

# The Path to Economic Security & Family Well-Being in Colorado

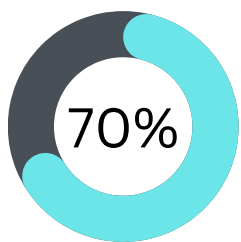
Data Insights to inform policy and practice

To achieve family well-being, we must achieve financial well-being.

Research consistently shows that financial supports can reduce child maltreatment and strengthen families. Promoting policies and practices that help families achieve economic security is an actionable opportunity for cross-system investment and impact.

## The Link Between Economic Insecurity and Child Maltreatment

The Family Stress Model of economic hardship is used to explain the link between economic insecurity and family well-being. When economic and material hardship occurs, caregivers experience increased stress, which can lead to depression, a sense of powerlessness, and less nurturing caregiver-child relationships, which can then lead to child maltreatment. **Economic and concrete supports act as protective factors to interrupt this cycle and create sustained opportunities for family well-being.**



of maltreatment allegations in Colorado are for **neglect**.

Of these, only 23% are substantiated.



Low-income families experiencing just one **material hardship** are

**3x** more likely to have a neglect investigation.



1 in 8 Colorado children under five live in **poverty**.

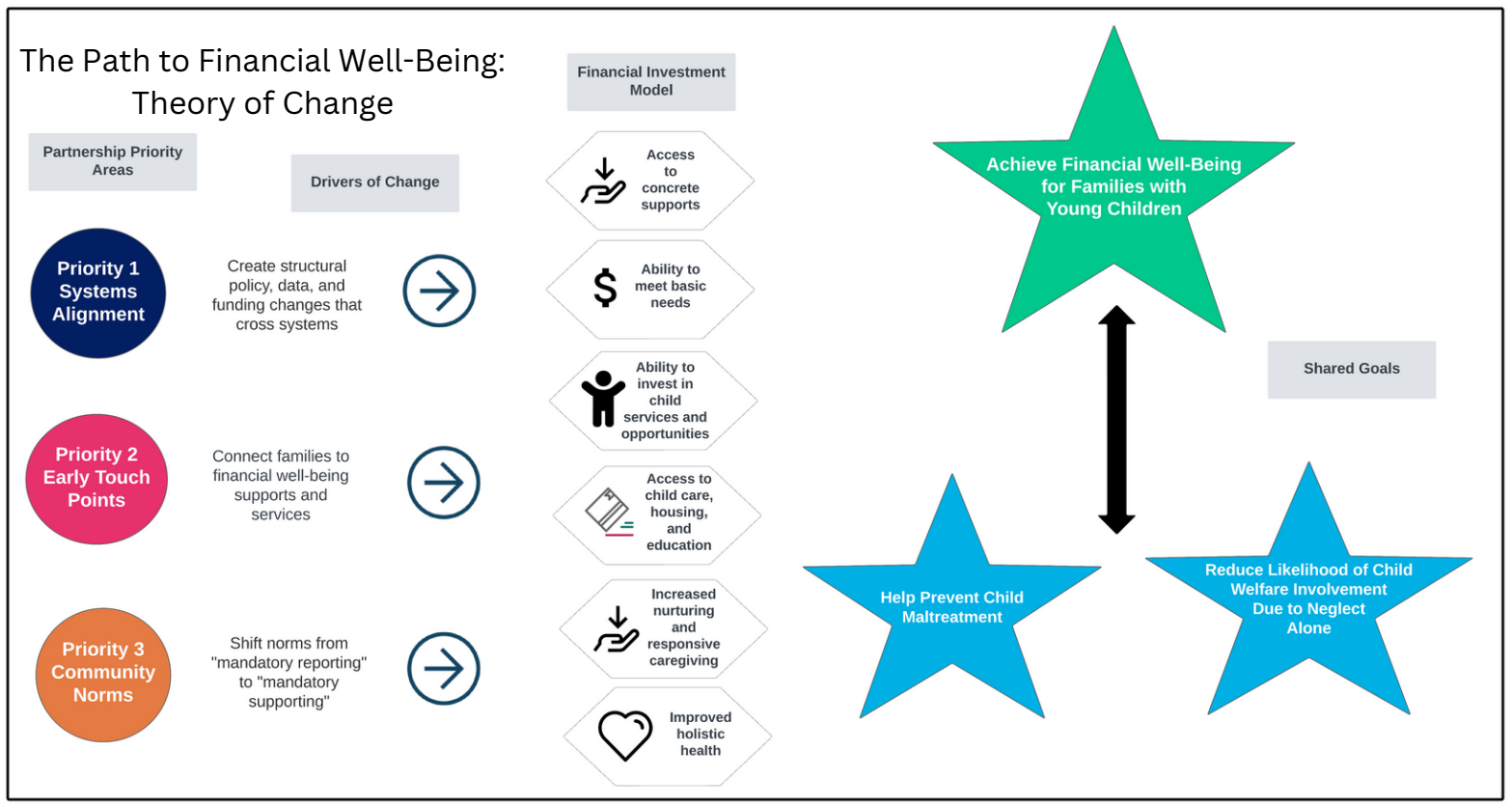
For Black and African American children, the rate is 1 in 4, showing significant racial **disparity**.



**Economic injustice and racial injustice are connected.** Poverty is experienced by families of color at higher rates. Structural racism and systemic inequities fuel poverty, which contributes to racial disparities in child welfare involvement.

# Poverty Does Not Equal Neglect

The Family Investment Model is used to explain how economic and concrete supports can help prevent child maltreatment and strengthen families. When families have access to concrete supports and resources to meet their basic needs, they are better able to engage child services, child care, housing, and educational opportunities, and provide more nurturing caregiver-child relationships. Together, this can lead to improved family health and decreased rates of child maltreatment. **The Colorado Partnership for Thriving Families is working to identify and activate strategies in systems alignment, early touch points, and community norms that can drive toward the shared goal of financial well-being for families with young children.**



## Policy and Practice Strategies to Strengthen Families

Research is converging on major concrete and economic supports that can—and do—disrupt the link between economic insecurity and child maltreatment. These supports require cross-system policy and practice investment to activate. **We invite you to join this collective effort.**

Medicaid Expansion / Affordable Health Care	Cash Assistance (TANF, Guaranteed Income, Child Support Payments)	Housing Supports and Subsidies
Tax Credits (Child Tax, EITC)	Paid Family Leave	Minimum Wage Increases
Child Care Subsidies / Affordable Child Care	Addressing the Cliff Effect	SNAP and WIC Enrollment and Expansion
Sufficient Unemployment Benefits	Workforce and Education Supports	Financial Counseling and Coaching