

Children, Adults and Families Division

January 23-24, 2007

DIVISION OVERVIEW

The ability to be financially self-sufficient and to provide for one's own needs and the needs of one's family are among the most basic desires in our society. For many individuals and families, the goal of being self-sufficient is challenged by issues of mental or physical disability, unemployment, alcohol or drug addiction, and/or histories of domestic violence or child abuse.

The Children, Adults and Families (CAF) Division provides support to individuals and families in order to ensure family stability, both emotional and financial. Vulnerable individuals, families and children may need temporary support such as:

- Cash assistance,
- Medical assistance,
- Food stamps,
- Case management and job assistance,
- Child care, and
- Child safety and protection.

Without this supportive assistance, vulnerable individuals and families are more likely to require more expensive and intrusive services. For example, assisting a parent to become clean and sober and to provide for the care and safety of his/her children not only results in a more positive outcome for a family, it also is a less expensive outcome than having to place the children in foster care for safety reasons.

During 2006:

- 522,000 low-income Oregonians (14 percent of the total population of Oregon) received food stamps, cash assistance and/or medical assistance;
- 38,700 individuals received child welfare services; and
- 17,800 individuals with disabilities received assistance preparing for and obtaining employment.

Self-sufficiency

CAF's self-sufficiency programs provide assistance for low-income families to help them become self supporting. The major program areas are:

- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF),
- Food benefits,
- Child care,
- Refugee assistance, and
- Medical eligibility.

Vocational rehabilitation

Vocational rehabilitation services are designed to assess, plan, develop and provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals whose disabilities present impediments to employment. The primary programs are:

- Basic vocational rehabilitation services,
- Youth Transition Program,
- Supported employment services, and
- Independent Living Program.

Child welfare

DHS is the state agency responsible for accepting and caring for children in need. These dependent children are neglected, abused, mentally or physically disabled and/or placed in legal custody by a court in the State of Oregon (ORS 419B). The primary services CAF provides are:

- Child protective services,
- Out-of-home foster care, and
- Adoptions.

DELIVERY SYSTEMS

CAF employees provide direct service to children and families from all Oregon communities. Often these services are provided in clients' homes. Some specialized services are provided through local contracts.

CAF is organized into 16 districts that provide self-sufficiency and child welfare services to clients in all Oregon counties through more than 100 field offices. In addition, CAF's Statewide Processing Center in Salem handles Oregon Health Plan applications.

Eligible clients receive cash assistance and food benefits through an electronic benefits card. Use of a benefits card increases client convenience, program efficiency and accuracy.

Vocational rehabilitation services are provided by 184 trained counselors and support staff who deliver direct client services through 34 field offices and multiple single employee outstations in one-stop career centers, schools and other agencies.

OUTCOMES

Self-sufficiency

Through self-sufficiency programs, more than 434,000 Oregonians are able to improve their ability to receive adequate nutrition each month through receipt of food benefits administered by DHS.

Approximately 18,000 Oregon families receive cash assistance for basic living expenses through the TANF program each month. Included in this number are approximately 11,000 individuals who receive employment and training services through the JOBS program to improve their ability to get and keep jobs.

The Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program encourages employment and the healthy development of children by helping more than 9,500 low-income working families pay their child care bills each month.

Vocational rehabilitation

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services assisted 17,779 individuals during FY 2006 to address their disability barriers in order to obtain employment. The 2,984 Oregonians who secured competitive employment ceased or decreased their reliance on publicly funded income supports and/or medical benefits. The 261 youth served under the Youth Transition Program broke the typical pattern of leaving school for social security benefits.

Child welfare

Protective service assessments were completed during FY 2005 for 19,373 families. Through reunification services, 64 percent of the children who left foster care were reunited with their parents. Finalized adoptions were achieved for 1,033 children who had been residing in foster care, a 9.5 percent increase over FY 2004.

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAMS

Self- sufficiency

Federal and state policy surrounding the self-sufficiency program's purpose has evolved from primarily ensuring that single adults with children were able to remain together to developing program policies which focus more on the sustained employability of all adults in families with children. This is most dramatically demonstrated by the shift in policy resulting from the welfare reform legislation establishing the TANF program. TANF first passed in 1996 and was reauthorized through the DRA. The initial 1996 legislation replaced the historic welfare entitlement program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), with a program focused on enabling families to move away from cash assistance and ensuring that child care is available for low-income working families.

Vocational rehabilitation

The 85-year-old legislation authorizing the vocational rehabilitation program has experienced significant revisions in recent years. The intent of the revisions has been to focus services and resources on those individuals with the most significant disabilities. The workplace and its expectations of employees has shifted as well, with an increased need for individuals with strong technical and soft skills and the ability to perform a variety of tasks.

Child welfare

The most significant changes in child welfare in recent years were Oregon's Best Interest of the Child legislation and the federal Adoptions and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997. SB 689, the Best Interest of the Child, was aimed at reducing the number of children remaining in foster care for an extended length of time. Similarly, ASFA mandated that public child welfare agencies provide permanency for foster children within prescribed time frames. These significant state and federal statutes prioritized safety, permanency and well-being for children as the primary goal of child welfare.

MAJOR CHANGES DURING 2005-2007

The TANF program was reauthorized in February 2006 as part of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA). The DRA made significant revisions related to program activity definitions and reset the Caseload Reduction Credit (a reduction to the general participation requirement), from a base year of 1995 to 2005. These changes created new challenges for states to achieve participation requirements. The passage of the DRA also presents an opportunity for states to reconsider the TANF program's significance and connections to other family and child initiatives.

Effective September 1, 2006, CAF implemented Medicaid citizenship documentation requirements as required by the DRA. The new requirements do not affect citizens eligible for Medicare or disability-related benefits from the Social Security Administration. To minimize the impact on low-income families, staff are working with affected Medicaid applicants to help them meet the new requirements.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND PROGRESS

CAF is the lead on eight of the department's 29 Key Performance Measures (KPMs). Five of these KPMs fall within self-sufficiency programs, one within vocational rehabilitation and two within child welfare.

Self-sufficiency

KPM #5 – Percent of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) adults placed for whom employment is a goal. This performance measure compares the number of TANF and assessment program clients required to seek employment each month to those who actually become employed. The goal for this measure is 11.1 percent of adults entering employment each month. In 2005 the actual performance was 8.3 percent of adults entering employment per month.

This measure reflects the ability of DHS and its partners to help individuals served by the TANF program become employed. Most of these job placements are 30 or more hours per week, and result in families earning their way off monthly cash assistance.

This measure links to Oregon Benchmark #14 – Percent of covered Oregon workers with earnings of 150 percent or more of the poverty level for a family of four.

KPM #6 – The percent of TANF clients who do not return or are off cash assistance 18 months after exiting TANF due to employment. This performance measure is calculated by dividing the number of TANF cases closed each month due to employment by the number not receiving assistance 18 months later. The goal for this measure is that 92 percent of adults exiting the program due to employment are not on assistance 18 months later. During 2005, 91.4 percent of placed adults were not currently receiving public assistance.

This measure demonstrates the ability of the TANF JOBS program to prepare TANF clients for the world of work. It also helps assess the ability of families to remain self-sufficient after leaving TANF due to employment.

This measure links to Oregon Benchmark #14 – Percent of covered Oregon workers with earnings of 150 percent or more of the poverty level for a family of four.

KPM #7 – The pregnancy rate per 1,000 females ages 15-17. The teen pregnancy rate in Oregon fell almost 50 percent between 1990 and 2005. In 1996 the rate was 47.3. As of 2005, the number of pregnancies per 1,000 was 24.2. DHS is working with the Oregon Progress Board to revise targets to better reflect the trend in the pregnancy rate during the past 10 years.

This performance measure links to Oregon Benchmark #39 – Pregnancy rate per 1,000 females below the age of 17.

KPM #8 – The percentage of childcare providers who are providing enhanced quality of care. This measures the percentage of providers participating in the subsidy program who receive a 7 percent higher rate because they meet enhanced training standards. Providers licensed by Employment Department automatically qualify. Others qualify for the enhanced rate by meeting the same training standards required of licensed providers. In December 2005 the program achieved 25.2 percent versus a goal of 27 percent. The rates DHS pays licensed providers continue to fall below their usual charge, resulting in fewer licensed providers participating in the subsidy program. This impacts the percentage, since the majority of enhanced rate providers are licensed.

This performance measure links to Oregon Benchmark #18 – Percent of children entering school ready to learn.

KPM #10 – The ratio of Oregonians receiving food benefits compared to the estimated number of Oregonians living at or below the poverty level. This measure has increased from .78 in FY 2001 to 1.10 in FY 2005. Oregon is one of the leading states in food benefit participation. Oregon continues various strategies to improve outreach.

This performance measure links to Oregon Benchmark #58 – Oregon's national rank for percent of households that are: a) food insecure (limited access to enough food for all household members to live a healthy active life); and/or b) food insecure with hunger (at least one member must go hungry)."

Vocational rehabilitation

KPM #3 – The percentage of Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services consumers with a goal of employment who obtained employment. The goal for this measure is for 66 percent of consumers with employment plans to obtain employment. The actual performance in 2005 was 63.4 percent.

Child welfare

KPM #13 – The median number of months from date of latest removal from home to finalized adoption. This measure focuses on timely achievement of adoption for children in foster care who are unable to return home. A state meets the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) goal for this indicator if the median length of time from date of latest removal from home to finalized adoption is 36 months or less.

In 2005 Oregon's median number of months to adoption was 33.3 months, compared to 32.1 months in 2006.

KPM #14 – Percentage of abused/neglected children who were re-abused within six months of prior victimization. A state meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect during the period under review, 6.1 percent or fewer children had another substantiated or indicated report within six months.

In 2006 Oregon's re-abuse rate of 6.7 percent reflected a significant improvement compared to the 2005 re-abuse rate of 10.2 percent.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Drug abuse: Approximately 62 percent of children entering foster care in FFY 2005 had parental drug abuse as a reason for placement. Although CAF does not specifically track the types of drugs being abused, it is estimated that approximately 47 percent of all children entering foster care were being placed at least in part due to parental methamphetamine use.

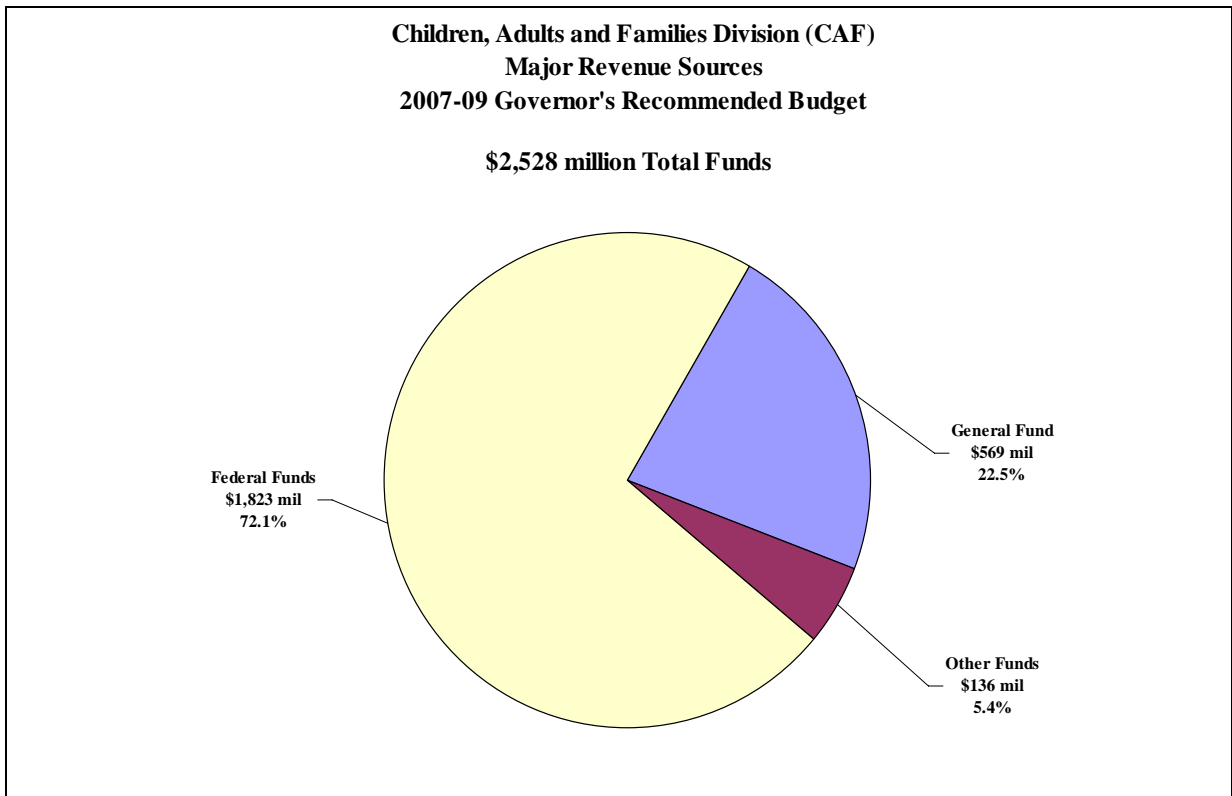
TANF: Reauthorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program occurred in February 2006 with President Bush's signature of the DRA. This federal law requires significant changes in the Oregon TANF program. While this law presents certain challenges for states, it also is an opportunity for Oregon to reshape its self-sufficiency program in a way that best meets the needs of our changing vulnerable population.

Affordable child care: A critical issue for low-income working families is the ability to afford child care. Access to stable, high-quality child care also contributes to a more stable workforce. Instability in child care arrangements makes it more difficult for low-income families to remain employed. Child care that supports children's development, especially in the early years, helps children succeed in school and better prepares them to be part of tomorrow's workforce.

Vocational rehabilitation: The anticipated reauthorization of the federal Rehabilitation Act in 2007, in combination with the reauthorization of the federal Individuals for Disabilities Education Act, places a special focus on transition-aged youth and represents an under-funded mandate for state vocational rehabilitation systems.

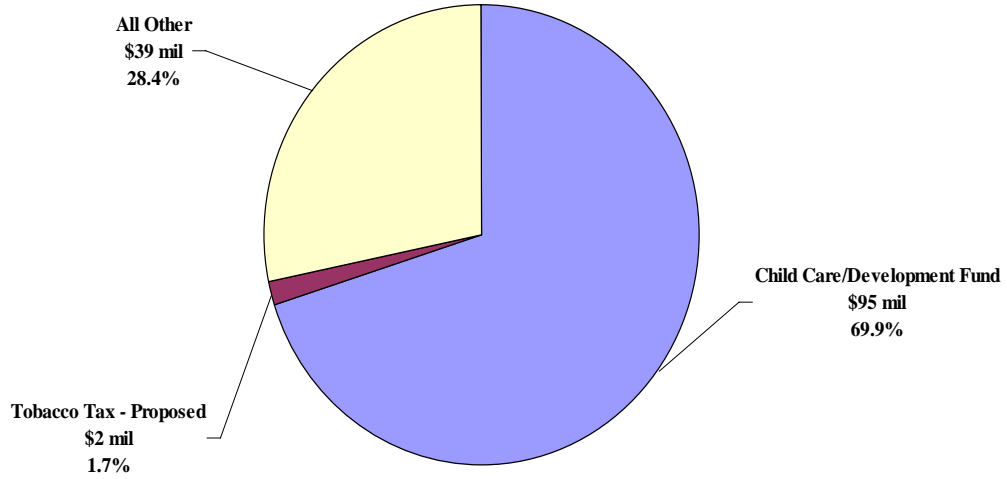
Child welfare: Reports from the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services and the National Child Welfare Resource Center on Organizational Improvement have recommended significant improvements in Oregon's public child welfare system. In addition to policy and practice changes, DHS is urged to address workload issues. One of these issues is a growing need to have access to legal counsel. Currently, child welfare caseworkers routinely appear in court representing the department in such situations as removing a child from a parent for safety reasons or recommending the safe return of the child to the parent. Legal representation for the department is available in only a small percentage of cases.

BUDGET OVERVIEW



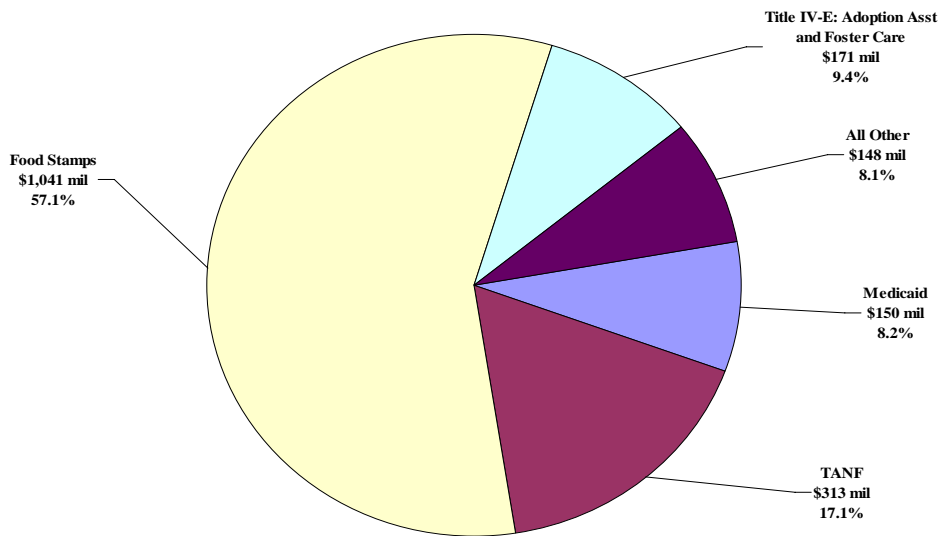
**Children, Adults and Families Division (CAF)
Major Other Funds Revenue Sources
2007-09 Governor's Recommended Budget**

\$136 million Other Fund

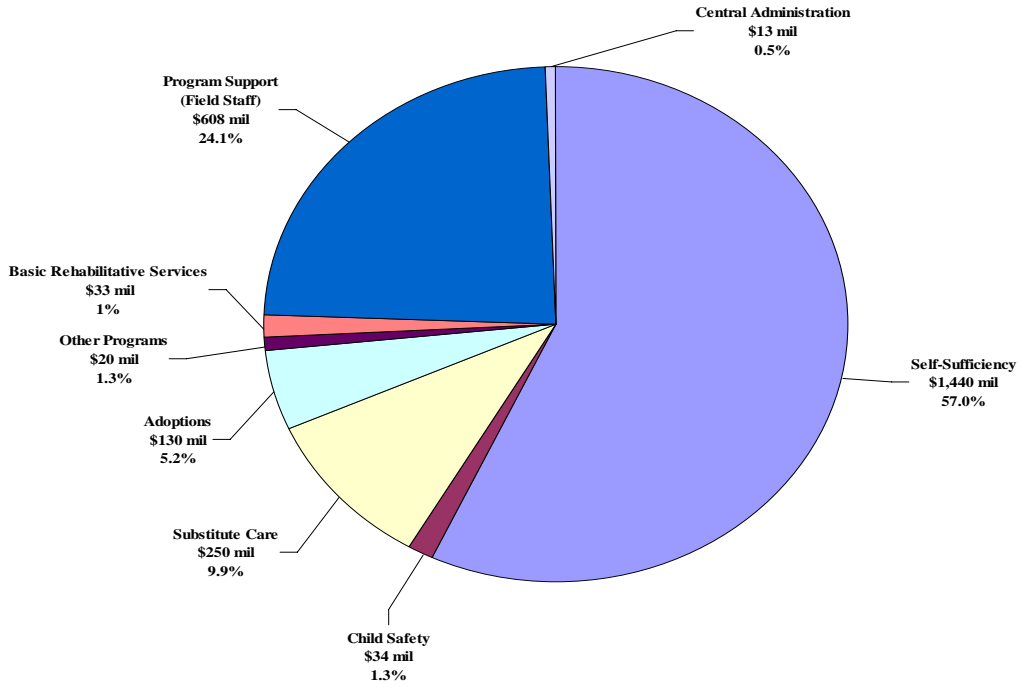


**Children, Adults and Families Division (CAF)
Major Federal Funds Revenue Sources
2007-09 Governor's Recommended Budget**

\$1,823 million Federal Fund



**Children, Adults, and Families (CAF)
Total Fund Use by Program
2007-09 Governor's Recommended Budget
\$2,528 million Total Fund**



**Children, Adults, and Families (CAF)
General Fund Use by Program
2007-09 Governor's Recommended Budget
\$569 million General Fund**

