

# A NEW STANDARD IN PLACEMENT STABILITY





This document summarizes how  
**DECREASED PLACEMENT DISRUPTIONS**

and

**DECREASED TIME TO PERMANENCY**

Translate into *COST SAVINGS* for FOSTER CARE AGENCIES

and

*IMPROVED OUTCOMES* for FOSTER CHILDREN

through the use of **ECAP**,

a REVOLUTIONARY NEW INTAKE DECISION SUPPORT TOOL

that is made available through our company,

**FOSTER CARE TECHNOLOGIES**



# BACKGROUND

- **ECAP (Every Child A Priority)** is a software-based intake tool that is designed to help public and private foster care agencies find better placements for their foster children through a research-backed matching process. TFI Family Services, the company that created ECAP, has been using ECAP since July of 2010.
- In 2013, researchers from the School of Social Welfare at the **University of Kansas** evaluated ECAP and found that it had a significant impact on TFI's placement stability metrics. The researchers also provided recommendations to further improve ECAP.
- **Today ECAP** is helping to find better placements for foster children in several states across the nation. Foster Care Technologies continues to improve ECAP by engaging in ongoing research projects that combine social welfare research and data science to produce better outcomes for child welfare organizations and the children and families they serve.



# HIDDEN COSTS (1)

Placement disruptions are often very stressful events for foster children. Disruptions can have a lasting negative impact on children for many years, even after they leave foster care.\* Placement disruptions are also expensive for agencies in that they divert resources away from other essential work that they must do to serve their communities. The agency that created ECAP estimates that it costs

**\$1,619**

**every time a child has to be moved from an existing foster home to a new one**

This total cost includes all the **costs of supporting licensed social workers and other agency employees** who spend time *making phone calls, locating new placements, changing school enrollment, re-establishing medical services, transporting children, documenting their work, and other activities.*

\*Changes in Placement among Children in Foster Care: A Longitudinal Study of Child and Case Influences  
by Christian M. Connell, Jeffrey J. Vanderploeg, Paul Flaspohler, Karol H. Katz,  
Leon Saunders, and Jacob Kraemer Tebes; Social Service Review,  
Vol. 80, No. 3 (September 2006), pp. 398-418



# HIDDEN COSTS (2)

Children who experience disruptions in their foster care placements are likely to spend more time in the foster care system, and they have a reduced chance of ever achieving permanency.\*

This extra time spent in foster care takes an emotional toll on children, and it increases costs for state departments.

It costs the state of Kansas about this much to support one child in foster care:

**\$70 per day**

\* Fisher, P.A., Kim, H.K., and Pears, K.C. (2009). Effects of Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care for Preschoolers (MTFC-P) on reducing permanent placement failures among children with placement instability. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 31, 541-546.  
Northern California Training Academy. (2008). *A Literature Review of Placement Stability in Child Welfare Service: Issues, Concerns, Outcomes and Future Directions*.  
The Center for Human Services: University of California UC Davis Extension.



**Using ECAP helped TFI Family Services reduce all of these costs by helping to decrease number of moves and a reduce the average time to permanency among all of their foster children.**



# What is it and what does it do?

- A web-based intake tool that uses behavioral matching to help child welfare staff make the best possible placement decisions for children in foster care.
- ECAP's placement recommendations are generated by algorithms that are based on statistical analyses of key child characteristics and how those characteristics have related to past placement successes/failures.
- Each placement is made “smarter” because ECAP instantly applies a vast amount of historical placement outcome data to every non-relative foster placement.

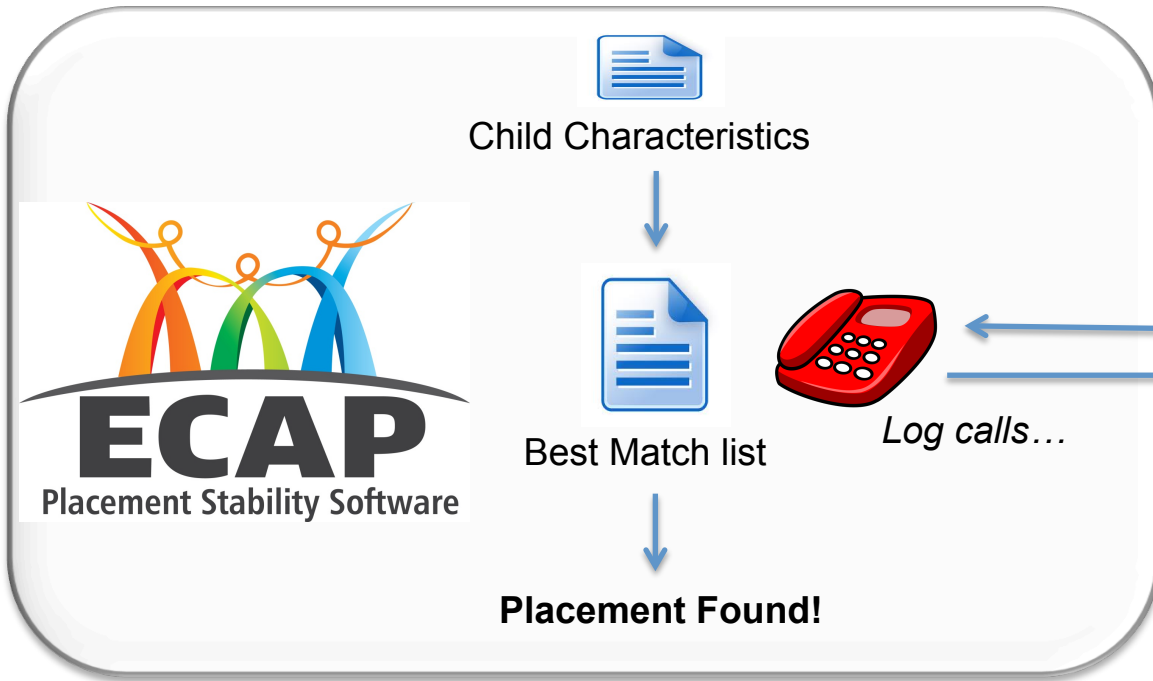


# How does it work?

- Case workers enter information about the child as he/she enters care.
- The information about the child is processed, producing a score that determines the level of care that is best suited for that child.
- ECAP compares the children's profiles with the available families' profiles within that level of care to assess compatibility between each possible pairing.
- ECAP's algorithms produce a ranked list of recommended available foster homes. The intake worker can begin calling homes from the list and logging calls within the application as calls are made.
- The foster care worker places the child with the highest ranked home available, thereby minimizing the risk of a placement disruption for that child while he/she is in foster care.



# Child Placing Agency

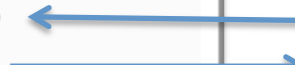


## Agencies

## Homes



*Log calls...*





# The RESULTS:

BETTER OUTCOMES FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

and

COST SAVINGS FOR THE FOSTER CARE AGENCIES



# The BETTER OUTCOMES...

Researchers at the **KU School of Social Welfare** tracked and compared two different cohorts of children. In one cohort (Pre-ECAP) the children were NOT placed using ECAP. In the other cohort (Post-ECAP), children were placed with the highest ranked available provider from ECAP's recommended placement list. The following improvements were observed:

- **As a whole, children in the Post-ECAP cohort moved less often and their placements lasted longer.**
  - There was a 22.5% improvement in the number of days of care provided per move for the Post-ECAP group when compared to the Pre-ECAP group.
- **Children in the Post-ECAP cohort reached permanency 53 days (median) sooner than those in the Pre-ECAP cohort.**
  - There was a 12% reduction in time until permanency for the Post-ECAP group when compared to the Pre-ECAP group.



# The COST SAVINGS...(1)

## Fewer Moves Needed

During 2012, TFI Family Services, a Kansas-based agency provided 769,647 days of care. Using the Pre/Post data for *days of care provided per placement move*, the agency would have prevented a total of 452 moves from occurring. Using a *cost-per-move* figure of \$1,619, this means that the agency was able to save \$731,788 in placement costs in only one year.

Region	Annual Days of Care	Days of Care Per Move		# Moves		Moves Saved	Cost Per Move	Savings
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post			
Region 1	301,369	316	388	954	777	177	\$1,619	\$286,563
Region 3	468,278	316	388	1482	1207	275	\$1,619	\$445,225
<b>Total TFI</b>	<b>769,647</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>2436</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>\$1,619</b>	<b>\$731,788</b>



# The COST SAVINGS...(2)

## Reducing Time to Permanency

for children placed in non-relative foster homes

average (median) # of days each child spent in care at TFI before ECAP (21 months)	440
Reduction in TIME TO PERMANENCY	12%
Reduction in TIME TO PERMANENCY, in Days	52.80
<b>average daily cost to care for a foster child</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
Dollars saved per child placed with ECAP during entire length of his/her care	\$3,696
Average number of kids in care	2,200
# of foster children entering the foster system during one year	470
Total dollars saved per year	\$1,737,120
Percent of children whose placements will be guided by ECAP	47%
Adjusted dollars saved	\$816,446.40
Percent of exits from foster care in Kansas in 2013 due to permanency (adoption, reunification, or guardianship)	86.0%
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL COST SAVINGS DUE TO REDUCED TIME TO PERMANENCY (based on number of all foster children in placement network)</b>	<b>\$702,144</b>



# for MORE INFORMATION...

To learn more about **ECAP** or to schedule a demo

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