

APHSA
American Public Human Services Association

**INFLUENCE
BUILD
CONNECT**

presents

Family Well-Being and Child Welfare Services Against the Backdrop of COVID-19

Recorded: Monday, October 5, 2020

**LIVE
WEBINAR**

NAWRS
National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics

Thrivng Communities Built on Human Potential

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WHO WE ARE

WE REPRESENT

state and local health and human services agencies through their top-level leadership

WE SEEK TO

influence modern policies and practices, help our members **build** capacity for their teams, and **connect** them to other human-serving organizations and policymakers

APHSA
American Public Human Services Association

We build well-being from the ground up.

Thrivng Communities Built on Human Potential

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a little about...

NAWRS



NAWRS is a non-profit association whose purpose is to promote the exchange of ideas on how research and statistical analysis can contribute to the development and administration of effective human services programs.



Get Involved! Sign up for the [NAWRS Mailing List](https://nawrs.org) at <https://nawrs.org>.



Follow us on Twitter @NAWRSSWorkshop

Find recordings of previous NAWRS Virtual Workshops at <https://nawrs.org/#vw>

Topics include: Serving SNAP participants during COVID-19, Machine learning in human services contexts, and more!

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Photo by Marcin Jozwiak on Unsplash

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They're Children at Risk of Abuse, and Their Caseworkers Are Stuck Home

Scores of investigations into allegations of abuse or neglect have been delayed or sharply curtailed during the coronavirus pandemic, records and interviews show.

The New York Times, 8/7/2020

Is Child Abuse Really Rising During The Pandemic?

Amid speculation of a spike in abuse, advocates worry that families of color will be policed even more.

The Marshall Project, 6/15/2020

Child abuse reports are down during the pandemic. Experts say that's a bad sign

CNN, 5/17/2020

The centers helping child abuse victims have seen 40,000 fewer kids amid the pandemic

The Washington Post, 8/19/2020

As hospitals see more severe child abuse injuries during coronavirus, 'the worst is yet to come'

Pediatricians and child protection advocates say lawmakers need to take immediate action to stop the abuse and save lives.

USA Today, 5/13/2020

Child protection workers warn abuse cases on rise during pandemic

KBTX-TV (Texas), 8/3/2020

National Sexual Assault Hotline sees record demand during pandemic. Many reaching out are children.

USA Today, 7/21/2020

Experts see no proof of child-abuse surge amid pandemic

When the coronavirus pandemic took hold across the United States in mid-March, forcing schools to close, many child welfare experts warned of a surge of child abuse

ABC News, 6/28/2020

Child abuse reports in Washington down nearly 50 percent

Advocates worried about unreported abuse during pandemic

The Columbian, 8/18/2020

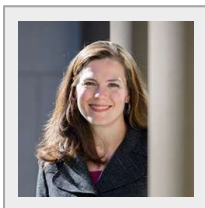
Child Abuse Reports Plummeted During Pandemic, And That's Not A Good Thing

NBC Bay Area Found Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect Are Likely Slipping Through the Cracks After Californians Sheltered At Home and Schools Closed

NBC Bay Area, 5/29/2020

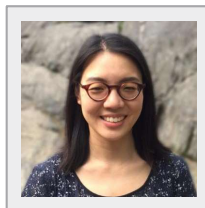
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Our Presenters Today



KERRI RAISSIAN

Associate Professor
University of Connecticut, Department of Public Policy



KELLEY FONG

Assistant Professor
Georgia Tech, School of History and Sociology



DANIELLE MARTIN

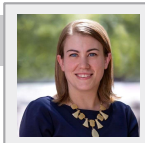
Acting Director
Division of Continuous Quality Improvement, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services



ANGELA GREEN

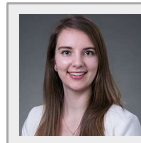
Region V Administrator
Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Hosted and Moderated by:



KATE STEPLETON

Senior Research Associate
MEF Associates



CHRISTINA BECKER

Knowledge Mobilization Manager
APHSA

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Measuring COVID's Affect on Child Maltreatment

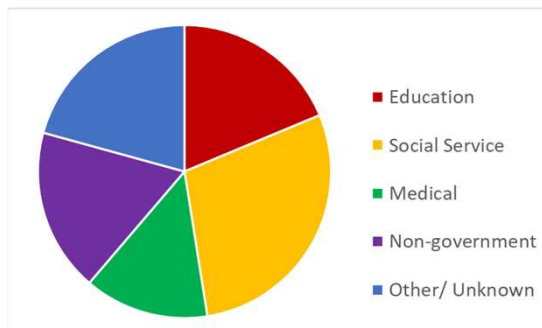
Kerri M. Raissian
Associate Professor of Public Policy
University of Connecticut

Reflects joint work with Lindsey Bullinger, Angela Boy, Megan Feely,
Stephen Messner, William Schneider, Shannon Self-Brown

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Who Reports Child Maltreatment to CPS?

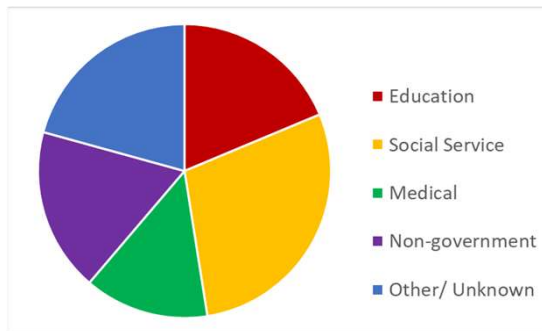
Child Maltreatment (2000)
Uses NCANDS: Child File, 2018 Data



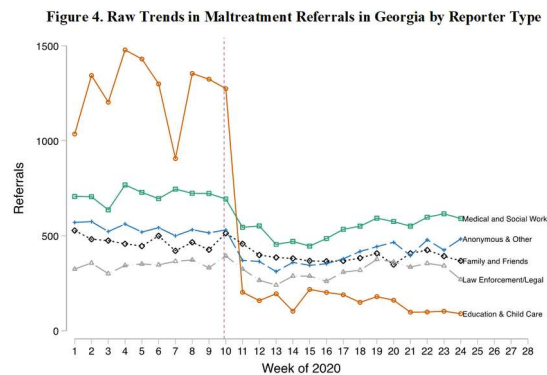
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Who Reports Child Maltreatment to CPS?

Child Maltreatment (2000)
Uses NCANDS: Child File, 2018 Data



Bullinger et al. (2020).
Work is under review



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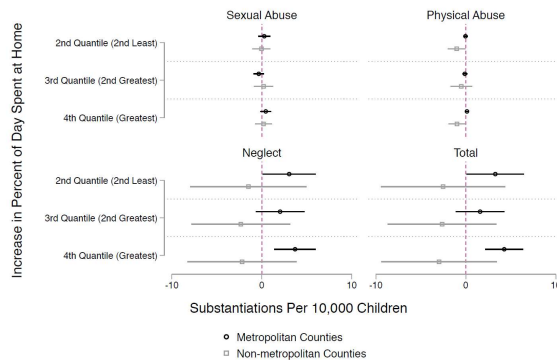
Does the Drop Measure a Real Reduction in CM?

- Unlikely
- COVID-19 has brought a host of stressors:
 - A reduction in economic resources
 - A reduction in available time
 - A reduction in available supports (like school or childcare)

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Using Indiana's Child Maltreatment Data

Figure 3. Effect of Staying at Home during COVID-19 Pandemic on Substantiated Child Maltreatment Reports



Areas that stayed at home more, Q4, had increased levels of child maltreatment – specifically neglect.

These areas had traditionally lower CM levels and are more affluent.

Bullinger, Raissian, Schneider, and Feely. 2020. Under review.

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Using Georgia's Child Maltreatment Data

- Counties where people stayed home longer experienced higher child maltreatment rates
- More supervisory neglect
 - Particularly in metropolitan counties
 - Particularly in counties that have (historically) lower report rates
- More educational neglect
 - Particularly in higher poverty counties
 - Particularly in counties that have (historically) higher report rates
- Effects plateaued after about week 4
- Prior to COVID-19, staying home and CM were not related

Bullinger, Boy, Feely, Messner, Raissian, Schneider, Self-Brown. 2020. Under review.

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More Time at Home? More Supervisory Neglect?

- Other research assess child-wellbeing during COVID finds **increases in**
 - High acuity pediatric visits (Chaiyachati et al. 2020)
 - Daily calls to poison centers (Chang et al. 2020)
 - Home based fractures (Bram et al. 2020)

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COVID-19 and Child Maltreatment Reporting: What Are We Missing?

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Kelley Fong, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Sociology


Georgia Institute of Technology


October 5, 2020

I am enormously grateful for the generosity of the research participants in Connecticut and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) staff who facilitated my access. All analyses, interpretations, and conclusions are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Connecticut DCF. This research was generously supported by the Doris Duke Fellowship for the Promotion of Child Well-Being, the Multidisciplinary Program on Inequality and Social Policy at Harvard University, and the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship.

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The New York Times
Child Abuse Cases Drop 51 Percent. The Authorities Are Very Worried.

 By Nikita Stewart
Published June 9, 2020 Updated Aug. 7, 2020

 **politics**

Child abuse reports are down during the pandemic. Experts say that's a bad sign

By [Paul LeBlanc](#), CNN
Updated 1:30 PM ET, Sun May 17, 2020

The Boston Globe
 Reports of child abuse and neglect are plummeting across New England. That's not a good thing

By [Matt Stout](#) Globe Staff, Updated April 9, 2020, 5:58 p.m.

Los Angeles Times
 'We do not want another Gabriel Fernandez' Coronavirus leads to 'alarming' drop in child abuse reports

By [RICHARD WINTON](#) | STAFF WRITER
APRIL 21, 2020 | 11 AM UPDATED APRIL 22, 2020 | 10:02 AM

milwaukee journal sentinel
 'No one is there to point it out': Experts say more child abuse is likely happening -- but with kids at home, it's not being reported

[Gina Barton](#) Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
Published 1:54 p.m. CT May 7, 2020 | Updated 5:13 p.m. CT May 7, 2020

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DROP IN CALLS TO CHILD ABUSE HOTLINES RAISES RED FLAGS

CORONAVIRUS

Child Protective Services concerned with sharp decline in calls

A Bad Decline: Child Abuse Reports Drop Across New York During Pandemic

Child Abuse Reports In Kentucky Are Way Down — Why That's Not Good News

With Fewer Eyes On Kids, State Sees Sharp Decline In Child Abuse Reports

Falling child-abuse reports in Los Angeles have experts worried

Steep decline and closure of schools spark concerns that victims are not getting help

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What is it that child welfare agencies aren't seeing?

2.4 million child maltreatment reports annually

For **83% of children reported**, no allegations of maltreatment are confirmed

- 90% for reports from educational professionals (Raz and Edwards 2020)
- Reports from educational professionals have the lowest substantiation rates of all professionals (Kesner and Robinson 2002; King, Lawson, and Putnam-Hornstein 2013)

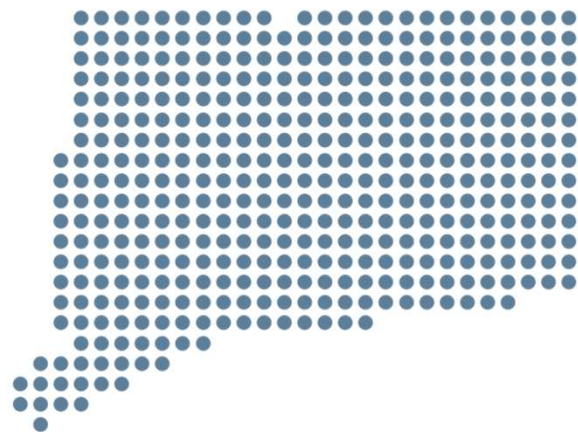
Most cases **close at intake**, with **95% of children** remaining at home

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Research

Two area offices of the
Connecticut Department of
Children and Families

- Mandated reporters
- Investigating social workers
- Investigated mothers



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We can (and must) do better than the “status quo”

- CPS is a collection point for professionals’ wide-ranging concerns about families

*CPS can put in place **family therapy**... It sounds like they’re both extremely stressed. They have a lot of, as you know, socioeconomic issues. I know there’s some **basic-need issues**... I don’t think this is a kid that’s in imminent danger, necessarily. I just think **they need some more education**. I think they could use some parenting skills, knowing what’s appropriate, what’s not appropriate.*

(School-based clinician)

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We can (and must) do better than the “status quo”

- CPS is a collection point for professionals’ wide-ranging concerns about families
- Reported families may not need a child protection-specific response

*I think the entire community think CPS can save them all and provide housing and fix their financial problem. I think that’s the misconception of people in the community. I’m not sure why, but I feel as if they cannot service the family, **they feel like we will be the backup plan**.*

(Investigator)

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We can (and must) do better than the “status quo”

- CPS is a collection point for professionals’ wide-ranging concerns about families
- Reported families may not need a child protection-specific response
- Even short-term, low-level contacts foster fear and disengagement

*I was panicking, like, “Oh, **they’re going to take my baby**”... I was trying to stay calm. I wanted to cry.*

*I couldn’t speak. The only thing that crossed my mind was that **they were going to take them away**.*

*I always thought that **their job is to come in and take a child from their family**... Oh my God. You don’t understand. I was so scared.*

(Investigated mothers)

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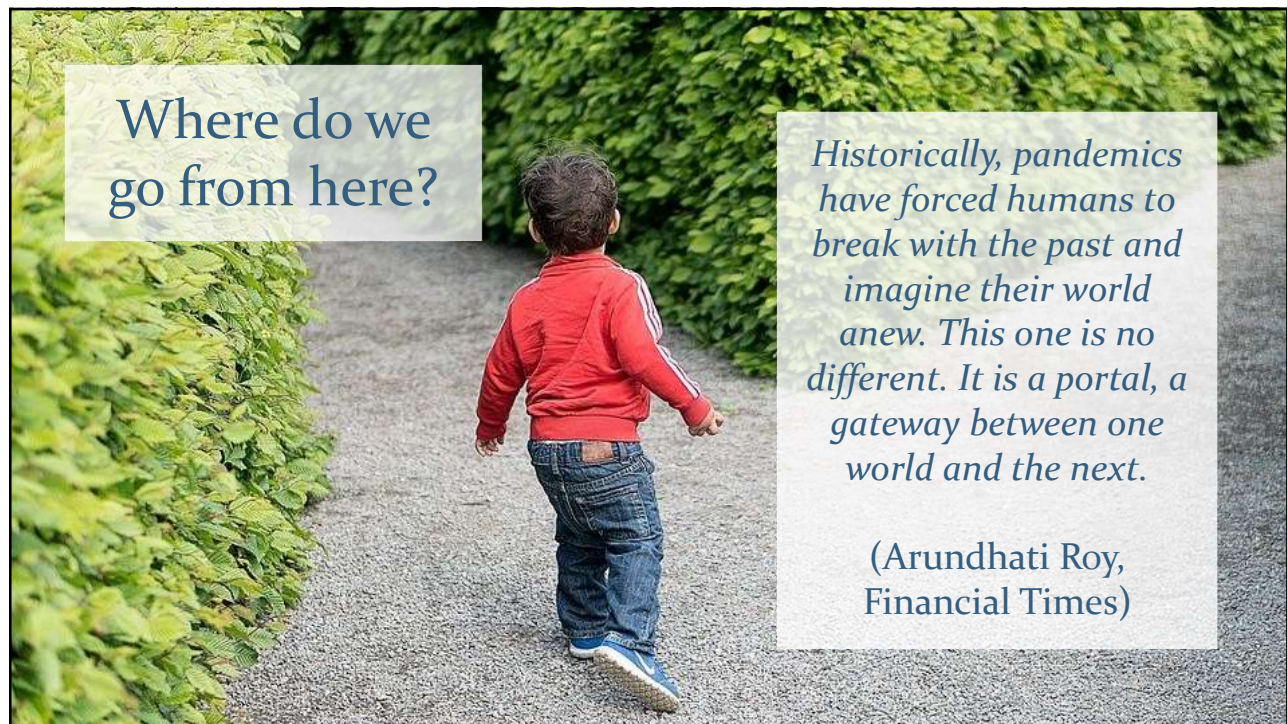
We can (and must) do better than the “status quo”

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- Even short-term, low-level contacts foster fear and disengagement

*It was certain stuff that I didn’t wanna say to her because **I didn’t know if she’s gonna go and tell**. Like, I thought when I first had him that I was going through postpartum. **I don’t tell them how I feel**. I don’t tell them any of that because I don’t need them to say, oh, she’s going through postpartum. She’s gonna hurt the baby.*

(Investigated mother)

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Where do we
go from here?

*Historically, pandemics
have forced humans to
break with the past and
imagine their world
anew. This one is no
different. It is a portal, a
gateway between one
world and the next.*

(Arundhati Roy,
Financial Times)

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Michigan
COVID-19
Prevention
Outreach
Project

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Michigan Prevention Outreach Project

Engage families who may be at greater risk of child abuse or neglect.

Of the **14,162** families listed, **staff spoke with 8,267**.

Eighty percent of families received a text, message, email or packet sent.

Additional actions Include:

- Ongoing utilization of this model.
- Identification of service gaps.
- Partnering with local service providers.
- **New** [COVID-19 prevention and reunification funding](#).
- Families First of Michigan (FFM) **temporary eligibility expansion**.
- Collaborating with Economic Stability Administration.
- Partnering with the Bureau of Community Services, Housing Services Section.



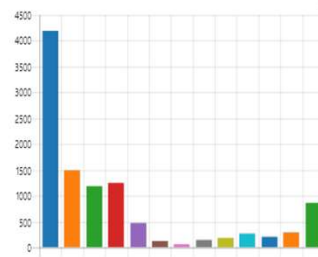
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Prevention Outreach Areas of Identified Need Phase I

3. Which areas of service did the family indicate would be helpful? Check all that apply.

N/A	4200
General Support	1492
Financial & Other Assistance	1191
Food and Nutrition	1238
Housing	476
Crisis Support	127
Substance Abuse	57
Child Care	133
COVID 19	188
Education	272
Counseling	210
Stimulus Check	288
Other	857



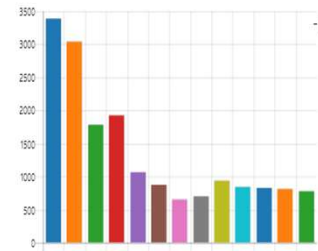
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Prevention Outreach Resources Offered Phase I



4. Which areas of service did you provide the family information about? Check all that apply.

N/A	3384
General Support	3031
Financial & Other Assistance	1782
Food and Nutrition	1930
Housing	1062
Crisis Support	873
Substance Abuse	657
Child Care	695
COVID 19	931
Education	843
Counseling	827
Stimulus Check	813
Other	779



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Prevention Outreach Areas of Identified Need Phase II

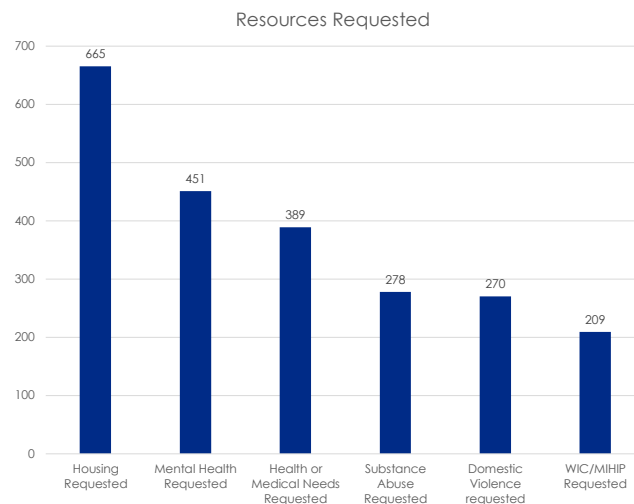
Forty-nine Percent of families were contacted
5319 out of 10,834



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Prevention Outreach Areas of Identified Need Phase II



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Prevention Outreach Stories of Success

Powerful Impact. Examples of Great Outcomes –

A call occurred with a family who needed help with getting clothing for her kids because money is tight right now due to them losing two family members. But this mother was positive and very happy that we called to offer her resources!

A call with a father struggling with health problems, and because he was out of work prior to this due to health problems, he doesn't qualify for many of the government benefits that others are getting right now, including the stimulus check. We talked and eventually I referred him to MCOP and Oaks of Righteousness. We talked about how benefits with FAP and MA may be impacted, and he ended up thanking me several times just for listening. I told him I would follow up next week to see how things are going. He acknowledged that he had been thinking about killing himself, and we talked enough about that for him to tell me he would not act because his son has no contact with his mother, and he doesn't want to leave his son without a parent. We talked about mental health resources. It was a long call, over 40 minutes, but I finished my work week feeling like I had done something of real value, which has been harder for me while we are in lockdown and I can't have the same level of interaction that I previously had with my clients.

From a worker "I was not so sure about people wanting calls from CPS for closed cases. I have had two today. One talked for about 45 minutes. The other had 1.5 hours' worth of questions. WOW."

"I just contacted a client on my list and explained the outreach program she said, "that is so awesome!" and was very appreciative"

"Through an Outreach phone contact client identified they were struggling because their FIP was closed. Linked with worker and discovered that it was closed in error and was turned back on. Success!"



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Q&A

Any questions? We'd be happy to answer them!

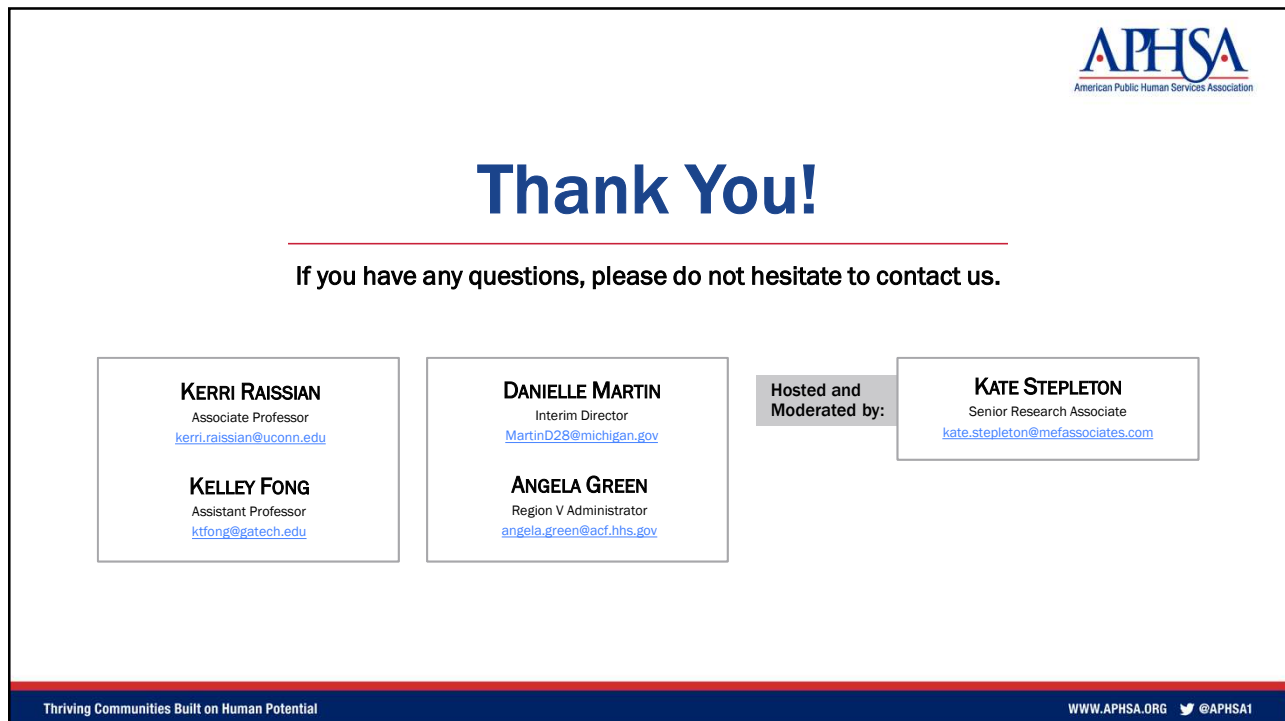
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Thank You!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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