

Wyoming Department of Family Services

Child and Family Well-Being System & Service Continuum



Wyoming
Department of
Family Services

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Table of Contents

WY Home Matters	2
Primary Prevention: Community-Based Services	4
Cash Assistance for Low-Income Families	4
Child Care	4
Child Support	5
Food Insecurity Assistance	5
Home Visitation	6
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Preschools	6
Weatherization Services	6
Work Training	7
Wyoming Children’s Trust Fund (WCTF)	7
Secondary Prevention: Targeted Community-Based Services and Supports	8
Adult Protective Services (APS)	8
Community Crisis Beds	8
Juvenile Diversion: Community Juvenile Services Boards (CJSB)	9
Kinship Support	9
Voluntary Case Plans	9
Tertiary Prevention: Out-Of-Home and Court-Ordered Services	11
Custody Status	11
Juvenile Probation	11
Independent Living	13
DFS Placement and Behavioral Health Continuum	13
DFS’ Youth Facilities	17
Conclusion	19

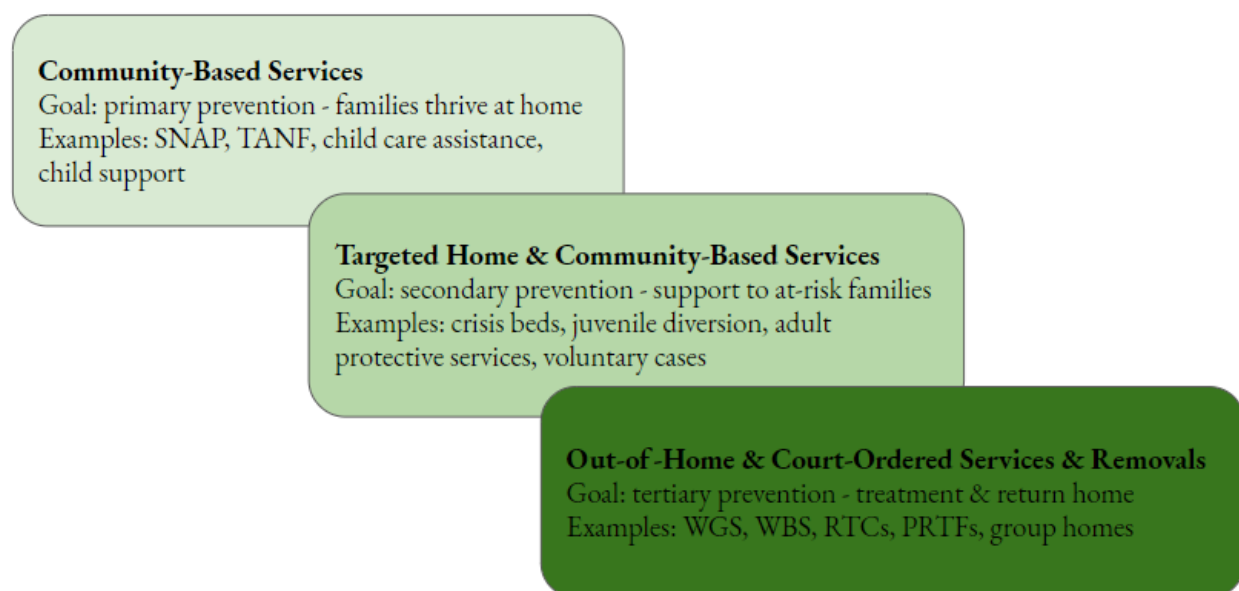
WY HOME MATTERS

The Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS) is guided by three values.

- Safe at Home - all children and adults deserve to live and be safe in their own homes.
- Opportunities for Success - all families deserve a fair chance at success. Our job is to promote family strengths and to provide access to supports that allow families to stay safely together.
- Supporting the People who Support the Families - our greatest resources are those people serving families directly in their communities - our staff and our partners.

WY Home Matters is a system-wide vision to promote a prevention-oriented child and family well-being system that empowers families to travel a path that is self-sustaining. DFS believes these changes start at a local level and require strong partnerships across the prevention continuum outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The Child & Family Well-Being System



DFS programs engage families in a wide variety of settings along the prevention continuum to keep families safe at home and provide opportunities for success. These engagements fall into three categories of prevention services:

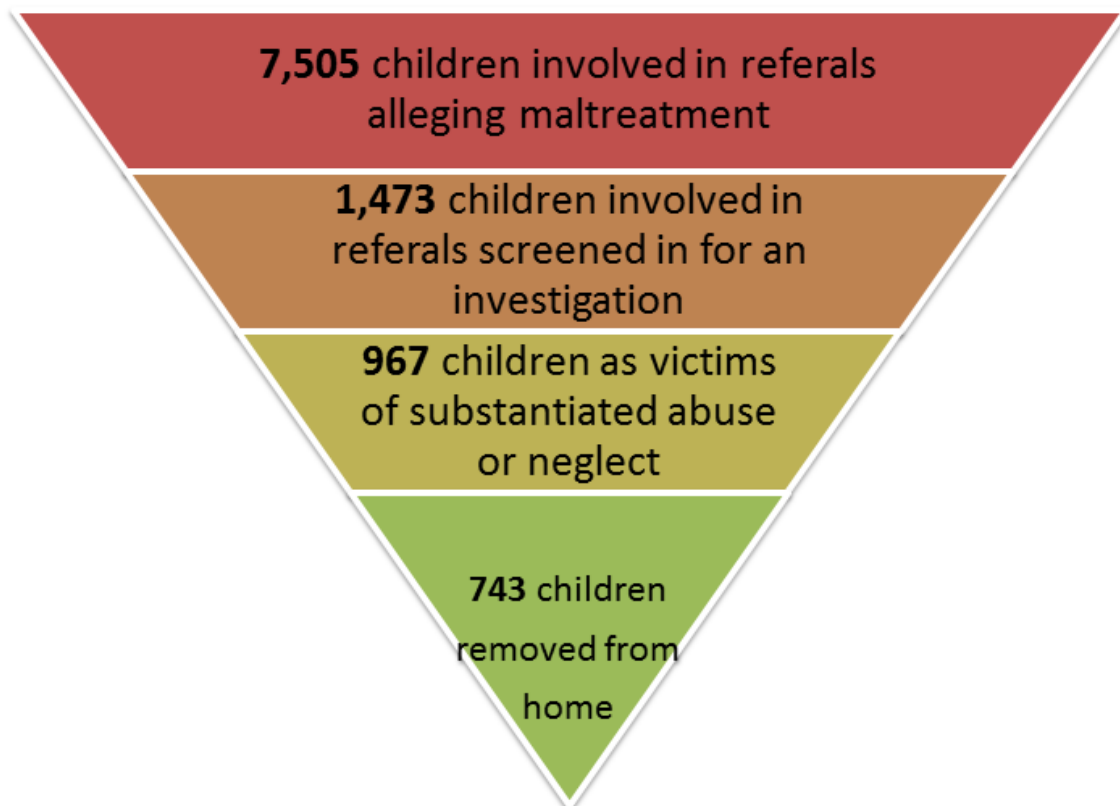
- 1) Primary Prevention: Community-based services
- 2) Secondary Prevention: Targeted home and community-based services and supports
- 3) Tertiary Prevention: Out-of-home and court-ordered services

Many people think that Wyoming's child welfare system begins when a child is removed from their home and court-ordered to an out-of-home placement. However, many at-risk families identified by communities do not need out-of-home placements or removal of children from

homes; rather, they need community-based and targeted services to remain safely at home. For example, of the referrals made to child protective services (CPS) with concerns about abuse or neglect (maltreatment) in calendar year 2020, forty-six percent (46%) were screened out, meaning they did not meet the statutory criteria of abuse or neglect necessary to open a case. Of those investigated because of maltreatment allegations, sixty-two percent (62%) were classified as neglect, not abuse. WY Home Matters emphasizes early intervention and community-based services as a first line of intervention whenever possible. DFS programs can and do provide services much earlier in the continuum.

Multiple children can be involved in a single referral made to CPS, and a subsequent abuse or neglect investigation and case. *Figure 2* highlights 7,505 individual children were included in SFY 2020 referrals alleging maltreatment; 1,473 children in those referrals were in cases that were investigated for maltreatment; 967 of those children were victims of substantiated child abuse or neglect; and 743 children were removed from their homes during this process.

Figure 2. Individual Children Involved in DFS' CPS System; SFY2020¹



While child welfare reports and expenditures tend to focus on the tip of the pyramid, DFS programs can and do serve children throughout the continuum in an effort to keep children and families safe at home.

¹ SFY 2020 case numbers may differ from a typical year due to COVID-19 pandemic influences.

PRIMARY PREVENTION: COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

DFS funds community-based services to provide families short-term assistance with basic needs necessary for family stability. Families receiving community-based services retain control of their decisions and require very limited formal contact with DFS. Community-based services are the foundation of ensuring safe homes for children and vulnerable adults.

CASH ASSISTANCE FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

Personal Opportunities with Employment Responsibilities (POWER)

POWER is a pay-after-performance program that promotes self-sufficiency and improves family stability through employment and training, child support cooperation, and other resources. In SFY 2020, an average of 498 households, or 1,079 individuals, including 843 children, received POWER benefits each month. A total of \$2,862,570 in Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant funds were paid to eligible households.

POWER is a required program under the TANF block grant. TANF is a federal funding source that provides States with flexibility in operating programs designed to help low-income families with children achieve self-sufficiency. Funds are used to fund cash assistance to low-income families with children, as well as a wide range of services that must meet one (1) or more of the four (4) federal purposes of TANF. The four federal purposes of TANF are to:

- 1) Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes;
- 2) Reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
- 3) Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and,
- 4) Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

CHILD CARE

DFS receives federal funds through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) which is used to pay for child care assistance, resource and referral services, and activities to ensure quality infant and toddler care. DFS received roughly \$12.3 million in CCDBG funds in federal fiscal year 2021.

Child care is oftentimes needed in order for parents to maintain employment or attend educational programming. DFS assists low-income families with funds to access child care while parents are working, attending job training, or receiving education. In SFY 2020, an average of 1,642 families with 3,038 children per month qualified for child care financial assistance, totaling \$12 million paid directly to child care providers.

DFS is also the child care licensing agent for the State of Wyoming. Child care licensure ensures children are being taken care of in healthy and safe environments by requiring licensed providers to meet a variety of minimum health and safety standards. As of March 1, 2021, Wyoming had 614 licensed child care providers who can serve 21,675 children.

Lastly, DFS engages with families and child care providers through early childhood services and ensures quality child care activities are provided as required by the CCDBG. Training, technical assistance, and a professional development system are administered to child care providers by DFS, and DFS provides child care referral services to parents. Additionally, DFS coordinates the work of the Governor's Early Childhood State Advisory Council.

CHILD SUPPORT

Child support is an essential tool for children to receive necessary financial support and helps meet their basic needs. DFS administers Wyoming's Child Support Program through contracts with private and public entities across Wyoming in each of the nine judicial districts. Child support services include:

- 1) Location of non-custodial parents;
- 2) Establishment of paternity;
- 3) Establishment and enforcement of child support orders;
- 4) Modification of child support orders; and,
- 5) Collection of child support payments.

In SFY 2020, there were 24,643 open child support cases in Wyoming and the program collected \$76,376,657 in child support payments. An average of 24,506 children were served through the Child Support Program each month in SFY 2020. Wyoming's Child Support Program is ranked number one in the nation going on eight (8) straight years.

FOOD INSECURITY ASSISTANCE

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), works to improve the nutrition of low-income individuals and families by increasing their ability to buy quality food products, with the intent of improving the overall health, safety, and stability of families. Households eligible for SNAP have income at or less than 130% of the federal poverty level.

SNAP benefits are issued to households through an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card that can be used like a credit card for eligible grocery purchases. In SFY2020, DFS served a monthly average of 27,162 individuals (including 12,778 children) and provided a total of \$41,387,346 in SNAP food benefits.

Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

DFS contracts with the Wyoming Food Bank of the Rockies to distribute food commodities to income eligible clients at 39 distribution centers across Wyoming. In SFY 2020, TEFAP expended a total of \$5,043,786.76 in federal funds to purchase 3,961,403 pounds of food distributed to 96,030 Wyoming households.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) was implemented in Wyoming in 2018. The program aims to improve the health of low income elderly persons 60 years or older by offering nutritious foods to supplement their diets. Similar to TEFAP, DFS contracts with the Wyoming Food Bank of the Rockies to distribute food to qualified elderly citizens. In SFY 2020, the CSFP served 233 people.

HOME VISITATION

Home visiting is an evidence-based program, with a family-centered approach that allows families the ability to adapt and self manage. \$1,177,341 of TANF funds are contracted annually to the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) to administer a home visiting model utilizing the expertise of Public Health Nurses statewide. DFS is also applying for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Grant which supports the Parents as Teachers home visiting program.

TANF PRESCHOOLS

DFS contracts \$1,824,820 of TANF funds annually to the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) to administer the TANF Preschool program, a program designed to increase economically disadvantaged children and families' access to high quality preschools and services.

WEATHERIZATION SERVICES

Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)

Heat and utility services are essential to healthy, safe home environments. The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is funded through a federal block grant and helps low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled with current or unpaid utility bills. Over 8,320 Wyoming households received LIEAP benefits during the 2019-2020 LIEAP season. Over 1,226 households received regular crisis assistance such as deposits to establish or restore service, or crisis services to fill tanks for propane or other deliverable fuels. 360 households received broken furnace repair to resolve heat loss emergencies due to equipment failure.

Weatherization Program (WAP)

The Weatherization Program (WAP) is funded through a federal award and provides a one-time benefit of weatherization services for homes in need of energy efficiency improvements to reduce reliance on LIEAP assistance and to reduce the energy cost burdens on low income

families. Energy efficiency services include insulation, air sealing, and energy related health and safety measures such as smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. DFS' two contracted WAP service agencies have weatherized 6,150 homes between 2010 and 2020.

WORK TRAINING

DFS partners with multiple agencies and organizations to support and utilize work training programs for parents. DFS funds these programs through TANF and SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) to assist families in accessing training and support services to gain skills and find careers that create a pathway out of poverty for the parent participant and their children. Specifically, DFS partners with Climb Wyoming and the Uinta County Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) to deliver programs to eligible single mothers, and the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to deliver the DADS Making a Difference program to eligible non-custodial fathers.

Finally, the Work Initiative Network (WIN) Program is a partnership between the DFS Child Support Program, the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and Climb dba Esther (Climb's training arm) with the goal of helping participants (parents who owe back child support) obtain and maintain stable employment in order to make regular, ontime child support payments. The program provides coaching and instruction in job and life skills that participants will use to get and keep work.

WYOMING CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND (WCTF)

The Wyoming Children's Trust Fund (WCTF) is a DFS partner and the lead for primary prevention in the community. The WCTF provides grant funding to local entities for the provision of community based services to keep children in stable, safe, and supportive environments and for the prevention of child abuse and/or neglect. Currently, the WCTF Board provides funding to local child protection teams to establish community based prevention initiatives. Additionally, funding is being provided to local early childhood programs to implement an evidence-based social emotional learning curriculum for preschoolers.

The WCTF budget resides within the DFS budget and is statutorily funded through a percentage of the five dollar surcharge on vital records as well as the interest earned on the corpus account. Additionally the WCTF receives federal funds as the lead agency for the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grant.

SECONDARY PREVENTION: TARGETED COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Secondary prevention is a collaboration between DFS and partner organizations such as law enforcement agencies, schools, service providers, medical providers, and community groups. DFS' secondary prevention efforts focus on crisis stabilization and what is commonly viewed as traditional diversion and prevention services. Targeted community-based services and supports are more individualized and intensive as they are DFS' last line of available resources to keep children and families from entering the formal court system in which children may be removed from their homes. Targeted community-based services and supports are also critical for the vulnerable adult population.

The following are the types of families DFS works with in the secondary prevention realm:

- 1) Families which cause someone or an entity a concern regarding the safety and well-being of children and they contact DFS. DFS investigates and finds indicators that children are at risk of abuse or neglect.
- 2) Vulnerable adults who someone or some entity is concerned about their safety and well-being and they contact DFS. DFS investigates and finds a vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- 3) Youth whose behavior is disruptive, defiant or out of control, or may lead to criminal behavior.

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS)

Upon receiving a report from a concerned entity, including a vulnerable adult, caregiver, guardian, or agent, or notification from law enforcement that a vulnerable adult is or is suspected of being abused, neglected, exploited, intimidated, or abandoned, DFS provides access to services to address the factors contributing to the maltreatment of the vulnerable adult. DFS coordinates services with multiple agencies, including WDH, hospitals, and local providers.

DFS' ability and authority to work with vulnerable adults under APS is limited to secondary prevention because vulnerable adults are not court ordered to DFS custody under tertiary prevention. DFS is limited to providing case management and access to coordinated services, and is restricted from being the caretaker of a vulnerable adult.

COMMUNITY CRISIS BEDS

Community crisis beds exist to provide temporary, emergency stabilization services for children ages zero to 18 as a means to prevent removal from their home and to prevent further penetration into the juvenile court system. Crisis beds can be utilized seven days a week for a

period not to exceed 30 days. Children can access crisis bed services by self or family referral, through medical and mental health professionals, law enforcement, DFS referral, or school staff.

14 private entities operate 81 total crisis beds across Wyoming. DFS uses TANF and state general funds to purchase crisis services for approximately 1,000 children per year at a daily rate of \$117 per bed whether the bed is occupied or vacant.

JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVERSION: COMMUNITY JUVENILE SERVICES BOARDS (CJSB)

Community Juvenile Services Boards (CJSB) allow communities, either through county commissioners or the establishment of a joint powers board, to individualize and manage juvenile justice diversion programs within each community. There are currently 14 CJSBs across Wyoming. CJSB diversion programs and approaches differ, but they all utilize local resources to direct youth and families away from the formal juvenile justice system. Resources and services include but are not limited to counseling, tutoring, mentorship programs, community service, time out in a community crisis bed, and informal supervision.

DFS state general funds for CJSBs are being eliminated beginning July 1, 2021 as a result of the required budget reductions. However, CJSBs have statutory authority to remain operational without DFS funding and many intend to do so after July 1, 2021.

KINSHIP SUPPORT

DFS currently funds two programs intended to provide services and supports including referral services, emotional support, case management and outreach to grandparents and other family caregivers. Kinship Connections of Wyoming is funded by the Kinship Navigator grant and is administered by Wyoming 211. DFS also manages a contract with the City of Cheyenne, Youth Alternatives, to provide kinship advocacy for displaced, at-risk youth in an effort to keep them from entering foster care. Services provided by Youth Alternatives include legal support for private adoptions and guardianships. This contract is also funded by the Kinship Navigator grant.

VOLUNTARY CASE PLANS

DFS engages with children who may not currently be abused or neglected but who, without intervention, risk being abused or neglected and being removed from their home by a court order. In these situations DFS has the ability to work with the family through a voluntary case plan. DFS can also support vulnerable adults and youth on probation through a voluntary case plan.

Voluntary case plans may include a wide range of requests and services, such as counseling or treatment, parenting skill classes, an evaluation by a medical provider, coordinated services with a child's school, and many more. Due to the voluntary nature of these case plans, DFS does not

have the ability to mandate a family engage in, follow through with, or complete the case plan. However, for those families that do, the voluntary case plan is an effective tool in preventing abuse and neglect and future contact with the court system.

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TERTIARY PREVENTION: OUT-OF-HOME AND COURT-ORDERED SERVICES

While DFS' engagement with families is very broad and begins as early as primary prevention with community-based services, when people think about DFS custody, the child protection system, and the juvenile justice system, they generally think about what occurs in DFS' tertiary prevention services, with children being taken into custody and removed from their homes.

DFS' tertiary prevention services are triggered by formal court involvement when a child is taken into legal custody, an abuse or neglect petition against a parent or caretaker is filed in juvenile court, or a CHINS or delinquency petition is filed against the juvenile in juvenile court.

CUSTODY STATUS

When a child is court-ordered into DFS custody, DFS assumes the care and supervision of the child and works with the multidisciplinary team (MDT) to make recommendations to the court regarding placement decisions. All placement decisions are ultimately made by the court. Under Title 14 of the Wyoming Statutes, there are three 'doors' by which a child may be placed into DFS custody.

- 1) Child Protection Act²: Allegations of child abuse or neglect are brought to the juvenile court by the prosecuting attorney's office filing a petition alleging that a child or youth is at risk of or has been abused or neglected, and when the action is necessary to protect the interest of the child.
 - a) Abuse is defined as "inflicting or causing physical or mental injury, harm or imminent danger to the physical or mental health or welfare of a child other than by accidental means", including:
 - i) Abandonment,
 - ii) Excessive or unreasonable corporal punishment,
 - iii) Malnutrition or substantial risk of malnutrition by intentional or unintentional neglect, and
 - iv) Commission of or allowing the commission of a sexual offense against a child.³
 - b) Neglect is the "failure or refusal by those responsible for the child's welfare to provide adequate care, maintenance, supervision, education or medical, surgical or any other care necessary for the child's well being."⁴
- 2) Children in Need of Supervision Act⁵: Complaints alleging CHINS are referred to the prosecuting attorney's office, which determines whether judicial action is necessary to

² W.S. 14-3-401 through 14-3-441.

³ W.S. 14-3-202(a)(ii).

⁴ W.S. 14-3-202(a)(vii).

⁵ W.S. 14-6-401 through 14-6-440.

protect the interest of the child. CHINS are brought by the prosecuting attorney’s office through the filing of a CHINS petition with the juvenile court.

- a) CHINS are children or youth who are “habitually truant”, disobedient, or “ungovernable and beyond control”, but whose infractions do not rise to the level of breaking the law.⁶
- 3) Juvenile Justice Act⁷ and Juvenile Probation⁸: The prosecuting attorney’s office is the single point of entry for all minors alleged to have committed a crime and determines whether to file a delinquency petition, and in which court. Delinquency petitions are filed when the action is necessary to protect the interest of the public or the child. The court may order a delinquent child to probation through DFS, a city, a county, or private organization. DFS therefore is not the probation entity for all juvenile delinquents, only those court ordered to DFS probation.
 - a) A juvenile delinquent is a child who commits a crime, contempt of court, or violates a court order which resulted from the criminal conviction of the child.

Children may transition between these three involvement statuses, or exit the system and re-enter through another door. *Table 1* summarizes the entry points into state custody.

Table 1. Three “Doors” to State Custody

	Child Protection	CHINS	Juvenile Justice / Probation
In DFS custody?	Maybe (prevention cases are voluntary)	Yes	Yes
Eligible for WGS/WBS?	No	No	Yes
Medicaid pay source?	Yes (except prevention cases)	Yes	Yes (100% SGF if in a detention facility)
Maximum age for DFS service	21 years	18 years	21 years

All children in the custody of DFS are automatically eligible for Medicaid coverage under the federal Foster Care eligibility program. Some children in DFS custody are enrolled in private insurance or other Medicaid eligibility programs, such as the Children’s Mental Health Waiver, or the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver.

⁶ W.S. 14-6-402(a)(iv).

⁷ W.S. 146-201 through W.S. 14-6-252.

⁸ W.S. 14-6-301 through 14-6-314.

JUVENILE PROBATION

DFS provides regular probation and intensive supervised probation (ISP) services and supervision to youth on probation ordered by the Juvenile Court Judge. DFS probation workers focus on early assessment and identification of treatment needs of the youth, and timely referrals for treatment as a way to keep probation youth in their home school districts and prevent out-of-home placement. In SFY 2020, DFS served a total of 1,470 youth and their families through traditional probation and ISP. While historically probation services focused on the youth's behavior, DFS' probation services involve a family-centered model to keep the youth in his or her community, and when that isn't successful, to achieve family reunification in a timely manner. Note that not all juvenile probation cases are assigned to DFS; Campbell County and Sweetwater County run their own probation programs.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

DFS contracts with community providers to provide Independent Living (IL) services to assist current and former foster care youth in achieving self-sufficiency. Youth ages 14 and older who have been in foster care are eligible, regardless of whether they were abused, neglected, or a CHINS or juvenile delinquent. IL services prepare youth to exit, and avoid returning to the State's system of care.

DFS PLACEMENT AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUUM

Behavioral health services available to all children in DFS custody fall along a continuum of severity of need and restrictiveness of the service or placement. The behavioral health population is not uniform; within this population there exists a wide variety of needs that vary by age, diagnosis, and treatment needs. Children may have suffered multiple traumas in childhood and have co-occurring substance use, intellectual disabilities, or developmental disabilities along with a behavioral health diagnosis. Within a single placement type, such as psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs), providers may serve distinct populations based on diagnosis and available programming.

Services are classified into three settings: outpatient, residential, and inpatient, based on the restrictiveness of the location.

- Outpatient settings include those where the child remains at home, in family foster care, or under a guardianship, and continues to attend their home school district while receiving mental health or substance abuse services, which may include adolescent intensive outpatient programming (AIOP), drug court, and day treatment programming;
- Residential settings include those where the child lives on-campus and may attend either their home school district or on-campus classes while receiving mental health or substance abuse services; and
- Inpatient settings are the most restrictive and clinical in nature.

Services are also classified into four types: educational, behavioral, clinical, and correctional, based on the primary goal of placement.

- Educational placements are primarily to support the child’s continued educational progress through an alternative educational setting;
- Behavioral settings are primarily to address behavioral issues interfering not only with the child’s education, but also their ability to function at home and in the community;
- Clinical settings generally require a clinical diagnosis and treatment for significant psychiatric instability; and,
- Correctional facilities are primarily to address delinquent behavior. These facilities include juvenile detention centers, the Wyoming Boys’ School (WBS), and the Wyoming Girls’ School (WGS). Juvenile detention centers are not therapeutic; however they often serve as the juvenile behavioral health safety net for clients for whom no other safe placement can be found. By statute, the WGS and WBS are correctional in nature; however, they offer more therapeutic programming than detention centers.

Table 2 summarizes the various behavioral, clinical, and correctional services in which children with behavioral health needs are placed.

Table 2. Behavioral Health Services

Service	Setting	Service Type	Description	Admission Criteria
Mental health & substance abuse services	Outpatient	Behavioral / Clinical	Therapies provided on an outpatient basis; may include AIOP, drug court, and day treatment programming	N/A
Crisis stabilization services (crisis beds)	Residential	Behavioral/ Clinical	Short-term, overnight services to de-escalate mental health crisis	Voluntary
Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)	Outpatient/ Residential	Behavioral / Educational/ Clinical	Residential program for students with behaviors and qualifying educational support needs	Court-ordered or school district referral
Group homes	Residential	Behavioral	Home like group setting for children with emotional, social, physical, and/or behavioral needs, who do not require a more restrictive facility for their own	Court-ordered or private pay

			protection or that of others	
Residential treatment centers (RTC)	Residential	Behavioral / Clinical	Service for children who require a combination of therapeutic, education, and treatment services in a residential group care setting	Court-ordered or private pay
Acute psychiatric stabilization	Inpatient	Clinical	Inpatient hospital psychiatric stabilization and medication management	Medical
Psychiatric residential treatment facility (PRTF)	Inpatient / Residential	Clinical	Inpatient psychiatric treatment facility that meets criteria for reimbursement as a medical service by Medicaid	Medical / Psychiatric evaluation
Juvenile detention center (JDC)	Residential	Correctional	County facilities for minors who have been adjudicated juvenile delinquents or are awaiting trial	Court-ordered
Wyoming Girls' School (WGS)	Residential	Correctional	State facility for female minors adjudicated as juvenile delinquents under Title 14	Court-ordered
Wyoming Boys' School (WBS)	Residential	Correctional	State facility for male minors adjudicated as juvenile delinquents under Title 14	Court-ordered

Funding for Out-of-Home Placements and Behavioral Health Treatment Services

Children may be court ordered to placement for reasons other than behavioral health needs, including placement for safety of the child. Children should be placed in the least restrictive setting to meet their needs, and a family home setting is preferred. Family home settings include family foster care (with family members or non-family members), guardianships, and pre-adoptive and adoptive homes.

When family home settings aren't appropriate or available, children may be placed in residential, congregate care settings. In residential service settings, children and youth receive, and providers may bill, for three separate services: room and board, active treatment, and educational services. Availability of funds for each of these services varies with the child or youth's insurance type, custody status, and education status. The court-ordered placements statute, or "COPS", at W.S. § 21-13-315 directs DFS to pay for room and board and the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) to pay for educational services for children court-ordered to a

private residential treatment facility, group home, day treatment program, or juvenile detention facility. W.S. § 21-13- 336 directs WDE to pay for educational costs for Medicaid-covered children with a medically necessary placement in a PRTF.

DFS uses a variety of funding sources to provide services to children and families. 65% of the social services budget is state general funds. The remaining 35% is funded with federal grants and funding streams such as Title IV-E funds and TANF which can only be used if the family meets the income and program eligibility requirements.

Table 3. DFS’ Out-of-Home Placement Payment Rates

Facility Type	Rate Prior to 7/1/21	Rate Beginning 7/1/21 ⁹	Payment Mechanism
Family foster home	\$645 per month, children 0-5 \$664 per month, children 6-12 \$732 per month, children 13-18	\$626 per month, children 0-5 \$645 per month, children 6-12 \$710 per month, children 13-18	Rate is per month, per child
Guardianship	\$0 to \$340 base, per month +tiered amount based on level of need	\$0 to \$330 base, per month +tiered amount based on level of need	Negotiated based on level of need
Adoption Subsidy	\$0 to \$399 base, per month +tiered amount based on level of need	\$0 to \$387 base, per month +tiered amount based on level of need	Negotiated based on level of need
Crisis beds	\$117 per day per bed; 81 total beds	Same	Paid regardless of occupancy or vacancy
Group home	\$133 per day	Under contract negotiation with facilities	Paid only when occupied
RTC / BOCES	\$173 per day through day 270; \$131 per day thereafter	\$170 per day through day 270; \$127 per day thereafter	Paid only when occupied
PRTF	N/A	N/A	Paid by Medicaid
JDC	Campbell County - \$75 per day Laramie County - \$195 per day Sweetwater County - \$195 per day	Same	Paid only when occupied

⁹ Rate reductions are a result of a 3% reduction in out-of-home placement appropriations in DFS’ SFY 2022 budget. New rates begin July 1, 2021, and are ongoing.

Table 4: DFS' Annual Expenditures for Out-of-Home Placements¹⁰

Service Category	SFY 2017	SFY 2018	SFY 2019	SFY 2020
Family Foster Care	\$5.1M	\$5.3M	\$5M	\$4.6M
<i>Children served</i>	962	1,025	1,013	967
Guardianship Subsidy	\$663K	\$697K	\$765K	\$809K
<i>Children served</i>	153	150	161	191
Adoption Subsidy	\$3.5M	\$3.6M	\$3.6M	\$3.7M
<i>Children served</i>	651	668	676	711
Congregate Care ¹¹	\$10M	\$9.5M	\$8.7M	\$8.1M
<i>Children served</i>	314	287	262	236
Grand Total	\$19.3M	\$19M	\$18.1M	\$17.2M

DFS' YOUTH FACILITIES

Wyoming Boys' School (WBS)

WBS is a 38 acre facility in Worland, Wyoming that provides public safety and care for adjudicated delinquent male youth, ages 12 to 21. WBS is an accredited educational and rehabilitative facility designed to treat and improve outcomes for at-risk boys in a safe, supportive, and healthy environment. WBS administers programs that promote public safety by providing supervision and family centered therapeutic services, physical and mental health programming, and education services. Eligible students have the opportunity to obtain a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate. WBS also contracts with local providers and others for physician services, barber, and other special education services that are provided on site. 94 full-time WBS staff serve approximately 270 youth on a biennial basis, and the average length of stay is 7.5 months.

The WBS is funded with state general funds. As part of the budget reductions in SFY 2021, WBS's Medicaid funds for mental health services¹² were decreased by \$300,000 on an ongoing basis. Additional reductions resulted in the closure of one WBS dormitory, capping the WBS daily capacity at 60 residents. The reduction in capacity may require county attorneys, judges, and multi-disciplinary teams (MDT) to consider less-restrictive alternatives to WBS when

¹⁰ Dollars have been rounded.

¹¹ Congregate care is a non-family like setting, and includes crisis centers, group homes, RTCs, PRTFs, WBS, WGS, detention, jail, hospitals, and the WY State Hospital.

¹² This reduction is reflected in the WDH budget. Medical services provided at WBS are not federally reimbursable, and are therefore paid through 100% state general fund Medicaid dollars.

making placement and treatment decisions for male youth. Overall, the WBS biennial budget is now \$15,856,908 which reflects a reduction of \$1,820,992.

Wyoming Girls' School (WGS)

WGS is a 98 acre facility in Sheridan, Wyoming that provides public safety and care for adjudicated delinquent female youth, ages 12 to 21. WGS is an accredited educational and rehabilitative facility designed to treat and improve outcomes for at-risk girls in a safe, supportive, and trauma responsive environment. WGS administers programs that promote public safety by providing supervision and family centered, trauma responsive therapeutic services, physical and mental health programming, and education services. Eligible students have the opportunity to obtain a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate. WGS also collaborates with local providers and others for physician services and other special education services that are provided on site. 77 full-time employees serve approximately 140 youth on a biennial basis, with an average length of stay of 8.9 months.

Like the WBS, the WGS is funded with state general funds and as part of the budget reductions in 2021, the WGS closed one dormitory, decreasing the daily capacity from 64 to 40 residents. This will have minimal impact as WGS' ongoing daily census averages 31 residents. Overall, the WGS biennial budget is now \$9,779,390 which reflects a reduction of \$2,851,747.

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CONCLUSION

DFS engages with children and families at a multitude of contact points, each time offering services and programs to prevent children and families from moving farther along DFS' continuum of services and reaching court-ordered services or out-of-home placement. If court-ordered services or out-of-home placement become necessary, DFS utilizes tools to achieve a timely and safe family reunification.

DFS additionally engages with vulnerable adults within the continuum to prevent abuse, neglect, exploitation, intimidation, and abandonment, and to quickly address factors that lead to maltreatment when they exist.

Unfortunately, while court-involved children and families are a small portion of the population DFS engages with, this population's court-ordered services and out-of-home placements absorb the bulk of DFS' budget. Not only do early prevention and targeted prevention services cost less than court-ordered services and placements, children and families have better outcomes when children are served at home and when removal is prevented. WY Home Matters envisions a child and family well-being system where more children and families are served through primary and secondary prevention, rather than more costly, and more traumatic, tertiary prevention services.

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