

## KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

### 2009 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

These three legislative proposals are required for three of the SRS FY 2010 budget reductions

#### Grandparents as Caregivers Program

The Grandparents as Caregivers Program will be funded by federal TANF funds rather than State General Funds. Changes to the program would include the following:

- Income of the grandparents will no longer be considered when determining eligibility, significantly increasing the number of caretaker families that could be served
- Legal custody of the child by the grandparent will no longer be required
- There will be no minimum age limit for the grandparent
- Child care assistance would be available for the grandparents who are employed, with no family share deduction applied
- Parental responsibility is promoted through mandatory referral to and cooperation with Child Support Enforcement
- Child's eligibility would reduce from age 21 to age 18 or up to age 19 if in secondary school

#### No removal into SRS custody for youth 16 and older for non-abuse/neglect reasons

Only youth age 16 or older who have been maltreated will be placed in the custody of the Secretary

- Youth over the age of 16 with circumstances such as out-of-control behavior, truancy, or running away will remain at home with services to help improve family functioning
- A portion of the foster care savings resulting from this decision is offset by an increase in in-home services to support the youth and their family, including:
  - Family Preservation
  - Truancy prevention programs
  - Strengths-based family support services aimed at stabilizing families
  - Programs focused on crisis intervention, improving parenting skills and making connections with community resources
  - Services to help assure youth graduate from high school including identification of educational risk factors, working with schools to ensure all school credits are counted and providing services to youth
- In addition mental health, substance abuse and community developmental disability support services would be available

#### Secretary's custody ends at age 18

Foster children will be released from custody when they turn 18 or finish high school

- There is no change in benefits for these youth through the Independent Living Program. Program benefits include:
  - An SRS case manager who meets with the youth on a monthly basis
  - Supports for daily living skills training and career planning
  - Kansas Regents tuition waiver program
  - Medicaid eligibility to age 21
  - Independent living monthly subsidy up to \$300 per month until age 21
  - Financial coverage up to \$300 for one-time start up costs of rent or housing
  - Financial coverage up to \$500 for one-time start up costs of utilities, furniture or housing supplies
  - Financial assistance up to \$3,500 in the first year for education and training related expenses