

CHILDREN'S BUREAU (CB)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Children's Bureau (CB) seeks to provide for the safety, permanency and well being of children through leadership, support for necessary services and productive partnerships with States, Tribes and communities.

MAJOR GOAL: Providing approximately \$8 billion in funding every year, CB works with State, local and Tribal agencies to develop and implement programs that focus on preventing the abuse and neglect of children in vulnerable families, protecting children and youth from further abuse and finding permanent placements and connections for those who cannot safely return to their homes.

CB programs that provide funding to States and Tribes include:

- Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Program
- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) State Grants
- Children's Justice Act
- Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program
- Promoting Safe and Stable Families
- Court Improvement Program
- Foster Care
- Adoption Assistance
- Guardianship Assistance Program
- Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

CB Discretionary Grant Programs include:

- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Discretionary Program
- Adoption Opportunities Program
- Abandoned Infants Assistance Program
- Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program

CB Special Initiatives and Information Resources include

- **Child and Family Services Reviews**
- **Child Welfare Information Gateway**
- **AdoptUsKids**

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Grants to States and Tribes

The **Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)**

Program provides grants to a lead State agency to disburse funds for community child abuse and neglect prevention activities. Funds are used to develop, operate, expand and enhance community-based efforts to strengthen and support families to prevent child abuse and neglect; foster the development of a continuum of preventive services through state and community-based public and private partnerships; and finance public information activities focusing on the healthy and positive development of families and child abuse and neglect prevention activities. In FY 2009, approximately \$42 million is available for CBCAP.

The **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) State Grant Program** provides grants to States to improve child protective service systems. This program assists States in improving: intake, assessment, screening and investigation of child abuse and neglect reports; risk and safety assessment protocols; training for child protective services workers and mandated reporters; programs and procedures for the identification, prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect; and services to disabled infants with life-threatening conditions and their families. In 2009, approximately \$26 million is available for the CAPTA State Grants.

The **Children's Justice Act (CJA)** provides grants to States to improve the investigation, prosecution and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that limits additional trauma to the child victim. The program also addresses the handling of child fatality cases in which child abuse or neglect is suspected and some cases of children with disabilities and serious health problems who also are victims of abuse and neglect. Funding comes from the Crime Victims' Fund, which collects fines and fees charged to persons convicted of Federal crimes. In FY 2009, \$17 million is available for CJA.

The **Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program** (title IV-B, subpart 1 of the Social Security Act) assists States and Tribes to improve their child welfare services with the goal of keeping families together. States and Tribes provide services in support of the following purposes: 1) protecting and promoting the welfare of all children; 2) preventing the neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children; 3) supporting at-risk families through services which allow children, where appropriate, to remain safely with their families or return to

their families in a timely manner; 4) promoting the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care and adoptive families; and 5) providing training, professional development and support to ensure a well-qualified child welfare workforce. Services are available to children and their families without regard to income. In FY 2009, approximately \$281 million is available for the Child Welfare Services program.

The **Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program** (title IV-B, subpart 2 of the Social Security Act) provides grants to State and eligible Tribes to support operation of a coordinated program of family preservation services, community-based family support services, time-limited reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services. **In FY 2009**, approximately \$348 million is available for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program.

The **Court Improvement Program (CIP)** provides grants to enable the courts to conduct assessments of their foster care and adoption laws and judicial processes, and develop and implement plans for system improvement. Three grants are awarded to the highest court in each State: a "basic" CIP grant, a grant for data collection and analysis, and a training grant. In FY 2009, approximately \$32 million is available for CIP grants.

The title IV-E **Foster Care Program** is an annually appropriated entitlement program with specific eligibility requirements and specific allowable uses of funds. It provides funds to States for: foster care maintenance payments; administrative costs to manage the program, including costs for statewide automated information systems; and training for staff as well as foster and adopting parents. These payments vary from State to State and are subject to eligibility criteria determined by title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Funding for the program in FY 2009 is **approximately \$4.6 billion**. Beginning in FY 2010, Tribes will also be eligible to apply to participate in the program.

The title IV-E **Adoption Assistance Program** provides funds to States to subsidize families that adopt children with special needs who cannot be reunited with their families, thus preventing long, inappropriate stays in foster care and providing children a permanent loving home. Like the title IV-E foster care program, this is an annually appropriated entitlement program with specific eligibility requirements and specific allowable uses for the funds. To receive Adoption Assistance benefits, a child must have been determined by the State to be a special needs child, e.g., be older, a member of a minority or sibling group, or have a physical, mental, or emotional

disability. Additionally, the child must have been unable to return home, and the State must have been unsuccessful in its efforts to adopt without medical or financial assistance; and meet pre-determined financial eligibility requirements. Funds also are used for the administrative costs of managing the program and training staff and adoptive parents. Funding for the program in **FY 2009, is approximately \$2.1 billion**. Beginning in FY 2010, Tribes are now eligible to apply to participate in the program.

The title IV-E **Guardianship Assistance Program** is a new program. Beginning in FY 2009, States have the option to begin operating a Guardianship Assistance Program to provide kinship guardianship assistance payments to relatives who assume legal guardianship of children for whom they have cared while foster parents. To be eligible for title IV-E kinship guardianship assistance payments, a child must have been eligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments during at least a six consecutive month period during which the child resided in the home of the prospective relative guardian who was licensed or approved as meeting the licensure requirements as a foster family home. In addition, the State agency must determine 1) that return home or adoption are not appropriate permanency options; 2) the child demonstrates a strong attachment to the prospective relative guardian; and 3) the relative guardian has a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child. Funding for the program in FY 2009 is expected to be approximately \$14 million. Beginning in FY 2010, Tribes will also be eligible to apply to participate in the program.

The **Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP)** offers assistance to States to provide independent living services to help current and former foster care youth achieve self-sufficiency. States and local agencies are encouraged to assist youth in a wide variety of areas designed to support a successful transition to adulthood. Activities and programs include help with education, employment, financial management, housing, emotional support and assured connection to caring adults for older youth in foster care as well as youth 18-21 who have emancipated or "aged out" of the foster care system. The Educational and Training Vouchers Program (ETV) for Youths Aging out of Foster Care was added to the CFCIP in 2002. ETV makes available vouchers of up to \$5,000 per year per youth for postsecondary education and training for eligible youth. In FY 2009, \$140 million is available for the CFCIP Independent Living Assistance program and approximately \$45 million for Education and Training Vouchers program.

Discretionary Grants

The **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Discretionary Program** funds research and demonstration grants and contracts, focused on the causes, prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect; investigative, administrative and judicial procedures; and the national incidence study of child abuse and neglect. The program also funds projects to: disseminate training materials; provide technical assistance; and demonstrate and evaluate improved methods and procedures to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect. In addition, the program also funds a Home Visitation initiative that makes competitive grants to states to encourage investment of existing funding streams into proven-effective home visitation programs. In FY 2009, approximately \$41 million is available for the program.

The **Adoption Opportunities** program supports grants and contracts to eliminate barriers to adoption and to help to find permanent homes for children, particularly those with special needs, who would benefit by adoption. In FY 2009, approximately \$26 million is available for the program.

The **Abandoned Infants Assistance** program provides grants to help identify ways to prevent the abandonment of children in hospitals and to identify and address the needs of infants and young children, particularly those with acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and prenatal drug or alcohol exposure. In FY 2009, approximately \$11 million is available.

The **Infant Adoption Awareness Training** program has funded grantees to develop curricula and implement training programs to train designated staff of eligible health centers. The program provides adoption information and referrals to pregnant women on an equal basis with all other courses of action included in non-directive counseling to pregnant women. In FY 2009, approximately \$9 million is available for the program.

Special Initiatives and Information Resources

The **Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs)** are designed to examine child welfare outcomes for children and families served by a State's child and family service program. Section 1123 A of the Social Security Act provides the legislative authority for the CFRs. The CFRs cover child protective services, foster care, adoption, family preservation, family support, and independent living. They are designed to help States improve child welfare services and the outcomes for families and children who receive services by identifying strengths and needs within State programs, as well as areas where

technical assistance can lead to program improvements. The reviews emphasize accountability and are conducted in collaboration between State and Federal governments. The CFRs examine outcomes for children and families in three areas: *safety, permanency, and child and family well-being*. Within these three areas, seven (7) *outcomes* are assessed through statewide data and onsite review of cases. The reviews also examine seven (7) *systemic factors* that affect the quality of services delivered to children and families and the outcomes they experience.

Child Welfare Information Gateway provides information services for the Children's Bureau, compiling, synthesizing, and disseminating resources on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families to child welfare professionals and the public. Child welfare and related professionals can rely on Information Gateway for quick access to publications, websites, a workforce community of practice, and online databases covering a wide range of topics, including child welfare, child abuse and neglect, foster care and adoption. For more information, visit <http://www.childwelfare.gov>.

The **AdoptUsKids** project provides information and referral services to prospective and approved adoptive families, as well as training and technical assistance to States and Tribes to increase their capacity in providing adoption services to children in foster care and to increase retention and recruitment of foster and adoptive parents. The AdoptUsKids photolisting website features waiting children. Over 10,000 children featured on the site have been placed in adoptive families since its inception. The program, in partnership with the Ad Council also uses public service announcements (PSA) to promote adoption. For more information, visit <http://www.adoptuskids.org>.

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