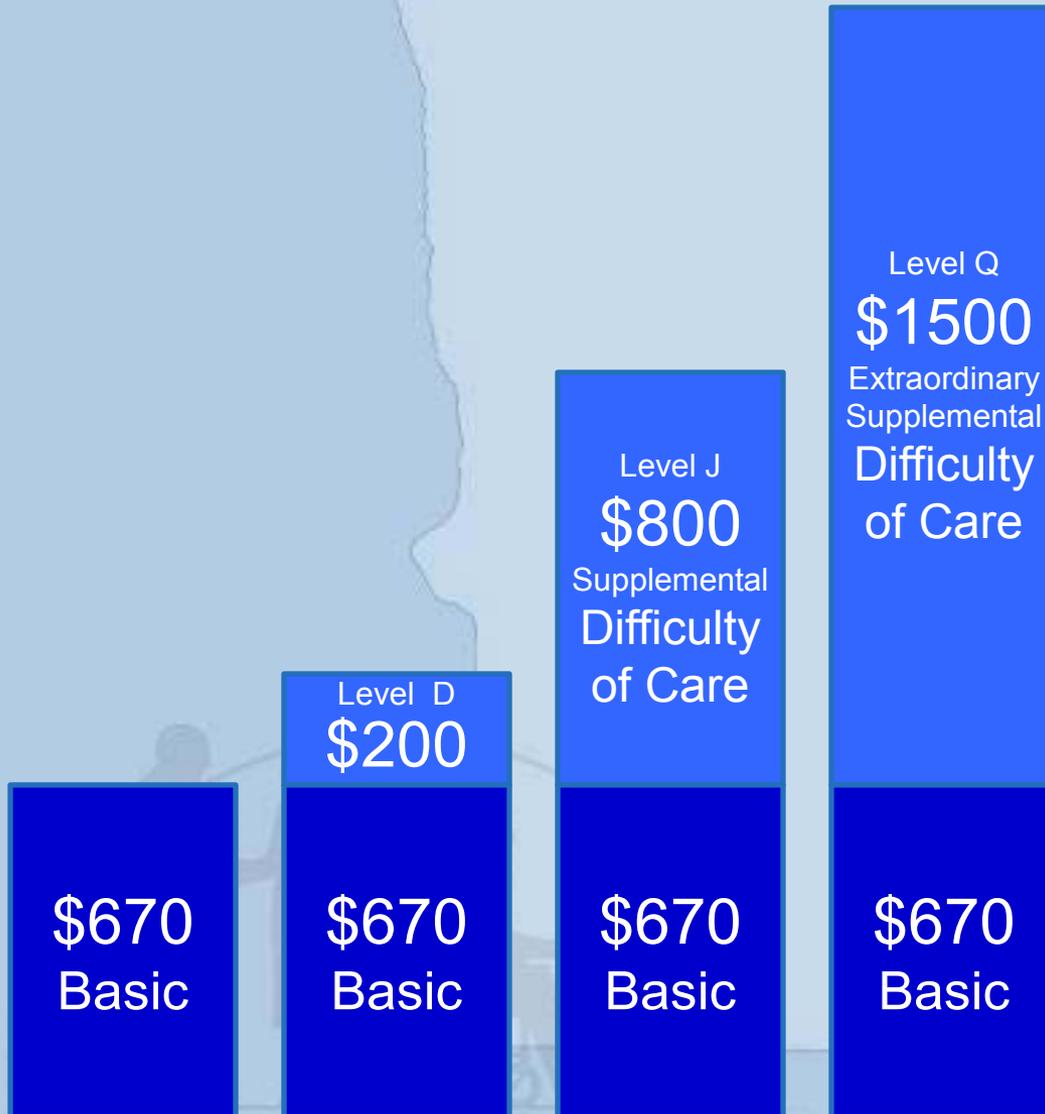
Total Payments

\$670

\$870

\$1470

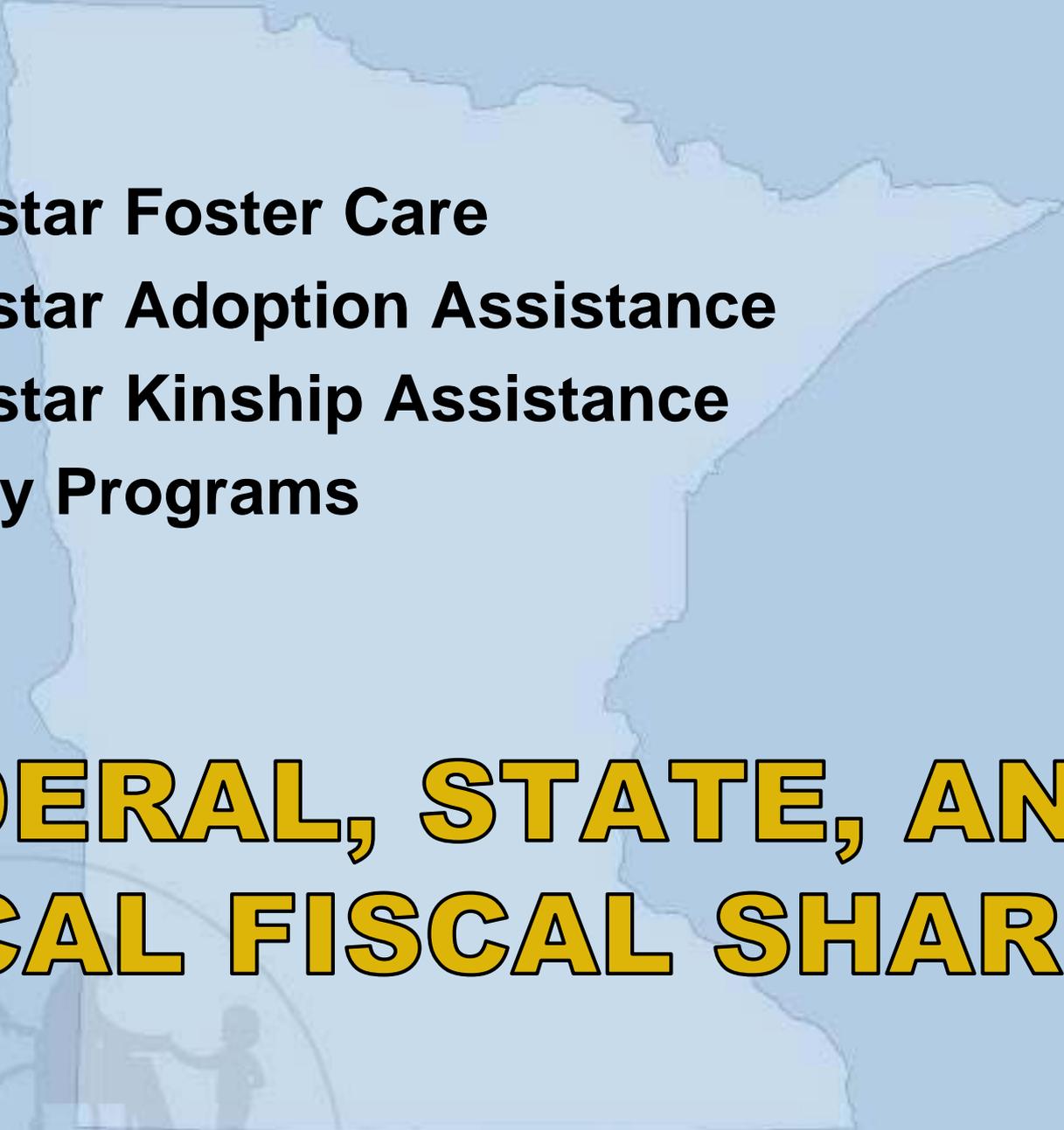
\$2170



- Adding the Basic and Supplemental payments together yields the total monthly benefit.
- Here are some examples for 6-12 year olds.

Emergency Rates in Family Foster Care

- **Default Emergency Rate**
 - **Basic + Level “D” supplemental**
 - **Available to agencies without a MAPCY**
 - ✓ **only for the initial 30 days**
 - **Without an Approved MAPCY, the payment falls to level B (basic only) after 30 days of the continuous placement**
 - **beginning on day 31**
 - **Benefit rate can be increased retroactive thru completing an Assessment**
- **More?**
 - **Special Cost Code 96**



Northstar Foster Care
Northstar Adoption Assistance
Northstar Kinship Assistance
Legacy Programs

**FEDERAL, STATE, AND
LOCAL FISCAL SHARES**



Issuing payments for Adoption Assistance and Kinship Assistance

- **DHS will continue to issue payments for legacy Adoption Assistance**
- **DHS will issue payments for the new Northstar Kinship Assistance and Northstar Adoption Assistance**



Issuing payments for Foster Care, RCA, & MnPD

- **Initiative tribes and counties issue the payments to caregivers for Northstar Foster Care**
 - benefits based on age and the MAPCY assessments
- **Initiative tribes and counties will issue payments to caregivers for legacy foster care until all the young people involved leave or move into Northstar Care**
- **Counties will continue to issue payments for Relative Custody Assistance (RCA) until it is completely phased out**
 - Minnesota Permanency Demonstration Project counties will continue to issue those payments, too

Foster Care Payment Changes

- **Service Arrangements will change to include MAPCY**
- **Rate will be auto-calculated by SSIS**
 - Rates based on Approved MAPCY
 - No manual entry of rate will be possible
 - The Assessed MAPCY level cannot be paid until the MAPCY is approved
 - Payments cannot be made without a matching placement

Fiscal Shares

State Share



Federal Share
(Title IV-E)

Local Share
(CW Initiative
Tribe or County)

Fiscal Shares: Federal

- **The Federal Share is through Title IV-E**
- **This continues Title IV-E for foster care and adoption assistance**
- **New Title IV-E for Northstar Kinship Assistance**

Fiscal Shares: State

- **Northstar Care is more expensive than the previous legacy programs**
- **The State is adding much more money**
- **This includes a new State Share for foster care plus additional funds for permanency**

Fiscal Shares: Local

- **Child Welfare Initiative Tribes and Counties pay about the same as they did before**
- **Instead of paying for all of foster care, they now pay for a local share only**
- **But they add a new local share of permanency**
- **It balances out**

Fiscal Shares: Local

To minimize costs to the tribal or county agency:

- **Get as much to be eligible for Title IV-E as possible**
- **Get as much to be eligible for Northstar Care shares as possible**



Agenda

1. **Background**
2. **What's changing?**
 - **Eligibility Determination**
 - **Resource Families**
 - **Permanency**
 - **Uniform Assessment (Minnesota Assessment of Parenting Children and Youth or MAPCY)**
 - **Unified Benefits for Children**
 - **Federal, State and Local Fiscal Shares**
3. **Agency Responsibilities**
4. **What's next?**

NEXT

Legally Responsible Agency. Financially Responsible Agency. When one agency is both. When they are different.

3. AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

Agency Responsibilities

Legally Responsible Agency



- The legally responsible agency is responsible for the young person.
- It's the social service agency that is assigned responsibility for ***placement, care, and supervision*** of the young person through a court order, voluntary placement agreement, or voluntary relinquishment.

Agency Responsibilities

Financially Responsible Agency

- **The financially responsible agency is about money.**
- **It's the social service agency that pays the *local share* of:**
 - **Northstar Care Foster Care**
 - **Northstar Kinship Assistance**
 - **Northstar Adoption Assistance**
 - **Legacy programs.**



Agency Responsibilities

Financially Responsible Agency

- **The two American Indian Child Welfare Initiative tribes – Leech Lake and White Earth – are the financially responsible agency for Initiative children.**
- **It could also be a county agency.**
- **Under Northstar Care for Children, the agency that is financially responsible at the time of foster care placement continues to be responsible for the local share of any maintenance payments after permanency.**

Agency Responsibilities

Usually the same agency

- Usually the legally responsible agency and the financially responsible agency are the same.
- The Initiative Tribes are both for all Initiative Children.



Agency Responsibilities

When Two Agencies are Involved

- Usually the legally responsible agency and the financially responsible agency are the same.
- **But sometimes they aren't.**
- Most commonly, this involves a tribe with legal responsibility and a county with financial responsibility.



Agency Responsibilities

When Two Agencies are Involved



- Whether two counties, or a tribe and a county, sometimes the legally and financially responsible agencies are different.
- When they are different, then they ***must work together*** on Northstar Care for Children.

Agency Responsibilities

Exactly how they work together varies by subject:

- 1. Placement**
- 2. Case of Record in SSIS**
- 3. MAPCY Assessments and Reassessments in Northstar Foster Care**
- 4. Notice of MAPCY to Caregivers in Foster Care**
- 5. Payments for Northstar Foster Care**
- 6. Case Planning, Permanency, and Court**
- 7. Kinship or Adoption Placement Agreement**
- 8. Northstar Kinship or Adoption Assistance Eligibility Determination**
- 9. Northstar Kinship or Adoption Assistance Benefit Agreement**
- 10. Payments for Northstar Kinship or Adoption Assistance**
- 11. MAPCY Reassessments for Northstar Kinship or Adoption Assistance**
- 12. Notice of MAPCY to Caregivers in NKA or NAA**

Agency Responsibilities

MAPCY Assessments



- The financially responsible agency has final approval for the assessment or reassessment.
- However, the financially responsible agency *must* seek the assistance of the legally responsible agency in its completion.
- Exactly how that occurs varies.
- Suppose that a tribe is legally responsible and a county is financially responsible.
- The tribe might complete the assessment on paper, while the financially responsible county enters it into SSIS and subsequently approves it and provides the notice to the caregiver(s).

January 1, 2015

4. WHAT'S NEXT?



Dates to Prepare for

- **November 26, 2014**
- **Final date to add kids to:**
 - **Legacy Adoption Assistance**
 - **Legacy Relative Custody Assistance**



Dates to Prepare for

- **If the court hasn't finalized a**
 - adoption decree
 - order of TPLPC

***on or before November 26, 2014* all the legacy paperwork is void**

- **Hurry up... or else wait.**

Dates to Prepare for

**November 27 - December 31,
2014**

- **If final court action for Adoptions or TPLPCs occur during these dates**
 - **Children may be unable to qualify for**
 - **Legacy programs**
 - **Northstar Care programs**



Dates to Prepare for

- **December 31, 2014**
- **Final date to add kids to:**
 - **Legacy Family Foster Care**
 - **Legacy Extended Foster Care – Supervised Independent Living (EFC-SIL)**



Prepare for Northstar

- **Finalize RCAs and Legacy Adoptions**
- **Communicate with caregivers about waiting to finalize NKA and NAA until after January 1**
- **Communicate with current resource families about Northstar Care for Children**
- **Review current placements and ensure for accurate entry in SSIS**
- **Clean up BUS ORG in SSIS**
- **Ensure timely documentation of placements**

Prepare for Northstar

- **Collaborate!**
 - **Between program areas**
 - Licensing, CP, CMH, etc.
 - **With Resource Families**
 - **Between Fiscal and Program areas**
 - **With other agencies**
 - **With other partners**
- **Get more information**

Upcoming Trainings

- **MAPCY VPC Training on December 1 and 2**
- **MAPCY Web-based Training**
- **SSIS Documentation and Mentor Meetings**
- **More will be offered in 2015 as we understand what's needed**

Northstar Care Summary

- **Northstar continues the direction in Child Welfare for Safety, Well-being, and Permanency.**
- **For children who cannot reunify, Northstar supports the permanency preference of Adoption in Minnesota.**
- **Supports resources families who make a permanency commitment to older children.**
- **Uses a uniform assessment for all children to determine any benefit beyond the basic payment**
- **Supports best practices**

Thank You

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