



Public Children Services Association of Ohio

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INVESTING TANF FOR IMPROVED CHILD WELFARE OUTCOMES

PCSAO is committed to providing and presenting in a useful fashion, various resources for public children services agencies as they embrace opportunities to better serve Ohio's abused, neglected, dependent and unruly children and youth, and their families. Safety, stability and permanency are all activities that can be fiscally supported, using TANF funds.

Furthermore, research increasingly points to the need to invest in developmental activities for our children and youth that have been abused and neglected, in order to improve child outcomes. There are a number of opportunities to support key developmental activities beyond the Help Me Grow program (funded with TANF, but provided by local Health Departments). Examples include academic success programs for foster youth, unruly diversion programs, transitional youth programs, and teen pregnancy prevention programs. Many of these programs will experience increased success when offered in collaboration with other local entities such as with juvenile courts, schools, with Workforce Investment Act programs, or with the Family and Children First Council.

An outline of TANF purposes, and pertinent information for considering investing TANF for child welfare under that purpose, is presented below. Following that outline is a variety of resources that may be helpful as you design local programs.

Four Purposes of TANF

1. **To provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.**
 - a. Families must have dependent children
 - b. Families must be income eligible
 - c. Birth/adoptive families, child only grants for relatives (legal custodians and guardians too)
 - d. OWF program

2. **To end the dependence of needy parents on governmental benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.**
 - a. Families must have dependent children
 - b. Families must be income eligible
 - c. Work participation programs, child care and self sufficiency services and supports
 - d. Traditional PRC services and benefits
 - e. Youth transitional / independent living services
 - f. Unruly youth diversion services
 - g. Domestic violence prevention and case management services
 - h. Family preservation services, prevention of unnecessary placements, family reunification services
 - i. Kinship caregiver and Navigator services
 - j. Short term respite services
 - k. Single parent adoption recruitment, matching and placement services and incentives (income eligibility set at 120% state median income, same as PASSS)

3. **To prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.**
 - a. No child / family / age requirement
 - b. No income test
 - c. Broad array of services could be provided and populations could be served
 - d. Family planning (including contraception services), clinical and follow-up services, abstinence education, teen pregnancy prevention services and campaigns.
 - e. Research shows pregnancy prevention is also linked to youth resiliency (school success, pro-social youth diversion programs such as after school programs, substance abuse education and prevention)

4. **To encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.**
 - a. No income test
 - b. Preparing for and maintaining healthy marriages
 - c. Promoting responsible fatherhood, non-custodial father training and work programs
 - d. Adoption family recruitment, matching and placement services and incentives

ODJFS Resources

1. **PRC Reference Guide is a great resource (new, 5/06)**

Link at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owf/prc/PRCReferenceGuide.stm>

Specific Child Welfare Section – pages 52 - 59 (Children at Risk of Abuse or Neglect, Youth in Transition, Family Formation, Prevention of Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancies, Non-custodial Parents). Also example for including services within your local PRC plan. (attached)

2. **July 18, 2006 letter to PCSA Directors from Rick Smith** “Notice of forthcoming allocation letters for...TANF AdoptOhio Kids Incentives, Multi-Ethnic Placement and Independent Living”. This letter outlines allowable and suggested use of the SFY 07 TANF Allocation under the Governor’s Executive Order. Has examples! (attached)

County Resources

1. **“Use of TANF in Child Welfare” by Mead Wilkins, Director of Medina CDJFS.** Special focus on investing in youth resiliency activities. (attached)
2. **Franklin County Children Services AdoptOhio Incentives Program for 2006/07, from John Saros, Director of Franklin CCS, also Summit CSB Incentives program.** Adoption finalization incentives for families that adopt certain waiting children. (outlines attached)
3. **Family Preservation TANF strategies from John Fisher, Director, Licking CDJFS.** (materials provided)
4. **Lorain County Children Services’ School Success Initiative.** Links research to education supports for foster children, to greatly improved outcomes. (write up attached)

Additional Resources

1. **Pregnancy Prevention & Unplanned Pregnancies.** Power point from Crystal Ward Allen, PCSAO Executive Director. Useful program, research and legal information. (attached)