

The Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program is a Federal program aimed at preventing child maltreatment, enabling children to remain safely with their families, and ensuring permanency for children in foster care. The program supports State child welfare agencies and eligible Tribes in establishing and operating integrated, community-based services for families. Administered by the Children's Bureau, the program includes both mandatory and discretionary funding components.

PSSF Program Purpose and Objectives

As outlined in Title IV-B, subpart 2 of the Social Security Act,¹ the purpose of PSSF is to enable States and Tribes to operate a coordinated program of community-based services for the

¹ 42 U.S.C. § 629. See Compilation of Titles IV-B, IV-E, and Related Sections of the Social Security Act, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/compilation-of-social-security-act>.

Legislative History

PSSF's history began in 1993, when the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act created subpart 2 of Title IV-B of the Social Security Act and established the Family Preservation and Support Services Program. Responding to concerns over the number of children in foster care, Congress created this capped entitlement program to provide States with funding for prevention services that support families before children entered out-of-home care. In addition to funding Family Preservation and Support Services grants, the program established the Court Improvement Program (CIP).

In 1998, the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) reauthorized and renamed the program to the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. In line with ASFA's emphasis on promoting permanency for children and youth in foster care, the PSSF Program was expanded from primarily prevention services to also include time-limited family reunification services for families with children in foster care and adoption promotion and support services.

The PSSF Program was reauthorized by the PSSF amendments of 2001, the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, and the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006. During that time, discretionary funding streams were added to the initial mandatory funding. Changes included increased PSSF funding for Tribes; set-aside funding for f

PSSF Formula Grants

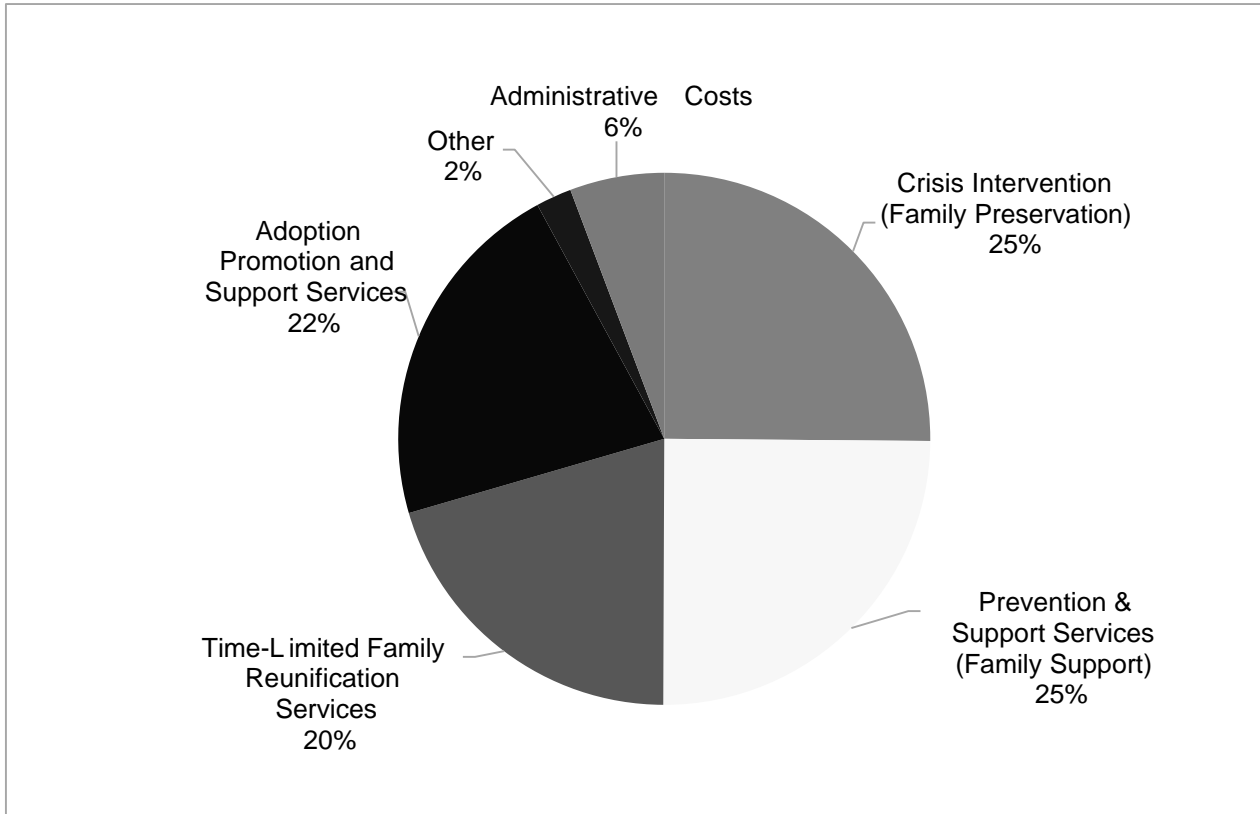
Mandatory PSSF funds are distributed to States, territories, and Tribes through formula grants. Funding to States and territories are based on the jurisdiction's share of children receiving benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, a Federal program supporting low-income families. In FY 2015, all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and 4 U.S. territories and insular areas received allotments of approximately \$295 million. The law requires that States and Tribes provide a 25 percent match. (Requirements for allocation of funding are discussed below.)

Three percent of the PSSF mandatory funds and discretionary funds are reserved for distribution to Tribes and Tribal consortia that have submitted a PSSF plan. Allotments to Tribes are based on the number of children in each Tribe as a proportion of the total number of children under age 21 in Tribes with submitted and approved plans. To receive a grant, a Tribe must have an allocation of \$10,000 or more. About 135 Tribes receive PSSF funding annually.

PSSF Program Plans

States and Tribes must submit plans with intended goals for their PSSF programs. These plans must reflect collaboration and engagement of stakeholders in planning processes. As required under title IV-B, plans for the PSSF Program must be integrated into each State or Tribal agency's 5-year Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and Annual Progress and Services R(F)-5.5 gressld3 2-12.3(n)-6.43Anr 6ioa(gr)-6.3(es)-86bmihl24.4

Exhibit 2: FY 2015 PSSF Planned Expenditures



Definitions

Presented below are descriptions as defined by law³ of each of the four service areas.

Family support services are community-based services designed to:

- f Promote the safety and well-being of children and families
- f Increase the strength and stability of families
- f Increase parents' confidence and competence in their parenting abilities
- f Afford children a safe, stable, and supportive family environment
- f Strengthen parental relationships and promote healthy marriages
- f Enhance child development (including through mentoring)

Family preservation services are services for children and families designed to help families (including adoptive and extended families) at risk or in crisis, including:

- f Service programs to help children:
 - x Return to families from which they have been removed, where safe and appropriate, or
 - x Be placed for adoption or with a legal guardian, or
 - x Be placed in some other planned, permanent living arrangement, if adoption or legal guardianship is determined not to be safe and appropriate for a child

³ As defined in the Social Security Act, Title IV-B, subpart 2, Section 431 (42 U.S.C. § 629a)

- f Pre-placement preventive services programs, such as intensive family preservation programs, designed to help children at risk of foster care placement remain safely with their families
- f Service programs designed to provide follow-up care to families to whom a child has been returned after a foster care placement
- f Respite care of children to provide temporary relief for parents and other caregivers (including foster parents)