

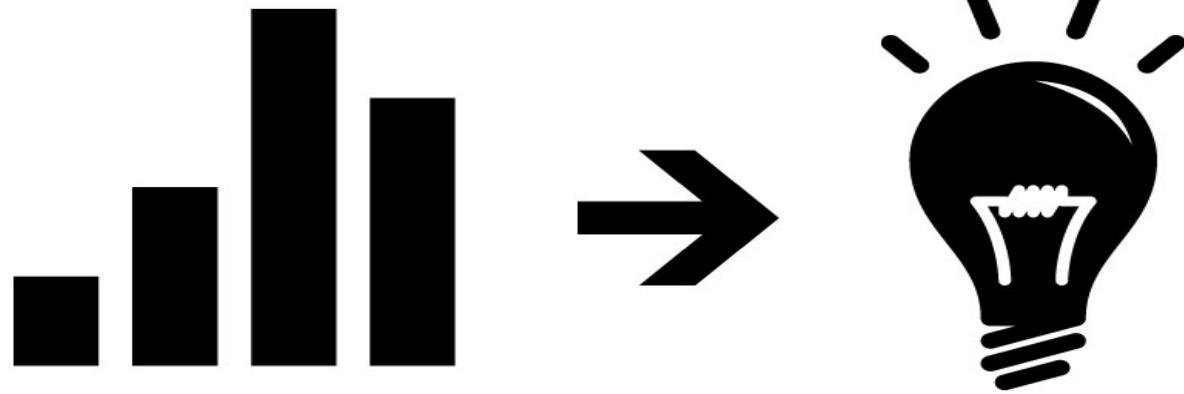
Innovations in Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation:

ECMHC To Support Arkansas' Most Vulnerable Children



**Nicola Connors Edge, Lorraine McKelvey,
Angie Kyzer**

How AR Used Data To....



- Target ECMHC to the most vulnerable
- Advocate for system level changes
- Make the case for expansion of ECMHC



with support from:



- ECMHC program staffed through partnerships with Community Mental Health Centers
- Provide programmatic and child-specific consultation
 - 3 month child-specific, 6 month programmatic partnership
 - Weekly consultation
 - Services provided by mental health professional certified as consultant to child care
- Provide system-level consultation to child care and child welfare systems

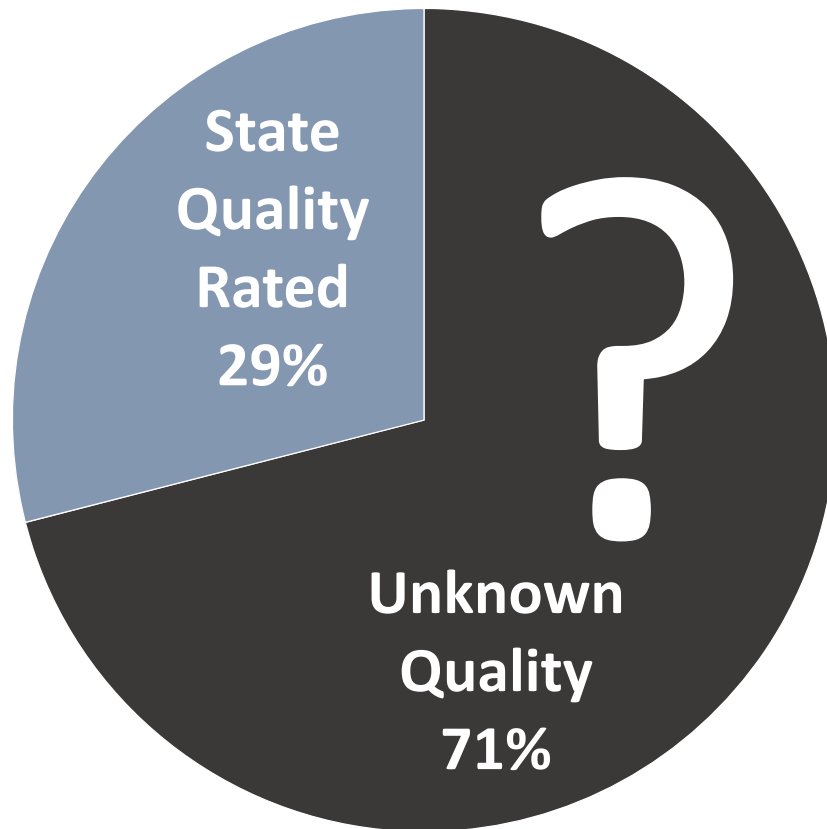
Goals



- Promote positive social and emotional development of children through changes in the early learning environment.
- Decrease problematic social and emotional behaviors of young children in early child care settings by building the skills of child care providers and family members.

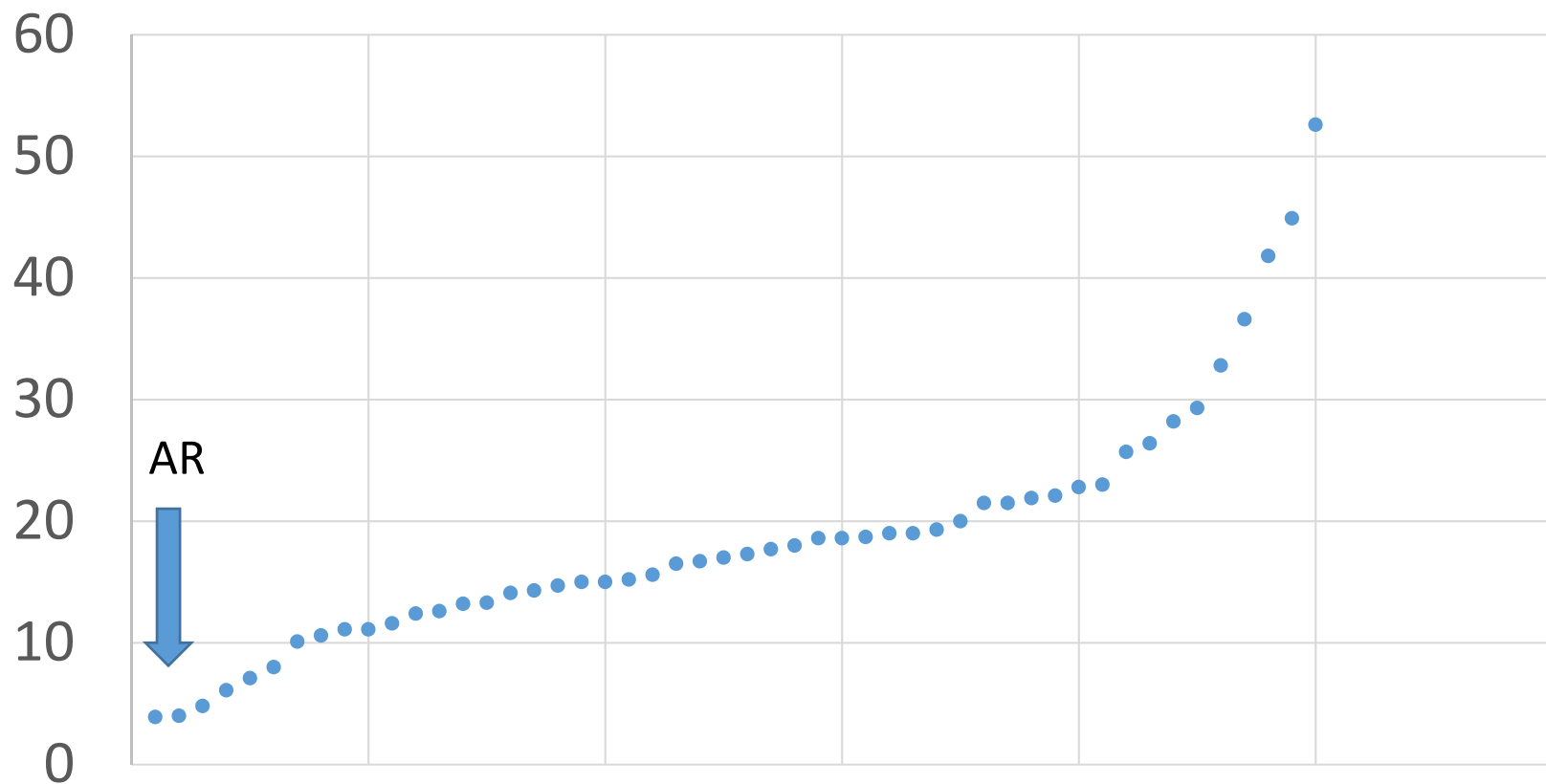
2010 Shift to Focus on Foster Children

1,376 foster care vouchers



**75 foster
children
statewide
enrolled in Head
Start**

Arkansas vs Nation (2012)



Percent of Foster Children 0-5 Enrolled in EHS/HS by State

Qualitative Data from Child Care Directors

Moves/disruptions



Communication gaps



Foster parents are decision makers

Inadequate training/
support

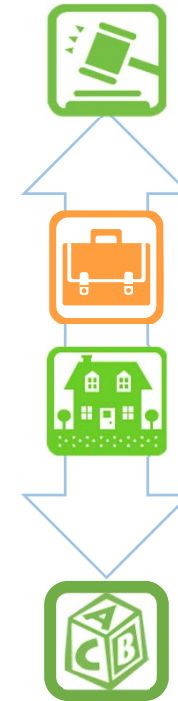
Hard Realities for Child Welfare

No Slots Available!



Priority

AR Toolkit



Voluntary alignment of practices

Policy and Practice Change

Revised
Educational
Stability
Policy



Child Welfare
Supervisors
Observe in
Child Care
Programs

Developed
Practice
Guideline on
Child Care
Transitions

2016:
Programs
accepting
vouchers
must
participate in
QRIS

2016: New
rules to limit
suspension
and
expulsions

2016: New
electronic
prompt for
caseworkers
when child
eligible for HS
or state Pre-k

Hard Realities Remain

**No Slots
Available!**



**2015 Update: 91
foster children
enrolled in EHS/HS**

Can't Bring them to Quality? Lets Raise the Quality!

- Used voucher data to offer ECMHC services to centers where foster children were naturally clustering
- Centers serving foster children were prioritized on wait list



Did ECMHC Improve Quality? The Case for Expansion

- Evaluated impact of ECMHC in 46 centers
- Large variability in participants
 - Majority non-participants in quality rating system
 - 37% of teachers had an Associate's degree or higher
 - Teachers had average of 8 years of experience

Data Collection



Classroom Observations Pre/Post Consultation by Research Staff

- **Teacher-Child Interactions-** Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale (Arnett, 1989)
- **Classroom Climate** - Preschool Mental Health Climate Scale (PMHCS; Gilliam, 2008).
- **Child Behavior** –Child Behavior Frequency Count & PMHCS Child Interactions

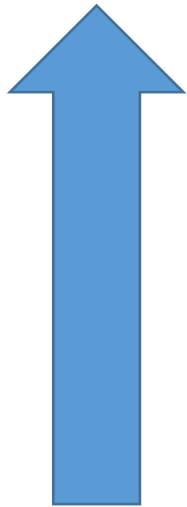
Teacher Turnover/Instability

- Matched Pre/Post-test observations were completed on 120.
- >50% of teachers could not be matched because:
 - They left employment, were on extended leave, were moved to a classroom not receiving consultation



Improvements in Teacher-Child Interactions

Significant improvement over 6 months of consultation:



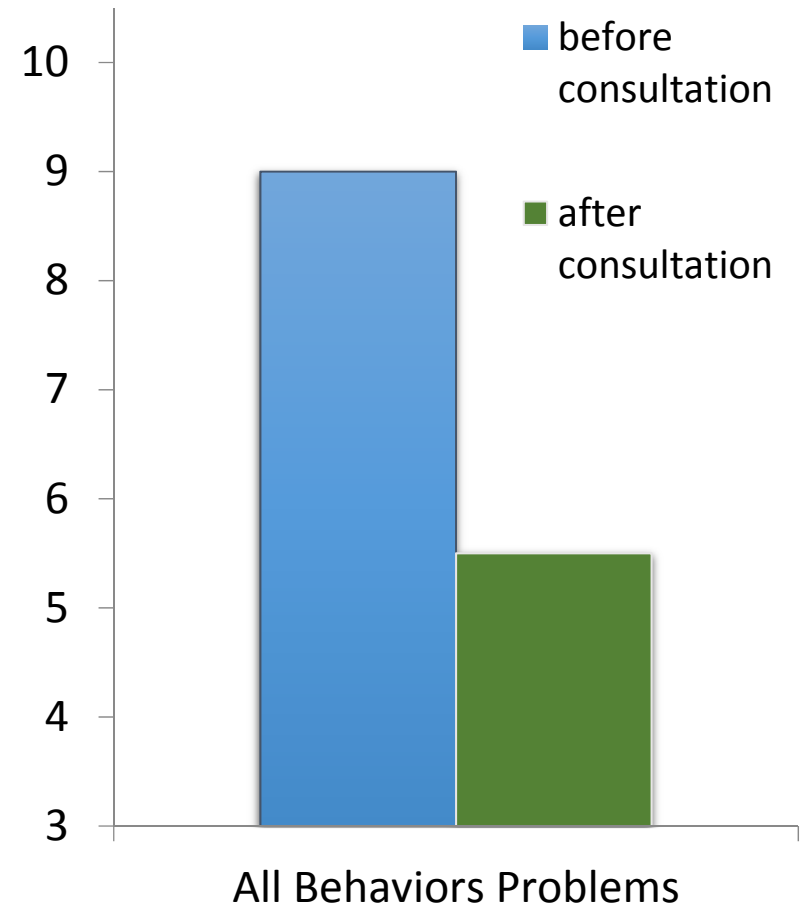
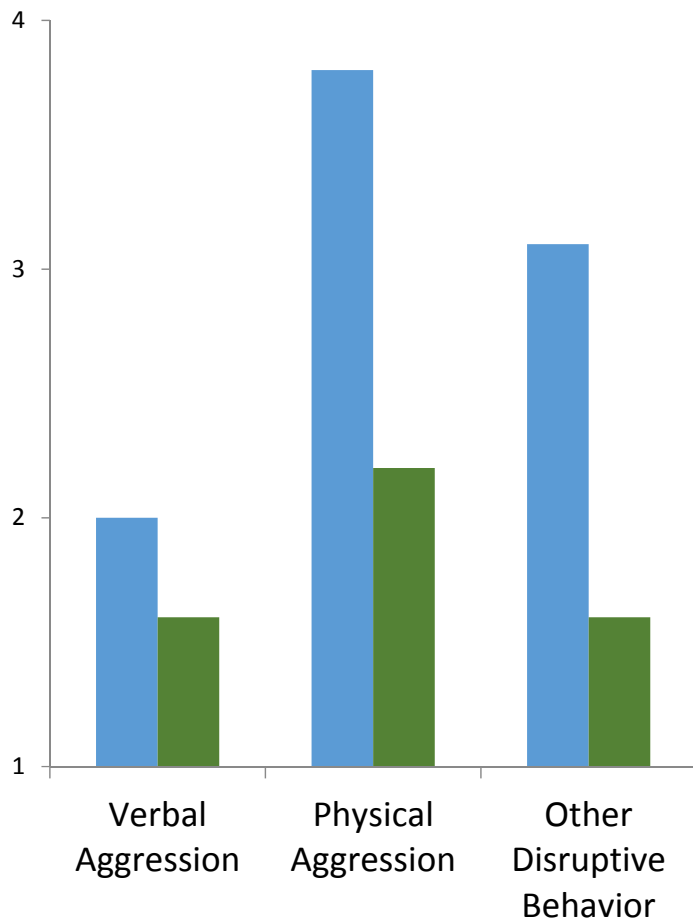
Sensitivity: becoming more sensitive and positive in interactions.

Engagement: more engaged in caring for the children (reduced detachment).

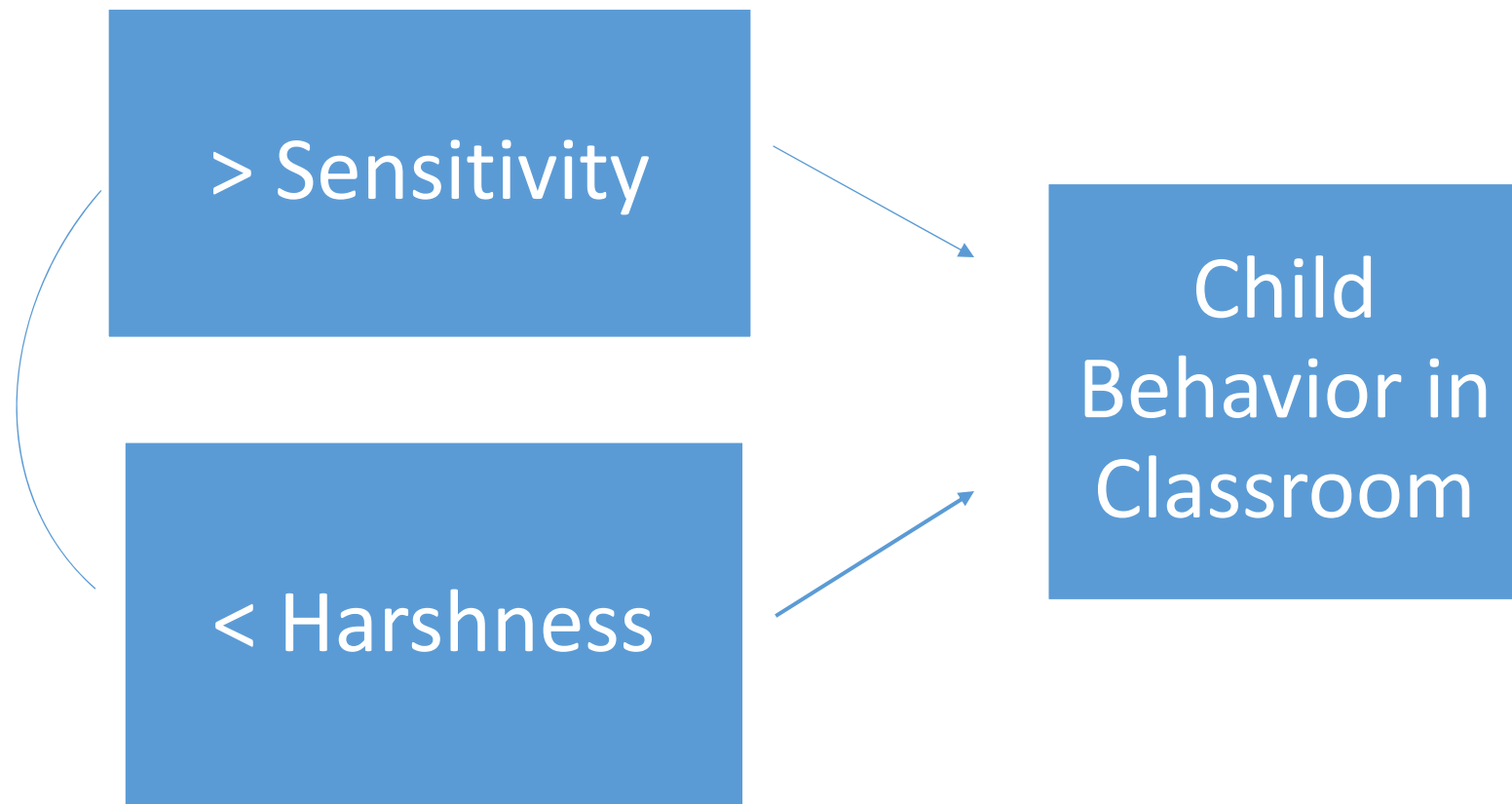


Punitive Actions: use of yelling, humiliation or using harsh words.

Disruptive Behaviors Observed in the Classroom

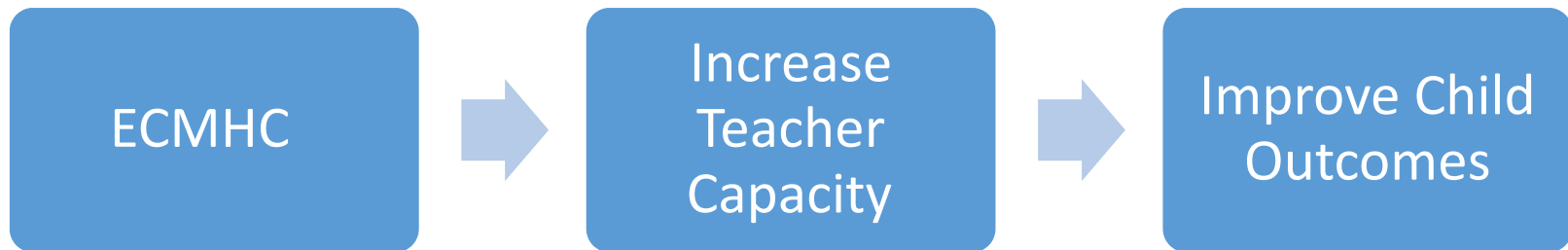
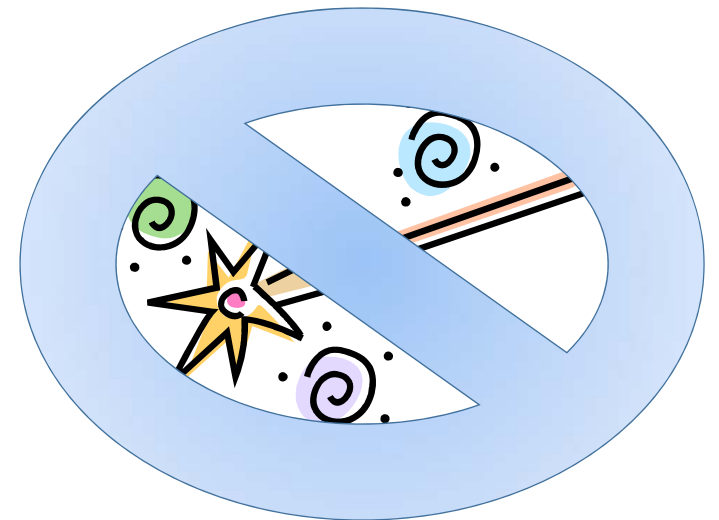


How does teacher change relate to behavior change?



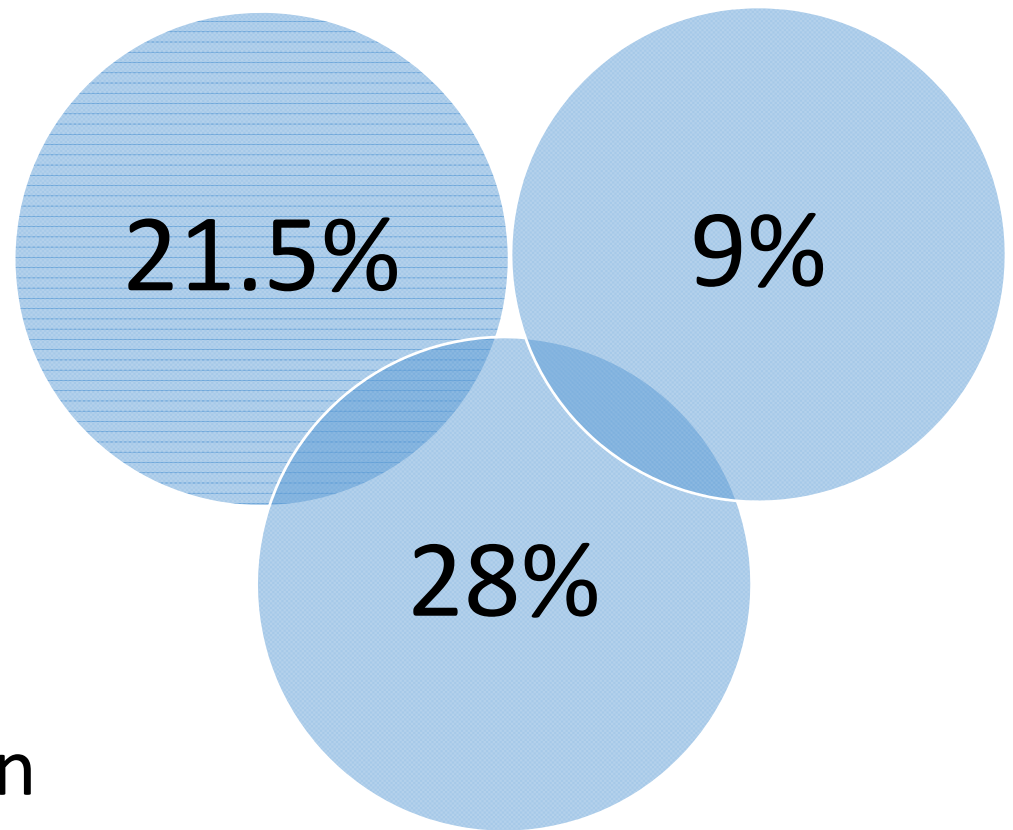
Summary of Findings

- ECMHC can be effective even in centers of variable quality (for teachers that stay)
- Support for the theory of change



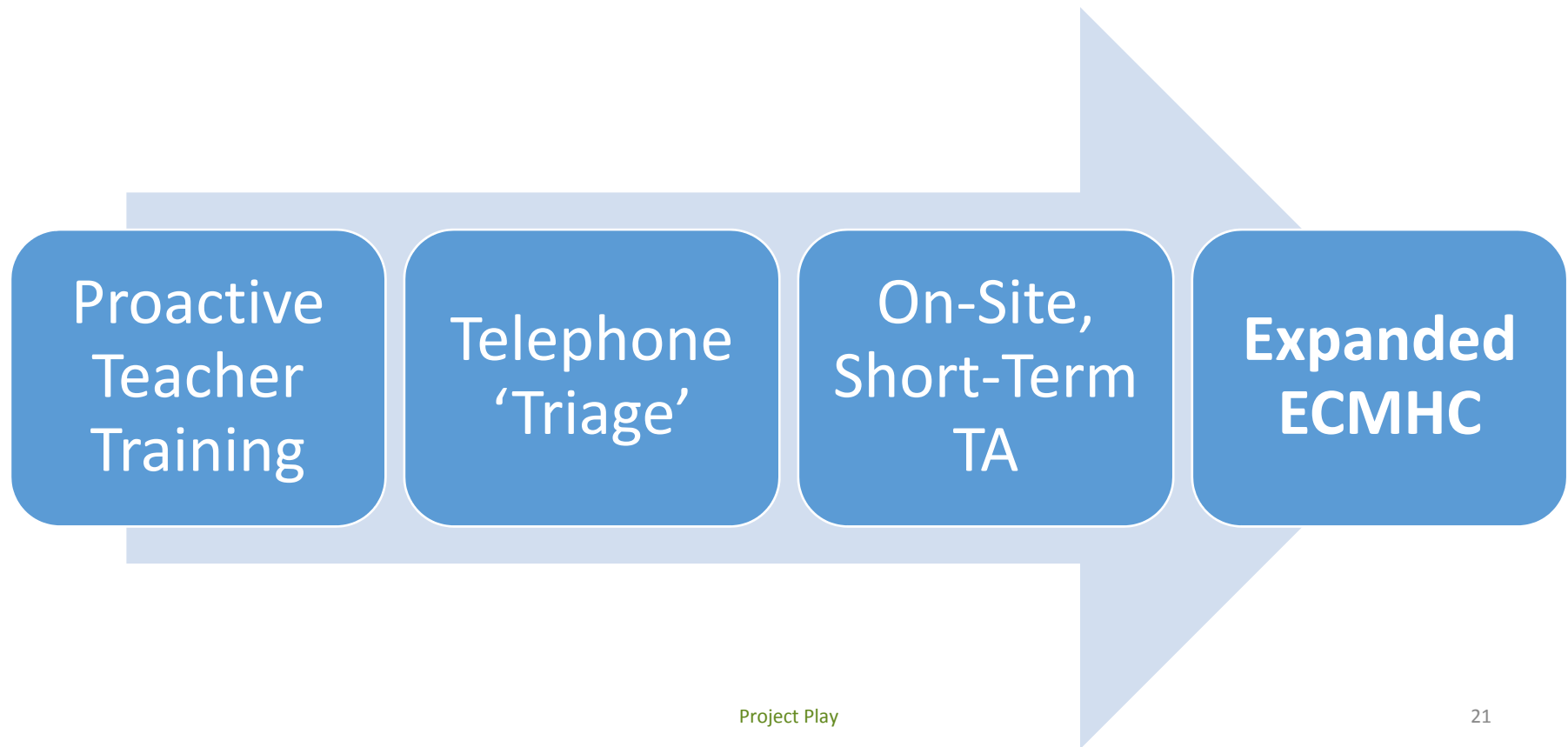
Making the Case for Expansion to Serve Additional Vulnerable Children

- It works – even in lower quality settings!
- The need is great!
 - Disparities data
- Alignment with federal/state efforts to reduce suspension and expulsion



Moving Forward: Partnering to Prevent Expulsion & Suspension

- New non-expulsion policies effective July 1, 2016
- New 'BehaviorHelp' system to coordinate supports



Prevent Expulsion in Early Care – *5 Course Series*

FREE viewing dates:

Course 1 – The Teaching Pyramid
8/1/2016 - 8/5/2016

Course 2 – Nurturing Relationships
8/8/2016 - 8/12/2016

Course 3 – Supportive Classrooms
8/15/2016 - 8/19/2016

Course 4 – Understanding Behavior
8/22/2016 - 8/26/2016

Course 5 – Describing Behavior
8/29/2016 - 9/2/2016



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