

ANNUAL REPORT FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2009

**CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES
EXPEDITED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT FUND**

OVERVIEW

Laws 1998, Chapter 10, Section 21 (HB 2645) established through Arizona Revised Statute §8-812 the “Child Protective Services Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund.”

The Child Protective Services (CPS) Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund enables the Arizona 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 the Department to make the following information available to the public upon request and 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

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, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (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 child 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 2009 APPROPRIATION

The sum of \$224,500 was appropriated to DES for state fiscal year 2009 for the CPS Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund.

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.

Data collection and reporting note: In fiscal year 2009 (FY09) a more expedient method was used to select the expedited clients which affected how the outcomes are reported as compared to prior years. The vast majority of clients selected for last year's report (FY08) started services in FY07 and continued to receive services in FY08. In contrast, the vast majority of clients selected for FY09's report started services in FY09. As a result, there was less turnover of the selected clients in FY09 because they had less time in treatment. Thus, fewer clients received services with Expedited Funds in FY09, than what was reported in FY08.

The new method of identifying clients in FY09 made a difference in the program completion rate as compared to FY08. Since the vast majority of FY09 clients started services in FY09, they had fewer months to complete services. In contrast, many FY08 clients were continuing clients from FY07 and thus had more time to complete services than those selected in FY09.

Likewise, the number of clients listed as not needing services in the FY09 report appears higher than in the FY08 report. This is because most of the clients in the FY08 report were continuing clients from FY07. The clients who did not need services were screened out in FY07 and never showed up in the FY08 report. The clients selected for the FY09 report included mostly new clients who were assessed and screened-out for services in FY09. Lastly, the FY09 clients did not have the same amount of time to complete the program as those in the FY08 report. Thus, it appears that the outcomes are lower in FY09 when in reality, most had not yet completed treatment. Next year's clients will be selected in the same manner as in FY09, which will make for better comparisons between the years.

In FY09, one hundred and forty-two parents or guardians were provided services from the Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund. Of all participants, 76 (53 percent) completed treatment, 38 (27 percent) clients continue to receive treatment and/or supportive services, while the remaining 28 (20 percent) were assessed and 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.

In FY09, seventy-six children in 106 cases were able to remain with or were returned to their parents/guardians as a result of services provided, including 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 76 children, 13 children were able to achieve permanency through an alternative reunification plan such as guardianship or adoption as a result of the services provided.

The parents/guardians of 57 children continue reunification efforts with their children.

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

One hundred and forty-two 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, including substance abuse assessment and intervention. 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 Services to adequately provide needed interventions for substance use disorders. The availability of the fund continues to allow DES to provide a more comprehensive array of substance abuse services. Consequently, Child Protective Services is able to more fully address the safety and permanency of children whose parents or guardians have substance abuse issues.

The fund also makes available a comprehensive continuum of services to individuals who might not be eligible to receive needed services from another source, or it may supplement treatment services until another funding source can be determined.

The provision of substance abuse treatment is critical to supporting the Department in making 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. For those parents who have been unable to remediate their substance abuse problems, alternative permanency for their children has been achieved. Having offered the services available through this fund has assisted in achieving other permanency plans more expeditiously in these cases.