

# CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERVICES

Offering  
comprehensive  
support to  
caregivers and their  
families to prevent  
child abuse &  
neglect.



# Abstract:

- The Caregiver Support Services (CSS) program provides a unique opportunity for families who are experiencing acute stressors and/or disability challenges.
- CSS provides respite in many scenarios that empower the family to gain supports and relief in caregiving, emphasizing self-care.
- CSS allows for wrap-around services ensuring that resources are in place to provide longevity of support, decreasing the risk of the children entering the dependency system.
- CSS empowers families through support groups and after care.

# Objectives:

1. Understand how wrap around services combined with varied response to respite needs can assist families.
2. Differentiate between the different types of respite opportunities.
3. Evaluate your program to ensure success by changing the dynamic of the family to decrease the possibility of abuse and neglect.

# What is Caregiver Support Services?

A respite and wraparound service with an overarching goal to reduce and eliminate the incidence of abuse and neglect and placement of children into foster care in counties served.

CSS:

1. Places an emphasis on family choice and voice.
2. Assists the family in reducing stress by increasing access to community supports and resources.
3. Offers time limited respite services in a variety of settings.
4. Assists in the development of an informal system for long-term sustainability, and provision of open-ended, long-term support through support groups.

# Eligibility Criteria:

We provide services to any parent or caregiver caring full-time for a child 0-14 and living in counties served:

The child may have a:

- Physical disability
- Social-emotional challenges
- Developmental delays/disability

Or a Caregiver may be experiencing an acute situational stress leading to a strained family system.

The child may have an underlying medical condition but deemed “medically stable” and not requiring medical care during respite services.

# The Benefits of Caregiver Support Services:

- Improve caregiver/child and sibling relationships
- Reduce Parent and Caregiver stress
- Focus on personal and family goals
- Helps families stay healthy and their children reach their full potential

# What are wraparound services:

- An approach that considers the **whole** family unit, not simply the identified child or caregiver, knowing the family unit is a highly integrated, complex system that must be addressed holistically.
- A thorough **assessment** that includes a determination if the family/child has medical insurance, stable housing, free or reduced school lunch, and other risk factors in addition to assessing protective factors, strengths, and challenges.
- **Connects** families with needed resources to build and expand the family's support systems.
- Offers monthly Support Groups for long-term sustainability.
- Provides Parent/Caregiver education

# What is Respite?

## **Respite is the service not the outcome**

- Respite care is a short break provided to a primary caregiver to give temporary relief from the daily tasks of caring for a care recipient.
- Research shows:
  - Respite is capable of reducing caregiver stress, depression, alleviating sleep deprivation, and reducing the sense of burden experienced by caregivers (Cowan & Reed, 2002).
  - When focused on at-risk children there is evidence of reduced risk of child abuse and/or neglect (Cole, et al., 2005; Cole & Hernandez, 2008).
    - Respite helps delay or avoid facility-based placements (Gresham, 2018).



# Types of Respite being offered:

## Family-Selected Caregivers

selected by the family, assumed to have knowledge of the family, knows the child, and understands the culture and habits of the family. *\*CSS places great value on family selected caregivers as this respite option has the greatest probability of sustainability as a long-term support for the family. Overnight care may be provided through this stipend-based option.*

# Types of Respite being offered:

## **Respite Care Providers**

Full-Time & Part-Time Respite Care Providers, provide high quality respite care and ensure the safety of the children served while completing personal hygiene and other assisted daily living skills as needed. In addition to safety, the provider will assist the individual(s) in daily activities as noted in the Family Support Plan. The providers must have experience working with children with or without disabilities.

# Types of Respite being offered:

## **Center Based Care**

will be used when the family's choice is to have the child go off site to receive the respite relief. CSS will offer a financial payment for the center care based on the level of care and authorized hours in the service plan.

## **Group Care**

shelter care provided to children that have an immediate need to leave their family setting for a brief period of time allowing the family to secure services, have a cool down period and plan for the reunification.

# Evaluating Success:

At Intake Pre-Assessments are completed with the family to gauge the level of Parental Stress, Family Support and Protective Factors. These assessments are utilized to create Family Support Plans for the caregivers and children to work on during the time the case is open.

At Closure Post-Assessments are completed with the family to gauge if the level of Parental Stress has decreased and if the levels of Family Support and Protective Factors have increased.

# Evaluating Success:

**Parental Stress Scale:** is an 18-item questionnaire assessing parents' feelings about time and parenting role, exploring both positive aspects (e.g. emotional benefits, personal development) and negative aspects of parenthood (e.g. demands on resources, feelings of stress). The instrument assesses parental stress, and it encourages discussions to promote caregiver self-care and well-being.

**Family Support Scale:** is an 18-item measure which asks parents to rate, on a five-point response scale, the helpfulness of various potential sources of social support. The scale appears to lend itself well to program evaluations because it is very brief, easy to administer, and has demonstrated reliability and validity.

**Protective Factors Survey, 2nd Edition (PFS-2) Concrete Supports:** The 4-question survey is designed for use with parents and caregivers participating in family support and child maltreatment prevention services. The survey results are designed to: provide agencies with a snapshot of the families they serve, measure changes in family protective factors, and help identify areas where staff can focus on increasing protective factors for each family.

# Evaluating Success:

Measures: Based on assessment data cumulative through Dec 2024

- Parental Stress: decreased by 97.7%
- Family Support: increased by 98%
- Protective Factors: increased by 91.9%

After reviewing the child welfare system database, no families that have completed the Caregiver Support Services program have entered the dependency program.

# Questions? Comments?



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