

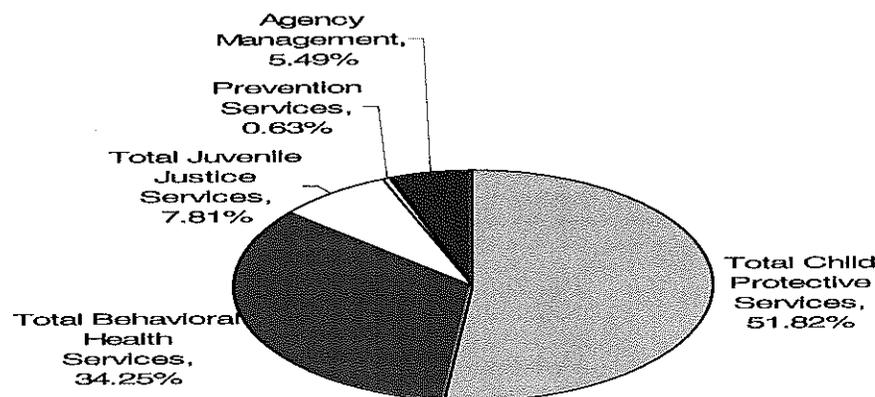


DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ISSUE BRIEF

ISSUE: Department of Children and Families Budget

Considerable resources have been committed to the Department for programs and services that support Connecticut children and families. One of the largest CT state agencies, the Department's resource allocation is reflected below.

Average number of full time employees: 3,477
Recurring Operational Expenses: \$838,837,437



Major Program Accounts

Much of DCF's resources are used to purchase services for children and families. There are over 100 service types and a range of other purchases made through "flex funding," including mentoring, respite services, wrap-around services, housing expenses, and therapeutic and recreational activities for children in out-of-home care. Contracted services in FY08 exceeded \$200 million and fee- for-service spending exceeded \$100 for a total of approximately \$300 million. An additional \$190 million is spent through DCF's board and care accounts for adoption and foster care subsidy payments, no nexus education costs, and flex fund spending -- for a total of approximately \$500 million in purchased services. 153 contracts were entered in SFY 08.

Investment Trends

Over time, state appropriations committed to the work at the Department have grown significantly. Since FY 2004 there has been a 38% increase in DCF's budget -- from \$607.4 million to its current budget of \$838.8 million. Major areas driving this growth are:

- Front line staff: Increases in personnel services largely reflect the hiring of social workers so that caseloads can be reduced--a prerequisite to improving practice and outcomes. Caseloads have been reduced from 40-60 to 15-20 per worker in just a few years.

- Mental health services: Increases in behavioral health spending developed an important community-based system of care -- most notably in-home services, which have allowed DCF to dramatically reduce its entry into care rate and expand access to treatment services.
- Family-specific spending: "Flex fund" spending has resulted in more individualized and immediate services --an important departure from the old bureaucratic approach. This has improved permanency, placement stability, and treatment outcomes.
- Therapeutic group homes: These homes provide treatment for children with significant emotional disorders in community-based congregate settings and serve as a key alternative to large institutional settings. Since developing these group homes, our placement in out-of-state residential facilities has dropped from over 500 to less than 335 in 3 years. Even more important, the use of residential settings is down nearly 40% in 4 years due to this and other reform efforts.
- Other areas: Additional major investments have been made in the use of evidence-based and promising practices in child welfare, mental health, substance abuse treatment and family support.

A breakdown of the major functional areas of spending are as follows:

Program	Expenditures
CPS Community Based Services	\$27,611,478
CPS Out of Home Services	\$237,561,967
CPS Administration	\$169,514,306
Total Child Protective Services	\$434,687,751
BH Community Based Services	\$68,979,335
BH Out of Home Services	\$153,248,194
BH State Operated Facilities	\$59,724,829
BH Administration	\$5,298,338
Total Behavioral Health Services	\$287,250,697
JJ Community Based Services	\$17,664,484
JJ Out of Home Services	\$18,222,455
JJ State Operated Facilities	\$27,658,288
JJ Administration	\$1,956,953
Total Juvenile Justice Services	\$65,502,180
Prevention Services	\$5,285,352
Agency Management (Personnel & Operating Expenses, etc)	\$46,037,544
Total Agency Expenditures	\$838,763,524

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