

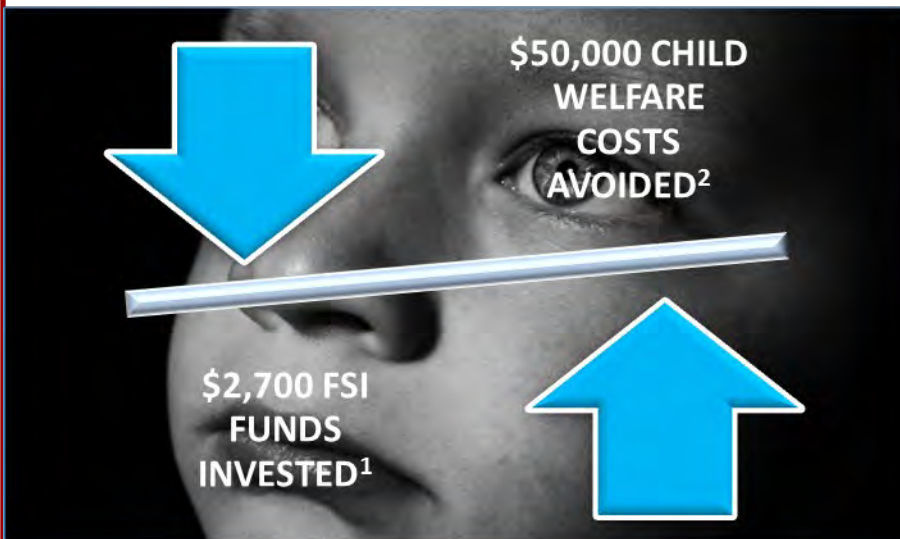
# FAMILY SERVICES INITIATIVE

A family recently served through the Family Services Initiative (FSI) felt they had nowhere to turn. A grandmother and her two teenage grandchildren were being kicked out of the home they shared with their uncle, thus making them homeless. There was a real threat that they would be on the streets with nowhere to turn. At that point, a Child Protective Investigator became involved and contacted 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares, Inc. for help.

With support from FSI funds, the family was immediately placed in a motel close the children's school - one that had been vetted through FSI and assigned to a PEHMS Navigator. The Navigator used funds through FSI and Central Florida Behavioral Health Network (CFBHN) to cover the rental fee for the 5 weeks they stayed in the motel, while also collaborating with a local real estate agent to secure permanent affordable housing close to the children's school.

The family was registered to obtain "Relative Caregiver Funds" through the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) to activate benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Until those benefits kicked in, the Navigator provided funds for the family to purchase food.

Once affordable permanent housing was located for the family, the Navigator covered the rental deposit for the apartment, and also connected the family with Hands Across the Bay to assist with the utility deposits. In addition, the Navigator was able to work with the real estate agent to ensure that the family was placed in an apartment next to a grandmother raising her own grandchildren, thus strengthening both families' support systems. Finally, the family was connected to Kinship Care to provide long-term guidance and support.



A little over \$2,700 of FSI funds were accessed to support this family through their transition from the brink of homelessness to a stable, affordable environment. Had they not been given this hand up, the children, given their age, would likely have been separated and placed in group foster homes. This would've resulted in an estimated \$50,000 in costs to the community, not to mention the long-term trauma inflicted upon the family.

By accessing FSI approved vendors, there was also a realized cost-savings of more than \$4,500...the amount it would've cost the family for temporary housing, food,

transportation and more, as they traveled from agency to agency completing the necessary paperwork for services. And by connecting the family with existing, longer term support services, such as Kinship Care and Hands Across the Bay, an additional \$5,000 was saved.

This was a family on the brink of crisis and splitting up. But they are together and they are stronger because of the Family Services Initiative. And there are many more like them...

<sup>1</sup>FSI funds spent to stabilize the family.

<sup>2</sup>Out-of-Home Foster Care for 2 children for approximately 10 months (based on a typical case) = \$50,000.