

ANNUAL REPORT FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2007

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES EXPEDITED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT FUND

OVERVIEW

Laws 1998, Chapter 10, Section 21 established through Arizona Revised Statute §8-812, which created the Child Protective Services Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund.

The Child Protective Services (CPS) Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund enables the Department of Economic Security (DES) to provide substance abuse treatment services so that permanency for dependent children can be expedited when parental substance abuse is a significant obstacle to family reunification. The Fund can also be used for substance abuse treatment for parents or guardians with a primary goal of facilitating family preservation, including services that maintain the family unit in a substance abuse treatment setting.

A.R.S. § 8-812(F) requires DES to make the following information available on the DES website:

- ◆ The number and percentage of parents and guardians who are offered treatment paid for with fund monies and who complete treatment.
- ◆ The number of cases and children who are able to remain with or are returned to the custody of their parents or guardians as a result, in whole or in part, of treatment paid for with fund monies.
- ◆ The number of children who receive expedited permanent placement as a result of the availability of services paid for with fund monies.
- ◆ Data for cases that are part of expedited dependency proceedings.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The DES maintains contracts with community agencies for the provision of substance abuse treatment and recovery support services. Expedited substance abuse treatment funds are integrated to ensure a comprehensive continuum of services are available in concert with Title XIX, TANF and General Fund dollars. This integration has resulted in a blending of fund sources that emphasize coordination and maximization of treatment resources.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

A.R.S. § 8-812(C) specifies that the state appropriation cannot be used on behalf of a parent unless the following are true:

- ◆ The parent or guardian is a party to a dependency action concerning a child of the parent or a child under the care of the guardian.
- ◆ The parent or guardian is not eligible for benefits under Title XIX of the Social Security Act or private insurance, or the necessary substance abuse treatment service is not available under Title XIX or private insurance.
- ◆ The case plan provides for the children to either remain with or return to the parent or guardian.
- ◆ The treatment is necessary for the case plan to be accomplished.
- ◆ A recipient of services that are paid for with fund monies shall sign a written statement as outlined in statute.

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2007 APPROPRIATION

The sum of \$224,500 was appropriated to DES in state fiscal year 2007 for the CPS Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund. The following section of this report indicates the number of parents and children who were provided services through this appropriation.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A.R.S. § 8-812(F.1): The number and percentage of parents and guardians who are offered treatment paid for with Fund monies and who complete treatment.

Two hundred and nineteen parents/guardians were provided services from this appropriation. These clients include three parents/guardians who continued treatment authorized in the prior fiscal year. Of all participants, 158 (72%) have completed treatment and/or benefited from some treatment, 56 clients (26%) continue to receive treatment and/or supportive services, while the remaining five clients (2%) were identified as “no services needed.”

A.R.S. §8-812(F.2.): The number of cases and children who are able to remain with, or be returned to the custody of their parents or guardians as a result, in whole or in part, of treatment paid for with Fund monies.

Fifty-three children in 74 cases were able to remain with or were returned to their parents/guardians as a result of treatment paid for in whole or in part with Fund monies.

A.R.S. §8-812(F.3.): The number of children who receive expedited permanent placement as a result of the availability of services paid for with Fund monies.

In addition to those 53 children, 18 children were able to achieve permanency through an alternative reunification plan such as guardianship or adoption as a result of the Fund monies.

The parents/guardians of 116 children continue reunification efforts with their children.

A.R.S. §8-812(F.4.): Data for cases that are part of the expedited proceedings.

Two hundred and one cases were part of an expedited court proceeding.

CONCLUSION

Positive outcomes for children and families involved in the child welfare system are often dependent upon access to effective interventions to address issues associated with maltreatment. Access to services such as substance abuse treatment are critical given the prevalence of substance use disorders within families involved in the child welfare system. Prior to enactment of A.R.S. § 8-812, limitations in resources and stringent eligibility requirements impacted the ability of Child Protective Case Managers to adequately provide needed interventions for families dealing with substance use disorders. The availability of the Fund continues to allow DES to provide a more comprehensive array of substance abuse services. Consequently, case managers are able to more fully address the safety and permanency of children. The Fund also makes available a comprehensive continuum of services to individuals who might not be eligible to receive needed services from another funding source, or it may supplement treatment services until another funding source can be determined.

The provision of substance abuse treatment is critical in helping the Department to make reasonable efforts as required by federal and state law to reunify families impacted by substance abuse. The interventions provided have supported parents in their recovery and allowed children and parents to be reunified when it is safe to do so. Many parents continue in treatment with the goal of reunification, while other parents treated may have severe and chronic addiction disorders that continue to interfere with their ability to safely reunite them with their children. In circumstances when parents do not complete treatment or benefit from treatment to the extent necessary for reunification, the availability of services made possible by this Fund has given the parents an opportunity to remediate their substance abuse problems. Consequently, CPS Specialist's were then able to accomplish alternative permanency for children in an expeditious manner. For those parents who have been unable to remediate their substance abuse problems, alternative permanency for their children has been achieved.