

# A Mental Health Promotion Project for Children and Youth in Foster Care

Barb Putnam

John Giudice

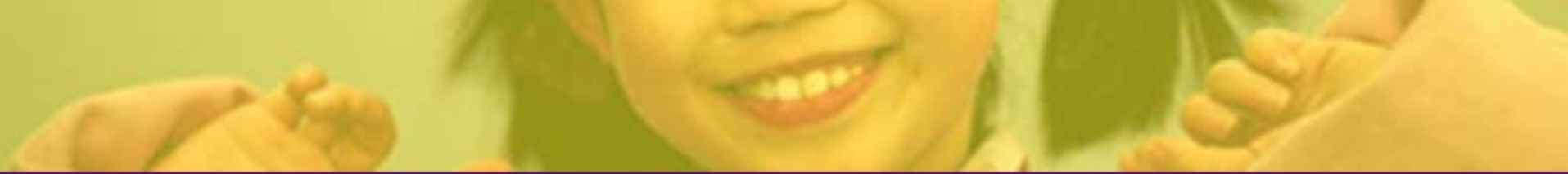
Mickey Kander



*Washington State*  
Department of Social  
& Health Services



*Washington State Department of*  
**Health**



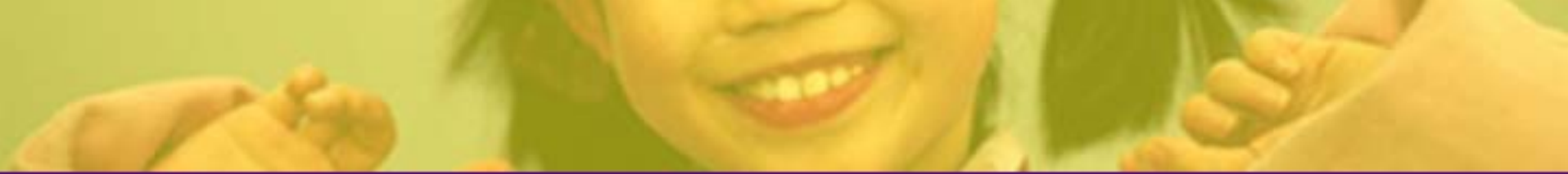
# Mental Health Promotion





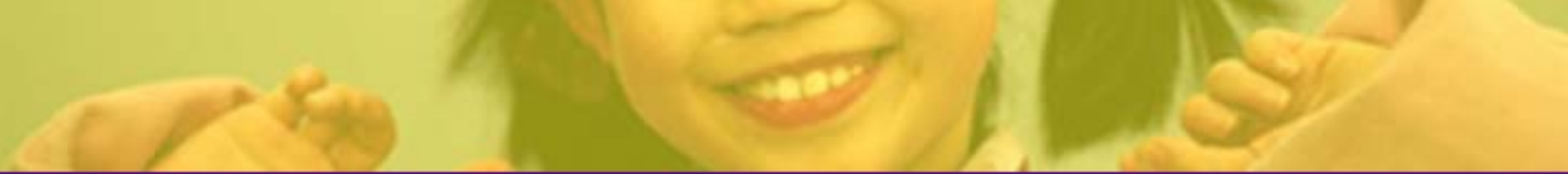
# Washington Kids in Foster Care

- 54.4% had a diagnosable mental health condition as an adult
  - Compared with 20% of the general population of children.



# Why so High?

- Interruption of Relationship with a Parent/Caregiver
- Multiple Placements
- Coping Strategies



# Children's Administration Needs

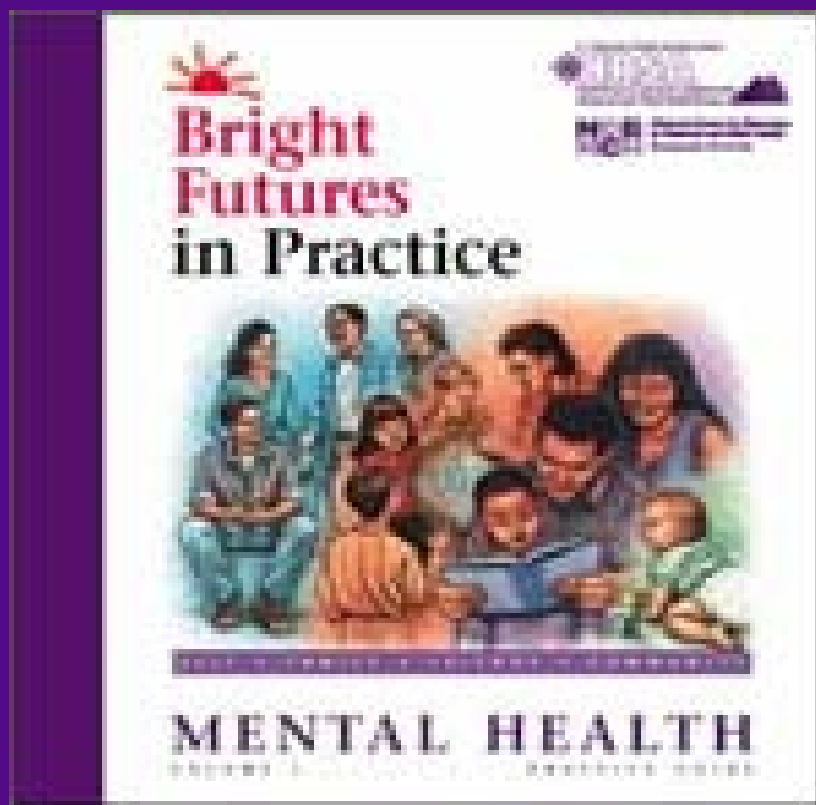
- Braam Panel
- Kids Come First
- Federal Review



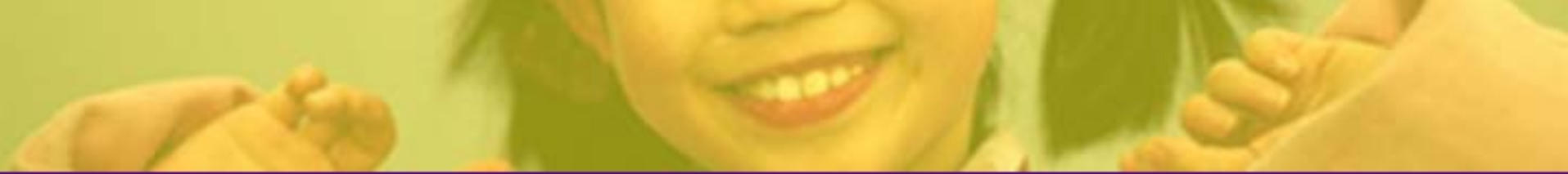
# What to do

- Primary Prevention of Mental Illness
  - Bright Futures in Practice: Mental Health
- Collaborate with State Agencies
- Establish Curriculum for Foster Parents
- Provide Pilot Trainings
- Evaluate Project

# Bright Futures: Mental Health



- **Maternal and Child Health Bureau**
- **Guidelines for Physicians**
- **First time used for audience other than health professionals**



# Collaboration

- DSHS/Children's Administration
- University of Washington
- Department of Health
- Foster Parents (FPAWS)
- Foster Child Assessment Program
- Mockingbird Society
- DSHS/Mental Health Division
- Treehouse



# Curriculum

## Content

- Mental Health Promotion Education
- Bright Futures Information
- Common Conditions
- Mental Health Services in Schools

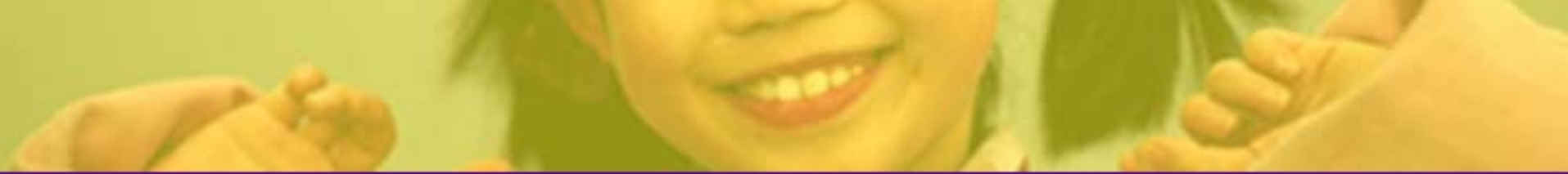
## Delivery

- Foster Parent Co-Trainer partnering with Professional Trainer
- Interactive
- Panel of Experts

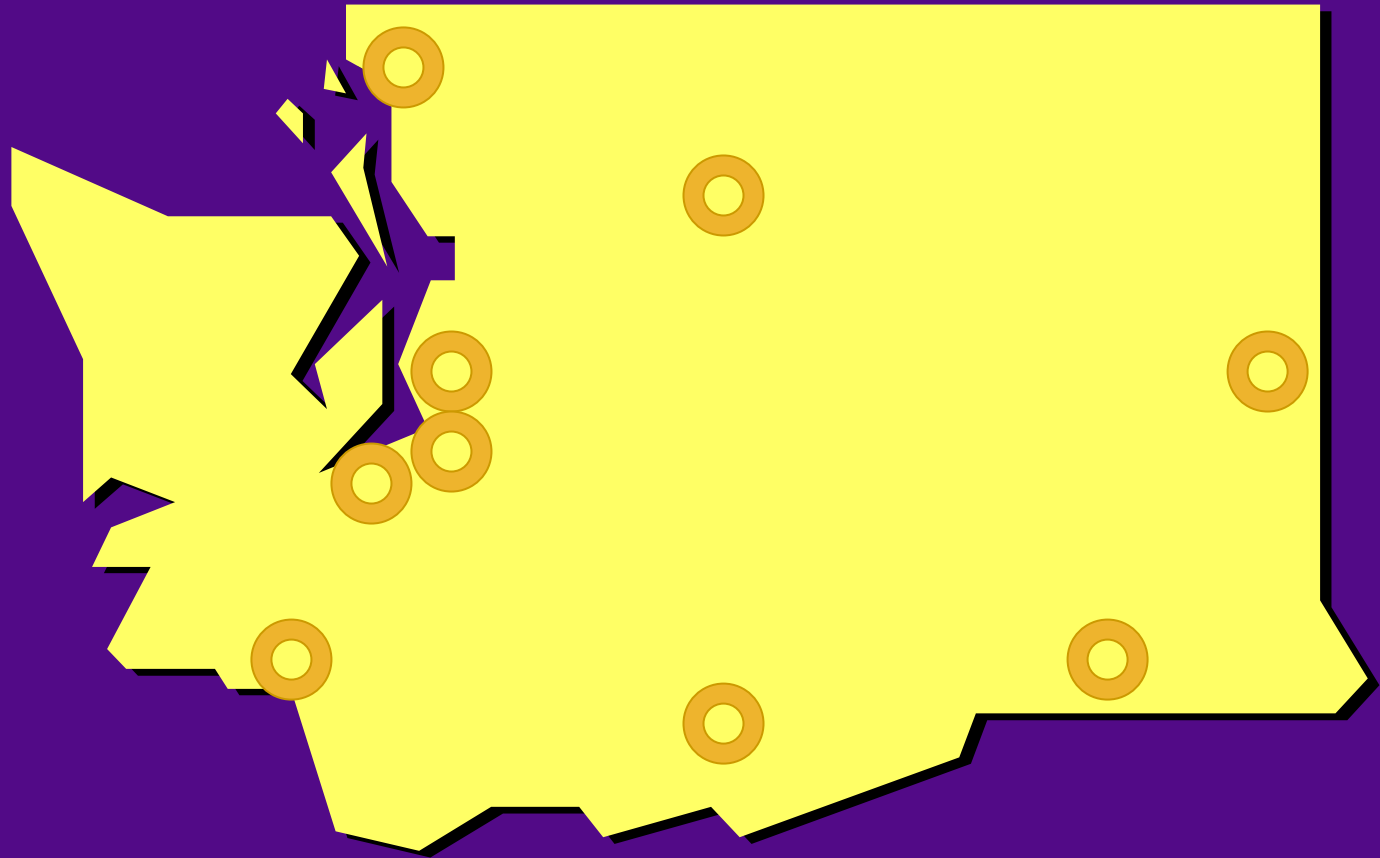


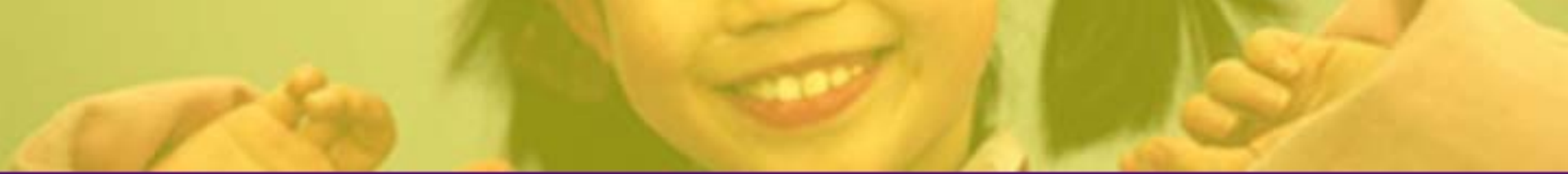
# Marketing

- Food
- Fliers easily distributed over the internet
- Partnered with FPAWS
- Worked with regional DSHS offices
- Had fliers in hard copy at conferences



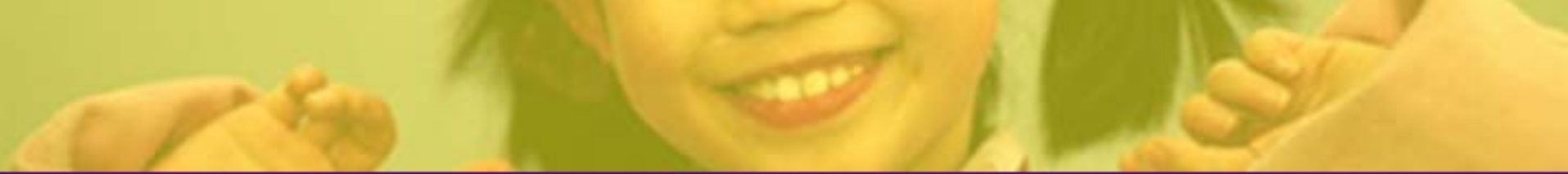
# Pilot Trainings





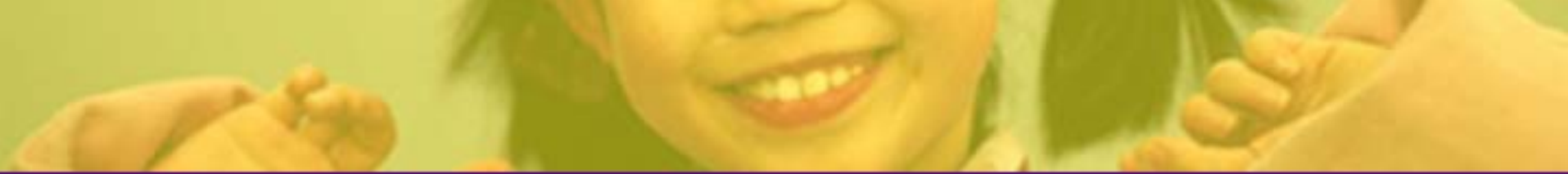
# Impressions of Foster Parents

- “I should have had this training when I first became a foster parent.”
- “Great info for me where I am right now in this journey.”
- “Excellent & informative! Good job 😊”
- “Thank you for lunch and the Books”



# Other Impressions of Foster Parents

- “More time the class has so much info it could be two days”
- “I did enjoy being in the group though would have 1st chosen to view at home if possible.”
- “Need more info on how to address resources for child’s strengths – i.e.: extra skill in math – talented in writing, etc.”



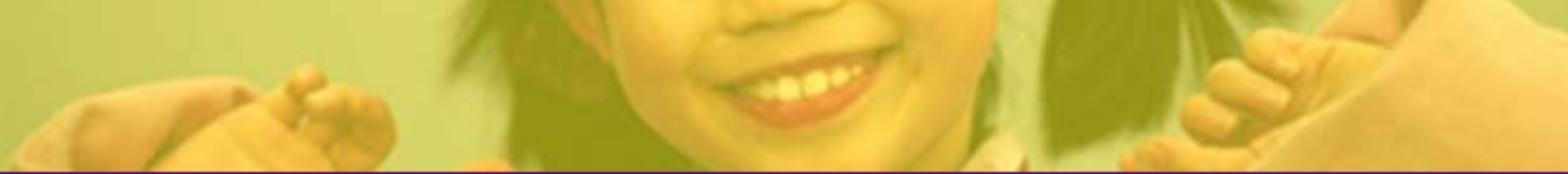
# Outcomes

- 1 out of 3 attending foster parents understood how to obtain mental health care
- Of those foster parents who did not know prior to the training, 88% left the training knowing how to obtain mental health services for children in their care



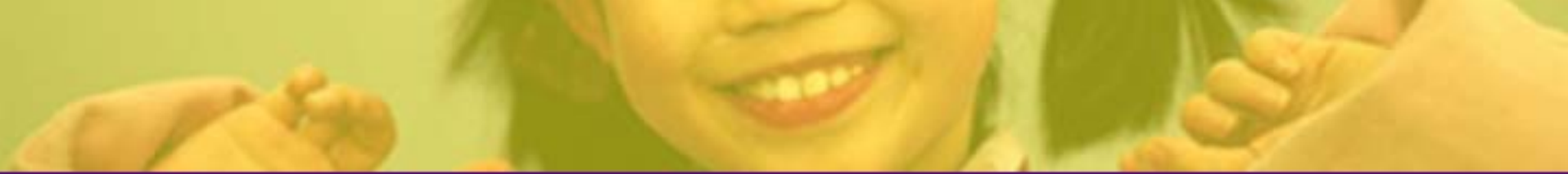
# Next Steps

- Evaluation of pre and post surveys.
- Follow up survey with foster parents (Fall 2007)
- Manual for Trainers
- Children's Administration will continue to make the training available to foster parents after grant is finished



# Activity

- Get into groups
- Review assigned tools
  - Answer the question, “how would I use this?”
- Report back 1 or 2 uses



# Questions/Discussion

**Barb Putnam**      [puba300@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:puba300@dshs.wa.gov)

**John Giudice**      [jrgiudice@juno.com](mailto:jrgiudice@juno.com)

**Mickey Kander**      [mickey.kander@doh.wa.gov](mailto:mickey.kander@doh.wa.gov)