



Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Child Welfare

It is estimated that between 60%-80% of families involved with child protective services in the country have a Substance Use Disorder (SUD).

While the federal entities responsible for SUD treatment and child welfare, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), have made significant efforts to address services for this population, there are still significant barriers in both systems that deter the ability for families to access treatment.

Barriers include limitations in the number and age of children who can participate in treatment with their parents as well as funding formulas that do not consider the special needs of children in their design.

In order for both systems to maximize funding, resources and outcomes for families affected by SUDs, TCA recommends that:

- ACF and SAMHSA identify mechanisms to blend funding to ensure the provision of integrated child welfare and treatment services that encompass the entire family.
- ACF and SAMSHA support the development of program models that allow for all children to enroll in treatment with their parents, with no limitations on age or number of children in the family, inclusive of models that incorporate housing and treatment.
- ACF and SAMSHA support funding models that are based on the unique needs of each child and parent participating in services versus formulas that assume a “one-size fits all” philosophy.
- ACF and SAMHSA work collaboratively to allow family SUD treatment models to be certified as foster care providers, including eligibility for Title IV-E funding for children in their care.
- SAMSHA incorporates child welfare related services as a mandatory component of SUD treatment for all participants who have children that are at risk of entering in or are involved with the child protective services system.
- ACF and SAMSHA mandate partnerships between local SUD and child welfare providers in any new RFAs that provide services for consumers with children.
- ACF and SAMSHA work collaboratively to ensure that the issues of families with SUDs are taken into consideration in any efforts for Child Welfare Finance Reform.

Treatment Communities of America (TCA) applauds Congress for enacting H.R. 5456, the Family First Prevention Services Act, which incorporated many of the above mentioned recommendations, as part of the February 2018 budget agreement. The Act will make tremendous progress in serving families impacted by substance abuse and the child welfare system by allowing federal Title IV–E dollars to be used in a time-limited way for evidence-based services including mental health, substance abuse treatment and parenting programs.

TCA looks forward to working with Congress on robust implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act in 2018 to ensure that parents receive the treatment they need to help keep families together.

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