

INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY CHILDREN’S BUDGET

Temporary Assistance for Families (Including Employment Services)

The Temporary Assistance for Families program provides cash assistance for basic needs, such as clothing, housing, utilities, and transportation, to severely low-income families while they strive to become self-sufficient. To qualify for assistance, families must have very few assets and little or no income. Almost all families with an adult must participate in work activities and seek employment through the TAF Employment Services program. Cash assistance ceased to be an entitlement following the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 and is limited to sixty-months, with provisions for extended assistance if the family meets hardship criteria. Cash assistance recipients must cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement Program, which establishes paternity and assists in obtaining child and medical support. Temporary Assistance for Families benefits are financed by the TANF Block Grant and state funds.

Funeral Assistance

Funding for Funeral Assistance was removed in FY 2011. While no funds are budgeted in either FY 2011 or the base budget request for FY 2012, an enhancement has been requested to restore funding for the program. The Funeral Assistance program contributed a maximum of \$550 for funeral expenses. To receive funeral assistance, the deceased must have been a cash, medical, or food stamp recipient at the time of death. Those qualifying for funeral assistance have very few assets: resources of the family or estate of the deceased and other assets at the time of death were limited to \$2,000. The program was financed by state funds.

Low Income Energy Assistance

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) provides an annual benefit to low-income households for energy bills and to avoid the shutoff of utility services. To qualify for energy assistance, households must have incomes below 130.0 percent of the federal poverty level, must have made recent payments on their energy bills, and must pay directly for utility costs or rent including utility costs. Assistance levels vary depending on household income, the type of dwelling, the number of household members, and energy type. Payments are sent directly to the utility provider and credited to the household’s bill. The primary determinant of the number of LIEAP participants is the prevailing cost of energy. The caseload has risen significantly in years where residential energy costs have spiked. Congressional appropriations for energy assistance have varied greatly in the recent six years, ranging from \$17.7 to \$49.5 million, resulting in significant swings in the amount of assistance available to households each year. The program is funded by a combination of a block grant and emergency appropriations from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Child Care Assistance

The purpose of Child Care Assistance is to enable low-income families to enter the workforce and retain employment, while providing safe and developmentally appropriate care for children. To be eligible for child care, families must have incomes below 185.0 percent of the federal poverty level, have a need for child care (such as the parent’s employment), and must comply with Child Support Enforcement requirements. Families with incomes above seventy percent of the poverty level are required to pay a share of the child care cost. Assistance is provided for children up to age thirteen. Child care is provided by centers, licensed providers, registered providers, and unregulated providers (i.e. care by relatives and care provided

by persons in the child’s home). The amount of assistance provided varies by location, family income and size, the number of children in care, the type of child care setting, and hours of care. Child care rates are reviewed biennially through a market survey in order to form a comparison to the 75th percentile of market rates, a benchmark used by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to ensure that children receiving child care have access to quality care comparable to the general population. Child Care Assistance is funded by a combination of state and federal funds.

Child Care Quality

The majority of child care quality expenditures are devoted to resource and referral services. Resource and referral programs serve as a central component of the state’s child care infrastructure. While their core role is to provide information to parents about child care available in their communities and referrals to other programs in response to family needs, they also maintain databases on child care programs, build the supply of child care by providing training and technical assistance to new and existing providers, and improve child care quality by offering training for family child care providers, center staff, and directors. Because of the lack of affordable care for infants, the department also funds training, technical assistance, and resources specific to infant and toddler caregivers. The Department also contracts for literacy activities and assists in supporting the Kansas Enrichment Network for after school investments.

Kansas Early Head Start

The Kansas Early Head Start Program provides early intervention to enhance children’s development during their formative years, enables parents to be better caretakers and teachers to their children, and helps parents meet their own goals, including economic independence. Comprehensive services available to program participants include: weekly home visits, physical and mental health education, nutrition education, social services, parental involvement and education, services for children with disabilities, job seeking and retention support, and child care for parents who are working or are attending school or job training. The Head Start Collaboration Office within SRS strives to improve the coordination of policies and initiatives among early childhood programs within the state. Kansas Early Head Start grants are awarded to 13 early learning programs in 48 counties serving 1,117 children from birth to four, and their families. The Kansas Early Head Start expenditures meet the infant/toddler targeted funds requirement in the Child Care and Development Fund State Plan.

Child Support Enforcement

Congress enacted Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) program, to counteract the increasing tax burden of public assistance programs for children left unsupported by one or both parents, and to improve the lives of children living in poverty. Federal law requires each state to establish an effective statewide uniform CSE program to improve the quality of life for children; to reduce expenditures for cash assistance, food stamps, foster care, and medical assistance; to help families become independent of public assistance; and to return the responsibility of supporting children to parents whenever possible. Failure to meet federal requirements will result in fiscal sanctions to both the TANF Block Grant and CSE Programs.

The CSE Program is a joint federal, state (judicial and executive branches), county, and private operation which must satisfy numerous federal requirements. The program must provide a full range of child and medical support services from the establishment of orders to modification and enforcement of those orders. SRS is the designated Title IV-D CSE agency for Kansas. Services are provided in all areas of the State by CSE regional staff, and by contracts with most court trustees, one county attorney, and private sector providers (private attorneys, credit bureaus, process servers, and paternity testing facilities). These services are not just for low-income persons receiving other SRS benefits. Any custodial parent may ask for CSE’s unique absent parent location and Child Support Enforcement services. No other private or government agency has the legal authority to provide these services.

Vocational Rehabilitation Case Services

Rehabilitation Services supports secondary students with significant disabilities to prepare for employment through the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program. Eligible students work with their VR counselors to establish specific employment goals. Such goals may result in direct entry into the workforce or career development through post-secondary education. Then, based on their goals and rehabilitation needs, an Individual Plan for Employment is developed detailing the services to be provided. Services may include assistive technology, physical/mental restoration, vocational training, job placement, and supported employment.

Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy

The Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (KYEA) was funded in FY 2006 at the direction of the 2005 Legislature. Through a contract agreement KYEA provides outreach activities to young people with disabilities that encourage work over public assistance as a lifestyle. Specific projects and activities conducted are Disability Mentoring Day, the Disability Heritage Project, the annual Youth Leadership Forum and self-advocacy training in developing Individualized Education Plans.

Wichita School District Collaboration Project

In FY 2009, Rehabilitation Services entered into a collaborative project with Wichita USD 259, the Kansas Health Policy Authority/Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (KHPA), and the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning (KUCRL). The project is designed to inspire, prepare, and support transition-aged youth with disabilities for employment success, whether it be through direct entry into the labor market or through post-secondary education focused on career development.

Disability Determination Services

Disability Determination Services makes disability decisions for Kansas claimants applying for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. Kansans may be entitled to benefits based upon disability or blindness as defined by the Social Security Act. Children from birth up to age 18 may apply for SSI and/or SSDI benefits. In order to qualify for SSI, children must have a disability and they and their families must have little or no income and resources. In order to qualify for SSDI, children must have a disability and have worked long enough to earned SSA work credits.

Independent Living Services

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) work to achieve full inclusion of persons with a disability in their community of choice, which includes children with disabilities as allowed by the Rehabilitation Act. As a core service, CILs provide systems advocacy and through special projects conduct innovation and outreach projects which serve to support and assist children with disabilities and their families to ensure they are given the opportunity to grow up and become fully participating members in their communities. An enhancement request is requested for the Independent Living Services Program. Please refer to the Supplemental/Enhancement section for details.

Community Services

The Community Services program funds local collaborative efforts to provide services to children and their families to prevent unnecessary placements of children into Foster Care. These efforts are primarily directed at children who are safe from abuse and/or neglect by their care givers, but who need preventive services, either because of their own behaviors, or the parent’s need for support. These could be children with behavioral problems, truants, or children with serious medical or mental health needs. These services are designed to be provided by community providers to prevent SRS from becoming involved with the family through an abuse/neglect or non-abuse/neglect assessment.

Family Services

The purpose of Family Services is to maintain children safely in their own homes by mitigating the risk factors that threaten out-of-home placement. Family Services are provided to families in crisis resulting from a sudden onset of urgent circumstances endangering a child or children and resulting in the risk of removal from their home. Family Services may also alleviate specific situations at earlier stages which, if services are not offered, may develop into a crisis. The services provided are based on the social worker’s assessment of risk and safety at the time a report is received on a family. Family Services are tailored to alleviate the risks of the child or family that threaten children remaining safely in the home. Services are offered by SRS staff or through referrals to other community agencies and organizations.

Family Services recognizes the inherent integrity and value of the family. Whether a child is in need of protection or is in conflict with home or community, the use of family-centered services is an effective approach for preserving the family and the family’s safe functioning. These services are primarily delivered to the family unit rather than to individual family members. However, individual family members may also receive specific services. Services may be court ordered, recommended by SRS, or requested by the family.

Family Preservation Contracts - In-Home Services

Family Preservation in-home services are intensive services offered to families who are at imminent risk of having a child come into the custody of SRS and removed from their home. These services assist the family in identifying and understanding the problems within the family that place a child at risk of out-of-home placement, and assists them in finding ways to change how the family unit functions. While most issues are resolved within the first 90 days of referral, the providers are responsible for services 12 months from the time of referral.

Other CFS Grants/Contracts

This section is comprised of a combination of unique programs. These include the following Federal grants received by CFS - the Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act (CAPTA) Grant, the Children’s Justice Act (CJA) Grant, the Kansas Coalition on Sexual and Domestic Violence Grant, Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Caseworker Visitation Grant, the Kansas Serves Substance Affected Families Grant, and the Adoption Incentive Grant. It also includes funding for an Emergency Shelter Grant, Child Welfare Grants provided to Native American Tribes, and the Adoption Resources Recruitment Contract. These programs cover a wide spectrum of services from early prevention to enhancing permanency.

Reintegration/Foster Care - Out-Of-Home Services

Foster Care services are provided to children and families when the court has found the child to be in need of care and the parents are not able to meet the safety and care needs of the child. Most children who require foster care have been abused or neglected and have significant developmental, physical, and emotional needs, which require an array of services and care options. However, some children who are not abused or neglected may be placed in foster care for reasons such as out-of-control behavior, truancy, overwhelmed parents, and running away from home. Their needs can range from placement with a relative to inpatient psychiatric care. Family foster homes are the most frequently used placement resources, but some children require more structured settings, such as a group home, or residential center, including Medicaid funded inpatient psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs). CFS’ partners in service delivery are the Child Welfare Case Management Providers (CWCMP) who are responsible for providing foster care services including case planning, placement, life skills and foster parent recruitment and training. SRS social workers are responsible for monitoring the safety of the children and monitoring the progress made toward permanency.

Adoption Support

Adoption Support provides assistance for the needs of children placed in permanent adoptive homes. Assistance may include medical services; ongoing monthly financial subsidy for children who have significant medical, emotional, or developmental needs; time limited payment(s) for specific needs that cannot be met through Medicaid, subsidy, or other resources; and/or one-time payment to provide for legal fees related to the adoption. Adoption Support is essential to enable children, who would otherwise remain in SRS custody, to be placed in permanent adoptive homes. This placement is the primary goal for children who cannot be reunited with their families.

Permanent Custodianship

Permanent Custodianship is a permanency option which is explored when there are compelling reasons why reintegration and adoption are not the preferred permanency option. This option may be more appropriate for older children, those with strong family bonds, or when cultural traditions influence the permanency decision. When custodianship is established, a subsidy may be provided to assist families willing to assume the responsibility of establishing a permanent home for older children and their siblings. Once eligibility is determined and an agreement is in place, the subsidy can continue until the child reaches eighteen years of age (or until the child completes his or her high school education in the year the child turns 18).

NARRATIVE INFORMATION – DA 400
Division of the Budget
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AGENCY NAME: Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services
PROGRAM TITLE: Integrated Service Delivery
SUBPROGRAM TITLE: Children's Budget

Independent Living Life Skills/ETV

Independent Living services are available to young people between the ages of 15 and 21, who were in custody and in out-of-home placement for any length of time on or after their 15th birthday with the exception of youth in detention and locked facilities. The purpose of the program is to ensure that youth have a smooth and successful transition to self-sufficiency as young, independent adults. Available services and assistance include assistance with completing secondary and post secondary education, monthly independent living subsidies, life skills training, and leadership opportunities. These services are provided by the local SRS offices. Additionally, youth eligible for Independent Living can attend Kansas higher education institutions under the Kansas Foster Child Educational Assistance Act which was effective July 1, 2006. Tuition and fees are waived by the schools. No payment from SRS is required. Youth are eligible through the semester they turn 23 years of age.