

Annual Progress and Services Report

South Dakota
Department of Social Services
Division of Child Protection Services

State Fiscal Year 2026



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Appendix B: Update on the Service Descriptions

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Section A: Overview of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP)/Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) and the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)

The Administration for Children and Families' Program Instruction document can be found by clicking the attachment.



Section A provides an Overview of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP)/Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) and the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR).

Section A is not a requirement of a State's 2026 APSR; therefore, it is not included in South Dakota's APSR.

Section B: Requirements for the 2026 APSR

I. Update to the Vision & Collaboration

State Agency Administering the Programs

Organizational Structure Overview

The South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection Services (CPS) is the Division designated to administer the Title IV-B and IV-E programs, Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act grant, John H. Chaffee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood, and the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Program. The Department of Social Services is led by the Department Cabinet Secretary. Under the Department of Social Services, the Division of Children and Family Services was created. There is a Chief of Children and Family Services who oversees the Director of CPS. CPS is a state administered and state supervised child welfare system. The CPS Division Director oversees the statewide provision of CPS programs and services. There are two Assistant Division Director's, one who oversees field services and one who oversees program areas, both are under the direct supervision of the Division Director. There are two Program Administrators, one who oversees Continuous Quality Improvement and Outcomes and one who oversees Services to Families, both are under the direct supervision of the Division Director. State Office of CPS Program Specialists serve as advisors and consultants to the Division staff in specific program areas and are involved in the administration of funding, promotion, and evaluation of those programs. CPS is divided into six geographical regions. Each Region is led by a Regional Manager who is directly involved with the management of staff in the Region and responsible for overseeing the region-wide provision of services in all program areas. CPS has eighteen offices statewide that provide CPS services. Each office within a Region has a supervisor or supervisors who provide clinical and direct supervision to Family Services Specialists and Social Services Aides that provide services in the program areas.

The core components of CPS and functions within those components include:

Intake – receipt of child abuse and neglect reports Request for Services (RFS') including collateral contacts prior to screening and assignment for an Initial Family Assessment (IFA).

Initial Family Assessment – process used to assess threats to danger and maltreatment in assigned child abuse and neglect reports through interviews with children, parents, and through other information sources.

- Ongoing Services – Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA) case planning and evaluation, and services provided for in-home and foster care cases where there are threats to child safety.
- Permanency Planning Services – providing placement resources, permanency planning, independent living and supports for children placed in out-of-home care.
- Adoption Services – placement of children who have a goal of adoption when parental rights are terminated and post-adoption services for children in adoptive placement.
- Licensing – licensing and regulation of child welfare and child placement agencies that provide placement services to children with emotional and behavioral needs was moved to the Office of Licensing and Accreditation January 2021. CPS provided these services prior to the creation of the Office of Licensing and Accreditation.
- Title IV-E Prevention Plan – development and implementation of the Prevention Plan and requirements as outlined in the Family First Prevention and Services Act.
- Administration of the Parenting Education Partners network.

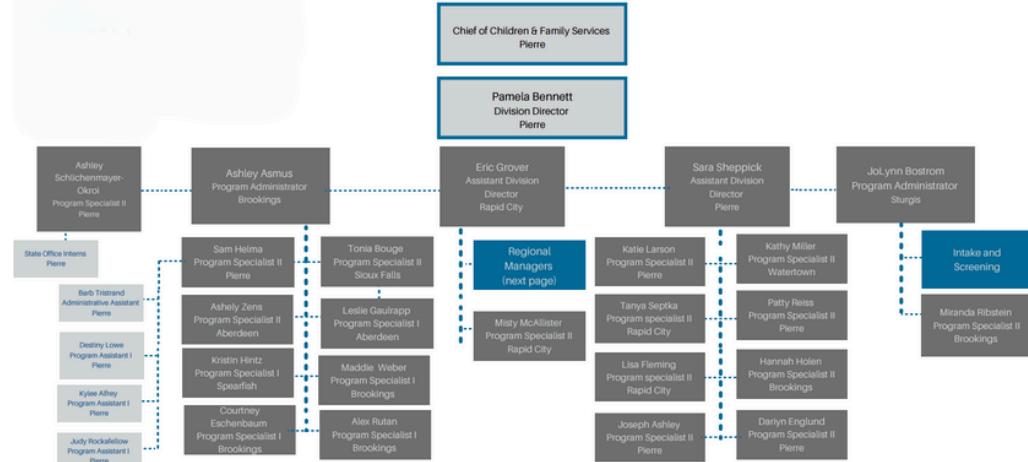
CPS directly provides child protection services for five of the nine South Dakota tribes. The tribes directly served by CPS are the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, and Yankton Sioux Tribe. The four tribes that provide their own full array of child welfare services are Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and the Oglala Sioux Tribe. CPS has Title IV-E agreements with these four tribes.

Each of the tribes have tribal courts and tribal law enforcement. There are several similarities with protocols of the courts and law enforcement for the five tribes compared to non-tribal law enforcement and courts. The similarities include the option for joint investigations, provisions for law enforcement to take emergency custody, and abuse/neglect (A/N) actions through the court with the court being able to give custody, care, and placement responsibility to CPS. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and U.S. Attorney's Office also have jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute criminal child abuse on reservations.

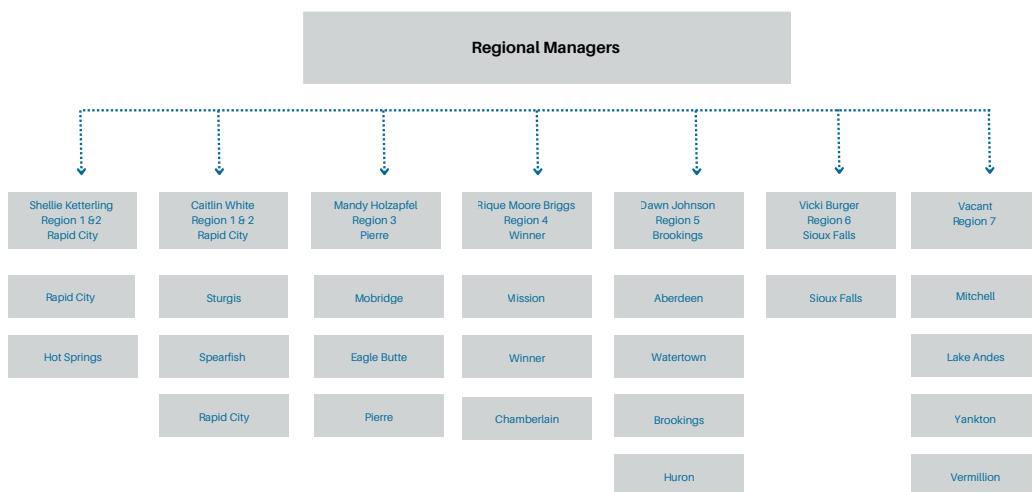
A more detailed description of each of the Department's Divisions and the programs each provides can be found on the Department's website.

[Department's Website](#)

CPS State Office Organization



CPS Regional Management Structure



Vision Statement

Families are engaged with a child welfare system which honors and uplifts their values and resilience through the empowerment of families involved within the system.

Mission Statement

South Dakota welfare's mission is to engage parents, youth, and partners in a shared vision, to empower all involved to lead systemic change.

Public Access to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP)

The Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) is on the State's website on the CPS page. The Statewide Assessment will be available on the State's website once South Dakota has received the Round 4 Child and Family Services Plan Final Report.

Questions about the availability of the CFSP can be directed to:

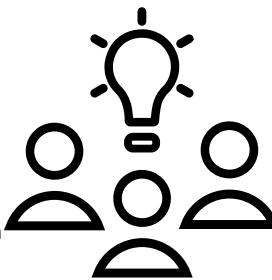
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Disaster Plan

From late 2024 through early 2025, South Dakota experienced a series of significant weather events that led to multiple executive and emergency declarations, primarily in response to severe storms, straight-line winds, heavy rainfall, and flooding. On June 22, 2024, an executive order was issued following storms and flooding that damaged roads, bridges, dams, and other public infrastructure, prompting the deployment of state, tribal, and local resources. To protect public health and safety, a temporary "no boating" restriction was enacted on several lakes across Lincoln, Bon Homme, Yankton, Hutchinson, and Turner counties. The order remained in effect until the emergency concluded, expiring no later than July 22, 2024. A second executive order, issued on July 26, 2024, responded to further damage caused by additional storms, flooding, and winds, and included a disaster declaration for 25 counties across the state. On March 28, 2025, Governor Larry Rhoden signed an executive order granting the South Dakota Wildland Fire Division authority to utilize National Guard assets in response to wildfires throughout the state. Additionally, on May 28, 2025, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe declared a public safety emergency due to rising methamphetamine use, drug trafficking, and gun violence on its reservation, with efforts focused on strengthening law enforcement, encouraging community reporting, and coordinating public safety and health resources.

Collaboration



To create a shared vision across the broader child welfare system to support prevention and better outcomes for children and families, CPS collaborates consistently with the internal and external partners in the development, assessment, modification, and monitoring of the CFSP, as well as the progress reported in subsequent APSRs. These collaborative efforts are not seen as an event, but an ongoing process to continually identify more efficient and effective ways to improve outcomes for children and families who encounter the child welfare system.

Detailed engagement with stakeholders that occurred in SFY2025 can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A1.

Internal Collaboration

The Department of Social Services Strategic Plan for 2025-2029 was presented to all staff via electronic correspondence. The plan development included staff from across the state from every division and at various levels of the agency. The strategic plan places value on staff input and the customer experience. Every step in the development of the plan looked very deliberately at what it would mean for employees and South Dakota customers. South Dakota's DSS Strategic Plan will be the basis for progress and the measure of success will be the work completed to meet the goals. The Strategic Plan goals center around creating a culture that includes recognition, innovation, and opportunities for growth. A reminder of South Dakota's goals and vision will be included in the July 2025 CQI Newsletter which is distributed to all staff within Child Protection Services.

The following sources provide for internal collaboration within the South Dakota Department of Social Services and CPS. Due to the structure of the department inter-department and inter-agency collaboration occurs on a consistent basis.

Source	Members	Purpose	Source	Members	Purpose
DSS Executive Team	Department Cabinet Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Children and Family Services, Chief of Legal Services, Chief of Behavioral Health, Division Director for Medical Services, and the Administrator of Communications	The Executive Team was created by the Cabinet Secretary in April 2020 and meets twice a month to discuss department initiatives at a high level.	CPS Management Team	Division Director, Assistant Division Directors, Program Administrators, Program Specialists, and the Regional Managers.	The CPS Management Team meets every quarter face to face. The team has continued to meet weekly since March 2020 via Zoom meetings. Agenda items include the status of each region and program area as standing agenda items; ongoing progress evaluation of current initiatives; and discussion, selection, and planning of new initiatives accepted by the team.
DSS Management Team	Department Cabinet Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Children and Family Services, Director of Legal Services, Chief of Behavioral Health, Division Directors for CPS, Child Care Services, Medical Services, Economic Assistance, Child Support, Behavioral Health, Human Services Center Administrator, and the Human Resources Manager	The DSS Management Team meets monthly to discuss department and division initiatives, staffing, legislation, budgets, integration of services, and to identify successes, challenges, and solutions.	CPS Program Specialist Team	Child Protection Services Program Specialists	The team meets every month during their CQI Core Team meetings. Program Specialists are the subject experts at the State Office level of CPS. One of the agenda items is an analysis of the Permanency, Safety and Well-Being Regional Reviews to determine if there are gaps in policy and procedure or a need for additional staff development. The CPS Program Specialist Team also tracks the progress of the agency's Program Improvement Plan (PIP), CFSP, and APSR.
CPS Supervisory Team	Division Director, Assistant Division Directors, Program Administrators, Program Specialists, Regional Managers, and all Supervisors	The team meets in person twice a year and focuses on the status of current initiatives, topic specific skill enhancement, education, and planning. The group discusses and has input in the CFSP and the APSR.	CPS Comprehensive Safety Intervention (CSI) Workgroup	Assistant Division Directors, Program Administrators, Program Specialists, Regional Managers, Supervisors and Family Services Specialists	The CSI Team focuses on the State's safety model by the review of policies and trends to make recommendations to the CPS Management Team. This team reviews case fidelity review findings to ensure practice is implemented as intended.
			CPS Intake Team	Intake Supervisors, Lead Intake Family Services Specialists, Intake Family Services Specialists	Each year a mandatory Intake Specialist meeting is held to update the Intake Specialists and the Intake Specialist Screeners on policies and procedures and to discuss practice. Prior to the Intake Specialist meeting, questionnaires are sent to the Family Services Specialists and Supervisors on topics they would like to discuss and review. This gives the Intake Family Services Specialists, Screeners, and Supervisors input on the agenda items at the annual training. The agenda includes training on sufficient information gathering, identifying danger threats, peer reviews, and team building activities.
			Supervisor Advisory Group (SAG)	Supervisors across the state	The team meets monthly to address topics as presented to them by the field, or by the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Core Team.

Source	Members	Purpose
Regional Managers and Program Specialists	Child Protection Services' Program Specialists and Regional Managers, Division Director, Assistant Division Director	Meet to discuss gaps in policy and practice that are causing less optimal outcomes following their respective Region review. The Program Specialist and Regional Managers meet weekly via Zoom and bi-annually in person where these gaps can be discussed. This might include adjusting a current policy or practice, developing new practice guidelines or policy, providing additional training, making additions or changes to the Family and Child Information System (FACIS), or collaborating with another agency in the community to improve outcomes. Regional Managers have also started monthly meetings via phone calls to discuss these issues more in depth with the Division Director and Assistant Division Director.
Certification Training Faculty	Program Specialists, Supervisors and Family Services Specialists who guide and provide insight on how training topics are implemented in work practice at the local level	Faculty meets with their training colleagues one to two times a year to plan for and assess the training needs of new Family Services Specialists. Adjustments to enhance the training is based on the Regional Reviews, and the CSFR, as well as updates to policy and practice. Faculty offers training at least twice a year in the areas of Permanency and Well-Being, Foundation, Initial Family Assessment, Protective Capacity Assessment, and Trauma Informed Care.
ICWA Capacity Building	The workgroup is made up of representatives from the seven regions in CPS, the ICWA Program Specialist, CQI Program Specialist, and FACIS Program Specialist.	This workgroup is responsible for completing a capacity building process with training and awareness of ICWA trends locally and nationally. Casey Family Programs has expressed support for the workgroup and offered to schedule presenters for the group. The members from each region are able to bring back knowledge from this workgroup and serve as subject matter experts within their regions.

[Multi-Disciplinary Teams Collaboration](#)

The following describes the collaborative efforts of CPS through the facilitation and support of multiple multi-disciplinary teams. Each of these collaborations are utilized in all aspects of the CFSP/APSR, including, but not limited to, development, assessment of agency strengths and areas of improvement, review and modification of goals, objectives, and interventions and monitoring of progress. When collaborating, the CPS team ensures diversity of families and young adults being served who have been historically underserved or marginalized, and those adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality in the child welfare system.

CPS asked partners of the child welfare system to participate in a survey to learn more about the awareness and use of community supports and resources to help parents care for their children. Information is collected from child welfare partners on accessibility of services, significant barriers to access mental health resources, significant barriers to access substance abuse services, how their agency supports families, what are the most sufficient resources in their community to prevent child abuse and neglect, what is the least sufficient resource to prevent child abuse and neglect, what are the reasons they see children enter the foster care system, and what are the reasons they see children remain in the foster care system. This survey is implemented statewide on a yearly basis in conjunction with an office's CQI meeting with community partners. Refer to Service Array for specific responses from this survey.

The Family First Program Specialist has identified a group of parents, caregivers, and youth with lived experience to help provide feedback to CPS representing the perspectives of parent, caregiver, and the child. The purpose of this process is to gather information to help improve the CPS provision of services. Parents have the opportunity to voice what their expectations were in working with CPS and to share if those expectations were achieved. This allows CPS to determine quality of services and areas where quality can be enhanced. This advisory group has provided feedback on the data collection process of parenting education partners, as well as assessing quality of parenting education classes in the past year. The meetings are not set at a specific frequency, rather when opportunities arise where the input of these valuable partners is sought, the group will meet to provide input at those particular meetings/events/projects. Those members who are also involved in Family First Plan development through the Prevention Team meet at the frequency in which those meetings occur, which were largely monthly throughout the past calendar year, and will likely be quarterly ongoing through implementation. Some members are also involved in the CBCAP Advisory Board and those meetings are held twice annually.

Child Protection Services (CPS) surveys youth in accordance with the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) regulations at age 17 for children in foster care & and follow-up surveys at age 19 and 21. Additionally, CPS surveys all 17-year-old youth in foster care each year, not just in Federal NYTD Baseline years. CPS reviews the survey results and uses the information in the CFSP and subsequent APSRs.

Independent Living Surveys are completed by youth who are transitioning from care. The surveys are used to assist in assessing services to youth and to help Child Protection Services (CPS) in looking at and enhancing service delivery. The results of the exit interviews are presented to the CPS Management Team and provided to staff during ongoing and Certification training. The information gained from the surveys was utilized in the development of the CFSP and subsequent APSRs; information will continue to be used to measure progress and make any needed adjustments in independent living services. Refer to Service Array for specific responses from this survey.

The Office of Licensing and Accreditation, under the Department of Social Services, prepares for the annual relicensing onsite visit to group care centers for minors and residential and intensive residential treatment facilities by surveying residents and staff. The resident survey includes a range of questions on topics such as how the resident is treated; whether the resident feels safe; what contact they have with their family and supervising staff; and how they are engaged in the development of their treatment plan. The staff survey includes questions pertaining to program policies and procedures, training, treatment planning, and services offered by the program. The information is shared with the individual agencies while in the review process as an element of the renewal review.



The Children with Disabilities Education Act 2004 requires the establishment of a special education advisory panel to provide suggestions and advice to the State Department of Education on critical issues regarding special education services throughout South Dakota. The South Dakota Advisory Panel on Children with Disabilities (SDAPCD) meets, at minimum, four times a year. The membership of the SDAPCD must consist of members appointed by the Governor. The membership is representative of the State population and composed of individuals involved in or concerned with the education of children with disabilities, including a representative from the State child welfare agency responsible for foster care.

While developing the State Prevention Plan as outlined by the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) a teaming structure was developed including a Core Team to drive planning efforts, a Prevention Team to help navigate efforts, and a Fiscal Team to plan braiding and blending of funding streams for greatest impact. The teams typically meet monthly. Meetings are a hybrid of virtual and in-person for maximum participation. The Core Team is comprised primarily of CPS and DSS leadership and program staff, along with the experience provided by a tribal ICWA Director, and two tribal child protection leads. The Prevention Team involves a broad range of participants representing urban, tribal, rural, and even frontier perspectives in South Dakota. There is a prominent and diverse tribal aspect with a variety of representatives involved, young adults with lived experience participate, a grandmother who is a Common Sense Parenting trainer and is parenting her grandchildren represents her tribal affiliation, many community and state agencies with leads from varying levels of structure are included, and federal partners are involved.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe main task force meets every Monday, and the sub-workgroup meets every Friday. The discussion is focused on improving the challenges faced by the OST's -Child Protection Program. CPS ICWA Program Specialist continues to attend the main OST Task Force meetings on Mondays, however at this time the sub-workgroup is focused on The Tiwahe Project, therefore the ICWA Program Specialists does not attend these meetings. Following Main Task Force Meetings, the ICWA Program Specialist informs DSS-CPS leadership of questions, updates, and/or requests.

One of the overarching goals of the 2020 - 2024 Plan was to improve communication between partners of the child welfare system, these efforts continue in the System Outcomes Section of the 2025-2029 CFSP. This includes stakeholders as reviewers, a survey to them, and CQI meetings with the stakeholders. Information that will be used at the CQI meetings with the stakeholders is data collected and presented in the Regional Assessments.

Source	Members	Purpose
Independent Living (ILS) Young Voices Youth Groups	Independent Living Services Program Specialist and Community Resource Persons	Young Voices continues to provide youth another means to share their views and experiences in foster care and provide input into how the system can improve independent living services and transition support. Young Voices is currently utilized as a platform for youth to present their lived experiences to a variety of audiences. In the upcoming fiscal year, the Independent Living and Permanency Program Specialist plans to collaborate with Community Resource Persons to expand this group into a collaborative workgroup where youth can provide input on child welfare practices and policy.
GRIT Calls	Representatives from each group care facility and each Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) comprise the South Dakota Association of Youth Care Providers (SDAYCP), CPS staff, CPS Supervisors, CPS Regional Managers, and CPS State office	GRIT is an acronym outlining the following values for the group: G - Guts, to bring it to the think tank, and dig into the guts of what the youth needs R - Resilience, of the youth, and of the team providing care I - Identification of the needs and the resources appropriate or needed T - Treatment steps for crisis, further crisis prevention and following the crisis follow-up The GRIT calls occur weekly to discuss youth with high acuity needs who are in need of placement. The SDAYCP and CPS discuss the youth's strengths, needs, previous placements, and level of care needed in attempt to problem solve and keep the youth in South Dakota, rather than having to be placed out of state. These youth are discussed on the weekly calls until a placement is found.
State Review Team (SRT)	Representatives from the Divisions of CPS, Medical Services, and Behavioral Health in addition to representatives from the Departments of Human Services, Education, and Corrections	The SRT meets weekly to review referrals of children and youth for inpatient treatment at residential and intensive residential treatment facilities. The SRT submits recommendations for psychiatric level of care to the South Dakota Foundation for Medical Care, formerly known as PRO (Peer Review Organization). The Foundation for Medical Care utilizes child psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses to determine medical necessity for psychiatric level of care and if the case meets criteria, the Foundation for Medical Care approves placement for a specific period of time not to exceed six months with a process to review requests for continued stays. If the case does not meet criteria, a less restrictive level of care is recommended by the SRT with suggestions from the Foundation for Medical Care.

Source	Members	Purpose	Source	Members	Purpose
Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Board	Statewide network of parenting educators, parents, and stakeholders	Board meets at least two times per year to assess the effectiveness of the Common Sense Parenting and Positive Indian Parenting classes and make recommendations regarding parenting program approaches, techniques, and accommodations for populations with special needs. The Parenting Education Partners work with tribal agencies to improve efforts toward serving tribal areas. Input from the Advisory Board is used to enhance parenting education training for parents in the development of the CFSP and subsequent APSRs. The input from the Advisory Board will continue to be used to measure progress and make any needed adjustments in the Parenting Education Program.	Independent Living Services (ILS) Advisory Workgroup	Representatives from Department of Social Services Child Protection (CPS) , Independent Living Preparation Program representatives, Department of Corrections, Housing, Economic Assistance, Unified Judicial System, CASA, group and residential facilities, Community Resource Persons (CRP), tribal representative, and youth who are in foster care or have exited foster care.	The ILS Workgroup meets at least twice per year and advises CPS on the biannual teen workshops and annual teen conference, program development, and service delivery to youth. Data on NYTD and Youth Independent Living Surveys are provided at the meetings. The ideas and input provided during the meetings are used in the development of the CFSP and subsequent APSRs. The input of the workgroup will continue to be used to measure progress and make any needed adjustments in Independent Living Services.
Justice for Children Committee (JCC)	Membership includes those required by the grant: law enforcement, Criminal Court Judge, Civil Court Judge, prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, attorney for children, CASA representative, health professional, mental health professional, Child Protection Services agency personnel, an individual experienced in working with children with disabilities, a parent, an adult former victim of child abuse/neglect, and an individual experienced in working with homeless children and youth.	Established to meet the requirements of the Children's Justice Task Force Grant and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Grant. Review of the broader systems involved with child welfare and policy and recommendations for enhancement and improvements are ongoing functions of the JCC. The JCC report is included in the Child Abuse, Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Plan. The recommendations and action steps established by the JCC for the Children's Justice Act Grant are also included in the APSR. The JCC is consulted regarding CPS policy, practice and training related to responding to child abuse and neglect, including sex trafficking of children.	Stronger Families Together Initiative	The Governor's Office, Tribal Relations, DSS (CPS, OLA, Communications), South Dakota Kids Belong, Tribal child welfare programs (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Sicangu and BIA from Crow Creek), ICWA specialist (Rosebud Sioux Tribe), foster and adoptive parents, foster care alumni, business leaders, faith-based organizations, private adoption agencies, and child placement agencies	The Stronger Families Together initiative is a call for action to recruit, prepare, and support foster and adoptive families within their own communities based on the following four principles: All children deserve to grow up in a family where they are loved and protected; Foster families are needed to care for children and support their families when they are experiencing challenges that cause the children to be unsafe; Encouragement, support, and services are needed for parents, kinship families, foster families, and adoptive families to provide the best care possible for children; Families are needed to provide children a safe, stable, and permanent forever family if they cannot return home. The initiative highlights the needs for more foster families to provide care for Native American children, sibling groups, older youth, children who require specialized care due to behavioral, mental health, or medical needs, and families who are willing to partner with the child's family to help achieve reunification and/or to maintain connections.
State and Private Adoption Agency Collaboration	Staff from licensed private adoption agencies and CPS program staff	The team meets to discuss the opportunity to work collaboratively with the State on several topics. Plans are underway to survey members on what projects to focus on first. Collaboration ideas suggested by the group include post adoption services, adoptive parent training and education, matching opportunities, and resource sharing. The group will be meeting every two months initially. This year the Department of Social Services collaborated with the private Adoption Agencies in discussing adoption competent services for South Dakota families. The National Training Institute presented to the group information about the Adoption Competency training for mental health professionals and the training for caseworkers. The private agencies were encouraged to use this free training to enhance their adoption programs. The Department also engaged this group in a focus group about post adoption services in preparation for the release of the Post Adoption RFP that came up for publication at the beginning of the year.			

CPS Team Members, Committees and Groups Collaboration

CPS team members participate in the following teams, committees, and groups to continue to foster collaboration across the child welfare system. Each team promotes the child welfare system and informs the development, assessment, modification, and monitoring of the CFSP, as well as the progress reported in subsequent APSRs. When collaborating, the CPS team ensures diversity of families and young adults being served who have been historically underserved or marginalized, and those adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality in the child welfare system.

Parenting Education Partners hold peer reviews of local Parenting Education providers biannually. The information from the reviews is used in the APSR to improve parenting education and other prevention services. The input gained from the Peer Reviews is used for the development of the CFSP and subsequent APSRs and will continue to be used to measure progress and make any needed adjustments in the Parenting Education Program and prevention services.

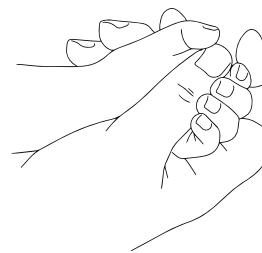
The South Dakota Department of Health has established two Infant and Child Death Review Committees—one serving the East River region and the other the West River region. These committees are part of a prevention-oriented initiative designed to analyze and address factors contributing to infant and child mortality within the state. The review process emphasizes identifying preventable causes of death, such as unsafe sleep environments, congenital conditions, and maternal health risks. Each committee is composed of a multidisciplinary team that includes representatives from law enforcement, Child Protection Services, hospital and emergency medical staff, behavioral health professionals, forensic pathology, and tribal health organizations. By collaboratively reviewing the circumstances surrounding each death, the committees aim to identify patterns, risk factors, and potential points of intervention to prevent future fatalities. The Preventable Death Review Team initially focused on South Dakota's two most populous counties—Minnehaha and Pennington. As of May 2025, the scope of review has expanded: the East River Committee now covers the 44 counties east of the Missouri River, while the West River Committee covers the 22 counties to the west. The Review Team includes the Regional Managers from the respective coverage areas.

CPS and the Department of Education continue their collaboration related to the implementation of Title I of Every Student Succeeds Act. Procedures for staff in CPS and local school districts were developed, as well as an MOU between the Departments of Social Services and Education to enhance educational stability for children and a process to address issues as they arise.

The Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment is located at the University of South Dakota under the School of Health Sciences. The Center has six major goals and 48 supporting objectives that address a 10-year comprehensive approach toward ending child sexual abuse in South Dakota. The objectives of the 10-year plan will increase the State's capacity to address all forms of child maltreatment. The six goals of the plan include: Statistics and Benchmarking; Public, Private and Tribal Health; Mandatory Reporting; Criminal Justice and CPS Response; Infrastructure; and Public Awareness. The Center has an advisory board with multi-disciplinary representation including the Division Director for CPS. The advisory board provides direction, guidance, and oversight of the 10-year plan. The objectives of this Plan will increase the State's capacity to address all forms of child maltreatment.

In October 2023, the Foster and Adoptive Care Recruitment and Retention team of Stronger Families Together, Region 1 (Rapid City), initiated a collaborative effort in Pennington County. This partnership seamlessly integrates the principles of Stronger Families Together with the objectives of the Foster Parent Recruitment/Retention Collaborative aimed at bolstering the recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families in the Rapid City area. Originally, the Foster Parent Recruitment/Retention task force comprised five public and private adoption agencies in Pennington County. Following the integration of Stronger Families Together, this collaboration now encompasses a broader spectrum, including five public and private adoption agencies, foster families, tribal representation, and community involvement through a local church.

The participating private and public agencies comprise Catholic Social Services, Lifeline Children's Services, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, and the Department of Social Services. Other participants include a community representative from a local church, foster families, and a representative from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. The beginning of the Foster Parent Recruitment/Retention collaboration dates back to late 2015, with the primary objective of augmenting the pool of adoptive and foster families in South Dakota, particularly addressing the pressing need in western South Dakota.



The Protective Services Program Specialist is a member of the steering committee for Project SCOPE (Supporting Children of the Opioid Epidemic). Project SCOPE is a national training initiative intended to build nationwide provider capacity and confidence in applying evidence-based practices in screening, monitoring, and interdisciplinary support for children and families diagnosed with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome (NOWS), or who are suspected of being impacted by opioid use, trauma, or related exposure. The purpose of this national initiative is to train interdisciplinary teams on emerging knowledge and evidence-based practices in screening, monitoring

and interdisciplinary care for children impacted NAS, trauma, or related exposure. Core curriculum will include current research on brain development, developmental outcomes of prenatal exposure to opioid and other substances, trauma informed care, provider secondary trauma stress, and strategies to support caregivers. This initiative is intended to improve outcomes by linking research to practical application in local communities, providing opportunities to share knowledge and findings with national networks and federal agencies, and providing recommendations for future interventions. The Center for Disabilities at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine is partnering with the University of Wyoming Institute for Disabilities and the Nisonger Center at the Ohio State University and the University of Cincinnati Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities for this project. This initiative will build upon the effective ECHO virtual training model and is a pilot supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. This initiative will also support Plans of Safe Care.

The ReNew Program through Bethany Social Services starts at prenatal care and continues to age five. This program provides a case manager to assist the family with resources to overcome any barriers they may be facing, though they specialize in past and present substance abuse. This program began in Region 1 and Region 6. The Regional Manager in Region 6 participates on the advisory group.

In 2020, the CPS Division Director was appointed to serve on the Behavioral Health Advisory Council (BHAC). The Council advises the Division of Behavioral Health with the planning, coordination, and implementation of the State's behavioral health services plan. BHAC members assist with the establishment of goals for the State Plan while also monitoring and reviewing fiscal and programmatic information to evaluate the adequacy of services for individuals with behavioral health needs. The BHAC also provides input toward potential services and/or funding expansion.

South Dakota is in the midst of a methamphetamine epidemic, while at the same time experiencing a growing opioid problem. Volunteers of America, Dakotas (VOAD) serves pregnant, parenting and postpartum women whose children have been removed or are at-risk of being removed from their custody due to substance use. VOAD's New Start Residential Program and its primary partner, CPS, propose to address the need for formal coordination mechanisms among family serving agencies to respond to the rising rate of children in out-of-home placements due to parental substance abuse. VOAD's New Start Program is one of only two residential treatment facilities in the state where mothers can live with their children during recovery. VOAD is located in Sioux Falls, SD but serves families from across the entire state. Mothers may have their children with them from ages 0-8 years old and a total of two children. The Regional Manager from Region 6 is the primary child welfare partner for the Regional Partnership Grant (RPG). Currently VOAD New Start has the capacity to serve a total of 30 women in their residential program.

CPS has been engaged as a partner with South Dakota Unified Judicial System's Dual Status Youth Initiative. The term "dual status youth" refers to juveniles who come into contact with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and occupies various statuses in terms of their relationship to the two systems. A growing body of research has consistently confirmed that, in comparison to juveniles without such cross-system involvement, dual status youth present a range of important challenges. The challenges and costs associated with dual status youth strongly suggest the need to devise and implement innovative ways to manage these difficult cases. The Robert F Kennedy (RFK) National Resource Center will use its four-phase framework to provide technical assistance and consultation in partnership with the South Dakota Unified Judicial System to positively impact outcomes for youth involved in both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Enhancements and improvements in policy and routine practice realized through this project will focus on strengthening practices, programs, and services for various systems of care on behalf of the South Dakota Unified Judicial System for their identified target. The initiative was previously active in several counties however is currently active in Pennington County, which is located within the Black Hills Region. A Family Services Specialist Supervisor from Region 1 attends the monthly meetings. In State Fiscal Year 2025, the group focused on runaway youth and collaborated on ways to prevent future runaway episodes. The group will continue to meet on a monthly basis in State Fiscal Year 2026 and focus on youth who are in contact with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Juvenile Collaboration is a new collaborative group started by the Sioux Falls Public School District and the Sioux Falls Police Department. The school and law enforcement agency are going to apply for a Stop Grant of \$2 million to start targeted services for families that would be provided at the after-school program. Members of this group include agency leaders, such as the State's Attorney's Office, Schools, Lutheran Social Services, Volunteers or American, and multiple other agencies. Juvenile Collaboration aims to identify intervention services for families with elementary school age children who are demonstrating for juvenile behaviors. The Region 6 Regional Manager, Vicki Burger, was invited to be a member of this group. The group is still in their infancy, but the intention is to meet monthly.

The Learning and Development Program Specialist collaborates with Call to Freedom, an advocacy center for Human Trafficking to deliver training to Child Protection Services Family Services Specialists on identification and risk factors for youth who come to the attention of CPS. These trainings are delivered twice yearly.

South Dakota desires to collaborate and bring together cross-agency partners to develop, implement, and monitor Plans of Safe Care for all infants affected by substance use, not just those infants who meet the criteria for child welfare intervention. South Dakota desires to collaborate and bring together cross-agency partners to develop, implement, and monitor Plans of Safe Care for all infants affected by substance use, not just those infants who meet the criteria for child welfare intervention. To continue this initiative, South Dakota State University received a HRSA grant related to Plans of Safe Care. The BIRTH-SD-AIM (Bridging Information and Resources to Transform Health of South Dakota parents - Assessing need and Implementing Maternal health safety bundles) was received in September 2023 and the grant period is for four years. Over those four years, the goal is to implement sets of patient safety standards in birthing hospitals across the state and the first set of standards that is being worked on is for pregnant individuals with substance use disorder.

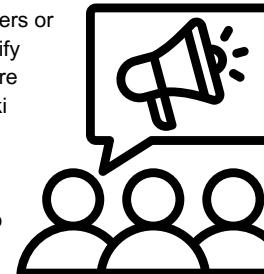
Lutheran Social Services received a family stabilization grant and is implementing the CARES model in Watertown and Sioux Falls areas. This evidence-based model is geared towards prevention of families in the child welfare or juvenile justice system by identifying families early and providing a case manager and family advocate to walk alongside them through their at-risk situation. This program started receiving referrals from the Watertown and Sioux Falls school district in January 2022.

Lutheran Social Services has collaborated with CPS throughout the process of securing the grant through implementation. There are ongoing discussions regarding data sharing and metrics to help measure outcomes for the program.

The National Association of State Foster Care Managers (NASFCM) is a platform that enables State Foster Care Managers to collaborate and share their knowledge to enhance the well-being of children and youth who are placed in out-of-home care, as well as their families. Through this organization, members can exchange information and expertise about issues that impact the safety, permanency, and overall welfare of these children. The Executive Board convenes once a month to address organizational matters. Currently, the board's president is a member of SD CPS.

CPS is collaborating with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment, which contracts with the Black Hills Special Services Cooperative, to coordinate a parent's advisory group. The leader of this group participates in the CBCAP Board to facilitate a feedback loop between the two entities. The state lead for Head Start participates in the CBCAP Board, as well, and mutual sharing of data and goals are exchanged through this process. CPS outlined for the group opportunities to provide input in more detail to help enhance parental feedback. Through the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Board Meetings, parenting education partners are in the process of identifying representatives from each area served (statewide coverage is assured by the group of these providers) to participate in future board meetings to share feedback and assist in planning. As development of the parenting education focus on fatherhood continues to expand, champions of fatherhood who are fathers (or other male caregivers such as grandparents and uncles) with lived experience related to involvement in CPS are being sought. An infrastructure of trainers who are fathers is in progress and community education partners are in place to begin delivering fatherhood parenting education; when the champions of fatherhood are identified this program area will kick-off. The FFPSA Plan development Prevention Team has created a rich pathway for the sharing of information through various platforms and members of the team, including the Department of Health, Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities, and community training sites delivering parenting education, which are often offshoots of other community service organizations such as domestic violence shelters, family time (visitation) centers, and university settings.

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Source	Members	Purpose	Source	Members	Purpose
Birth to Three Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)	Employees of the Department of Education, and the CPS Protective Services Program Specialist	<p>The council has the purpose of advising and assisting the Department of Education on identifying appropriate services for children ages birth to three who have a disability or developmental delay. Information is exchanged between CPS and the ICC to further services for the children in the target population. The Council meets four times per year and the Program Specialist provides input regarding keeping the children safe and provides data on the number of Birth to Three children who have been victims of abuse and/or neglect. The ICC is mandated by federal law and appointed by the Governor to advise and assist the Lead Agency to implement the requirements of Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).</p> <p>The 2021 child count numbers for children served by South Dakota's Part C Birth to Three Program was 1,018.</p>	Prevention and Support Collaboration	DSS-CPS Management Team, Pennington County State's Attorney Office, South Dakota ICWA Coalition, and the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board.	This project encourages partnership amongst local agencies to reduce the rate of children entering the welfare system by enhancing family support and prevention strategies. The focus is on identifying families at high risk of future child welfare intervention and offer voluntary support services with the goal of decreased risk of future involvement with child welfare and preserving family integrity.
Pre-Kindergarten-12th grade and Youth Serving Organizations (PK-12YSO)	The Center for the Maltreatment of Child Prevention and CPS Protective Services Program Specialist	<p>The task force began in November 2018 to surround a community's infrastructure, particularly schools and youth serving organizations, with the tools and education necessary to know of, respond to, and prevent child maltreatment. Four focused objectives of the task force are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer all school district personnel mandatory reporter training; develop a platform and infrastructure for virtual support services of counseling, behavioral health and social work in K-12 schools; launch a coordinated effort to teach prevention to students in school systems as well as their parents/guardians; and launch a coordinated effort to teach child sexual abuse prevention efforts in youth serving organizations and faith-based organizations. 	South Dakota Youth Care Providers Association	Representatives from the Department of Social Services (CPS, Auxiliary Placement, and Behavioral Health) and the Department of Corrections	<p>Discuss areas related to children placed in group and residential care such as admissions, denials, discharges, seclusion and restraints, placement numbers, out of state placements, and efforts to improve the system for youth placed in upper levels of care.</p>
State/Tribal Child Welfare Consultation (STCWC)	Representatives from tribal child welfare programs, ICWA programs and DSS-CPS	<p>The team meets to facilitate coordination and information sharing between CPS and the Tribes. Items related to the CFSP and APSR continue to be discussed at each of the meetings. The group created its second strategic plan entitled, "Strategic Plan for Unified Advocacy and Action" which has two targets for the group's collective work: "Disproportional Entry Rates of Native American Children into Custody" and "Determine What Prevention Efforts Are Needed.", however, as discussions progressed it was decided that while these are still very important targets, they needed to be broken down into more realistic steps that would strengthen the targets in the long run. Details can be found in the Tribal Collaboration section of the APSR.</p>	REACH (Respond, Educate, Advocate, Counsel, Heal) Team	Local law enforcement, Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI), medical providers, forensic interviewers, child protection, mental health providers, victim advocates and prosecutors	<p>The team was established in 2017, is headquartered in Watertown and serves 13 surrounding counties. This multidisciplinary team is designed to help victims and their families navigate the criminal justice system. Once child abuse is alleged, the victim comes to the center, where they meet with the team, allowing the family to receive next step information from all specialties on the team. The team approach allows the child and family to get all information from one place, so the team can create a plan of action together.</p>

Source

Members

Purpose

National Child Welfare Anti-Trafficking Collaborative

State, county, and tribal child welfare agencies all over the United States

Work to initiate or strengthen strategies to address human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The collaboration was formed to provide child welfare professional the space to discuss efforts and share resources. The collaboration meeting bimonthly to hold targeted conversations on how different states are addressing tracking within child welfare agencies.

School-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program

CPS, Behavioral Health, Yankton School District, and Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health in Yankton, SD

This program will benefit families who require intervention; however, do not meet the criteria for CPS intervention. The goal is to reach families and provide services prior to a family experiencing a crisis which prevents them from safely caring for their child. In researching evidence-based models and considering the resources already in the Yankton community, Systems of Care was selected as the model for this program. Additional steps included data collection, education around mandated reporting, screening criteria of the school, and Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health educating CPS on services offered through the school and community. Collaboration continues around development around criteria and the screening protocols.

State Courts and Members of the Legal and Judicial Communities Collaboration

The state maintains ongoing collaboration with state courts and key members of the legal and judicial communities to strengthen the child welfare system. This collaborative approach was evident during the recent Child and Family Services Review, where stakeholders from the legal and judicial community participated as a reviewer, and two judges took part in stakeholder interviews. Additionally, the Director of Child Protection Services presented on Child Welfare System Collaborative Outcomes at the State's Attorney Conference, reinforcing cross-system dialogue. Engagement is further supported through annual surveys distributed to stakeholders, allowing for continuous feedback and improvement. On May 29, 2025, new AFCARS elements and House Bill 1195—legislation revising provisions related to the termination of parental rights for children adjudicated abused or neglected—were presented to the Court Improvement Program Committee. Ongoing education is prioritized through the monthly Lunch and Learn series, which offers training on various child welfare topics to a broad audience, including judges, attorneys, child welfare staff, CASA volunteers, foster parents, and other professionals. These efforts underscore the state's commitment to integrated, informed, and collaborative child welfare practices.

Source

Members

Purpose

Court Improvement Program (CIP) Committee

Six representatives from CPS

The CIP Committee focuses on areas that relate to the CFSR safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes, the case reviews system, and the CFSP/APSR.

II. Update to the Assessment of Current Performance in Improving Outcomes

Child and Family Outcomes

The Statewide Assessment was submitted in January 2025 and addresses all requirements of the Update to the Assessment of Current Performance. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and is awaiting the Final Report to officially determine areas needing improvement in order to begin the process of developing a Program Improvement Plan. **Foundational information for South Dakota's child and family outcomes is provided within the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan located on the DSS Website.**

South Dakota is aware that Native American children are the highest population of children in care and this is disproportionate to the Native American population in South Dakota. There are several initiatives outlined in South Dakota Annual Progress and Services Report to target working with South Dakota Tribes and collaborating on how to serve the Native American population. South Dakota is also aware Placement Stability and Permanency performance outcomes are low from multiple data sources listed above, which is addressed in the permanency outcome section below.

Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

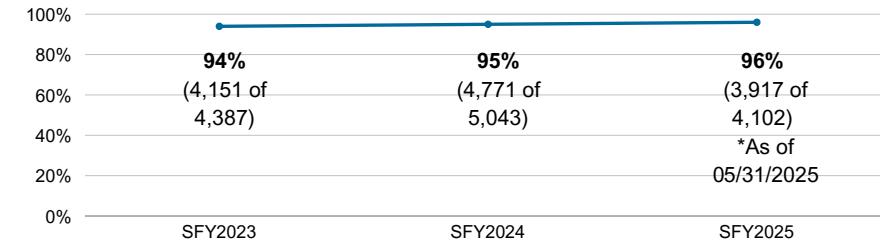
Refer to the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for information regarding the utilization of the Children and Family Service Review Data profile in conjunction with data reports in the CCWIS system, case reviews utilizing the OMS, internal case review on policy and practice, or external data sources to identify trends in both strengths and areas needing improvement. Foundational information on South Dakota's policy and practice surrounding Safety Outcome 1 can be found in the Statewide Assessment Attachment.

Analysis of Data:

In Round 3 2016 CFSR, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. South Dakota completed Round 4 Child and Family Services Review the week of March 17th 2025 and is awaiting the Final Report to determine performance as it relates to Safety Outcome 1. Once the Final Report is received, South Dakota will begin to implement improvement strategies as necessary.

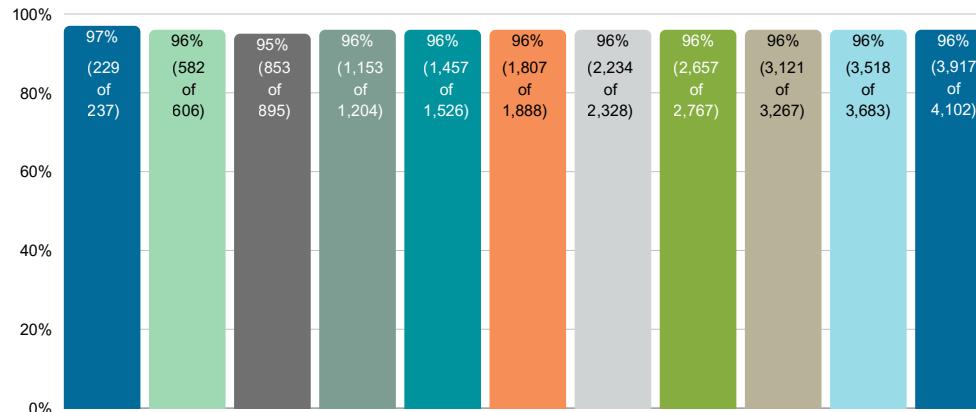
South Dakota utilizes reports within the FACIS system to monitor progress as it relates to performance of meeting initial contact timeframe with diligence considered. South Dakota has consistently increased performance since SFY2023.

Initial Contact with Diligence



Data Source: Family and Child Information System (FACIS) Report

South Dakota has consistently met a 95% performance of meeting initial contact timeframe with diligence considered in SFY2025.

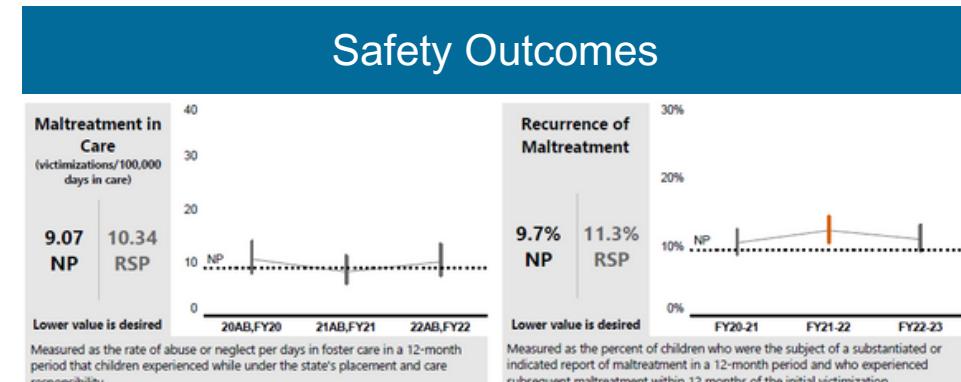


Data Source: FACIS Report

Although South Dakota consistently meets initial contact timeframes within the Children's Bureau's targeted performance, enhancements were made to the CPS Intake phone system in State Fiscal Year 2025. The 3C Logic phone system is a web-based platform that went live on December 17, 2024. This new system eliminates the need for a physical desk phone, or a specific phone line and all calls will be routed through a web-based program allowing Intake Specialists to answer calls from any location, if they have access to power and an internet connection. This flexibility allows Intake Specialists to remain available remotely during inclement weather or other disruptions to on-site operations. This system has been implemented in other state agencies, such as Department of Labor. This new system is very welcomed, as there have been ongoing issues with the current system, including several "dropped" calls. The system has several data points and "real time" data, which allows administrators and supervisors to monitor call flow and staff coverage more efficiently.

As the Intake Assessment is the first source of knowledge about a family when a concern has been expressed to the agency by a reporting party, it is of utmost importance Intake Specialists gather specific and sufficient information from the reporter to ensure accurate and prompt decision making regarding next steps for our agency. South Dakota Child Protection Services partnered with Action for Child Protection to increase the Intake Assessment fidelity by examining practices of Intake Specialists as they receive calls, document the concerns, and decision making for screening and determining response time. In May 2023, Action for Child Protection conducted a fidelity review and analysis of Intake Assessment reports and interviewed and observed Intake Specialists to gain further insight regarding workload, competency, and intervention fidelity. Refer to Safety Outcome 2 for further information regarding this initiative.

South Dakota's Data Profile for February 2025 identified Maltreatment in Foster Care and Recurrence of Maltreatment as statistically no different than National Performance.



Data Source: Risk-Standardized Performance from South Dakota February 2025 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR 4) Data Profile

Child Protection Services in South Dakota strives to continue to improve outcomes for children and families to ensure children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect. CPS accurately collects data in their Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) to show performance in meeting initial contact with diligence. This data is collected and analyzed each month by the Data Analysis Program Specialist and shared with the Protective Services Program Specialist. South Dakota remains steady at a 95% strength performance, which is target performance by the Children's Bureau. South Dakota has not identified any improvement goals for timeliness of initial contact and oversight will continue. Although South Dakota is performing no different than national performance in Recurrence of Maltreatment, South Dakota has determined a need for further analysis on this area as previous performance was worse than national performance. Safety Outcome 2 outlines strategies to improve safety outcomes for children as it encompasses prevention of entry/re-entry in foster care and risk and safety assessment. Please see Safety Outcome 2 for strategies to decrease recurrence of maltreatment.

South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Safety Outcome 1.

[Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate](#)

Refer to the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for information regarding South Dakota's Comprehensive Safety Intervention Model.

[Analysis of Data:](#)

In Round 3, 2016 CFSR, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Safety Outcome 2.

Child Protection Services in South Dakota strives to continue to improve outcomes for children and families in order to prevent entry or re-entry in foster care and to ensure safety is managed for children and families who are served by the child welfare system. CPS has strategically identified the following initiatives/projects to support positive outcomes.

- Intake Coaching
- CSI Policy enhancement and training
- In-Home Safety Plan Recruitment
- Family First Prevention Plan

Foundational information regarding these initiatives can be found in the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 can be found below.

Intake Coaching: In an effort to improve Intake Assessment fidelity, South Dakota Child Protection Services (CPS) partnered with Action for Child Protection to review and enhance intake practices. This collaboration focused on evaluating the processes Intake Specialists use to receive calls, document concerns, and make screening and response time decisions.

In May 2023, Action for Child Protection conducted a comprehensive fidelity review. This included analysis of Intake Assessment reports, staff interviews, and observation of Intake Specialists to assess workload, competency, and adherence to practice standards. Based on their findings, Action recommended formalized training and coaching to strengthen staff effectiveness, competency, and efficiency across the Intake Unit.

In response, South Dakota CPS issued a Request for Proposal to secure coaching services, ultimately selecting Action for Child Protection as the vendor. The initiative formally launched with an in-person kickoff meeting in Pierre on July 9–10, 2024. Intake Specialists and Supervisors completed a self-assessment and baseline knowledge survey on July 24, 2024.

Group coaching sessions followed: in Rapid City on August 12–13, 2024, and in Sioux Falls on August 20–21, 2024. These sessions emphasized critical thinking, knowledge development, and effective application of learning in practice. Staff also engaged in virtual collaborative sessions, reviewing intake calls to strengthen information collection and decision-making.

To conclude the initial coaching phase, Action conducted on-site visits in Rapid City and Sioux Falls from January 28–30, 2025. During these visits, staff received individualized feedback, discussed strengths and areas for improvement, and participated in the development of ongoing coaching goals. Practice standards were distributed, and staff contributed to the identification of their professional development needs. Action will complete the project in SFY2026 by conducting final self-assessments and a fidelity review, focusing on increased competency and intervention fidelity. The results of fidelity reviews are scheduled to be received by July 1, 2025. Once received, the Administrator of Services for Families, Protective Services Program Specialist, and CQI Team will review the findings. Ongoing fidelity reviews will occur in State Fiscal Year 2026 to ensure the desired outcomes of the coaching are being achieved.

Family First Prevention Plan:

Refer to Section III. Plan for Enacting the State's Vision, Goal 1 for further information.

Community-Based Recruitment of In-Home Safety Plan Providers: South Dakota identified the Community-Based Recruitment of In-Home Safety Plan Providers in their 2019-2024 Child and Family Services Plan as a pilot in Region 5 (Aberdeen, Brookings, Huron, Watertown). The communities of Aberdeen, Brookings, and Huron have implemented this program. Region 5 has the highest number of in-home cases in South Dakota, with having 33% more in home cases than the second highest Region. As of 05/31/2025 Region 5 has served 55 families through in-home services in SFY2025. During State Fiscal Year 2025, notable progress was made in the development and expansion of the Community-Based Safety Plan Bank in Region 5, with focused recruitment and implementation efforts. Initial efforts centered on increasing the pool of safety plan providers in Brookings and Huron, leading to a training in August for prospective providers in Brookings. By December, these recruitment efforts had resulted in 5 active providers in Brookings serving 11 children across 5 families, and 11 providers in Huron serving 34 children across 19 families. Additionally, Aberdeen had 3 providers and had served 1 child. In May 2025, a strategic planning meeting was held among program leadership and regional representatives to assess the current implementation and explore potential expansion of the safety plan bank model to additional regions across the state, marking an important step toward statewide scalability of this community-based prevention resource. Continued collaborative meetings will be held in State Fiscal Year 2026 to support ongoing progress and guide the broader implementation of this community-based prevention initiative. South Dakota's next steps to implement this program statewide is to finalize policy, develop an implementation plan, and monitor and measure progress statewide.

Initial Family Assessment Policy:

South Dakota's present and impending danger threats were refined, to include additional guidance and direction regarding the applicability of each threat to family conditions. The roles and responsibilities of On-Call Specialists, Initial Family Assessment Specialists, and Supervisors were clarified. These processes were currently in practice; however, the policy now highlights key areas and identifies who is responsible for tasks such as, making initial contact with families, reviewing child protection and law enforcement history, and safety planning meetings. Another area of focus relates to information collection; the Initial Family Services Specialists gathered information during interviews and collateral contacts related to caregiver's protective capacities; however, this information was never formally documented in the IFA document. With the new updates, Specialists will now document both enhanced and diminished protective capacities that are known or identified during the Initial Family Assessment process within the IFA document. To implement the new update, the information was presented to the CPS Management Team on October 31, 2024, and presented to the CPS Supervisors on November 19, 2024. Throughout the month of December, webinars were held with all CPS staff to highlight the key changes in policy. Refer to Staff Training Systemic Factor for further information regarding updates to Initial Family Assessment training curriculum and planned coaching. The policy was put into effect on December 2, 2024. As of May 28, 2025 all templates and screens have been updated in FACIS.



Out of Home Safety Plan Without Custody and Modified Family Assessment Policy

During State Fiscal Year 2025, progress resumed on the Out-of-Home Safety Plan Without Custody and Modified Family Assessment Policy project, which had been a pending initiative for approximately two years. In July, it was identified that the existing draft policy required substantial revision, and that additional data needed to be gathered to support its development. A plan was initiated by the Administrator and CSI Program Specialist to move the project forward. By September, the CSI Program Specialist had begun reviewing the draft policy and held meetings with the FACIS team to discuss potential enhancements to system screens that would support policy implementation. Continued work on this project, including policy refinement, data analysis, and system updates, will remain a focus in State Fiscal Year 2026 to support consistent application and improved outcomes for families. In State Fiscal Year 2026, fidelity reviews of the Protective Capacity Assessment and Initial Family Assessment will occur which will also encompass the Out of Home Safety Plans Without Custody and Modified Family Assessment.

Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations

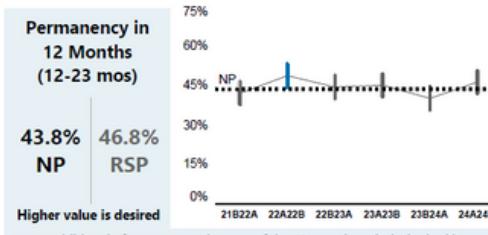
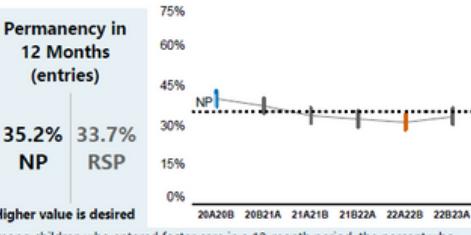
Refer to the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding Permanency Outcome 1.

Analysis of Data:

In Round 3 2016 CFSR, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Permanency Outcome 1.

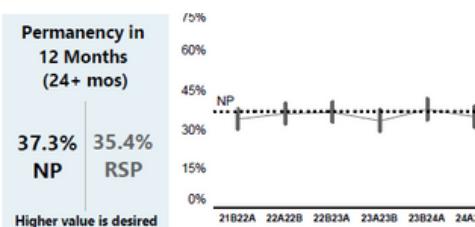
CPS has consistently shown it is not statistically different than the national average for the following permanency outcomes: permanency in 12 months (entries), permanency in 12 months (12-23 months), and permanency in 12 months (24+ months). South Dakota has identified the area of need related to reentry to foster care and placement stability.

Permanency Outcomes



Among children who entered foster care in a 12-month period, the percent who exited foster care to reunification, adoption, guardianship, or living with a relative within 12 months of their entry

Among children in foster care at the start of the 12-month period who had been in care for 12 to 23 months, the percent who exited to permanency in the subsequent 12 months



Among children in foster care at the start of the 12-month period who had been in care 24 months or more, the percent who exited to permanency in the subsequent 12 months



Among children who discharged to permanency (excluding adoption) in a 12-month period, the percent who reentered care within 12 months of exit

Targeted efforts and initiatives to improve performance in this outcome include increasing the pool of foster homes that can accurately match the need of the children in foster care, and enhanced matching of children to resource providers. Further information about these initiatives can be found in the Diligent Recruitment Plan.



Among children who entered care in a 12-month period, the number of placement moves per day they experienced during that year

Data Source: Risk-Standardized Performance from South Dakota February 2025 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR 4) Data Profile

Refer to Case Review System Systemic Factor for data pertaining to Periodic Reviews and Permanency Hearings.

Initiatives to support enhanced performance is provided below. Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for foundational information regarding initiatives to support Permanency Outcome 1 such as the Office of Licensing and Child Protection Services Licensing Progress Redesign, Stronger Families Together, and Court Hearing Observation Project. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding these initiatives can be found below.

Court Hearing Observation Project The Court Observation Project was completed in Brown and Codington County prior to the 2025-2029 CFSP and began in Hughes County on April 15, 2024.

During State Fiscal Year 2025, Region 3 CPS staff provided all necessary paperwork to the contracting agency and a staff member with the contracting agency attended court hearings. Court room observations by the contracting agency were completed on September 13, 2024. CPS staff also provided all parents and youth over the age of 12 with surveys for this project. CPS and UJS have received approval to move forward with splitting the cost of the observations in Pennington County. As of June 18, 2025 UJS and CPS are waiting for confirmation from the Abuse and Neglect Judge in Pennington County on whether they are willing to allow Court Observation to occur. At the request of the Chief Justice, findings from the observations are not being released until the observations are completed and will be released as statewide trends.

Placement Stability: South Dakota has implemented several proactive strategies to mitigate the reasons for previous placement disruptions and ensure better outcomes for children in care. These efforts include comprehensive caregiver training to equip foster parents with the necessary skills to manage the child's specific needs, as well as providing specialized services tailored to the child's unique challenges. Additionally, adjustments to placement criteria have been made to better match children with the most suitable caregivers and environments. To further prevent disruptions, the agency conducts ongoing monitoring through regular check-ins, where Child Protection Services' Family Services Specialists maintain a minimum of monthly in-person contact with both the child and their placement providers. These visits help assess the placement's stability and identify any needs that may arise, ensuring that both the child and the caregiver receive the support necessary to sustain a stable environment. In addition, the Licensing Specialist with the Office of Licensing and Accreditation plays a vital role in supporting licensed placement providers, assisting with any identified barriers or challenges, and ensuring open communication between the provider and the specialist. Licensed placement providers also participate in annual in-person renewal meetings, where strengths and areas for improvement are discussed. This process helps gather crucial information, which in turn improves placement matching and ensures that providers are equipped and aware of the child's specific needs prior to placement. These combined efforts, along with collaborative planning involving all stakeholders—such as social workers, therapists, and the child's support network—create a comprehensive, coordinated approach that promotes ongoing placement stability and supports the well-being of the children in care.

Permanency Round Tables: South Dakota began implementing Permanency Roundtables (PRTs) as a permanency planning tool in November 2017. PRTs are structured, in-depth case consultations designed to accelerate legal permanency for youth in out-of-home care. The process stimulates professional learning, identifies systemic barriers, and develops aggressive, creative, and realistic Permanency Action Plans for individual children or sibling groups.

Unlike standard case staffings, PRTs provide uninterrupted, focused discussions (lasting at least two hours), include an external consultant to bring a fresh perspective, and ensure direct access to decision-makers who can resolve systemic or policy-related barriers.

PRTs are conducted across all regions and can be used in a variety of permanency goal situations—including reunification, adoption, and APPLA—particularly when no clear permanency resource is currently established. PRT follow up meetings are held every 30-90 days and continue until permanency is achieved.

The composition of the PRT team intentionally excludes youth, families, attorneys, and other stakeholders from the initial meeting to create a safe space for staff to openly examine barriers and explore solutions. However, input from these parties is encouraged before and after the Roundtable to inform planning and support implementation.

To support continued implementation and expansion, South Dakota is partnering with Casey Family Programs to provide training and technical assistance related to PRTs. While CPS will have a designated lead for this initiative, Casey Family Programs has been asked to include the four Program Specialists for Permanency and Adoption in meetings with their consultant as planning begins around training, developing policy and procedures, model fidelity, and outcome tracking. Staff development leadership will also be involved early to align this work with broader staff training efforts. CQI will be engaged as the initiative progresses, especially around fidelity reviews, data tracking, and outcome evaluation. Coordination with CQI leadership will determine the appropriate timing for their involvement.

Office of Licensing and Child Protection Services Licensing Process Redesign

Refer to the Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention Systemic Factor for information regarding progress towards the redesign process and future plans.

Stronger Families Together: Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding the Stronger Families Together Initiative. Recruitment and retention of foster homes is vital to ensure placement stability for children. A child's needs must be matched to a foster family's strengths and areas of expertise in caring for children. To sufficiently match the needs of a child who is in foster care, there must be a sufficient number of all types of foster homes. When improper matches are made, the placement is in jeopardy of disrupting.

It is the fifth year of the Stronger Families Together initiative, and the following principles continue to be the focus:

- All children deserve to grow up in a family where they are loved and protected.
- Foster families are needed to care for children and support their families when they are experiencing challenges that cause the children to be unsafe.
- Encouragement, support, and services are needed for parents, kinship families, foster families, and adoptive families to provide the best care possible for children.
- Families are needed to provide children a safe, stable, and permanent forever family if they cannot return home.

The following entities across South Dakota continue to work together for Stronger Families Together: Governor's Office, DSS, CPS, OLA, South Dakota Kids Belong (SDKB), Tribal child welfare programs, foster and adoptive parents, foster care alumni, business leaders, faith-based organizations, private adoption agencies, and child placement agencies.

CPS and OLA continue to collaborate with child placement agencies and private adoption agencies to facilitate recruitment and retention activities all across South Dakota. However, there are targeted recruitment and retention groups in the Black Hills Region and regions 3 and 4 due to the disproportional number of foster homes to children in custody. Regions 1 and 2 have been consolidated into what is now referred to as the Black Hills Region. All reported data reflects this regional realignment. In Region 6, a recruitment and retention team is currently being established in response to the area's large population base and strong engagement from community partners. This team will focus on strengthening and expanding foster and adoptive care efforts within the region. The SFT Program Specialist, in preparation for the recruitment and retention plan, has started to analyze and review Region 6 data.

Detailed information regarding recruitment and retention efforts that occurred in SFY2025 can be found in within Appendix A, Attachment A2.

For SFY 2026, the SFT program specialist is working on a collaborative recruitment plan including the community stakeholders, the Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA), and CPS. This recruitment plan will include collaborative data from the community stakeholders, OLA and CPS.

Stronger Families Together Continued:

Number of Foster Homes vs. Children in Care- As of 05/31/2025

Region	# of Foster Homes	# of Children in Care (does not include Trial Reunification)	# of Children in Care excluding T.R/Group/Residential/Independent Living	# of Children in Kinship Care (%) *Kinship + Foster Family Rel + Foster Family Fictive)	# of children in Licensed Kinship Care (%) *Foster Family Rel + Foster Family Fictive)	
Black Hills Region	168	551	1,492	212 (38%)	47 (9%)	3.3 times as many children as foster homes
Region 3	54	170	142	61 (36%)	10 (6%)	3.1 times as many children as foster homes
Region 4	32	152	128	15 (10%)	5 (3%)	4.8 times as many children as foster homes

Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children

Refer to the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding Permanency Outcome 2.

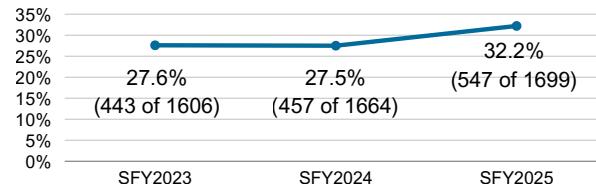
Analysis of Data:

In Round 3 2016 CFSR, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Permanency Outcome 2.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, Youth with Lived Experience were surveyed and provided information regarding their ability to maintain connections while in foster care. 83% (66 of 80) of youth reported they had the opportunity to maintain meaningful relationships with friends, family, and important people in their life.

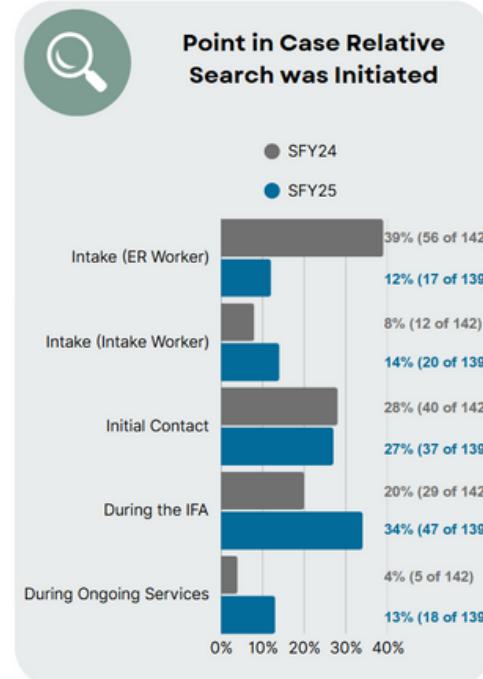
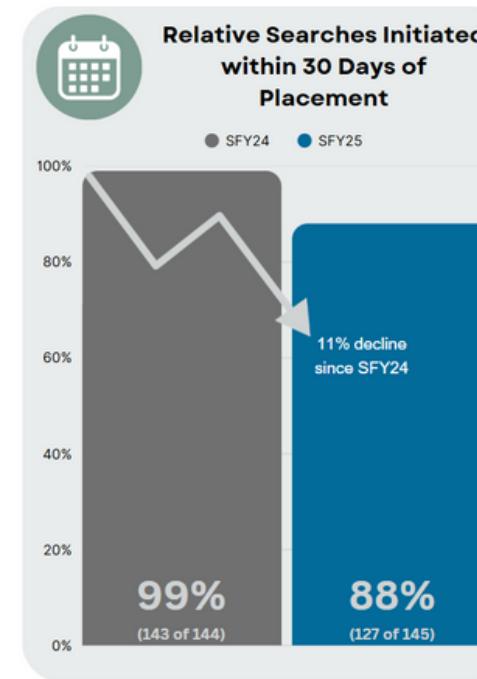
As of May 31, 2025, 32.2% (547 of 1699) of children in care are placed in kinship care. (Data Source: FACIS Report) South Dakota is focused on placing children in kinship care and has seen positive improvements since SFY2023:

Children Placed in Kinship Care

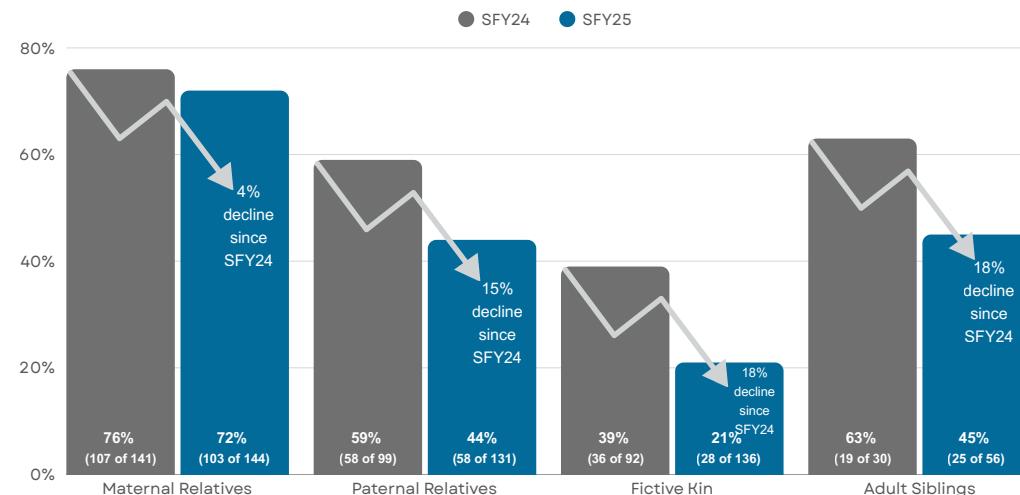


In State Fiscal Year 2025, a Kinship Fidelity Review was completed by the Continuous Quality Improvement Team. One hundred forty-five children who entered care in State Fiscal Year 2024, had been in care for 6+ months, and were not initially placed in kinship care were reviewed. Results from this fidelity review can be found below:

Results from this fidelity review can be found below:



Concerted Efforts Made within First 60 Days to Identify All Identified Living Relatives



The results from the Kinship Fidelity Review were reviewed by the CQI Team and Permanency Program Specialist. Although areas needing improvement were identified based on this fidelity review, the review is solely based on documentation. In order to reflect an accurate assessment, when South Dakota receives the Final Report from Round 4 CFSR, the fidelity review results will be analyzed in conjunction to the Round 4 CFSR results. This combined analysis will help distinguish between true practice gaps and instances where improvements are primarily needed in documentation. The state has already taken action in State Fiscal Year 2025 to strengthen relative placement and these efforts are outlined within this outcome section.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for foundational information regarding initiatives to support Permanency Outcome 2 such as Relative Engagement and Support, Family Time, and Stronger Families Together: Birth Family. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding these initiatives can be found below.

Kinship South Dakota: During State Fiscal Year 2025, the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Child Protection Services (CPS) advanced the implementation of the Kinship South Dakota initiative, a kinship navigator program designed to support kinship caregivers across the state, regardless of tribal or state CPS involvement. Through a contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS), a full-time kinship navigator was deployed to provide individualized support, conduct needs assessments, connect families with community resources, and offer ongoing advocacy to help kinship caregivers overcome barriers and maintain stable placements for children. The state plans to continue evaluating and enhancing Kinship South Dakota as a potential IV-E Kinship Navigator Program once additional program models receive a designation of well-supported on the Title IVE Clearinghouse. Reference Kinship Navigator Funding (Title IV-B, Subpart II) section for more information regarding Kinship South Dakota.

To promote awareness and engagement, DSS Communications issued a press release in September 2024 highlighting the program, and Kinship South Dakota was formally recognized in a proclamation signed by Governor Kristi Noem for Kinship Appreciation Month. The program was also featured at key outreach events, including the Foster Fest recruitment event in Pierre and the Community Response to Child Abuse Conference in Sioux Falls, where information and referral materials were distributed to child welfare professionals and caregivers.

In January 2025, Kinship South Dakota participated in the 2025 Children's Day at the Capitol, further raising visibility among legislators, advocates, and the public. Additionally, efforts to expand collaboration were underway, with outreach initiated to all nine tribal nations and local CPS offices across South Dakota to build relationships and schedule informational presentations. These efforts laid a strong foundation for continued growth and impact of the program in State Fiscal Year 2026.

Family Time: A fidelity review tool is currently being created collaboratively by the permanency program specialist and CQI Program Specialists. Once the tool is complete, the CQI team will conduct a fidelity review of family time services being provided to the children and families being served by the agency. The Supervisor Advisory Group (SAG) along with the support of the CQI Team, will review the findings of the fidelity reviews and make recommendations to the Permanency Program Specialist and CQI Core on any modifications to the policy to better support frequency and quality family time.

Relative Engagement and Support:

Relative caregivers were invited to join a webinar in November to learn more about adoption permanency options in South Dakota.

Relative Engagement and Support Continued:

Kinship Workgroup: The Kinship Workgroup continued to meet on a monthly basis during State Fiscal Year 2025 to review policy and practice to support kinship families.

Kinship Licensing Standards: During State Fiscal Year 2025, CPS partnered with the Office of Licensing & Accreditation (OLA) and the Kinship Workgroup to develop and implement kin-specific foster care licensing and adoption approval standards aimed at reducing barriers for kinship families. These revised standards are designed to expedite the licensure process, increase access to Foster Care Maintenance Payments, and provide kinship caregivers with the same level of financial support as non-relative foster families once licensed.

The updated rules were formally adopted by the Interim Legislative Rules Committee on May 6, 2025, and went into effect on June 2, 2025, following an amendment to the South Dakota Administrative Rule. Notable changes include the elimination of the physical exam requirement—while still allowing the licensing agency to request medical or psychological records if needed—the removal of the 30-hour preservice training requirement in favor of caregiver-specific training recommendations, a lowered minimum licensing age from 21 to 19, and more flexible standards for capacity and sleeping arrangements. Specifically, the number of children placed in a home will be assessed individually, and room-sharing will be permitted without strict age or sex restrictions, based on agency approval.

In May 2025, CPS also submitted a IV-E Plan Amendment to allow the use of IV-E funding for eligible youth and caregivers under the new kinship standards. These collective efforts reflect South Dakota's commitment to ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children by strengthening support for kinship caregivers and helping maintain family placements.

Fidelity Review: The CQI Team completes annual case review that looks at if the fidelity to the relative search policy is followed. The Kinship Workgroup along with the support of the CQI Team reviews the findings of the fidelity reviews and makes recommendations to the Permanency Program Specialist and CQI Core on any modifications to the policy to better support quality and sufficient relative searching. Refer to Analysis of Data for fidelity review results.

Placement with Siblings: Child Protection Services (CPS) prioritizes placing siblings together when they enter foster care. To support this goal, the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team has been actively gathering data, conducting fidelity reviews, and identifying trends to inform the development of a standardized approach and policy to guide sibling placements.

During State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025, CQI Program Specialists participated in monthly split sibling meetings across Regions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. These meetings aimed to identify barriers to sibling placements, analyze emerging trends, and highlight areas for improvement. In collaboration with Black Hills Regional Managers, the CQI team is preparing to launch similar meetings in the Black Hills Region starting in June 2025. With this addition, split sibling meetings will be active statewide.

In May 2025, a split sibling fidelity review was conducted to assess regional and statewide practices and to pinpoint opportunities for policy and practice enhancements. Building on these findings, the CQI team and the Permanency Program Specialist will, in SFY 2026, analyze the review results and begin drafting comprehensive policy. This policy will include clearly defined expectations for split sibling meetings to ensure consistent practice across all regions.

Stronger Families Together: Birth Family: Stronger Families Together is described in Permanency Outcome 1 as a way to support placement stability through recruitment and accurate placement matching. However, this initiative also has a component that supports birth families and reunifications. The Stronger Families Together recruitment messaging purposely recruits foster families who are willing to provide care and support to the children in foster care and their birth families, to partner in reunification efforts. When the foster families are involved in wrap services, this can also provide additional support to the birth families to assist them in pre and post reunification.

A core component of SFT recruitment messaging is the intentional effort to identify and engage foster families who are not only willing to care for children in foster care, but who are also committed to supporting the children's birth families. These foster families are encouraged to partner in reunification efforts and, when possible, participate in wraparound services that provide critical support to birth families both before and after reunification.

South Dakota Kids Belong (SDKB), a key SFT partner, continues to expand and strengthen support services not only for foster and kinship families, but for birth families as well. SDKB's wraparound services are designed to alleviate barriers that birth families may experience during the reunification process. For example, wrap families may serve as safety plan providers, help with transportation, provide occasional child care, prepare meals, or assist with other needs identified in the reunification process.

A key partner in these efforts is Open Bible Church in Rapid City, a leader in community-based support. For more information about their wraparound model, visit: <https://openbiblrc.org/wrap/>. As of May 31, 2025, there are 18 Foster Friendly Churches across South Dakota. To be designated as Foster Friendly, churches must meet three best practices:

- Provide trauma-awareness training for staff and volunteers who work with children and youth.
- Teach in a main gathering about God's heart for vulnerable children and families, while offering ways for the congregation to respond.
- Establish an ongoing support ministry for foster and kinship families, such as wraparound services, support groups, or respite events like "Foster Parents' Night Out."

This faith-based model equips congregations to better understand and respond to the behavioral and relational needs of children in care, while also building a community of support around foster, kinship, and birth families.

For instance, in May 2025, Open Bible Church hosted Hope for the Journey, a two-day conference based on the Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI®) framework. The event was offered at no cost and included free childcare, providing caregivers, church leaders, and professionals with practical tools to build trust and connection with children and youth in and out of care. The conference drew 50 RSVPs and 30 attendees. Importantly, their outreach extended beyond their congregation to include participants from other churches, foster and kinship caregivers, and birth families. Plans are already underway to offer this training again in the future.

Through continued partnership and wraparound engagement, Stronger Families Together and SDKB are fostering a statewide culture that embraces family-centered care, enhances placement stability, and supports successful reunifications.

Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs

Refer to the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding Well-Being Outcome 1.

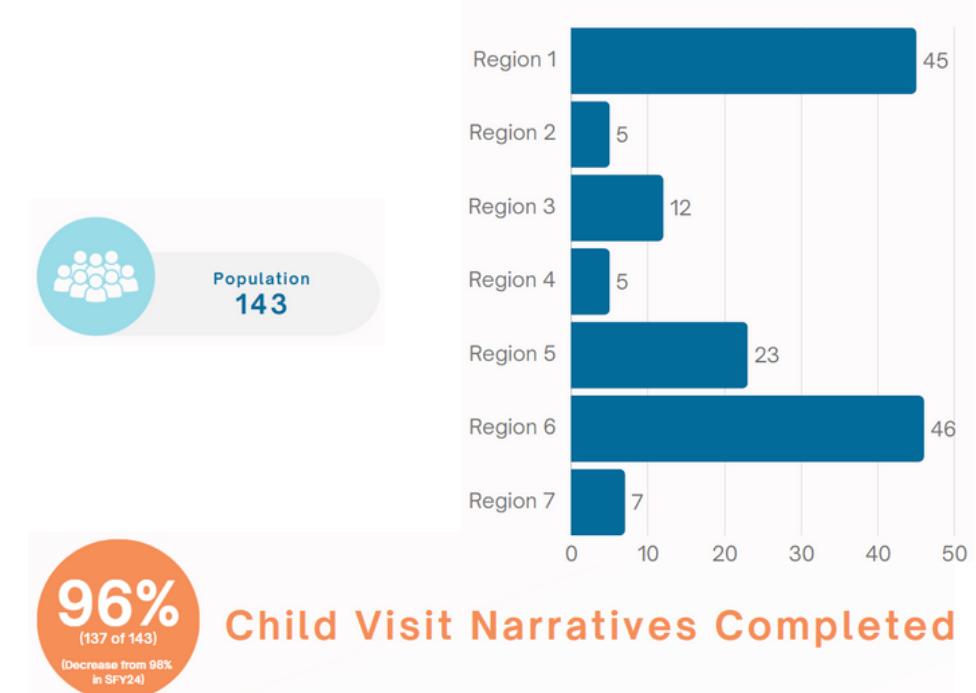
Analysis of Data:

In Round 3 2016 CFSR, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Well-Being Outcome 1.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, a Continuous Quality Improvement Program Specialist began oversight of the Caseworker Visits Report to ensure accurate data entries. The Caseworker Visit Report was analyzed on a weekly basis to identify inaccurate entries, notify workers of missing data, and identify regional and statewide trends. In Federal Fiscal Year 2025 as of May 21, 2025, 93% (11,993 of 12,893) of case worker visits occurred with children and 93% (11,175 of 11,993) of these visits occurred in the child's residence.

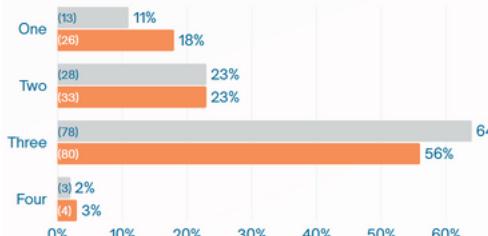
In State Fiscal Year 2025, Youth with Lived Experiences were surveyed and provided feedback regarding their case plan. Refer to Case Review System for specific information regarding this survey.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, the CQI Team conducted a case review of youth who had been in care for at least 60 days and had an initial child case plan completed between January and June 2024. A sample size calculator was used to ensure a 95% confidence level with a 6% margin of error. This review occurred in August 2024 and was strictly a document review that did not take into consideration input from youth, parents, or caseworkers. Statewide findings of the fidelity review are presented below:



Number of Months of Narrative Reviewed:

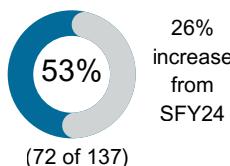
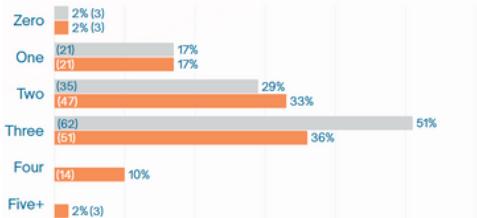
● SFY24 (Denominator: 121) ● SFY25 (Denominator: 143)



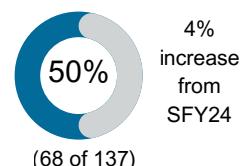
Number of Narratives Completed:

● SFY24 (Denominator: 121)

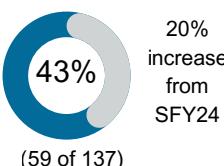
● SFY25 (Denominator: 143)



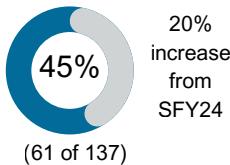
Safety Tab contains sufficient information to support a quality safety assessment of the child



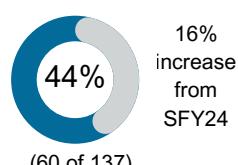
Placement Tab contains sufficient information to support quality conversations with the placement resources to discuss placement stability and what their needs are to care for the child



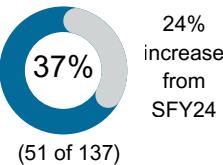
Medical Tab contains sufficient information to support quality conversation with the child and placement resource about the child's medical strengths and needs and services



Educational/Developmental Tab contains sufficient information to support quality conversations with the child and placement resource about the child's educational/developmental strengths and needs and services



Mental Health Tab contains sufficient information to support quality conversations with the child and placement resource about the child's mental health strengths and needs and services



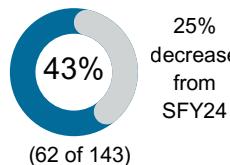
Connection Tab contains sufficient information to support quality conversations with the child and placement resource about the child's connections

1%
decrease
from
SFY24

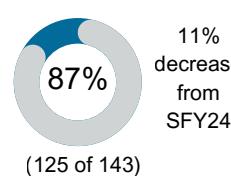


Permanency Tab contains sufficient information to support quality conversations with the child and placement resource about the child's permanency goals

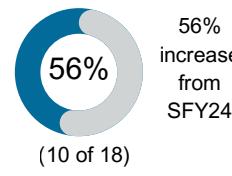
CHILD CASE PLAN



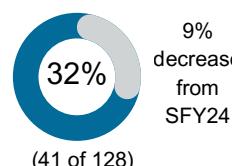
Strengths description contains sufficient information regarding the child's overall strengths in the areas of medical, mental health, development, education, social, and culture



Child has identified needs

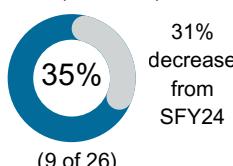


The strength section supports the child not having needs

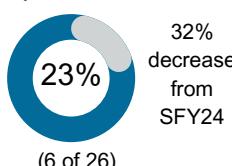


Sufficient needs statement

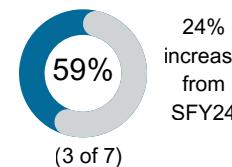
18% (26 of 143) of children were 14 years or older



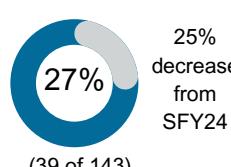
ILS Strength Section has sufficient information regarding the child's Independent Living Skills



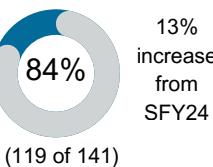
ILS Needs Section describes areas of need in regard to Independent Living Skills



Youth with siblings who have a sufficient plan to support all sibling connections, including siblings not in care

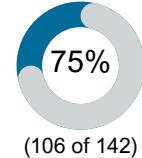


Sufficient plan to support lifelong connections



Least restrictive/proximity section contains sufficient information to explain why the type of placement was chosen to meet the child's needs

5%
increase
from
SFY24



Youth with siblings who have a sufficient plan to support all sibling connections, including siblings not in care

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for foundational information regarding Well-Being Outcome 1 such as Parent Collaboration, Fidelity Reviews, Wrap Around Services to Foster Families, and Business Partnerships. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding these initiatives can be found below.

Child Caseworker Visits:

During State Fiscal Year 2025, the Supervisor Advisory Group analyzed child caseworker visit data, identified trends, and presented their findings at a Supervisor Management Team meeting. Through this data analysis, it was determined that there was a need for revised policy to ensure children were being seen on a monthly basis. In response, the group reviewed the existing caseworker visit policy and made enhancements to include clearer guidance on oversight responsibilities at all levels—Family Services Specialist, Supervisor, Regional Manager, and State Office—as well as procedures for secondary worker assignments. The enhanced policy was introduced at a weekly Management Team meeting, allowing Program Specialists and Regional Managers to provide feedback. In May 2025, the revised policy was formally presented at a Supervisor Management Team meeting. Staff were informed of the updates through a webinar held on June 17, 2025, and the revised policy is set to take effect on July 1, 2025. In State Fiscal Year 2026, the CQI Program Specialist will continue to review monthly caseworker visit reports from FACIS to identify trends. In addition, an annual fidelity review will be completed to ensure staff are adhering to policy and practice expectations.

Parent Caseworker Visits:

Beginning in April 2025, the Supervisor Advisory Group began to analyze data related to parent caseworker visits. The group is in their beginning stages of the analysis and has plans in State Fiscal Year to further analyze data, identify trends, and present data to the Supervisor and Management Team. Following these steps, policy will be revised to support enhancements to practice in order to achieve positive outcomes. In State Fiscal Year 2026 the CQI Program Specialist will continue to review monthly caseworker visit reports from FACIS to identify trends. In addition, an annual fidelity review will be completed to ensure staff are adhering to policy and practice expectations.

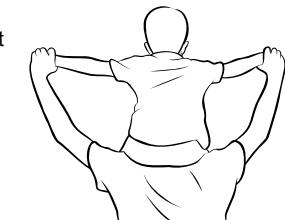
Protective Capacity Assessment Enhancements: In State Fiscal Year 2025, South Dakota has partnered with ACTION for Child Protection to enhance policy and practice surrounding the Protective Capacity Assessment. ACTION has provided suggestive materials to the State and a Comprehensive Safety Interventions Workgroup has been formed to review the provided materials. A recommendation from ACTION emphasizes Change Focused Contact. This type of contact aims to focus on enhanced collaboration with parents and caregivers in the case planning process. The workgroup began meeting in April 2025 to compare materials provided by ACTION for Child Protection to current policy and training curriculum to determine where enhancements should be made. In State Fiscal Year 2026, enhancements to policy, training curriculum, and documents will be rolled out to staff. Fidelity reviews will continue to be implemented as well as regional reviews to monitor outcomes.

Parent Collaboration: CPS has extensive efforts to collaborate with the caregivers and parents involved in the child welfare system within South Dakota. CPS's partnership with parent education partners throughout the state allow for parent input to be provided to enhance the parenting education programs. This feedback is provided through Peer Reviews which are held, at minimum, biannually for each parenting education site. There are not set months in which the peer reviews take place. Each year a schedule is developed based on the parenting education partners' preferences, availability, geography, and is also impacted by organizational changes. The feedback provided includes information about the quality of the course, instructor delivery, and the needs and strengths for their communities. This provides opportunities to highlight preventative measures to further prevention services available not only through CPS, but also the Division of Child Care, which has also focused on prevention and parenting education for the birth to age 3 years range.

A parents with lived experiences survey was distributed via Survey Monkey and paper copies to parents who have worked with CPS, regardless of their outcome, in the past year. The survey was open for two months. In total, 1,066 parents were sent the survey, and 74 individuals participated in the survey. The survey results indicate that over half of respondents expressed positive perceptions of their caseworkers across several key areas. Specifically, a majority agreed or strongly agreed that their caseworker listens attentively and demonstrates a genuine effort to understand their family's unique circumstances. Respondents also highlighted that caseworkers generally follow through on their commitments, recognize strengths within the family related to the care, safety, and well-being of their children, and show genuine care for the family while discussing necessary changes to ensure children's safety at home. Refer to Service Array and Resource Development for the results of the survey.

The CQI Team reviews the results of the parent surveys to target areas of strengths and needs both statewide and regionally. The results are shared with all levels of CPS staff to further efforts of quality parental engagement and collaboration.

CPS has targeted efforts for father engagement. CPS has been able to add four male parenting education trainers. CPS acknowledges that being able to have fathers instruct the parenting education to other fathers will optimize engagement and outcomes for the fathers working with CPS. The individuals in the education courses are not only receiving the parenting curriculum but are also being provided with a positive male role model for fatherhood. CPS works to expand fatherhood curricula and programming available, and champions of fatherhood are continually sought to drive and maintain momentum on this focus area.



CBCAP funding is supporting the consultant work that the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment is delivering this next year. The overall goals are to plan and deliver fatherhood-focused parenting education to fathers and male caregivers regionally throughout the state, and to identify champions of fatherhood who can support these efforts formally and informally to help improve overall promotion of fatherhood in the state.

CPS also partners with the tribal stakeholders to ensure that parent and caregiver input from all communities are being sought. CPS has regular meetings and communication with tribal partners where feedback is communicated with CPS staff and leadership. This feedback is crucial to ensuring CPS preserves and grows the relationships with our tribal communities and uses the feedback to enhance practices and focus on prevention techniques.

Further information regarding parenting education can be found in Section V. Service Descriptions

The Fatherhood Initiative: The mission of the Fatherhood Project is to enhance the awareness with the Family Services Specialist of the importance of fathers in the lives of their children. In the first year of the project, CPS focused efforts on educating and skill building to staff regarding engagement with fathers.

During State Fiscal Year 2025, progress was made toward advancing the Fatherhood Initiative within South Dakota's Department of Social Services (DSS), with an emphasis on engaging fathers in prevention services and parenting education. Early in the fiscal year, two fathers participated in Common Sense Parenting training with Boys Town in Mitchell—one of whom leads fatherhood efforts for the Black Hills Special Services Cooperative and another affiliated with the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. These initial efforts led to ongoing exploration of collaboration opportunities.

In parallel, the agency purchased two father-focused curricula—24/7 Dad and InsideOut Dad—with the latter tailored for corrections-involved fathers. These programs can be implemented by identified local champions to broaden the reach of fatherhood education efforts. Training options are being explored with the champions of fatherhood identified through the work with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment. Additionally, planning was initiated for a Fatherhood Symposium in collaboration with the Great Plains Tribal Leaders Health Board, though this effort was paused due to federal funding uncertainties.

By the end of the fiscal year, DSS continued to explore alternative strategies to build local capacity, including engaging existing parenting education partners to identify and recruit fatherhood champions. In support of broader public awareness, a social media campaign was initiated in collaboration with DSS Communications to coincide with Mother's Day and Father's Day, aiming to elevate the visibility and importance of father engagement statewide.

Efforts to strengthen the Fatherhood Initiative will continue into State Fiscal Year 2026, with a focus on building sustainable partnerships and expanding access to evidence-based programming for fathers across South Dakota.

Business Partnerships: Through the Foster Friendly App, South Dakota Kids Belong (SDKB) connects foster families with businesses and community partners that offer reduced or free products and services in support of children in foster care. SDKB has revised its tracking approach and no longer reports the number of non-profit agencies separately. Instead, this data is now categorized under 'Community Support,' which includes nonprofit organizations, businesses, programs, and churches that provide a variety of services to foster families.

Examples of Community Support include Foster Friendly Churches, internship opportunities for youth in foster care, and trauma-informed schools such as the Spearfish School District. Participating businesses, non-profits, and community organizations are listed on both the SDKB and Stronger Families Together websites, as well as in the Foster Friendly App.

As of May 31, 2025, there are 324 Foster Friendly businesses and 46 Community Support partners, and 55 non-profits statewide. For more information, please reference the America's Kids Belong video highlighting a Foster Friendly business in South Dakota.

WRAP Around Services: South Dakota Kids Belong (SDKB) continues to collaborate closely with faith communities across the state—including Sturgis, Deadwood, Hot Springs, Custer, Rapid City, Pierre, Aberdeen, Platte, Freeman, Yankton, Vermillion, and Sioux Falls—to provide wraparound support services to foster families. As of May 31, 2025, there are 38 active wrap teams in place. These teams offer direct, practical support such as home or vehicle repair, meal preparation, childcare, mentorship, grocery shopping and delivery, lawn care, and emotional encouragement, typically provided through the foster family's church or community.

- SDKB employs a dedicated State Wrap Director with extensive experience organizing and coordinating wraparound services for foster families.
- Additionally, SDKB has a Foster Friendly Community Catalyst located in the Black Hills—one of three priority areas in the state identified as having the greatest need for foster family recruitment and retention.
- While many churches do not yet have formal wraparound teams, several have been recognized as Foster Friendly Faith Communities in the Foster Friendly App. To receive this designation, churches must meet three best practices:
 - Offer trauma-awareness training for staff and volunteers working with children and youth.
 - Teach in a main gathering about God's heart for vulnerable children and families, while providing an opportunity for community response.
 - Establish an ongoing support ministry for kinship and foster families, such as wraparound programs, support groups, or events like "Foster Parents' Night Out."

For an example of these efforts in action, please reference the America's Kids Belong video highlighting a South Dakota foster family.



Motivational Interviewing: South Dakota Implemented Motivational Interviewing to address the need for enhancement in Family Services Specialist's skill development regarding engaging resistive parents who comply with Child Protection Services intervention but do not make the necessary behavioral changes. The PCA process emphasizes engagement of parents as a critical component of intervention by using a collaborative approach with parents and focusing on self-determination. The PCA measures progress through behavior change rather than compliance. The Motivational Interviewing training was provided to enhance Family Services Specialist's ability to engage parents in the protective capacity process, which is driven through caregiver self-determination and measures progress based on behavioral change.

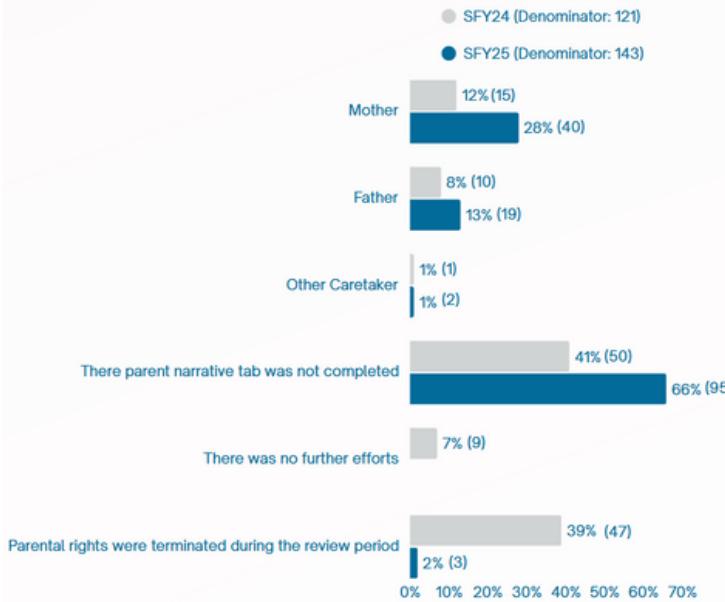
It can help decrease parent's resistance to intervention and is intended to strengthen the parent's own motivation and commitment to change.

When Motivational Interviewing (MI) was initially implemented, Supervisor's lack of confidence to train their staff, even after completing MI Level I and MI Level II, was identified as an area of development and continues to be monitored and measured. An MI trainer completed Zoom training once a month, lasting approximately 20 minutes. There were specific MI adherent exercises and coaching offered for Supervisors statewide which they then would repeat with their staff. Since implementation of the monthly activities, Supervisors have reported an appreciation for the guidance and focus. The first training occurred January 6, 2020, and ongoing trainings have subsequently occurred on the first Monday of each month in 2020. Towards the end of 2020 the training day and time was reevaluated and as a result, the MI trainings were moved to the first Wednesday of each month starting February 2021.

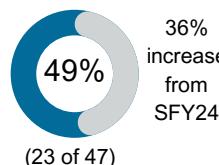
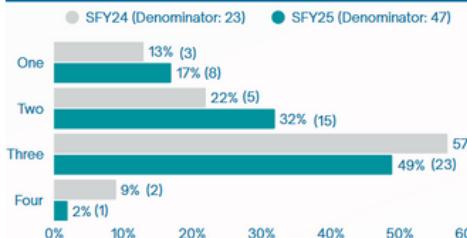
Motivational Interviewing Continued: This change was made due to other recurring meetings scheduled on Monday's. Supervisors found value in having monthly trainings as they appreciated the structure and organization of the monthly meetings. Each monthly activity was stored in One Note and is dedicated towards the MI monthly training for the Supervisors who were not able to attend the Zoom training. Supervisors found the activities were easy to follow if they were not able to attend the meeting and relied on One Note for the information. In January 2022, the MI monthly meetings were discontinued as Supervisors reported more confidence in their ability to train and enhance staff's understanding of motivational interviewing from the changes in prior years with implementation of Motivational Interviewing and ongoing skill-building techniques. MI training activities can be made available as needed/requested. A team of MI trainers performs training of newly hired staff twice yearly or as requested. These trainings were conducted via Zoom, however, in 2024 these trainings returned to being delivered in person. MI trainings will continue to be delivered in person to enhance practice, relationship-building, and confidence. CPS is exploring securing a contractor to lead the agency's Motivational Interviewing practice including integration with model fidelity and ongoing skill building.

Fidelity Review: In August 2024, the Continuous Quality Improvement Team conducted a child/parent caseworker visit fidelity review. Part of this review looked at parent caseworker visit narratives to determine the sufficiency of narratives and information that was missing. This fidelity review was solely based on narration and did not account for interviews with caseworkers and/or parents. In comparison to the positive data from Round 4 CFSR, the fidelity review reflects the need for quality documentation of caseworker visits with parents. In State Fiscal Year 2026, implementation of enhanced Protective Capacity Assessment policy and practice will be monitored to assess the positive impact on quality documentation. Statewide results of this fidelity review can be found below:

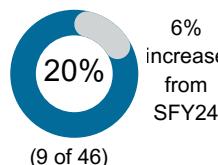
Parent/Caregiver Narrative Completed On:



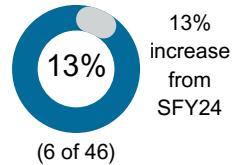
Number of Months of Narrative Reviewed:



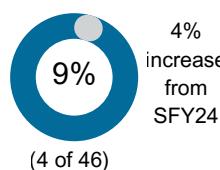
Case Plan Tab contains sufficient information regarding protective capacities, services, and barriers to understand the status of the parent's progress



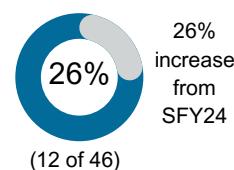
Visitation/Relationship Tab contains sufficient information regarding the frequency and quality of parent/child visits



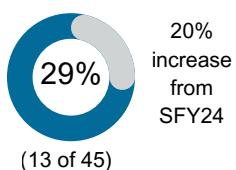
Visitation/Relationship Tab contains sufficient information promoting the parent/child relationship other than visitation



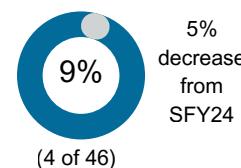
Supports/Safety Planning Tab contains sufficient information regarding quality conversations about supports/safety plan providers for the parents



Child Case Plan/Connections Tab contains sufficient information there are quality conversations with the parent about the child's needs (medical, mental health, education, connections or other needs)

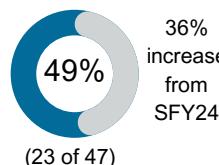
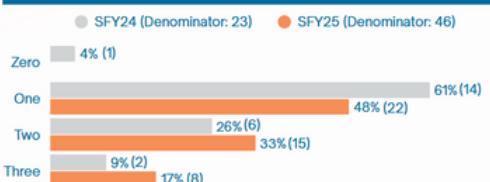


Permanency/Concurrent Planning/Relative Tab reflects quality conversations about the child's primary permanency goal

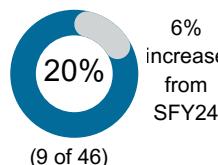


Permanency/Concurrent Planning/Relative Tab reflects quality conversations about the child's primary permanency goal

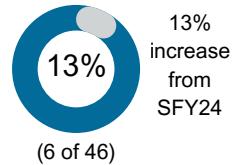
Number of Parent Narratives Completed:



Case Plan Tab contains sufficient information regarding protective capacities, services, and barriers to understand the status of the parent's progress



Visitation/Relationship Tab contains sufficient information regarding the frequency and quality of parent/child visits



Visitation/Relationship Tab contains sufficient information promoting the parent/child relationship other than visitation

Parenting Education:

Refer to Section V. Update on the Service Descriptions for further information regarding Parenting Education.

Ongoing fidelity reviews of the credit tracking management process are completed by the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team annually.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, the Education Credit Tracking Fidelity Review Tool was created and will be utilized when the fidelity review is completed by the CQI team in SFY26.

Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs

Refer to the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding Well-Being Outcome 2.

Analysis of Data:

In Round 3 2016 CFSR, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Well-Being Outcome 2.

CPS developed initiatives to improve needs and services for youth. These initiatives include:

The Independent Living Program Specialist incorporates improvements to policy and practice of the management (tracking and planning) of educational credits for youth in care.

The ILS Advisory Workgroup continues to discuss information collected in the ILS screen and transition survey when children leave foster care to make updated recommendations if necessary. Data collected from this reporting period indicates the following:

- 73% (36 of 49) of youth are attending school when they transition from care.
- 36% (14 of 39) of youth surveyed had completed the 11th grade.
- 16% (7 of 43) of youth surveyed had completed high school.
- 94% (32 of 34) of those youth who have not graduated stated it was a goal of theirs to graduate.
- 76% (35 of 46) of youth stated it was a goal to continue their education after high school.

At the end of SFY25, the Independent Living Program Specialist, in collaboration with the Community Resource Person (CRP) Team, initiated a comprehensive review and revision of the Independent Living Services (ILS) section of the CPS Program Policy Manual. The purpose of these updates is to ensure that policies and procedures are clearly defined, consistent, and supportive of the needs of youth preparing to transition from foster care to adulthood. This work aims to eliminate ambiguity, improve practice, and reduce barriers that youth may face when accessing ILS supports.

To date, several meetings have been held to discuss needed amendments, clarify processes, and ensure alignment with federal Chafee guidelines and best practices. In SFY26, this work will continue with a strong emphasis on youth voice. Members of the Young Voices advocacy group have been invited to review the updated policy and related ILS documents. Their lived experience and personal insights are critical to shaping policies that are youth-centered, practical, and effective. Their feedback will help ensure that the policy not only meets administrative needs but also supports meaningful, real-world outcomes for youth in care.

The review process has been collaborative, involving input from CRPs who work directly with youth, as well as planned engagement from youth themselves. Moving into SFY26, the goal is to finalize policy updates and incorporate them into staff training and resource materials, with a continued commitment to engaging both field staff and youth as essential partners in the development and implementation of ILS policies.

Provide education to staff and residential facilities on the management of educational credits for youth in care completed by the Independent Living Program Specialist and Group and Residential Program Specialist on an ongoing basis.

During SFY25, the Independent Living Program Specialist provided ongoing education to CPS staff, tribal partners, and others on the importance of managing educational credits for youth in foster care. Presentations were delivered through the Permanency and Wellbeing Training series, an individual CPS office session, and a collaborative event with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment, where educational staff were also present. These trainings emphasized how foster youth often lose school credits due to placement moves and highlighted the importance of keeping youth in their home school districts whenever possible. Staff were encouraged to plan placement changes strategically—ideally at the beginning or end of a semester—to prevent disruption in academic progress. Age Meetings were identified as key opportunities for the youth's team to discuss graduation planning, establish goals if a youth is behind in credits, or explore alternative education options such as GED programs or on-line schooling when necessary. Staff were also informed about the resources available through the Chafee Program, including funding for tutoring, GED testing, books, laptops, computers, and summer school to help youth recover credits and stay on track. Credit recovery services were strongly recommended as a support option when applicable. In SFY26, efforts to support credit management will be further strengthened through increased collaboration with group care and residential providers to ensure academic stability and success for youth in care.

Collaboration with the Department of Education to ensure appropriate services and credit tracking are being provided to youth in care. Child Protection has a representative involved on the South Dakota Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities to assist with this collaboration. CPS has a designated Child Welfare representative in State Office to work with the Department of Education.

Child Protection Services (CPS) collaborates with the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) to ensure appropriate educational services, credit tracking, and school stability are provided to youth in foster care. CPS has a designated Child Welfare representative at the State Office level who works closely with DOE to support these efforts. Additionally, CPS maintains representation on the South Dakota Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities to help identify and address barriers impacting educational outcomes for youth in care.

In May 2025, the Permanency Program Specialist provided training to Title I school district staff across South Dakota. The training focused on the importance of educational stability for children in foster care and included best practices and recommendations to help school districts meet the unique needs of these students. Topics included maintaining school of origin placements when appropriate, facilitating smooth school transitions, and improving communication between child welfare and educational agencies.

Collaboration with the Department of Education Continued: CPS recognizes the impact of school mobility and credit loss on foster youth and has included questions in the education fidelity review to capture data related to these areas. In SFY26, the CQI team will conduct the educational credit fidelity review and relevant information will be shared with the Department of Education. In SFY26, CPS plans to engage Young Voices, the youth advisory group, to share their lived experiences with DOE leadership. This presentation will highlight barriers foster youth face in maintaining academic progress due to frequent placement and school changes. The goal is to build greater awareness and identify strategies, including improved credit tracking and access to career exploration tools to support the long-term academic success of youth in foster care.

Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs

Refer to the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding Well-Being Outcome 2.

Analysis of Data:

In Round 3 2016 CFSR, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Well-Being Outcome 3.



CPS' plan regarding physical and behavioral/mental health performance is outlined in the Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan; reference this plan for further details.

Psychotropic Medication Fidelity Review: A Psychotropic Medication Fidelity Review was scheduled to occur in SFY2025, however the outside consultant who provides South Dakota with the sample did not provide the information in a timely manner to complete the review prior to June 30, 2025. South Dakota has received the sample as of June 2025 and will complete this review in SFY2026. The CQI team in conjunction with the Higher Level of Care Program Specialist revised the fidelity review tool to include questions regarding adherence to oversight policy. Data and trends will be collected in SFY2026 when the fidelity review is completed.

The following areas will be assessed in the 2026 review:

- Placement settings
- Ages
- Diagnoses
- Assessments to support:
 - Medication
 - Diagnosis
 - Need for medication
- Current and past medications prescribed
- Medication oversight
- Consent for medication

Psychotropic Medication Fidelity Review Continued: As stated previously, the Child Case Plan contains the current status of the child's mental health. The Child Case Plan is reviewed by the Supervisor with the Family Services Specialist for accurate completion and quality data. The following items are included for focus of the Mental Health section:

- Dates of evaluations and provider names
- Current diagnoses
- Current medications and therapist
- Strengths and challenges
- Progress

Psychotropic Medication- Regional Review: CPS also monitors proper oversight on psychotropic medications, sufficient assessment of mental health needs and services through Regional Reviews. Regional Reviews are completed one time a year in each region in South Dakota. In SFY2025, South Dakota completed Round 4 Child and Family Services Review, therefore regional reviews did not occur. South Dakota is awaiting the Final Report to determine performance as it relates to oversight of psychotropic medications and sufficient assessment of mental health needs and services. Regional Reviews will resume in SFY2026.

Well-Child Check Fidelity Review: Medicaid provided Child Protection Services with a list of clients who did not have a billed Well-Child Exam in 2024. A review of these clients was completed to determine whether a Well-Child Exam was completed. From January 1, 2024 to November 30, 2024 there were 1,720 children in care at least 30 days who required a well-child exam. Of those children, 1,683 were seen by a medical professional and met the criteria for having a well-child exam. These numbers equate to 98% of children in care for at least 30 days from January 1, 2024 to November 30, 2024, had a well-child exam completed.

Systemic Factors

Information System

Overview

Child Protection Services' Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) is called Family and Child Information System (FACIS). FACIS is a statewide information system developed and maintained to collect and report data about children, family and resources served by South Dakota CPS. During the 2016 Child and Family Services Reviews; the CPS information system was rated as a strength and found in substantial conformity. CPS included more detail for the comprehensive data quality plan in accordance with CCWIS requirements. The Data Quality Plan details were included with the FFY 2025 APDU completed on August 30, 2024.

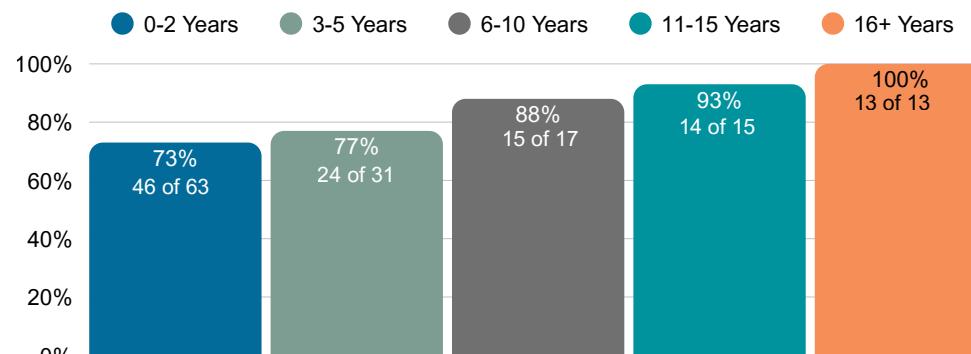
In Round 3 Child and Family Services Review, South Dakota was in substantial conformity with the Information System systemic factor. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to the FACIS Information System.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Statewide Assessment for foundational information regarding South Dakota's Information System. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding the information system can be found below.

Data Management

CPS submits the required Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) and National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) reports on time and meeting compliance. CPS utilized the FACIS data reports to submit SFY25's budget request for funding CPS.

A survey was administered to all field staff in State Fiscal Year 2025. 81% (112 of 139) of staff who completed the staff survey reported that their FACIS training was adequate to complete their job duties. The following staff, by years of service, reported their FACIS training was adequate to complete their job duties: 73% (46 of 63) of staff who have been employed by the agency for 0-2 years, 77% (24 of 31) of staff employed for 3-5 years, 88% (15 of 17) of staff employed for 6-10 years, 93% (14 of 15) of staff employed for 11-15 years, and 100% (13 of 13) of staff employed for 16+ years.



A majority of staff who reported their FACIS training was inadequate to complete their job duties were staff who have been employed for less than 5 years and have less experience with the FACIS system compared to staff who have been employed for more than 5 years. In State Fiscal Year 2025, the FACIS Team, CQI Team, and Learning and Development Manager began discussions to re-implement FACIS training into the Certification Training curriculum for new staff. In-person FACIS training will be fully implemented in State Fiscal Year 2026. Refer to Staff Training Systemic Factor for further information.

Demographic information for individuals contained in a specific abuse/neglect Request for Service are entered in the intake screen at the time of intake. Social Services Production Access (SSPA) is the data base utilized by the Department of Social Services Division of Economic Assistance for determination of SNAP and TANF eligibility. An interface was created in order for intake specialists to gather demographic information about a family when a Request for Service is received.

Preliminary conversations with CPS Leadership and CIP have occurred and will be ongoing regarding the new ICWA AFCARS elements. The new elements were presented during the CIP meeting in May 2025 and continued conversations will occur on an ongoing basis.

Federal Report Submissions

CPS submits compliant Federal reports, which include, the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), NYTD (National Youth in Transition Database) and National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). These reports are submitted on time and with minimal errors noted. South Dakota's did not have a IV-E Review in State Fiscal Year 2025, but is preparing for the upcoming review in April 2026.

The FACIS Team and Management Team members use the appropriate data quality utilities and tools provided to ensure data is accurate. These include using the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) Data Quality, Compliance & Frequency Reports, National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), & National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) portal programs to review data prior to submission. Any data errors found are addressed and corrected wherever possible. With the implementation of AFCARS 2.0, the National Child Welfare Data Management System (NCWDMS) portal was developed. South Dakota has uploaded AFCARS files and submitted the official files beginning with the FFY 2023A reporting period (10/01/2022-03/31/2023). All submissions thus far have been compliant. The FACIS Team and Bureau of Information and Technology (BIT) staff participated in the NCWDMS pilot phase by transmitting and submitting test files. The FACIS Team and BIT staff utilize the compliance and data quality checks to ensure data is accurate and meets data compliance rules.

FACIS Reports

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding FACIS Reports. In SFY25, South Dakota continued to utilize monthly FACIS reports for a variety of initiatives.

FACIS utilizes online caseload compliance reports. These reports are real-time, interactive reports returning results directly from a worker's staff module. These reports alert staff to missing data based on state or federal rules, policy or practice. The SFY25 staff survey indicated 74% (86 of 117) of staff reported to consistently utilize case compliance.

Accurate and Timely Data Entry

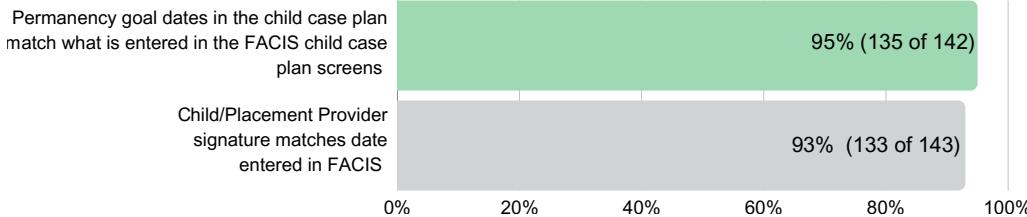
Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context related to accurate and timely data entry.

As part of each fidelity review, elements included in the fidelity review are also reviewed for accuracy within FACIS. An example would be the Case Plan date in FACIS matches the signature date on a case plan.

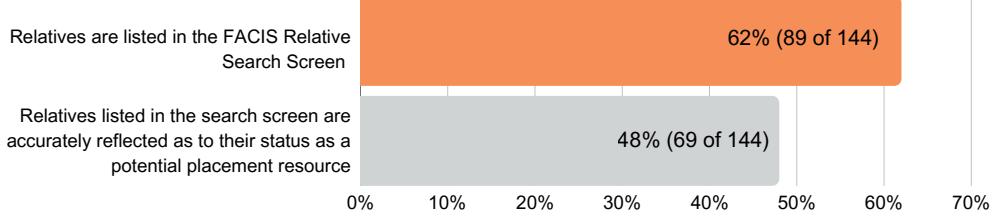
- **Child Case Plan/Caseworker Visits:** The Child/Placement Provider signature matches the date entered in FACIS and the child's permanency goal on their child case plan/evaluation matches what is entered in FACIS

- **Foster Kinship Placement Payment Review:** The payment screen reflects that foster kinship providers are being paid at a minimum the basic foster care rate.

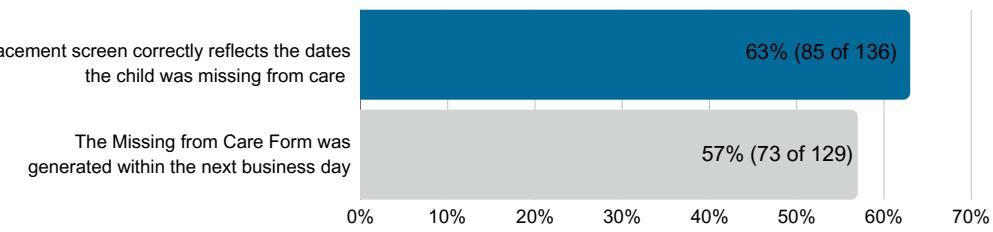
100% 194 clients were reviewed and 194 were in compliance



- **Kinship:** All relatives who were identified within the first 60 days of placement are listed in the Relative Search Screen, all relatives documented in the relative search screen are accurately reflected as to their status as a potential placement resource.



- **Missing from Care:** The placement screen correctly reflects the dates the child was missing from care and the Youth Missing From Care Runaway form is generated in FACIS.



In State Fiscal Year 2026, further data quality checks will be implemented in the following fidelity reviews:

- **Psychotropic Medication:** The consent form for psychotropic medication is in the file for children in group care and residential treatment and diagnosed conditions are accurately coded in the Diagnosed Conditions FACIS screen.
- **ICWA:** Tribal affiliation in FACIS matches documentation in the file, enrollment status in FACIS matches documentation in the file.
- **Child Case Plan/Caseworker Visits:** Education information in the case plan matches the FACIS education screen, narrative information on where the child was seen matches the selection in the FACIS caseworker visit screen.
- **Family Time:** The Family Time Agreement document is generated in FACIS, the mothers and fathers are entered in the biological parent screen, mothers and/or fathers are open for services.
- **Youth Education Credits:** The client's educational credits on their education assessment screen matches educational records and the child case plan.

Case reviews rationale statements includes specifics to what is missing to guide staff. CPS gathers additional information during case reviews and staff are afforded an opportunity to correctly enter data. This process occurs during both fidelity and regional reviews. Please see the Quality Assurance section for more details.

Even though South Dakota is meeting the 90% requirement for AFCARS elements, CPS is reviewing NCWDMS and sending data points out to local offices if information is missing. Prior to submission, Program Specialists are reviewing files and reach out to local offices to ensure data is entered correctly and complete before submitting.

CPS Management Team staff, including Program Administrators, Regional Managers, and Program Specialists, review reports in their specific areas for accuracy. For example, the ICWA Program Specialist reviews the ICWA report monthly and works with offices to ensure information is entered timely to be provided to the tribal entities.

As each AFCARS reporting period nears, FACIS Program Specialists run test files to ensure accurate and complete information. FACIS Program Specialists are reviewing those files along with CQI Program Specialists. Information on areas where the percentages are lower but still meeting the 90% requirement are provided to CPS Management Team and/or local offices to ensure data is entered correctly and complete prior to submitting the official AFCARS file. If any data element happens to be below the 90% compliance in a test file, the data points are discussed during weekly CPS Management Team meeting to address the missing information and plan to get the information entered timely.

Preparation of public data requests and internal data quality or fidelity reviews demonstrate the accuracy of data entry related to removal dates, foster care entry dates and exit dates. Further, Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) show these data points are accurate. CPS has not had the removal date, foster care entry date, or exit date conflict with FACIS in a review using the Online Monitoring System (OMS). Reviewers have not notified QA staff that FACIS information is incorrect for these data points.

Since the FACIS system processes payments to providers in addition to supporting reporting, entry and exit dates must be entered timely and accurately. If not, payments would either be made incorrectly or be delayed due to errors.

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In State Fiscal Year 2023, 99.6% (32,744 of 32,865) of Payments were processed correctly due to accurate and timely data entry

Data Source: FACIS Report

CPS develops and implements any needed improvements and modifications to FACIS to support Federal and State reporting and support the State's policy and practice. CPS will continue to develop functions in the system for any updates to federal requirements such as AFCARS, NYTD, IV-E Eligibility and funds reconciliation. As South Dakota CPS practice is enhanced in safety, permanency, and well-being, the necessary system changes to support the program are made. The program changes necessary in CPS for best practices will drive system changes. The system will not drive the practice used to deliver services to children and families.

Information System APSR 2026 Update and Planned Activities:

BEES Interface: The new Medicaid Eligibility system BEES was implemented as of March 4th. CPS staff are in daily contact working through errors records.

OLA MIS Interface Project: In State Fiscal Year 2025, progress resumed on the Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA) MIS Interface Project, which had previously been on hold. The goal of this project is to establish a functional interface between the Family and Child Information System (FACIS) and the new OLA Management Information System (MIS). This interface is critical to ensure the accurate and timely exchange of foster and adoptive parent licensing data—including license status, address/location, and demographic details—between the two systems.

After a period of inactivity, the project was formally reinitiated in April 2025. On April 9, representatives from CPS, the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and Outcomes team, and the Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) participated in a restart meeting with OLA. During this meeting, participants reviewed the interface control documents (ICDs) that had been developed in the prior year, which outline the required data elements and interface frequency. CPS and BIT staff began reviewing these ICDs to confirm that all critical system requirements were accurately captured and reflected.

The project has since moved into a planning and requirements validation phase, with additional collaborative meetings scheduled to ensure alignment across teams. Further progress and implementation efforts are anticipated to continue into State Fiscal Year 2026.

Request For Services Module Changes: In State Fiscal Year 2025, the Request for Service Module Changes project advanced significantly, with major updates to FACIS screens and related reporting functions aimed at improving the screening process for service requests. Initial updates were moved to production on June 26, 2024. Following implementation, two minor issues were identified—one associated with the old screening selections and another with the newly implemented options.

The fix for the new options was successfully deployed to production on July 10, and the fix for the old screening selections was moved to the reporting environment, with production deployment planned for the week of July 22. Testing of updated reports to reflect these changes was also initiated, with implementation targeted by the end of July.

By August 2024, updates to several reports had been successfully moved to production, with only a few reports remaining in the final stages of testing. Continued testing and refinement efforts persisted through October and November 2024, although progress on the remaining reports slowed in November due to competing priorities within the agency.

Overall, CPS made key enhancements to the request for service screening process and supporting data systems in FY 2025. Finalization of all report updates is expected to continue into the next fiscal year.

FACIS Template Translation: In State Fiscal Year 2025, the FACIS Template Translation Project made substantial progress toward its goal of making Child Protection Services (CPS) documents accessible in the primary languages of the families being served. The project focused on translating high-priority CPS document templates into five languages: Karen, Nepali, Somali, Spanish, and Swahili.

Early in the fiscal year, key document groups—including Due Process, Independent Living, Initial Family Assessment, Investigation, Legal, and select Placement and Other documents—were translated and moved to production. In July 2024, the project was temporarily put on hold due to delays with the contracted translation service and overlapping system development efforts by the Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA).

By late July, CPS received approval to resume the next group of translations through the previous vendor. In October 2024, those templates moved to production, and CPS began participating in planning for a new translation RFP to support long-term needs. By November, the next set of templates was submitted to BIT (Bureau of Information and Telecommunications) for processing, and additional templates were translated and moved to production in January 2025.

Significant progress was made in March 2025, with 58 translated templates moved to production, enhancing CPS's capacity to communicate with non-English-speaking families across the state. As of April 2025, CPS is evaluating whether additional templates require translation to further support language accessibility.

This project has strengthened CPS's commitment to equitable service delivery by improving communication and understanding between caseworkers and the diverse communities they serve.

Caseload Analysis Project: In State Fiscal Year 2025, the Caseload Analysis Project made steady progress toward improving CPS's ability to evaluate and manage caseworker workload by refining how case data is tracked and reported in the Family and Child Information System (FACIS).

The project began with regular meetings starting in June 2024 and transitioned to bi-monthly meetings in July to accelerate progress. Early efforts focused on reviewing Request for Services (RFS) and ICPC supervision case counts, analyzing current assignment reasons, and exploring how to better distinguish between cases involving in-home services, placement, or out-of-home safety plans without custody. The group also sought to improve data on parents served to more accurately reflect case complexity.

By October 2024, a key system enhancement was implemented: an assignment reason column was added to the staff module, and a corresponding field was added to the client summary screen. This change allows more precise tracking of assignment types. The group agreed to expand this enhancement to the family and resource modules, ensuring consistent and comprehensive data collection across the system.

Although November's meeting was canceled, work resumed in April 2025 with a focus on understanding how to better capture the number of parent case plans per family—a crucial metric for assessing workload and compliance. The workgroup is currently evaluating whether additional FACIS screen modifications are needed or if the existing infrastructure can support this data collection. Overall, the Caseload Analysis Project is advancing toward more nuanced and data-informed workload assessments that will help optimize case assignment, staffing, and service delivery across the CPS system.

RFS Screens Enhancement Project: During State Fiscal Year 2025, significant progress was made on the Request for Service Screens Enhancement Project, aimed at aligning the FACIS (Family and Child Information System) with updates in Child Protection Services (CPS) policy and practice. These changes are designed to support the implementation of the enhanced Comprehensive Safety Intervention model, which strengthens initial family assessments and present danger planning to ensure child safety and improve family outcomes.

In November 2024, the Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) officially released the project for development, beginning updates to the Request for Service Basic screen and templates. These enhancements are critical to capturing new policy elements, including updated present danger and safety planning information. CPS and BIT held collaborative meetings in December 2024 to establish the workflow and lay the groundwork for the technical updates.

Throughout early 2025, BIT continued making system modifications and prepared elements for testing. Although CPS experienced delays in initiating testing due to competing high-priority projects, testing began in April 2025. The Protective Services Program Specialist led these efforts and maintained regular communication with BIT, who remained responsive to questions and enhancement requests. Testing is expected to continue, with further refinements and validations of the updated screens.

This project marks a key step in modernizing the agency's data systems to reflect current safety intervention practices. Phase 1 of this project was completed on May 28, 2025. Phase 2 of this initiative is now in progress and will continue into State Fiscal Year 2026 as CPS completes testing, implements the updates, and ensures system functionality aligns with practice standards.

Banking Detail: In State Fiscal Year 2025, Child Protection Services (CPS) made steady progress on the Banking Detail Project, an initiative to enhance the electronic payment process in FACIS (Family and Child Information System). This project was initiated in response to recommendations from legislative auditors and is designed to improve the oversight, accuracy, and functionality of banking details and payroll processing within the CPS system.

In November 2024, CPS submitted an enhancement request to the Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) for updates to the banking detail screens in FACIS. The estimate for the project was completed and approved in December 2024, and a formal kick-off meeting was held on December 18. By January 2025, BIT had begun development work on the screen and payroll process updates.

By February 2025, significant progress had been made, with most of the screen and payroll process enhancements completed. CPS and BIT coordinated to begin testing these updates. In April 2025, CPS started testing the screen changes and prepared to begin testing the payroll process components.

This project remains on track and is expected to further improve internal controls and support more efficient financial processing within CPS. Continued work on final testing and implementation will carry into State Fiscal Year 2026.

2025-2029 Information System Goals

South Dakota CPS takes a proactive approach to ensure their information system is kept up to date and relevant to accurately tell the story of children and families experience who enter the child welfare system, as well as staff's workload and caseload. The following goals were included in the 2025-2029 CFSP and updates for SFY2026 are included below.

1

Enhance CPS Information System to capture data around danger threats and present danger planning.

2026 APSR Update:

Danger threats were added to FACIS screens and reports were updated to capture this data. Initial Family Assessment policy was updated and in November 2024 work began to incorporate the new policy into the information system. The Protective Services Program Specialist began testing screens and templates within the information system in April 2025 and the changes went into production in May 2025. Phase 2 of the project is now in progress.

2

Enhance quality of data to collect and allow for analysis of Conditions for Return prohibiting children from moving to trial reunification.

2026 APSR Update:

CPS intends to start work in this area in Fiscal Year 2026.

3

Enhance data reports distributed to judicial partners.

2026 APSR Update:

CPS intends to start work in this area in Fiscal Year 2026.

4

Complete CQI process on existing reports to ensure the information presented is still relevant and identify if any enhancements are needed.

2026 APSR Update:

In SFY2025, enhancements were made to the child case plan report. Previously, this report counted from the first date of placement and reported out if a child case plan was completed within 60 days of placement. The enhanced report counts from the date of intake in the legal screen to more accurately account for completion of child case plans within 60 days of removal, as opposed to 60 days of placement. The purpose of this is to account for children who do not immediately enter an out of home placement due to circumstances such as hospitalization. An additional enhancement to the report was made to exclude children from the calculations when they have been placed on trial reunification with the parent they were removed from as an individual child case plan is not required in those circumstances.

Continued enhancements will be made to existing reports in SFY2026.

5

Enhance FACIS to assist with caseload/workload analysis.

2026 APSR Update:

Meetings have been occurring twice per month with the workgroup to determine the data wanting to be captured and how to accurately and clearly display the data in a format that is user-friendly and easy to understand. An RFP for a Workload Assessment was published in May 2025; CPS is currently awaiting receipt of proposal submissions from interested agencies. CPS has requested the Workload Assessment to include: analysis of the complexity of cases to measure workload versus caseload, analysis of current caseload & workload distributions among existing staff, determine suggested workload & caseload standards and staff needs; determine suggested operational efficiencies, forecast staffing needs, and analysis of agency program management structure and capacity. CPS is requesting the vendor to develop an instrument to measure workload that can be administered by CPS' existing CQI Team for ongoing assessment of workload. Award for the contract is anticipated by mid to late June 2025, with completion of the project required by 09/30/2025.

Case Review System

In the 2016 Child and Family Services Review, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with the Case Review System systemic factor. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to the Case Review System.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Statewide Assessment for foundational information regarding South Dakota's Case Review System. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding this systemic factor can be found below.

Child's Written Case Plan

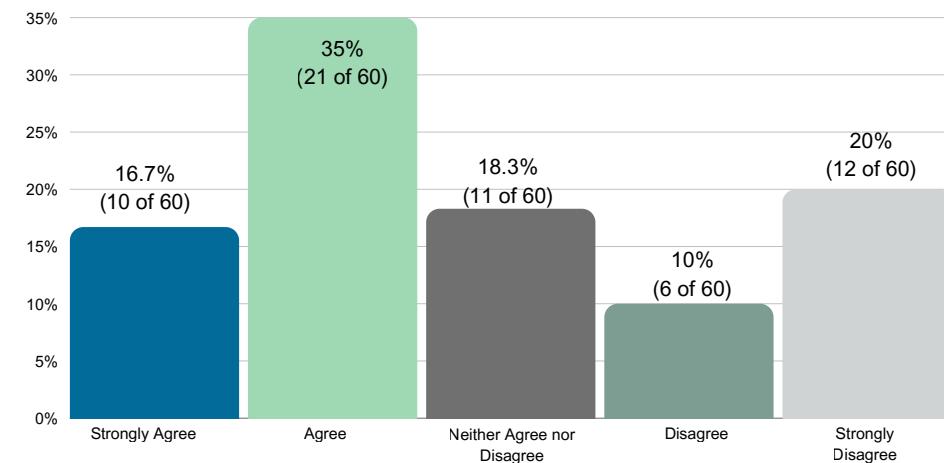
Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Statewide Assessment for context related to Child Case Plans.

In SFY2025 as of May 31, 2025, 84.5% (1,280 of 1,515) of children in care 60 days or more had a child case plan completed. (Data Source: FACIS Report)

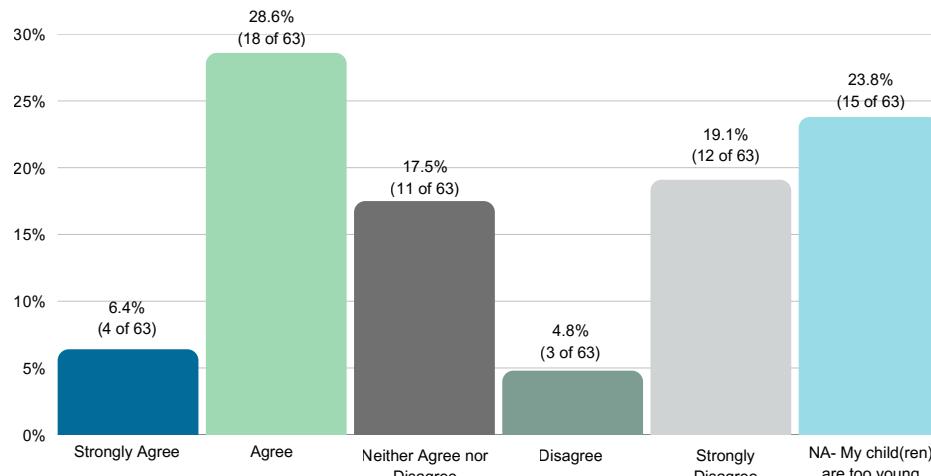
Parent engagement is essential to initial and ongoing case planning. Parental engagement is monitored and reviewed by the CQI Team through Caseworker Visit and Child Case Plan fidelity reviews and the Parental Capacity Assessment (PCA) fidelity reviews. Further information about parent engagement, input, and collaboration is discussed in detail the Well-Being 1 Outcome.

A Parents with Lived Experience Survey was administered in State Fiscal Year 2025. Parents/caregivers provided the following information regarding involvement in their child's case planning:

I have been involved in case planning for my children to ensure their individual needs are met either in my home or while they are placed out of the home.

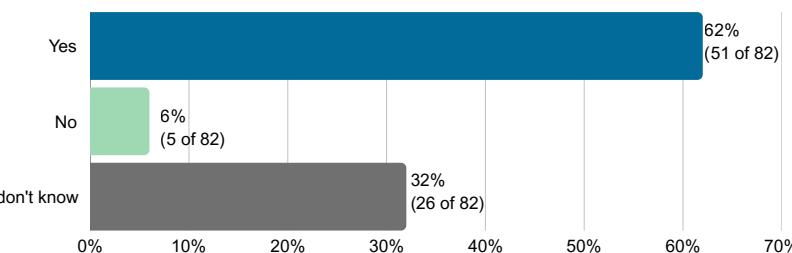


My caseworker has spent time with my child(ren) and has listened to what they say about what needs to change at home, their concerns, and their needs.

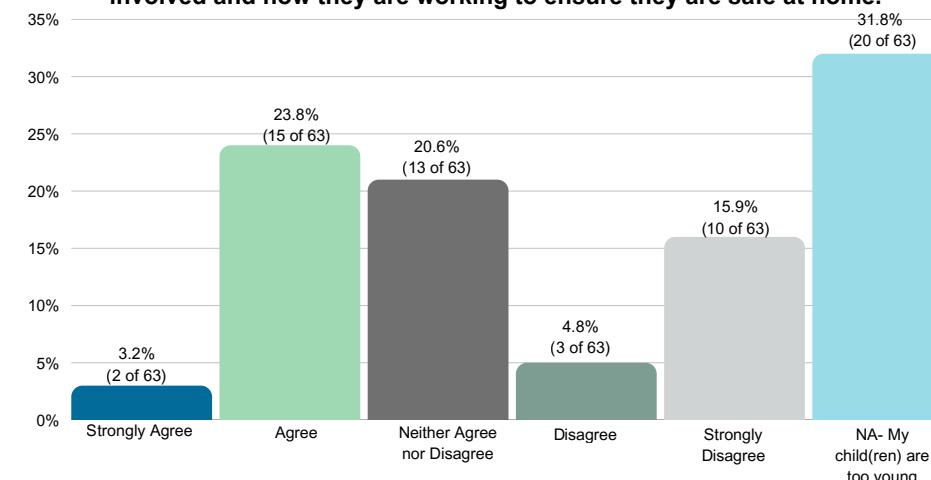


A Youth with Lived Experience Survey was administered in State Fiscal Year 2025. Youth provided the following information regarding their case plan:

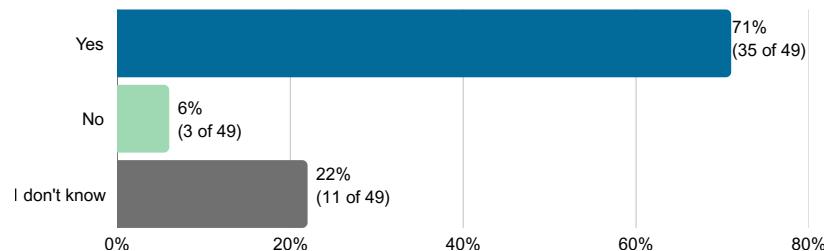
Youth Has a Child Case Plan



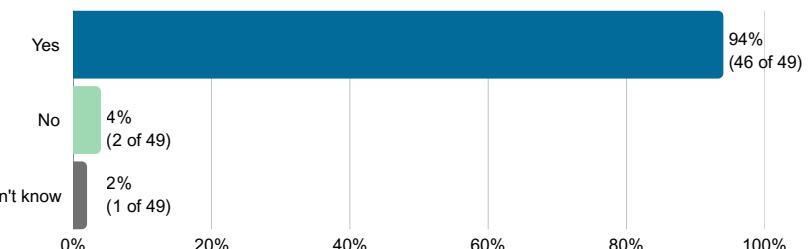
My caseworker has made sure my child(ren) fully understand why Child Protection is involved and how they are working to ensure they are safe at home.



Youth Provided Input for their Child Case Plan



CPS Worker Discusses Case Plan with Youth



A Child Caseworker Visit Fidelity Review was completed by the CQI Team in State Fiscal Year 2025. Refer to Well-Being Outcome 1 for further information regarding the results of the fidelity review and initiatives to support positive outcomes.

Periodic Reviews

South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Periodic Reviews.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Review and Statewide Assessment for context related to Periodic Reviews.

Changes were made to the FACIS case compliance screen for PPRT tracking. The definition has been updated to consider the new Permanency Review checkbox on the Client Legal Screen. If a legal hearing has this box checked, Case Compliance will read this as satisfying the PPRT requirements. Offices that have regular hearings on a timely schedule will no longer need to add separate legal hearings - one of the hearings and a PPRT Administrative Review. The initial PPRT or review hearing is due six months after a child's entry into foster care. Subsequent review hearings or PPRT's are due six months from the previous review hearing. If the review hearing or PPRT is late, the six months starts counting from the date of that review. Children will show on the Case Compliance screen four months before the PPRT or review hearing to allow time to schedule the review hearing or PPRT.

Beginning in SFY2025, a CQI Program Specialist began to oversee the PPRT FACIS Report on a monthly basis. Oversight of this report includes identifying clients who have not had a PPRT in over 6 months. The CQI Specialist will notify the Regional Manager immediately in order to have data entered and/or a PPRT scheduled.

CPS completes an annual survey to stakeholders to gather input on how the child welfare system is performing on meeting the needs of children and families. In SFY2025 there were 258 stakeholders surveyed, out of those 65% (168) were involved with the court system. 82% (124 of 152) of stakeholders who are with the court system indicated Periodic Review Hearings are occurring every 6 months for children in the foster care system.

Data pertaining to State Fiscal Year 2025 is presented below:

State Totals - Periodic Reviews	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Children with Entry into Foster Care...											
...6 months on Month End	60	45	52	47	65	62	67	58	64	65	60
...6 months on Month End and have PPRT (timely)	49	28	43	34	38	45	64	43	51	36	42
...% timely	82%	62%	83%	72%	58%	73%	96%	74%	80%	55%	70%

Data Source: Family and Child Information System (FACIS) Report

State Totals - Periodic Reviews	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
... more than 6 months	1,064	1,058	1,023	1,019	1,003	1,020	1,005	1,002	1,013	1,046	1,060
...more than 6 months and have PPRT within 6 months of Month end (timely)	895	864	818	823	782	923	897	891	897	916	877
...% timely	84%	82%	80%	81%	78%	90%	89%	89%	89%	88%	83%

Data Source: Family and Child Information System (FACIS) Report

Permanency Hearings

South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Permanency Hearings.

Refer to the 2025-2029 CFSP and Statewide Assessment for context regarding Permanency Hearings.

SDCL [26-8A-22](#) (Final decree of disposition—Permitted disposition when parental rights not terminated—Annual permanency hearing for child in foster care) and SDCL [26-8A-26](#) (Termination of parental rights—Return of child to parents or continued placement—Annual permanency hearing for child in foster care) state that in no case may a child remain in foster care for a period of more than twelve months from the time the child entered foster care without the court holding a permanency hearing and making a dispositional decree. The court is to review the child's permanency status and make a dispositional decree every twelve months if the child continues in the custody of the Department of Social Services. As part of the permanency hearing, the court shall determine whether the State has made reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan that is in effect.

CPS policy regarding permanency hearings mandates staff must request a permanency hearing for every child that has been in the Department of Social Services care for 12 months, and the child must have a Dispositional (Permanency) Hearing on or before the 12-month anniversary of the child's entry into foster care. There must be a Permanency Hearing requested every 12 months if the agency has custody, or placement and care responsibility.

Beginning in SFY2025, a CQI Program Specialist began overseeing the Permanency Hearing FACIS report. The CQI Program Specialist identifies clients who have not had a Permanency Hearing in over 12 months and immediately notifies the Regional Manager.

The chart below outlines the total number of children in custody on month end date, the number of those children who were expected to have a permanency hearing within the previous 12 months, and the number who had a timely permanency hearing within the previous 12 months.

State Totals - Permanency Hearings	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Children in Custody on Month End (Entry into Foster Care)	1,499	1,485	1,475	1,481	1,473	1,511	1,494	1,465	1,483	1,503	1,528
Children expected to have a permanency hearing	797	786	769	782	771	774	759	735	740	761	780
Number timely	735	729	727	751	738	746	732	700	697	726	736
...% timely	92%	93%	95%	96%	96%	96%	96%	95%	94%	95%	94%

Data Source: Family and Child Information System (FACIS) Report

The chart below breaks down the number of children who were expected to have a permanency hearing with the length of stay in care. The chart outlines the number of children who reached 12 months on month end and if they had a timely permanency hearing and children who have been in custody more than 12 months and had a timely permanency hearing within the last 12 months.

State Totals - Permanency Hearings	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
...12 months on Month End	61	45	49	51	33	43	47	34	40	44	58
...12 months on Month End and have Permanency Hearing (timely)	56	42	46	48	33	41	46	32	34	44	49
...% timely	92%	93%	94%	94%	100	95%	98%	94%	85%	100%	84%
...more than 12 months	736	741	720	731	738	731	712	701	700	717	722
...more than 12 months and have Permanency Hearing within 12 months of Month end (timely)	679	687	681	703	705	705	686	668	663	682	687
...% timely	92%	93%	95%	96%	96%	96%	96%	95%	95%	95%	95%

Data Source: Family and Child Information System (FACIS) Report

The chart below describes children who have been in custody less than 12 months but had a permanency hearing. These children were not required to have a permanency hearing by month end and their permanency hearing occurred early, resulting in a timely permanency hearing.

State Totals - Permanency Hearings	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
...less than 12 months on Month End	702	699	706	699	702	737	735	730	743	742	748
...less than 12 months on Month End and have Permanency Hearing (timely)	509	504	499	487	475	468	431	463	489	475	465
...% timely	73%	72%	71%	70%	68%	64%	59%	63%	66%	64%	65%

Data Source: Family and Child Information System (FACIS) Report

Periodic Review and Permanency Hearing Goals

- 1** Aside from the caseworker compliance reports, CPS is collaborating with BIT to build a report that will let the Permanency Program Specialist and Regional Managers see upcoming PPRT 180 days in advance. This report will be run monthly to ensure it captures the most updated information.
- 2** An additional report is being developed to show the percentage of PPRT achieved timely in any given timeframe. The report is designed to capture the initial PPRT due from the child's entry into foster care (Adjudication or 60 days after placement, whichever comes first). Then the report will capture subsequent PPRT's from the date of the most recent home. These specific data points will allow the CQI team to identify any trends relating to timeliness of PPRT's.
- 3** The data for these reports has historically been collected in FACIS, however, there wasn't a report to show the performance. These are being designed to show the statewide and Office/ Region performance. These reports will also capture, age, race, placement service type, length of time in care, court jurisdiction, if the child is in state or tribal jurisdiction, initial permanency goal, and current permanency plan.

2026 APSR Update:

This year, meetings were held with the Bureau of Information and Telecommunications twice a month to develop the reports highlighted in all three goals. The Bureau of Information and Telecommunications created the reports and completed testing in January and February 2025. In March 2025, the reports were completed and are now in production.

Termination of Parental Rights

In 2016 Child and Family Services Review, South Dakota CPS received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for termination of parental rights based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews. Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders indicated there is not a consistent statewide process for filing termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions. CPS provided data showing that timely filings of TPR petitions did not occur in several cases. Stakeholders said termination proceedings do not occur timely for Native American children.

South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Termination of Parental Rights.

CPS must request the State's Attorney or Tribal Prosecutor to file a petition to terminate parental rights when a child has been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months. The State's Attorney and Tribal Prosecutor file the petition.

The exceptions to the provisions are as follows:

- The child is being cared for by a relative.
- The Case Plan documents a compelling reason for determining that filing such a petition would not be in the best interest of the child.
- Not all the services in the Case Plan that are necessary for the safe return of the child to the parent's home have been completed but progress toward the goal is being made and is documented.
- The Department must document any compelling reasons for not filing a petition to terminate parental rights in the child's Legal Screen within FACIS.

SDCL 26-8A-21.1 allows the court to not reunify a child with the parent for certain circumstances including those felonies specified in Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). SDCL 26-8A-21.2 requires the court to hold a permanency hearing if reasonable efforts are not provided and further requires the court to consider termination of parental rights, guardianship, placement with a permanent relative, or determine if there are compelling reasons to not enter a disposition that includes any of those options. SDCL 26-8A-26.1 allows the court to terminate parental rights for any child that has been abandoned for 6 months or longer. CPS policy requires a petition for termination of parental rights be filed on an abandoned infant as defined by State law. State law requires that children be appointed attorneys in abuse and neglect court actions to represent the interests of children.

Termination of Parental Rights Goal

1

There is currently a report in FACIS regarding children who have been in custody 15 of the most recent 22 months. This report currently captures, the date the TPR petition was filed, when TPR occurred for the mother and father, and what, if any, compelling reasons to not file a termination of parental rights petition. This report is being updated to capture the statewide and Office/Region performance. This report is also being updated to capture, age, race, placement service type, length of time in care, court jurisdiction, if the child is in state or tribal jurisdiction, initial permanency goal, and current permanency plan. This report is also being updated to capture exceptions to provide reasonable efforts under the Adoption and Safe Family Act. These specific data points will allow the CQI team to identify any trends relating to timeliness of permanency hearings.

2026 APSR Update:

During State Fiscal Year 2025, the FACIS team met with the Bureau of Telecommunications twice monthly to develop the report described above. Development and testing was completed and the report was put into production in March 2025. The report remains active and is accessible to staff. The CQI team will utilize this report in the future to identify trends relating to timeliness of permanency hearings. Currently and in SFY2026, South Dakota is working to ensure accurate data entry for all children in care who have a petition filed or compelling reasons so that the CQI team can move forward with oversight in this area. In SFY26, the FACIS and Bureau of Information and Telecommunications teams plan to make updates to the report to track the timeliness of petitions being filed to determine if there are areas of the state needing focused CQI efforts. Once the report is enhanced and data is analyzed, collaboration with legal partners will occur to facilitate improvement in these areas.

Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

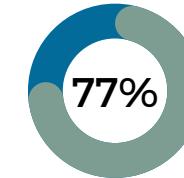
South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers.

CPS has a written policy regarding the "Notice to Out of Home Providers". This policy can be found in the Legal section, of the CPS Procedures Manual. The policy states: "It is the FSS responsibility to assure that the foster parent, pre-adoptive parent, or relative caregiver, receives written notice of all hearings regarding the child placed in their home. The provider must also be given the opportunity to provide a verbal presentation or a written statement or report to the court."

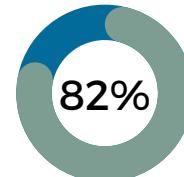
In June 2007, the Chief Justice of the South Dakota Supreme Court gave a directive, by letter, to all Circuit Court Judges to ensure foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and/or relative caregivers receive notice of hearings. CPS policy requires the Family Services Specialists offer the placement resource the option to be heard orally in court, submit written comment, or have their comments included in the court report.

Policy also requires the Supervisor to ensure all participants are notified by letter. Placement Resource providers can be reimbursed for travel for attendance at PPRTs. Placement Resources and stakeholders are surveyed on how often placement resources are informed being informed of PPRT meetings and court hearings regarding children placed in their homes.

In SFY25, a survey was administered to placement resources and the following information was gathered regarding placement resources being informed of court hearings and their right to be heard in court.



227 of 296 reported to receive notification of Permanency Planning Review Team (PPRT) meetings and Court Hearings regarding the children in their home.



243 of 298 reported to be informed of their right to be heard in any Permanency Planning Review Team (PPRT) meetings or court hearings.

Quality Assurance System

In CFSR Round 3, South Dakota was in substantial conformity for the Quality Assurance systemic factor. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to the Quality Assurance System.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Statewide Assessment for foundational information regarding South Dakota's Quality Assurance System. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding this systemic factor can be found below.

The Department of Social Services is state administered, and state operated. In SFY2025, a merge of Region 1 and Region 2 occurred resulting in the Black Hills Region. Child Protection Services now has 6 regions, comprised of 17 offices that provide services to all counties in the state except those areas under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe which has a tribal child welfare program and a current agreement with the State. South Dakota is divided into 66 counties. Oglala Lakota County, which is within the Pine Ridge Reservation, is the only county where CPS does not have at least partial service responsibility.

South Dakota has a Quality Assurance policy that outlines Continuous Quality Improvement and Outcomes policy and practice that describes how the CQI system functions in South Dakota.

CPS conducts quality assurance reviews and uses reports from CCWIS to evaluate the process. Reports are accessible to all staff and reports and case review results are used to implement improvements and monitor progress. In SFY2025, Regional Reviews were adjusted to focus on supporting the regions selected for the Round 4 Child and Family Services Review. The CQI Team conducted nine mock reviews across Region 3, Region 5, and Region 6 to prepare staff for the Child and Family Services Review process. Statewide Regional Reviews will resume in SFY2026.

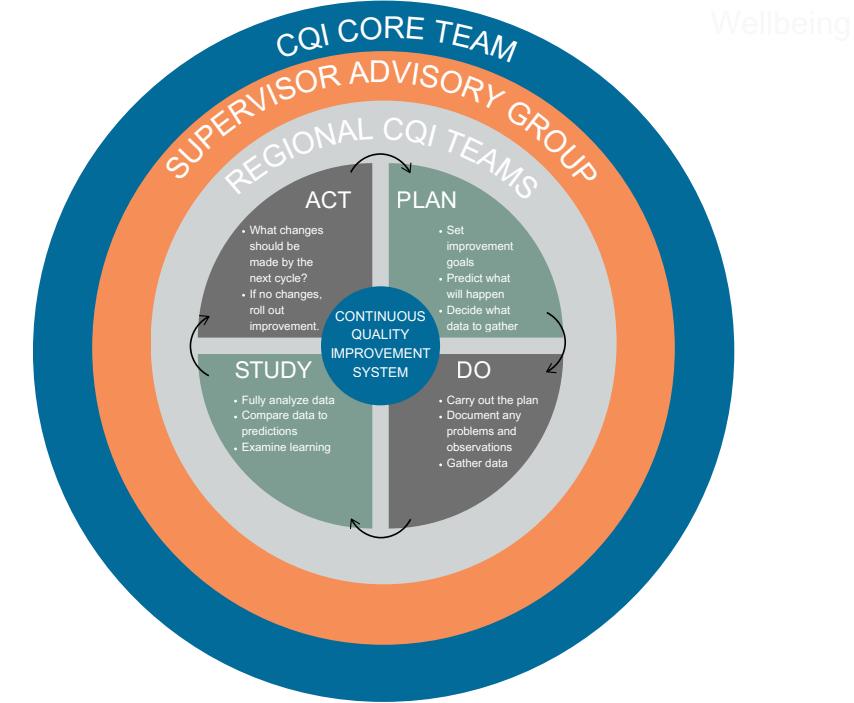
During the 2016 Child and Family Services Review (Round 3), CPS chose to have a State-conducted CFSR. South Dakota completed PIP reviews utilized existing staff as reviewers and successfully graduated off the Round 3 PIP. South Dakota has prioritized CQI and developing a consistent review team for CFSR reviews and interval review processes. South Dakota was capable of completing a State-Led Review for Round 4, however, chose to complete a CB-led Review in order to focus on developing the CQI Team. The CQI Team was finalized in March of 2025 and will support South Dakota during Round 4 PIP Reviews and being State-led for future Child and Family Services Reviews. **Information regarding South Dakota CPS major QA initiatives can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A3.**

South Dakota Department of Social Services is contracting with Achieve-It to assist in managing strategic planning across the agency. This would include strategies outlined in the Child and Family Services Plan and subsequent Annual Progress Services Reports, CFSR Program Improvement Planning, CQI Plans, CPS Monthly Reporting, DSS Monthly Reporting, internal strategic planning within the Department of Social Services, and external strategic planning with other child welfare partners. Achieve-It will South Dakota to streamline the same information across several plans, for example if a data point or goal progress update is outlined in three different plans the update is entered once and automatically streamlined in all relevant plans.

Achieve-It also allow for project/goal management to send out automatic alerts when information or goal progress is due to be updated. The contract is anticipated to be completed in SFY2026 then the CPS CQI Team will transition current plans and initiatives to Achieve-IT for plan management.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Round 4 Statewide Assessment for context regarding South Dakota's Continuous Quality Improvement structure.



In SFY2025, two additional Continuous Quality Improvement Program Specialists were hired. The CQI Team is now comprised of an Administrator of CQI and Outcomes overseeing the team, two FACIS Program Specialists, a Strategy and Outcomes Program Specialist, and four CQI Program Specialists. In SFY2025, this team was responsible for CFSR Review preparation, development of the Child and Family Services Plan, fidelity reviews, development of the Annual Progress Service Report, revision of policy and procedures, and oversight of performance outcome at the local and state level.

Quality Data Collection

Several enhancements were made to South Dakota's Information System in State Fiscal Year 2025 to support quality data collection. Refer to the Information System Systemic Factor for further information. In addition, data quality checks were conducted during fidelity reviews completed by the CQI Team in SFY2025. Plans for additional data quality checks have been created and will be implemented in SFY2026. Refer to the Information System Systemic Factor for further information.

In SFY2025, the CQI Team continued to provide oversight to FACIS reports to ensure accurate and quality data entry. Currently, CQI Program Specialists oversee the Child Caseworker Visits, Parent Caseworker Visits, PPRT, Permanency Hearing, and Initial Family Assessment Reports. In State Fiscal Year 2026, CQI Program Specialists will oversee reports associated with Protective Capacity Assessments as well as FACIS reports utilized for CQI Plans. **Information regarding FACIS reports that are utilized for Refer to attachment quality assurance and analysis of outcomes can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A4.**

Quality Data Collection

Data is also collected through various survey's to staff and stakeholders. **The schedule for administering annual surveys can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A5.** Surveys outlined were administered in SFY2025 and will continue to be administered in SFY2026.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Round 4 Statewide Assessment for context regarding South Dakota's Case Record Review Data and Process.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, Regional Reviews were paused as the CQI Team focused on supporting the regions selected for the Child and Family Services Review. Mock reviews were conducted with Region 3, Region 5, and Region 6 Family Services Specialists and Supervisors to prepare them for the Child and Family Services Review process. Two cases were randomly selected four weeks prior to the mock review. Supervisors were expected to schedule interviews and prepare case files as expected for the Child and Family Services Review. One week following the mock review, a debrief meeting was held with the Continuous Quality Improvement Team and Regional Manager to discuss trends from the review.

In State Fiscal Year 2026, the Continuous Quality Improvement Team will return to the statewide Regional Review process as described in the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan. All regions will be reviewed on an annual basis.

In addition to mock reviews, fidelity reviews were completed by the Continuous Quality Improvement Team in SFY2025. Results from fidelity reviews were analyzed by the Strategy and Outcomes Program Specialist and provided to Regional Managers for further review and presentation to their staff. Fidelity reviews will continue to be conducted by the Continuous Quality Improvement Team and regional reviews will resume in SFY2026. **Detailed information regarding an outline of fidelity and regional reviews can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A6.**

There are several levels of data analysis occurring throughout CPS. Data, both qualitative and quantitative, are analyzed at the local level as offices review the results of the Regional Reviews. Data is analyzed at the regional and statewide levels as Regional Managers and Supervisors review the various data profiles, FACIS data, and surveys. The Supervisor Advisory Group (SAG) meets monthly. The SAG serves as another level of data analysis, as they work on issues identified by the field, or by the Management Team. The SAG disseminates results both to the Management Team and the field. In State Fiscal Year 2025, the Supervisor Advisory Group analyzed child caseworker visit data, presented findings to the Supervisor and Management Teams, revised policy, and presented enhanced policy to field staff. In State Fiscal Year 2026, the Supervisor Advisory Group will complete this same process for data associated with parent caseworker visits.

Case Record Review Data and Process

The CQI Core Team meets monthly to discuss issues that have come to their attention through the Regional Reviews, SAG, or data profiles and other reports. The CQI Core Team then analyzes data around specific issues and reports findings to the Management Team.

Individual case review results from the mock reviews completed in SFY2025 were distributed to the Regional Manager at the end of the review week. The Regional Manager is encouraged to share the specific results with the Supervisor(s) as well as each staff person. This process will continue in SFY2026 when Regional Reviews resume.

While QA reviews serve as the data collection component in the CQI structure, it is important to continue the CQI loop. Upon receiving the Regional Assessment, offices are expected to examine instances of lower achieving performance indicators utilizing root cause analysis and to develop an improvement plan which includes continued evaluation. While data analysis occurs on a regular basis by the various groups within CPS, it historically has occurred to a lesser degree at the local level between Supervisors and the Family Services Specialists. In SFY2026, assigned CQI Program Specialists will support each region in utilizing root cause analysis to develop CQI Plans focused on lower achieving performance indicators. Through the course CQI training and application of the CQI process to improving specific outcomes and practice, all staff at the local office level become more engaged in data analysis.

Sharing of statewide and local data with stakeholders for their analysis and use and eliciting feedback on their analysis and conclusions is also an important component of CPS' CQI philosophy. In previous sections of this report, it has been detailed how information is shared with internal stakeholders and their feedback is sought. There is a shift from holding meetings across the state to share results with stakeholders to involving stakeholders in the offices CQI process and efforts towards change.

Feedback to Stakeholders and Decision-Makers and Adjustment of Programs and Process

Collecting and analyzing the data are important steps within the CQI process. One of the overarching goals of the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan was to improve communication between partners of the child welfare system. This includes stakeholders as reviewers, a survey to them, and CQI meetings with the stakeholders. Information that will be used at CQI meetings with the stakeholders is data from the Regional Reviews, results of a survey sent to them during the onsite review, and any pertinent data from FACIS.

Regional Assessments were released in July 2024 and will be released again in July 2025. Regional Assessments capture the performance outcomes of the latest Regional Review as well as results of fidelity review, stakeholder survey results, parent survey, and staff survey results. This gives a comprehensive view of how the Region operates and what areas to focus CQI plans on. South Dakota utilizes the Online Monitoring System (OMS) Reports to identify performance outcomes and trends associated with the Regional Reviews. CQI plans are approved by the Administrator of CQI and Outcomes and monitored by the CQI Program Specialist assigned to the Region. The Regional Assessments are provided to stakeholders and included in the office's CQI meeting with stakeholders.

Youth

South Dakota's Young Voices group continues to serve as a vital youth advisory body, providing current and former foster youth with the opportunity to engage with peers, share lived experiences, and contribute to the improvement of child welfare policies and practices. The Department actively seeks input from Young Voices, and their involvement has informed and inspired several successful initiatives across the state.

During the spring of SFY25, South Dakota administered the annual youth survey to gather youth perspectives on key outcome areas, including safety, permanency, and well-being. The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team will analyze the results in SFY26, identifying trends and areas needing improvement. Young Voices will be engaged in reviewing the data and assisting in developing actionable strategies aimed at improving outcomes in partnership with the CQI and Independent Living Services (ILS) teams.

In SFY26, a primary goal is to further develop the Young Voices framework to ensure sustainability and long-term impact. Current youth members are working collaboratively to establish clear guidelines around leadership roles, group membership, presentation protocols, and participation incentives. These foundational elements will strengthen the structure of the group, support recruitment of new members, and promote consistent engagement—particularly among youth currently in care.

In addition, targeted outreach efforts will be made to increase Native youth representation in Young Voices, ensuring tribal perspectives are reflected in statewide decision-making and in shaping Independent Living Services programming.

Parents

Parents and caregivers were administered parent surveys in November 2024. One of the survey questions asked parents if they want to participate in a focus group that will review the results of the survey and participate in joint planning on how to improve children and parents experience when they are involved in the child welfare system in South Dakota. After the survey results are received, parents were contacted and a parent collaborative workgroup has begun through a contract with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment. Refer to Quality Assurance Goal 2 for further information.

Monthly Reports

South Dakota CPS has monthly reports that capture monthly updates on current initiatives, technology projects, new initiatives, and data reporting. The monthly report was enhanced in SFY2025 to capture specific initiatives and goals outlined in the Child and Family Services Plan. Monthly Report updates are shared with both CPS and DSS leadership to close the feedback loops about what the CPS specific initiatives are and how they compliment the overall mission of the South Dakota Department of Social Services. All Regional Managers and Program Specialists have access to the information contained in the monthly report and are responsible for reviewing the information to identify any intersects with their program.

Data and initiatives are shared at the CPS Management Team meetings when relevant. The following data points are captured on the monthly report:

- Total Abuse and Neglect Referrals each month
- Centralized Intake Data
 - Total calls
 - Handled calls
 - Abandoned calls
 - Abandoned calls out of service
 - Speed of answer
 - Average talk duration
 - Average hold duration
- Pending and Completed Out of Home Investigations
- Finalized Adoptions
 - Percentage of adoptions by Foster Parents, Relatives, Non-Relative/Non-Foster Parents
 - Finalizations within 24 months
 - Average length between initial placement to finalization
- Stronger Families
 - Newly licensed families
 - Goal progress
 - Region 1, 3, and 4 new, closed, and total homes
 - Wrap Services for Foster Families
 - Commit to Know More cards

- Placement Trends
 - New children entering custody
 - Children discharged from custody
 - Percentage of children in a family setting
- Alternative Placement Data
- Discharge Outcomes
- Children in Group/Residential Care by Region
- Out of State Youth in Residential Treatment Centers
- ICPC Requests
- Children missing from care
 - Placement type
 - Age
 - Date of missing from care
 - Days on the run
- Adoption Data
 - Children with the plan of adoption
 - Children placed for adoption
 - Children with the plan of adoption and no identified resource
 - Average age of children waiting for adoption
 - Children involved in appeals to supreme court
 - Subsidized Adoptions

Court Improvement Program

The Court Improvement Program and CPS actively collaborate on enhancing practice to achieve better permanency outcomes. The Administrator of CQI and Outcomes presents to the CIP committee on Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being performance outcomes from South Dakota's CFSR Data Profile as well as performance outcomes from the onsite reviews. This helps CIP keep well-informed on where South Dakota is performing and to identify any areas they can provide support or insight to assist in improvement outcomes for children and families.

2025-2029 Quality Assurance Goals

1

Hire and Train remaining CQI Team

2026 APSR Update:

In October 2024, approval was granted to list the 4th Continuous Quality Improvement Program Specialist position. The CQI team began the hiring process in November which consisted of essay questions and in-person interviews. The position was offered to the candidate in February 2025 and the applicant accepted. The 4th Continuous Quality Improvement Program Specialist began their role on March 9, 2025 and has started to receive training. Further training will continue to be provided in State Fiscal Year 2026.

2026 APSR Update:

In September 2024, the 5-year plan was reviewed with the Child Protection Services Management Team and the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment submitted a proposal to begin a parent collaborative group. Approval was given to the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment to develop a parent collaborative group and parent surveys were administered in November 2024. Parent surveys allowed parents to identify if they were interested in being part of the collaborative group. The Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment reviewed responses from the parent survey and provided a report to Child Protection Services. The results were incorporated into the Statewide Assessment. The Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment continue to work towards establishing a parent collaborative workgroup and provide monthly updates to Child Protection Services regarding their progress. At this time, parents who identified an interest in participating are being interviewed by the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment. Once in-person interviews are completed, the workgroup will begin. Individuals with lived experiences were engaged in the Child and Family Services Review process through case-related interviews and stakeholder interviews.

Refer to Goal 3, Objective 2 for information related to engaging youth with lived experience.

Staff Training

In Round 3 Child and Family Services Review, South Dakota was found to be in substantial conformity with the Staff Training systemic factor.

South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Staff Training.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Statewide Assessment for foundational information regarding South Dakota's Staff Training Systemic Factor. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding this systemic factor can be found below.

Reference South Dakota's Training Plan for further information.

In 2025, South Dakota Child Protection Services (CPS) transitioned back to in-person training delivery for the first time since the onset of COVID. This return to face-to-face learning reflects a strategic effort to enhance knowledge retention, engagement, and skill development among new staff. As part of this transition, all on-boarding curricula were thoroughly reviewed and revised to determine the most effective mode of delivery for each component. The result is a hybrid training model that intentionally balances virtual and in-person formats, ensuring that content is delivered in the format best suited to promote comprehension, application, and long-term retention. Plans are underway to incorporate additional interactive video modules in 2026 to further streamline and enhance the virtual learning components.

Initial Training

CPS continues to provide mandatory Certification training for all newly hired Family Services Specialists. The Certification Program also is required for any newly hired Supervisors, Regional Managers, or Program Specialists. The rotation allows for staff to enter the training cycle shortly after their hire date. The current Certification training is 225.5 hours of training.

225.5 Hours

The training rotations is as follows:

- Foundation (28 hours)
- Mandatory Reporter Training (1 hour)
- Initial Family Assessment/Safety Evaluation/Planning/Interviewing (28 hours)
- Ongoing Services/Case Planning and Safety Management (Protective Capacity Assessment) (28 hours)
- Protective Capacity Evaluation (14 hours)
- Permanency/Well-Being (30.5 hours)
- Trauma Informed Practice (12 hours)
- Medical Indicators of Abuse and Neglect (8 hours)
- Motivational Interviewing Level One (12 hours)
- Motivational Interviewing Level Two (8 hours)
- Foster/Adoptive Parent Training Program (30 hours)
- Human Trafficking Training (3 hours)
- Office of Licensing and Accreditation-Foster Care Licensing (3 hours)
- Safety Crisis Management Techniques (SCM) (8-16 hours)
- Compassion Fatigue (8 hours)

The SCM training offers a full day de-escalation training and a full day of evasive physical intervention maneuvering. Previously, these trainings were separate however in SFY25 the trainings are now combined and all staff are required to attend.

Staff receive initial training in the FACIS system that includes explanations of data fields pertinent to AFCARS submissions and the importance of timely and accurate data entry. This training is completed at the local office level during onboarding of new employees. The duration of the training is dependent on the employee's personalized need but is generally 2 hours in length. Virtual FACIS training sessions were held in SFY25 and plans for implementation of in-person FACIS training is being developed with hopes of implementation in SFY2026.

All Child Protection Services staff were previously required to complete the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Training Academy the Capacity Center for State's offers on their website, however feedback received from staff indicated that the training was difficult to understand and comprehend. Due to this feedback, CQI Training Curriculum is undergoing revision and is scheduled to be implemented in State Fiscal Year 2026. The training will be provided to staff after their first year of employment and certification training is completed. Training will be provided by CQI Program Specialists and staff will gain knowledge on the South Dakota CQI system, internal processes, external processes, importance of accurate and timely data entry, and current workgroups. Initial CQI Training will be delivered in person with a requirement for staff to participate in an annual webinar training every year following their initial training. Once completed, the webinar will be added to SDLearn, South Dakota's Learning Monitoring System, which will notify the staff when training is required.

The Learning and Development Program Specialist continues to evaluate the training needs of field staff. CPS has been enhancing Certification training to create more skill-based training and is exploring technology to aid in this. Faculty for each training meet annually to evaluate and plan for further enhancement of the training to meet the development needs of field staff. As policies are undergoing updates the training teams meet and collaborate more closely on impacts.

Staff are administered an annual survey which captures feedback on training and satisfaction regarding training's effectiveness. In order to address employee and consumer feedback to improve training curricula, the responses from staff surveys and post-training assessments are reviewed by the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team in collaboration with the Learning and Development Program Specialist following certification trainings. This data is analyzed to identify trends and inform improvements to the existing staff training curriculum. In the most recent SFY2025 Staff Survey, 84% (117 of 140) of staff reported they have the resources and tools (training) necessary to perform job duties.

Comprehensive Safety Intervention (CSI) Practice Model Training: CPS partnered with Action 4 Child Protection to revise policies, curricula, and tools within the Comprehensive Safety Intervention (CSI) Practice Model. Action 4 Child Protection secured a contract with CPS to ensure successful implementation of new policies, curricula, and tools within the CSI Practice Model already developed by Action 4 Child Protection. New hires will also undergo certification training as part of the onboarding process. Delivering consistent, high-quality training is essential to maintaining fidelity to the agency's core practice model, ensuring improved outcomes for the children and families CPS serves.

Action 4 Child Protection will provide initial certification training on the Comprehensive Safety Model starting in 2025. Action 4 Child Protection will mentor state trainers on the training curriculum to prepare them to administer the training to new staff by the time the contract expires. The approach to implementing the new CSI model certification training is as follows:

- Initial Family Assessment, Protective Capacity Assessment, Protective Capacity Evaluation:
 - Create and deploy pre-training assessment to establish baseline for supervisor and staff competency.
 - Deliver 3 sessions of IFA training for Supervisors, 3 sessions for Family Services Specialists, and 2 sessions for onboarding new staff.
 - Deploy post-training assessment and provide results to South Dakota CPS Leadership.

Ongoing Training

CPS continues to provide formal ongoing training for Family Services Specialists and Supervisors. Depending on the need, CPS provides training either through virtual training or traditional classroom settings.

The following trainings are available virtually, both live and recorded, to Family Services Specialist, Supervisors, Program Specialist, and Regional Managers:

- Adoption- National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI)
- Independent Living Services
- Qualified Residential Treatment Provider Procedures and Upper-Level Placement
- FACIS Placements (2)
- FACIS Payments (2)
- FACIS Basics (6)
- Missing from Care
- Kinship (Added in SFY2025)
- ICWA (Added in SFY2025)
- FACIS Clerical Overview (2)
- FACIS Resources
- FACIS Case Plans & Family Matrix
- FACIS Request for Service Clearance (2)
- IV-E Eligibility
- AFCARS
- Foster Care Appreciation and Support Services
- Permanency (Added in SFY2025)
- Family First (Added in SFY2025)
- Foster Care Child Case Plan & Narratives (Added in SFY2025)

FACIS trainings highlighted in the bullets above occur virtually, several times per year. Training sessions on payments and supervisor roles are geared toward supervisors and their duties and responsibilities. Training on FACIS data reports is provided to various levels of the Management Team on an as needed basis.

CPS has partnered with the SD Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault to provide Domestic Violence Training. They have provided 2, 4 hour trainings to current CPS staff in 2025 and have committed to providing these on an annual basis.

CQI Ongoing Training:



The Administrator of CQI and Outcomes arranges annual CQI training/skill building activities to the CQI Core Group. For example, the CQI Core Group completed modules of the Change and Implementation of Practice together.

One of the Supervisor Advisory Group's overarching goals is Skill Building in the CQI Process. It was identified for the group to enhance their CQI skills with quarterly CQI skill building activities, which is provided by the CQI Team.

Regional Managers, Supervisors, and Field Staff receive ongoing training from the CQI Team during their annual CQI meetings. This also affords the CQI team an opportunity to educate stakeholders on CQI.

As mentioned prior, staff will be required to complete annual CQI training via a webinar platform every year following the completion of initial in-person CQI training. This training plan will be implemented in SFY2026.

Safety Crisis Management was introduced to enhance staff safety through de-escalation techniques and hands-on physical intervention training and continued to be a training requirement in SFY2025. All CPS staff are required to participate in both the de-escalation training and hands-on evasive training. Manuals of techniques are also shared to each participant to serve as an ongoing tool for reference. In order to share this training with all CPS staff, a team of nine instructors were trained by JKM, Inc. and certified to train the material ongoing. They are required to recertify annually through JKM, Inc. Five training teams were formed by these instructors and these instructors are leaders of the training in their coverage areas. This training will continue to be offered 3-4 times in SFY2026 in different locations to accommodate on-boarding staff.

Refer to the Case Review section, Well-Being One, for more information on efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of Motivational interviewing.

Northeast South Dakota Family Violence Prevention Conference

This training was designed for professions working with families experiencing domestic violence, child maltreatment, sexual assault, and trauma. Staff heard from nationally known speakers regarding the latest research, practical experiences, and methods of addressing all forms of maltreatment. In SFY2025, 11 staff attended this conference.

SDLearn

South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources has developed a Learning Management System, SDLearn. All BHR Training and Development opportunities can be found in the SDLearn system. All state employees have access to SDLearn.

SDLearn houses over 2,600 predeveloped courses in a multitude of content genres. The system is designed to take an employee's job title and personal interests into account, allowing it to suggest training courses suited to their needs. Employees can search for professional and personal development courses in SDLearn as well as register for instructor-led trainings being offered. Employee onboarding, BIT cybersecurity training, required compliance training and Ignite Leadership Development will all be found within SDLearn as well. Besides choosing classes independently and the required courses assigned to employees, supervisors also have the ability to assign trainings to staff.

The Child Protection Management Team (Regional Managers and Program Specialists) are informed of various trainings at the Capacity Center for State's and Children's Bureau regarding safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families as well as preparation that occurred in SFY2025 for Round 4 of the Child and Family Services Review. Members of the Management Team attend these trainings if available and the training topic is relevant to their specialty.

JBS Training

In addition to the Capacity Center for State's and Children's Bureau trainings for preparation for Round 4 Child and Family Services Review, all staff and stakeholders who were assigned as reviewers participated in a 2 day training by JBS International.

Community Response to Child Abuse Conference

There is an annual Community Response to Child Abuse Conference, which occurs every October. Attendees typically include: medical providers, law enforcement, educators, counselors, social workers, students, community advocates and more. The conference typically offers 15+ unique breakout sessions provided by local and regional leaders.

In SFY2025, 60 staff attended the Community Response to Child Abuse Conference. Four general sessions were offered in October 2024 that featured state and national experts who discussed current best-practices.

- Warren Binford: The Digital Child
- Sean Covel: The Question is How
- Suzanne Starling: Understanding Vulnerable Child Syndrome
- Michelle Trent and Briana Halse: Risk Management: Trauma-Informed (Self) Care

Staff had the opportunity to pick from 19 breakout sessions in October 2024:

- The Negative Impact of Social Media on Child and Adolescent Mental Health; A.R. Ascano
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Child Sexual Abuse Cases; Shelly Hruby, Kirsten Persson, and Kelly Wharton
- Personal and Professional Perspective of Utilizing Lakota Culture to Heal and Examine Social Determinants of Tribal Health; Damon Leader Charge
- A Multi-Tiered Community-Based Approach to Trauma-Informed Care for Youth in Southeastern South Dakota; Ellen Knowles
- Every Connection Counts: Strengthening Cases Through Victim-Centered Investigation and Prosecution; Roxanne Hammond and Cameron Ducheneaux
- Breaking Barriers: Reducing Stigma and Harm in Substance Disorder and Child Welfare; Melissa Dittberner
- Engaging Fathers: Enhancing Family-School Partnerships; Keith Ferguson
- Indigenous Approach to Addiction Healing and Mental Health Management; Gene Tyon
- Hope is an Action: The Next Step in Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences; Tifanie Petro

- Handle with Care; Angela Waldner
- When the Perpetrator is a Child; Warren Binford
- Ghosts in the Nursery and Child Abuse: The Relationship to Infant Mental Health; Nancy Free
- Appropriate Involvement of Minors in Custody and Dependency/Neglect Cases; A.R. Ascano
- Family First Prevention Services: Next Steps; Ashley Schlchenmayer-Okroi
- Behavioral Health, Education, Access and Management for South Dakota - Increasing Capacity to Address Pediatric Behavioral Health Needs Across South Dakota; Aimee Deliramich and Nikki Eining
- Monsters Among Us: Catching Predators and Keeping Kids Safe in a Digital Abyss; Heather Knox and Matthew Almeida
- The Medical Evaluation of Abusive Head Trauma in Children; Suzanne Starling
- Understanding the Impacts of Social Determinants of Health in Early Childhood; Jennifer Weber
- Laying the Foundation for Tribal and State Partnerships: Strategies to Expand Diversion Access for Indigenous Youth; Annie Brokenleg and Tamera Marshall

Multi Disciplinary Response to Victim Services Training

This training was held in March 2025 and 11 staff members attended. The training provided knowledge from national and statewide experts on addressing and serving victims.

Practice Enhancement and Fidelity Initiative: South Dakota Child Protection Services launched a practice enhancement and fidelity initiative following the implementation of updated curriculum and revised policy within the CPS practice model.

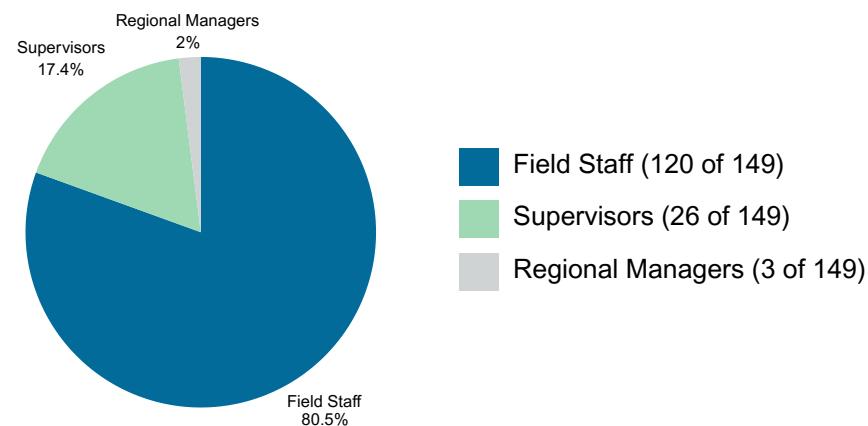
To support this transition, all Initial Family Assessment (IFA) and Ongoing Services (PCA) supervisors received targeted retraining, designed specifically to strengthen supervisory skills aligned with the updated curriculum. These trainings emphasized how to support caseworkers in applying the model consistently, with a focus on accurate safety decision-making, quality assurance, and documentation oversight.

Alongside supervisor training current and new Initial Family Assessment field staff were retrained using the new curriculum. This effort serves as a statewide "reset" to reinforce alignment with the agency's practice standards and ensure uniform application of assessment criteria across all regions.

Training was delivered in person at multiple locations throughout the state to maximize accessibility for staff. In total, three regional supervisory trainings and three field staff trainings were completed for the IFA phase of the model. The next phase will be focusing on Protective Capacity Assessments (PCA), the second component (ongoing case management) of the practice model — will follow the same structure. Three additional supervisory and worker trainings will occur and will be held at varying locations.

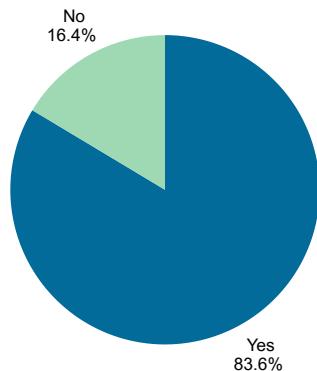
Initial feedback from the IFA trainings has been overwhelmingly positive. Both supervisors and field staff have reported a stronger understanding of safety decision-making, improved clarity around expectations, and greater consistency in documentation practices. This early response supports the agency's goal of creating a more unified and effective approach to child protection services statewide.

In SFY2025, the state administered an annual staff survey to all staff to assess the adequacy of resources, tools, and training necessary to effectively perform job duties. 149 staff responded to the survey and the chart below outlines the respondents specified roles.



I have the resources and tools required to fulfill my responsibilities.

83.6% of respondents (117 of 140) felt they had the resources and tools required to fulfill their responsibilities. Ongoing training is categorized as part of "resources and tools" in this survey.



84%

84% (117 of 139) of staff also reported to have received adequate ongoing training opportunities that have been beneficial to complete their job duties.

Supervisor Development

CPS continues to focus on the enhancement of supervision skills. In response to achieving this objective, CPS is committed to providing specialized training for Supervisors related to clinical and consultation skills in implementing the Comprehensive Safety Intervention (CSI) model.

Child Protection Supervisors are required to complete a series of trainings to help support and give them guidance in supervision. These trainings include:



There are also elective trainings Supervisors have the opportunity to attend to further support them in supervision of staff.

- Helping Them Grow
- Feeding the Four Tendencies for Supervision
- 16 Personalities for Supervisors: Putting it All Together
- The Challenge of Change for Supervisors
- Managing Remote Workers
- Ignite Leadership: First-Time Supervisors
- Ignite Leadership: Mid-Level Managers and Experienced Supervisors

An emphasis on supervisory staff development including benchmarks of completion is in development; an exploration into the possibility of a supervisory certification program is underway. In SFY25 supervisor feedback was gathered for the structure of these trainings and have determined to implement a "Basics of Supervision" and an "Advanced Supervision" training. Each curriculum is in rough draft form and a supervisory work-group will assist in developing this further.

BHR attended the April/May 2024 Management Team and Supervisor Meeting and presented on the results of the staff engagement survey. This survey was initiated statewide and the data was broken down by department and division. CPS data was presented and attendees at the meeting broke into groups in order to provide additional feedback and recommendations for next steps. The data was then shared with all CPS staff for information. At the beginning of SFY25, a workgroup was formed to review CPS specific data from the BHR engagement survey. In SFY2025, the workgroup completed further analysis and developed recommendations which were submitted to CPS leadership for consideration. CPS Leadership is reviewing the developed recommendations and further steps will be made by the workgroup once guidance from leadership is received.

Supervisor and Management Team meetings were held in SFY2025 and covered the following topics to continue to promote supervisor and management team development:

- **September 2024:** Reactive vs. Proactive Leadership
- **November 2024:** FACIS Legal Screens training, IFA Policy, Fictive Kinship, Communication Styles, IV-E Updates, Guardianship Training
- **May 2025:** Funding Information, Laws that Impact Child Welfare, Caseworker Visit Oversight, CQI Data, Program Improvement Plan, Qualified Residential Treatment Programs, IFA Policy, Prior Miscellaneous Authorizations, Out of State Travel Procedures, ILS Workshops, Youth Speaker,

Initial Family Assessment and Protective Capacity Assessment: CPS has entered into a contract with Action 4 Child Protection to provide ongoing coaching and consultation to be provided as a follow-up to the new curriculum implantation they facilitated. This will include further workshops with staff for skill building as well as one on one coaching with supervisors to ensure fidelity to the model. More information regarding specific supervisor training can be found in the Ongoing Training section.

[Staff Training 2025-2029 Goals](#)

1

Develop Hybrid Training Materials: Create training materials optimized for both virtual and in-person formats to ensure consistency in learning outcomes.

2026 APSR Update:

Beginning in July 2024, South Dakota established a vision to transition the majority of trainings back to in-person delivery, incorporating a virtual pre-certification session to be completed during the week preceding each in-person training. Additionally, virtual modules are being developed to support foundational learning and enhance the utilization of SD Learn. As of February 2025, the Foundations, Permanency and Well-Being, and Initial Family Assessment trainings have adopted a hybrid model consisting of a virtual pre-certification followed by in-person instruction. The Protective Capacity Assessment training has also resumed in-person delivery and is currently going through a curriculum revision to align with updated policy.

2

Standardize Training Assessment Criteria: Establish standardized assessment criteria to evaluate participant competency across all training formats.

2026 APSR Update:

In September 2024, all trainings were reviewed to determine which lacked a pre-test or required revisions to existing assessments. By October 2024, pre-tests were developed for both the Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA) and Foundations trainings, resulting in all trainings having both pre- and post-assessments in place. Following the administration of these assessments, fidelity reviews will be conducted to further identify areas of weakness within the training content. Additionally, pre-tests and post-tests will be migrated to the SD Learn or SurveyMonkey platforms to streamline tracking and data management.

3

Develop Formalized Supervisory Level Training: Create a comprehensive and standardized training program specifically designed for supervisory roles to ensure consistent leadership development.

2026 APSR Update:

In November 2024, a Supervisor Meeting was held to provide supervisors the opportunity to contribute ideas for the development of a new supervisor training curriculum. Based on the input gathered from the supervisor team, an initial draft of the Basics of Supervision curriculum was created. A dedicated workgroup is currently being established to further refine and develop the curriculum and associated training materials.

In April 2024, a supervisor training on the newly developed Initial Family Assessment curriculum was delivered statewide by a contracted agency. This training provided all supervisors—regardless of their level of experience—with a consistent, up-to-date understanding of current policy and practice, ensuring alignment and standardization across the state.

4

Standardize In-Service Training: Implement standardized in-service training programs to ensure ongoing professional development and consistent competency across the agency.

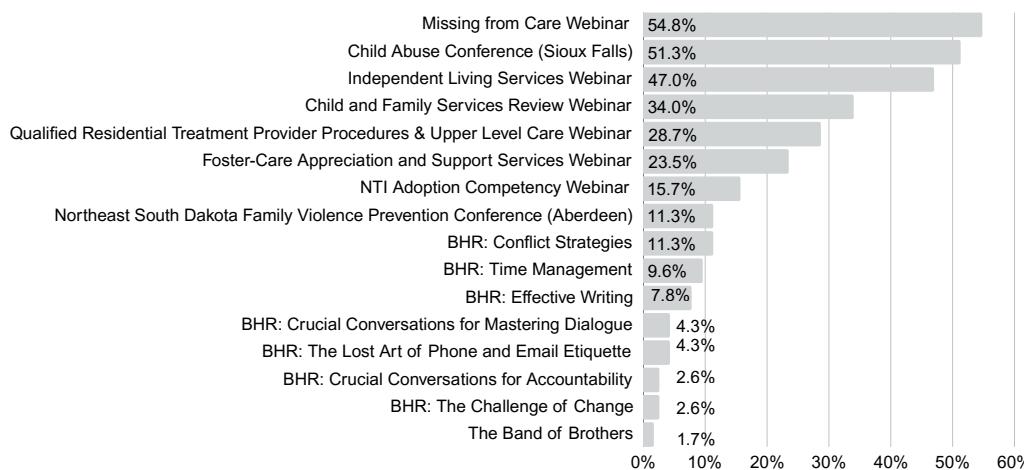
2026 APSR Update:

Exploration of in-service training topics is currently underway. Specific areas under consideration include substance use and addiction, sexual abuse, human trafficking, and compassion fatigue. A particular gap has been identified in training related to substance abuse; as a result, additional in-service training in this area is being further explored to provide ongoing support for staff following initial certification.

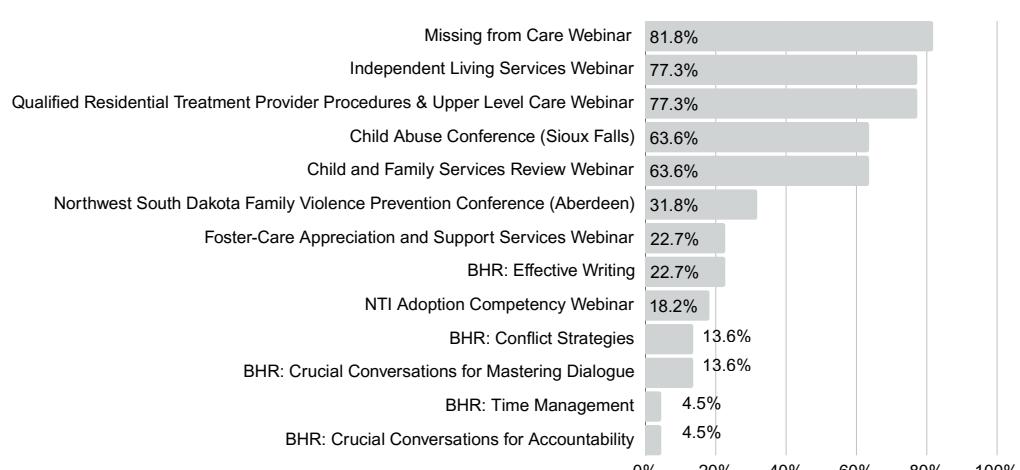
CPS has trained CPS Leadership on Compassion Fatigue. Compassion Fatigue will be implemented into certification training for staff in 2025. Participants will learn the symptoms and science of burn out, secondary trauma, and vicarious trauma, as well as tools for prevention. In addition to Compassion Fatigue, Trauma Training is provided to staff and facilitated by a mental health professional who helps staff understand and respond to their own secondary trauma, as well as client trauma.

In SFY2025, staff and supervisors completed the following ongoing training that addressed skills and knowledge needed to carry out job duties:

Trainings/Conferences Field Staff Have Attended (Available to all staff)

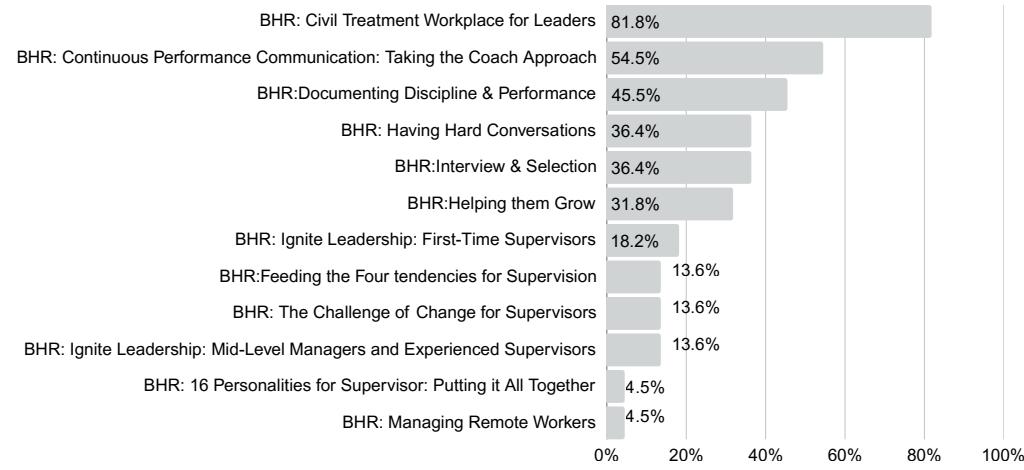


Trainings/Conferences Supervisors Have Attended (Available to all staff)



30
Hours

Trainings/Conferences Supervisors Have Attended (Available to Supervisors only)



Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

Thirty hours of training is provided for all prospective foster and adoptive families in the State of South Dakota. Training is facilitated through a combination of online and classroom sessions to provide added flexibility for families. Training is based on the philosophy that the value of family life for children, however family is defined, is compelling. Because of this, knowledgeable and skilled foster and adoptive parents are integral to providing quality services. The Office of Licensing and Accreditation administers a survey quarterly to families who have completed the training to learn about their training experience and ways training can be enhanced.

Foster and adoptive parent training goals are to help:

- Meet the protective, developmental, cultural and permanency needs of children placed with foster and adoptive families.
- Strengthen families, whether they are families of origin, blended families, extended or kinship families, foster families, adoptive families, or tribal members.
- Strengthen the quality of family foster parenting and adoption services by providing a standardized, structured framework for pre-service training and mutual assessment.

UNITY

UNITY is a curriculum based on the traditions and cultures of Indian people. It is designed to address issues Native American foster parents have identified as important and prepare current and potential foster parents for their critical role as caregivers for Indian children.

UNITY is a 30-hour training curriculum with the following components:

- Foster Parent Orientation
- Human Growth and Development
- Attachment and Loss
- Protecting, Nurturing and Meeting Needs through Discipline
- Historical Trauma and Intergenerational Grief
- Effects of Addiction on Children
- Child Abuse/Neglect and Sexual Abuse
- Promoting Permanency Outcomes
- Kinship Care and Self-Esteem

In addition to training to become a licensed foster parent, additional cultural trainings are being offered to current foster families. Examples of these include the following trainings:

- Cultural Competency Training Services, training is provided by LSS through the WIC Community Innovation and Outreach Project:
 - Part 1- Relating to Norms
 - Part 2- Understanding Values
 - Cultural Language Arts Network Classes
 - Intro Dakota – taught by Summer Dumarce
 - Intermediate Dakota- taught by Dawi Huhu Maza
 - Positive Indian Parenting Classes
 - Indian Child Welfare Act Training presented by CPS Family Services Specialist Supervisor from Watertown, SD.
 - Protective Factors Meets Positive Indian Parenting

[Foster and Adoptive Parent Training 2025-2029 Goal](#)

1

Enhance Foster and Adoptive Parent Training to be more trauma-informed and equip families with specialized skills to care for children with medical and behavioral needs.

2026 APSR Update:

Foster Care Licensing staff, in collaboration with Lutheran Social Services (LSS), continue to implement the National Training and Development Curriculum (NTDC) for preservice training of foster families. In the spring of 2024, LSS facilitated a focus group consisting of current foster families, Child Protection Services (CPS) staff, and the Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA). The focus group was trained on the core NTDC themes, and the curriculum received positive feedback. A Learning Management System was secured through SD Learn, which will be used to deliver both preservice and post-service training to foster families. Ongoing efforts are focused on the development of training materials, including PowerPoint presentations, Facilitator Guides, and Participant Handbooks for each theme. In late summer of 2025, the State of South Dakota will implement the National Training and Development Curriculum (NTDC) for all new foster and adoptive parent applicants. The NTDC is a comprehensive, evidence-based, and trauma-informed curriculum designed to better prepare families to meet the complex needs of children in foster care, including those with medical and behavioral challenges.

In addition to the updated pre-service curriculum, current foster and adoptive families have access to the NTDC "Right-Time" training themes. These trauma-informed themes are designed to provide ongoing support and skill development. These additional training opportunities will better equip families to respond to children's evolving needs through their placement.

In SFY2026, the Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA) will focus on the effective statewide implementation. Throughout the year OLA will actively gather feedback, monitor outcomes, and make data-driven adjustments to ensure families are better equipped to meet the complex needs of children in foster care.

[Service Array and Resource Development](#)

In the 2016 CFSR Round 3, South Dakota was in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development.

South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Service Array.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Statewide Assessment for foundational information regarding South Dakota's Service Array Systemic Factor. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding this systemic factor can be found below.

[Array of Services](#)

Detailed information regarding services in South Dakota can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A7. South Dakota continues to make efforts to ensure access to services for families and children. CPS identifies children and family's needs beginning with the Intake and through the IFA process. At the conclusion of the IFA, the safety evaluation process determines which families are in need of intervention based on child safety. The IFA is a bridge to the PCA which is the ongoing intervention process. The PCA provides the Family Services Specialist with a structured approach for engaging and involving caregivers and children in the case planning process. Intervention services are no longer focused on compliance, but rather on behavior changes. Services to children and families are provided by CPS, as well as community partners through contractual agreements or referral.

CPS provides a full range of child welfare services statewide. Services are provided in the tribal jurisdictions either directly by CPS or under agreements in which the particular Tribe provides the full array of services. The services provided by CPS include parenting education, intake for child abuse and neglect reports, 24/7 emergency response, assessment of abuse and neglect and child safety, ongoing protective services, reunification services to families, independent living services, and permanency planning services. CPS uses the Comprehensive Safety Intervention (CSI) model to respond to reports of abuse and neglect. The CSI is a safety driven model integrated throughout the components of the services to families. CPS coordinates these services with community and tribal providers.

Throughout the creation of the Families First Prevention Plan, CPS has engaged in extensive collaboration with internal and external providers, including interagency staff, parents, caregivers and youth to ensure input from those working with and being provided services from CPS is utilized. CPS provided educational presentations to community partners across the state to allow for those partners to better understand the purpose and goals behind prevention services and efforts.

CPS continued to contract with the ICF consulting agency to support in further planning, development, and implementation of the prevention plan. As a result of this work, a teaming structure was developed to include a Core Team to drive planning efforts, a Prevention Team to help navigate efforts, and a Fiscal Team to plan and identify the multiple funding streams to ensure the greatest impact of the prevention efforts.

The CORE Team meets monthly and is comprised primarily of CPS and DSS Leadership and program staff. To further collaboration with the tribal community, a tribal Indian Child Welfare Act Director and two tribal child protection leads, are involved in the CORE Team meetings, which help drive the creation and monitoring of the progress of the prevention plan.

The Prevention Team brings the most input from stakeholders across the state. By having such a diverse team and range of participants the input from the Prevention Team includes urban, tribal, rural, and even frontier perspectives in South Dakota. There is a prominent and diverse tribal aspect with a variety of representatives involved, such as a young adult with lived experience and a grandmother who is a Common Sense Parenting trainer in addition to raising her grandchildren.

Members of the prevention team are from the following agencies.

- Department of Social Services
- Child Protection Services
- Division of Child Care Services
- Division of Behavioral Health
- Department of Health
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Education
- South Dakota Urban Indian Health
- Division of Criminal Investigation
- State's Attorney Office
- Juvenile Corrections Services
- Department of Tribal Relations
- Family and Youth Representatives
- Youth Providers Association
- Court Appointed Special Advocate
- DSS Board Member
- Monument Health
- Indian Child Welfare Act Coalition
- Public Elementary School Nurse
- Sicangu Children and Family Services
- Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Outside of the Prevention Team significant collaboration and consultation with South Dakota Department of Corrections-Juvenile Services, and the South Dakota DSS Medicaid Team. Through this collaboration CPS was able to help identify what services are already provided through existing services, such as Medicaid, as well as what shared needs are experienced across the state, such as trends with youth who are involved with juvenile services. The goal is to explore CPS can intersect with existing initiatives to best serve the children and families of South Dakota.

Throughout State Fiscal Year 2025 FFPSA efforts have been concentrated on developing policies and procedures for FFPSA service delivery, discovering potential pilot site partners offering evidence based practices, and submitting and revising the FFPSA South Dakota Plan, which was submitted to federal partners in July of 2024. In early SFY 2026, the FFPSA South Dakota Plan will be resubmitted to federal partners for review, including additional detail requested, state policies, and further detail on procedures. In response to the December 2024 issuance of federal guidance related to tribal flexibilities, collaboration with tribal IV-E partners will begin in SFY 2026 to explore rich partnerships and mutual involvement to work towards development of amendments for submission to the FFPSA State Plan, maximizing the opportunity to utilize tribal-relevant services which are not required to demonstrate compliance with the same requirements of being rated as well-supported or rigorous data evaluation like the evidence-based programs available in non-IV-E tribal agreement areas and statewide in South Dakota. West River Mental Health is an early pilot site and an agreement to explore piloting of Parent Child Interaction Therapy, a well-supported program, is in development; the pilot opportunity will begin in SFY 2026.Upon FFPSA Plan approval, South Dakota will pilot and then begin implementing FFPSA services, with a focus on data collection and Continuous Quality Improvement.

South Dakota has implemented three significant initiatives including mobile health units, broadband expansion, and the community health worker program to increase the availability and accessibility of services to residents of South Dakota.

Mobile Health Units



Wellness on Wheels is a mobile unit initiative through the Department of Health that brings community health services to underserved communities, including rural locations, across South Dakota. Communities are able



to request a wellness on wheels visit to have the mobile unit come to their community. Services offered through the Wellness on Wheels mobile unit includes Women, Infants, and Children services, pregnancy care, immunizations, oral health, safe sleep, maternal depression screening, developmental screening, and sexually transmitted infection testing.

Data Source: South Dakota Department of Health <https://doh.sd.gov/programs/wellness-on-wheels/>

Broadband Expansion Initiative

Access to high-speed internet is essential for everything from healthcare to education and economic development. Recognizing the digital divide that affects rural communities, South Dakota has made significant investments in expanding broadband infrastructure. In 2019, as a response to Governor Noem's challenge to bring sustainable, high-speed internet to every home and business in South Dakota, legislature approved a \$5 million allocation that launched the ConnectSD broadband program. ConnectSD has leveraged \$85 million of state general funds along with \$89 million of federal funds and \$127 million of private investment from the broadband providers. These investments total over \$301 million in broadband expansion in the state since Governor Noem took office in 2019. The program has awarded 106 grant awards or projects and has connected or is in the process of connecting almost 32,000 locations that previously did not have internet access or were underserved. In addition to ConnectSD, the Digital Equity Act Program allocates \$2.75 billion to create three grant programs focused on advancing digital equity and inclusion. (Data Source: South Dakota governor's Office of Economic Development)

These initiatives are designed to ensure that all individuals and communities have the skills, technology, and resources necessary to fully participate in and benefit from the digital economy. The South Dakota Digital Opportunity Plan outlines an inclusive strategy to close the digital divide, aligning with the state's broader economic objectives. South Dakota recognizes equipping its residents with the technologies and skills of the 21st century is essential for maintaining its way of life and supporting the vitality of its small towns. The state plans to fully leverage the funding available through the Digital Equity Act, using this Plan as a guiding framework. The plan's vision is to ensure every citizen will have access to affordable, future-proof, high-speed internet, along with the means to utilize it safely and competently. The plan's objectives include: Improve access to and adoption of affordable high-speed internet, enhance accessibility of public services online, increase access to digital literacy curriculums, increase access to cybersecurity curriculums, and expand access to computing devices for accessing the internet. Broadband expansion has significantly improved accessibility to telehealth services, including mental health care, by providing more widespread and reliable internet connections, especially in rural or underserved areas.

With better internet access, individuals in remote locations can now engage in virtual healthcare consultations, reducing the need for travel and overcoming geographical barriers. Individuals also have access to online applications that prior to this expansion they would have to drive to the particular office to receive such as Child Care Assistance, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications. High-speed internet facilitates video calls, enabling real-time interactions between patients and healthcare providers, which is essential for effective telehealth, including mental health support.

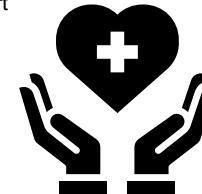
For mental health services, this has been particularly impactful, as individuals can access therapy, counseling, and psychiatric consultations from the privacy and comfort of their own homes. Furthermore, as broadband networks become more affordable and widely available, more people can participate in telehealth, including those with limited access to transportation or those living in areas with fewer healthcare facilities. Broadband expansion has also contributed to better access to mental health resources, remote monitoring tools, and digital health platforms, empowering individuals to manage their mental well-being. Ultimately, the growth of broadband infrastructure has been a key enabler of telehealth's evolution, enhancing equity in healthcare by making both physical and mental health services more accessible to a diverse population.

South Dakota's Community Health Worker Program

Community Health Representatives have worked across South Dakota for 50 years, however beginning in 2015, South Dakota Department of Health began work to develop a Community Health Worker workforce across South Dakota. In 2015, the Department of Health conducted an environmental scan and statewide analysis of the Community Health Worker workforce. In 2016, The Department of Health and Department of Social Services co-facilitated a workgroup to develop key recommendations for Community Health Workers in South Dakota. From there, in 2017 and 2018, the Department of Social Services drafted a Medicaid State Plan Amendment and submitted it to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for review. The Medicaid State Plan Amendment was approved and on April 1, 2019 the Department of Social Services announced Community Health Worker services as a covered service of South Dakota Medicaid under fee-for-service reimbursement. From 2020 to 2022 the state of South Dakota launched a workgroup, developed a strategic plan, established relationships with Community Health Representatives, was awarded the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Health Disparities Grant, and partnered with organizations in South Dakota to further develop supports for the workforce development. In 2022, South Dakota launched the first Community Health Workers programs and since then relationships with Community Health Representative programs continue to develop. This program uses local residents to provide health education, outreach, and support services in their communities. CHWs help individuals in underserved

rural areas navigate the healthcare system, access preventative care, and manage chronic conditions. This program has been instrumental in improving health outcomes, especially in high-risk rural communities. developmental screening, and sexually transmitted infection testing.

(Data Source: Department of Health Website <https://doh.sd.gov/about/community-engagement/community-health-workers/>)



EMS Telemedicine in Motion

"Telemedicine in Motion: EMS" is a groundbreaking initiative launched in South Dakota on November 14, 2022. This initiative is designed to integrate telemedicine into the state's emergency medical services (EMS) and enables EMS agencies to equip their ambulances with iPads that connect them to Avel eCare's emergency medicine specialists in Sioux Falls. Whenever EMS teams need assistance, they can consult with doctors and nurses during transit, improving patient care in real-time. The program was launched through the leadership of Governor Kristi Noem, who advocated for increased funding to support local EMS agencies. As a first-of-its-kind program in the United States, it is poised to strengthen the sustainability of EMS services across South Dakota and enhance the quality of care in communities statewide.

The goal of the Telemedicine in Motion: EMS program is to ensure that emergency medical crews are no longer isolated when transporting patients to larger hospitals, especially in rural areas. Eighty percent of South Dakota's ambulance services are staffed by volunteers and may find themselves in critical situations without immediate access to advanced medical expertise.

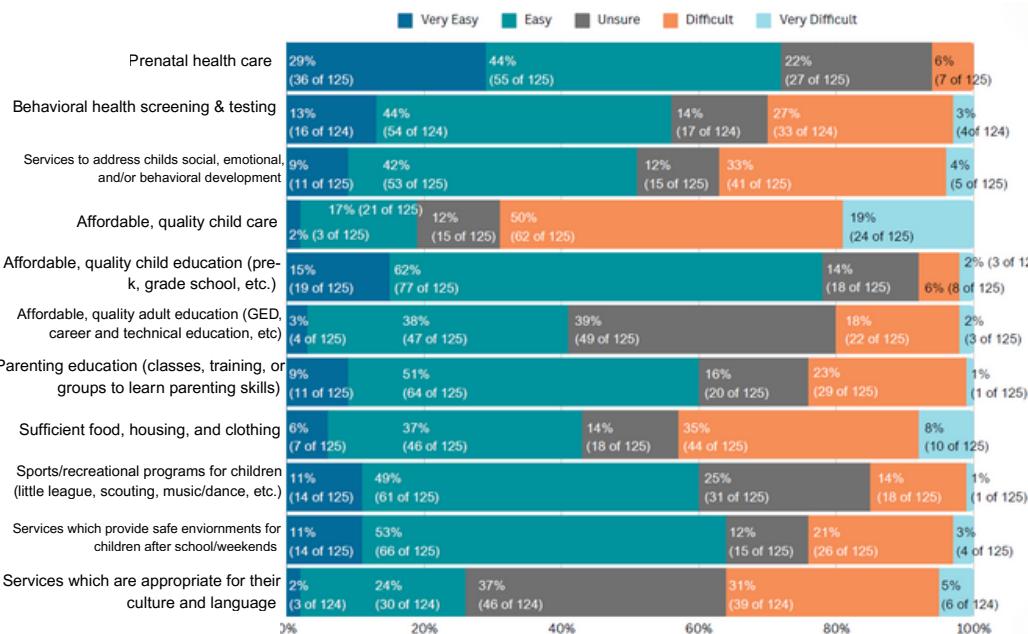
By connecting EMS crews with Avel eCare's board-certified emergency physicians and experienced nurses via telemedicine, this program provides crucial support during transit. This additional layer of professional guidance will help EMS personnel make informed decisions and deliver more effective care. For rural South Dakota communities, where access to specialized medical professionals may be limited, having emergency physicians and nurses on hand through the telemedicine system is a significant enhancement. It ensures that patients receive timely and expert care even before reaching the hospital, improving outcomes and overall medical experiences for those in need. Since the implementation in 2022, 107 communities statewide have been positively impacted.

(Data Source: Department of Health's Website <https://doh.sd.gov/healthcare-professionals/ems-trauma-program/ems-telemedicine/>)

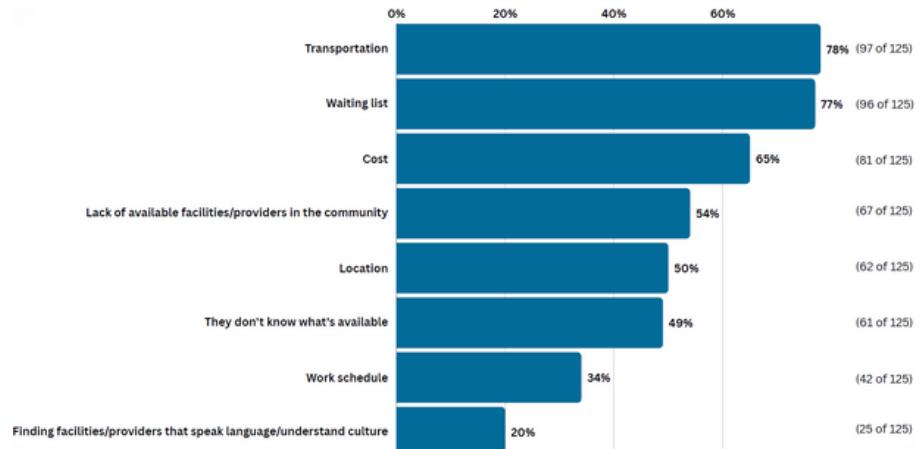
[Stakeholder Feedback on Availability and Accessibility of Services under all Jurisdictions Covered under the CFSP](#)

A detailed description of engagement with stakeholders that occurred in SFY2025 can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A1.

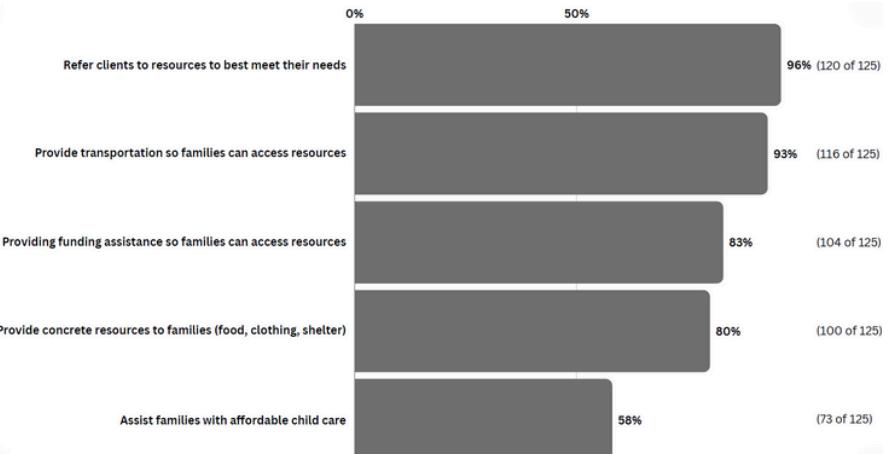
In State Fiscal Year 2025, a survey was administered to staff and included questions regarding service array. One hundred and twenty-five staff provided input regarding the ease of families' ability to access community services and the results are displayed below:



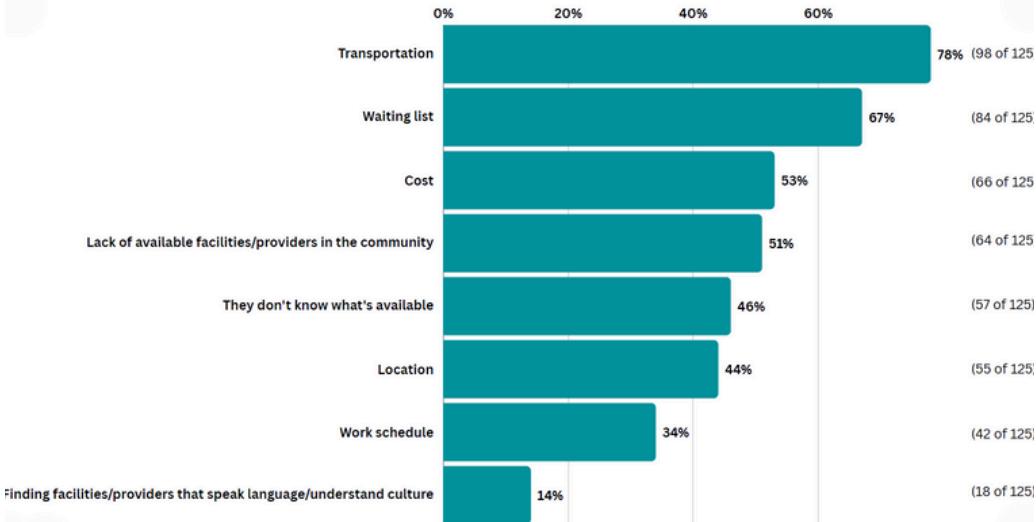
Staff identified the following barriers to accessing mental health resources:



Staff identified the following ways they support families in accessing services:



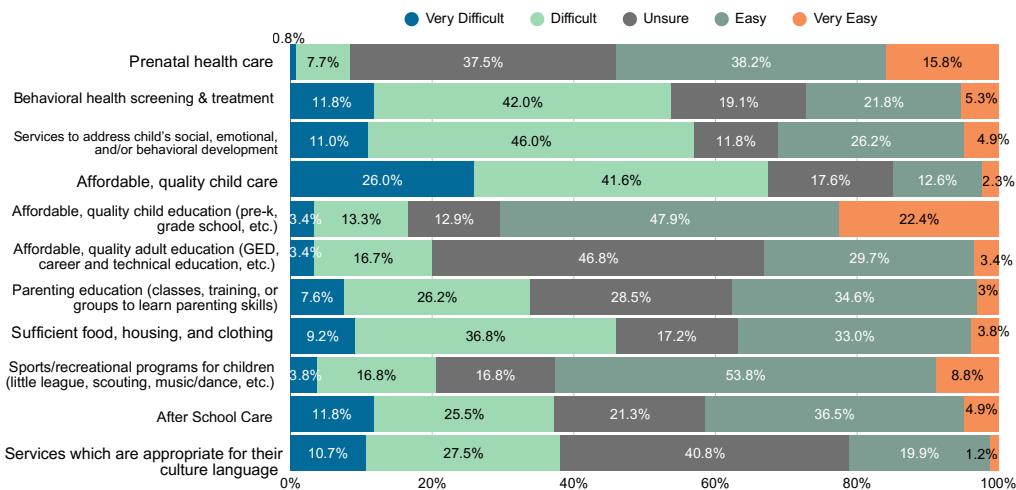
Staff identified the following barriers to accessing substance use/abuse resources:



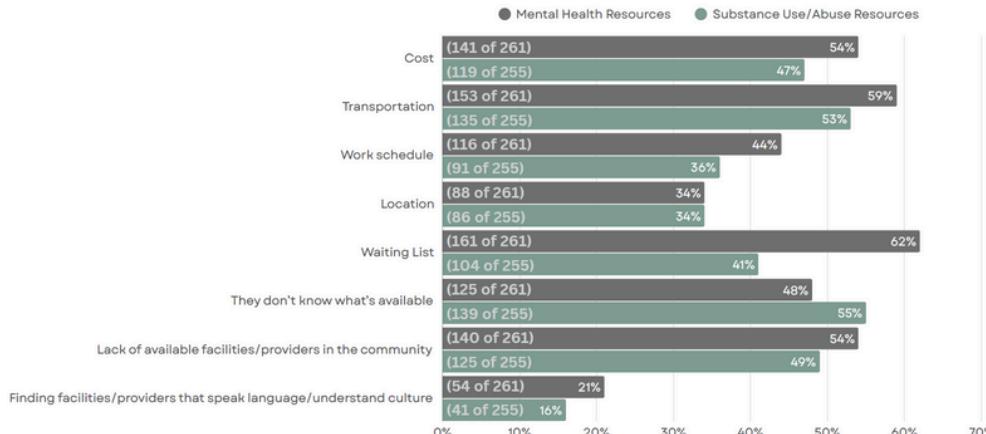
Community Stakeholder Engagement

CPS seeks input from stakeholders, parents, and youth about service array and delivery in their area. Please see Quality Assurance section for more detail regarding youth and parent surveys. There are six Regional Reviews held each year where the Administrator of CQI and Outcomes provides a stakeholder survey to several community partners, including State Court Judges, Tribal Judges, State's Attorneys, Tribal Prosecutors, child's attorneys, parent's attorneys, CASA directors, mental health directors, domestic violence shelter directors, drug and alcohol service providers, ICWA directors, BIA Social Services directors, law enforcement officials, family visitation center directors, court services officers, parole agents, schools and residential/group care facility representatives. Regional Reviews will resume in SFY2026.

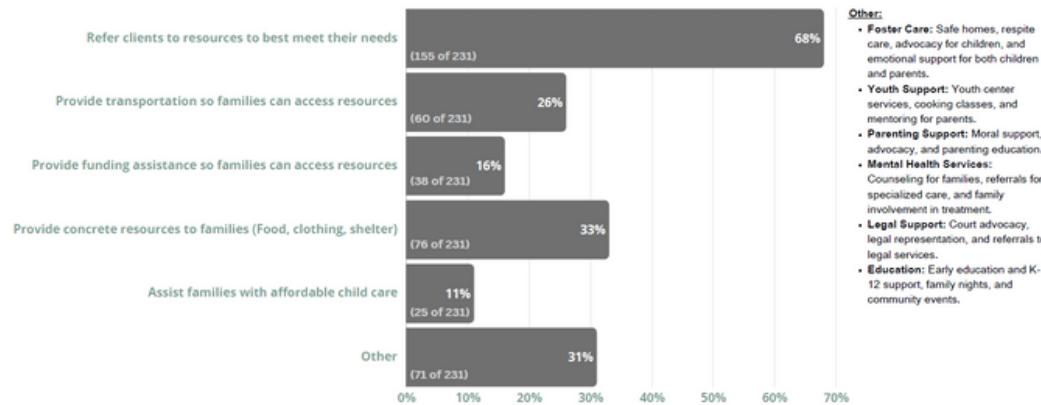
In State Fiscal Year 2025, a survey was administered to stakeholders and included questions regarding service array. Stakeholders provided input regarding the ease of families' ability to access community services and the results are displayed below:



Stakeholders identified the following barriers to accessing services



Stakeholders identified the following ways they support families



Tribal Engagement

Nine tribal nations are located within South Dakota, with CPS providing direct child protection services for five of these nine tribes. The four tribes that provide their own full array of child welfare services are the Flandreau Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and the Oglala Sioux Tribe. The tribes directly served by CPS are the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, and Yankton Sioux Tribe. CPS has Title IV-E agreements with these four tribes. Each of the tribes have tribal courts and tribal law enforcement. There are several similarities with the protocol with the courts and law enforcement with the five tribes compared to non-tribal law enforcement and courts. The similarities include the option for joint investigations, provisions for law enforcement to take emergency custody, and abuse/neglect actions through the court with the court being able to give custody, care, and placement responsibility to CPS. The FBI and U.S. Attorney's Office also have jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute criminal child abuse on the reservations. Tribes have representation in many internal and external workgroups related to services provided by South Dakota's child welfare system. Refer to Tribal Collaboration for further information

Through storytelling, the tribes shared their communities' strengths, opportunities or challenges, and areas of concerns in services; these themes are identified below.

Strengths:

- Developed service arrays
- Investment in families and community
- Creative systems to address basic needs
- Cultural/traditional methods to address family needs

Opportunities or Challenges:

- Housing
- Substance use disorder services/treatment
- Lack of cultural services
- General lack of services in geographical areas
- Lack of community/familial connection

Areas of Concern:

- EBPs lack cultural or traditional component
- Infrastructure, funding, and resources to support direct Title IV-E drawdown
- Necessary collaboration for Title IV-E pass-through funding
- How to ensure their voices are heard

The support of Positive Indian Parenting through Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant funds will continue. Other programs such as Family Spirit and Lakota Circles of Hope would be considered for IV-E reimbursement if a program were to achieve the well-supported rating in the Clearinghouse. These programs are reported to be provided in the state by various community organizations.

Additional engagement included involvement of two tribal members for the development of the request for proposal to obtain the consultant to organize family first prevention planning, scoring of proposals, review of contract, and involvement in teaming structure. Meetings with the ICWA Coalition leads to gather historical information on preferred methods of engaging tribes and provide information on the elements and requirements of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) occurred, including the SD ICWA Coalition meeting in Rapid City. CPS values the involvement of Native representation at all levels of planning, development, and implementation of the prevention plan and the pace at which this planning process has proceeded was intentional in order to organize this involvement. As a result, the Core and Prevention teams have benefited from tribal voice in discussion and decision-making.

Consultants from ICF along with members of DSS met individually with tribal officials on tribal lands to present an overview of FFPSA and begin the process of consultation to gain input from each of these tribes. CPS values the involvement of Native representation at all levels of planning, development, and implementation of the prevention plan. The ICWA Program Specialist has ensured that ICF maintained up-to-date contact information for the tribes throughout the process. As a result, the Core and Prevention teams have incorporated Tribal perspectives into discussions and decision-making processes.

A meeting is scheduled for July 1, 2025, in Sioux Falls to reconvene the Prevention team, finalize the FFPSA Plan, review all submitted information, and prepare the revised plan for resubmission to the Children's Bureau for approval. **Engagement efforts with Tribes related to the Family First Prevention Plan can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A8 and Attachment A9.**

Youth Engagement

Positive Youth Development (PYD) remains the foundation of South Dakota's Independent Living Program (ILS), with Young Voices at the center of youth engagement and policy influence. This youth-led initiative ensures that practices are informed by lived experience and encourages youth to use their stories to drive system improvement, personal growth, and community awareness.

Throughout SFY25, Young Voices members actively participated in shaping Independent Living services, engaging in recruitment strategies, and system reform efforts:

Ongoing Planning and Collaboration

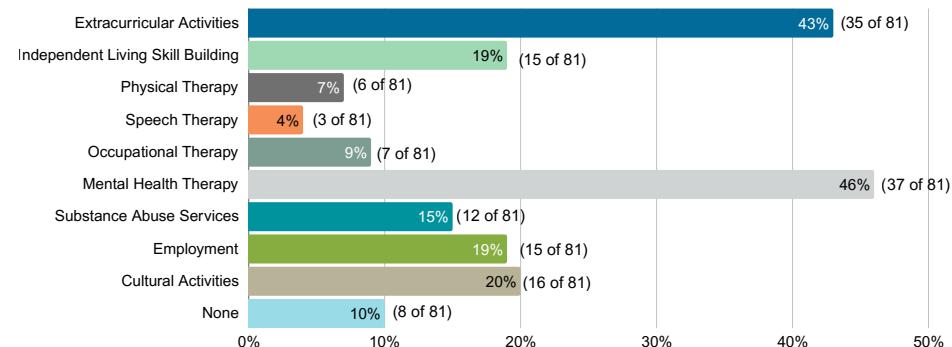
- Throughout the year, all Independent Living Services (ILS) events, including youth workshops and workgroup meetings, included discussions with youth and supportive adults about how to use lived experiences in recruitment efforts. Strategies included in-person presentations and social media engagement. Youth contributing to these initiatives are compensated through Chafee funds.

Youth Engagement Events – SFY25

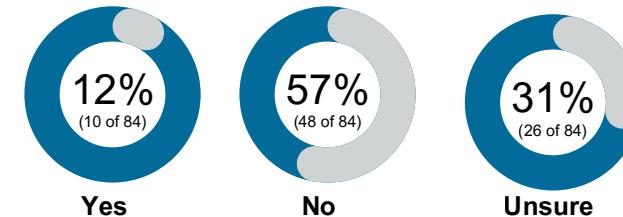
- June 2024: The ILS Program Specialist and Community Resource Team hosted the annual ILS conference in Pierre, SD, attended by over 100 youth. A former Young Voices member delivered the keynote, sharing her foster care journey, transition to adulthood, and her ongoing advocacy efforts.
- October 2024: Three young adults presented to providers at the Human Services Psychiatric Center in Yankton. Their message focused on preparing youth in treatment for independent living. The session was impactful enough that they were invited to speak directly with youth in the long-term placement, offering encouragement and practical advice.
- November 2024: Two young adults attended a showing of The Sound of Hope at the Elks Theater in Rapid City, an event aimed at recruiting foster homes. Though they did not present, their presence was recognized privately and appreciated by DSS Cabinet Secretary Matt Althoff.
- January 2025:
 - Two young adults joined the Independent Living Program Specialist at a foster parent quarterly training. While the specialist presented program information, the young adults shared deeply personal experiences. Their stories left a lasting impact—one family in attendance expressed interest in fostering older youth.
- February 2025: Three young adults spoke at the SD Association of Youth Care Providers quarterly meeting in Pierre. Their presentation focused on:
 - The value of provider participation in Age Meetings
 - Ensuring youth retain educational credits during residential placements
 - Teaching practical life skills to help youth prepare for adulthood
- May 2025:
 - Two young adults presented to CPS Supervisors, Regional Managers, Program Specialists, and Leadership, focusing on the role of caseworkers in building trust, being consistent, and showing up for youth. They reflected on how those relationships shaped their healing and impacted their transition into adulthood.
 - Two foster youth graduates were featured on the Department of Social Services Facebook and Instagram social media pages, celebrating their high school graduations, and highlighting their future planning and aspirations.
- June 2025:
 - Several youths who transitioned from care will serve as keynote speakers at the upcoming ILS conferences in Sioux Falls and Rapid City. In addition to sharing their stories, they will help lead conference activities to encourage peer engagement and comfort among current foster youth.
 - These same young adults will also present at the Homeless Summit in Pierre, SD. Their session will offer provider insights into how to better meet the needs of young adults experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
 - Two college students who transitioned out of care will share their experiences with post-secondary education and how the Educational Training Voucher (ETV) helped them alleviate financial burdens and supported their academic success through the Department of Social Services Facebook and Instagram social media posts.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, a survey was administered to youth with lived experience and included questions regarding service array. Youth provided input regarding services they have participated in.

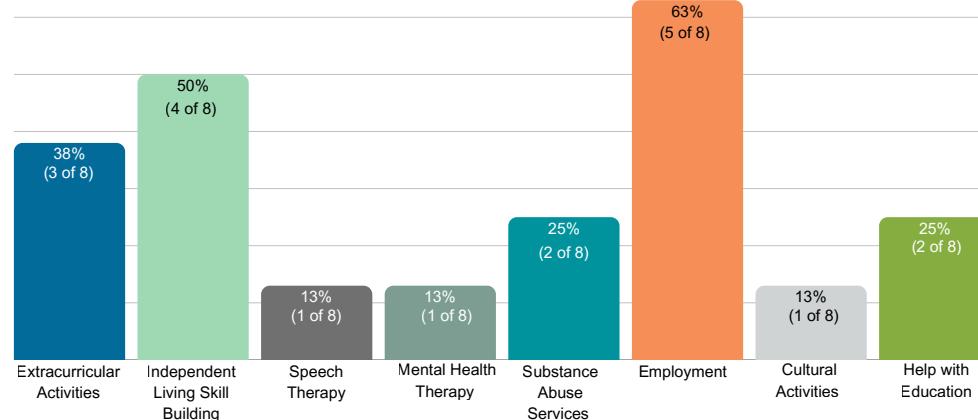
Current services/activities involved in:



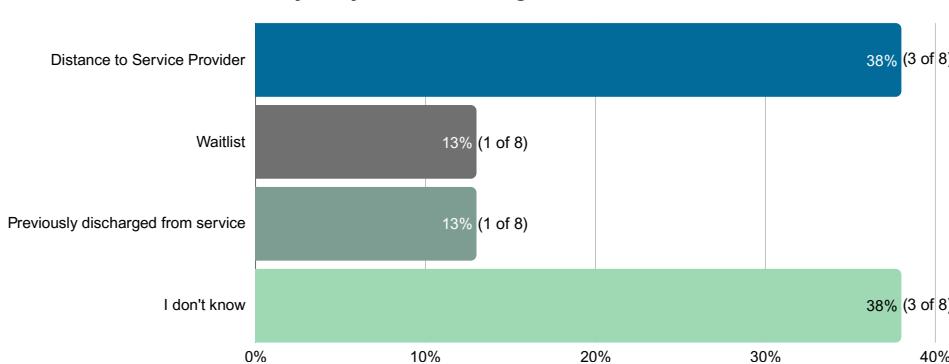
Are there services you need?



Services Needed:



Why are you not receiving these services?



Ongoing Goals and Action Steps for SFY26

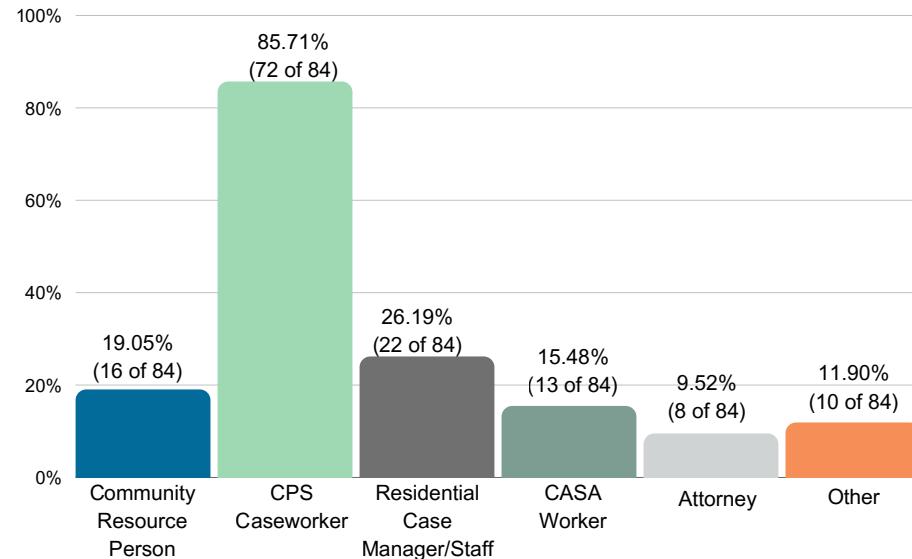
The Independent Living Program Specialist and Community Resource Team will continue to build on youth engagement and advocacy efforts through the following planned activities in SFY26:

- Youth Presentations at Statewide Conferences: In August 2025, former foster youth have been invited to speak at the Behavioral Health and Suicide Prevention Conference in Sioux Falls. They will share their lived experiences related to mental health prevention, treatment, and recovery supports.
- Training Videos Featuring Youth Perspectives: Videos featuring former foster youth sharing their experiences in care will continue to be recorded and used as training tools for new staff. These videos are designed to demonstrate the impact that child welfare professionals have on the lives of the youth they serve.
- Statewide In-Person Presentations to DSS Staff: Former foster youth will present during all-staff meetings held for Family Services Specialists across the state. These sessions will focus on the critical role of caseworkers in building trust, maintaining consistency, and fostering meaningful relationships that contribute to healing and a successful transition into adulthood.
- Social Media Advocacy through Stronger Families Together: DSS will continue to produce and share photos and short video clips for the Stronger Families Together social media campaign. These posts will celebrate the achievements of youth formerly in care while raising awareness about the ongoing need for foster homes, particularly for older youth.
- Faith-Based Community Engagement: Former foster youth will present at a faith-based gathering hosted by the Stronger Families Together initiative, helping to educate and engage communities in supporting youth in care.
- Foster Parent Orientations and Trainings: Youth speakers will continue to participate in orientations and training sessions for new or prospective foster parents, sharing their personal stories to highlight the real-life impact of committed, supportive caregivers and highlight the need for more foster homes for older youth.
- Increasing outreach to Native youth to join Young Voices, to ensure stronger tribal representation in shaping ILS programming.
- Development of Young Voices Framework: Current members of Young Voices are working to establish clear leadership, membership, presentation, and incentive guidelines. These efforts aim to strengthen the structure of the group, support recruitment of future members, and encourage more consistent participation from youth currently in care.

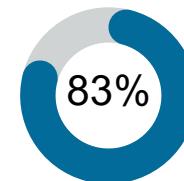
During the spring of SFY25, South Dakota administered the annual youth survey to gather youth perspectives on key outcome areas, including safety, permanency, and well-being. The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team will analyze the results in SFY26, identifying trends and areas needing improvement. Young Voices will be engaged in reviewing the data and assisting in developing actionable strategies aimed at improving outcomes in partnership with the CQI and Independent Living Services (ILS) teams.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, a survey was sent to Youth with Lived Experience. Ninety-One youth across the state of South Dakota provided responses regarding their experience in foster care. The following charts represent information gathered in the 2025 Youth Survey regarding communication with agency staff and additional support individuals:

What workers do you meet with on at least a monthly basis?



Youth provided the following information regarding their experience with Court Hearings:



19 of 23 youth reported they have the opportunity to speak in court.



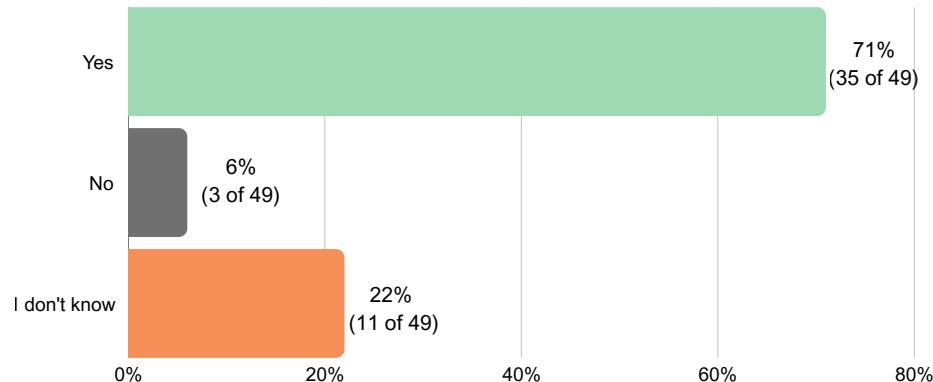
32 of 32 youth reported having the ability to give their opinion to their attorney.

Youth provided the following information regarding their case plan and their involvement in developing their case plan:

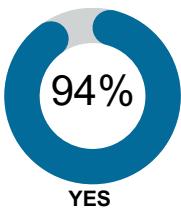
62%

51 of 82 youth reported they have a child case plan. 26 of 82 were unsure if they had a case plan.

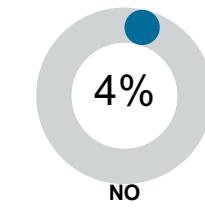
Of youth who had a child case plan, 71% (35 of 49) reported having involvement in developing their case plan by providing input.



The following graph represents youth's responses regarding discussions with their case worker about their case plan.



46 of 49 youth reported that their CPS worker discusses their case plan with them.



2 of 49 youth reported that their CPS worker does not discuss their case plan.



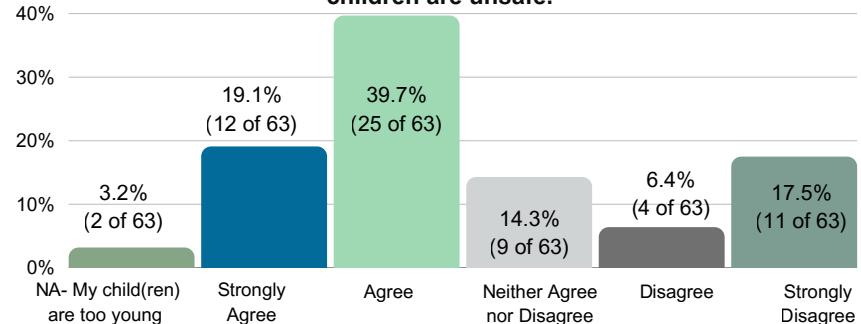
1 of 49 youth was unsure if their CPS worker discusses their case plan with them.

Parent/Caregiver Engagement

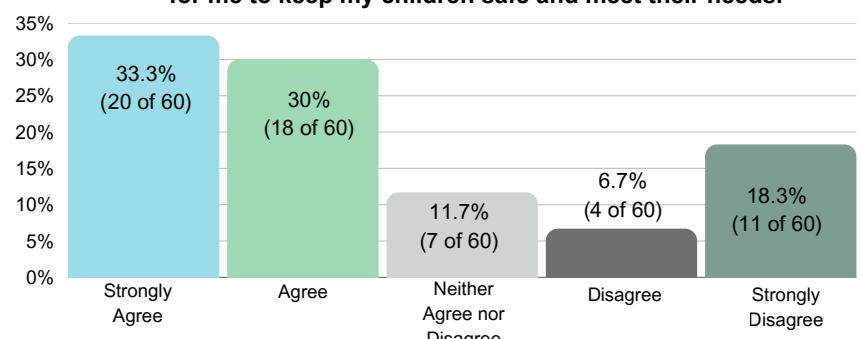
A parents with lived experiences survey was distributed via Survey Monkey and paper copies to parents who have worked with CPS, regardless of their outcome, in the past year. The survey was open for two months. In total, 1,066 parents were sent the survey, and 74 individuals participated in the survey. The survey results indicate that over half of respondents expressed positive perceptions of their caseworkers across several key areas. Specifically, a majority agreed or strongly agreed that their caseworker listens attentively and demonstrates a genuine effort to understand their family's unique circumstances. Respondents also highlighted that caseworkers generally follow through on their commitments, recognize strengths within the family related to the care, safety, and well-being of their children, and show genuine care for the family while discussing necessary changes to ensure children's safety at home.

The following chart displays parents/caregiver's responses to their involvement in the case planning process:

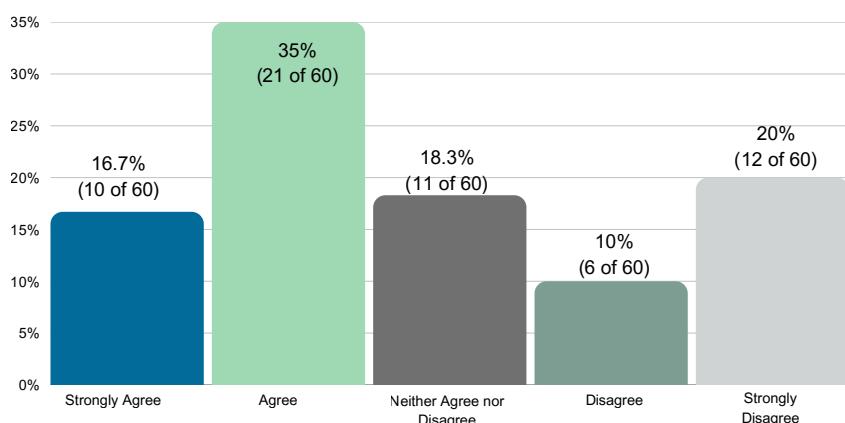
My caseworker has been clear with me about why or how my children are unsafe.



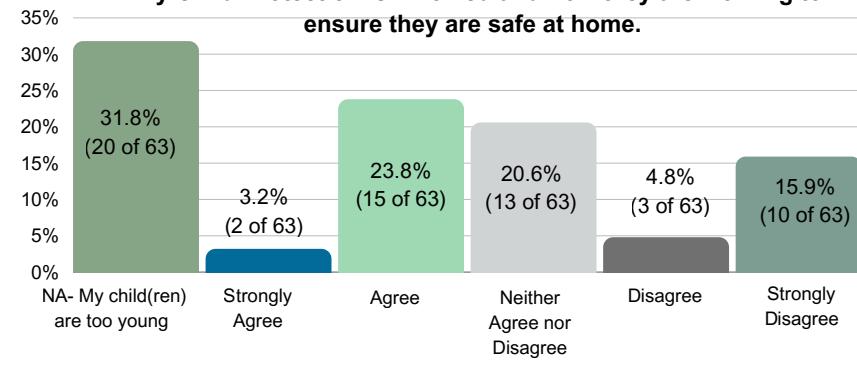
I have been involved in planning what needs to change in order for me to keep my children safe and meet their needs.



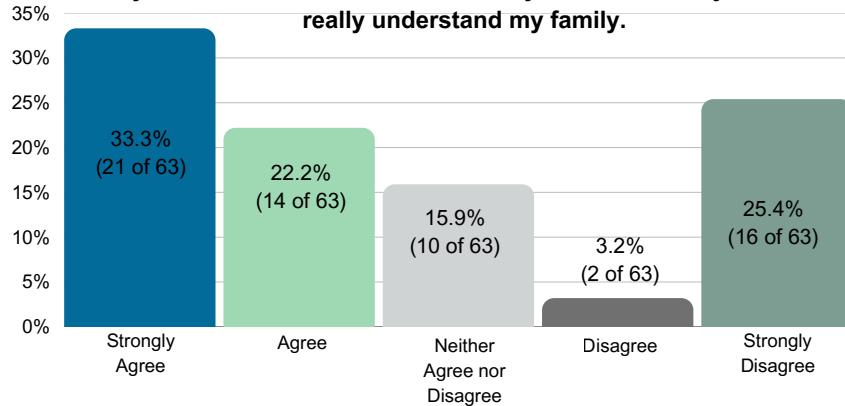
I have been involved in case planning for my children to ensure their individual needs are met either in my home or while they are placed out of the home.



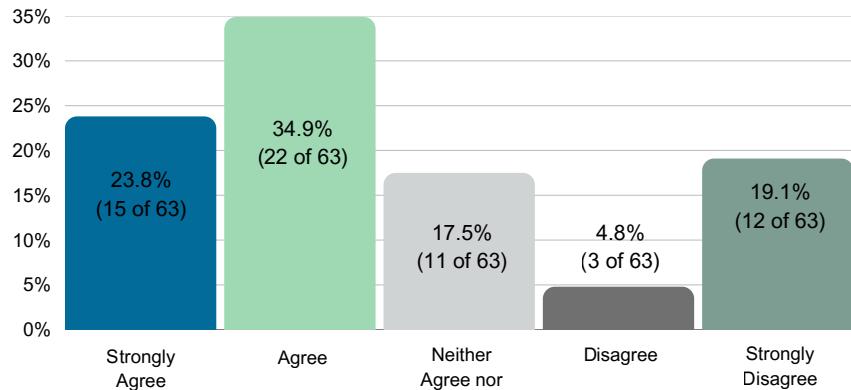
My caseworker has made sure my child(ren) fully understand why Child Protection is involved and how they are working to ensure they are safe at home.



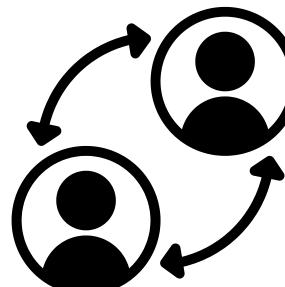
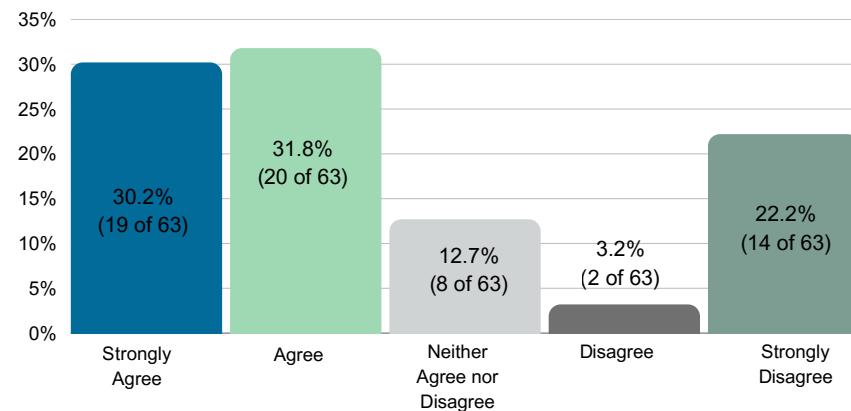
My caseworker listens to me in a way that shows they want to really understand my family.



My caseworker notices what's working well in my family regarding the care, safety and wellbeing of my child(ren).



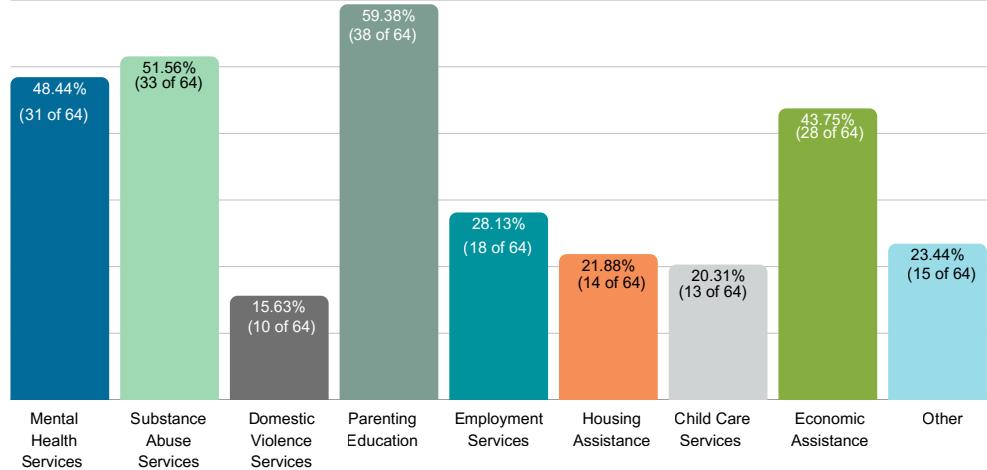
My caseworker cares about my family and what changes need to happen to make my children safe in the home.



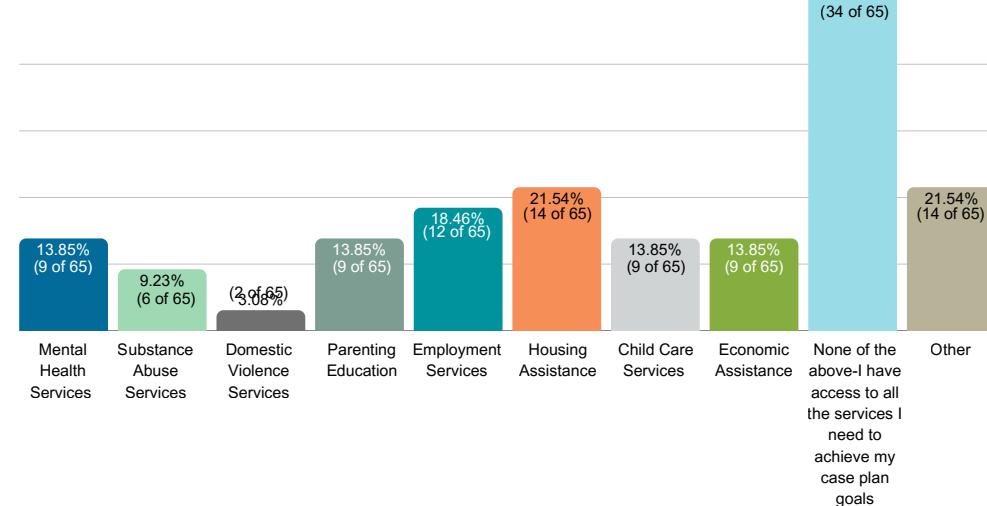
Groups of parents and caregivers were recruited in the Brookings, Pierre and Sioux Falls areas to assist with cognitive interviewing in relation to parent surveys which are slated to be sent out the Summer of 2024. Cognitive interviewing is a technique used to evaluate survey questions to determine whether the true meaning of the question, as intended by the evaluator, is conveyed to respondents, and more generally whether the question is functioning as intended. The CQI Team conducted the interviews in Sioux Falls on May 29, 2024, and in Pierre on May 31, 2024 and in Brookings on June 5, 2024 and June 11, 2024. There was a total of 20 parents who participated in the cognitive interviews and 65% of these parents were Native American. They provided valuable feedback, which was used to make updates to the survey utilized in SFY2025.

The survey specifically asks parents what services they utilized to achieve their case plan goals, how services were individualized to address their specific needs, if there were services they needed, but did not have access to, and what barriers, if any, prevented them from receiving services. One of the survey questions asked parents if they want to participate in a focus group that will review the results of the survey and participate in joint planning on how to improve children and parents experience when they are involved in the child welfare system in South Dakota. All the parents interviewed expressed this being excellent and how valuable it is to have parents with lived experience involved in that process, majority wanted to participate in the focus group. Lutheran Social Services organized the purchase of gift cards for appreciation of participation in these sessions. The survey is scheduled to be sent out July 2024 and will target current parents involved with CPS, both in home and placement cases, as well as parents who have closed child welfare cases within the last year.

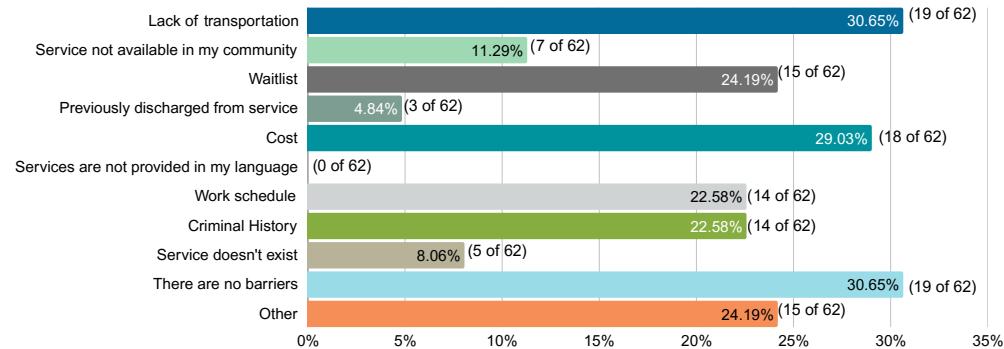
In State Fiscal Year 2025, a survey was administered to parents with lived experience and included questions regarding service array. Parents provided input regarding services they have utilized to achieve case plan goals and barriers to accessing services.



Parents provided the following information regarding services they need but don't have access to:

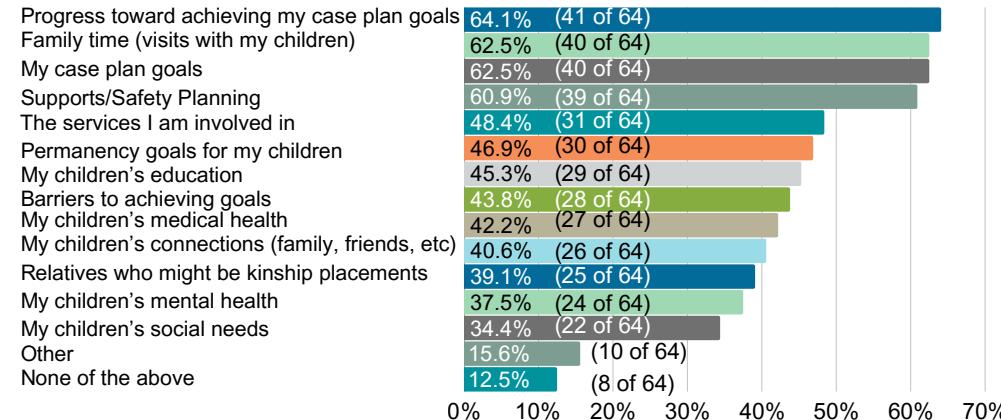


Parents identified the following barriers which prevent them from receiving services:

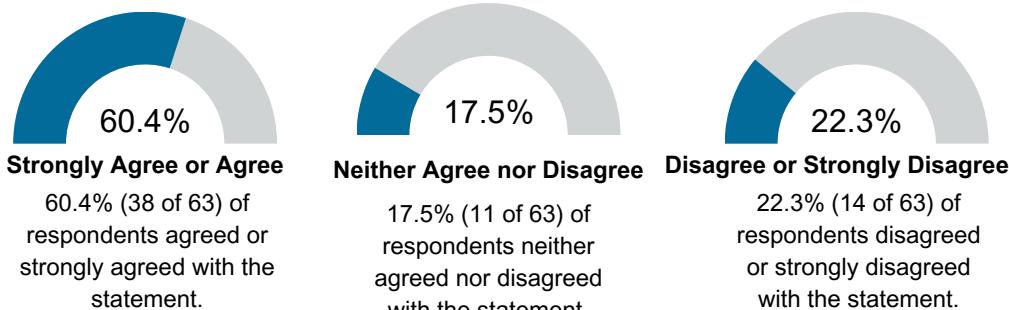


The parent survey revealed that 69.4% (43 of 62) of parents reported having at least monthly face-to-face meetings with their caseworker. 12.9% (8 of 62) had face-to-face meetings less than once a month, and 17.7% (11 of 62) never had any in-person meetings. Several factors can affect these meeting frequencies, such as parents living out of state, being incarcerated, or having limited access to in-person contact due to restrictions in prisons, jails, or treatment facilities. Additionally, the length of the case and the parent's situation can further influence the ability to meet face-to-face.

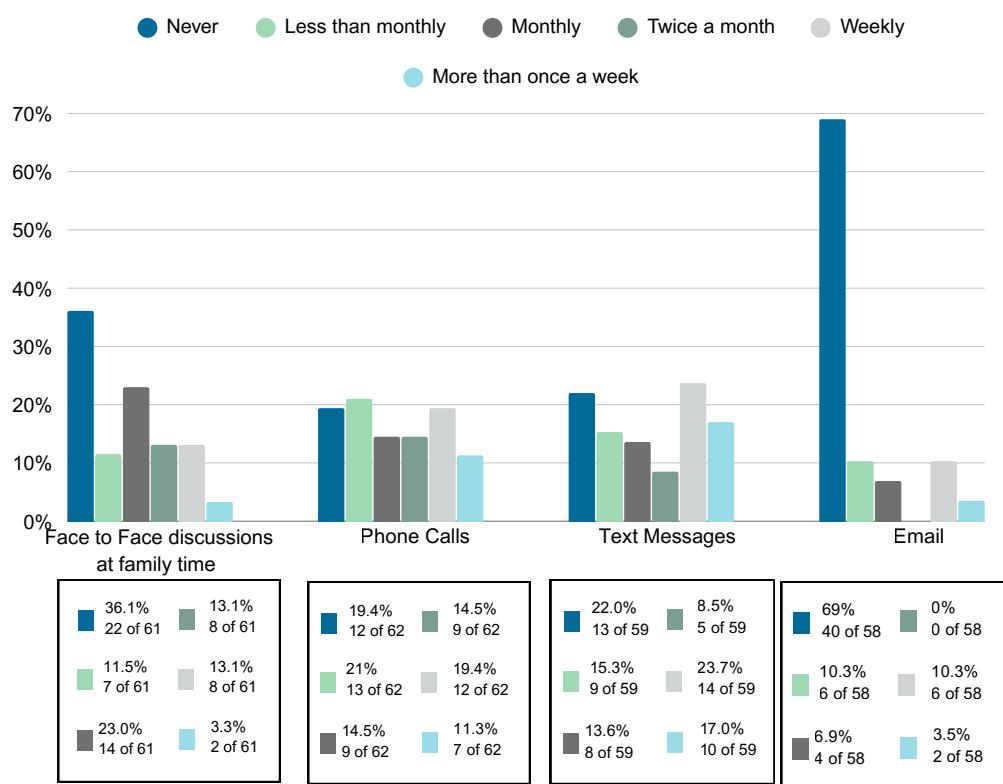
During face to face meetings, parents and caregivers reported to discuss the following topics with their caseworkers:



Parents and caregivers shared their level of agreement with the statement, "Face-to-face meetings with my caseworker are of sufficient quality to discuss my family's needs, goals, and services," through the Parents with Lived Experiences Survey.

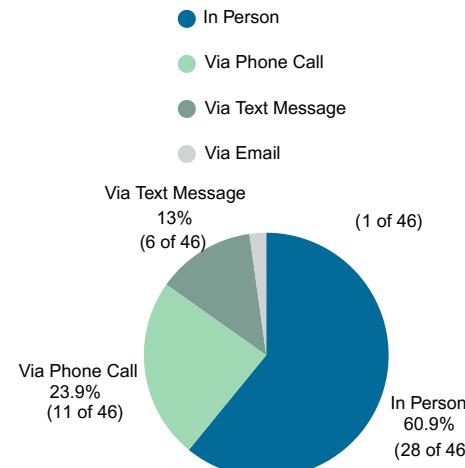


In addition to face-to-face meetings, ongoing communication through phone calls, text messages, and during family time plays a crucial role in supporting the ongoing case plan process. These alternative methods help maintain consistent contact between the caseworker and parent/caregiver, ensuring continuous collaboration and updates. Regular communication, even outside in-person meetings, strengthens the partnership between the caseworker and parent/caregiver, allowing for timely support, clarification of goals, and addressing any concerns. This ongoing communication is essential for keeping the case plan on track and fostering a positive, supportive relationship that benefits the family's progress. Through the parent survey, parents/caregivers provided the following feedback regarding the frequency of communication with their caseworker based on the form of communication.

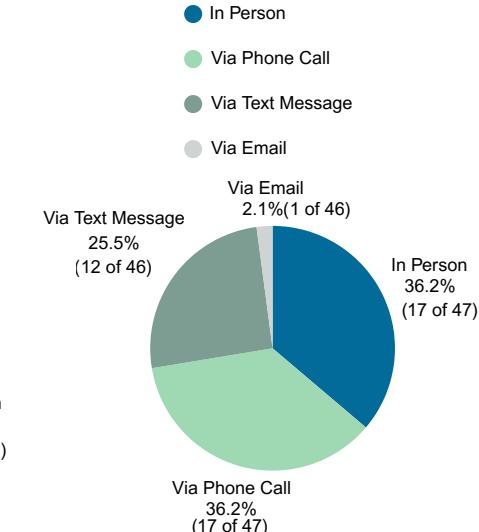


The next two figures reflect data gathered by questions about the method in which important updates are communicated. In person and phone call communication were found to be the most frequent forms of communication between parents and caseworkers when discussing progress on case plan goals and information regarding services.

My progress on my case plan goals.



Information regarding services.



Parent collaborative workgroup: In State Fiscal Year 2026, the collaborative work to strengthen child welfare efforts will continue with a focus on active engagement and partnership. The parent workgroup, facilitated by the Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment, will be fully operational, with parents engaged in meaningful dialogue and planning to improve agency practices and service delivery. These efforts will ensure that the lived experiences and insights of parents inform policy and practice improvements. Communication between the contracting agency and Child Protection Services will remain ongoing, with regular updates and coordination to support the workgroup's progress and align efforts across agencies. This phase builds on the foundation laid through initial and follow-up meetings in December 2024 and March 2025, where survey data was analyzed and one-on-one interviews helped gauge stakeholder interest and readiness to participate.

In State Fiscal Year 2026, the agency will remain committed to meaningful engagement with stakeholders, including tribes, youth, and parents, by continuing to facilitate inclusive workgroups and conduct targeted surveys. These efforts ensure that diverse perspectives are actively incorporated into decision-making processes, fostering transparency and collaboration. By maintaining open lines of communication and encouraging participation from all community members, the agency aims to create more responsive and equitable programs and policies that reflect the needs and priorities of those it serves. Surveys will be administered to stakeholders in July 2025, and youth and parents in March 2026.

1 Develop a Parent Collaborative workgroup to assist in identifying strengths and barriers in accessing and individualizing services for children and families.

2 Continue engagement with Young Voices to ensure services to youth are appropriate and individualized.

2026 APSR Update on Service Array and Resource Development Goals:

Initial and follow up meetings with the Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment were held in December 2024. During meetings, data from survey results were analyzed and plans for initial meetings with focus group members were discussed. An additional meeting was held in March 2025 to discuss progress updates. The Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment was conducting one-on-one interviews to assess the willingness to participate in the stakeholder groups. Child Protection Services receives monthly updates regarding progress towards finalization of a parent collaborative workgroup from the Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment.

South Dakota's Young Voices group continues to serve as a vital youth advisory body, providing current and former foster youth with the opportunity to engage with peers, share lived experiences, and contribute to the improvement of child welfare policies and practices. The Department actively seeks input from Young Voices, and their involvement has informed and inspired several successful initiatives across the state.

In SFY26, a primary goal is to further develop the Young Voices framework to ensure sustainability and long-term impact. Current youth members are working collaboratively to establish clear guidelines around leadership roles, group membership, presentation protocols, and participation incentives. These foundational elements will strengthen the structure of the group, support recruitment of new members, and promote consistent engagement—particularly among youth currently in care.

In addition, targeted outreach efforts will be made to increase Native youth representation in Young Voices, ensuring tribal perspectives are reflected in statewide decision-making and in shaping Independent Living Services programming.

Individualizing Services

CPS begins assessment of children's and families' individualized needs at Intake. There are five elements included in the Initial Family Assessment (IFA) are also within the Request for Services Intake form. Those five elements are: whether maltreatment occurred; the nature of the circumstances surrounding the maltreatment if it did occur; child functioning of each child; general parenting practices and discipline of each parent/caregiver in the home; and adult functioning of each parent/caregiver in the home. Intake Specialists gather any information the referent can provide related to these five elements as well as demographic information and characteristics.

When referrals are assigned for an IFA, the Family Services Specialist completing the IFA must be aware, when possible, of any specialized needs that could affect the Family Services Specialists ability to complete the assessment related to such things as language, developmental delays, hearing or speech limitations, etc. CPS staff are able to purchase translator services.

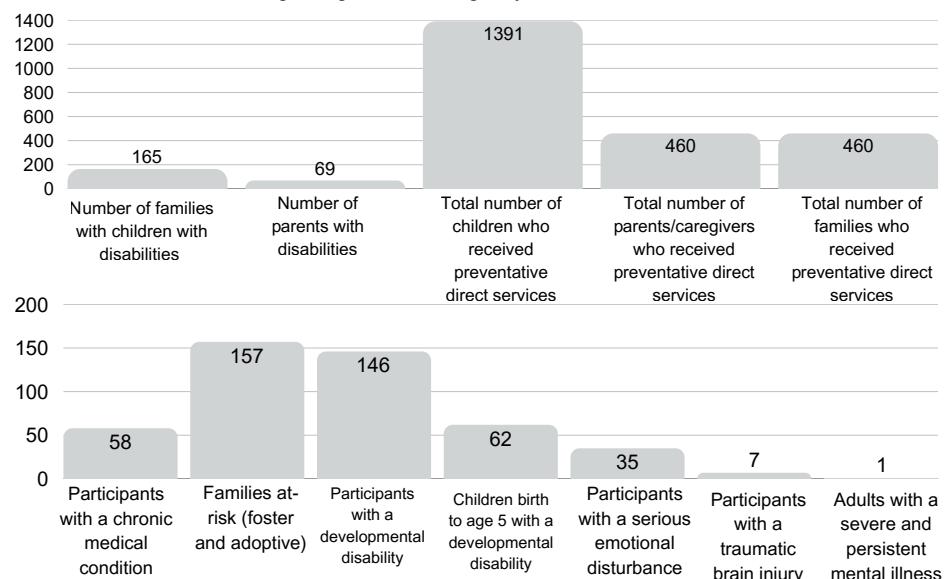
CPS works with the parents during the PCA process to determine what the family's needs are and what services are necessary to address those needs. The PCA Case Plan is developed around the necessary services and includes roles, responsibilities, and time frames for those who are involved in the plan. South Dakota is an expansive, rural state with a small population base. The availability of services to families varies depending on the particular geographical area of the state.

CPS facilitates parent's access to services through collaboration with service providers, assistance with working with service providers, assistance with transportation, paying for expenses for services not covered through other means, and assistance in addressing other issues that may create barriers for families to access services. The PCA Case Plan Evaluation is used by CPS through communication and contact with the family members and communication and coordination with service providers to evaluate the Case Plan progress and assess whether the diminished protective capacities are being enhanced and, subsequently, whether safety threats are being eliminated.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, the FACIS Program Specialist and Bureau of Telecommunications has translated 88 document templates in FACIS to be accessible in English, Spanish, Karen, Nepali, Somali, and Swahili. In addition to providing translated documents to accommodate the specific needs of clients, the websites of the Department of Social Services, Department of Education, Department of Health, and Department of Human Services are equipped with google translate functionality that supports translation into a wide range of languages.

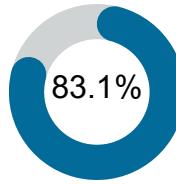
This ensures greater accessibility and inclusivity for individuals with diverse linguistic backgrounds, facilitating more effective communication across various service platforms. CPS employees have access to Propio, Lutheran Social Services Interpreter Services, A to Z World Languages, and services through the Division of Rehabilitation Services in order to provide information to individuals in their primary language. **Refer to Appendix A, Attachment A9 for detailed information regarding the services provided, population that is served, and the location of services.**

In addition to language services, the agency works with children and families who have diagnosed disabilities. The Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities supports families of children or adults with special needs through the Respite Care Program. The following charts include information regarding clients the agency has served in Federal Fiscal Year 2024.

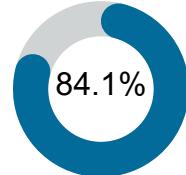


Surveys were administered to parents, stakeholders, and staff in Fiscal Year 2025 to gather information regarding services being individualized and personalized. The following information was collected:

83.1% (49 of 59) of parents/caregivers indicated, through the parents with lived experiences survey, that services they received were individualized/personalized (developmentally, culturally, easily understood, and in their primary language) to their specific needs.



84.1% (53 of 63) of parents/caregivers indicated, through the parents with lived experiences survey, that documents related to their case were provided in their primary language.



65% 161 of 247 of stakeholders reported services are individualized (developmentally, culturally & linguistically) to the needs of the children

62% 150 of 243 of stakeholders reported services are individualized (developmentally, culturally & linguistically) to the needs of the parents/families

71% 89 of 125 of staff reported services are individualized to the needs of children/families

Placement Resources Support Services

South Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS) Respite Program provides funding for respite services for adoptive families. The DHS Respite Program served 497 children from October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024. (Data Source: *Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention FY2024 Annual Report*) Foster parents are also provided respite care services. In SFY 25, \$379,908 was utilized to provide respite care for foster families funded through a combination of state and federal grants to include IVB, IVE, and TANF.

There are multiple resources across the state for foster families to access free clothing and other items for children in foster care. The following non-profit agencies provide support directly to foster families:

The Closet, Foster Network out of Sioux Falls assists with supporting foster families across the state. The Foster Network has a clothing closet open to families. The Foster Care Network assists families with bedroom furniture, scholarship opportunities for children in foster care and help supplement families at Christmas time with gifts for children in foster care.

The Cherub's Closet in Sioux Falls, offers one pack of diapers per child once a month, including clothing and other items.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, in Sioux Falls, provides free diaper for children in foster care. These are available three Wednesdays and the first three Saturdays of every month.

Building our Families, WRAP Around Support and Training Opportunities in Sioux Falls SD, offers support and training to local foster families.

Sotera Youth and Family Services Collaborative out of the Pierre area provides additional training to foster families. They have a Foster Parent Association supply closet available to foster and kinship families consisting of clothing (size preemie to men's 4x), hygiene products, new underwear, socks, and baby supplies. They host multiple retention events each year for families.

Black Hills Foster Care Association covers the western side of the state. They provide backpacks with basic necessities for children when they come into care. They host multiple retention events each year for families.



Fountain Springs Church in Rapid City provided essential items to children and families in foster or kinship situations, including clothing, underwear and socks, pajamas, meals and other items as needed. This clothing closet closed in April of 2024, however, the Fountain Springs Church is committed in continuing to assist foster families by providing needed items for their family when a request is made. They also provide new clothing and shoes to children who are participating in the South Dakota Kids Belong I Belong Project in Rapid City. Fountain Springs also hosts the quarterly foster parent trainings which are organized through the Black Hills Region Foster/Adoption Recruitment and Retention team.

The Aberdeen Area Foster Closet, in Aberdeen, provides baby/toddler items and toys, hygiene items and clothing for children in foster care.

Restore Church Foster Closet in Yankton provides needed supplies and meals to support foster families and initial placements of children in their home. They also provide wrap around services for foster families with words of affirmation, childcare, acts of service, and prayer.

The EC-CASA Caring Closet in Watertown provides items to foster families such as clothing, baby hygiene and equipment, blankets/pillow, toys books, and much more.

Brookings Area Foster Closet, in Brookings, provides clothing, shoes, hygiene packs, diapers, baby items and more to foster families in the Brookings area.

The Foster Closet in Mobridge, offers clothing and other items to support foster families in their area with new and existing placements.

Huron Area Hope and Blessings Inc. in Huron, SD, offers each child three free outfits for children in foster care in addition to 50% off low-cost items in their thrift store.

Wrap-Around Services + Foster Closet, in Winner, SD, provides foster youth entering care with a backpack filled with toiletries, a blanket and/or comfort item, and some age-appropriate books, toys, or activities. They also have a community of volunteers who help fill any specific requests for children in care, such as baby items, clothing, etc.)

The Light of Mine Ranch is operated by a DSS foster family near Rapid City. They have purchased a ranch in Western SD intending to build individual homes for foster families to live in the same proximity while supporting each other. This faith-based non-profit currently supports current foster families through other means such as providing filled back-to-school backpacks for children in foster care, and hosting summer events to bring foster families together. One of their goals is to provide Native American Cultural Awareness to foster families in Western SD, and currently they provide Native American regalia to families who have children participating in dance. In 2025, the Light of Mine Ranch opened a "Foster Care Shop" to provide new or slightly used clothing and other supplies, such as furniture and toys, to foster families.

Southern Hills Foster and Adoption Closet, in Hot Springs provides clothing of all sizes for boys and girls along with a heavy inventory of jackets and gloves. They have limited stock of car seats and high chairs for loaning out as needed. They are currently working on having baby formula and food, as well as diapers and wipes available.

South Dakota Kids Belong, in partnership with the Department of Social Services, has initiated a program, the *Foster Friendly App*, that will allow community businesses and others to show their support to area foster families. South Dakota Kids Belong has reached out to local businesses and 'Community Supports' with a request to become "Foster Friendly." Businesses, supports, or non-profits that would like to participate will provide their information on the Foster Friendly app and will note any discounts and/or services that are being provided to show their support. As of May 31, 2025, there are currently over 324 businesses and 46 'Community Supports' who have volunteered services at a reduced or no cost for foster families.

Dream Makers, for youth aging out of foster care, is designed to come alongside youth who have aged out, or are in the process of aging out of the foster care system without support between the ages of 18 and 29. Dreams should elevate, remove barriers, create opportunity, provide permanency, sustain employment, make education available, or promote confidence and growth. Most dreams that are selected are within the \$100-\$1,000 price range. Occasionally, dreams for higher amounts based on a compelling need are selected.

Winner Area Wrap-Around Services was started by a foster parent in the Winner area. This group requests donations and arranges baskets for foster parents and children who enter care such as diapers, toys, sippy cups, baby wipes, pacifiers, etc. In addition to baskets, this group also assists with ongoing needs a family may identify.

Mobridge Foster Care Closet is ran by a foster parent in the area. This closet provides diapers, clothing, beds, and other needed supplies to foster parents and kinship providers in the Mobridge area.

South Dakota Kids Belong is working closely with the faith communities in Sturgis, Spearfish, Deadwood, Belle Fourche, Hot Springs, Custer, Rapid City, Pierre, Aberdeen, Freeman, Platte, Yankton, Vermillion, Dell Rapids, and Sioux Falls areas to provide wrap around services to existing foster families. As of May 31, 2025, there are currently 38 wrap leaders. Wrap services provide direct supportive services such as home/car repair, meal prep, day care, mentorship, grocery shopping/delivery, lawn maintenance and words of encouragement through members of the foster family's church or community.

- SDKB has a state wrap director who has vast experience in organizing wrap around services for foster families.
- SDKB has a Foster Friendly Community Catalyst in Rapid City who focuses on the needs in the Black Hills regional area. This is one of the three identified areas in South Dakota with the highest needs for recruitment and retention of foster families.
- Many churches in SD do not have organized wrap services; however, they have become foster friendly by creating an awareness for children in foster care, becoming trauma informed, and asking for members to engage in the mission to care for vulnerable children. These churches are recognized in SDKB's Foster Friendly App.

In SFY2025, a survey was administered to placement resources. 91% (273 of 300) of placement resources identified that their Family Services Specialist is responsive if something comes up and needs to be addressed between caseworker visits.

New kinship licensing standards have been developed to better support relatives in becoming licensed caregivers, with the goal of reducing barriers and increasing placement stability for children in out-of-home care. These revised standards aim to create a more accessible and equitable process by acknowledging the unique strengths and circumstances of kinship families, while still upholding child safety and well-being. Newly proposed Kinship Licensing Standards were drafted and shared with CPS kinship caregivers, tribal leaders, CPS staff, and kinship workgroup members for review and feedback.

To further encourage community input, a public hearing was held on April 14, 2025, providing kinship caregivers and the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed standards for adoption and foster care. Key changes include increased flexibility in non-safety-related requirements. By aligning licensing practices more closely with the realities of kinship care, the agency seeks to promote timely placements with familiar caregivers and strengthen long-term permanency outcomes for children.

On June 1, 2025, South Dakota Administrative Rules were amended to incorporate these new standards. The updated rules will enable CPS to speed up the licensure process for kinship foster care and eliminate existing barriers. Once kinship families complete the licensing process under these specific standards, they will receive the same level of financial support as non-relative licensed foster families. CPS implemented new policy to refer families to a kin-specific licensing process in June 2025.

Additionally, in May 2025, CPS submitted an IV-E Plan Amendment regarding foster care maintenance payments to access IV-E funding for eligible youth and caregivers.

The Department of Social Services received \$177,211.00 in funding through the Kinship Navigator Grant to be utilized from October 1st, 2023 through September 20th, 2025 to assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet the needs of the children they are raising and their own needs; and to promote effective partnerships with public and private agencies to ensure kinship caregiver families are served. This includes providing concrete supports and brief legal services for families. These concrete supports may include groceries, gas, beds, clothing, etc.

Other families were also provided long-term referrals to community supports or public assistance. The CPS Family Services Specialist completes a funding request when financial support is identified as a need to maintain placement stability during the monthly home visit. A funding request is completed and provided to program staff. CPS Program staff coordinate services and supports through local businesses and set up direct bill accounts to limit the burden of purchasing services. Kinship caregivers can also request reimbursement for supports and services that were directly purchased by the kin.



DSS/CPS launched a kinship navigator program titled "Kinship South Dakota". To help implement this program DSS/CPS signed a contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS) to provide a full-time kinship navigator that can assist CPS in providing services to kinship families in South Dakota, regardless of CPS involvement.

Implementation continued with a soft launch of family referrals in June 2024. The program was launched to tribal agencies and SD CPS in August 2024 and launched to the public in September 2024. This program provides a full-time kinship navigator who offers support and resources to kinship caregivers. The aim is to help meet the needs of the family and support the ongoing placement of children with their kinship caregivers.

Kinship South Dakota conducts a needs assessment for each family to identify referrals to resources and provides concrete supports available in the family's community. If additional support is needed, the kinship navigator will assist the caregiver through advocacy, problem-solving, and additional guidance to remove barriers to provide care for their kin. Inquiries and referrals can be made to Kinship South Dakota from child welfare agency staff, kinship families, counselors, professionals, community partners, or any concerned individuals. To reach Kinship South Dakota, individuals can call 1-844-344-9482 or 605-601-3410, or send inquiries/ referrals via email to KinshipSD@LssSD.org. No application is required to receive services initially. After the family assessment is completed, the navigator will assist the kinship family in reimbursement through the kinship navigator grant. The navigator will also assist the family in obtaining the W9, invoice, etc. for more efficient voucher processing. The navigator then provides follow up or aftercare prior to closing the inquiry.

Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive funds are used for a variety of services for children and families. Funds are used to fund the Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) contract. The contract provides for two recruiters working with youth statewide on recruiting and identifying adopted families. The youth assigned to the WWK recruiters are identified as youth harder to place. The caseload for each recruiter averages 18 to 20 children. The contract finalized 15 adoptions and 2 guardianships in SFY2025.

Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive funds have been used to pay for child specific home study updates, adoptive placement supervision services for youth matched with adoptive families living outside of South Dakota, who are approved through private adoption agencies. Funds have been used for individual services and items requested by families. Some examples are legal fees, home modifications, travel reimbursement, applied behavioral analysis, specific parenting training, and various other miscellaneous items.

CPS tracks adoption savings through the CCWIS Program. All subsidized adoptions are entered in FACIS. When a funding source is determined and approved, IV-E adoption subsidies based on the provisions of Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 are identified as a "Fostering Connection's" case. The Subsidized Adoption Summary Details report identifies the calculated paid claims for eligible cases under "Fostering Connections". CPS calculates the state/federal match and determines the actual adoption cost savings. CPS' method has been approved by the Children's Bureau and reports the actual savings. There have been no changes to the methodology. Currently there are 615 youth receiving adoption assistance who are IV-E eligible because of Fostering Connections to Success and the Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

CPS has spent the entire savings on Post Adoption Services. CPS assists several adopted youth in residential treatment and group care placements with tuition assistance and other services not covered under some other type of funding source. CPS will continue to utilize adoption savings for post-adoption supports to families. Families are now referred to the LSS CARES Program through the LSS Post Adoption Contract.

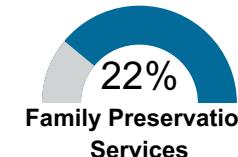
CPS continues to use Promoting Safe and Stable Families (IV-B, Subpart II) funds to assist with providing services that help keep children in their homes; support parents to keep children safe when reunification occurs; ensure stability of placements with foster parents, kinship parents, and adoptive parents; and facilitate adoptions. Approval for use of funds must be provided by Regional Managers and the Assistant Division Director. CPS views Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds as a critical source for situations where even basic levels of support can make the difference in the success of family preservation. Emergency funding for Promoting Safe and Stable Families allowed CPS to assist families with the same services for a longer period as CPS often depletes the funds well before the allotted timeframe.

CPS continues to request approval to utilize funds in order to provide contract services for Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) and kin placement home studies to support temporary and permanent placement with relatives and non-custodial parents, legal services to expedite permanency for ICWA children through the court process, child parent visitation through contracts with visitation centers, and contract services for genetic testing to establish paternity for children in foster care.

In addition, funds are available for staff to help families meet needs that can help with placement prevention or reunification including:

- Transportation, bus tickets and gas cards for parents to access services and employment
- Rental assistance, utility deposits to support placement prevention and reunification
- Crisis or other day care to support placement prevention and reunification
- Counseling/treatment for parents
- Assessments and evaluations for parents and children to assess danger threats and determine service needs
- Alcohol and drug treatment and testing for parents to assess danger threats and determine service needs
- Supports and services to Present Danger Plan and Safety Plan Providers to prevent children from entering care
- Needs for kinship placement resources - beds, cribs, highchairs, initial food, or clothing, etc.

Title IV-B, Subpart II funds are allocated as follows:



CPS needs to enhance implementation of interventions in maintaining children in their homes and determining when children can be reunified. Funds will be used to support these efforts. (Mental Health Services, ICWA Expert Witness, Daycare)



The services and reason the service providers were selected include: community based family visitation center services for parents and their children, which were selected for contracting based on the fact they were already providing visitation services and located in several regions across the state to provide increased access for families; paternity testing; home studies



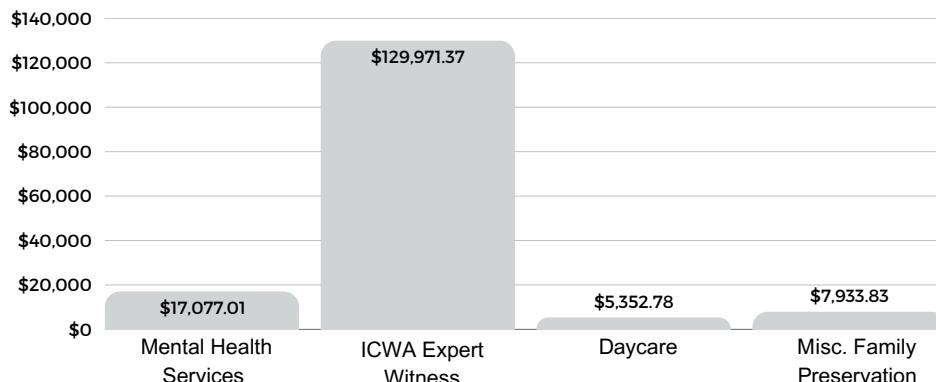
CPS will be increasing efforts to improve timeliness of permanency and funds will be used in this area to support these efforts. (Visitation Centers, Interpreters, Housing/Utilities, Transportation/Grocery/Gas/Cleaning, Home Studies, Mental Health Services)



CPS will be increasing efforts to improve timeliness of permanency and ensure stability of adoptions and funds will be used in this area to support these efforts. (LSS Home Studies, travel expenses for kinship to visit children while transitioning to their pre-adoptive home)

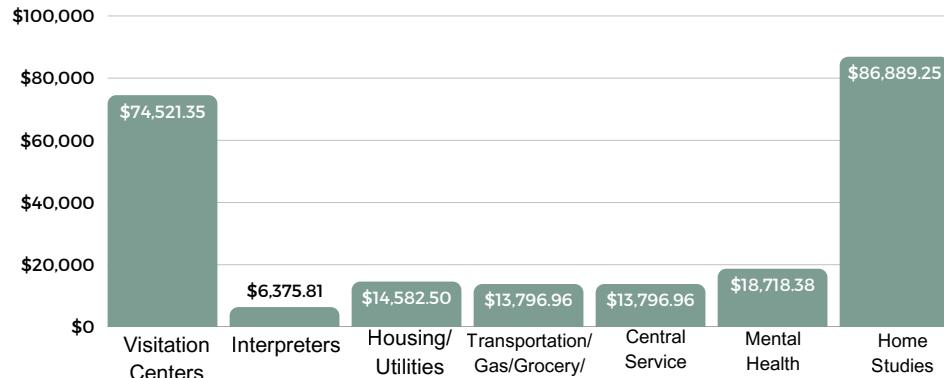
Family Preservation Services

In FFY2025, a total of \$728,795.00 Promoting Safe and Stable Families (IV-B, Subpart II) funds were spent. Of these funds, \$160,335.00 was spent for family preservation services in the areas of mental health services, ICWA expert witness, daycare, and miscellaneous family preservation.



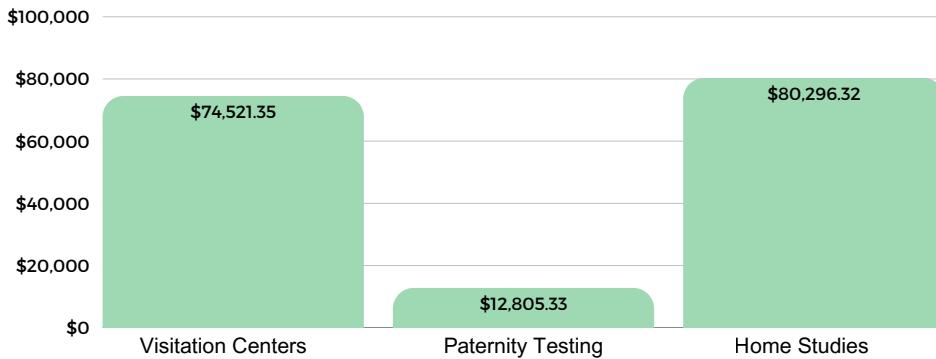
Time Limited Family Reunification Services

\$218,638.00 is allocated for time limited family reunification services for expenses such as visitation centers, interpreters, housing/utilities, transportation/grocery/gas/cleaning, central service billing, mental health services and home studies.



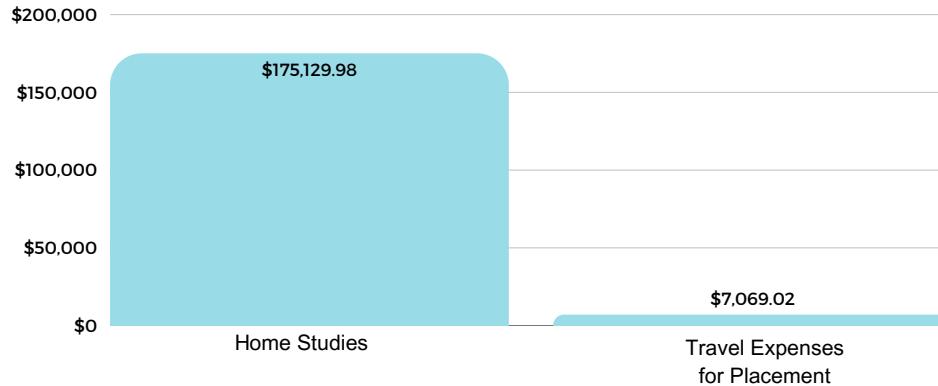
Family Support Services

\$167,623.00 is allocated towards family support services to include visitation centers, paternity testing, and home studies.



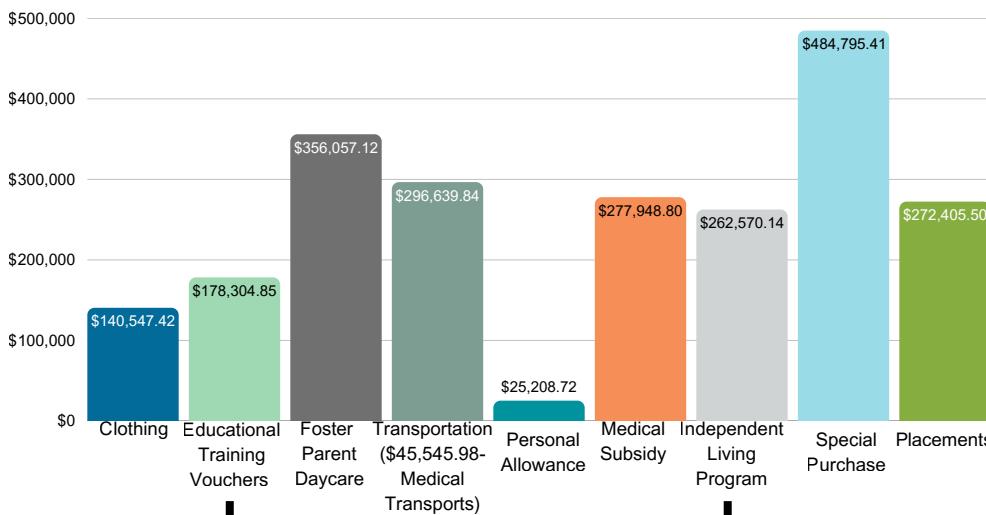
Adoption Promotion and Support Services

\$182,199.00 is provided for adoption promotion and support services for expenses such as home studies and travel expenses for placement.



Miscellaneous Payments

Child Protection has availability to assist with financial needs such as clothing, educational expenses, extra-curricular activity costs, college supplies, driver's education, transitional housing, and much more. In State Fiscal Year 2025, \$2,765,448.86 was spent through miscellaneous payments for costs related to children's needs.



Educational Training Vouchers (ETV) includes items for older youth in foster care such as housing (\$228), scholarships (\$176,657.84), college supplies (\$242.30), and transportation (\$1,176.71).

Costs associated with the Independent Living Program category include: case management (\$148,182.56), Driver's Education (\$23,044.23), Housing (\$27,248.78), Miscellaneous Expenses (\$33,160.67), Starter Kit (\$19,244.10), Transitional Housing (\$11,206.80), and Tuition/Scholarships (\$483.00).

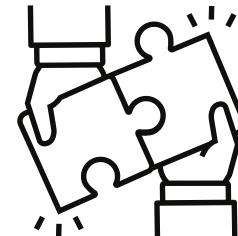
Agency Responsiveness to the Community

In Round 3 Child and Family Services Review, South Dakota was in substantial conformity with the Agency Responsiveness to the Community systemic factor. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Agency Responsiveness to the Community.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan and Statewide Assessment for foundational information regarding South Dakota's Agency Responsiveness to the Community Systemic Factor. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 regarding this systemic factor can be found below.

[State Engagement and Consultation with Stakeholders](#)

CPS is committed to collaborating with community partners to prevent child abuse and neglect. The Governor of South Dakota signed an Executive Order recognizing April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. A media campaign was developed to share the proclamation statewide. CPS encourages people in communities across the state to work together to keep children safe and offer the support families need to stay together. Child abuse prevention material is provided to the Common Sense Parenting class participants statewide. Parenting Education Partners provide information to parents and service providers in their areas of service. See Section 5, Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) section under Child and Family Service Continuum for further information about convening community partners to prevent child abuse and neglect.



Surveys are completed with community stakeholders, parents and children, and CPS staff when Quality Assurance reviews are completed to obtain input on CPS service delivery. The results of the surveys are provided to the Regional Managers and Supervisors for each office reviewed in the form of a written assessment to help in determining systemic strengths and needs and responding to the needs either locally or programmatically. The information gained from the surveys is used to assess outcomes and the CPS service system and will be provided to stakeholders and included in the office's CQI meeting with stakeholders.

Beginning in SFY 2022, parents, youth and kinship providers with lived experience were invited to participate in the kinship workgroup. The youth and kinship providers have attended workgroup meetings. Foster parents and other community partners are active members on the Region 1 and Region 3 Foster Parent Recruitment workgroup. The CQI process is completed during workgroup meetings with internal CPS staff, community partners, and members with lived experiences. This is further detailed in Section 2, Quality Assurance System. CPS publishes data relating to safety, permanency and well-being on the Department of Social Services website for anyone to access. Since the launch in SFY 2021, birth parents, kinship families, foster parents, adoptive parents, and youth with lived experience have participated in planning and implementation of the Stronger Families Together initiative to recruit and support foster families who support reunification efforts, maintaining connections, and timely permanency for children.

CPS asked partners within the child welfare system to participate in a survey to learn more about awareness and use of community supports and resources to help parents care for their children. This is further detailed in Service Array systemic factor.

Information regarding engagement with stakeholders in SFY2025 can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A1.

Coordination of CFSP Services with Other Federal Programs

The Department of Social Services, Division of Child Care Services provides funding to resource providers when childcare is needed for children in out-of-home placement. The provider must meet program eligibility and is required to be working or attending school (excludes graduate school). Income is not considered for these providers. In SFY2025 (July 1st, 2024- May 31st, 2025), the Division of Child Care Services served a monthly average of 662 children in the care of CPS.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families is a public assistance program administered by the Department of Social Services, Division of Economic Assistance. A relative caregiver may be eligible for TANF if there is a parent absent from the home and the caregiver is not receiving a comparable monthly subsidy or other forms of public assistance (for example SSI) for the child. In order for a relative to meet criteria for TANF, they must meet the specific degree of relationship found in Admin Rule 67:10:01:06. In SFY2025, The TANF payment rate was higher for children who were "agency placed" in out-of-home care (custody only) by the Department of Social Services, under a court order. In SFY2025 (July 1st, 2024-May 31st, 2025), there was an average of 184 "agency placed" TANF cases. Other kinship families working with CPS also received TANF as the result of a present danger or parental agreement (no custody), but these families are not considered "agency placed".

Children in foster care receiving IVE or IVB funding are eligible for Medicaid Title XIX coverage. Reimbursement for lodging, mileage, and meals is available for appointments or services covered by Medicaid, that are outside the child's city of residence, through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Travel (NEMT). The resource provider must follow the guidelines set by the program. Children in out-of-home placement receiving Medicaid are eligible for this program. The service must be a Medicaid covered service by a Medicaid provider.

The Former Foster Care Medical Program, through the Department of Social Services, provides extended medical coverage for youth aged 18 to 26 that are leaving State or Tribal foster care after their 18th birthday. Referrals for this program are normally generated by the Division of Child Protection Services' (CPS) staff. There is no resource or income limit. In state fiscal year 2025, there were 424 youth receiving Medicaid as part of the Former Foster Care Medical Program.

Children in the custody of CPS eligible for IV-E funding receive child support services through the Department of Social Services, Division of Child Support Services. As of May 31st, 2025, Child Support Services reports 300 current child support cases and 564 arrears cases involving children in CPS custody.

The Health Home Program is available to any child in CPS custody in family foster homes and kinship homes. South Dakota's Health Home Program offers enhanced health care services to eligible Medicaid recipients who have qualifying chronic conditions or a severe mental illness or emotional disturbance.

A child in out-of-home placement may be eligible for assistance through the Social Security Administration due to a disability or through Social Security benefits after the death of a parent. If benefits are available, the Specialist must use the funding to support the care and wellbeing of the child while in out-of-home placement. When CPS learns a child who has entered CPS custody is receiving benefits from Social Security, CPS works with Social Security to be designate CPS as the payee for the child. If a child is not receiving benefits, but it is determined it is in the best interest of the child to receive benefits, CPS will make an application for benefits.

The Department of Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health provides mental health and substance use services across the state. CPS refers children and parents for evaluation and treatment services to Community Mental Health Centers which receive state and federal funds through contracts with the Department of Social Services. CPS also refers parents and youth for evaluation and treatment services to addiction treatment service providers which receive state and federal funds through contracts with the Department of Social Services. As part of the Juvenile Justice Public Safety Improvement Act, community-based treatment services are also available for justice involved and at-risk youth. Those services include Functional Family Therapy, Aggression Replacement Training, Moral Reconation Therapy, Systems of Care, Substance Use Disorder Services, and other additional services. The Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, 988, is a direct connection for children or families to receive care and support during a mental health, substance abuse, or suicide crisis. Resource providers or children can receive this support by dialing 988 on any phone. 988 can help address and guide a resource provider or child in addressing the immediate crisis needs of the child. It also reduces the use of law enforcement and helps end the stigma towards seeking or accessing mental health care.

The CPS Independent Living Program Specialist is a member of the Department of Labor and Regulation Workforce Training Youth Committee. The Committee was established in response to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. The WIOA provides greater emphasis on serving out of school youth through training and services related to related to employment. CPS assists youth who transition from foster care and parents in need of housing by working with federally funded housing programs including HUD.

Eligible children in the custody of CPS are provided services through the South Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities. The programs include residential and community-based services for individuals with disabilities. The mission of the Division of Developmental Disabilities is to ensure that people with developmental disabilities have equal opportunities to receive services and supports they need to work and live. There are state funded family supports available for those caring for children who have a developmental disability. These programs include Respite Care, Strengthening Families Program, Family Support 360, and CHOICES Program.

CPS works with the local schools to assure children in the custody of CPS receive special education services and other school-based services. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and non-profit private schools. This program provides free and reduced school meals for children. Children in foster care or children who reside in a household that receives TANF services are eligible for free school meals. These children may also be eligible for the School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program for Children, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program. CPS also assists parents and resource providers in receiving in accessing special education services through the schools. A child may be eligible for an Individual Education Program. Eligibility is determined by an evaluation procedure completed by the child's school district and based off the SD Department of Education Eligibility Guide. Head Start and Early Head Start is available for families who receive public assistance (TANF, SSI, or SNAP) or who have children in an out-of-home care by CPS are eligible for free learning and developmental services for children ages 0-5. There are center-based or home-based options. Head Start programs help prepare children to succeed in school and deliver services in core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being.

SD Birth to Three helps children with developmental delays and their families provide early intervention to services and supports. The program is for children from birth to 36 months with developmental delays or disabilities. Children in out-of-home placement must receive a birth to three evaluations after a substantiated report of abuse and neglect or during their initial placement in out-of-home care, and additionally if there are developmental needs or concerns that are identified later. In Federal Fiscal Year 2024, 646 children ages 0-3 were referred to the Birth to Three Program.

The Department of Social Services, Division of Child Care Services provides the Early Childhood Enrichment Program. This program focuses on keeping children safe by providing child safety seats at no cost to families with children who are eligible for Title XIX Medicaid. Caregivers for children placed in out-of-home care are eligible for this program.

South Dakota Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC), through the SD Department of Health, is a public health nutrition program that provides information on healthy eating, referrals to healthcare and other services, and nutritious foods (vegetables/fruit, whole grains, dairy, proteins, juice, cereal, infant food) to supplement diets for South Dakota children up to age five who qualify for Medicaid Title XIX, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or other low income programs. Caregivers of children placed in out-of-home are eligible for this program.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program through the Department of Social Services, Division of Economic Assistance, helps low-income families by providing the food they need to stay healthy. If a kinship caregiver is struggling to provide food during out-of-home placement, SNAP is a resource that can be utilized.

Energy and Weatherization Assistance is available through the Department of Social Services, Division of Economic Assistance. This program helps low-income households pay for home heating costs and make their homes more energy efficient. Eligibility and assistance amounts are based on the number of people in the home, income, and type and cost of heating in the home. Kinship caregivers are able to apply for assistance.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) provides resources to assist children with a disability obtain or maintain employment, economic self-sufficiency, personal independence, and full inclusion into society. Vocational Rehabilitation offers Project Skills, which is a paid work experience available to high school students. The state works with the local school district to provide students a job coach that facilitates an opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements. This division also provides transitional resources for students with disabilities. This helps students plan for their future with a variety of services. Other resources available through Rehabilitation Services include Project Search, Assistive Technology, Supported Employment Services, Customized Employment, and Independent Living Services. In addition, there are services available to children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech impediments.

The Department of Social Services, Child Protection Services receives funding through the Kinship Navigator Grant to assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet the needs of the children they are raising and their own needs; and to promote effective partnerships with public and private agencies to ensure kinship caregiver families are served. This includes providing concrete supports and brief legal services for families. These concrete supports may include groceries, gas, beds, clothing, etc. CPS received \$200,000 in Kinship Navigator Grant funding in FFY2023. This entire amount was utilized before September 30, 2024. Additionally, CPS received \$177,211 in FFY2024 to be utilized by September 30, 2025. In SFY2025, CPS used the Kinship Navigator Grant to support families who were caring for their kin, either formally or informally. From June 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025, Kinship South Dakota received 172 referrals. Among these families, 128 were involved with State Child Protection Services, while 3 were involved with Tribal Child Protection Services. Furthermore, 41 informal families, who had no involvement with a child welfare agency, also received assistance. In total, 54 families, comprising 223 children, were approved to receive short-term concrete supports or legal assistance through the Kinship Navigator Grant funding in SFY2025. Additionally, 129 families were connected to other community supports or public agencies for further support.

[Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention](#)

South Dakota was found to be in substantial conformity with the Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention systemic factor in the Round 3 CFSR. South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2025 and has not received the Final Report as of June 2025. Once the final report is received, South Dakota will review to determine any areas needing improvement related to Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention.

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Review and Statewide Assessment for foundational information pertaining to this systemic factor.

[Office of Licensing and Child Protection Services Licensing Process Redesign](#)

Child Protection Services (CPS) and the Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA) have worked collaboratively for several years to enhance recruitment, licensure, placement, and support for foster families across South Dakota. Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for previous updates regarding this project.

Through this partnership and with the previous support of the Change and Innovation Agency (CIA), a Business Process Re-Design Project was launched to identify strengths, address areas for improvement, and enhance our service delivery. This collaborative effort has led focus on four key strategies to offer families greater flexibility and a more personalized onboarding experience. The four strategies are:

- Streamlining the Initial Inquiry and Licensure Process
- Updating Pre-Service Training
- Enhancing Pre- and Post-Licensure Networking Opportunities
- Optimize Placement Coordination

The first strategy, streamlining inquiry and licensure process, aims to engage families quickly, keep families engaged, and reduce the number of days to become licensed. The streamlined licensing process will eliminate unnecessary touchpoints for families that are ready and eager to move forward. The streamlined process also provides families with a single point of contact throughout their foster care licensing journey to ensure greater consistency, communication, and support. Finally, the modified licensing process will decouple the initial assessment/home study from training requirements removing unnecessary wait time. Families are still required to complete 30 hours of training before they receive their initial license. Portions of the streamlined licensing process has been piloted. Full implementation of the modified licensing process will be implemented in late summer 2025.

As previously mentioned, the State will implement the National Training and Development Curriculum (NTDC), providing updated material and trauma informed information to families. A workgroup comprised of families, contracted licensing staff, and state licensing staff evaluated the NTDC curriculum to identify essential information that will be included in the 30 hours of pre-service training. A hybrid delivery (combination of face to face and self-paced) model will be used to implement the NTDC curriculum.

The third strategy, enhancing opportunities for foster families to connect and access peer support through their licensing experience aims to support retention of families. An initial evaluation of current opportunities resulted in identifying regions of the state in which families do not have access to the same support systems as other regions of the state do. On a regional basis, opportunities to connect and access peer support will be identified and implemented. Implementation of this strategy is ongoing.

The last strategy, optimizing placement coordination involves three specific activities. The first activity focuses on identifying a pool of foster parents that are available for emergency placements. On a regional basis, OLA maintains and provides CPS a list of families who are available for placement. Secondly, OLA has included placement support resources in an Request for Proposal (RFP) to assist state staff in expedite and improve placement searches. Finally, a team comprised of CPS and OLA will be established to identify specific structure, roles, and responsibilities to streamline and improve placement procedures.

These strategies are designed to improve the overall experience for foster families and strengthen the support system for staff and families statewide.

Standards Applied Equally

SD State law mandates licensure of childcare providers and gives the Department authority to establish minimum standards for licensure and adoption approval. All licensing and adoption actions are based on South Dakota laws (SDCL 25-5 and 26-6) and adoption and licensing standards (Chapters 67:4:01 – Provisions and Scope of Services; 67:14:32 - Services to Adoptive Families; 67:42:09 – Child Placement Agencies; 67:42:05 - Family Foster Homes; 67:42:07 – Group Care Centers for Minors; 67:42:08 – Residential Treatment Centers; 67:42:11 – Environmental/Health; 67:42:13 – Independent living Preparation; and 67:42:15 – Intensive Residential Treatment Centers. As new national standards are passed into Federal law, the Department actively works with the Division of Legal Services and other stakeholders to draft legislation to bring South Dakota into compliance with Federal law.

Foster and adoptive parents are required to complete 30 hours of orientation training. Unity training is available to a limited degree in some tribal areas. DSS has modified the process for the 30 hours of training to allow applicants to attend classes completed in ten, three-hour meetings, participate in individual sessions or complete it online. Home consultations are conducted throughout the training and as part of the home study process. Upon completion of the orientation training, families are given an application to sign for licensure of foster care and for adoption approval.

The Department has 120 days from the date an application is signed to complete the home study process. The initial home study completed can be used for both adoption approval and foster care licensure. DSS policy does not allow for provisional licenses. Exceptions can be made for a maximum of six children under 18 in the home, including the foster parent's children in the case of sibling groups.

When licensing staff initially license a foster home and complete renewals of licenses the OLA Supervisor and Program Manager review the documentation to assure standards are met. They are required to read the home study related to general standards, look for completed background checks, look for any changes in the home that may affect the license, and verify completion of training.

The rules and law cover a range of standards including health history, three reference checks, central registry screenings for all household members that are 18 years of age or older, criminal records checks for adult household members by the Division of Criminal Investigation that includes a fingerprint FBI check for foster care licensure and adoption approval, training, the applicant's ability to provide care, number of children in the home, and home safety provisions.

Once a family is licensed for foster care and approved for adoption their license is valid for one year. After a foster parent is licensed, an application for foster care is completed by the foster parent on an annual basis. A renewal visit is completed to check continued compliance with administrative rules. In addition to required pre-service training, foster parents must attend six hours of training annually before their license may be renewed.

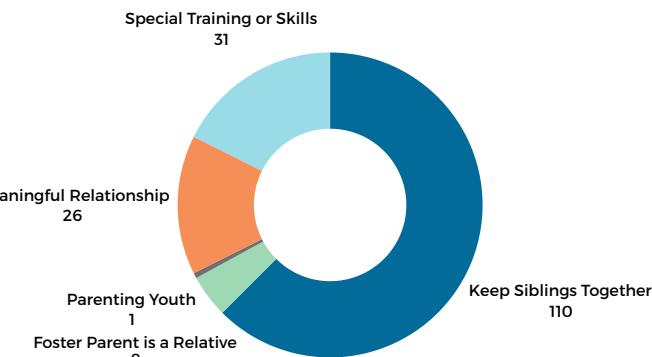
In compliance with the federal rule effective November 27, 2024; South Dakota's State Title IV-E plan was amended to ensure licensed kinship families are reimbursed at the same Foster Care Maintenance Payment (FCMP) rate as a licensed non-relative foster home would receive for the same placement. South Dakota has approved separate kinship licensing standards, effective June 1, 2025, which removed some of the barriers for kinship families to become licensed. These new standards are designed to provide greater support for kinship caregivers and are expected to significantly increase the number of licensed kinship families.

Exceptions to the Number of Children

DSS has an Administrative Rule allowing exceptions to the status and number of children cared for by foster families. OLA Licensing Specialists request exceptions to this standard to the Licensing Supervisor and Program Manager. OLA Licensing Specialists provide the resource name and number along with the following:

- A summary of the number of children currently in the home
- The number of children requested for the exception
- The needs of the children being placed
- The reason for the exception
- The family's ability to meet the needs of the additional children
- What actions or next steps will be needed to support the family

The Licensing Supervisor and Program Manager will approve or deny the exception. All exceptions are tracked on a shared document between the Program Manager and Licensing Supervisor. There are no timeframes associated with the exceptions; however, approved exceptions are re-evaluated at the time of the family's annual renewal. Since January 2021, OLA has granted 176 exceptions, 42 of which were granted in the previous fiscal year. The chart below shows the total number of exceptions and the reasons the exceptions were granted.



Child Placement Agencies (CPAs)

The Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA) is the agency responsible for licensing Child Placement Agencies. Each Child Placement Agency, Group Care Center, and Residential Treatment Facility is relicensed annually by the OLA Program Specialist.

There are 11 Child Placement Agencies licensed to provide services. The majority of the children served by Child Placement Agencies providing adoption placement services are newborns whose parents are not involved with CPS and who voluntarily terminate parental rights for the purpose of adoption of the child. The agencies provide the temporary foster home, complete adoptive home studies and match children with adoptive parents. The service CPS contracts from Child Placement Agencies is treatment foster care. The Child Placement Agency recruits and licenses the foster families. CPS makes placement referrals to the Child Placement Agency. The Child Placement Agency provides supervision and case management services to the child and the foster home as a supplement to the supervision and case management services CPS provides.

The Child Placement Agency must follow the same standards and requirements as OLA foster homes must follow, which are established through state law and rule. Each licensed agency is reviewed at least one time per year.

Group Care Centers, Emergency Shelters, and Residential Treatment Facilities

There are 3 Group Care Centers for Minors, 8 Residential Treatment Centers, 1 Intensive Residential Treatment Center licensed, and 6 Emergency Shelters to provide care in South Dakota. Each licensed facility is reviewed annually. The review consists of an audit of 25% personnel records and 25% resident records, review of volunteer records if volunteers are used, review of updates or changes to policy and procedure and interviews with staff and residents of the facility.

A random sample of employee personnel records and youth records are reviewed, interviews are completed with a selected number of youth and staff, and surveys using survey monkey are completed with all youth and staff. OLA completed the annual reviews of all 18 facilities during state fiscal year 2025.

CPS contracts with Private Agencies to provide Treatment Foster Care, Group Care, Residential Treatment, and Intensive Residential Treatment services. These agencies are licensed by OLA, reviewed yearly, and approved by the Program Manager. Each agency is responsible to keep orientation and on-going training records for each staff and OLA reviews a random sample during their yearly renewal. Per South Dakota Administrative Rule, training standards for staff in these agencies follow:

67:42:07:04. Orientation and In- Service Training

The facility must have written plans for orientation and in-service training. Each direct child care staff member shall participate in the in-service training. The written plan for in-service training must provide for training in the following areas for staff during the first year of employment:

- (1) Administrative Procedures and overall program goals;
- (2) Understanding children's emotional needs and problems that affect and inhibit their growth;
- (3) Family relationships and the impact of separation;
- (4) Substance abuse, its recognition, prevention, and treatment;
- (5) Identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect;
- (6) Principles and practices of child care;
- (7) Behavior management techniques;
- (8) Use of seclusion and personal restraint, if used by the facility;
- (9) Emergency and safety procedures; and
- (10) Cultural sensitivity.

Staff must receive training to become certified in basic first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation and must maintain certification throughout employment.

For staff beyond the first year of employment, the plan must provide for competency-based training based on an annual evaluation of the staff member's competencies.

Agencies that do not comply with the training standards will be placed on a Corrective Action Plan.

Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

OLA is the Division within the Department of Social Services responsible for licensing Child Welfare Agencies. The type of facilities for children which are defined as child welfare agencies are Foster Homes, Child Placement Agencies, Group Care Centers for Minors, Residential Treatment Centers, Intensive Residential Treatment Centers, and Emergency Shelters. Child Welfare Agencies are required to meet established standards.

Provisions for Criminal Background Checks for Prospective Foster and Adoptive Parents

South Dakota Codified Law 26-16-14.3 and 26-6-14.5 require criminal records checks of child welfare license applicants, staff, and other adults residing in the facility or home, including foster homes and group and residential programs, and 25-6-9.1 requires criminal records checks of adoptive parents and applicants. These checks for foster homes and group and residential facilities are done through the state Division of Criminal Investigation. DSS rules ARSD 67:42:01:05.01 and 67:14:32:05.05 defines what convictions disallow an applicant from being licensed for foster care or approved for adoption.

CPS rules ARSD 67:42:01:05.02 and 67:14:32:05.03 require screening of applicants, staff, family and other household members who are at least eighteen years of age for substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect, defines substantiated reports to include placement on the central registry, outlines the screening process and does not allow these individuals in a foster or adoptive home to have a substantiated report.

67:42:01:05.01. Criminal record check.

The department shall secure a criminal record check to obtain information concerning convictions for criminal offenses by a prospective foster parent as well as any other adult living in the prospective foster home. An individual is not eligible to receive a foster home license if the individual or any other adult living in the prospective foster home has a conviction for any of the following:

- 1. A crime that would indicate harmful behavior towards children;
- 2. A crime of violence as defined by SDCL 22-1-2 or a similar statute from another state;
- 3. A sex crime pursuant to SDCL chapters 22-22 or 22-24A or SDCL 22-22A-3 or similar statutes from another state; or
- 4. Within the preceding five years, a conviction for any other felony.

If an individual is seeking licensure from another child-placement agency, the department shall obtain the criminal record check for the child-placement agency if the child-placement agency is unable to obtain the record check on its own. If the criminal record check reveals a conviction for any of the crimes listed in this section, the department shall notify the child-placement agency of the existence of the conviction.

For all other child welfare agencies, the department shall review the provider's records to ensure that the criminal records are being secured to detect convictions for any of the crimes listed in this section.

The department shall deny an application and shall notify the applicant of the denial if the criminal record check required under § 67:14:32:11.01 detects a conviction for any of the following:

1. A crime that would indicate harmful behavior towards children;
2. A crime of violence as defined by SDCL 22-1-2 or a similar statute from another state;
3. A sex crime pursuant to SDCL chapters 22-22 or 22-24A or SDCL 22-22A-3 or similar statutes from another state; or
4. Within the preceding five years, a conviction for any other felony.

**67:14:32:05.05.
Application denied if criminal record check detects certain crimes.**

**67:14:32:05.03.
Screening for substantiated reports or convictions of abuse and neglect.**

The department shall screen an applicant and family members and other household members who are at least ten years old to determine if the individual has been involved in any substantiated incidents of child abuse or neglect. The individual may not have a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect. Substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect include reports placed into the department's central registry under § 67:14:39:03, reports placed on the central registry of another state, and reports that were investigated and substantiated by a tribal program.

If the screening locates an individual's name on the department's central registry and the individual has not already been given due process on the substantiation, the department shall notify the individual in writing that he or she may request a hearing to refute the accuracy of the information found. The hearing shall follow the provisions of SDCL 26-8A-11 and chapter 67:14:39.

If the screening locates an individual's name on the central registry of another state, it is the individual's responsibility to contact the other state to access the process for removal of his or her name from that state's central registry. If the other state has such a process and removes the individual's name from its central registry, the individual shall request the other state to submit documentation to the department verifying the removal of the individual's name from its central registry.

If the screening locates a report that was substantiated by a tribal program, it is the individual's responsibility to contact the tribal program to access the process for removal of his or her name from the record of the report. If the tribal program has such a process and removes the individual's name from the record of the report, the individual shall request the tribal program to submit documentation to the department verifying the removal of the individual's name from the record.

Licensing Specialists monitor any changes in family circumstances and complete the required background checks as needed. At the time of the renewal, the Licensing Specialist will complete a name-based search in FACIS and through the Unified Justice System to ensure the family remains in compliance with standards.

Safety of Children in Care

The Regional Managers track the number of children who enter CPS custody and have no emergency placement identified by the evening of their first night in care. This tracking allows CPS to evaluate the types of placement resources needed for children in CPS custody.

CPS completes a minimum of one monthly home visit for children placed in all levels of out-of-home care within South Dakota. The caseworker must assess the child's strengths, needs, and services at each home visit. The caseworker must seek input from the resource provider, parent(s), child, and other members of the permanency team regarding the child's medical health, mental health, educational status, social health, family connections, independent living skills, and permanency goals. In addition, the caseworker must assess safety through observations and interviews with the resource provider and child. The caseworker must also assess placement stability and provider resources needed to stabilize the placement. The caseworker uses input, observation, and contacts with the child's permanency team to develop the Child Case Plan and is documented in the caseworker narratives monthly. This case plan is established within 60 days of the child's placement out of the home and updated every six months. Refer to Monthly Caseworker Visit Formula Grants and Standards for Caseworker Visits section for further information regarding frequency and quality of home visits.

Response to Children on Missing from Care Status

When the Department of Social Services has custody or care of a youth and the youth is absent from their placement resource or parent, specific procedures must be in place to help successfully locate and assess the youth's safety. Children and youth who are missing, or have run away from foster care, have a greater likelihood of experiencing adverse outcomes. This applies to any child or youth who the SD Department of Social Services has responsibility for care, placement, and supervision.

When a child is reported as missing from care, the resource provider or CPS must contact law enforcement for entry into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and SD Missing Persons Clearinghouse. Within 24 hours, CPS must notify the child's parent(s) and notify the National Center for Missing and Endangered Children (NCMEC). On the next business day, CPS must notify other participants of the child's permanency team including the tribe (if applicable), the state's attorney or tribal prosecutor, the child's attorney, or guardian ad litem, and the parents' attorneys. The CPS Independent Living/Permanency Program Specialist will be notified of the report when the CPS caseworker enters that the child is missing from placement on the caseworker documentation system (FACIS). If the youth is missing from care and considered high risk or if it is believed that the child was taken against their will, the CPS Director must be notified. The CPS caseworker will document attempts to locate the child on a weekly basis. Concerted efforts should be completed to locate the missing youth. The Independent Living/Permanency Program Specialist reviews all CPS children missing from care monthly to ensure that sufficient attempts to locate are occurring. The Independent Living/Permanency Program Specialist can request further consultation to locate the missing youth. The Independent Living/Permanency Program Specialist reports information regarding children missing from care/runaway to the Director and Assistant Director.

The CPS Independent Living/Permanency Program Specialist conducts a monthly review of all CPS children reported missing from care to ensure that diligent efforts to locate the youth are being made. This includes verifying that Family Service Specialists have maintained communication with the Children Missing from Care at the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). Each month, NCMEC provides a report that includes both newly and previously reported missing children from South Dakota.

The Program Specialist cross-references this report to confirm that recovered children have been properly reported to NCMEC and that open lines of communication are maintained. This process supports federal compliance and promotes coordinated recovery efforts.

Additionally, the Program Specialist participates in quarterly regional meetings with surrounding states' child welfare contacts. These meetings provide a platform for reviewing data, sharing recent successes, and discussing challenges related to federal missing child reporting requirements. States also share current strategies and approaches for locating and engaging missing youth. NCMEC participates in these meetings to offer updates and support to state agencies.

Once a child is recovered or located, diligent efforts must be made to complete a debriefing with the child that includes:



Documentation of the debriefing must be included in the youth's file. This information will be reported to future placement resources. If the youth is identified to have been at risk or a victim of sex-trafficking trafficking, this must be reported immediately to intake, law enforcement, the NCIC, and NCMEC. A specialized plan must be created to identify specialized services and supports for a youth who has been a victim of sex-trafficking. This may include a referral to appropriate forensic, medical, mental health, placement, and educational services.

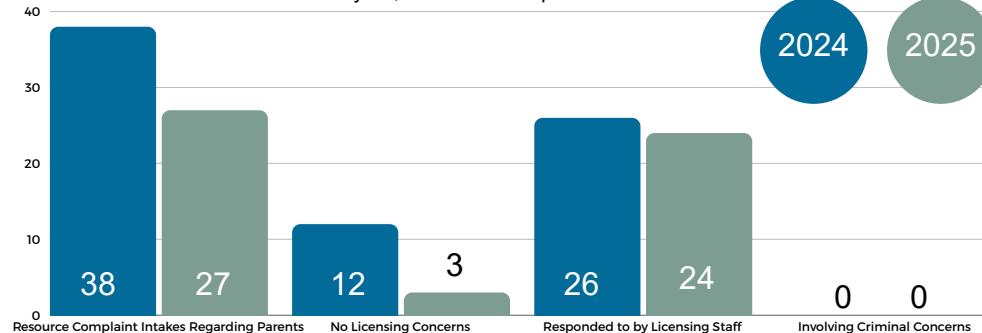
CPS Foster Home Licenses

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding South Dakota's Title IV-E review that occurred in 2018 as well as a mock IV-E review that took place in April 2024. In State Fiscal Year 2025, Training and consultation has been provided to the IV-E Program Assistants, Field staff and Licensing staff in these areas, to minimize errors and maximize IV-E revenue.

Provisions for Addressing the Safety of Foster Care and Adoptive Placements for Children

Refer to the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for information regarding the process for when CPS receives a report alleging abuse or neglect of a child in foster care or a placement facility. South Dakota's process remains the same and updated data is provided below.

The following table provides data on the Resource Complaint reports to CPS regarding foster parents. Each report was determined to be solely a resource complaint since it did not involve abuse and neglect concerns or concerns for child safety. The reports were then further assessed for licensing concerns and those with licensing concerns were addressed by licensing. The concerns reported are related to Fiscal Year 2025 as of May 31, 2025 and compared to Fiscal Year 2024.



Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

During the 2016 Child and Family Services Reviews the State's Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention program was rated as a Strength and found in substantial conformity. The Statewide Assessment was submitted May 2024 and South Dakota completed Round 4 CFSR the week of March 17, 2024. South Dakota is awaiting the Final Report to determine performance related to diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive homes.

Refer to the Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan for detailed information regarding plans for performance enhancements and assessment and strategies for continually strengthening outcomes consistent with our vision.

Detailed efforts towards recruitment and retention that were held in SFY2025 can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A2.

State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements

Refer to the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for foundational information regarding the State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 are provided below.

CPS policy continues to require home studies requested by another State for prospective foster and adoptive homes or kinship providers be completed and submitted to the other state within 60 days. The only exception to this time limit is if circumstances are beyond CPS's control (e.g., delays in receipt of Federal Agency background checks). CPS then has an additional 15 days to complete the study and report to the requesting State.

CPS continues to contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS) to complete ICPC home studies for foster homes and adoptive homes in all Regions. CPS contracts with Lutheran Social Services to complete ICPC home studies for prospective kinship placements and parents in all Regions.

Procedures outlined in the Statewide Assessment and 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan are still required to be followed by LSS and CPS staff in order that the 60-day time frame can be met for ICPC home studies related to foster and adoptive parents. Refer to these documents for the specific procedures.

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South Dakota utilizes the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) to process cross jurisdictional adoptive and permanent placements within the State of South Dakota. All Interstate State Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) parties are required to utilize NEICE by 2027. There are currently four ICPC member states that are not currently utilizing the NEICE program, however two of these four states have signed Memorandum of Understandings and are in the process of implementing the NEICE system. South Dakota processes these requests via secure email.

South Dakota utilizes reports in the NEICE system and the FACIS system to assess the efficiency of the ICPC process.



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South Dakota utilizes reports in the NEICE system and the FACIS system to assess the efficiency of the ICPC process.

South Dakota Local Office completes all required documents for an ICPC request. This request is sent to the ICPC Program Specialist for processing. The ICPC Program Specialist reviews documents for accuracy and requests additional information from SD Local Worker if needed. The information is then sent to the receiving state via NEICE or secure email.

NEICE has streamlined the process for sending and receiving ICPC requests and improved timely communication between States. There continues to be delays in receiving out of state background clearances and completion of required foster parent/adoption training. These requirements often take over sixty days and delay the timely completion of home studies and placement decisions.

The sending state send ICPC documents to South Dakota utilizing the NEICE system or secure email. The ICPC Program Specialist reviews documents to ensure accuracy and requests additional information in needed. The information is then sent via secure email to SD Office of Licensing and Accreditation, the contracted home study agency, and the Local SD Child Protection Office for review.

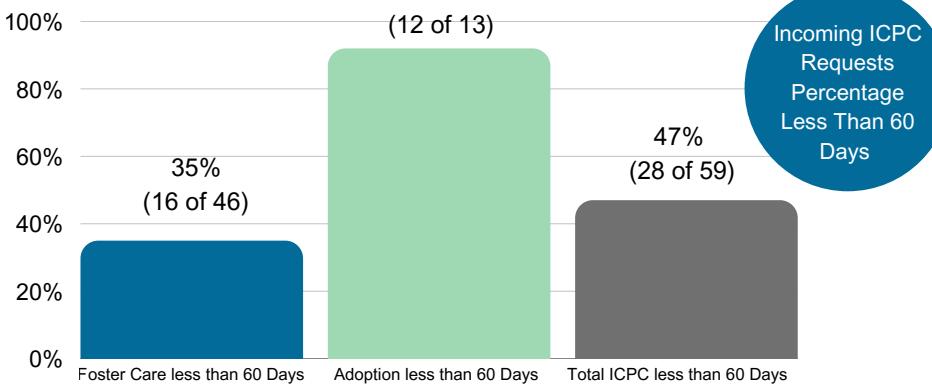
SD Office of Licensing and Accreditation and/or the contracted home study agency then complete study. The completed study is sent back to the ICPC Program Specialist who reviews in conjunction with the SD Local CPS Office to determine a placement decision.

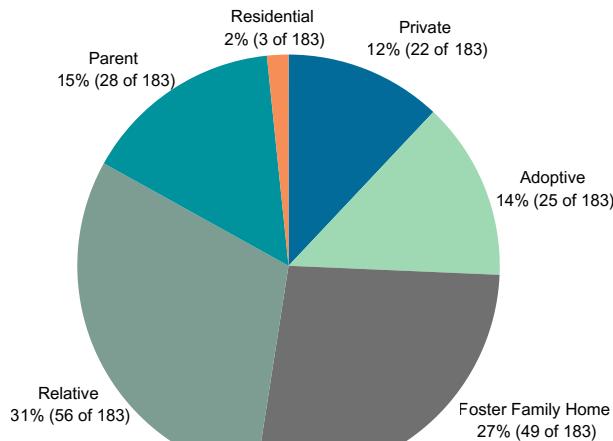
ICPC Program Specialist receives ICPC requests via secure email from the SD Department of Corrections, private adoption agencies/attorneys, contracted Tribes and from parents for private residential or adoptive placements. The ICPC Program Specialist reviews these requests for accuracy and sends the requests via NEICE or secure email to the receiving state. When ICPC requests are received from another state for private parental placements, private adoptions, or residential placements, ICPC Program Specialist reviews information and approves or denies placement. If the proposed placement resource is domiciled on tribal land with a State-Tribal agreement to complete home studies, the request is sent to the Tribal Social Services Agency for completion of the home study and placement approval.

To improve the timeliness of ICPC home study requests, the ICPC Program Specialist/Deputy Compact Administrator maintains a comprehensive Excel spreadsheet to track all sending and receiving ICPC cases. Upon receipt, all ICPC home study requests are immediately forwarded to the appropriate home study agency via NEICE or secure email. The NEICE system supports timely processing by issuing automated reminders when 30 and 10 days remain before a home study is due. Additionally, the ICPC Program Specialist proactively sends status inquiries to receiving states and reminders to South Dakota Lutheran Social Services (SD LSS) to follow up on the progress of pending home studies. In May 2025, the NEICE system in South Dakota was updated to display home study due dates prominently on the face page of each case—visible to both sending and receiving parties. This due date is color-coded: green when on track and red once the 60-day completion requirement has been exceeded. The preliminary home study discussed prior will also support improvement in timeliness.

In State Fiscal Year 2026, South Dakota will continue to enhance the process in order to improve timeliness of home studies. The ICPC Program Specialist will conduct a training session for supervisors and Regional Managers, focusing on the requirements and timeliness related to reviewing completed home studies for questions, concerns, approvals, or denials. In addition, the ICPC Program Specialist and ICWA Program Specialist will be conducting an ICPC and timeliness training for the Tribal Social Services Agencies that complete home studies. The ICPC Program Specialist will track South Dakota's timeliness improvement following these trainings and by monitoring the predicted timeliness improvement stemming from South Dakota's newly implemented state kinship licensing standards. The tribes with State -Tribe IV-E agreements are exploring development of kinship-specific licensing standards for their tribal child welfare programs, as well.

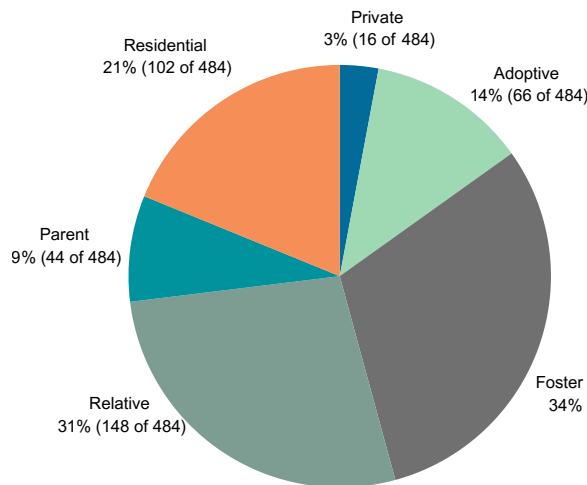
The following is data obtained from NEICE regarding completion of ICPC foster home and adoption home studies.





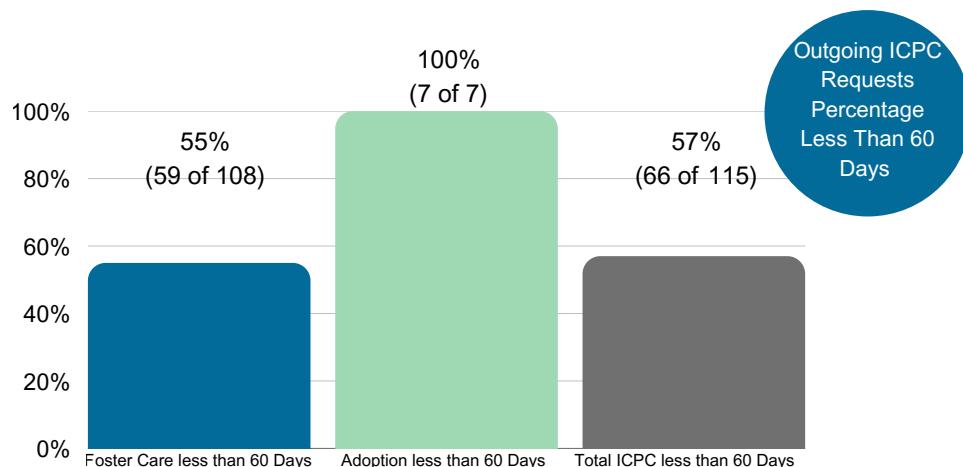
Incoming ICPC Requests by Type of Placement- SFY2025

The following table includes data which shows the volume of ICPC requests by placement type CPS has made in SFY2025. Of particular significance is the number of Relative and Foster Family Home ICPC requests for the last State Fiscal Year.



Outgoing ICPC Requests by Type of Placement- SFY2025

The following table includes data which shows the percentage of home studies completed for CPS within 60 days by other states.



Outgoing ICPC Requests Percentage Less Than 60 Days

III. Update to the Plan for Enacting the State's Vision

Goals

Families are engaged with a child welfare system which honors and uplifts their values and resilience through the empowerment of families involved within the system.

CPS collaborates consistently with the internal and external partners in the development, assessment, modification, and monitoring of the CFSP, as well as the progress reported in subsequent APSRs. These collaborative efforts are not seen as an event, but an ongoing process to continually identify more efficient and effective ways to improve outcomes for children and families who encounter the child welfare system.

Further collaboration with internal and external teams provided the input necessary to finalize South Dakota's vision statement, these partners included the Pennington County Deputy State's Attorney, Court Improvement Program Coordinator, the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment. A tribal stakeholder and additional CIP member who is associated with the school district were invited, however, were not able to attend. They were given the opportunity to provide feedback in writing. In determining interim benchmarks, the team agreed to set a benchmark for the first year, then review progress towards each goal/objective each year thereafter to determine what the next year's goal should be.

The process of envisioning the future of child welfare through the development of a vision statement provided an opportunity for multiple discussions, both internal and external. The vision statement provided aims to empower all members of the child welfare system towards systemic change.

South Dakota CPS utilizes reports available in the OMS to analyze case review results from a statewide, regional, and individual lens to determine where and what CQI efforts are needed throughout the state. Review-level reports are analyzed to decipher if trends in areas needing improvement require statewide CQI efforts or if those efforts are needed in a certain region of the state; alternatively, if high performance in an item is identified in a localized area of the state, analysis of the cases reviewed identifies what practices that region is doing to achieve high performance so those practices can be replicated throughout the state. South Dakota completes annual CQI case reviews; review-level reports are utilized to compare results from one year to the next to determine if CQI initiatives are effectively improving outcomes as intended. Case-Level reports are analyzed by field staff and supervisors to identify areas of strength and improvement for individual caseworkers so that supervisors can strategically develop their staff.

South Dakota completed Round 4 Child and Family Services Review in March 2025. South Dakota determined it is more strategic to wait on setting benchmarks 5 years in advance or identify specific supports as initiatives may shift as a result of the CFSR findings and PIP implementation. CPS wants to ensure the PIP implementation supports and CFSP implementation supports align. Additional benchmarks and implementation supports will be captured on subsequent APSR's after the Round 4 PIP is finalized. As of June 30, 2025 South Dakota is awaiting their Final Report.

Goal 1

The Child Welfare System is equipped to provide children and families with evidence-based prevention services which align with the Family First Prevention Plan.

Goal 2

When a family is involved in the child welfare system, the least restrictive prevention service is utilized, to ensure children are not removed from the home when they can safely be cared for in their home.

Goal 3

Families involved with the child welfare system through the court, receive appropriate services to ensure timely and suitable safety, permanency, and wellbeing for children. Children return to the home as soon as safely possible through a shared understanding of all parties of Conditions for Return.

Goal 1

The Child Welfare System is equipped to provide children and families with evidence-based prevention services which align with the Family First Prevention Plan.

The first goal focuses on the need to identify and change the trajectory of children and families at risk of entering the child welfare system. Families have better outcomes when parents and children are served together in the home prior to any formal child welfare intervention.

➤ **Goal 1, Objective 1:** Reduce entry into foster care by families accessing services prior to the need for out of home placement.

Rationale: Evidence-based prevention services to families will reduce situation where family find themselves in crisis situations that lead to Child Protection Services intervention. This will reduce childhood trauma and family separation.

Interim Benchmarks:

- Year 1: Finalize Family First Prevention Plan for comprehensive prevention services to be available to families.
- Year 2, Benchmark 1: The Family First Prevention Services Act Plan is resubmitted and approved. Training, piloting, and implementation planning is made.
- Year 2, Benchmark 2: A prevention umbrella will be developed, enveloping the variety of prevention services and supports offered, to positively impact outcomes.

2026 APSR Goal 1 Progress Update:

Family First Prevention Plan: The Prevention Plan was submitted for approval by federal partners on July 30, 2024. Three of the eight elements were met in the initial version of the plan. The agency continued to implement planning and respond to federal partners with enhanced detail and develop piloting efforts. Revisions were made in the months of February and March 2025. The Prevention Plan was finalized for resubmission in April 2025. Policy is currently in development and a communication plan has been established. Training materials are being developed and efforts are underway to reengage state and tribal partners through scheduled meetings and outreach. Once the Family First Prevention Plan is resubmitted and approved by federal partners and implemented, training on evidence-based programs that are encompassed in the plan will be subsequently provided. **Detailed engagement efforts specific to the Family First Prevention Plan can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A8.**

South Dakota Governor Larry Rhoden proclaimed April as Child Abuse Prevention month. Activities were held around the state to promote this proclamation and included:

- "Wearing of blue" day in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month in April
- 7th Circuit CASA hosted a Child Abuse Awareness Community Event.
- Sioux Falls CASA hosted a Red Cape Campaign.
- Northern Hills CASA hosted a coffee and conversation event.
- Stand Up to Child Abuse 5K Run and Walk
- Child Abuse Prevention information posted on Facebook
- Newsletters
- A resolution was passed on March 25th by the Oglala Sioux Tribe declaring April as "Month of the Child". The tribe hosted several events such as a walk-run-bike event, scavenger hunt, parade, education classes, presentations, and a baby crawl.

School Based Child Abuse Prevention Program: During State Fiscal Year 2025, the Systems of Care (SOC) project in the Yankton area made steady progress in strengthening interagency collaboration, enhancing data sharing practices, and evaluating the effectiveness of child protection prevention services. CPS intake data was initially requested and shared with SOC partners, supported by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established early in the year. Regular quarterly meetings were held, allowing for ongoing dialogue and review of referral data, with the CQI Outcomes team providing additional insights as needed. Efforts were made to compare program participant data with open CPS cases to assess service impact. Throughout the year, a revised annual MOU was developed and reviewed by legal counsel; however, a historical oversight in the original agreement was identified in April, prompting the preparation of a revised data set and updated MOU to ensure accurate and appropriate data sharing moving forward. School and community mental health partner agencies opted to meet after school resumes in the fall, rather than meet prior to the end of the school year as to best accommodate scheduling. Information was shared by email exchange, however. Despite scheduling challenges and the need for document revisions, the project demonstrated effective coordination and a strong commitment to continuous improvement, laying a solid foundation for future work.

Lutheran Social Services (LSS) CARES: During State Fiscal Year 2025, the CARES program continued to provide consistent wraparound support services while focusing on sustainability and preparation for Title IV-E Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) alignment. Quarterly meetings facilitated regular updates and collaborative planning between CARES and CPS. While referrals typically wane during summer due to school closures, outreach efforts targeted summer programs to maintain visibility. As the school year resumed in September, CARES refreshed engagement with schools and introduced an expanded coverage area for the CARES program staff due to higher utilization of services in the Sioux Falls area as compared to Watertown. The CARES program continues to support ongoing collaboration with CPS Post Adoption to help stabilize adoptive placements.

By December, there were eleven active clients in both Sioux Falls and Watertown, and CARES remained on track to achieve a well-supported rating through the Title IV-E Clearinghouse by summer 2025. Program participation remained steady into the spring, and efforts to secure long-term sustainability through grant funding and federal support continued.

The chart below highlights participant data as of May 31, 2025.

	Sioux Falls	Watertown	Total
	Referral Distribution		
Total Referrals	141	62	203
Total Enrolled (To Date)	83	39	122
Active Clients (Currently Enrolled)	15	9	24
Processing Referrals (Contacting)	4	1	5

Data Source: Lutheran Social Services

Training and Technical Assistance: Once the Family First Prevention Plan is implemented, training on evidence-based programs that are encompassed in the plan will be provided.

- **2026 APSR Goal 1 Implementation and Program Supports:** Once the Family First Prevention Plan is approved by federal partners and implemented, training on evidence-based programs that are encompassed in the plan will be provided.

Goal 2

When a family is involved in the child welfare system, the least restrictive prevention service is utilized, to ensure, whenever possible, children are not removed from the home.

The second goal focuses on the need for the child welfare system to effectively utilize prevention interventions, both existing and others yet undeveloped, to ensure children who can safely be cared for in their home or in the home of an extended family or family network, do not enter custody. Children and families must be served in the least intrusive means necessary.

► **Goal 2, Objective 1:** Child welfare system partners are empowered to participate in joint planning to enhance service array and delivery at the local level.

Rationale: Systemic change occurs when all child welfare systems collaborate to support families in receiving timely and appropriate services in order to achieve positive outcomes.

Interim Benchmarks:

- Year 1, Benchmark 1: Regional assessments are completed and distributed to stakeholders, to inform them of local child welfare trends.
- Year 1, Benchmark 2: Regional teams are created or enhanced to develop CQI plans to identify and implement strategies to improve outcomes for children and families.
- Year 2, Benchmark 1: CQI Program Specialists will support all regions in South Dakota in developing a CQI Plan to identify and implement strategies to improve outcomes for children and families.

2026 APSR Goal 2, Benchmark 1 Progress Update:

In SFY2025, the Year 1 Benchmark 1 for Goal 2 was achieved. Regional Assessments were provided to Regional Managers and shared with supervisors. The Continuous Quality Improvement team supported regions on analyzing their Regional Assessments. Regional Managers are in the process of identifying stakeholders to share the Regional Assessments with and engage in Continuous Quality Improvement Plans.

2026 APSR Goal 2, Benchmark 2 Progress Update:

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025, the Year 1 Benchmark 2 was achieved. The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team developed a CQI Toolkit to support regional implementation of CQI Plans. The toolkit includes key resources such as a Referral Form, 5 Whys, Fishbone Diagram, Logic Model, Theory of Change, and CQI Plan template. To ensure accessibility, the CQI Toolkit was uploaded to the agency intranet, providing staff with easy and centralized access to these materials. On September 11, 2024, the toolkit and an overview of the CQI planning process were presented to the Management Team, along with a discussion on the implementation strategy across regions.

Region 3 was selected to pilot the CQI Plan process. A collaborative meeting was held on October 4, 2024, during which participants worked to identify a core problem, analyze root causes, and develop targeted interventions to strengthen safety decision-making. A follow-up meeting took place in December 2024 to review the draft CQI Plan and discuss appropriate metrics for measuring outcomes and progress. Region 3 is currently engaged in identifying relevant stakeholders and finalizing metrics to track progress toward identified goals.

A CQI Plan has been implemented in Region 1 to support the Stronger Families Together initiative in their work of targeted recruitment of foster families. A CQI team member attends monthly meetings to support the team on their goals and progress towards increasing the number of foster homes in Region 1.

A CQI Program Specialist has been assigned to every region in South Dakota to provide support in CQI initiatives. As part of the CQI Program Specialist's assignment, CQI plans will be developed with every region in South Dakota in SFY2026.

During State Fiscal Year 2026, the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team will engage with each region individually to initiate the development of regional CQI Plans. By the close of the fiscal year, all regions across the state will have implemented active CQI Plans.

Training and Technical Assistance: The CQI Team will complete case review on policy and practice, administer surveys, provide analysis of surveys and case reviews, and develop the Regional Assessments for each local CQI meeting. The CQI Team will provide guidance to the local teams in developing CQI plans.

2026 APSR Goal 2 Implementation and Program Supports: In September 2024, the CQI Team met with the supervisor team from Region 7 to review fidelity review results and their regional assessment. The CQI Team assisted the supervisors in analyzing their regional assessment to further understand areas where a CQI plan could support the region.

Fidelity reviews were completed by the CQI team to review policy and practice surrounding ICWA, child case plan/caseworker visits, kinship connections and placement, children missing from care, foster kinship placement payments, split siblings, and well-child exams. The results from fidelity reviews are compiled and will be shared through regional assessments in July 2024.

In State Fiscal Year 2026, the CQI Team will conduct local CQI meetings with each region to review and analyze regional assessments and further develop CQI plans.

Goal 3

Families involved with the child welfare system through the court, receive appropriate services to ensure safety, timely and suitable permanency, and well-being for children.

The third goal focuses on the need for families involved with the child welfare system through the court to receive appropriate services to ensure safety, timely

and suitable permanency, and well-being needs for children are met. A safe home is qualified by the absence or; the presence of sufficient caregiver protective capacities; and confidence in consistency and endurance of the conditions that produced the safe home. The term "safe home" is used in the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) as the objective of CPS intervention. Conditions for Return (CFR) identify specific behavior and circumstances that must exist within a child's home for a child who is in an out of home safety plan to move to an in-home safety plan. If all parties acknowledge and focused on CFR than children would return home as soon as possible based on safety. Permanency planning is the process of taking prompt, decisive action to maintain children in their own homes, or to permanently place them with other families. Permanency planning can only be achieved in a timely manner through a system wide recognition and investment in child welfare. The absence of any major partner in permanency planning causes significant delays and jeopardizes positive outcomes for children. Well-being encompasses mental, behavioral, emotional, and social functioning as well as physical health and development of a child. Children and families are best served when the system is functional.

 Goal 3, Objective 1: Parents are actively engaged and empowered to participate in child welfare system change.

Rationale: Parents and/or caregivers with lived experience should be actively involved in child welfare system change in order to ensure they have sufficient, individualized services, are engaged in case planning and permanency planning for themselves and their children. Engaged parents are more likely to have successful outcomes. In order to enhance the child welfare experience for parents, it is vital to have perspective from a parent who has experienced the child welfare system. Seventy-three percent of children served by the child welfare system are Native American, there will be a strategic approach to ensure sufficient representation.

Interim Benchmarks:

- Year 1: A parent collaborative workgroup is built.
- Year 2: Parent collaborative workgroup is sustainable.

2026 APSR Goal 3, Objective 1 Progress Update:

South Dakota achieved the Year 1 Benchmark for Goal 3, Objective 1 in State Fiscal Year 2025. Initial and follow up meetings with the Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment were held in December 2024. During meetings, data from survey results were analyzed and plans for initial meetings with focus group members were discussed. An additional meeting was held in March 2025 to discuss progress updates. The Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment was conducting one-on-one interviews to assess the willingness to participate in the stakeholder groups. Child Protection Services receives monthly updates regarding progress towards finalization of a parent collaborative workgroup from the Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment.

The current parent collaborative workgroup is currently comprised of mothers, however the value of fathers and other caregivers in a parental role is recognized. In SFY2026, CPS and the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment will expand efforts to ensure that collaborative workgroups are both sustainable and inclusive of fathers and other caregivers in parenting roles.

Training and Technical Assistance: Technical Assistance is needed from the Family First Program Specialist and local offices to identify parents to be involved in a collaborative workgroup. Training needs to be provided to the parents regarding capacity building in order to have focused and meaningful discussion. Technical assistance may be sought from the Capacity Building Center for States.

- **2026 APSR Goal 3 Implementation and Program Supports:** Parents were administered surveys by local offices for to current parents and state office distributed surveys to parents who were no longer involved with the child welfare agency. Parents had the opportunity to voice interest in participating in a collaborative workgroup. In State Fiscal Year 2025, parents were identified to participate in the collaborative workgroup and in State Fiscal Year 2026 these parents will be provided training regarding capacity building in order to have focused and meaningful discussion. A CQI Program Specialist is a member of the collaborative workgroup and provides additional training and support as needed.

 **Goal 3. Objective 2:** Youth are engaged and empowered to participate in child welfare system change.

Rationale: Youth should be given the opportunity to be involved in child welfare system change. They should feel empowered to share their experiences as a child involved in the child welfare system. There is currently a youth advocacy group that provides input on permanency and wellbeing topics. The intention is to collaborate with this group to align youth engagement initiatives. Seventy-three percent of children served by the child welfare system are Native American, there will be a strategic approach to ensure sufficient representation.

Interim Benchmarks:

- Year 1: Community Resource Persons, Independent Living Skills Program Specialist, and Young Voices leadership are engaged to determine if incorporating this objective in their existing program aligns with their mission.
- Year 2: Independent Living and Permanency Program Specialist will engage with Community Resource Persons and Young Voices Leadership to begin implementation of a youth with lived experience workgroup.

2026 APSR Goal 3, Objective 2 Progress Update:

A Continuous Quality Improvement Program Specialist and Independent Living Program Specialist met with the Community Resource Persons Team on January 16, 2025 to discuss this goal and benchmarks. A follow up meeting was held in February 2025 where the Community Resource Persons Team shared barriers to promoting permanency and well-being for older youth in care. The Community Resource Persons agreed to identify youth with lived experience to incorporate into future meetings pertaining to this goal. In an effort to make improvements towards the barriers shared by the Community Resource Persons Team, The Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist is identifying areas within policy and practice where services can be enhanced to eliminate barriers towards achieving permanency and promoting well-being. Updates to policy are underway and fidelity reviews will be implemented to track improvement.

Young Voices remains active in South Dakota, though they do not meet monthly. Instead, they come together periodically to share their foster care experiences and contribute to improving policies and practices within the child welfare system. Goal 3 of South Dakota's Child and Family Services Plan outlines the objective that youth are engaged and empowered to participate in child welfare system change. The agency's year 1 benchmark includes engaging Young Voices leadership to determine if incorporating this objective in their existing program aligns with their mission. CPS publishes data relating to safety, permanency and well-being on the Department of Social Services website for anyone to access. Since the launch in SFY 2021, birth parents, kinship families, foster parents, adoptive parents, and youth with lived experience have participated in planning and implementation of the Stronger Families Together initiative to recruit and support foster families who support reunification efforts, maintaining connections, and timely permanency for children.

The state of South Dakota remains steadfast in its commitment to collaborating with young adults who have transitioned out of foster care after age 18 who are passionate about sharing their lived experiences. These youth have continued to engage in impactful panel presentations across the state, demonstrating resilience and dedication.

Recognizing the value of their voices, the Independent Living Program Specialist, in collaboration with the Community Resource Team, is working diligently to recruit new members to reinvigorate and expand the program. Also, in SFY26, the Independent Living Program will focus on strengthening partnerships with tribal nations and increasing outreach to Native youth to join Young Voices, to ensure stronger tribal representation in shaping ILS programming.

The insights provided by Young Voices have proven invaluable in shaping and enhancing South Dakota's foster care and independent living services. Young Voices participants have contributed meaningfully by speaking to foster parents, group and residential staff, Child Protection Services employees, administration, and other key stakeholders. Their perspectives help illuminate areas for growth and innovation, ensuring that independent living services and transition supports address the real needs of youth transitioning from care.

Over the past year, members of Young Voices have significantly expanded their advocacy efforts, sharing their experiences and perspectives with key stakeholders to foster understanding and improve services for youth in care.

Young Voices delivered a compelling presentation that resonated with attendees at the below events in 2024 and 2025.

- **October 2024:** Three young adults presented to providers at the Human Services Psychiatric Center in Yankton. Their message focused on preparing youth in treatment for independent living. The session was impactful enough that they were invited to speak directly with youth in the long-term placement, offering encouragement and practical advice.
- **November 2024:** Two young adults attended a showing of The Sound of Hope at the Elks Theater in Rapid City, an event aimed at recruiting foster homes. Though they did not present, their presence was recognized privately and appreciated by DSS Cabinet Secretary Matt Althoff.
- **January 2025:** Two young adults joined the Independent Living Program Specialist at a foster parent quarterly training. While the specialist presented program information, the young adults shared deeply personal experiences. Their stories left a lasting impact—one family in attendance expressed interest in fostering older youth.
- **February 2025:** Three young adults spoke at the SD Association of Youth Care Providers conference in Pierre. Their presentation focused on:
 - The value of provider participation in Age Meetings
 - Ensuring youth retain educational credits during residential placements
 - Teaching practical life skills to help youth prepare for adulthood
- **May 2025:** Two young adults presented to CPS Supervisors, Regional Managers, Program Specialists, and Leadership, focusing on the role of caseworkers in building trust, being consistent, and showing up for youth. They reflected on how those relationships shaped their healing and impacted their transition into adulthood.
- **May 2025:** Two foster youth graduates were featured on DSS Facebook and Instagram social media posts, celebrating their high school graduations, and highlighting their future planning and aspirations.

- **June 2025:**

- Several youths who transitioned from care will serve as keynote speakers at the upcoming ILS conferences in Sioux Falls and Rapid City. In addition to sharing their stories, they will help lead conference activities to encourage peer engagement and comfort among current foster youth.
- These same young adults will also present at the Homeless Summit in Pierre, SD. Their session will offer provider insights into how to better meet the needs of young adults experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Two college students who transitioned out of care will share their experiences with post-secondary education and how the Educational Training Voucher (ETV) helped them alleviate financial burdens and supported their academic success through a social media post on the DSS Facebook and Instagram.

The Independent Living Program Specialist and Community Resource Team will continue to build on youth engagement and advocacy efforts through the following planned activities in SFY26:

Youth Presentations at Statewide Conferences: In August 2025, former foster youth have been invited to speak at the Behavioral Health and Suicide Prevention Conference in Sioux Falls. They will share their lived experiences related to mental health prevention, treatment, and recovery supports.

Training Videos Featuring Youth Perspectives: Videos featuring former foster youth sharing their experiences in care will continue to be recorded and used as training tools for new staff. These videos are designed to demonstrate the impact that child welfare professionals have on the lives of the youth they serve.

Statewide In-Person Presentations to DSS Staff: Former foster youth will present during all-staff meetings held for Family Services Specialists across the state. These sessions will focus on the critical role of caseworkers in building trust, maintaining consistency, and fostering meaningful relationships that contribute to healing and a successful transition into adulthood.

Social Media Advocacy through Stronger Families Together: DSS will continue to produce and share photos and short video clips for the Stronger Families Together social media campaign. These posts will celebrate the achievements of youth formerly in care while raising awareness about the ongoing need for foster homes, particularly for older youth.

Faith-Based Community Engagement: Former foster youth will present at a faith-based gathering hosted by the Stronger Families Together initiative, helping to educate and engage communities in supporting youth in care.

Foster Parent Orientations and Trainings: Youth speakers will continue to participate in orientations and training sessions for new or prospective foster parents, sharing their personal stories to highlight the real-life impact of committed, supportive caregivers and highlight the need for more foster homes for older youth.

Development of Young Voices Framework: Current members of Young Voices are working to establish clear leadership, membership, presentation, and incentive guidelines. These efforts aim to strengthen the structure of the group, support recruitment of future members, and encourage more consistent participation from youth currently in care.



Young Voices also serves as an essential platform for participants to influence systemic improvements. The Community Resource Persons (CRPs) meet with Young Voices members and relay updates and recommendations to the CPS Independent Living Program Specialist. These recommendations directly inform the development of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and subsequent Annual Progress and Services Reports (APSRs). By integrating youth feedback into these critical documents, South Dakota ensures that lived experiences remain central to measuring progress and implementing adjustments in independent living services.

The state remains committed to recruiting new Young Voices members and fostering a culture of collaboration, ensuring that youth continue to have meaningful opportunities to shape the systems that serve them. South Dakota recognizes that youth input is not only valuable but essential to achieving long-term success for those transitioning out of foster care.

As evidenced by the information provided, South Dakota has successfully met the Year 1 benchmark. Community Resource Persons, Independent Living Skills Program Specialist, and Young Voices leadership have collaborated in SFY25 and determined this objective aligns with their mission. In SFY26, the Independent Living and Permanency Program Specialist will continue to engage with Community Resource Persons and Young Voices leadership to implement a youth with lived experience workgroup.

Training and Technical Assistance: Technical Assistance is needed from the Independent Living Program Specialist and local offices to identify youth to be involved in a collaborative workgroup. Training needs to be provided to the youth regarding capacity building in order to have focused and meaningful discussion. Technical assistance may be sought from the Capacity Building Center for States to collaborate with a youth with lived experience consultant to train and focus youth on the overarching goal of systemic change.

- **2026 APSR Goal 3, Objective 2 Implementation and Program Supports:** In SFY26, the Independent Living Program Specialist will continue working closely with Community Resource Persons (CRPs) to further develop the Young Voices youth advisory group with the goal of establishing youth-led workgroups within group and residential care facilities. While this initiative was not implemented in SFY25, efforts will be renewed in the coming year to promote youth engagement and leadership in shaping the services they receive. Once youth are identified through collaboration between the Independent Living Program Specialist, CRPs, and Family Service Specialists, training will be provided to build their capacity to participate in meaningful discussions and advocate for systemic change. A CQI Program Specialist has been involved in discussions and will continue to support this objective as progress is made in SFY2026. Technical assistance may also be sought from the Capacity Building Center for States, including potential collaboration with a youth with lived experience consultant, to ensure the workgroups are focused, productive, and aligned with the overarching goal of improving youth outcomes.

➤ **Goal 3, Objective 3:** Court Improvement Program (CIP) Committee will analyze data and trends to determine improvement strategies to improve timely and appropriate permanency for children.

Rationale: To be engaged, a child welfare system must be well informed of the status of children and families served by the system. Accurate and precise data is necessary to understand child and family experiences in the child welfare system and determining what, if any, further strategies must be implemented.

Interim Benchmarks:

- Year 1: CIP Committee will review the results of the Child and Family Services Review, to identify permanency initiatives needed for the Program Improvement Plan.
- Year 2: The Child and Family Services Review results will be shared with CIP Committee once South Dakota has received the Final Report.

2026 APSR Goal 3, Objective 3 Progress Update:

The Child and Family Services Review process and State's data profile were shared during the October 2024 Court Improvement Plan Committee meeting. The results of the Child and Family Services Review were not shared with the CIP Committee in SFY2025 as South Dakota has not received the Final Report. Upon receipt of the State's Final Report, the results will be shared with the CIP Committee to identify permanency initiatives needed for the Program Improvement Plan.

Training and Technical Assistance: The CPS Administrator of CQI and Outcomes will provide data during CIP meetings that Child Protection Services has to help inform where South Dakota is in safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes. If available, other CIP members will share relevant data about safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.

- **2026 APSR Goal 3, Objective 3 Implementation and Program Supports:** In October 2024, the Administrator of CQI and Outcomes shared the State's data profile. The Administrator of CQI and Outcomes shared with CIP what South Dakota Sites were selected for the Round 4 Child and Family Services Review the week of March 17, 2025. It was shared two CIP members are participating as Stakeholder reviews. It was discussed stakeholder interviews are completed the week of the review and legal and judicial partners would be contracted for interviews. In May 2025 the Administrator of CQI and Outcomes updated CIP that South Dakota has not receive their Final Report. CIP discussed the best way to share the results of the CFSR to the legal and judicial community, some of the ideas shared will depend on when the Final Report is received.

IV. Quality Assurance System

Refer to the Assessment of Current Performance in Improving Outcomes Section under Systemic Outcomes for information on the Quality Assurance System.

Detailed information regarding South Dakota's Quality Assurance Initiatives can be found within Appendix A, Attachment A3.

V. Update on the Service Descriptions Child and Family Services Continuum

Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program

Services offered under title IV-B, subpart 1 have been described in Services Array and Resource Developed and Service Description, please see those sections for details.

CPS provides a full range of child welfare services statewide. Services are provided in the tribal jurisdictions either directly by CPS or under agreements in which the Tribe provides the full array of services. The services provided by CPS include intake for child abuse and neglect reports, 24/7 emergency response, assessment of abuse and neglect and child safety, ongoing protective services, reunification services to families, independent living services, permanency planning services, licensing of child welfare agencies, and parenting education. CPS uses the Comprehensive Safety Intervention (CSI) model to respond to reports of abuse and neglect, assess child safety, and provide ongoing services to families. The CSI is a safety driven model integrated throughout the components of the services to families. CPS coordinates these services with community and tribal providers.

Intake

The first phase of the CSI is intake which is concerned with evaluating allegations of maltreatment and threats to child safety as well as identifying families in need of Child Protection Services. State law requires reports of abuse and neglect to be made either to the county State's Attorney, law enforcement, or CPS. The county State's Attorney and law enforcement are required to inform CPS about reports they receive. CPS receives intake calls during normal business hours Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM in both central and mountain time zones. CPS (local) office staff provide emergency response to reports of maltreatment weekdays after 5 PM, during weekends and holidays. Calls are routed through local law enforcement agencies and CPS staff respond to the reports determined to indicate Present Danger.

CPS restructured the intake system in January 2015 from a regional call system to a centralized call system. Two Supervisors and seventeen Intake Specialists are split between two units, all serving under one administrator.

CPS can access information on criminal court convictions through the Unified Judicial System which provides information related to determining child safety during the intake process. CPS also networks and consults with key community and tribal stakeholders who could have relevant information about family history. Several jurisdictions across the state have community and tribally based Child Protection Teams and Multidisciplinary Teams for the purpose of assisting in the assessment and treatment of child abuse and neglect. CPS offices request collateral information from selected mandatory reporters to obtain relevant background information.

CPS uses the Child Maltreatment Screening and Response Determination to "triage" Request for Services (RFS) assignments based on child safety and vulnerability. The determination provides a structured decision-making process for Intake Specialists in the initial determination of child safety and vulnerability which then drives CPS' timeframes for initial contact.

2026 APSR Update:

Refer to Safety Outcome 2 for an update regarding enhancements that have positively affected Intake in State Fiscal Year 2025.

Emergency Response

CPS staff provide emergency response to reports of abuse and neglect 24 hours a day and seven days a week, which is coordinated with local law enforcement. Calls are routed through local law enforcement agencies and CPS staff respond to the reports determined to indicate present danger. Law enforcement or court services officers are authorized to take temporary custody of a child without an order of the court if certain criteria defined in South Dakota Codified Law are met.

APSR 2026 Update:

Refer to Section C for further information on updates and enhancements that have been implemented to support the Child Protective Service Workforce.

Initial Family Assessment

CPS and law enforcement have the authority under State law to investigate child abuse and neglect reports. CPS and local law enforcement have a protocol in place regarding coordination of investigations of abuse and neglect depending on child safety and whether the report involves a potential crime. The Initial Family Assessment (IFA) is the assessment process used by CPS when a report is assigned. The IFA places the emphasis on decision-making regarding intervention on impending and present danger threats to child safety rather than the substantiation of an incident. The IFA is supplemented with processes for Present Danger Plans, Safety Plan Determinations, Conditions for Return, and In-Home Safety Plans. The Present Danger Plan allows CPS to consider an alternative to children being placed in CPS custody during the completion of the IFA when it is indicated the child is unsafe due to present danger threats. CPS uses the Present Danger Plan to explore possible ways of controlling the danger threats to child safety with the family.



The parents can voluntarily allow the children to be cared for by other caretakers mutually agreed upon between the parent and CPS pending the completion of the IFA. Another option during the completion of the IFA, is the removal of the alleged maltreating caregiver. Safety Planning is used following the completion of the IFA when threats to child safety exist in the home. The use of a Safety Plan gives the parent and CPS additional time to make better determinations during the ongoing services phase as to what behavioral changes and services are needed to help the parent and CPS manage child safety. The most intrusive Safety Plan is when a child is removed from the home and placed in the custody of CPS because danger threats cannot be managed with the child in the home.

An important component of the Safety Plan requires coordination with other stakeholders who can be part of the Safety Plan. The Safety Plan Providers may be other family members, treatment providers, school representatives, day care providers, etc.

APSR 2026 Update:

Refer to Safety Outcome 2 and Staff Training Systemic Factor sections for further information regarding changes to IFA Policy and training for staff that occurred in State Fiscal Year 2025 and planned initiatives for State Fiscal Year 2026.

Ongoing Services

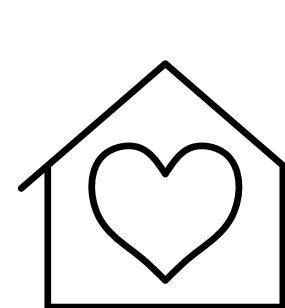
CPS believes case decisions need to be based on an ongoing analysis of safety. The Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA) is the ongoing process within the CSI model that occurs between CPS and the parents. The PCA emphasizes self-determination and facilitates case planning with the family based on danger threats, the protective capacities of the parents, and needed behavior change.

This focuses case planning on behavior change rather than just the incident or compliance through the development and enhancement of caregiver protective capacities. The PCA is used with both in-home cases and cases where the child is placed in the custody of CPS in an out of home Safety Plan.

CPS works with the parents during the PCA process to determine what must change and what services are necessary to achieve these behavioral changes. The PCA Case Plan is developed around the necessary services and includes roles, responsibilities, and timeframes for those who are involved in the plan. South Dakota is an expansive, rural state with a small population base. The availability of services to families varies depending on the geographical area of the state. The PCA process encourages the parent to lead the determination of what services they believe are necessary to make behavior changes and encourages the utilization of natural services identified by the family, e.g., tribal elders as counselors. CPS facilitates parents' access to services through collaboration with service providers, assistance working with service providers, assistance with transportation, paying for expenses for services not covered through other means, and assistance in addressing other issues that may create barriers for families to access services. The PCA Case Plan Evaluation is used by CPS through communication and contact with the family members and communication and coordination with service providers to evaluate the Case Plan progress to assess whether the diminished protective capacities are being enhanced, and subsequently, whether danger threats are being controlled.

APSR 2026 Update:

Refer to Safety Outcome 2 for further information regarding initiatives that have begun in SFY2025 and continued plans for SFY2026 regarding the Protective Capacity Assessment.



Placement Services

CPS provides placement services when a child is placed into the care and custody of CPS by either law enforcement or the courts. Placement options include kinship care, which includes relative and fictive kin care, foster care, other child welfare agencies licensed by the Office of Licensing and Accreditation under the Department of Social Services, and in some instances, out of state placement resources. Licensed child welfare agencies include family foster care, emergency/shelter care, treatment foster care, alternative placement services, group care centers for minors, residential treatment centers, and intensive residential treatment centers. Residential treatment

programs are also available for children with needs related to substance abuse, mental health, and developmental disabilities. CPS considers placement with relatives a priority and state law include provisions requiring a relative placement to be the first consideration when a child is placed. Kinship home studies are completed through a contract with a private agency. The kinship study process includes background checks and the assessment of the kinship caregiver's ability to meet the needs of the child and determination of the prospective kinship caregiver's ability to provide a safe home based on identification and evaluation of their existing protective capacities.

CPS can consider an expedited placement with relative kin or fictive kin soon after the child is placed in care before a home study is completed if the child has a substantial connection to the kin provider and if the necessary safety determinations can be made.

CPS provides supervision, case planning, permanency planning services, and independent living services to children in CPS custody. When law enforcement determines a child must be removed from a caretaker due to safety threats in the home without the assistance of CPS, CPS must have contact with the child immediately after being notified by law enforcement or another reporter to determine an appropriate safety plan. In cases where law enforcement calls CPS for assistance, CPS will immediately respond. When a child is removed from the home and placed by CPS into a licensed foster home, CPS will meet with the child to assess the needs and safety of the child the next working day.

If the child is placed in an unlicensed kinship care placement, CPS will assess safety the next business day. A home visit is then required for all children in out-of-home care within the next 14 days, with a third visit required in the next 30 days. Ongoing home visits are then required on a monthly basis.

CPS completes the Child Case Plan within 60 days of the child being placed in care. The case planning process emphasizes the involvement of parents, the child, the resource provider, the community resource person (if applicable), the supervisor, and others who have a significant role in the family. The Child Case Plan assesses and documents the child's needs, determines the services and supports needed, and documents the efforts made in meeting the child's needs, assuring stability, and facilitating permanency. CPS uses the Child Case Plan to assess progress and adjustments in the plan. CPS works in coordination with the Tribal ICWA Programs and other tribal resources when the child is affiliated with a Tribe. These efforts are described under the section on ICWA and collaboration with the Tribes. Additional tools CPS uses to promote stability and permanency for children in care and enhance family involvement include placement team meetings, team decision-making meetings, family group conferencing, permanency planning team meetings, independent living/ transition meetings, and concurrent planning.

APSR 2026 Update:

Refer to Permanency Outcome 2 for further information regarding new separate kinship licensing standards and Fidelity Review results.

Refer to Well-Being Outcome 1 for further information and data regarding child case plans, child-caseworker visits, and fidelity review results.

[Permanency Planning Services](#)

When reunification is not successful, CPS makes concerted efforts to place children in an alternative permanent placement. CPS considers placement with relatives as a priority and makes ongoing efforts to locate relative placement resources. CPS provides subsidies for guardianship using state funds and also receives federal funding through the Guardianship Assistance Program to provide guardianship subsidies to licensed kinship families who are eligible. CPS provides financial and medical subsidies and post-adoption services to children and their adoptive families. Many adoptions and guardianships are with the children's foster parents or relatives. CPS also places children and youth in Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) as an alternative when adoption and guardianship are not the permanent plans and APPLA is in the child's best interest. This is only utilized for a youth over age 16 and the court must provide approval for this permanent plan.

CPS provides support to placement resources and at least monthly visitation to ensure the stability, safety, and well-being of children in placement. CPS makes efforts to ensure the health, education, connections, social, and physical needs of children are met while in foster care. These efforts are documented in the Child Case Plan and the caseworker narratives.

CPS schedules a variety of team planning meetings to assist with case planning and permanency decisions for children in state custody. Permanency Roundtable Meetings and Adoption Conference Selection Meetings are included in these team planning meetings as well as a variety of others.

South Dakota began implementing Permanency Roundtables (PRTs) as a permanency planning tool in November 2017. PRTs are structured, in-depth case consultations designed to accelerate legal permanency for youth in out-of-home care. The process stimulates professional learning, identifies systemic barriers, and develops aggressive, creative, and realistic Permanency Action Plans for individual children or sibling groups.

Unlike standard case staffings, PRTs provide uninterrupted, focused discussions (lasting at least two hours), include an external consultant to bring a fresh perspective, and ensure direct access to decision-makers who can resolve systemic or policy-related barriers.

PRTs are conducted across all six regions and can be used in a variety of permanency goal situations—including reunification, adoption, and APPLA—particularly when no clear permanency resource is currently established. PRT follow up meetings are held every 30-90 days and continue until permanency is achieved.

The composition of the PRT team intentionally excludes youth, families, attorneys, and other stakeholders from the initial meeting to create a safe space for staff to openly examine barriers and explore solutions. However, input from these parties is encouraged before and after the Roundtable to inform planning and support implementation.

To support continued implementation and expansion, South Dakota is partnering with Casey Family Programs to provide training and technical assistance related to PRTs. While CPS will have a designated lead for this initiative, Casey Family Programs has been asked to include the four Program Specialists for Permanency and Adoption in meetings with their consultant as planning begins around training, developing policy and procedures, model fidelity, and outcome tracking. Staff development leadership will also be involved early to align this work with broader staff training efforts. CQI will be engaged as the initiative progresses, especially around fidelity reviews, data tracking, and outcome evaluation. Coordination with CQI leadership will determine the appropriate timing for their involvement.

The following table includes Permanency Round Table meetings that occurred in State Fiscal Year 2025 as of May 31, 2025.

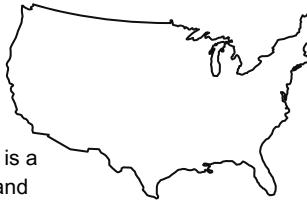
Region	Office	Reunification		Guardianship		Adoption		APPLA	
		New	Follow Up	New	Follow Up	New	Follow Up	New	Follow Up
Black Hills	Rapid City	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
	Spearfish	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
	Sturgis	0	0	0	10	0	70	0	6
3	Eagle Butte	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mobridge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Pierre	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Chamberlain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mission	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Winner	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Aberdeen	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0
	Brookings	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0
	Huron	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Watertown	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
	Sioux Falls	0	0	0	2	0	7	0	0
	Lake Andes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Mitchell	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Vermillion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Yankton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		0	23	0	20	0	105	0	6

Refer to Permanency Outcome 2 for further information regarding relative placement and initiatives that have supported relative placement in SFY2025.

Refer to Service Array Systemic Factor for further information regarding support services such as financial assistance, post adoption services, and guardianship incentive funds that have supported placement resources in SFY2025.

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)

South Dakota is part of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) which was established in 1960, to ensure children placed outside of their resident state are placed in a safe, suitable, and stable environment. The compact affords adequate protection and support services for children placed in out of state placements. South Dakota uses the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) which is a national electronic system for quickly and securely exchanging data and documents from one state to the next in order to place children across state lines.



Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant

CPS serves as the State Lead Agency for the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Grant. The CBCAP funding received by the State of South Dakota is used to:

- 1) Support primary and secondary community-based efforts to provide Parenting Education Programs and to prevent child abuse and neglect;
- 2) To support networks of partnerships for child welfare, schools, court systems, Head Start Programs, tribal agencies, and other organizations to better strengthen and support systems for families to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect; and
- 3) To foster understanding, appreciation, and knowledge of diverse populations in order to prevent child abuse and neglect.

2026 APSR Update:

Refer to Well-Being Outcome 1 for further information regarding initiatives that have been supported through this grant.

Parenting Education Program

The Parenting Education Program provides education to parents and caregivers through group classes to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. CBCAP funding makes it possible to support primary prevention programs and strategies that are available to all families, as well as secondary prevention efforts, which target children and families at risk for abuse and neglect in South Dakota. The Parenting Education Programs are offered to families and communities in South Dakota through Common Sense Parenting and Positive Indian Parenting. The class sites are posted on the State's website, so parents and caregivers have access to locations where the classes will be offered in different areas. If there is a need to have a class in an area not listed on the website, the Parenting Education Program coordinators will work with the Parenting Education Partners to meet the request through contracted instructors. There are also sites offering virtual training to attendees from throughout the state when in-person classes are not optimal.

2026 APSR Update:

Refer to Well-Being Outcome 1 for further information regarding initiatives that have been supported through this grant.

Chafee Program

The CPS Chafee Program is designed to assist youth in foster care as they are working toward independence. The program is rooted in Positive Youth Development, and believes that positive youth experiences, positive relationships, and positive environments are necessities of the program.



The Independent Living Services (ILS) Program in South Dakota provides services to youth beginning at age 14. These services are initially delivered by the assigned Family Services Specialist and the youth's out-of-home care provider. As youth transition toward adulthood, the program builds upon these early supports, fostering strong relationships and continuity of care. Beginning at age 16, Lutheran Social Services' Community Resource People (CRPs), contracted staff, begin providing dedicated independent living case management services. CRPs continue this support while youth are in care (ages 16–18) and after they transition out of care (ages 18–21). A key strength of the ILS Program is the active involvement of youth in planning for their futures. Feedback is regularly gathered through surveys completed at ILS Workshops, the Teen Conference, Age 16 and Age 17 Meetings, Transitional Meetings, and through the Lutheran Social Services CRP Satisfaction Survey. This youth voice is integral to the planning and continuous improvement of the ILS Program.

Refer to John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program) for further information.

Licensing

State law requires child welfare agencies that provide foster care, adoption, group care, independent living, residential treatment, and intensive residential treatment, to be licensed. The Office of Licensing and Accreditation under the Department of Social Services is the entity responsible for licensing child welfare agencies and monitoring child welfare agencies' compliance with licensing standards. The Office of Licensing and Accreditation has processes in place to ensure placement resources meet safety requirements and to ensure licensing standards are consistently applied to all placement resources.

Refer to Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention in Assessment of Current Performance in Improving Outcomes section for further information regarding enhancements in State Fiscal Year 2026.

Adoption

The CPS Adoption Program is responsible for the selection of the adoptive family for youth in CPS custody when the permanent plan changes to adoption. A formalized adoption selection committee is responsible for the selection of the adoptive family for youth. The Committee is made up of the Family Services Specialist, the Family Services Specialist's Supervisor, outside CPS representatives, the Adoption Program Specialist, the child's attorney, and other relevant participants. A review of the child's needs is considered as well as the approved adoption home studies of families interested in adopting. Prior to an adoption selection meeting being held for children where ICWA is applicable and a non-Native placement preference family is being considered, an ICWA staffing is completed. The Staffing includes the ICWA Program Specialist, the Adoption Program Specialist, and the local office to determine that ICWA has been followed. Placement laws are followed, and a decision is made regarding what is in the best interest of the child.

Youth who do not have an identified adoptive resource can be assigned to a Wendy's Wonderful Kid's recruiter or be candidates for the Permanency Roundtable process. The Adoption Program can access services through the AdoptUsKids Program and SD Kids Belong for specialized recruitment efforts. CPS has started to track these youth to better document efforts in locating an adoptive family.

Once a family is identified, a full disclosure meeting is held. The full disclosure meeting is an opportunity for the prospective adoptive family to review the child's entire Child Protection Services file. The family is able to take copies of the child's medical record, mental record, and school record contained in the file. The adoptive family is encouraged to speak with the various professionals involved with the child. This gives the family a comprehensive view into the child's life and allows for them to make an informed decision on whether they can commit to being the child's adoptive family.

The Family Services Specialist will then explain adoption assistance. If the family requires adoption assistance in order to adopt, the family may negotiate up to the basic foster care rate. Exceptions as outlined in administrative rule 67:14:14:05. state that a higher subsidy is allowed if a child meets specific criteria such as 1) lifelong medical condition requiring specialized care 2) disability requiring ongoing specialized treatment or mental health treatment and higher level of supervision 3) prior dissolved adoption or 4) resides in an institution and financial incentive is the only means of securing an adoptive family. Other adoption assistance may include Medicaid coverage until a child is age 18 and a non-medical subsidy covering pre-existing conditions. The Adoptive Placement Agreement and Subsidized Adoption Agreement are signed on the date of the adoptive placement. Non-recurring adoption expense reimbursements are made available to the family to offset the cost of adoption.

When the Adoption Petition and Notice of Hearing are filed with the court and CPS is notified, the local CPS staff completes the adoption consent and the recommendation for adoption finalization based on the Court Report and Report of Investigator. Post adoption services and support are provided by the Adoption Specialist. The youth's record is sealed.

There are two Adoption Program Specialists within the Child Protection Services Management team. One position focuses primarily on pre-adoption services while the second position's primary focus is on post-adoption services. The Adoption Program Specialist manages the Adoption Assistance Program and oversees subsidy payments, Medicaid coverage, and post-adoption services for youth adopted by CPS. The Adoption Program is responsible for technical assistance on adoption-related matters to field staff and to the general public about policy, administrative rules, State laws, and Federal laws. The Program is responsible for creating and amending existing policy and administrative rules on adoption.. The Program is responsible for creating and amending existing policy and administrative rules on adoption.

The Adoption Program is responsible for administration of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance Program. The Adoption Program manages the Adoption Registry and assists adoptive families and adoptees with petitions to open sealed adoption records and complete adoption searches.

Adoption Support

Two thousand, four hundred fifty-five children are currently receiving adoption assistance through CPS. Adoption assistance may include a maintenance subsidy, Medicaid coverage, and a non-medical subsidy, which covers services for pre-existing conditions. The amount of a subsidy and types of adoption assistance are negotiated prior to adoption finalization and remain in effect up to the youth's eighteenth birthday. CPS has been successful in obtaining continued legislative support for the Adoption Program. The SD Legislature has approved increases to the adoption budget every year for the last ten years.

A combination of Adoption Incentive funds, the Children's Trust Fund, and State General funds currently supports the Post Adoption Contract available to adoptive families in South Dakota. Lutheran Social Services (LSS) now holds the contract, following the end of the previous agreement with Children's Home Society on June 1, 2024. LSS was the only agency to submit a proposal in response to the new Request for Proposal (RFP) and was awarded the contract. Prior to finalizing the RFP, surveys were sent to all DSS adoptive families to better understand their needs. A total of 126 responses were received, and the identified needs were incorporated into the new RFP to enhance post-adoption services.

LSS has hired three professional staff members, including two full-time Post-Adoption Specialists and one full-time Post-Adoption Coordinator. These specialists serve as a centralized point of contact for adoptive families facing challenges or crisis. Staff conduct initial assessments to identify each family's strengths and needs, developing individualized plans that may include a range of resources and referrals. Services provided include assessments, safety planning, case management, in-home support to prevent adoption disruptions, 24/7 crisis support, and post-legal adoption services.

Additionally, LSS provides monthly communication to families, connects them to cultural community resources, assists with referrals to Group Homes and Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs), participates in discharge planning, coordinates respite care, and offers advocacy. They have created a Post Adoption Facebook Group and launched support groups for adoptive parents and adopted children.

LSS is beginning work on several new initiatives aimed at further supporting adoptive families during the 2026 fiscal year. These goals include developing an in-person camp for adopted youth, establishing a statewide list-serve for adoptive families, facilitating birth family connections, and hosting a parent/child bonding workshop. While these efforts are still in progress and not yet finalized, they reflect LSS's continued commitment to expanding and strengthening post-adoption services across South Dakota.

The 2025 Adoption Conference, "From Blow-Up to Bonding", was held on June 12 in Sioux Falls, hosted by Lutheran Social Services. The event brought together 84 attendees, including 53 professionals, 29 parents/caregivers, and 2 adoptees. The shared focus was on supporting family stability and enhancing professional skills in adoption-related care. The conference featured expert presentations from Dr. Chaitra Wirta-Leiker, Cara DeHaan, and Dr. Kari Oyen, who provided practical strategies for addressing common challenges in adoption. Topics included how brain development and memory influence child behavior, trauma-informed discipline, strengthening caregiver-child attachment, and promoting caregiver self-care. The event was well-received and reinforced the need for ongoing support and education for families and professionals alike.

Funds are obligated, and timely expenditures of the funds are monitored by the CPS Adoption Program Specialist through the Department of Social Services' monthly Grant Expense Report. The Post Adoption Services are provided to families involved in Inter-Country adoptions.

The Adoption Program also offers individualized post adoption services to families needing services not offered through the Post Adoption contract or Medicaid funding. These services include tutoring services, equine therapy, specialty camps for children with special needs, neurofeedback, orthodontic work, vision therapy, after-school programs, reading literacy program, respite care, medical supplies, various developmental disability assessments from Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) testing to Autism evaluations, psychosexual evaluations, applied behavioral analysis, social learning programs, crisis stabilization services, treatment foster care, independent living care, group care, and residential treatment services.

For youth requiring psychiatric residential treatment, the Adoption Program Specialist assists families with applications for funding through Medicaid and CPS provides tuition funding if this is not provided by the child's school district. The Adoption Program Specialist also assists families with referrals to the treatment facilities. The Adoption Program Specialist provides advocacy for youth and families with involvement with service coordination, treatment planning, and discharge planning.

In SFY2025, the following youth and children were served:

36 youth and 34 families were served through the Post Adoption Contract with Lutheran Social Services from January-May 31, 2025, as this is when they began serving families.

Adoption Assistance supported 44 adoptive youth with educational tuition while they received group care, residential treatment, or independent living services.

26 youth received group care or independent living services. There were no youth in treatment foster care this year.

1 child was served through residential disability services.

CPS continues to work to improve timeliness to adoption. South Dakota contracts with recruiters from Wendy's Wonderful Kids to assist with targeted recruitment for youth available for adoption. South Dakota continues to utilize permanency roundtables to remove barriers to adoption on stagnated cases and to better establish appropriate case goals. South Dakota has a partnership with SD Kids Belong to create videos of children to assist with recruitment for an adoptive home.

Adoption Family Service Specialists, Adoption Supervisors, and Adoption Program Specialists have completed the National Adoption Competency Training Initiative (NTI) through C.A.S.E., finishing all eight modules and Transfer of Learning Sessions by June 2024. This web-based training equips professionals to better address the mental health and developmental needs of children in foster, adoptive, or kinship families. The NTI training will be a mandatory training for on-boarding and professional development for Adoption Specialists.

Ongoing meetings continue between the NTI Implementation Specialist, the Adoption Program Specialist, and the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) team to explore ways to encourage more mental health professionals to complete the training. As of May 2025, these efforts have resulted in 18 new mental health professionals signing up to complete the mental health portion of the training, reflecting the positive impact of LSS's engagement.

South Dakota is preparing to be among a select group of states to receive up to 18 months of free, intensive technical assistance (TA) starting in Summer 2025 from the National Center for Adoption Competent Mental Health. This TA aims to improve access to trauma-competent mental health services for children and families who have experienced the child welfare system. CPS has been approved for this technical assistance to support post-adoptive services for children and families. The Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) has participated in initial information-sharing meetings with the Center and will be invited by CPS to continue involvement as deemed appropriate by their team.

This opportunity aligns closely with CPS's efforts to enhance post-adoption services, including the new statewide Post-Adoption Services contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS), which focuses on expanding services and increasing access to adoption-competent providers. Family survey feedback has highlighted a consistent need for therapists trained in adoption and permanency-related issues across the state. Additionally, the success of the National Adoption Competency Training Initiative (NTI) for CPS adoption staff suggests that similar structured support extended to mental health providers will be highly beneficial.

Refer to Service Array Systemic Factor within Assessment of Current Performance in Improving Outcomes section for further information regarding enhancements and initiatives in SFY 2026 focused on adoption and adoption support.

Information System

CPS has a functioning CCWIS called Family and Children Information System (FACIS). FACIS provides CPS with the ability to gather and maintain the necessary information related to the management of case activity throughout the CPS services continuum. FACIS provides the information required to be submitted for federal reporting under Title IV-E, Title IV-B, and Chafee. FACIS is used by all staff to document child welfare work including intake, IV-E eligibility, case management, placements, caseworker visits, resource management, adoptions, guardianships, financial management, reporting, administration, and interfaces. This is not an exhaustive list of documentation but provides a quality overview of major areas of focus.

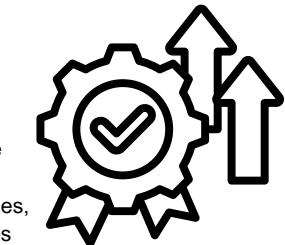
CPS has dedicated resources assigned to FACIS with three assigned FACIS Program Specialists whose primary functions are to maintain the FACIS system, provide oversight of the data, provide technical assistance to all users and complete projects to make improvements to the system when needed. One Program Specialist is designated the CCWIS Project Director. Security is managed through a FACIS administration function. Only designated FACIS Program Specialists can add access for staff and reset passwords in FACIS.

APSR 2026 Update:

Refer to Information System Systemic Factor within Assessment of Current Performance in Improving Outcomes section for further information regarding enhancements and initiatives in SFY 2026 focused on the state's information system.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

CQI was instrumental in identifying trends and implementing solutions to increase performance outcomes while South Dakota CPS was under their Program Improvement Plan and will do the same once South Dakota receives their final report from Round 4 Child and Family Services Review. The CQI Core Team gathers data on outcomes, analyzes data to determine next steps, and initiates any policy changes needed. CQI is done at the regional levels with both the staff and stakeholders in the community to address outcomes CPS underperformed in to be addressed as an entire child welfare system. CQI is managed by the Outcomes Management Program Specialist.



APSR 2026 Update:

Refer to Plan for Enacting the State's Vision, Goal 2, for further information regarding the initiative of Continuous Quality Improvement Plans that have begun initiation in State Fiscal Year 2025.

Refer to Quality Assurance System Systemic Factor for further information regarding the Continuous Quality Improvement policy and practice as well as initiatives that have been implemented in SFY2025 and plans for SFY2026.

Training

CPS provides mandatory Certification training for all newly hired Family Services Specialists. The Certification Program also is required for any newly hired Supervisors, Regional Managers, or Program Specialists. The Certification faculty includes 39 trainers from CPS and a physician who trains on medical indicators of child abuse and neglect, an advocate who trains on human trafficking awareness, a licensed therapist who shares trauma-informed care training, a staff member from the Office of Licensing and Accreditation to train on foster care licensing for the State of South Dakota, and a team of 13 Safety Crisis Management Instructors. The ICWA Program Specialist continues to provide Cultural Awareness training and contracted instructors deliver Positive Indian Parenting training as an option for the parenting education requirement.

The number of hours for certification training is 225.5. The increase in hours from 201.5 in the past year is due to the addition of Compassion Fatigue and Safety Crisis Management.

CPS continues to provide formal ongoing training for Family Services Specialists and Family Services Specialist Supervisors. Depending on the need, CPS provides training through Zoom, however, in State Fiscal Year 2025 efforts have been made to transition the primary training method back to in person training. Please refer to the Initial and Ongoing Staff Training in Section two of the APSR. The FACIS team also delivers a variety of ongoing trainings related to FACIS processes and features; these trainings have been delivered more informally in years past, however, in 2024 the processes and offerings have been enhanced and are more structured.

APSR 2026 Update:

Refer to Staff Training Systemic Factor within Assessment of Current Performance in Improving Outcomes section for further information regarding enhancements and initiatives in SFY 2026 focused on staff training.

Inclusion of Other Federally Funded Programs

CPS, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, Child Care, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program are all programs within the Department of Social Services. As described in the Collaboration section, Division Directors for each program meet on a regular basis to coordinate in strategic planning and evaluation to best serve our consumers. In April of 2020 the Division of Children and Family Services was created under the Department of Social Services. Child Support, Economic Assistance, Child Care Assistance, and Child Protection Services all fall under this division. Refer to the Collaboration section.

CPS staff and Division of Developmental Disability staff frequently consult to ensure mutual consumers are receiving high quality services. Plans are underway for the Division of Developmental Disabilities to potentially present at the Fall 2025 Management Team meeting to share information and raise awareness about their services.

Refer to the Collaboration section for Birth to Three and Head Start collaboration and to the Tribal Collaboration section of the CFSP and subsequent APSRs. Please see Agency Response to the Community Systemic Outcome for more details on inclusion of other federally funded programs.

APSR 2026 Update:

Refer to Agency Responsiveness to the Community Systemic Factor for further information.

Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)

South Dakota's Department of Social Services continues in its role as the State Lead Agency for the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grant. The Division of Child Protection Services has worked to establish and implement a continuum of community-based child abuse prevention programs. **Detailed descriptions of Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention activities that occurred in State Fiscal Year 2025 can be found within Appendix B, Attachment B1.**

These programs lead and support a statewide network of public and private agencies, service providers, and individuals whose services strengthen and assist families. The goals of the program are focused on reducing the likelihood of child abuse and neglect through the provision of prevention programs and services.

The CBCAP Advisory Board for the Parenting Education Program is at the center of a statewide network. This network provides an ongoing opportunity for agencies and providers to collaborate and support community-based efforts to design and provide activities and initiatives aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

The CBCAP State Lead Agency (SLA) Program Specialist leads and directs the CBCAP Advisory Board. The Division of CPS contracts with the Black Hills Special Services Cooperative and Kari Ewalt-Positive Parenting to provide a staff person to assist with additional training and support to the statewide network. The CBCAP SLA Program Specialist and consultants provide leadership for the CBCAP Advisory Board. A strong parent voice is a critical component of the CBCAP Advisory Board. Parent and caregiver input is promoted through all aspects of the planning and implementation of prevention programs and services.

The CBCAP Advisory Board meets at a minimum twice per year. Day and evening opportunities were introduced this year to maximize participation of parents and professionals who may not be available during typical working hours. This enhancement has been well-received and increased participation. The CBCAP Advisory Board serves as a vehicle to ensure an ongoing focus on the social and emotional well-being of children in the State of South Dakota through building on the resources of the state and communities.

The CBCAP Advisory Board meetings provide each member with an opportunity to describe their programs and services allowing each member to identify areas of potential collaboration and networking opportunities. The meetings allow the CBCAP SLA Program Specialist to provide education and information on a variety of areas related to child abuse prevention and to facilitate the development of a network of community-based services and providers. These meetings also provide an opportunity to share data, focus on innovation and best practices, and obtain feedback.

The Division of Child Protection Services as the CBCAP lead agency maintains a network of Parenting Education Partners strategically located to cover the geographic areas of the state (See Figure 1). The Division of Child Protection Services provides outreach to parents across the state through this network of Parenting Education Partners. Each partner offers the Boys Town Common Sense Parenting (CSP) or Positive Indian Parenting (PIP) classes in their region of the state. Parenting education is a strategy for reducing the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. The CSP Program equips parents with the knowledge and the skills needed to be effective parents. Class sessions and course materials assist parents to recognize and reinforce positive behaviors with praise and positive consequences, to provide preventative teaching and corrective teaching, and to teach techniques for self-control and staying calm. Role-playing during each class session increases the parent's confidence and strengthens the relationship with their children.

Parents equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills create safer home environments for children and decrease the likelihood of abuse and neglect. The CSP Program helps parents make their homes peaceful, enjoyable, and safe for the whole family. Each Parenting Education Partner is monitored through a peer review process and an examination of the evaluations completed by each class participant.

Parenting Education Partners provide feedback about the peer review process at the conclusion of the review outlining commendations and recommendations made during the review. Parenting Education Partners, Division of Child Protection Services staff, parents and CBCAP partners value the opportunity to come together around the table to discuss issues and concerns and celebrate the success of the CSP and child abuse prevention activities. CBCAP funds continue to provide a stipend for parents attending peer reviews.

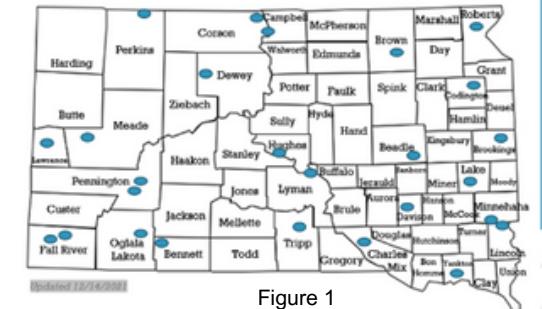


Figure 1

The Division of Child Protection Services continues to provide outreach assuring the availability of parenting education to Native American parents and caregivers, and others interested in learning traditional parenting methods. Several parenting education partners provide Positive Indian Parenting classes through referrals from the Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection Services. The eight-week course focuses on the elements of traditional Indian parenting which remain valuable and are utilized in contemporary parenting practices today.

The Division of Child Protection Services contracts with Boys Town to conduct training for the CSP Program as needed. In May and June, CSP Training was provided by Boys Town staff for over 30 new CSP trainers from across the State of South Dakota in the CSP program with a focus on Toddler and Preschooler parenting education. The traditional CSP program was focused on school-aged children. Both will remain available in the state to help best meet the needs of parents and caregivers for children of all ages. Trainers are recertified by the program as required to continue teaching the curriculum with a high level of fidelity. The 19 Parenting Education Partners are strategically located across the state. Each site is responsible for conducting CSP classes within their assigned region. Parenting Education classes were provided to incarcerated parents in three prisons/jails served by the Parenting Education Partners and classes were offered on the nine Tribal Lands/Native American Reservations.

Parenting Education Partners assist in the elimination of barriers to class participation and attendance. Some of these efforts include providing CSP classes at remote locations to eliminate transportation as a barrier; offering virtual classes; altering the location and time of parenting classes; offering CSP materials in a Spanish version; certifying a bilingual instructor; and providing Karen language and sign language interpreters. Parenting Education Partners provides age-appropriate examples and additional instruction to families with young children (i.e., also families from Head Start Programs).

Several opportunities to share Positive Indian Parenting have been offered in the past year. Further detail is included in latter sections. Trainings have been led by PIP consultant Kari Ewalt and instructor Jessica Snaza. Their involvement in the Native American communities near where they reside has really brought PIP to life in South Dakota and many further activities are planned. A consultant was brought on to develop a Community of Practice amongst providers of Positive Indian Parenting to enhance connectedness and promote best practices.

The Division of Child Protection Services blends Federal and State General funds and Children's Trust Fund to enhance the services provided through the CBCAP Program. South Dakota used the Children's Trust Funds to assist with providing the match to the Parenting Education Program. The Department of Social Services collaborates with the Department of Health the use of birth certificate fees. The money collected is submitted on a monthly basis to the State Treasurer and deposited in the Children's Trust Fund. The Department of Social Services is the agency designated to administer Title IV-B and IV-E Programs, Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Grant, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, and the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Program. The Division of Child Protection Services is a state-administered and state supervised child welfare system designated to administer the programs required to meet the mandates of those federal programs. The Division of Child Protection Services Program Specialists serve as advisors and consultants to the Division in specific program areas and are involved in the administration of funding, promotion, and evaluation of those services. The Division of Child Protection Services is divided into seven geographical regions. Each region has offices, which serve multiple counties. Regional managers are directly involved with the management of staff in the region and overseeing the region-wide provision of services in all program areas. The Division of Child Protection Services has 18 offices. Each office within a region has a supervisor or supervisors who provide clinical and direct supervision to Family Services Specialists, Leads, and Social Service Aides offering services in the program areas.

An important part of the IV-B program with the CBCAP Grant is focused on prevention education and parenting support; the goals are to enhance prevention of child abuse and neglect. Prevention-awareness activities occur statewide and increase parent's capacity to safely parent their children. The strategies are to support community-based efforts to develop, operate, expand, and enhance initiatives aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to support a network of coordinated resources and activities to better strengthen and support families to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. The objects are to promote community awareness activities by having information and education materials available to community-based programs; and to provide an additional parenting education resource by maintaining a network of parenting education providers who hold classes on a regularly scheduled basis that are designed to meet a variety of individual needs. South Dakota also offers sites opportunities for funding to support the site's involvement in developing or participating in community-based focused prevention efforts related to fatherhood and cultural experiences.

Information on the Family First Prevention Services act (FFPSA) has been shared with CBCAP Advisory Board members. This is a significant focus area which will enhance the future of prevention services in the state. The Division of Child Protection Services entered into a contract with ICF, inc. to guide the state as a consultant to develop the state's prevention plan. Discussion on evidenced-based practices and Advisory Board member involvement in prevention plan development has occurred.

As part of a broader state strategy, the Division of Child Protection Services through a state/tribal consultation group meets quarterly to collaborate and communicate with representatives from South Dakota tribes to obtain their input and discuss program issues related to the coordination of programs and services on the reservation. To improve collaboration with services to Native American children and families, the Division of Child Protection Services, Indian Child Welfare Act Program Specialist serves as a liaison between the tribes and the Division of Child Protection Services. The Indian Child Welfare Act Program Specialist serves on the CBCAP Advisory Board. Information about the Common-Sense Parenting (CSP) classes is communicated through the Indian Child Welfare Program Specialist.

Parenting Education Partners identify strengths and areas of enhancement through surveys and peer reviews of local Parenting Education providers. The peer reviews promote a continued collaboration with the community and how to effectively engage additional participants who would benefit from preventative services. Surveys are completed by class attendees before taking the class, and after completing the class. Data collected from the surveys are discussed during the peer reviews and utilized for delivery recommendations. The peer reviews have helped the program develop an understanding around new ways to engage communities and obstacles parents face in attending classes.

In the last year the enhanced survey process was in place for a full year, revealing robust data to help inform prevention services, collaboration pathways for community partnerships, and overall demographic information valuable to prevention.

CSP classes continue to be offered to incarcerated mothers in South Dakota. The women in the Women's Prison in Pierre are entered into the system as a course completion when completing CSP. The following month these records are flagged for Earned Discharge credit. There are 20 days awarded for class completion. It is applied to the end of their sentence, which pushes the dates on the front end. The amount of the push depends upon a sentencing formula determined by the length of the sentence. Essentially those that complete CSP will be awarded 20 days off their sentence.

CSP classes held at the Women's Prison served 142 parents and impacted 336 children.

Data Source: Growing Up Together Parenting Site

A trainer has been recruited for the Black Hills Special Services Co-Operative to teach classes in the Pennington County Correctional Facility upon the completion of his training planned for summer of 2024.

Kari Ewalt has began teaching classes at the Roberts County Jail to mothers and fathers. Curricula is rotated between Common Sense Parenting and Positive Indian Parenting upon request of inmates who are parents and caregivers. She has outreach to the Codington County and Brown County areas and progress on delivering services in those areas is underway.

The statewide prevention activities provided by the Parenting Education Partners, Domestic Violence Centers, Child Protection Teams, and the Division of Child Protection Services includes:

Resources: Includes the Child Welfare Information Gateway information, shared on the State's website

Governor's Executive Proclamation: The website contains the Executive Proclamation and resources to promote community awareness that can be used throughout the year, as well as activities designed especially for April, Child Abuse Prevention Month

Prevention Resource Guide: The 2023/2024 Prevention Resource Guide was shared with the Child Protection Services staff, Tribal Child Welfare Agencies, and Parenting Education Partners to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect

Social media awareness campaign shared through Facebook and Instagram

During April, Child Abuse Prevention Month, several Facebook Posts specifically on topic of prevention of child abuse and neglect

Child Abuse Prevention materials distributed to CSP class participants statewide which included awareness materials, informational handouts, and questions to open up conversations with youth regarding child abuse. Common Sense Parenting brochure: The brochure has information about the CSP Program, locations, and contact information for CSP Providers. The CSP brochure includes information about the Six Protective Factors

Safe Home Rule: Parents attending CSP classes make a staying calm plan and learn skills to help them and their children remain calm; parents attending CSP classes will write a Safe Home Rule in place for the safety of everyone in the home

Mandatory Reporting brochure: South Dakota requirements regarding reporting child abuse and neglect

Safe Havens in South Dakota brochure: If a parent of a baby less than 60 days old feels they cannot care for their baby they can leave the baby with an emergency medical services provider, or employee at any fire department, law enforcement agency, clinic, licensed child placement agency or medical facility; leaving a baby under this law with an emergency medical services provider or child placement agency as allowed for under this law is not a crime

Child Care Assistance Program: Child Care Assistance is available to families who meet income guidelines and are working or working and attending school a minimum of 20 hours per week

Registration and Licensure of Child Care Environments: Information for licensing a child care environment

Parent's Guide- Child Seat Safety: Buckling up the right way in a car seat, booster, and seat belt brochure

Impaired Driving Information: Reducing alcohol-related crash fatalities and injuries is a priority for the Office of Highway Safety brochure

Pedestrian and Bike Safety: Helmet information brochure

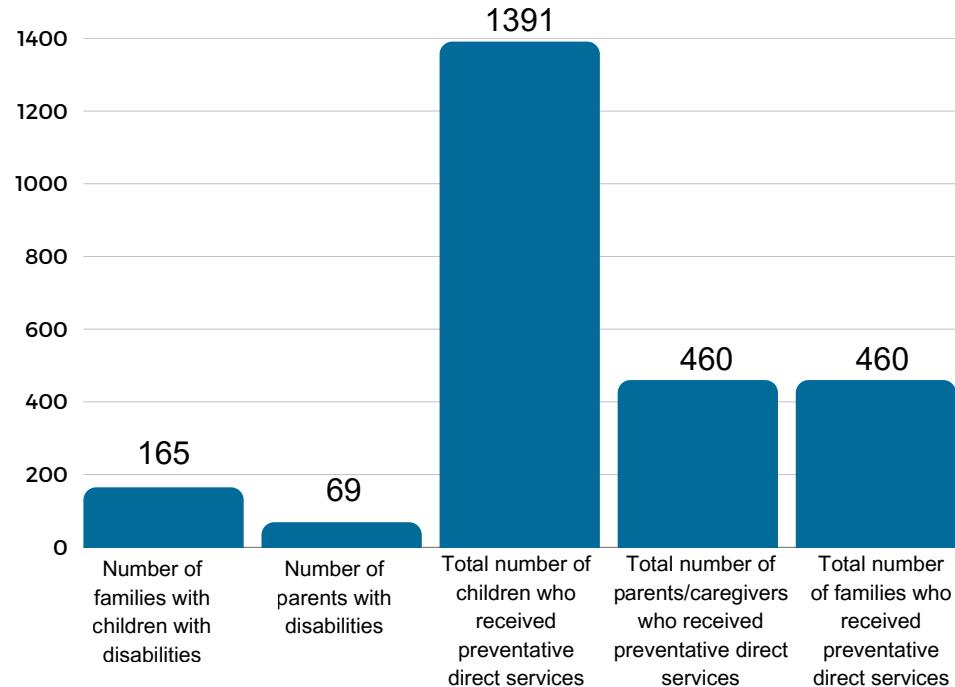
National Children's Helpline: Get emotional support from a trained advocate, become empowered and a stronger parent

Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs: Strategies to prevent sexual abuse brochure

The following Child Abuse Prevention Activities were held during the reporting period:

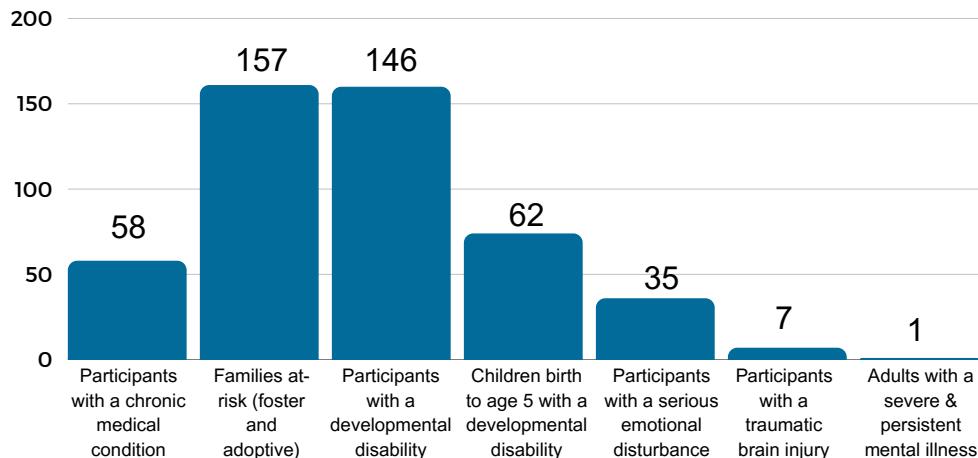
- "Wearing of blue" day in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month in April
- 7th Circuit CASA hosted a Child Abuse Awareness Community Event.
- Sioux Falls CASA hosted a Red Cape Campaign.
- Northern Hills CASA hosted a coffee and conversation event.
- Stand Up to Child Abuse 5K Run and Walk
- Child Abuse Prevention information posted on Facebook
- Newsletters
- A resolution was passed on March 25th by the Oglala Sioux Tribe declaring April as "Month of the Child". The tribe hosted several events such as a walk-run-bike event, scavenger hunt, parade, education classes, presentations, and a baby crawl.
- Healthy Kids Day in the capital city including pinwheels posted on the lawn to enhance recognition.

Description of the numbers served by CSP and PIP Federal Fiscal Year (FFY2024):



Other services and programs provided to families throughout South Dakota (FFY 2024): CPS uses Promoting Safe and Stable Families funding to provide adoptive parents with respite care services through the South Dakota Department of Human Services Respite Care Program. The Respite Program served 497 children. There were 401 families who received respite care services. (Data Source: *Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention FY2024 Annual Report*)

The number of children and adults in each diagnosis category are as follows:



The Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment facilitated parent input interviews and groups to obtain information from parents with lived experience to help inform prevention services. Work is underway to sustain this feedback loop with CPS after CPCM's involvement ends.

As outlined the CBCAP-related American Rescue Plan funds awarded to South Dakota have been utilized to support the Positive Indian Parenting trainings and materials; however, further utilization of the funds will be informed by the work being conducted through the development of the South Dakota Prevention Plan. An element of the process has been conducting information seeking sessions from across the state and assessing for needs within the CPS system relative to primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. These ARPA dollars were utilized to expand Positive Indian Parenting, support rebranding of child welfare prevention services to maximize utilization of supports and enhance access to services, collaborate with the Unified Judicial System to share information on services, expand fatherhood-focused efforts, and develop a parent input feedback process. Full obligation of funds are expected by September 30, 2025.

Positive Indian Parenting Community of Practice work has begun. Kari Ewalt has recorded a condensed training for a social work class at South Dakota State University. This recording will be beneficial for years to come with future social work students at the university.

The FRIENDS Leadership Institute was previously on pause, but has been approved. The State Lead Agency CBCAP representative from South Dakota is actively participating in this opportunity.

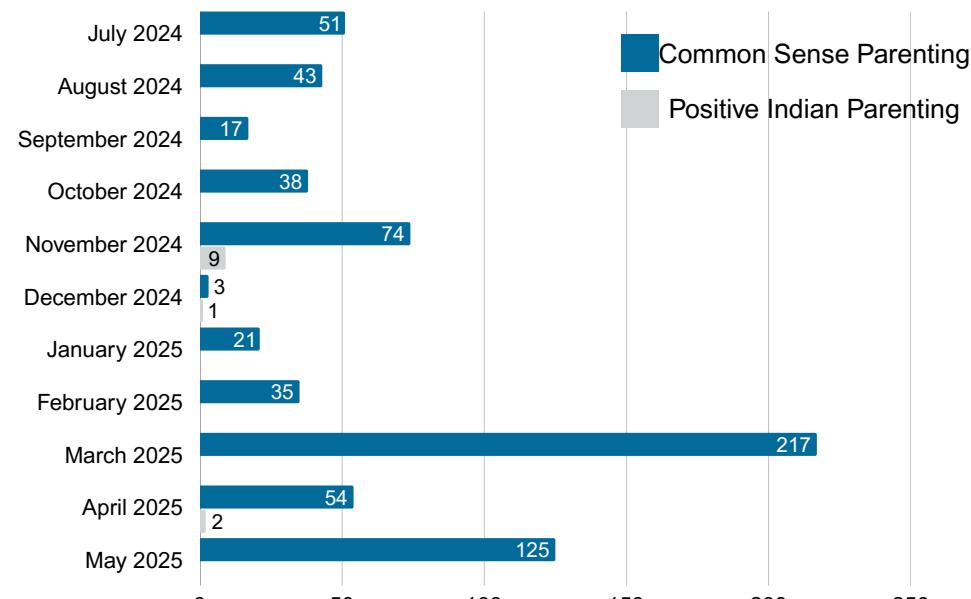
Peer reviews took place at South Dakota State University (SDSU), Black Hills Special Services Cooperative, Catholic Social Services, and Jan Manolis Family Safe Center. Peer reviews were positive and collaborative at all locations. **Detailed information pertaining to peer reviews held in SFY2025 can be found within Appendix B, Attachment B1.**

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued to rebrand the prevention services managed by DSS CPS. The aim is to increase awareness and appeal for the wide range of prevention services offered, including parenting education curricula (Common Sense Parenting for School-Aged Children, Common Sense Parenting for Toddlers & Preschoolers, and Positive Indian Parenting). This rebranding effort will also encompass community-based child abuse prevention activities, anticipated fatherhood-focused initiatives, and upcoming Family First Prevention Services Act evidence-based program offerings. Consulting on this project and full reveal will be held at the October CPCM-led Community Response to Child Abuse Conference. At this annual conference a panel of parenting educators and CPS state staff will share information on data and present Parenting Pathways: Real Talk with Real Providers, a panel to the full conference group of attendees. The panel will include:

- Connie Hermann- Common Sense Parenting Toddlers and Preschoolers
- Keith Ferguson- Fatherhood and Incarcerated Parents (Pennington County)
- Lisa Blake- Common Sense Parenting School Aged (Women's Prison in Pierre)
- Kari Ewalt- Positive Indian Parenting
- Pastor Dave Abels- Families County Early Childhood Partner from EA to determine if they are interested

The scope of work for this project with Insight will include developing a brand identity for the prevention services umbrella, creating print and digital media graphics, handling copyright and trademark services, developing coding for an interactive map of providers, and providing website recommendations for integrating these services into the DSS website. The project will be completed by September 15, 2025.

The following chart represents participants who attended Common Sense Parenting and Positive Indian Parenting sessions in State Fiscal Year 2025:



Data Source: Program Specialist Monthly Tracking Form

There is a 25-person Positive Indian Parenting training for new instructors scheduled for June 2025 in Eagle Butte. Combined with the Positive Indian Parenting Community of Practice data will be more representative of the volume of PIP classes taught throughout the next year.

Refer to Appendix B, Attachment B1 for activities and meetings that have been held in State Fiscal Year 2025 in relation to Community Based Child Abuse Prevention.

Refer to Well-Being Outcome 1 Planned Activities and Initiatives for further information regarding The Fatherhood Project.

Children's Justice Act (CJA)

Foundational information regarding the Children's Justice Act (CJA) can be found in the 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan. Updates from State Fiscal Year 2025 and plans for State Fiscal Year 2026 can be found below.

The Task Force continued to meet on a quarterly basis through a virtual platform. Due to at least six hours round trip travel required for nearly all the Task Force members, the members have agreed to continue to meet virtual in the upcoming fiscal year. This allows for more members to participate and assists with time management.

The positions of Criminal Court Judge and Mental Health Professional were vacated, as both individuals retired. The Task Force members have been asked to provide input regarding a replacement for these positions, specifically those who work directly with the Court. An individual was named for the Mental Health Professional; however, was unable to fulfill the role. The role of Individual Experience in Working with Children with Disabilities was revised following a period of limited participation by the previous representative, who indicated a desire to step back from involvement with the Task Force. The Task Force members have been asked to provide input regarding a replacement for these positions, specifically those who work directly with the Court.

The Task Force members share agency updates at every meeting, which provides an opportunity for all the agencies to be aware of the different grants available in the state, training opportunities, and projects. This also builds relationships between the agencies. Minutes are taken at each meeting and the updates are detailed in the CJA grant application.

The Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection and the Task Force continue to use Children's Justice Act grant funds to reach a level of an investigative and judicial process that is consistent in practice, effective in protecting children, limits the risk of further trauma to the child, and provides fairness to the accused. Children's Justice Act grant funds are used to fund Task Force activities that are focused on the areas emphasized in the Act.

APSR 2026 Update:

The 2024 Children's Justice Grant application and three-year assessment was submitted on June 6, 2024. South Dakota received approximately \$92,000. These funds were focused on out of home investigations, a sexual abuse training, and used to sustain the Centralized Intake phone system. On July 30, 2024, the Children's Bureau confirmed the grant was approved and finalized. The Protective Services Administrator was scheduled to attend the Children's Justice Act Grantee Meeting on March 31, 2025 in order to receive the grant, however this meeting was cancelled due to federal funding cuts. The 2025 Children's Justice Grant application will be submitted on June 18, 2025. South Dakota receives \$92,908.

A "Protecting Our Children" training was held on June 26, 2024, in Rapid City and June 27, 2024, in Rapid Pierre. Professionals invited to the training were: multidisciplinary teams, child advocacy/children's justice centers, sexual assault response teams, law enforcement, prosecutors, medical and mental health providers, child/victim advocates, judges, and child protection staff. Flyers were sent electronically, and it was also advertised on the Children's Home Society website. There were 75 participants that attended the training.

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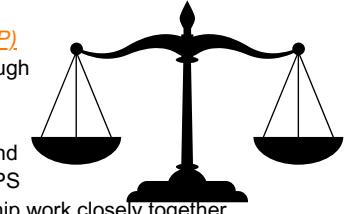
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Court Improvement Project (CIP)

The South Dakota Court Improvement Program Committee, through the direction of the SD State Supreme Court, assesses the child welfare system's handling of child abuse and neglect cases and recommends improvements for achieving safety, permanency, and well-being in a timely manner. The Chief Justice appoints four CPS staff to serve on the CIP. The CIP Coordinator and CPS leadership work closely together. Collaboration is evidenced through Goal 3 of the State's Round 3 PIP which was developed by combined efforts of CPS and CIP and is still a current project. The CIP Coordinator is a CFSR reviewer, a reviewer with the Safety, Permanency, and Well-being Regional Reviews, and a member of the State Tribal Consultation. The CIP Coordinator seeks CPS input in relevant sections of the CIP Self-Assessment. See the Tribal Consultation section. CIP have conducted monthly Lunch and Learn Trainings since March 2021 to provide relevant and up-to-date information as it relates to the child welfare system. The target audience for the training series are Judges, attorneys, child welfare agency staff, CASA, foster parents, or other child welfare professionals.



APSR 2026 Updates:

During the October Court Improvement Project meeting, the CQI and Outcomes Administrator shared the state's data profile and discussed the Child and Family Services Review process.

In SFY2025 the following training topics have been presented during the Lunch and Learn Series:

- August 2024: Children and Sexual-Based Online Harms: A Guide for Professionals
- October 2024: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
- November 2024: Spirit of ICWA
- January 2025: ICPC Process
- February 2025: Understanding Trauma's Impact on the Brain and De-Escalation Techniques
- March 2025: Identifying and Managing Common mental Health Disorders in Maltreated Children
- April 2025: Understanding the Impact of Maltreatment on Child Development
- May 2025: Independent Living Services for Youth in Foster Care

Service Description

CPS seeks input from stakeholders, parents, and youth about service array and delivery in their area. Seven Regional Reviews occur a year; a survey is distributed to stakeholders in the Region in coordination with the review schedule. The survey gathers information relating to service array, permanency, and staff/foster parent training. South Dakota started conducting surveys instead of individual stakeholder phone calls in January 2020, at the beginning of the Round 3 PIP Year One Measurement Year. The surveys reach more stakeholders and provide more data on how the child welfare system functions within each Region. CPS reaches State Court Judges, Tribal Judges, State's Attorneys, Tribal Prosecutors, child's attorneys, parent's attorneys, CASA directors, mental health directors, domestic violence shelter directors, drug and alcohol service providers, ICWA directors, BIA Social Services directors, law enforcement officials, family visitation center directors, court services officers, parole agents, schools and residential/group care facilities through the survey process. All stakeholder feedback is provided to the Regional Manager, Assistant Division Directors and Division Director. The Regional Manager is responsible for providing the feedback to the local stakeholders and staff.

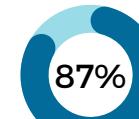
A parent survey is completed to obtain input on quality measures and receive feedback on service delivery. This year parents have been invited to participate in ongoing focus groups to share feedback ongoing. See the Service Array Outcome section for more details. CPS has shared information with parent groups located throughout the state through partnerships with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment and the Black Hills Special Services Cooperative.

During the spring of SFY25, South Dakota administered the annual youth survey to gather youth perspectives on key outcome areas, including safety, permanency, and well-being. The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team will analyze the results in SFY26, identifying trends and areas needing improvement. Young Voices will be engaged in reviewing the data and assisting in developing actionable strategies aimed at improving outcomes in partnership with the CQI and Independent Living Services (ILS) teams.

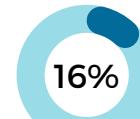
The NYTD Review provides guidance to policies and practices related to collecting and reporting timely, reliable, and accurate data on youth in transition. The NYTD data has identified strengths in emotional connections with an adult, Medicaid coverage, and safe sex practices. The NYTD data has identified additional support needed in education, employment skills, substance abuse, and housing.

Youth complete the Independent Living Services Survey during the Transitional Living Planning Meeting which occurs thirty to ninety days before a youth leaves Child Protection's custody. The purpose of the Independent Living Services Survey is to gather data and information on youth as they transition from out-of-home care.

The Transitional Independent Living Planning Meeting and Independent Living Services Survey must be completed with all youth transitioning from care at the age of 18 or older. Data collected from youth transitioning from care during this reporting period indicates the following:



41 of 47 Youth stated they had a support to talk to about education beyond high school



7 of 43 Youth report they have graduated high school



36 of 49 Youth are currently attending school

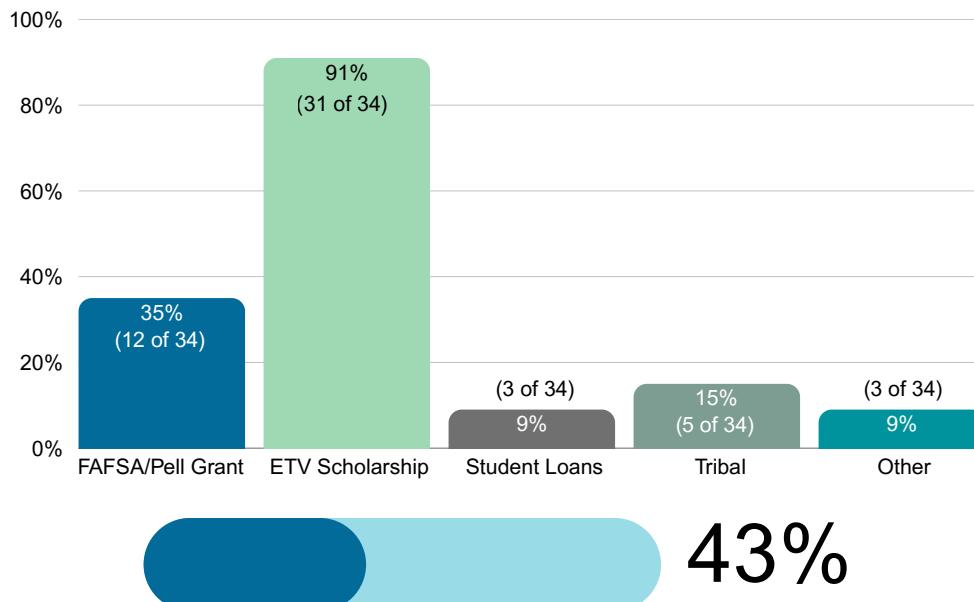


84% (36 of 43) of Youth who completed the survey had not completed high school. Of those youth, 94% (32 of 34) reported it is a goal of theirs to graduate high school.



76% (35 of 46) have a goal to continue their education after high school.

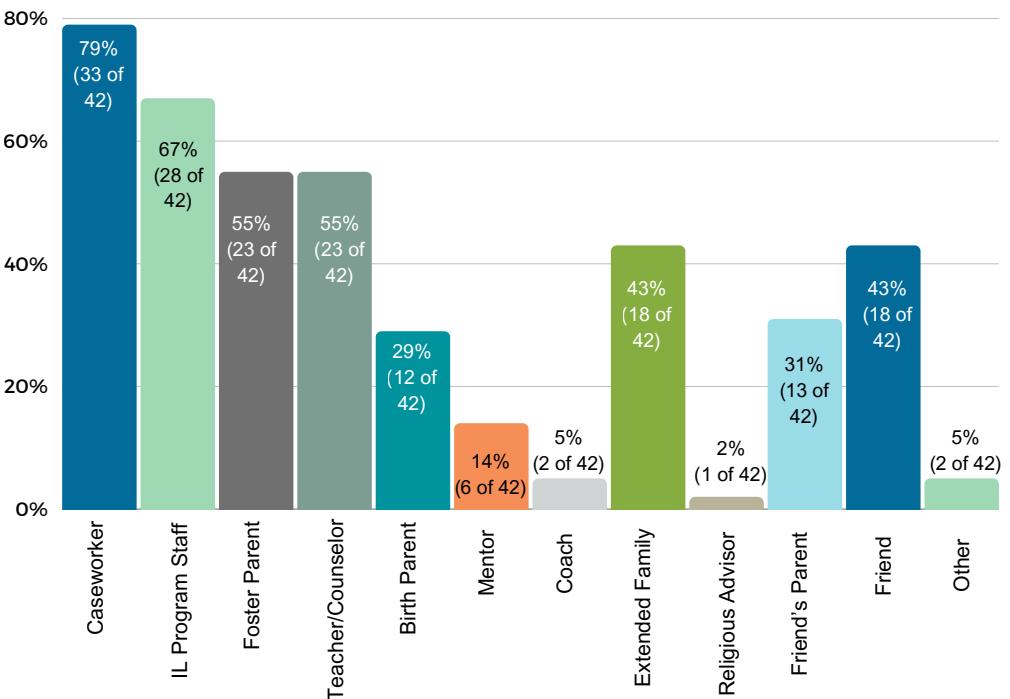
73% (33 of 45) of youth stated they have a way to pay for their education beyond high school. The following chart displays the means to which youth plan to pay for their education beyond high school:



43%

43% (19 of 44) of youth were employed at the time of transitioning from care.

92% (43 of 47) of youth reported that someone has talked to them about their career interest. The following chart displays the individual who spoke to them about their career interest.



98% (46 of 47) of youth reported they have an adult in their life they could turn to for help



74% (34 of 46) of youth reported to be in contact with a grandparent or family member



94% (44 of 47) of youth expressed a desire to remain in contact with their Community Resource Person after transitioning from care.

Education and employment continue to be focal points for the Independent Living Services Program. The information has been incorporated into the CFSP/APSR goals of the ILS Program. The ILS Program continues to utilize staff modules and compliance reports to monitor, and track tasks related to youth in NYTD baseline, and to ensure youth needing to complete a NYTD survey can be located to complete the survey. The CRPs have access to FACIS and Compliance Reports for cases assigned to them, which assists with meeting the NYTD requirements. Enhancing high school credit acquisition will be a main focal point of the program for the next several years.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, the Continuous Quality Improvement Team has implemented an Education Credit Fidelity Review. The purpose of the Educational Credit Fidelity Review is to ensure consistent and accurate monitoring of a youth's academic progress while in care, with a focus on tracking critical educational indicators. This includes documenting each child's school placements, current grade level, number of credits earned, credits still needed to graduate, and any loss of credits due to changes in placement. By maintaining comprehensive records of these factors, the review process helps identify patterns and trends—such as frequent school changes or credit loss—that may hinder a youth's ability to graduate on time. Ultimately, this information will support better educational planning and advocacy, promoting more stable and successful academic outcomes for youth in care.

Services for Children Adopted from Other Countries



CPS provides services for children adopted from other countries. Services for adoptive families and post-adoptive families offered are dependent on the needs of the child and adoptive family, but can include: Medicaid coverage, mental health support, therapy services, medication management, medical appointments, educational services, case management, supervision, and monthly visitation to assess the child/children's needs. CPS has not provided assistance or services to inter-country adoptive families this past fiscal year as there have been no youth in custody adopted inter-country. CPS is prepared to provide support services for children adopted from other countries if the need arises. These services would be tailored to the specific needs of the child and adoptive family and could include Medicaid coverage, mental health support, therapy services, medication management, medical care, educational assistance, case management, supervision, and monthly visits to assess the child's well-being. However, at this time, CPS is not providing services to any intercountry adoptive families, as no youth adopted internationally are currently in state custody.

Services for Children Under 5

There are specific initiatives outlined in the Case Review Outcomes Section of the CFSP, which encompass services to all children, including the 34% (591 of 1,738) under the age of 5. (Data Source: FACIS Report) Please see that section for more details.

Services are found across the State of South Dakota and CPS uses a range of services to help facilitate services for all children, including children under the age of five. These services include relative searches, home studies, concurrent planning, Placement Team meetings, developmental assessments, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) evaluations, special needs daycare, and mental health referrals.

Children under the age of 5 comprise 34% (591 of 1,738) of the population of children in custody of CPS.

Data Source: FACIS Report

CPS' Certification training provides information to new staff on recognizing developmental milestones, beginning when a child is one month of age. In addition, new staff are also trained regarding developmental guidelines and family time, emphasizing the need for increased family time for younger children to support bonding and attachment.

The Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) requires a referral to a Birth to Three Program for any child ages three and under who is involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect. The parent/guardian is advised, and with their permission, a referral is made for developmental screening of their child. CPS has, and will continue to, refer children to the Birth to Three Program. Children are still referred to the Birth to Three Program even when the case does not involve a substantiation on a case-by-case basis. Refer to Section C for further information regarding the State's CAPTA Plan.

South Dakota Birth to Three contributes to the success of children with developmental delays and their families by providing dynamic, individualized early intervention services and supports by building on family strengths through everyday routines and learning experiences. The South Dakota Birth to Three Early Intervention Program serves children from birth to 36 months with developmental delays or disabilities and their families.

Early Intervention includes:

Support and training to help families understand and address their child's developmental delays

A process to help the adults in a child's life learn to help the child develop

A voluntary system

To help protect the safety of children while minimizing the potential trauma caused by interim or multiple placements, the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Regulation No. 7 requests expedited ICPC approval or denial by a receiving state for the placement of a child with a parent, stepparent, grandparent, adult uncle or aunt, adult brother or sister or child's guardian. Regulation No. 7 expedited approval process includes criteria the child sought to be placed is four years of age or younger, including older siblings sought to be placed with the same proposed placement resource.

The Parenting Education Program and Head Start Programs continue to work together to pursue areas of connection with the South Dakota Head Start Programs. Parent information and education are critical components of every Head Start Program. Head Start services are located in every county in South Dakota, both state and tribal. Parents with children who attend a Head Start Program are encouraged to participate in the Common Sense Parenting classes. The Parenting Education Partner's instructors are provided with materials and training to assist in providing parenting education to families with children ages 3-5. The Common Sense Parenting Program and the Bright Start Responsive Parenting Program are comprehensive parenting programs designed to serve families in South Dakota. The Common Sense Parenting Program is a product of years of research compiled by Boys Town. The Program's easy-to-learn techniques address issues a parent may have with communication, discipline, decision-making, relationships, and self-control when parenting. Parenting training for parents and caregivers of children birth to age three is available in two formats: Responsive Parenting and Understanding Me Up to Age Three. During each of these series, parents will learn about topics such as social-emotional growth, early brain development, safety, temperament, and guidance. Instructors have been specially trained in infant-toddler caregiving. Both series are available in different locations throughout the state and are free.

Early Head Start Programs provide family-centered services for low-income families with children ages 0-5. These programs are designed to promote the development of the children, and to enable their parents to fulfill their roles as parents and to move toward self-sufficiency. Early Head Start programs provide similar services as preschool Head Start Programs, but they are tailored for the unique needs of infants and toddlers. Early Head Start Programs promote the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of infants and toddlers through safe and developmentally enriching caregiving. This prepares these children for continued growth and development and eventual success in school and life. Following the general Head Start model, Early Head Start Programs support parents, both mothers and fathers, in their role as primary caregivers and teachers of their children. Programs assist families in meeting their own personal goals and achieving self-sufficiency across a wide variety of domains, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security. Early Head Start Programs also mobilize the local community to provide the resources and environment necessary to ensure a comprehensive, integrated array of services and support for children and families.

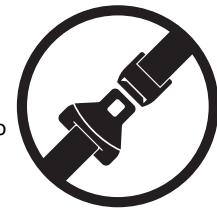
The Bright Start Program, through the Department of Health, is designed to help first-time expectant moms focus on their own health and well-being, so they have healthier babies. Home visits are especially helpful for first-time moms. Trained nurses visit during pregnancy to share information about nutrition, ongoing prenatal care, home safety, and creating a positive home environment. Visits may also include goal setting, building support systems, and can even address child care options and job training. Nurse home visits for first-time moms can begin anytime between the start of the pregnancy and two months after delivery. Once started, these visits can continue up to the child's third birthday. Bright Start has programs in Rapid City, Huron, Pierre, Sisseton, Aberdeen, Pine Ridge, Belle Fourche, Spearfish, and Sioux Falls. The Sioux Falls Program covers Minnehaha, Lincoln, Turner, and McCook counties.



Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, is responsible for providing federal health services to American Indians and Alaska Natives. The provision of health services to members of federally recognized tribes grew out of the special government-to-government relationship between the federal government and Indian tribes. This relationship, established in 1787, is based on Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, and has been given form and substance by numerous treaties, laws, Supreme Court decisions, and Executive Orders. IHS is the principal federal health care provider and health advocate for Indian people, and its goal is to raise their health status to the highest possible level.

IHS provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for American Indians and Alaska Natives. IHS provides pre-natal care to women as well as dental, immunizations, pediatrics, behavioral health, and rehabilitation services. Locations in South Dakota include Eagle Butte, Fort Thompson, Mobridge, Lower Brule, Pine Ridge, Rapid City, Rosebud, Standing Rock, Sisseton, and Wagner. The Great Plains Area IHS also provides health services to Native Americans who are not counted in the user population of the Area. This population does not reside within any service unit; however, they meet the IHS eligibility criteria for health services provided at IHS or Tribally operated direct care facilities. The largest concentrations of the non-service unit eligible in South Dakota are in Aberdeen and Sioux Falls.

The Child Safety Seat Distribution Program focuses on keeping children safe by providing child safety seats at no cost to families who meet income eligibility requirements to ensure children are in the best child seat for their height and weight until they are at least 4'9". At 4'9", most children can safely wear a seat belt.



Current South Dakota law states, "Any operator of any passenger vehicle transporting a child under five years of age on the streets and highways of this state shall properly secure the child in a child passenger restraint system..." and the operator of a motor vehicle must make sure a "...passenger who is at least five and under eighteen years of age is wearing a properly adjusted and fastened safety seat belt system..." If the belts don't fit properly, the operator must find another "safety belt system" to secure the child (SDCL 32-37). This program distributes child seats to income eligible parents and children statewide, by assessing financial need.

Feeding South Dakota is a hunger relief organization that has distribution centers in Sioux Falls, Pierre, and Rapid City. Their vision is a hunger-free South Dakota where everyone in need has access to nutritious food because freedom from hunger and good nutrition are critical to the future economic, social, and emotional health of South Dakota citizens. In their 2024 Fiscal Year, 11.7 million meals were provided and 12,772 families were served monthly through the mobile food distributions. Feeding South Dakota also has a Backpack Program which gives food every weekend to children who otherwise might go hungry. In Fiscal Year 2024, 161,957 backpacks were distributed to students.

During the summer months, Feeding South Dakota has a Summer BackPac Program in Sioux Falls, Pierre, Lower Brule, and Rapid City. Department of Health, Child and Family Services Nurses and Nutritionists deliver public health services in each South Dakota county. Services include immunizations, WIC, growth and developmental screenings, and baby care.

Imagination Library through South Dakota United Way offers services to children and families. The Imagination Library is one of the Capital Area United Way's Community Impact Programs, established to increase access to early learning. The Imagination Library provides free age-appropriate books to any child, ages 0-5, at no cost to them or their family, regardless of family income. Books are mailed to the child's home each month until their fifth birthday. Children will be able to build their own home library and access the joy of reading right from their home. Each book is age appropriate and includes such titles as The Little Engine That Could, The Poky Puppy, The Tale of Peter Rabbit and Favorite Finger Rhymes.

The Newborn Screening Program through the Department of Health is a program to detect potentially fatal or disabling conditions and birth defects in newborns as early as possible. This is a statewide service that is available at any doctor's office. In rural areas, the Department of Health has started a new program, Wellness on Wheels, to offer the newborn screening program to those who do not live near a medical clinic. This service offers blood spot screening, hearing screening, and continued follow-up medical care to infants who have a diagnosed disorder.

The following services specific to the six CPS Regions across South Dakota.

Black Hills Region (Rapid City, Spearfish, Sturgis)

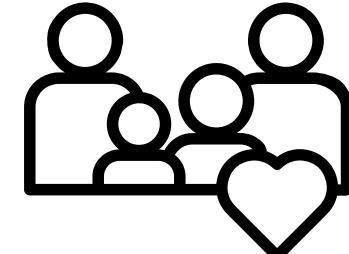
Full Circle is located in Rapid City, SD and is a substance abuse residential treatment program for pregnant women and women with young children who have substance abuse issues. Mothers receive intensive and/or low-intensity treatment and rehabilitation counseling in the following areas while living in this facility:

 Substance Abuse	 Case management to link with other needed community services, including childcare and housing
 Prenatal Care	 Rehabilitation counseling and recovery support
 Trauma Education	 Support in reunification goals
 Education on parenting, nutrition, and family issues	

Children newborn to ten-years-old may be eligible to stay with their mother during treatment. This prevents foster family placement, provides opportunities for the family to stay together, and teaches the family to become a healthier unit.

Fatherhood First through Youth and Family Services (YFS) in Rapid City help fathers understand and embrace the vital role they play in their children's lives. Fatherhood First offers hands-on programming for fathers or father figures and their children. Fathers, or male role models, and their children participate in quality, hands-on activities organized and provided by staff. These events promote social skills, enhance child development, and strengthen the bond between a father and his child. YFS Fatherhood First staff members also provide individualized home visits to families enrolled in YFS Programs.

United Families Visitation Center is located in Rapid City, SD. United Families allows multiple family time opportunities a week for children and their parents. This is also valuable when there are infants or children under the age of five where it is imperative to offer more family time to support reunification efforts.



Family Engagement Services through Children's Home Society in Rapid City offers prevention programming in the Northern Hills. Programming includes in-home case management designed to address each family's unique needs. They work with individuals and families to promote stability and prevent child abuse/neglect through education, skill development and therapeutic crisis management.

OneHeart, Transformational Services (Recovery Team) is located in Rapid City, SD. Recovery Team members work with each assigned adult and family as part of a multidisciplinary service team. Team members are comprised of OneHeart Care Coordinators, Peer/Residential Support Specialists, Housing Liaison, Life Safety Officers, and Provider Partner Case Managers and team members. Services may be provided both on and off the campus. Team members collectively and collaboratively support each adult or family in their journey towards an overall recovery from the underlying conditions contributing to unstable living situations and assist guests with obtaining and maintaining housing. Transformational Services are provided within a Recovery-Oriented Care (ROC), Trauma-Informed Care (TIC), and Poverty-Informed Care (PIC) framework and include assessment, service referral coordination, advocacy, and Person-Centered Planning (PCP). Team members utilize the technique of Motivational Interviewing to support their work with guests.

Additionally, the Recovery Team's practices and decision-making with clients are guided by evidence-based assessments and interventions, to include Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT), Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy, and Functional Therapy. OneHeart Campus is not yet operational but has been awarded substantial funding and the Campus will begin renovations shortly. There will be apartments available for families as well as individuals. They will be able to provide direct services not only to prevent the removal of children from a parent's care, but to assist in reunification efforts recurring sooner.

Rural American Initiatives is another service in Rapid City, SD. This is a Head Start Program specific to Native American Children. They are in the Lakota Homes community in Rapid City and have a huge community support. They are very supportive to the families they provide services to and will take children who are in foster care. They are supportive of reunification efforts.

Volunteers of America (VOA) in Rapid City, SD provides several resources to families in crisis to include long-term and short-term housing, veteran's assistance, emergency supplies for children under five, case management help and pre-natal classes. This is available to anyone in need to include foster parents, kinship, and parents.

The ReNew Program through Bethany Social Services is a program that starts at prenatal care and continues to age 5. This program provides a case manager to assist the family with resources to overcome any barriers they may be facing, though they specialize in past and present substance abuse.

Bella Pregnancy Center in Spearfish, SD offers the Earn While You Learn Program (EWYL). Often, new parents not only have questions about the care of their child but wonder, "How am I going to provide all the things my baby needs?" Earn While You Learn is an educational program designed to help you become the best parent you possibly can be, while at the same time giving you the opportunity to earn some of the things you need to care for the physical needs of your baby. You can earn "Mommy Money" or "Daddy Dollars" to purchase these and other items while you learn important information vital to raising your child in a healthy, happy environment. During the months of pregnancy, there are many concerns for most new parents about pregnancy and how to meet the needs of the baby after birth. The EWYL Program allows the expectant mother and father to gain information while earning "Mommy Money" or "Daddy Dollars" to purchase necessities from the wide array of brand new and "like new" items in our Bella Boutique. The more you learn, the more you earn. The education is done on an individual basis. Upon enrollment the client chooses the day of the week they will have their classes.

Early Childhood Connections covers several counties in the Rapid City area. They provide various parenting classes, infant/child CPR, professional development for childcare providers and resource information like childcare listings and car seats.

Love Inc. covers the Black Hills area. They provide the Clothe a Kid Program which provides up to \$70 per child for clothing each school year. They offer classes through their Life Inc. Program that offers incentives as people complete their homework. They provide classes on finances, parenting, nutrition, marriage, and Christianity. They provide a free meal as a part of the classes. Love Inc. also has The Connection Center which can provide furniture items, diapers, and clothing.

Realtors for Kids provides financial resources for children of all ages who reside in the Northern Hills when referred by an agency such as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), DSS or a school. They can help with the cost of camps, sports, bedding, medical assistance for travel, or other expenses not covered by Medicaid/insurance or any area of need.

Family Engagement Services through Children's Home Society in Rapid City offers prevention programming in the Northern Hills. Programming includes in-home case management designed to address each family's unique needs. They work with individuals and families to promote stability and prevent child abuse/neglect through education, skill development and therapeutic crisis management.

Families First Early Learning Foundations through Black Hills Special Services Cooperative offers programming in the Northern Hills. Early Learning Specialists are dedicated to engaging with families in environments that suit them best. They provide emotional support, share valuable insights, and connect individuals with additional resources. Their primary focus is to empower and assist in their journey, fostering a positive and inclusive experience.

Region 3 (Pierre, Eagle Butte, Mobridge)

Urban Indian Health in Pierre offers affordable primary and preventative health care. Services include general pediatric care of childhood illnesses, vaccinations, well child checkups and pediatric acute care visits. They also offer a nutrition counseling and teaching kitchen, Baby Steps, a prenatal support group for pregnant women and their partners that meets monthly, and mental health and substance use disorder counseling services.

Growing Up Together in Pierre offers a Childbirth class four times a year and Breastfeeding class six times a year for expectant mothers and their family support person. They also offer a Sibling Readiness Class six times a year to provide information about becoming a big brother or sister to siblings and their parents.

Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) is a peer support group of mothers who are expecting or have an infant, toddler, or preschooler. MOPS meet during the school year twice a month, the second and fourth Tuesday at Community Bible Church in Pierre and on the second and fourth Thursday at First United Methodist Church.

Great Plains Healthy Start serves Cheyenne River and Standing Rock reservations offering a variety of services to women, their partners, and children from birth to 18 months. These services include case management, health and life skills education, screening and referral and home visiting.

Cheyenne River Youth Project offers tribal members and their family's access to emergency hygiene products, household items including cleaning supplies, clothing, school supplies and diapers.



Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a non-profit organization that builds and delivers beds to children who do not have a bed. Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a group of volunteers dedicated to finding those young children who do not have a bed and may be sleeping on the floors of their home. Through the efforts of volunteers and donations, wooden beds are built, assembled, and delivered to children in their homes. There are 250 Chapters across 38 states and Canada, one of those chapters has started in Pierre, SD.

Sotera Family Visitation Center in Pierre facilitates supervised family time in their child-focused and welcoming environment.

Region 4 (Chamberlain, Winner, Mission)

Lakota Tiwahe Center (LTC) is located on the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and provides Early Intervention Services to Families of infants and toddlers (Birth to 5 years old) with developmental delays and/or disabilities. The Lakota Tiwahe provides services in four areas:



Lakota Tiwahe's primary goals are to work towards decreasing the number of children born with disabilities and developmental delays, decrease the number of births to teenage mothers. LTC understands teenagers are at greater risk of having babies born with defects and developmental delays due to consumption, and the lack of prenatal care and screening all babies born on Rosebud Reservation at six months of age for physical and developmental delays.

The FACE Program through the St. Francis Indian School on the Rosebud Sioux Tribe is a program designed for teen mothers and their children. It allows the mothers to continue their education and their children receive daycare services, and preschool.

The Rosebud Sioux Tribe Maternal and Child Health Program serves women on the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Indian Reservation determined to have a high-risk pregnancy. Clients are followed by visiting nurses throughout their pregnancy. After delivery, the mother and newborn receive health and well-being checks, education and referrals to other programs, and resources as needed. Home visits begin two weeks after delivery and continue on a regular basis until the baby's second birthday.

Shared Waters serves expectant mothers and families with children aged five and below on the Crow Creek Sioux and Lower Brule Sioux Indian Reservations by joining families in their homes for an hour twice a month and to help parents be their child(ren)'s first teacher by giving them the resources to do age-appropriate activities with the family.

Family Enrichment provides developmental screening using the Denver II Developmental tool for newborns up to age five, unless the child enters Early Head Start at which time screenings are done there. The screenings are done once every three months. Family Enrichment also partners with the Chamberlain School District, local area Birth to Three Connections, and the Highmore School District to identify families with children in this age range to ensure developmental screenings are completed. The program provides assistance to the parents by providing donated items such as formula, diapers, bottles, and wipes if available, purchasing children's books, making referrals to services, and assisting with transportation if needed.

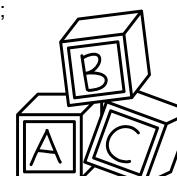
Region 5 (Brookings, Huron, Aberdeen, Watertown)

Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a non-profit organization that builds and delivers beds to children who do not have a bed. Their motto: "No kid sleeps on the floor in our town!" Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a group of volunteers dedicated to finding those young children who do not have the luxury of sleeping on a bed or even laying their heads on a pillow. Through the wonderful efforts of volunteers and generous donations, bunk beds are built, assembled, and delivered to those children who are otherwise sleeping on couches, blankets or even floors. There are chapters in Aberdeen, Brookings, Huron, and Watertown, SD.

1,000 Books Before Kindergarten is through the Brookings Library in Brookings, SD. The concept is simple; the rewards are priceless. Read any book to your newborn, infant, and/or toddler. The goal is to have read 1,000 books (and you can repeat books) before your little one starts kindergarten. The Brookings Public Library offers tracking sheets to keep you going and celebrates reading milestones by tracking participation in the library. Toy and Resource Lending Library is in Brookings, SD and run through the South Dakota State University. The mission of the Toy and Resource Lending Library is to assist families and caregivers in learning more about their child/children's development, educating families and caregivers on how they can help children learn through play, and providing necessary knowledge, resources and tools for families and caregivers to learn about child growth and development. A variety of items, such as puzzles, games, blocks, children's books and more can be borrowed to assist children in their play.

Feeding Brookings in Brookings, SD is a United Way sponsored organization that provides food and hygiene items to families in the Brookings community. Ascension Lutheran Church in Brookings has volunteers who distribute produce and bakery items provided by the local Wal-Mart and Hy-Vee stores, canned goods from the Emergency Food Assistance Program, hygiene items, and a food item of the month as well as any donations from local churches and community members. There are no poverty restrictions, and everyone can utilize this opportunity. Each household receives a number and numbers are chosen at random for order of distribution. The Brookings Area Transit Authority (BATA) in Brookings provides free rides to Feeding Brookings.

Plus One Pregnancy Guidance Center in Huron is a non-profit faith-based organization that assists teens, women, and couples facing unplanned pregnancies in making the healthiest choices possible for themselves and their unborn children. They provide a safe, compassionate atmosphere for free and confidential services. New moms receive support at Plus One until the child is two years old. The following free services are offered: Free Pregnancy Test; Peer Counseling & Support; Pre-Natal, Labor & Delivery Education; Adoption Planning Information; Parenting Education; STD/STI Information; Maternity/Baby Boutique; Assistance Referrals; and Post-Abortion Counseling.



Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) is a peer support group of mothers who are expecting or have an infant, toddler, or preschooler. MOPS meet during the school year twice a month, the second and fourth Tuesday, from 9:30 to 11:30 AM at Living Hope Alliance Church in Huron, SD. Sessions will resume in Fall. At each MOPS meeting, you can expect brunch, fabulous speakers on an array of topics, small group discussion time, devotions, participation in community services, and the development of new relationships. Childcare is provided during meetings.

Bubbles and Books story time is offered at the Huron Public Library. This program is a fun interactive time using finger plays, action rhymes, songs and stories to encourage enjoyment of books and language. Activities vary weekly and this is designed to target wee readers, birth to pre-K

The Beacon Center Family Visitation Center provides a safe, child-friendly environment in which children and families can have family time and become reacquainted with one another. The Family Visitation Center provides both family time and exchanges. Family Time include CPS family time and non-CPS family time. The facility offers three family time rooms that are monitored through audio and video technology. The Family Visitation Center allows the Department to offer multiple family time opportunities a week. This is also valuable when there are infants or children under the age of five where it is imperative more family time occurs to support reunification efforts.



The 612 Flats in Watertown, SD, offers emergency housing and has 8 units to house community members who currently do not have permanent housing, including families with children. In

Fallout Shelter in a non-profit in Watertown, SD, which is a place that members of the community can go to find support in recovery from addiction and trauma. There is also an emergency housing component to their program and can assist parents with small children. The Shelter also offers Martial Arts classes to youth in foster care at a discounted rate.

The Watertown public library has Toddler Time which uses shorter stories, nursery rhymes simple songs and finger plays to introduce children 18-36 months the joys of reading. Though children birth to pre-k are welcomed. Activities follow the reading.

Kids Konnection in Aberdeen, SD is a visitation center that advocates for a child's right to establish and maintain positive interactions with significant adults in his or her life. Their trained staff facilitate family time on site and exchanges between parents and guardians in children's lives. Family time involves parents and children spending time together at Kids Konnection. Family time is monitored by staff and video recorded. The length of family time depends on the family situation and need. Kids Konnection's family time and exchange services allow parents to avoid encountering one another. An exchange involves custodial and non-custodial parents exchanging their children for family time which do not take place at Kids Konnection. Staff facilitate the exchange of the children between parents. Kids Konnection allows the Department to offer multiple family time opportunities a week. This is also valuable when there are infants or children under the age of five where it is imperative more family time occurs to support reunification efforts.

Sanford Children's Child Services is a resource in Aberdeen that provides car seats to eligible families at no cost. They must meet income eligibility requirements. They also have a toy lending library where families can check out toys designed to foster child development.

Region 6 (Sioux Falls)

Heartland House, through Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership (ICAP), is a Rapid Re-Housing Program in Sioux Falls, SD created to help homeless families with children. To be eligible, families must have children, be homeless and must commit to case management services. Families are required to work with a Housing Stabilization Coach to create a Housing Stabilization Plan and can generally receive up to 12 months of rental assistance based on their individual progress. The families pay rent based on their income. The goal for each of the participants is eventual self-sufficiency and housing stabilization. Maximum capacity for the program is 46 families at any given time.

South Dakota is in the midst of a methamphetamine epidemic, while at the same time experiencing a growing opioid problem. These circumstances have led to a significant increase in the number of child abuse and neglect cases. VOAD serves pregnant, parenting, and postpartum women whose children have been removed or are at-risk of being removed from their custody due to substance use. Volunteers of America Dakotas (VOAD), New Start Residential Program and its primary partner, the South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection Services (CPS), propose to address the need for formal coordination mechanisms among family services agencies to respond to the rising rate of children in out-of-home placements due to parental substance abuse. VOAD's New Start Program is one of only two residential treatment facilities in the state where mothers can live with their children during recovery. VOAD is in Sioux Falls, SD, and serves families from across the entire state. Mothers may have their children with them from ages 0-8 years old and a total of two children.

Volunteers of America (VOA) in Sioux Falls, SD provides several resources to families in crisis to include long-term and short-term housing, veteran's assistance, emergency supplies for children under five, case management help and pre-natal classes. This is available to anyone in need including foster parents, kinship, and parents.

The Family Visitation Center in Sioux Falls, SD provides safe supervised family time and exchanges with the goal that while in their care, children are emotionally and physically safe. Families spend time together in private, child-friendly rooms, monitored by professional well-trained staff. Staff also facilitate the safe exchanges of the children from one parent to the other. The Family Visitation Center allows the Department to offer multiple family time opportunities per week. This is also valuable when there are infants or children under the age of five where it is imperative more family time occurs to support reunification efforts.

Harbor Families in Sioux Falls, SD is a movement fueled by compassion to keep children safe and families intact. Through Host Families, Family Friends, and Family Coaches, they temporarily host children and provide a network of support to families in crisis while they get back on their feet.

The ReNew Program through Bethany Social Services starts at prenatal care and continues to age five. This program provides a case manager to assist the family with resources to overcome any barriers they may be facing, though they specialize in past and present substance abuse.

Region 7 (Mitchell, Yankton, Lake Andes, Vermillion)

Big Friendz Little Friendz in Mitchell, SD has a Mentor Moms Program that matches new and expectant young moms one to one with an experienced adult mentor mom. The mentor mom will assist with teaching essential parenting skills through observation, interaction, friendship, and role modeling. Matches meet once a week for an hour and commit to at least a one-year relationship.

Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a non-profit organization that builds and delivers beds to any child between the ages of 2-18 that has no bed. It is a group of volunteers dedicated to finding children who have no bed the luxury of sleeping on one. Using donations, the volunteers build beds/bunk beds and deliver them to those in need. Each bed comes with a mattress, bedding, pillow, and quilt/comforter. There are 250 Chapters across the U.S. and one in Canada. A new Chapter is begin organized in the Mitchell area but at this time they are still a distribution center.

River City Family Connections (RCFC) in Yankton, SD is designed for children and their separated or divorced parents where there has been domestic abuse, child abuse, or conflict involved with family time. RCFC can also be used to establish or re-establish relationships with significant others. Their site serves as a comfortable, neutral location for the transfer of children and for onsite supervised family time. They are committed to preserving family relationships with a secure, child-oriented setting. RCFC allows the Department to offer multiple family time opportunities a week. This is also valuable when there are infants or children under the age of five where it is imperative more family time occurs to support reunification efforts. River City Family Connections also offers Common Sense Parenting classes.

Family Visitation Center (FVC) in Mitchell, SD is available to parents and their children as a resource for families seeking a wide range of services in the process of custody and family time litigation. The safety and comfort of the child is of utmost importance. Children are often caught in the middle of their parents' problems, especially when there has been history of abuse. FVC is designed for children and their separated or divorced parents where there has been conflict involved with family time, domestic abuse, or child abuse. The Center serves as a comfortable, neutral location for the transfer of children for traditional family time and as a location for monitored onsite family time. The Family Visitation Center allows the Department to offer multiple family time opportunities a week. This is also valuable when there are infants or children under the age of five where it is imperative more family time occurs to support reunification efforts.

There is a program through Wagner School District that will be able to serve all 3-5-year-old in the Wagner school district for preschool services. This service will be offered full school days, five days a week. Breakfast and lunch and two snacks are provided to the children. The days are educational based but provide time for a nap and play. For students enrolled it will help reduce the daycare hours.

Melanie Bailey through River City Counseling in Platte and Wagner Community Hospital provides mental health services through play therapy. Melanie can provide more frequent contact while Wagner Community Hospital's contract is limited to 1-2 a month.

Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Services has play therapy available for children.

The Yankton Contact Center provides food, and it is available all day every day. They provide gasoline, temporary housing, some medications. The Contact Center can also act as a rep payee for Social Security recipients.

Pathways Shelter has different tiers of services to assist with housing. They have a night-by-night emergency shelter for families. Pathways offers emergency shelter for families. There is a community transition program for men coming out of prison. Pathways has an Emergency Solution Grant Service to offer monetary support to families at risk of homelessness. Pathways offers security deposit assistance to people who have successfully moved through their tier program. And then they offer Pathways also offers youth services to young adults. The young adults are taught life skills and share a home with the other participants.

The Vermillion community offers Early Head Start services to assist young children and their families on child development.

Efforts to Track and Prevent Child Maltreatment Deaths

South Dakota Codified Law 26-8A-3 mandates which entities are required to report child abuse and neglect

“26-8A-3. Persons required to report child abuse or neglected child--Intentional failure as misdemeanor. Any physician, dentist, doctor of osteopathy, chiropractor, optometrist, emergency medical technician, paramedic, mental health professional or counselor, podiatrist, psychologist, religious healing practitioner, social worker, hospital intern or resident, parole or court services officer, law enforcement officer, teacher, school counselor, school official, nurse, licensed or registered child welfare provider, employee or volunteer of a domestic abuse shelter, employee or volunteer of a child advocacy organization or child welfare service provider, chemical dependency counselor, coroner, dental

hygienist, or any safety-sensitive position as defined in § 3-6C-1, who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child under the age of eighteen has been abused or neglected as defined in § 26-8A-2 shall report that information in accordance with §§ 26-8A-6, 26-8A-7, and 26-8A-8. Any person who intentionally fails to make the required report is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Any person who knows or has reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected as defined in § 26-8A-2 may report that information as provided in § 26-8A-8.”

South Dakota Codified Law 26-8A-4 mandates anyone who has reasonable cause to suspect a child has died because of child abuse or neglect must make a report. The reporting process required by SDCL 26-8A-4 stipulates the report must be made to the medical examiner or coroner and in turn the medical examiner or coroner must report to the South Dakota Department of Social Services.

“South Dakota Codified Law 26-8A-4. Additional persons to report death resulting from abuse or neglect--Intentional failure as misdemeanor. In addition to the report required under § 26-8A-3, any person who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of child abuse or neglect as defined in § 26-8A-2 shall report that information to the medical examiner or coroner. Upon receipt of the report, the medical examiner or coroner shall cause an investigation to be made and submit written findings to the state's attorney and the Department of Social Services. Any person required to report under this section who knowingly and intentionally fails to make a report is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.”

When CPS receives reports of child maltreatment deaths as required under SDCL 26-8A-4 or from any source, CPS documents the report in FACIS (CCWIS). In addition, the Administrator of Services for Families, Director of Field Services, and Division Director are immediately notified of the death. The Administrator of Services for Families works closely with the Family Services Specialist and Supervisor assigned to the case to gather details regarding the death, as well as circumstances leading up to and surrounding the incident. Deaths that meet the NCANDS data definition are reported to NCANDS. The State has and will continue to provide information to the Justice for Children's Committee (JCC), which is a joint committee of the Citizen Review Panel and Children's Justice Task Force, regarding child deaths. For FFY 2024, South Dakota reported 3 child deaths to NCANDS that were a result of child maltreatment.

The South Dakota Department of Health has received a grant through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to implement a South Dakota Violent Death Reporting System (SD-VDRS) to collect data from death certificates, medical examiners/coroners and law enforcement related to various violent deaths to inform prevention efforts. As a part of the grant, the Department of Health has developed a Preventable Death Review Team in South Dakota. This team collaborates with law enforcement, medical examiners/coroners, and the Vital Statistics Office to create and implement a plan to collect timely and comprehensive data on all child deaths. The team will initially focus on the two largest counties, Minnehaha and Pennington, and then will expand statewide within the next two to four years. The team will begin with children ages 0-12 and then expand to include a review of all children.

The Protective Services Program Specialists are a part of the review team. Information regarding this review team will be shared with the task force, to include, but not limited to, supporting the fatality review team. Please see the following link for the Safe Sleep campaign to prevent child maltreatment fatalities by the Department of Health.



MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families

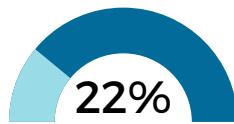
CPS continues to use Promoting Safe and Stable Families (IV-B, Subpart II) funds to assist with providing services that help keep children in their homes; support parents to keep children safe when reunification occurs; ensure stability of placements with foster parents, kinship parents, and adoptive parents; and facilitate adoptions. CPS views Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds as a critical source for situations where even basic levels of support can make the difference in the success of family preservation. Emergency funding for Promoting Safe and Stable Families allowed CPS to assist families with the same services for a longer period as CPS often depletes the funds well before the allotted timeframe. CPS will continue to request approval to use funds to provide:

- Contract services for Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) and kin placement home studies to support temporary and permanent placement with relatives and non-custodial parents
- Legal services to expedite permanency for ICWA children through the court process
- Child parent visitation through contracts with visitation centers
- Contract services for genetic testing to establish paternity for children in foster care

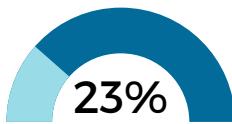
In addition, funds will be made available for staff to help families meet needs that can help with placement prevention or reunification, including:

- Transportation, bus tickets and gas cards for parents to access services and employment
- Rental assistance, utility deposits to support placement prevention and reunification
- Crisis or other day care to support placement prevention and reunification
- Counseling/treatment for parents
- Assessments and evaluations for parents and children to assess danger threats and determine service needs
- Alcohol and drug treatment and testing for parents to assess danger threats and determine service needs
- Supports and services to Present Danger Plan and Safety Plan Providers to prevent children from entering care
- Needs for kinship placement resources - beds, cribs, highchairs, initial food, or clothing, etc.

Approval for use of funds must be provided by Regional Managers and the Assistant Division Director. The IV-B, Subpart II funds will be allocated as follows:



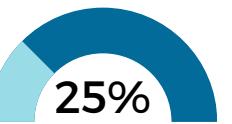
Family Preservation Services:
CPS needs to enhance implementation of interventions in maintaining children in their homes and determining when children can be reunified. Funds will be used to support these efforts. Categories include mental health services, ICWA Expert Witnesses, daycare, and miscellaneous expenses that support family preservation.



Family Support Services:
The services and reason the service providers were selected include: community based family visitation center services for parents and their children, which were selected for contracting based on the fact they were already providing visitation services and located in several regions across the state to provide increased access for families; CPS will be increasing efforts to improve timeliness of permanency and funds will be used in this area to support these efforts.



Time Limited Family Reunification Services:
The services and reason the service providers were selected include: community based family visitation center services for parents and their children, which were selected for contracting based on the fact they were already providing visitation services and located in several regions across the state to provide increased access for families; CPS will be increasing efforts to improve timeliness of permanency and funds will be used in this area to support these efforts.



Adoption Promotion and Support Services:
CPS will be increasing efforts to improve timeliness of permanency and ensure stability of adoptions and funds will be used in this area to support these efforts. Funds will be utilized for expenses such as home studies and travel expenses.

Refer to CFS-101 Part II for further information regarding the estimated number of individuals and families to be served; the populations to be served; and the geographic areas where the services will be available. No category of Title IV-B, Subpart II - utilized below 20%. Reference CFS-101 for more details.

Service Decision-Making Process for Family Support Services

The services and reason the service providers were selected include: community based family visitation center services for parents and their children, which were selected for contracting based the need for family time and transportation services in regions across the state to provide increased access for families; FAS screenings by the University of South Dakota Medical School with the expertise in this area; home studies for parents and kinship families completed by service providers with statewide coverage who have training and experience providing appropriate services to the communities they serve, support for Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) testimony for applicable cases in two of the jurisdictions with the majority of ICWA cases, and genetic testing to establish paternity necessary for parent/child case planning and permanency.

Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment

Children four and under and children in situations involving parental substance abuse are populations at high risk of maltreatment. CPS identified this population through abuse and neglect dispositions entered on FACIS (CCWIS). The Initial Family Assessment is the process used by CPS to assess child maltreatment and child safety. A child aged six or younger is automatically identified as vulnerable in the criteria utilized for determining children in impending danger and requiring intervention.

CPS refers children aged three or younger to the Department of Education's Birth to Three Program. The Birth to Three Program is a family-focused, in-home service for children from birth to 36 months of age with developmental delays or disabilities. CPS staff may refer any child to the program; however, CPS policy mandates all children involved in a substantiated case are required to be referred to the Birth to Three Program. In Federal Fiscal Year 2024, 646 children ages 0-3 were referred to the Birth to Three Program. (Data Source: IFA Safety Outcomes FACIS Report)

The Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA) is the intervention model used by CPS with families receiving ongoing services. The PCA is used to strengthen the parent's protective capacities related to existing threats to child safety. The presence of danger threats and need to strengthen parental protective capacities are correlated, which means there is an automatic focus on age-appropriate interventions related to danger threats to younger children in cases involving children 6 or younger or for children with disabilities. There is a focus in the PCA on assessing the impact of substance use on parents' protective capacities. Treatment is focused on those situations where substance use is found to be out of control, threatening a vulnerable child, and likely to cause significant harm in the near future.

Kinship Navigator Funding (Title IV-B, Subpart II)

South Dakota Child Protection Services (CPS) supports kinship care. Whenever it is possible to safely do so, CPS utilizes kinship care for placement of children in State custody. CPS recognizes there are many times families manage child safety internally through kinship placements that do not involve state intervention.

The Department of Social Services created the Kinship Workgroup in December 2021. This workgroup consists of Child Protection caseworkers, supervisors, regional managers, and program specialists. It also includes contracted kinship staff, tribal representatives, kinship caregivers, and others with lived experience. The Kinship Workgroup meets monthly and helps provide input and consultation as needed to expand the services available to kinship families.

Since the initial round of funding, South Dakota has used the Kinship Navigator Grant funds to expand resources for kinship families and provide essential support services. This support includes counseling, assistance with childcare expenses, groceries, clothing, furniture, gas reimbursement, appliances, and other necessities for families caring for their relatives or fictive kin. The Kinship Navigator Grant has also been used to cover legal fees for guardianship, helping to secure permanency for children living with kin.

Additionally, funding has facilitated outreach to kinship families involved with CPS, as well as those providing care without CPS involvement. CPS has partnered with schools, tribal agencies, mental health providers, and other community resources to distribute funding to kinship families throughout South Dakota. The goal of this funding is to help kinship families access benefits or services that enhance their ability to provide safe and quality care for children. In grant year 2024, CPS received \$177,211 from the Kinship Navigator Grant and plans to allocate all funds by September 30, 2025. If awarded, CPS plans to continue to utilize FFY2025 grant funding in the same way for concrete services and legal fees.

CPS continues to facilitate a Kinship Workgroup, which includes CPS family and kinship specialists, supervisors, and regional managers. Additionally, the workgroup comprises of contracted kinship staff, tribal representatives, kinship caregivers, and others with relevant lived experiences. The Kinship Workgroup provides valuable input and consultation to expand the services available to kinship families. South Dakota will maintain the use of this workgroup in during FFY2025 to support kinship families and identify high-quality services that address their unique needs.

Recently, the Kinship Workgroup contributed to the development of kin-specific licensing standards in South Dakota and advocated for changes to administrative licensing rules. In May 2025, CPS submitted an amendment to its IV-E plan concerning these kin-specific standards. The Kinship Workgroup played a crucial role in supporting the approval of these standards.

In January 2024, Child Protective Services (CPS) established a crucial partnership by contracting a full-time kinship navigator through Lutheran Social Services, a private agency also dedicated to kinship assessment and family finding for CPS. This contract, renewed in June 2024 and June 2025, laid the groundwork for the successful launch of "Kinship South Dakota" statewide in July 2024. This initiative connects kinship caregivers across South Dakota with a dedicated full-time kinship navigator who provides essential support and comprehensive resources. Our mission is to meet the diverse needs of families and ensure the ongoing placement of children with their kinship caregivers.

Kinship South Dakota conducts an initial needs assessment for each family, enabling them to identify precise referrals to vital resources and in the family's community. When additional assistance is needed, the kinship navigator steps in to advocate, problem-solve, and provide expert guidance to eliminate barriers that may hinder caregivers from effectively caring for their kin.

The program is designed to address both immediate and short-term financial needs, ensuring caregivers have the resources they require. Referrals to Kinship South Dakota are received by phone and email from various stakeholders or caseworkers and are handled by a full-time kinship navigator. Furthermore, the navigator actively fosters partnerships between kin and community-based tribal or state providers, ensuring that kinship families receive the comprehensive support they deserve within their local communities. Kinship Navigator Grant funds play a vital role in supporting and implementing the Kinship South Dakota initiative.

Recognizing the importance of accessible resources, CPS is diligently planning a Kinship South Dakota website that will empower kinship caregivers with online access to applications, referrals, and services. The development and maintenance of this website will continue in FFY2025, along with ongoing grant funding to support the mission.

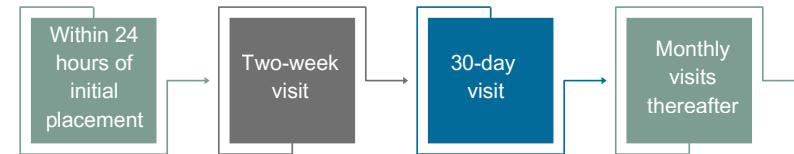
CPS applied for the FFY2025 Kinship Navigator Grant again in June 2025. CPS is committed to delivering impactful support and services that enhance child well-being, strengthen kinship family dynamics, improve access to essential services, and elevate satisfaction with programs and resources. Grant funding will play a pivotal role in providing kinship families with essential legal services, enabling them to successfully complete family-driven plans for legal guardianship of relative children.

Refer to Service Array Placement Resources Support Services for further information on Kinship Navigator Funding utilization in SFY2025.

Refer to Permanency Outcome 2 for further information regarding enhanced Kinship Standards that have been implemented through the work and collaboration of the Kinship Workgroup.

Monthly Caseworker Visit Standards and Formula Grants

CPS policy requires staff to visit children:



Children in group/residential care the policy is monthly visitation. Staff are expected to visit children placed out of state every six months with an expectation of monthly visits by the out of state agency providing supervision.

CPS staff are required to enter visits with children in foster care in FACIS (CCWIS). Reports in FACIS, which is accessible to staff, are used to report both monthly calendar visits and visits per child per 12 months based on CPS staff entries of visits into FACIS. CPS staff also document the detail of the visits in the FACIS narrative. The narrative is to include the Family Services Specialists' assessment of the safety, permanency well-being of the child during each visit as well as the case activity related to case planning. A screen in FACIS allows staff to document visits as a specific activity and specify whether or not they are in residence. CPS developed a report to be used by the administration, the Family Services Specialists and Supervisor to monitor the level of compliance with caseworker visits monthly. CPS added a Caseworker Visits Compliance Report.

CPS consistently outperforms the National Standard of 95% of children visited each month and 50% of the visits occurring in the child's residence. In FFY 2024, 96.13% of children were visited monthly and 93.04% of these visits were in the child's residence. CPS will continue to explore opportunities to increase quality assessment of children in care during caseworker visits. CPS administers a survey to placement resources to help monitor caseworker visits. The information gathered from the placement resource involves frequency of visits, location of visits, quality of visits, and placement resource satisfaction with visits. This information is utilized to help increase the frequency and quality of caseworker visits with children as well as enhance services and supports to placement resources. In SFY 2025 all six regions sent the placement resources survey regarding caseworker visits. Surveys were sent to all resource providers at all levels of care with a current placement at the time the surveys were distributed in each region. Each region was designated a month during the fiscal year in which surveys would be sent to resource providers with current placements during that month. At the beginning of the designated month, the Strategy and Outcomes Program Specialist pulled a list of all children in care for the region and worked with the region to compile an email list of all resource providers for children placed from their region. Once the email list was completed, the surveys were sent out. Providers were asked to fill out a survey for each sibling group placed in their home if they had more than one. See details below regarding date of survey distribution, number of surveys sent, number of responses and response rate. Note: Some respondents only submitted partial survey responses as they skipped some survey questions.

SFY25 Placement Resource Survey – Response Rates

Region	Date Surveys Sent	Number of Resource Providers Surveyed	Number of Responses Received	Response Rate
Region 1	11/08/2024	263	79	30%
Region 3	11/18/2024	82	32	39%
Region 4	11/13/2024	98	41	42%
Region 5	12/26/2024	77	41	53%
Region 6	01/29/2025	225	111	49%
Region 7	02/06/2025	50	29	58%
Total		795	334 <small>*1 respondent did not respond to the question asking office/region</small>	42%



281 of 296

Placement resources reported their Family Services Specialist visits monthly or more with the child placed in their home/facility.



293 of 302

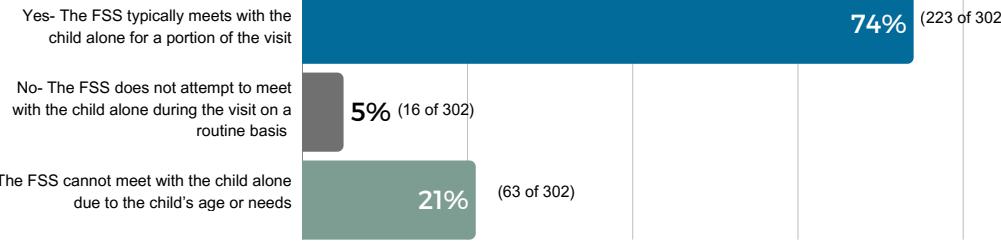
Placement resources report the Family Services Specialist address, privately if needed, the issues they want to discuss during caseworker visits.



273 of 300

Placement resources report the Family Services Specialist is responsive if something needs to be addressed between caseworker visits.

Family Services Specialist Meeting Alone with the Child Monthly



Survey results are filtered out by Region and each Regional Manager is provided their individual results to share with staff and follow up on any questions or concerns as needed. Please see Well-Being Outcome 1 for an overview of South Dakota's outcome performance on frequent and quality caseworker visits.

South Dakota completes data quality checks, which are also outlined in South Dakota's Data Quality Plan, to ensure caseworker visits identified as occurring in the residence are in person interactions or through virtual visits. When completed, information is shared with management team and a plan to improve data will be developed.

CPS utilizes visitation centers to supplement parent and child visitation. When CPS staff observe these visits and meet with the children afterwards, it provides another opportunity for the children to feel free to express feelings and concerns to staff. Caseworker Visits funds have been used in the previous fiscal year and will continue to be used to fund family time at visitation centers in order for CPS to have another resource related to staff visits of children in care.

In SFY2025, the Supervisor Advisory Group prioritized revising the child caseworker visit policy to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Family Services Specialists, Supervisors, and Regional Managers. The revised policy also strengthens expectations around documentation and outlines the process for assigning secondary workers. The group began by reviewing the existing policy in collaboration with their regional supervisor teams, gathering feedback, and using these insights to draft an updated policy document. The enhanced policy was then shared with the Management Team and formally presented to both the Supervisor and Management Team groups at the May Supervisor and Management Team meeting. A webinar is being held for all staff on June 17, 2025 where the revised policy will be shared. The policy will go into effect on July 1, 2025.

Progress Reporting for other Grants and Requirements Coordinated through the APSR

Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments

Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive funds are used for a variety of services for children and families. Funds are used to fund the Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) contract. The contract provides for two recruiters working with youth statewide on recruiting and identifying adopted families. The youth assigned to the WWK recruiters are identified as youth harder to place. The caseload for each recruiter averaged between 9 to 14 children. This is a decrease from previous years as there was turnover in the Rapid City location and with the supervisor over the program. The vacancies have been filled and the caseloads are being rebuilt. The Sioux Falls location had a record number of adoption finalizations in FY25 at ten, with three more scheduled in June and July. The Rapid City locations had two adoptions and two guardianships in FY25.

Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive funds have been used to pay for child specific home study updates, adoptive placement supervision services for youth matched with adoptive families living outside of South Dakota, who are approved through private adoption agencies. Funds have been used for individual services and items requested by families. Some examples are legal fees, home modifications, travel reimbursement, applied behavioral analysis, specific parenting training, and various other miscellaneous items.

A significant portion of the Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments supports the Post Adoption Services contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS). Through this contact, Lutheran Social Services (LSS) offers a comprehensive range of supports to meet the diverse needs of adoptive families. These services include resource referrals, case management, a 24-hour crisis hotline, and support groups for both adoptive parents and youth adoptees. LSS also facilitates referrals to adoption-competent therapists and provides professional training, educational opportunities, workshops, and day camps for adoptive families. Key initiatives include hosting an annual adoption conference and developing a mentorship program to connect families with additional support. Additional services encompass safety planning, in-home support aimed at preventing adoption disruptions, regular communication with families, and connections to cultural community resources. LSS also assists with referrals to Group Homes and Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs), participates in discharge planning, coordinates respite care, and offers advocacy. In addition, LSS has created a Post Adoption Facebook Group and continues to expand support group offerings for both parents and children.

South Dakota plans to utilize the Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive funds to continue to support the contract and services described above in FY2026.

Adoption Savings

CPS tracks adoption savings through the CCWIS Program. All subsidized adoptions are entered in FACIS. When a funding source is determined and approved, IV-E adoption subsidies based on the provisions of Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 are identified as a "Fostering Connection's" case. The Subsidized Adoption Summary Details report identifies the calculated paid claims for eligible cases under "Fostering Connections". CPS calculates the state/federal match and determines the actual adoption cost savings. CPS's method has been approved by the Children's Bureau and reports the actual savings. There have been no changes to the methodology. Currently there are 615 youth receiving adoption assistance who are IV-E because of Fostering Connections to Success and the Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

CPS has spent the entire savings on Post Adoption Services. CPS assists several adopted youth in residential treatment and group care placements with tuition assistance and other services not covered under some other type of funding source. CPS will continue to utilize adoption savings for post-adoption supports to families in FY2026.

South Dakota has not experienced any challenges in accessing and utilizing the funds provided.

Family First Prevention Services Act Transition Grants

The FFFSA Transition Grant has been utilized for consultant services to prepare South Dakota DSS CPS through a workforce readiness assessment with Action for Child Protection and with ICF which consulted on developing the Family First Prevention Plan. Remaining funds are projected to be obligated by September 30, 2025 for the consultancy services.

John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program)

At the conclusion of the SFY25 Chafee Foster Care Program (CFSP), the CPS Independent Living Program continued to provide the following services. A brief description of each service, along with any updates or changes made during the year, is outlined in the paragraphs below.

Agency Administering Chafee

The Division of Child Protection Services (CPS) within the Department of Social Services (DSS) is responsible for providing services and permanency planning for youth in the custody of the state. Under South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL 26-8A-26), the state is required to provide Independent Living Services (ILS) to youth age 16 and older who are expected to remain in foster care until age 18. However, CPS policy extends ILS services to youth beginning at age 14 to better support early transition planning. In accordance with federal requirements under the Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood, ILS services are also available to young adults who have transitioned from custody between the ages of 18 and 21. The Educational Training Voucher (ETV) program, established under federal law, provides additional support for these young adults. Following the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act on July 9, 2018, South Dakota expanded ETV eligibility to include young adults who were in foster care at age 18, or who were adopted or entered guardianship at age 16. These individuals remain eligible for ETV support until age 26.

The CPS Independent Living Program is managed by the ILS Program Specialist, who oversees the coordination of Chafee-funded services and supports, including those provided through the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Community Resource Person (CRP) contract. The ILS Program Specialist works closely with CRPs and their supervisor to ensure the effective delivery of services through regular communication, including in-person and virtual meetings, emails, and phone calls.

Ongoing guidance is provided to CPS staff and CRPs through the CPS Policy and Procedure Manual, with updates and training conducted as needed to reflect service improvements, emerging challenges, or federal policy changes. The ILS Program Specialist is responsible for assigning eligible youth to the appropriate CRP in the FACIS system. These youth may include those involved with CPS, the Department of Corrections (DOC), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), or tribal child welfare agencies, depending on their individual circumstances.

Description of Program Design and Delivery

In South Dakota, the Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Program is a state administrated program. The ILS Program supports youth who have experienced foster care at age 14 or older in their transition to adulthood. Youth begin receiving ILS at the age of 14 years or older to provide on-going opportunities to engage in age or developmentally appropriate activities.

The state intends to continue delivering and providing programs that support all youth through transitional services such as assistance in obtaining a high school diploma and post-secondary education, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, training and opportunities to practice daily living skills, substance abuse prevention, and preventive health activities; help youth engage in meaningful connections with permanent connections with a caring adult; help youth engage in age or developmentally appropriate activities; provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition from adolescence to adulthood; and to make available vouchers for education and training, including postsecondary training and education, to youths who have aged out of foster care.

CPS has a contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS) to provide Community Resource People (CRP) to provide support services regarding development of independent living skills for youth ages 16 through 21 in foster care or formerly in foster care to assist in preparing youth to live independently as adults.

CPS is responsible for providing child welfare services on the following tribal lands: Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and Yankton Sioux Tribe. CPS has established agreements with the other four Tribes to provide their own child welfare services, which are Oglala Sioux Tribe, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. Native American youth are involved in all aspects of the ILS program. The ICWA Program Specialist maintains a contact list for each of the tribes. This information is shared with the CRPs. The CRPs are responsible for identifying resources and networking with people on the reservations in their area. Information regarding Chafee services, ETV funds, CRP services, ILS Workshops, Teen Conference and other ILS information is shared with the BIA and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies on an ongoing basis. Invitations are mailed to the Tribal ICWA Directors and Tribal Child Welfare Directors when conferences, workshops, and other ILS activities are held.

In SFY26, the Independent Living Services (ILS) Program will focus on strengthening partnerships with tribal nations and increasing access to ILS for Native youth through several targeted goals. These include: expanding tribal youth participation in statewide ILS events such as workshops and the annual conference; enhancing programming by incorporating tribal customs, language, and lived experiences into training and activities; increasing collaboration with tribal child protection programs by scheduling regular virtual engagement sessions each quarter; improving coordination between Community Resource Persons (CRPs) and tribal caseworkers to streamline referrals and service delivery; and increasing outreach to Native youth to join Young Voices, the statewide youth advisory group, to ensure stronger tribal representation in shaping ILS programming. Additionally, the ILS Program aims to improve follow-up and outcome tracking for tribal youth who receive Chafee services, Education and Training Vouchers (ETV), or participate in the Independent Living Preparation Program (ILPP), ensuring equitable access and measurable impact across all tribal communities.

The South Dakota Chafee Foster Care Independence Living Program Five-Year Plan is designed to assist youth in foster care and to assist youth as they are establishing independence. Youth begin receiving ILS at the age 14 through CPS continue to build on their relationship with youth as they transition to become an adult and living on their own. Over this period, the youth establish strong connections and trust with the CRPs. The CRP program established a process to continue the support of youth while the youth is in care and after the youth leaves care. The strength of the ILS program is to involve youth in the planning process with their plan as well as asking for their input and feedback through surveys completed at the workshops, teen conference, the exit survey and satisfaction survey. The CRP program has a high staff retention rate, which enhances the relationships between CRPs and youth. One of the purposes of the Child Family Service Plan (CFSP) is to continue to implement a comprehensive approach to achieve permanency. With the ILS program, the goal is to improve practice and coordination of services to assure youth are receiving the needed independent living services to have a positive transition to adulthood. Many of the aspects of the Five-Year Plan focus on the approaches to deliver independent living services to youth and young adults.

The following goals have been identified to strengthen programs for the Chafee program over the next five years.

Goal
1

Youth will obtain a high school diploma or GED.

Objective 1: Enhance the process for monitoring youths' high school credits.

Objective 2: Promote meaningful connections with educational providers, foster parents, adoptive parents, workers in group homes, case managers, and the youth.

- **Intervention 1:** Provide staff training, during the ILS module of Permanency and Well Being Certification training, to increase their engagement in the educational process of youth and enhance documentation of scholastic progress.
- **Intervention 2:** Engage the Department of Education, educational providers, placement resources, and Family Services Specialists to enhance relationships and provide support during the transition of high school credits for youth moving to different schools.

Objective 3: Address barriers affecting a youth's ability to obtain credits needed for graduation.

- **Intervention 1:** Collaborate with Department of Education along with Group and Residential Treatment providers to continue assessing the barriers limiting a youth's ability to obtain the credits required to graduate from high school and develop solutions to resolving the barriers such as through review of the youth's requirements to graduate and working with the former school district to transfer as many credits as possible. Child Protection has a representative involved on the Department of Education Advisory Council to assist with this collaboration.
- **Intervention 2:** While the school district is responsible for educational services, credit tracking is something the provider and Family Services Specialist must also be involved in during transition to make sure the youth receive maximum credit for the work they have done/doing at the time of their move.
- **Intervention 3:** Annual fidelity review of the credit tracking management process will be completed by the agency along with the CQI Team to monitor school credit tracking to identify ongoing trends.

2026 APSR Goal 1 Update:

An Independent Living Services Advisory Workgroup meeting was held on December 5, 2024. During this meeting, the team reaffirmed its commitment to the Chafee Goal of education as a primary area of focus. In February 2025, the Community Resource Persons (CRP) Team and the Independent Living Program Specialist met to review current ILS policy and related forms. During this review, it was determined that the ILS policy and Age Meeting documents required updates to ensure that youth's academic credits are accurately documented and reviewed consistently over time. Since the February 2025 meeting, the Independent Living Program Specialist has been working on revising the ILS Policy. The draft policy will be shared with the Community Resource Team and two members of Young Voices to gather feedback and ensure youth perspectives are included in the revisions. Once the Community Resource Team and Young Voices members have reviewed and provided input, the draft policy will be shared with the Management Team and Leadership. Prior to approving the updated policy, it will be distributed to Regional Managers and the Supervisory Team, and then officially uploaded into the policy manual for implementation.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, the Youth Education Credit Fidelity Review was implemented as a collaborative effort between the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team and the Independent Living (ILS) Program Specialist. This review, to be completed by CQI Program Specialists in June 2025, aims to ensure the consistent and accurate monitoring of academic progress for youth in care, with a focus on tracking critical educational indicators. The review includes comprehensive documentation of:

- Each youth's school placements
- Current grade level
- Credits earned
- Credits required for graduation
- Any loss of credits due to placement changes

By analyzing this data, the fidelity review process helps identify patterns—such as frequent school changes or credit loss—that may affect a youth's ability to graduate on time. The findings are intended to inform educational planning and advocacy efforts that support more stable and successful academic outcomes for youth in foster care.

Additionally, in SFY2025, supportive practices have continued to promote youth leaving care with their high school diploma or GED. These include:

- Ongoing credit reviews and goal setting during Age 16, 17, and Transitional Meetings to assess progress and develop plans to complete high school or pursue education beyond age 18.
- Placement providers, including group and residential care staff, continue to be invited to these meetings to support educational continuity and planning.
- Ongoing staff training during Permanency and Wellbeing sessions emphasize the importance of:
 - Utilizing credit recovery resources
 - Paying for tutoring services, summer school, and GED testing through Chafee flexible funding
 - Avoiding placement moves mid-semester whenever possible
 - Making efforts to maintain youth in their home school districts
 - Providing laptops or computers when needed through Chafee flexible funding

Further, efforts to address systemic educational barriers are supported through collaboration with the Department of Education, facilitated by the Permanency Program Specialist, who continues to serve on the Department of Education Advisory Council. This partnership helps inform statewide educational policy and practice improvements affecting youth in care.

Child Protection Services provided a training to Title 1 School District staff in South Dakota regarding educational stability for children in foster care in May 2025. This included best practice and recommendations to help school districts support children in foster care.

Objective 1: Increase youths' employability skills.

- **Intervention 1:** Provide employment skills training at Workshops, Teen Conference, and Young Voices meetings.
- **Intervention 2:** Collaborate with Group and Residential providers and Job Corp to provide youth with more work-related experiences. If the youth is unable to leave the campus due to treatment needs, collaborate with the provider to offer skill building opportunities onsite that will enhance the youth for future employability.
- **Intervention 3:** Collaborate with the Department of Labor, Community Resource People (CRPs), and CPS to develop strategies to improve employability opportunities for youth.

2026 APSR Goal 2 Update:

An Independent Living Services Advisory Workgroup Meeting was held on December 5, 2024, during which Chafee Goals were reviewed. The team agreed to continue prioritizing the goal of employment as a key focus area for program improvement and youth outcomes.

In February 2025, the Community Resource Persons (CRP) Team and the Independent Living Program Specialist met to review ILS policy and associated forms. During this meeting, it was determined that updates to policy were necessary to better support youth in overcoming barriers to employment—specifically the need to obtain a driver's permit or license, which was identified as a common obstacle. As a result, the team began revising the Age Meeting forms and is actively developing a tracking method to ensure that Child Protection Services (CPS) obtains original birth certificates and Social Security cards for all youth, which are required for employment and identification purposes.

To further support youth in accessing employment opportunities, the Independent Living Services Program continues to utilize Chafee flexible funding to cover essential employment-related needs, including:

- Laptops, cell phones, and cell phone cards to assist youth in searching for jobs, managing work schedules, and securing transportation.
- Bus passes and Uber/Lyft gift cards to address transportation barriers to and from the workplace.

Employment skills training continues to be a key component of the Independent Living Services program, delivered through ILS Workshops and the Teen Conference. These sessions are designed to enhance youth knowledge in areas such as job searching, completing applications, interviewing, and understanding workplace expectations. During ILS workshops and at the June 2025 ILS Teen Conference, youth ages 14–18 have received presentations about employment opportunities and resources, including support from the Department of Labor/Career Launch, Job Corps, and other employment agencies. Youth also learned about alternative career paths, such as cosmetology and the military. At the conference, Young Voices members will share their personal experiences related to life after foster care, including both the challenges and successes they've encountered in employment, to help inspire and inform their peers. The program continues to collaborate with Group and Residential Providers and Job Corps to expand work-based learning opportunities. When youth are unable to leave campus due to treatment needs, providers are encouraged to offer on site skill-building activities that prepare them for future employment. Additionally, during Age 16, 17, and Transitional Meetings, group and residential providers are prompted to help youth gain real-world work experience.

Teams work together to identify and remove barriers, ensuring that youth can develop meaningful employment history prior to exiting care. The Independent Living Program partners with the Department of Labor/Career Launch, Community Resource People (CRP), and Child Protection Services (CPS) to develop strategies and partnerships that increase access to employability opportunities. This includes efforts to expand job coaching, mentoring, and hands-on employment experiences. By leveraging community resources and cross-agency collaboration, the program aims to ensure that youth are equipped with the skills, tools, and support needed to achieve long-term employment success.

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is a critical principle encompassed in all aspects of services provided to youth and exemplified through Young Voices. PYD is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, school, organizations, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, foster positive relationship, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths. PYD is incorporated to the training plan and principles of PYD are embedded in the policy and practices of the ILS program. Through case planning, age meetings, and youth groups, an emphasis is placed on engaging youth with meaningful connections and encourage youth to share their lived experiences. Child Protection Services (CPS) continues efforts to implement and expand the Youth Bureau of Speakers program which was established under the broader initiative known as Young Voices. During all ILS events, including the workshops and workgroup meetings, there has been discussion with youth and supportive adults on how utilize the youths lived experiences to help recruit foster providers for older youth through in-person presentations, videos, social media and utilizing their input when writing CPS policy.

The National Youth in Transitional Database (NYTD) data is shared with youth and placement providers at ILS Workshops and Teen Conference as well as attendees of the ILS Workgroup meetings and Young Voices meetings. CPS will continue to share data with the Court Improvement Program Committee, the South Dakota Youth Care Provider Association, BIA and tribal child welfare agencies to obtain their input on the data to improve service delivery and make a difference to youth in the foster care system.

CPS will continue to collect high quality NYTD data with the Family and Children Information System (FACIS). The FACIS system is designed to assist staff to assure a youth will not be missed if the NYTD survey needs completion. CPS continues to develop functions in the system to support federal requirements and policy changes. Staff modules and compliance reports are used to assist CPS with monitoring, and tracking tasks related to youth in the NYTD baseline and follow-up populations. The CRP contractors assist in providing independent living services by having access to FACIS for cases assigned to them. The CRPs have access to the compliance report, which assists with the NYTD requirements.

Serving Youth Across the State

Independent Living Services (ILS) is provided as a statewide, supplemental service for youth before the age of 18. If youth still have a plan of reunification with their family, CPS will continue to provide reunification services. Independent Living Services are provided until reunification is successful or until it is determined, reunification is no longer an option. The other permanent plans are adoption, guardianship, permanent placement with a relative, or another planned permanent living arrangement (foster home, treatment facility, etc.) If reunification is successful, CPS continues to be involved until the parent(s) have the capacity to keep the child safe at home. CPS does not provide ILS beyond that time. If reunification is not successful, CPS works toward adoption, guardianship, permanent placement with a relative, or Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement (APPLA) until the youth transitions from CPS custody to live independently. CPS continues to work with the youth, the temporary placement resource and the permanent resource until the permanent resource is legally appointed as the permanent guardian of the youth. CPS can provide a subsidy to adoptive parents and families receiving guardianship of the youth until the age of 18.

If youth will be in foster care until the age of 18, CPS continues to provide financial and other supports to the youth and the placement resource, until the youth turn 18 years old. CPS does have an exception in policy allowing CPS to continue financial support for youth in custody, until they complete high school or reach the age of 21, whichever comes first. CPS did not select to extend IV-E funding beyond age 19. However, CPS utilizes state funds to support young adults who remain in placement beyond age 19. In addition, CPS can use Chafee funds to pay a foster home up to \$200 a month for those youth over 18, who are out of school, but continue to reside with their foster parent until the age of 21.

If a youth is attending a post-secondary school and dorms are not available, the ILS program can assist with housing off campus if the youth is a full-time student and maintains a 2.0 or higher-grade point average. The amount of the assistance can be up to \$300 per month including the security deposit.

The Chafee Program provides funding for Independent Living Preparation Programs (ILPP), which are designed to support youth and young adults ages 16 to 21 as they transition to independent living. These programs offer supportive housing and case management services to help residents develop the skills necessary for successful adulthood.

Youth participating in ILPP pay a minimal daily rent fee, which is refunded upon their exit from the program. Chafee funding covers monthly housing and case management costs, allowing participants to focus on skill-building and personal growth. ILPP residents receive support in achieving key goals such as:

- Earning a high school diploma or a High School Equivalency (GED)
- Securing employment or enrolling in higher education
- Learning essential life skills such as cooking, cleaning, and financial management

While 24-hour supervision is not provided, case managers work closely with youth to ensure progress and accountability. Participants are expected to engage in at least 40 hours of constructive activities each week. These may include a combination of education, employment, volunteer service, and life skills training.

This program is designed to empower youth with the tools, confidence, and support needed to achieve self-sufficiency and long-term success.

While ILS is provided by CPS to youth at the age of 14, the primary purpose is to assist those youth who will transition to adulthood from foster care. Services include facilitating continued involvement of the placement resource with the youth and maintaining or reestablishing connections with relatives. The services for those youth up to the age of 21 are a safety net mainly for youth who do not have a permanent family and need the continued support after they leave care whether the resource family stays involved or not.

South Dakota is committed to ensuring that youth who were formerly in foster care and have moved to the state after exiting foster care in another state continue to receive support and federally funded Chafee Program services, provided they have not yet reached age 21.

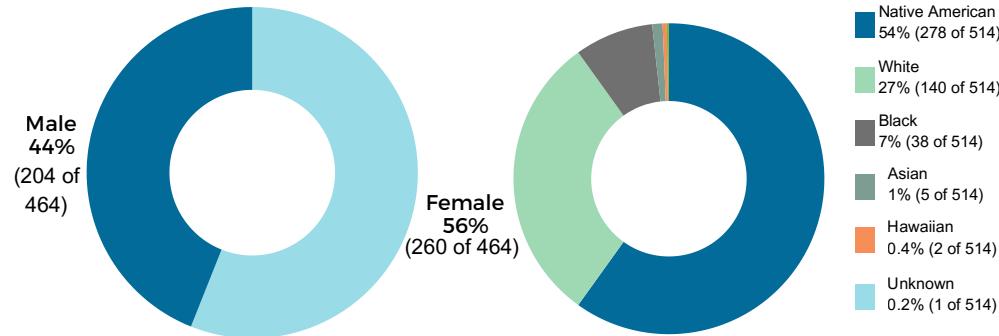
The Independent Living Services (ILS) Program Specialist will coordinate with the young adult to assign a Community Resource Person (CRP) who can assist in navigating available ILS services based on the individual's unique needs. These services may include, but are not limited to:

- Locating safe and stable housing
- Applying for financial assistance programs, such as the Fostering Youth to Independence (FYI) housing vouchers
- Accessing educational support, including the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program
- This collaborative approach ensures that transitioning youth receive the guidance and support necessary to achieve independence and long-term stability in South Dakota.

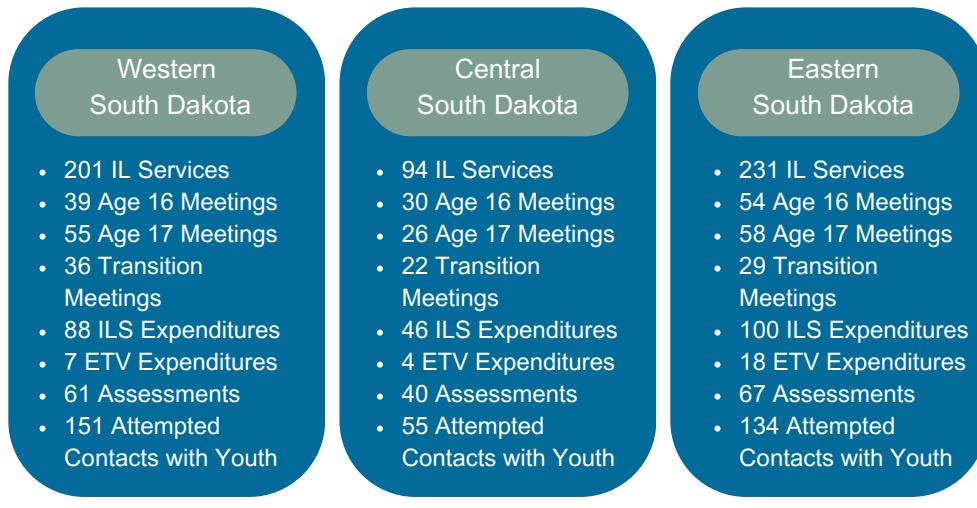
South Dakota provides tribal consultation with the tribes with an approved IV-E plan or a title IV-E tribal and state agreement have the option to receive directly from ACF a portion of the state's Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) and / or Education Training Voucher (ETV) allotment to provide services to tribal foster/foster youth (section 477(j) of the ACT).

CPS is divided into six regions providing child welfare services to South Dakota's 66 counties. There are five CRP's providing services to these counties. Two CRPs cover the entire western half of South Dakota (north and south), which includes 18 counties. There is one CRP located in the central portion of South Dakota who covers 28 counties, north and south, and two CRPs located in the eastern part of the state who cover 20 counties and they travel to the most southern corner of the state. CPS provides child welfare services for the following five tribes: Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and Yankton Sioux Tribe. CPS has established agreements with the other four tribes who provide their own child welfare services, which are Oglala Sioux Tribe, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

In SFY 25, 464 youth were served and 547 ILS Services were provided. The demographics of the youth served are as follows:



The following are the statistics related to services and activities completed by the CRPs for the timeframe July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025:



In addition to the geographical locations of services provided, data was collected regarding services provided by CRP Supervisors and Other Staff such as Family Services Specialists. The CRP Supervisor provided 13 Independent Living Services, 1 Age 16 Meeting, 2 Age 17 Meetings, 5 Transition Meetings, 4 ILS Expenditures, 1 ETV Expenditure, 3 Assessments, and 9 Attempted Contracts with Youth. Other staff provided 8 Independent Living Services, 1 Transition Meeting, 11 ILS Expenditures, 1 ETV Expenditure, and 2 Attempted Contracts with Youth.

[Serving Youth of Various Ages and Stages of Achieving Independence](#)

CPS continues oversight of the contract with Lutheran Social Services (LSS) to assign Community Resource Persons (CRP). CRPs deliver support services regarding development of independent living skills for youth ages 16 through 21 to assist in their transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency. CRPs assist youth to prepare for post-secondary education; provide personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and promotion of interactions with dedicated adults; provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services to allow youth to have regular, ongoing opportunities to engage in age or developmental-appropriate activities as defined in Section 475 (111) of the Act; and provide services to youth who after attaining 16 years of age have left foster care for kinship, guardianship, or adoption. Youth, after attaining 16 years of age, who left care through adoption or guardianship can participate in ILS Workshops, ILS conferences, and would be eligible for Educational Training Voucher (ETV) funds. Youth, 18 years of age or older, can remain in care up to age 21 to complete their high school education. If youth attend a post-secondary school, the CRP provides support to youth up to the age of 26. The CRP remains in contact with youth identified in the NYTD baseline up to age 21 to meet the NYTD requirement. The delivery of services under Chafee will not change if the youth chooses to leave care. The CRPs work to support youth referred to them from the tribal areas.

South Dakota ensures that Independent Living services are available to youth formerly in foster who have moved to the state, after exiting foster care in another state. The Independent Living Program Specialist is the point of contact when questions arise about youth moving to South Dakota and if they qualify for ILS. The IL Program Specialist assigns a CRP to that young adult, so they have a point of contact to help guide them through IL services in South Dakota. These young adults also qualify for the Former Foster Care Medicaid program and the CRPs also assist them in getting those services in place. The IL Program Specialist helps guide educational service providers on what IL services are available when they reach out with questions. The Independent Living Program Specialist networks with other state ILS leaders when attending virtual and in-person conferences and has shared that South Dakota can provide IL services to eligible youth. The Independent Living Program Specialist is also a member of the federal list serve where other ILS program leaders can reach out through correspondence to ask questions about services available to young adults moving or currently residing South Dakota.

ETV funding and the Fostering Youth Independence (FYI) voucher for housing are resources available to youth who have exited foster care and who move from other states into South Dakota. The Independent Living Program Specialist will reach out to the state in which the youth has moved from to verify their eligibility to help establish what South Dakota can assist with. Collaboration then begins between the two states to ensure that the young adult does not fall through the cracks and IL services are made available to them.

[South Dakota Youth Advocacy - Young Voices](#)

Incorporating Positive Youth Development is the foundation of the South Dakota Independent Living Program, the Young Voices Program serves to ensure that practices are guided by youth input and lived experience. Youth have learned to speak about their life stories and experiences in a way which leads to positive changes in themselves and others.

During SFY25, CPS continued efforts to implement and expand the Youth Bureau of Speakers program which was established under the broader initiative known as Young Voices. This initiative was created to establish, empower, and equip youth alumni with the tools and confidence to effectively share their lived experiences, insights, and success stories from the foster care system. The primary goal of this platform is to inspire, educate, and build awareness among stakeholders, service providers, and the broader community, thereby fostering a more supportive environment for current foster youth and encouraging the recruitment of foster families, especially for teenagers.

Throughout the year, all Independent Living Services (ILS) events, including youth workshops and workgroup meetings, included discussions with youth and supportive adults about how to use lived experiences in recruitment efforts. Strategies included in-person presentations and social media engagement.

Ongoing planning meetings were held between the Stronger Families Program Specialist, Lutheran Social Services (Community Resource staff), and the Independent Living Specialist to develop event ideas and strategies for the Youth Bureau of Speakers.

October 2024:

- Three young adults presented to providers at the Human Services Psychiatric Center in Yankton. Their message focused on preparing youth in treatment for independent living. The session was impactful enough that they were invited to speak directly with youth in the long-term placement, offering encouragement and practical advice.

November 2024:

- Two young adults attended a showing of The Sound of Hope at the Elks Theater in Rapid City, an event aimed at recruiting foster homes. Though they did not present, their presence was recognized privately and appreciated by DSS Cabinet Secretary Matt Althoff.

January 2025:

- Two young adults joined the Independent Living Program Specialist at a foster parent quarterly training. While the specialist presented program information, the young adults shared deeply personal experiences. Their stories left a lasting impact—one family in attendance expressed interest in fostering older youth.

February 2025:

- Three young adults spoke at the SD Association of Youth Care Providers conference in Pierre. Their presentation focused on:
 - The value of provider participation in Age Meetings
 - Ensuring youth retain educational credits during residential placements
 - Teaching practical life skills to help youth prepare for adulthood

May 2025:

- Two young adults presented to CPS Supervisors, Regional Managers, Program Specialists, and Leadership, focusing on the role of caseworkers in building trust, being consistent, and showing up for youth. They reflected on how those relationships shaped their healing and impacted their transition into adulthood.
- Two foster youth graduates will be featured on social media, celebrating their high school graduations, and highlighting their future planning and aspirations.

June 2025:

- Several youths who transitioned from care will serve as keynote speakers at the upcoming ILS conferences in Sioux Falls and Rapid City. In addition to sharing their stories, they will help lead conference activities to encourage peer engagement and comfort among current foster youth.
- These same young adults will also present at the Homeless Summit in Pierre, SD. Their session will offer provider insights into how to better meet the needs of young adults experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Two college students who transitioned out of care will share their experiences through a Stronger Families Together social media post about their post-secondary education experiences, and how the Educational Training Voucher (ETV) helped them alleviate financial burdens and supported their academic success.
- Ongoing development of Young Voices will continue in SFY26 with current members working to establish clear leadership, membership, presentation, and incentive guidelines. These efforts aim to strengthen the structure of the group, support recruitment of future members, to include tribal youth, and encourage more consistent participation from youth currently in care.

Independent Living Services Workshops

Rooted in positive youth development, ILS Workshops provide education and training in obtaining a high school diploma and post-secondary education, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, training, and opportunities to practice daily living skills (such as financial literacy training and driving instruction), and substance abuse prevention, and preventative health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention). All eligible youth can attend a workshop on each topic before reaching age 18. In addition to inviting youth to each workshop, invitations are extended to foster parents, adoptive parents, staff from group homes and residential treatment facilities, Department of Corrections (DOC) staff, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and Tribal Child Welfare staff so they have a better understanding of issues confronting youth as they prepare for independent living.

During SFY25, the Independent Living Services (ILS) Sub-Workgroup—an extension of the ILS Advisory Workgroup—convened to plan and implement regional workshops focused on post-secondary education and career readiness. This sub-workgroup included CPS staff, the CRP Team, a CPS Regional Manager, CPS Supervisors, and CASA volunteers. The group met virtually three times beginning in August 2024 to organize the events. It was determined that, instead of holding a fall workshop, three regional ILS workshops would be hosted in Spring 2025 across different locations in South Dakota.

The workshops were primarily geared toward youth ages 16–18 (juniors and seniors in high school), though some younger youth (as young as 14) also attended. Each event featured information about higher education, vocational opportunities, and support resources such as financial aid and employment training.

Tribal Outreach:

Tribal partners were invited to each of these workshops. Invitations were extended by the ILS Program Specialist through collaboration with the ICWA Program Specialist. Notices were shared via email as well as during a virtual ILS presentation with tribal partners, ensuring inclusion and opportunity for tribal youth to participate.

A total of fifty-nine (59) youth, ages 14 to 18, attended Independent Living Services (ILS) workshops held between July 1, 2024, and May 31, 2025. These workshops focused on preparing youth for adulthood by providing information on post-secondary education, vocational training opportunities, and essential support resources, including financial aid, scholarships, FAFSA, and employment programs such as Career Launch. Further information regarding each workshop can be found on the following page.

Workshop 1: Oglala Lakota College – Eagle Butte

Date: April 9, 2025

Youth Attendees: 8 total (6 CPS, 2 Standing Rock Sioux Tribe CPS)

Youth received a campus tour and information on ETV, FAFSA, and scholarship opportunities.

Virtual speakers included representatives from:

- South Dakota National Guard
- Paul Mitchell Beauty School
- Job Corps
- The Department of Labor's Career Launch program attended in person to discuss employment opportunities.

Workshop 2: Mitchell Technical College & Dakota Wesleyan – Mitchell

Date: April 15, 2025

Youth Attendees: 24 (All in CPS custody)

At Mitchell Technical College:

- Youth were provided an in-depth overview of college programs, financial aid, scholarships, housing, and tuition.
- A 1.5-hour campus tour was conducted followed by lunch.

At Dakota Wesleyan:

- Staff offered additional insight into housing, financial aid, and admissions.
- A campus tour followed by a presentation from the Department of Labor on the Career Launch program.

Workshop 3: Western Dakota Technical College – Rapid City

Date: April 30, 2025

Youth Attendees: 27 (All in CPS custody)

In-person presentations included:

- Department of Labor – Career Launch Program
- Paul Mitchell Beauty School
- Job Corps was unable to attend due to an emergency; CRP team members shared information and resources on their behalf.
- The college admissions team led a tour and provided details on scholarship opportunities, ETV, FAFSA, housing, and financial aid.

These workshops served as valuable opportunities for youth in care—including tribal youth—to explore post-secondary pathways and gain exposure to education, vocational training, and employment resources essential for successful transitions into adulthood.

Starter Kit Funds

The starter kit funds are earned by youth through engaging with the Independent Living Program and used for independent living items and needs as the youth transitions from custody at the age of majority. Youth who have left foster care due to kinship, guardianship, or adoption before 18 years old can use the starter kit funding, they earned when living on their own. None of the starter kit funds will be used for room or board. Between July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, \$15,779.48 of Chafee Funding was used for 37 youth who received Starter Kit Funds.

Driver's Education

Public transportation is not readily available across the state of South Dakota. Driver's Education is an essential program to ensuring youth are prepared to safely operate a motor vehicle. From July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, \$10,706.77 of Chafee Funding was provided to 31 youth for Driver's Education.

Youth Organizers

Youth ages 16 and older are provided with organizers. The organizers are utilized to help youth gather and organize the information they will need as they prepare to transition to adulthood and live on their own. An organizer includes sections for organizing and retaining medical, housing, employment, education, insurance, legal, personal, emergency, family, school, tax, paid and unpaid bills, and banking information. Organizers are provided to CPS, BIA, and tribal youth.

Former Foster Care Medical Assistance Program (FFCMA)

The Former Foster Care Medical Assistance Program (FFCMA) provided Medicaid coverage for 424 youth from July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025.

Independent Living Services Workgroup

The Independent Living Workgroup meets at least twice a year for planning, organizing, and facilitating the workshops and Teen conference. Workgroup members evaluate the success of the conference, plan for the workshops and provide guidance to the ILS Program Specialist for planning for independent living services. The group is composed of representatives from over 20 various entities and the Young Voices advocacy group members. Staff and youth involved with the BIA and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies are invited to participate in the ILS Workgroup. The Independent Living Workgroup members represent CPS' current and past foster care youth, the DOC, foster/adoptive parents, staff from group care centers for minors and residential treatment facilities, staff from Lutheran Social Services, the CRP's, their Supervisor and CASA.

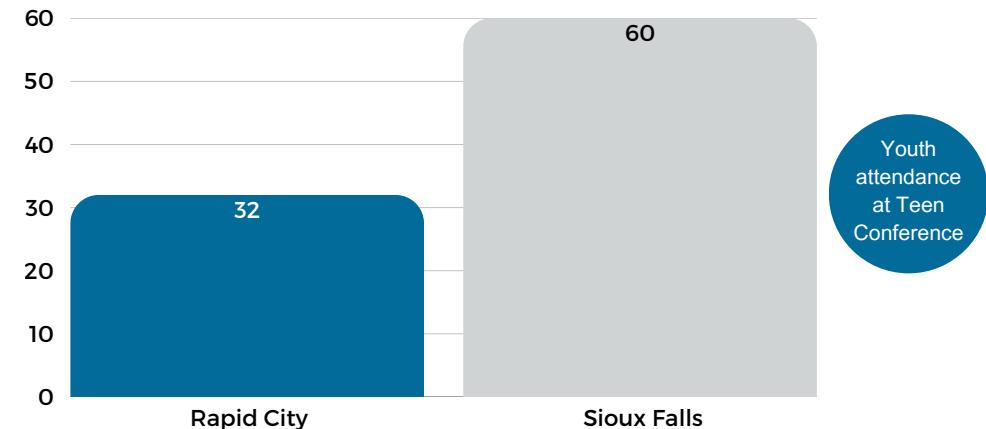
Teen Conference

The Independent Living Services (ILS) Teen Conference is designed to support youth ages 14-18 in developing critical independent living skills as they transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. Youth in the custody of Child Protection Services (CPS) as well as those served by Tribal Child Welfare Agencies are invited to attend.

During SFY25, the Independent Living Services (ILS) Sub-Workgroup—an extension of the ILS Advisory Work group—convened to plan and implement the ILS Teen Conference. This sub-work group included CPS staff, the CRP Team, a CPS Regional Manager, CPS Supervisors, and CASA volunteers. The group met virtually three times beginning in August 2024 to organize the event. The work-group opted to host the conference as a one-day event in two locations: Sioux Falls (eastern South Dakota) and Rapid City (western South Dakota).

Each event featured engaging and youth-centered activities, which included presentations from Young Voices members who shared their lived experiences and lead interactive sessions such as the "Shoppers Challenge," a hands-on budgeting activity with real-life scenarios. The keynote speaker, an employee with the Oglala Sioux Tribe Child Protection shared her personal journey through foster care and her advocacy work in the state of Nebraska. Her session included a cultural activity to further engage and connection with the youth. These activities were chosen based on feedback from the previous year's youth surveys, which indicated a desire for more, "real-life" and hands-on experiences.

The conferences were held on June 10, 2025, in Sioux Falls, and June 12, 2025, in Rapid City. At the conclusion of the June 12th event, the Secretary of the Department of Social Services joined the closing session, which included a small-group reflection activity. Youth were encouraged to share highlights from their day and provide input for future ILS events.



On June 10, 2025 32 youth attended the ILS Teen Conference in Rapid City. Two of the youth who attended were from Oglala Sioux Tribe and the remainder were in the care of the Department of Social Services.

On June 12, 2025 60 youth attended the ILS Teen Conference in Sioux Falls. All of these youth were in the care of the Department of Social Services.

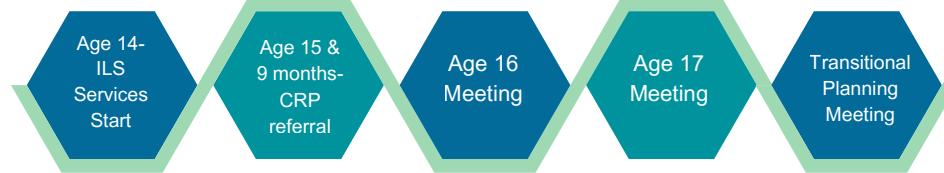
[Transition Planning Processes](#)

Independent Living Assessments and Case Planning

The Independent Living Program requires an independent living assessment for all youth in care at the age of 16. The Casey Life Skill Assessment (CLSA) is used to evaluate a youth's readiness to meet the challenges of adulthood and is designed to provide a picture of a youth's strengths and needs. The assessment tool is used to match the needs with independent living services. The results of the assessment are incorporated into the youth's Case Service Plan by Family Services Specialists. The Independent Living Services (ILS) Assessment must be completed by either the Family Services Specialist (FSS) or the Community Resource Person (CRP) prior to the youth's Age 16 Meeting, typically completed one month before the youth turns 16. The results of the assessment are shared with the youth's team to identify strengths, determine areas of need, and establish appropriate ILS goals for the case plan and ongoing services. From July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, 168 youth completed the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA).

Independent Living Planning Meetings

The Independent Living Planning meetings goal is to review the youth's long-term plans and break them down into smaller short-term goals. Planning meetings are held to increase positive outcomes for youth and to enhance their supports. Before the meeting, the youth will identify influential people in their lives to invite to the meeting. Youth are encouraged to invite whomever they feel can help them plan for their future. Prior to the meetings, information such as the youth's progress in school and credit report information is gathered, to ensure the youth and their team have well-informed information to enhance transition planning. Planning meetings are utilized to partner with youth to assess their strengths and needs. Independent Living Plans are specific to each child, but all contain the same integral components such as housing, education, employment, mentoring, and continued support services. Planning meetings provide opportunities to foster self-determination and build resiliency, ensuring emotional and psychological needs are not overlooked.



Age 16 Planning Meeting

Prior to the Age 16 meeting the youth will complete the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA). During the meeting youth and their supports will review the CLSA as a team to provide input to determine strengths and needs when developing the youth's case plan for ILS services. Education is an important topic to discuss at the Age 16 Planning meeting with emphasis on identifying a school contact, such as the school counselor, to participate in the meetings. The meeting assists youth to ensure the educational components are covered and identifies school credits obtained and those still needed to graduate. From July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, 124 Age 16 Meetings were completed.

Age 17 Planning Meeting

At the Age 17 meeting, although there are similarities to the Age 16 meeting, a higher focus is placed on the youth's plans for once they transition from foster care. The youth and their supports review the information such as credits, progress towards graduation, and their credit scores. During the Age 17 Meeting, the youth discusses their plans for transitioning to adulthood at age 18, as well as the steps and supports needed to prepare for that transition. From July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, 141 Age 17 Meetings were completed.

Transitional Independent Living Plan Meeting

These planning meetings are held with regard to the youth's transition from care as an opportunity, not only for additional program information, but also for the youth to share input about the system, identify unmet needs, and further assess readiness to transition into independent living. Important documents are given to the youth (such as verification letter, birth certificate, social security card, photo ID/Driver's license, school records, and Medicaid card), in addition to information on the importance of having a Power of Attorney for Health Care or a Health Care Directive, Selective Service and sex trafficking information. This information is added to the youth's ILS organizer to assist in retention and organization. From July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, 93 Transition Meetings were completed. This meeting provides an opportunity to have in-depth discussions with the youth regarding their transition from care.

Collaboration with Other Private and Public Agencies

The following provides information on collaborative and coordinated efforts that have taken place during the reporting period to involve the public and private sectors in helping adolescents in foster care achieve independence.

The ILS Program Specialist and CRP's collaborate with the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) regarding the South Dakota Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant funding which provides additional resources to youth age 16-24 for career exploration and job training.

Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota (LSS), in partnership with the South Dakota Department of Health, delivers comprehensive sexual health education statewide through two federally funded programs—Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) and the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP). While SRAE focuses on abstinence-based education and PREP includes both abstinence and contraception, LSS views these approaches as complementary rather than competing.

Through the LSS REACH (Resources and Education for Adolescents Choosing Healthy Behaviors) initiative, they work collaboratively with at-risk youth and their guardians to tailor education that is inclusive, nonjudgmental, and focused on achieving the best health outcomes. Backed by a highly trained and dedicated team, they ensure unified messaging across both programs to empower adolescents in making informed, healthy choices that support their well-being now and into adulthood.

The Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) is a collaborative effort with Department of Health, DSS/CPS, Lutheran Social Services and DOC. The overall goal of this project is to reduce teen pregnancy, and to increase abstinence, contraception to prevent pregnancy and STDs/HIV through intervention. This intervention is designed to increase the knowledge and skills youth have to reduce risky behaviors and help them identify qualities and attributes of healthy relationships between individuals and within families. CPS is using the evidence-based curricula Reducing the Risk, Be Proud Be Responsibility, and Botvin Life Skills Training. PREP also teaches 6 adulthood preparation subjects: healthy relationships, healthy lifestyles, adolescent development, financial literacy, parent and child communication and education/employment preparation skills. The trainings are currently being offered in five psychiatric residential treatment facilities, two intensive psychiatric residential treatment facilities, two group care centers for minors and one independent living program. The PREP program is working with 10 facilities in the state of South Dakota to target DSS youth. However, in some placements, some youth could be in DOC's custody or a school placement.

LSS REACH empowers youth to choose healthy behavior in all aspects of their lives by combining an evidence-based educational program with an invested and trained adult. REACH encourages youth to advocate for themselves and reduce risk behavior, peer pressure, and unhealthy relationships. REACH trains and facilitates in the following SD Department of Health approved evidence-based curriculum's: Teen outreach program (TOP), Motivating adolescents to reduce sexual risk (MARS), and Families talking together (FTT).

The 8th Annual Positive Youth Development Conference was held in Chamberlain SD, on April 23-24, 2025. The conference theme was Community Collaboration. This conference is intended for REACH Facilitators, Public Health Nurses, Teachers, Social Workers, Supervisors, and Community Partners, and informs attendees of a variety of methods they can utilize to enhance our programs, and support youth in social connectedness. Twenty-seven (27) participants attended from across South Dakota.

From June 2024 through May 2025, 237 total participants completed at least one evidence-based curricula, including Families Talking Together, Teen Outreach Program, Motivating Adolescents to Reduce Sexual Risk, and Reducing the Risk. REACH currently has 21 trained facilitators throughout South Dakota.

South Dakota Youth Care Providers Association

CPS and the Division of Juvenile Services under the DOC meet with the South Dakota Youth Care Providers Association, which is comprised of the directors of the intensive residential, residential and group care providers in South Dakota on a quarterly basis. The purpose of this collaboration is to provide information about DSS and DOC initiatives, seek assistance from the Association when needed and assure there is a platform for sharing of information and resolution of issues. Meeting agendas focus on sharing information regarding placement numbers, data regarding the monitoring of restraint and seclusion, data on the utilization of psychotropic medication and efforts to reduce utilization, enhancing the intake process for the reporting of allegations of abuse or neglect in facilities, credit recovery youth in placement, discharge planning, Positive Youth Development, the importance of ILS, and other topics to improve services to youth in placement.

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

The mission of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) is to support the juvenile justice system that ensures the safety of youth and the community, utilizes the assessment of risks, eliminates the unnecessary detention of youth, provides a safe environment for the youth held in detention, and promotes healthy youth development by providing due process and collaborative, evidence-based interventions for youth and families.

The JDAI Statewide Steering Committee is scheduled to convene quarterly and the CPS Assistant Director is a member of this committee, however meetings did not occur on a quarterly basis in SFY2025. A meeting to reconvene was held on 06/12/2025 and quarterly meetings will be re-implemented in SFY2026. The Annie E. Casey Foundation provides technical assistance to South Dakota with the Unified Judicial System and the committee. The JDAI Statewide Steering Committee will impact youth by assisting to prevent youth from entering the UJS system and providing guidance to CPS as a member of this committee.

Post-Secondary Schools

The ILS Program collaborates with post-secondary schools when planning ILS events. In SFY25, the ILS program held three regional workshops across South Dakota which all emphasized the importance of post secondary education and teamed up with four SD colleges and vocational schools who hosted youth from across the state.

A total of 59 youth attended the workshops, including tribal youth invited through coordinated outreach between the ILS and ICWA Program Specialists. Each event featured campus tours and presentations by college admissions staff, highlighting academic programs, financial aid, housing, and scholarships such as FAFSA and ETV.

- **Workshop 1** – Oglala Lakota College (Eagle Butte, April 9, 2025): 8 youth attended (6 CPS, 2 Standing Rock Sioux Tribe CPS). Youth toured campus and heard virtual presentations from the South Dakota National Guard, Paul Mitchell Beauty School, and Job Corps. The Department of Labor presented in person on employment opportunities.
- **Workshop 2** – Mitchell Technical College & Dakota Wesleyan University (Mitchell, April 15, 2025): 24 youth in CPS custody participated. Mitchell Tech offered a detailed overview of programs, financial aid, scholarships, housing, and tuition, followed by a 1.5-hour tour and lunch. Dakota Wesleyan provided additional insight on admissions and housing. The Career Launch program also presented.
- **Workshop 3** – Western Dakota Technical College (Rapid City, April 30, 2025): 27 CPS youth attended. Youth received in-depth information on admissions, financial aid, housing, and scholarships. In-person presentations were held by the Department of Labor, Paul Mitchell Beauty School, and CRP team members (on behalf of Job Corps, which was unable to attend due to an emergency).

Department of Education – SDMyLife

SDMyLife, launched in 2008, is a statewide platform provided by the DOE that supports career exploration and academic planning for South Dakota students. It is powered by Xello, an online program that helps students identify their interests, skills, and career goals while building a plan for life after high school. With support from educators, counselors, and families, SDMyLife helps students connect their learning to real-world opportunities. In SFY26, CPS will explore opportunities to leverage SDMyLife for youth in foster care to support their long-term planning and ensure they receive equitable access to career readiness resources.

In SFY25, CPS provided a training to Title 1 School District staff in South Dakota regarding educational stability for children in foster care in May 2025. This included best practice and recommendations to help school districts support children in foster care.

In SFY25, the Director of Program, Independent Living and Permanency Program Specialist, and a CQI Program Specialist created a tool to complete an educational credit fidelity review. Specific questions were designed around transferring of educational credits in order to gain data and trends pertaining to these barriers. The fidelity review will be completed by the CQI Team in SFY2026 and results will be shared as deemed necessary in order to identify and overcome barriers to credit recovery.

In an effort to address barriers faced by youth in foster care, particularly those related to credit loss and educational disruption when youth move between school districts, CPS plans to renew and strengthen collaboration with the DOE in SFY26. A key initiative will include a presentation from Young Voices, the CPS youth advisory board, to DOE representatives. During this presentation, youth with lived experience will share firsthand accounts of how school transfers and credit loss have impacted their ability to complete high school. This engagement aims to build awareness within the education system and inform policy or practice changes that can improve educational continuity for youth in care.

Medicaid – Former Foster Care Medical Assistance Program

CPS and Medical Services developed a referral process to assure youth register with the Former Foster Care Medical Assistance program. A report generated each month through the CPS data system, FACIS, provides the names of young adults eligible for this program who reside in the state. After the age of 18, the Former Foster Care Medical Assistance Program sends youth an annual renewal mailing to continue their eligibility for the program until the age of 21 years old. There are no income or resource limits and can serve youth up to the age of 26. The CRPs continue to educate young adults over age of 21 about the program and assist them with enrollment.

South Dakota CPS ensures that youth who have exited care are aware of the Former Foster Care Medicaid Program. The youth continue to be assigned a CRP even if they move out of state. The CRP ensures that the youth is aware of Medicaid eligibility in any state they reside in. Prior to transitioning from care, the youth's CRP will review the Former Foster Care Medicaid program with the youth so they are aware of this benefit no matter where they reside.

The ILS Program Specialist partners closely with Economic Assistance staff to address challenges that arise when youth transition from foster care and experience issues with their Former Foster Care Medical Program (FFCMP) eligibility. Common issues include youth not completing required paperwork, moving without updated contact information, or relocating in or out of South Dakota. Together, the teams work to resolve these cases and assist young adults in reactivating their Medicaid coverage, ensuring continuity of healthcare services during this critical transition period.

Collaboration with Lutheran Social Services, High School Mentoring

The Sioux Empire United Way provided funding to LSS for the High School Mentoring Program. The program is designed to enhance relationships for youth in foster care by linking youth with an adult volunteer mentor in the community. LSS hosts one event per month for youth to attend in addition to the one-on-one time spent with their mentor each week.

Department of Labor and Regulation

The DLR recognizes the importance of reaching out to youth in foster care, especially as they begin to transition to the adult world. The South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation has 10 local offices throughout the state offering employment services to job seekers. At these local offices, individuals can visit with an Employment Specialist regarding part-time or full-time work. Job Search and Retention classes are offered virtually to assist individuals in securing and keeping employment. This program is available to all residents, including the foster youth, while they are in care and after exiting care. Career Launch SD is a no-cost resource to help youth from 18-24 explore education and career opportunities. Training opportunities include registered apprenticeships, internships and work experiences, job shadowing, informational interviews, classroom presentations, and career and post-high fairs.

Youth Employment Specialists will help youth create work experiences. They'll also work with youth on soft skills, monitor students, and promote youth job openings. The following site has additional information: <http://careerlaunchsd.com/referral>.

DLR has nine sub-grantee providers of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) with services available throughout the state. AEL is for individuals over 18 years old and offers instructional courses to: The Adult Education and Literacy Program emphasize skills such as reading, writing, numeracy, financial literacy, English language competency, problem solving, health 100 literacy and family literacy. These skills bolster workplace readiness, transitions to postsecondary education and a higher quality of life for South Dakotans.

Youth Transitional Impact Program

The Department of Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health, and CPS collaborated on a program to assist youth with mental health needs. New Alternatives, located in Rapid City, provides specialized mental health services, transitional housing, and support services targeted to assist young adults with employment, independent living skills and development of community supports to enhance their chances for a successful transition to adulthood. Referrals to the transition program are for those youth 18 through age 20 who have functional impairments because of their mental illness. The program can host a maximum of 12 young adults. From July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, New Alternatives served 30 clients, 15 of these clients were involved in foster care.

Court Improvement Program

The Court Improvement Program is developing, establishing, and implementing Best Practice Standards for permanency hearings. Youth are an integral part of this process and will continue to be involved.

By fostering collaboration among courts, child welfare agencies, tribes and community partners, the CIP ensures compliance with state and federal child welfare laws while prioritizing the safety, permanency and well-being of children and families. Participants benefit from improved training, data-driven decision-making, and access to resources that strengthen child welfare systems. Engaging with the CIP is crucial for anyone involved in child welfare or the judicial process, as it creates a shared commitment to achieving better outcomes for vulnerable children in South Dakota through streamlined processes and informed practices.

The CIP is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, to support the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act to the state's highest state court of appeals. Grant funds support the state courts' continuous assessment and improvement to the handling of court proceedings related to child welfare and enhance the collaboration with title IV-E/IV-B agencies and tribes.

The Court Improvement Program Committee, through the direction of the South Dakota State Supreme Court, State Court Administrator's Office, assess the system's handling of child abuse and neglect cases and recommend improvements for achieving timely safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families.

Court Improvement Program Committee hosts the annual Children's Justice Conference. The conference is presented in Rapid City and Sioux Falls. This is a multidisciplinary training opportunity for those involved with youth such as attorneys, judges, CPS staff, DOC staff, CASA, mental health professionals, teachers, medical professionals, etc.

More than 500 professionals in the child advocacy field attended the 24th Annual Community Response to Child Abuse Conference, held October 3-4, 2024, at the Sioux Falls Convention Center.

The conference provided professional training and educational opportunities for child protection workers, teachers, medical professionals, dentists, law enforcement, social workers, mental health providers, youth service providers, the legal community and community members and child advocates.

Presenters discussed topics relevant to the well-being of children and families including:

- The Negative Impact of Social Media on Child and Adolescent
- When the Perpetrator is a Child
- Family First Prevention: Next Steps
- Indigenous Approach to Addiction Healing and Mental Health Management

Public and Private Sector

The ILS Program collaborates through the CRPs when planning the ILS Workshops and the Teen Conference. In each area, where the ILS Workshop and Teen Conference is held, there are local speakers that assist with presentations to reinforce the ILS skills, which will assist youth to become an independent adult.

Housing Support

Housing assistance and support for youth 18-21 can include providing up to \$200 a month for youth who are no longer under the custody of DSS but continue living in a foster home for a limited time. For youth living in their own rental unit, housing support can include their initial rent deposit and the first month's rent, 66% of the rent the second month and 33% of the rent the third month.

The Chafee Program provides funding for Independent Living Preparation Programs (ILPP), which are designed to support youth and young adults ages 16 to 21 as they transition to independent living. These programs offer supportive housing and case management services to help residents develop the skills necessary for successful adulthood.

If a youth is attending a post-secondary school and dorms are not available, the ILS program can assist with housing off campus if the youth is a full-time student and maintains a 2.0 or higher-grade point average. The amount of the assistance can be up to \$300 per month including the security deposit. From July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, 98 payments in housing support, totaling \$43,786.63, was provided to 35 youth. Additionally, \$883,289.70 was provided to support comprehensive case management of youth in transitional living programs and enhanced placement stability.

The ILS Program Specialist is a member of the South Dakota for the Homeless Consortium and the Youth Committee. The Independent Living Preparation Program and CRPs will continue to educate and assist youth in registering with Public Housing in the area the youth would like to live. To receive "room and board" youth need to complete an individual Independent Living Plan and submit a housing application for prior approval before funds can be expended. The five CRPs collaborate with the local housing programs in the different areas of the state, so youth transitioning from foster care receive low-cost housing.

Independent Living Preparation Programs

CPS provides financial support to youth in three Independent Living Preparation Programs (ILPPs) located in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and Mitchell, South Dakota. The ILPPs CPS contracts with do not receive funding under Part B of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974.

McCrossan Boys Ranch is designed to prepare young men (ages 17 - 20) for independent living. This program and on-campus apartments provide an opportunity for the young men to gain employment, learn how to cook, clean, and manage finances, along with many other skills needed to live on their own. The program helps residents earn a high school diploma or GED and gain skills for employment or go on to higher education. The program can serve up to 24 participants.

Volunteers of America, Dakotas Axis 180 program provides young adults ages 16-21, male and female, the opportunity to transition out of unsafe environments into safe, supportive housing while they learn the skills necessary to succeed on their own. Specifically, the program assists participants with education completion, employment training and placement, financial management skills, daily living skills, and interpersonal skills. The program can serve up to 21 participants.

Abbott House, Bridges Independent Living Program is made up of 16 independent living apartments, located in Rapid City and Mitchell. The program is tailored to help young adults, both male and female, fine-tune their living skills while providing affordable housing and a structured independent lifestyle. Youth in this program sign a lease, find and maintain a job, and cook for themselves. Staff members are available to help and provide guidance as they transition into their own apartment and learn to live independently and to establish appropriate schedules and responsibilities. This program serves 16 participants and serves young adults ages 16-21.

Foster Youth Independence (FYI) Vouchers

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) initiative makes Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) assistance available to Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) in partnership with Public Child Welfare Agencies (PCWAs). Under FYI, PHAs provide housing assistance on behalf of:

Youth at least 18 years and not more than 24 years of age (have not reached their 25th birthday) who left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, in accordance with a transition plan described in Section 475(5)(H) of the Social Security Act, and are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless at age 16 or older.

As required by statute, an FYI voucher issued to such a youth may only be used to provide housing assistance for the youth for a maximum of 36 months unless the youth meets the requirements to receive an extension of assistance under the Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities (FSHO) amendments. FSHO provides an FYI youth an extension of the 36-month time limit for up to an additional 24 months if they meet certain requirements.

In addition to providing up to 36 months of rental assistance, the PCWA must provide or secure the youth supportive services to assist the young person on their path to self-sufficiency. The Community Resource Person provides case management services and work closely with landlords to ensure that young adults have access to safe and stable housing as they transition into adulthood.

Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) have been established in South Dakota with Pennington and Minnehaha Counties, and these partnerships continue to thrive. In State Fiscal Year 2025, the FYI Voucher program expanded further through a new MOU with Yankton County, which includes the areas of Bon Homme, Tripp, Gregory, and Lake Andes.

From June 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025, the Sioux Falls Housing and Redevelopment Commission provided the following housing support to eligible youth: (Data Source: Sioux Falls Housing & Redevelopment Commission)

- Total rental assistance paid to eligible youth = \$15,265
- Total utility reimbursement payments to eligible youth from= \$1,613

From July 1, 2024, to May 1, 2025, Pennington County Housing paid \$65,013 in HAP assistance to landlords and \$1,213 in Utility Reimbursement to eligible youth. (Data Source: Pennington County Housing Section 8)

Determining Eligibility for Benefits and Services

Since the submission of the CFSP, there have been no significant changes to the state's objective criteria for determining eligibility for benefits and services under the Chafee and related programs.

DSS/CPS continues to use clearly defined, consistent, and equitable eligibility criteria to ensure fair treatment of benefit recipients. Chafee services remain available to youth who experience foster care at age 14 or older. The program continues to serve:

- Youth who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18;
- Youth who exited foster care after age 16 to guardianship or adoption; and
- Young adults ages 18 to 21 who have aged out of the foster care system.

DSS/CPS also continues to ensure that youth remaining in care until age 18 are supported in participating in age- or developmentally-appropriate activities. The state remains committed to equitable access to services and benefits by maintaining transparent eligibility standards and promoting inclusive practices across all service areas. Equitable services are also provided to tribal youth, who are not excluded from participation in any benefits or services under these programs. The state works collaboratively with tribal partners to ensure tribal youth receive the same opportunities and supports as all other eligible youth.

Cooperation in National Evaluations

DSS/CPS will cooperate in any national evaluations of the effects of the programs in achieving the purposes of Chafee.

Education and Training Vouchers (ETV)

DSS/CPS is the state agency responsible for administering, supervising and overseeing the ETV Program. The ETV Program is set forth under Section 477 (a) (3) "to help children likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions".

CPS implements policies and procedures to ensure South Dakota provides fair and equitable treatment of recipients in the ETV Program. The State will continue to assure and oversee the expansion of equal and fair treatment for current foster youth to include tribal youth and youth who have transitioned from the foster care system. Information about ETV and other Independent Living Services (ILS) continues to be shared with tribal partners through ongoing collaboration with the ICWA Program Specialist, as well as through regular presentations and outreach efforts by the ILS Program Specialist. CPS is committed to improving the participation and success of youth who have transitioned from foster care and are participating in educational and post-secondary training programs. The ETV Program provides financial capability to encourage and support youth in completing their educational goals and/or post-secondary training programs.

The funding received from the Federal Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program is used to support eligible youth with postsecondary education and training costs, including tuition, fees, books, and cost of living expenses. In accordance with the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (CFCPSTA), youth may apply for assistance through the State's ETV Program. Because educational attainment significantly influences a young person's housing stability and employment opportunities, it is critical that youth graduate from high school or earn a GED and pursue postsecondary education or vocational training. CPS utilizes ETV funds to support youth in their transition from foster care to self-sufficiency.

As authorized under the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) and incorporated into ongoing state policy, South Dakota continues to provide ETV assistance to eligible young adults who were in foster care at age 18, or who were adopted or placed in a guardianship after attaining age 16. These young adults remain eligible for ETV funding until age 26, provided they are enrolled in a postsecondary education or training program, maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA, and make satisfactory progress toward program completion. However, participation in the ETV program is limited to a total of five years, which do not need to be consecutive.

The FACIS database will ensure the total amount of educational assistance to a youth under the federal assistance program does not exceed the total cost of attendance as defined in section 472 of the Higher Education Act of 1965. The ILS Program Specialist monitors the ETV funds along with the youth that are eligible youth with the ETV funds.

The Independent Living Program Specialist and Assistant Director of DSS work together with the contracted agency to ensure external partners, such as the Department of Labor and Regulation are consulted and collaborated with, as it relates to ETV funds. Through these discussions the Department of Labor and Regulation and DSS are working on ensuring youth are aware of the Workforce Innovation and opportunity Act Youth Program, known as Career Launch.

Recruitment plan

- ETV Program information and the application process is on the DSS website
- ETV Program information is provided to BIA and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies, the DOC, Lutheran Social Services, all eligible youth, CRPs, the Department of Labor and Regulation and CPS staff.



Application process

The CPS website has information about the application and process. The following documents are required to be included with the application.

- A signed statement from post-secondary institution regarding the justification for funds including the cost of attendance
- School transcripts
- Acceptance letter from the school or vocational institution
- Last semester grades and updated GPA for subsequent applications

Criteria for eligible youth

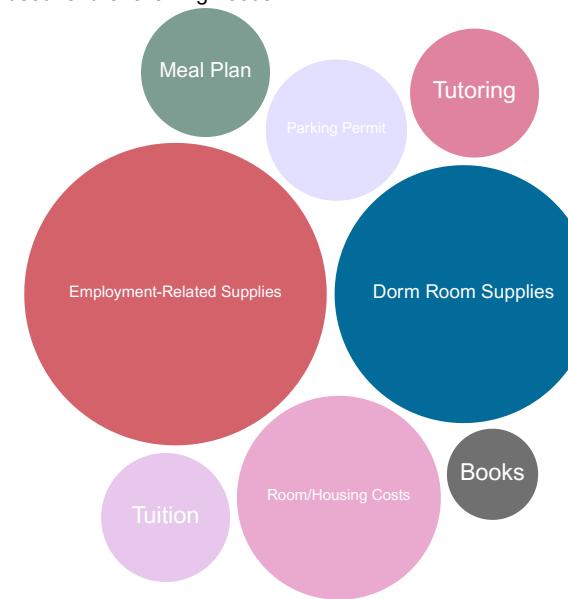
Youth in the custody of CPS, the DOC, BIA, and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies can apply for ETV funding to increase their educational attainment levels under this program if they meet the following criteria:

- Youth in foster care at age 18 who have transitioned from foster care in the custody of CPS, DOC, BIA and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies.
- Youth who are in foster care and are adopted or in guardianship after age 16.
- Youth participating in the ETV Program, before their 26th birthday, are eligible for the ETV, if they are enrolled in a post-secondary or training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of the program.
- Youth who accept the responsibility for completing their part of the educational planning and educational program.
- Youth who maintain positive documentation of progress by demonstrating at least a 2.0-grade point average and submit their grades and current GPA each semester to the ILS Program Specialist. Youth may be granted a probation period on an individual basis.
- Youth who demonstrate their willingness and commitment to live up to their ETV Program responsibilities.

Funding for eligible youth

South Dakota approves cost for higher education that shall not exceed \$5,000 or the total "cost of attendance", whichever is the less as defined in sections 472 of the High Education Act. Funding may be used for the following needs:

Funding may be used for the following needs:



These funds will be used after the Pell grant, and other financial aid assistance has been utilized. Education and Training Voucher funds will supplement existing financial assistance with the total amount not to exceed the "cost for attendance" for each postsecondary institution.

ETV data is shared and will continually be shared at the ILS Workgroup meeting. Youth will be involved with the information that is shared and will ask the youth for their input with the ETV funds in South Dakota. Young Voices will be involved with the ETV data by encouraging other youth to participate with the ETV funding. The ILS website will also be a way to continue to share the information concerning the ETV scholarships.

Chafee Training

Chafee training is incorporated into the training information discussed in the Training Plan.

Training funds provided under the title IV-E foster care and adoption assistance programs are utilized to provide training, including training on youth development, to help foster parents, adoptive parents, workers in group homes, and case managers understand and address the issues confronting youth preparing for a successful transition to adulthood and making a permanent connection with a caring adult.

Consultation with Tribes

CPS will continue efforts to work collaboratively with the South Dakota Tribes to improve child welfare outcomes and services for Native American youth and families. The ICWA Program Specialist is a liaison to the tribes and is responsible for collaborating and coordinating with the tribes to assure effective provision of services to tribal youth and families that comply with the federal and state mandates and tribal codes.

CPS will continue written and verbal contact with the BIA or tribal child welfare agencies from each of the nine tribes to discuss program issues and gain input related to the coordination of ETV, Chafee Foster Care program funding and services to eligible youth and staff on the reservations.

Native American youth between the ages of 14 up to age 21 are invited to be involved in the Chafee Foster Care program in the following ways:

- Invited to attend the ILS Workshops;
- Invited to attend the ILS Teen Conference;
- Invited to be members of the Independent Living Workgroup;
- Invited to attend Young Voices events;
- Invited to participate in the ETV funding to continue post-secondary education;
- Access to services provided by the Career Learning Centers (job mentors, job skills, writing resumes and pre-employment education);
- Invited to provide input regarding the ILS Five-Year Plan;
- Utilize Starter Kit funding; and
- Utilize PYD with youth.

The Community Resource Program will continue to collaborate with each tribe and offer assistance and support to youth with IL services. The CRPs are responsible to identify resources and to network with youth on tribal lands in their area. The CRP will continue to meet with BIA and tribal agencies individually to ensure their awareness and encourage participation in the program. Information regarding Chafee services, ETV funds, Community Resource Program services, ILS Workshops, Teen Conference events and other IL information and options will continue to be provided to the BIA and tribal child welfare agencies.

The Independent Living Program Specialist will work jointly with the CPS ICWA Program Specialist in the state office to enhance communication and ways to share information relating to the ILS program with BIA and the tribal child welfare programs. The ICWA Program Specialist is a member of the ILS workgroup and will provide information to the appropriate contacts within the tribal areas so youth in foster care are aware of the services. The ICWA Program Specialist is also part of the CPS Permanency Well-Being Workgroup and ILS Workgroup and is working on the Child and Family Service Plan.

Refer to Consultation and Coordination Between States and Tribes for further information.

VI. Consultation and Coordination Between States & Tribes

History of Collaboration

Refer to South Dakota's 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context regarding the history of collaboration between States and Tribes.

Current Collaboration:

The Department of Social Services, Division of CPS directly provides child protection services for five of the nine South Dakota tribes including Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, and the Yankton Sioux Tribe. CPS works under the jurisdiction of tribal services, tribal law enforcement and tribal courts to carry out its responsibilities. CPS works with tribal courts for emergency custody, child custody, continued custody proceedings and the courts grant care and placement responsibility to CPS.

Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Regional case reviews are completed on cases involving children and families under tribal court jurisdiction with services provided by state CPS, in the tribal areas mentioned above. In the past year, cases involving children and families under tribal court jurisdiction with services provided by CPS were reviewed for the Child and Family Services Review. In SFY2026, these cases will continue to be involved in Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Regional case reviews. Please see the Quality Assurance Outcome for more details of the case review process. CPS invites tribal partners to participate as a reviewer in the Regional case review process.

The ICWA Program Specialist distributes a monthly ICWA Director's report generated from CPS's CCWIS/FACIS system to the tribes. This report contains the following information for each tribe:

 Office	 Family Services Specialist Assigned
 Enrollment Status	 Months in Care
 Demographic Information	 Level of Care
 Initial Placement Date	 Permanency Plan
 Date of last legal hearing	 Type of last legal hearing

Tribes have the opportunity to provide feedback to ensure accuracy of the information in the ICWA Directors Report, including names on the list who have been determined to be ineligible for tribal membership. The ICWA Directors Report was designed to include children who are enrolled, enrollment has not been established, and eligibility pending. Children are listed with the indicated tribe based on affiliation not enrollment status.

Definitions of selections for Tribal Enrollment are as follows, which aligns with AFCARS:

- Yes = The person is enrolled in the tribe.
- Ineligible = The person is ineligible for enrollment in the tribe.
- Eligible = The person is eligible for enrollment but either the process has not been started or enrollment paperwork is pending.
- Unable to Determine = Unknown if the person is enrolled in the tribe.

DSS-CPS formed an internal ICWA Capacity Building Workgroup as part of the ongoing efforts to enhance practice. The goal of this workgroup is to expand knowledge and expertise in each CPS region related to ICWA implementation. The workgroup is made up of representatives from the seven regions in CPS, the ICWA Program Specialist, CQI Program Specialist, and FACIS Program Specialist. It was decided for this to be an internal workgroup due to the need to maintain confidentiality related to case reviews to monitor internal compliance with CPS ICWA requirements.

This workgroup is responsible for capacity building process with training and awareness of ICWA trends locally and nationally. As this workgroup becomes more established, the group will bring in consultants from tribes and other ICWA experts to assist in building knowledge and expertise among the group. Please see the Quality Assurance Systemic Outcome for more details regarding South Dakota's CQI Process.

South Dakota takes an integrated and ongoing approach to gathering information from tribal partners for the purpose of federal reporting by using every interaction with tribes as an opportunity to collect input and relevant information. This continuous engagement model allows for more meaningful, real-time feedback and ensures that tribal voices are consistently reflected in state efforts and federal reporting requirements. By embedding information gathering into regular communications and collaborations, South Dakota maintains a responsive and inclusive process.

The state's process to gather input from the tribes is a process set up in previous years through the State Tribal Child Welfare Consultation workgroup and through individual tribal consultations. It is organized in three parts with:

- Tribes that have a State Tribal Agreement, which is centered around technical assistance with CPS or ICWA programs.
- Tribes who don't have a State Tribal Agreement, which is centered around consultation with ICWA programs or with tribal CPS programs operating without a State Tribal Agreement
- Government to government outreach, which is centered around DSS Cabinet Secretary and sometimes the Department of Tribal Relations Cabinet Secretary meeting with Tribal Presidents/Chairs and councilmen or women.

In addition to workgroup meetings and individual tribal consultations that occur ongoing throughout the fiscal year, DSS sends email correspondence to tribal partners upon receiving the Program Instructions for federal reports and specifically asks for input regarding the consultation process. Tribal representatives are also notified of where finalized reports can be found on the DSS Website. In the previous state fiscal year, DSS invited Oglala Sioux Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, and Yankton Sioux Tribe to participate in stakeholder interviews for South Dakota's Round 4 Child and Family Services Review as an additional way to share input. DSS has previously requested Tribe's APSRs by email, but has never received a copy of these reports.

Through contract management, the ICWA Program Specialist continues to provide training on Title IV-E and other contract responsibilities the tribe has, according to the agreement. The ICWA Program Specialist will also reach out to ICWA programs that do not have an agreement with the state, who have new directors, in case they are interested in an overview on state court processes or CPS process.

As part of the yearly tribal outreach, those tribes are also contacted to see if they would like to have virtual consultations with DSS-CPS leads. These outreach efforts are aimed to maintain consistent dialogue and relationships with the tribe. This is all part of the multi-pronged effort to develop communication with the tribes to gain their feedback.

A virtual presentation was developed by the Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA) to provide an update to interested tribes on the Proposed Kinship Licensing program, which was delivered on March 14th, 2025. Tribes that participated were Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Oglala Sioux Tribe, and Rosebud Sioux Tribe and officials from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Social Services. [Refer to Appendix A, Attachment A9 for information pertaining to ongoing tribal engagement efforts.](#)

In compliance with ICWA, active efforts start even before custody is gained in the form of Present Danger Planning (PDP). Present Danger Planning is a service provided for tribal children in areas of the state where CPS performs the child welfare services. This service is an effort to prevent out of home placement and court involvement when it has been determined a child is unsafe. These preplacement preventative services include, notice to tribes of a PDP when parents give permission so tribes can engage the family and CPS to assist with planning to prevent the removal. The PDP includes two questions for the parent/caretaker in order for the Family Services Specialist to determine ICWA eligibility. In State Fiscal Year 2025, the following data was gathered through these questions included on the PDP:

- Did a primary caregiver identify as a member of a tribe in SD?
 - 205 (9.2%) said yes
 - 326 (14.7%) said no
- Did caregiver authorize CPS to notify the tribe of their PDP?
 - 42 (1.9%) said yes
 - 163 (7.3%) said no

In addition to PDP preventative services, parenting classes, including Positive Indian Parenting, are offered state-wide to tribal families. Refer to Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program, Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) for further information.

DSS provides reunification and permanency services for tribal children and families through direct services statewide; other than the four tribes who contract to provide their own child welfare services including reunification and other permanency services.

As part of Child Protection Services' policy and practice, the Department engages with all tribes for the children and families being served with an informal notice asking for enrollment status, assistance in finding relatives and assigned worker information. If the tribe intervenes then invitations to permanency planning-PPRT meetings and/or court reviews and case planning meetings are distributed. After intervening, tribes are also alerted to placement resources that may comply with ICWA but if not, then support is sought for good cause hearings and adoption conference calls. If the good cause for adoption is the option, even if the tribe has not intervened, they are contacted with the history of the case and relative search to allow the tribes to have the information for an informed decision either way. In some cases, this may lead to more collaboration through virtual meetings to discuss relatives, or lack of, and any barriers.

DSS collaborates with tribes for ILS services for youth transitioning out of care from State or Tribal custody. Refer to John H. Chafee, Consultation with Tribes for further information.

The State IV-E plan details policy for tribes to access GAP guardianship assistance as well as the process of utilizing adoption assistance for tribal adoptions. In SFY25, one contract tribe made use of GAP guardianship assistance, where 23 guardianships were finalized. Two contract tribes make use of Adoption Assistance for their tribal adoptions.

CPS works collaboratively to engage the tribe at all times, including actively engaging the tribe in placement searches, diligent relative searching and discussions on good cause when placing children outside of ICWA placement preferences.

This collaboration is ongoing through Good Cause Case meetings. A structured format for the meetings was developed to ensure that Family Service Specialists are prepared for the Good Cause case meetings. Local CPS staff, Adoption Program Specialist, Patricia Reiss, and the ICWA Program Specialist, Joseph Ashley attend the meetings to review DSS efforts to comply with efforts to meet ICWA preference before recommending Good Cause at Adoption Committee Meetings.

CPS builds and maintains its effective working relationship with tribes to ensure ongoing collaboration and ICWA compliance.

DSS-CPS must navigate through nine different tribal governments who oversee the ICWA or CPS programs the department works with. This has led to the Department of Social Services having government to government meetings with top officials from both entities to talk about improving communication, exploring the possibility of a direct Title IV-E program, entering into a State Tribal Agreement, or discussing other issues. DSS Cabinet Secretary Matthew K. Althoff has taken an active lead in communicating with tribes that have their Tribal Presidents or Chairmen involved in interactions with DSS-CPS. It has been DSS's long standing position to assist the tribes if they make the choice to enter into an agreement. When tribes are interested in making an agreement with the state, this process takes time and collaboration. The negotiations begin with a DSS listening session to the tribal representatives and tribal stakeholders after an overview presentation is given by DSS, which includes child welfare data for that region. Follow-up meetings occur as necessary.

2026 APSR Update:

As part of DSS-CPS's yearly formal invitation to meet individually with tribes as part of quarterly check-ins. Letters were sent to all nine tribes on January 31, 2025, with email reminders as needed to tribes that didn't respond initially. The tribes that met with DSS-CPS in SFY25 are as follows:

- August 1, 2024: Yankton Sioux Tribe ICWA Meeting held virtually
- October 31, 2024: Rosebud Sioux Tribe Meeting held in Mission, SD
- December 20, 2024: Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Children & Family Services Meeting held virtually
- February 7, 2025: Standing Rock Sioux Tribe ICWA Meeting held virtually
- February 18, 2025: Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Children & Family Services Meeting held virtually
- February 11, 2025: Oglala Sioux Tribe CPS Meeting held virtually
- February 24, 2025: Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate CPS Meeting held virtually
- May 20, 2025: Rosebud Sioux Tribe Meeting held virtually
- May 22, 2025: Oglala Sioux Tribe Meeting held virtually
- May 27, 2025: Yankton Sioux Tribe Meeting held virtually
- June 2, 2025: Standing Rock Sioux Tribe ICWA Meeting held virtually
- June 9, 2025: Lower Brule Sioux Tribe ICWA Meeting held virtually
- June 9, 2025: Yankton Sioux Tribe CPS & ICWA Meeting held virtually
- June 10, 2025: Rosebud Sioux Tribe Sicangu Child & Family Services Meeting held virtually
- June 30, 2025: Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate CPS Meeting held virtually

The offer for ongoing, quarterly meetings remains open, and all tribes have been informed accordingly. When meetings are held with tribes, the ICWA Program Specialist, Division Director, 2 Assistant Directors, and Regional Manager for that region are invited to attend. **Refer to Appendix A, Attachment A9 for further collaboration efforts with tribal partners in SFY2025.**

In addition, the ICWA Program Specialist sought feedback regarding the scheduling and structure of ICWA Coalition meetings. However, due to the ICWA Director's current schedule, feedback has not yet been received. In May 2025, the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe and Oglala Sioux Tribe met with DSS-CSP Leadership.

The ICWA Program Specialist also began tracking Good Cause meetings in State Fiscal Year 2025. The following meetings have been held:

• July: 5	• January: 2
• August: 5	• February: 6
• September: 13	• March: 6
• October: 6	• April: 7
• November: 1	• May: 3
• December: 4	

2026 APSR Update:

The ICWA Program Specialist maintains ongoing communication with all nine tribes to support continued collaboration and compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). In October 2024, feedback was solicited from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe regarding the Transfer Protocol Checklist, which had not been in use by the tribe. In February 2025, the Program Specialist worked with the Ponca Tribe to facilitate communication with a local office concerning an ICWA case. Also in SFY2025, DSS-CPS leadership met with six tribes on 15 occasions to provide program updates and strengthen partnerships.

The University of South Dakota, Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment (CPCM) formed a Tribal Communities Workgroup to begin planning for a "South Dakota Indigenous Families and Communities Training, Indian Child Welfare Conference". The workgroup was meeting bi-weekly throughout SFY2025 until April 2025 when federal funding became a barrier. There are 25 individuals involved from both state, tribal and private agency backgrounds. The ICWA Program Specialist remains in close contact with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and will continue participation when this group begins meeting again. The ICWA Program Specialist assists the contract tribes with statewide searches for state licensed foster homes, helps communication with the tribes either from DSS-CPS field offices or Native American constituents looking for help from their tribe or help with their state case. Individual meetings with tribes continue to be constructive, providing opportunities to address ICWA-related issues and explore strategies to enhance communication.

SD-DSS, CPS
Certification Training
curriculum is shared with
the tribal child welfare
agencies to support the
training of their CPS staff.

Tribal Child Welfare agencies are able to enroll their staff in CPS Certification Training when there is availability. The training includes information on the Initial Family Assessment (IFA), Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA), and Permanency and Well-Being (PWB).

2026 APSR Update:

The ICWA Program Specialist shared information regarding available training opportunities for State Fiscal Year 2025 with the Oglala Sioux Tribal ICWA Director. Additionally, new staff from the Crow Creek Bureau of Indian Affairs attended the in-person Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA) training held from September 9–12, 2024. The Yankton Sioux Tribe ICWA and Child Protection Services requested participation in certification training, resulting in the registration of three staff members for the Initial Family Assessment training held in Sioux Falls.

[More on Collaboration and Support with Tribes](#)

South Dakota CPS and the tribes collaborate in several different ways. Additionally, South Dakota CPS has a ICWA Program Specialist, who is a liaison between the tribes and State to provide technical assistance. **Information pertaining to South Dakota's ongoing technical assistance and collaboration with tribes can be found within Appendix C, Attachment C1.**

[Consultation on ETV and Chafee](#)

Refer to South Dakota's 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan for context related to consultation on ETV and Chafee. Updates from SFY2025 are provided below.

Tribal Consultation:

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025, the State of South Dakota, through the Department of Social Services (DSS), engaged in deliberate and ongoing consultation with each federally recognized Indian tribe within the state regarding the delivery of services under the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (Chafee) and the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program.

Tribal consultation efforts were conducted in partnership with the South Dakota ICWA Program Specialist. While quarterly email updates were originally proposed to disseminate information about Independent Living Services (ILS), it was determined that virtual engagement would foster more effective and meaningful consultation. In October 2024, the ILS Program Specialist shared a comprehensive informational document on ILS, including Chafee and ETV services, which the ICWA Program Specialist distributed to all tribal partners.

Further consultation occurred on March 13, 2025, when the ILS Program Specialist and the CRP Supervisor conducted a live Zoom presentation specifically tailored for tribal child welfare staff. The session included detailed information about Chafee flexible funding, ETV benefits, Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) housing vouchers, the Independent Living Preparation Program (ILPP), and the role of Community Resource People (CRPs).

The training was well attended, with participants including seven (7) staff from the Oglala Sioux Tribe Child Protection Program, one (1) member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe Task Force, one (1) representative from the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Child Protection Program, and one (1) representative from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Children and Family Services program. This consultative session provided a platform for questions, feedback, and clarification about services available to tribal youth.

In December 2024, the Independent Living Program Specialist hosted the annual Independent Living Services (ILS) Workgroup Meeting virtually, bringing together a broad range of stakeholders to discuss ongoing and future supports for youth transitioning out of care. Participants included two treatment foster home representatives from Our Home and the Abbott House, child protection staff including a regional manager, supervisors, and leadership, the Community Resource Person (CRP) team, two group care managers from Sacred Heart and New Beginnings, as well as representatives from CASA, SNAP, and Economic Assistance. Tribal partners were also present, with one representative from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and three members from the Oglala Sioux Tribe Child Protection Program. Although a member of the Young Voices youth advisory group was invited, they were unable to attend. The meeting's PowerPoint presentation included information about upcoming ILS workshops and proposed conference agenda topics and locations, feedback from the previous teen conference, a review of current ILS goals outlined in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP), and discussions on future goals. NYTD data was reviewed, and CRP roles and responsibilities were revisited. The meeting concluded with presentations from the Bridges Independent Living Preparation Program, Career Launch through the Department of Labor, and The Circle, a teen drop-off center located in Rapid City.

Coordination with Tribes:

Throughout State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025, Community Resource Persons (CRPs) conducted consistent and targeted outreach to tribal partners to support Native youth in achieving independence through the provision of Independent Living Services (ILS). The State of South Dakota ensures that all benefits and services under the Chafee and Education and Training Voucher (ETV) programs are made available to Indian youth on the same basis as they are to all other eligible youth in the state, without exception.

DSS continues to prioritize meaningful coordination with tribal nations to ensure effective service delivery to Native youth. Coordination activities are supported by Community Resource Persons (CRPs), who work directly with tribal child welfare agencies and tribal youth to ensure access to ILS and Chafee-funded services. CRPs maintain regular contact with tribal representatives, make in-person visits to reservations, and participate in case planning for youth in tribal custody.

Throughout SFY25, CRPs conducted numerous outreach efforts with the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Crow Creek Tribe. Activities included case planning meetings, Age 16 and Age 17 meetings, administration of the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment, and assistance with school enrollment, funding requests, and career and postsecondary planning. CRPs also supported youth with practical needs such as obtaining driver's licenses, permits, and cell phones. Monthly reservation visits and school-based check-ins ensured continuity of services and maintained strong partnerships with tribal service providers.

Equity in Access and Service Delivery:

The state ensures that Indian youth are afforded equitable access to all Chafee and ETV services on the same basis as non-Native youth. This includes the full scope of independent living preparation services, case management, Chafee-funded flexible supports, and access to the ETV program up to age 26, provided eligibility criteria are met. The state's approach emphasizes engagement and respects tribal sovereignty in the coordination and delivery of services.

To promote equitable access:

- Information about ILS services and eligibility criteria is shared regularly with tribal partners through both the ICWA and ILS Program Specialists.
- CRPs are assigned to tribal jurisdictions and make consistent outreach and follow-up visits to ensure eligible tribal youth are identified, assessed, and supported.
- Tribal youth are invited and encouraged to participate in ILS workshops and events. For example, two youth from the Oglala Sioux Tribe attended the ILS workshop in Eagle Butte on April 9, 2025, where they received postsecondary education resources and explored career opportunities.
- The ICWA Program Specialist assists with distributing communications, reminders, and invitations, including Doodle polls and calendar invites for scheduling presentations and events.

Chafee and ETV Services Provided to Indian Youth:

Chafee-funded services and supports currently available to Indian youth in South Dakota include:

- Independent Living Preparation Program (ILPP): Structured case management and housing for youth ages 16 to 18 in out-of-home care and 18-21 whom have transitioned from care to include tribal custody.
- Flexible Funding: Financial assistance for immediate needs such as housing, transportation, education-related expenses, vocational training, and basic needs.
- Life Skills Education: Life skills assessments, education, and practice in areas such as money management, employment readiness, transportation, tenant education, and health care navigation.
- Workshops and Conferences: Statewide ILS workshops and conferences, which include post-secondary tours, vocational program exploration, and peer mentorship from former foster youth.
- Education and Training Voucher (ETV): Financial assistance for post-secondary education or training programs, available to eligible youth up to age 26.
- Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Vouchers: Referrals and coordination to secure housing support through public housing authorities which includes case management services provided by the CRPs up to age 24.
- Community Resource Persons (CRPs): Dedicated staff supporting individualized planning, referrals, and connections to community services for youth 16 to 18 in out-of-home care and 18-21 whom have transitioned from tribal custody.

The state also supports programming and acknowledges the importance of lived experience in service delivery. At the upcoming June 2025 ILS conferences, a Child Protection staff member from the Oglala Sioux Tribe, who has lived experience in foster care, will serve as keynote speaker and will lead a cultural art activity. Youth voice and peer leadership will be central components of the event, providing further empowerment and representation for Native youth.

Goals

GOAL: Community Resource Person's (CRPs) provide ongoing consultation to tribes with an approved IV-E plan or a Title IV-E Tribal and State Agreement about their option to receive a portion of the State's CFCPSTA and /or ETV allotment to provide services to eligible tribal youth (Section 477(j) of the ACT) directly from ACF.

Title IV-E Funding

2026 APSR Update:

Consultation is ongoing although the tribes have not pursued an agreement. No Tribes in South Dakota have requested to develop an agreement to administer, supervise, or oversee the Chafee or an ETV Program with respect to eligible Indian children.

Throughout State Fiscal Year 2025, Community Resource Persons (CRPs) maintained consistent outreach with tribal partners to support youth in achieving independent living. In September 2024, CRPs made three contacts with the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and Oglala Sioux Tribes, including in-person visits and email communication. During these efforts, a CRP conducted a career assessment with one youth and worked to schedule a follow-up visit for another youth following a referral.

Information about Independent Living Services (ILS) available to eligible tribal youth was distributed quarterly to all tribes via email. These communications included details on Chafee flexible funding, Education and Training Vouchers (ETV), Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers, housing resources, the Independent Living Preparation Program (ILPP), and CRP assistance.

In February 2025, a poll was distributed to tribal partners to select a date for a virtual ILS training session, which took place on March 13, 2025. The session, led by the Independent Living and Permanency Program Specialist and CRP Supervisor, was attended by representatives from the Oglala Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, and the Oglala Sioux Tribe Task Force. Following the presentation, the ILS PowerPoint was shared with all tribes via email.

Additionally, tribes were provided with information on how to register youth in tribal custody for ILS workshops and the ILS Conference. Two youth from the Oglala Sioux Tribe participated in an ILS workshop in Eagle Butte, where they gained valuable insights into ETV scholarships, tuition, financial aid, and postsecondary opportunities. The youth also toured a college campus and attended presentations on programs such as cosmetology school, Job Corps, the Department of Labor's Career Launch program, and the South Dakota National Guard.



GOAL: Community Resource Persons (CRPs) provide services and support to all youth, including those involved with the Tribal Child Welfare Agencies, until the age of 21 years old.

2026 APSR Update:

CPS maintains a contract with Lutheran Social Services to provide the Community Resource Person's (CRPs). The CRPs provide assistance and services to youth in CPS custody, as well as youth with BIA and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies.

Throughout SFY 2025, CRPs engaged in ongoing outreach and support for tribal youth. In August 2024, CRPs made seven contacts with the Sisseton Wahpeton Tribe, including in-person visits and email correspondence. During this time, a youth was assessed using the Casey Life Skills Assessment, and an Age 16 meeting was completed. The CRPs also conducted three contacts with the Oglala Sioux Tribe, including an Age 16 meeting and providing information on Independent Living Services (ILS). In October 2024, CRPs facilitated three additional contacts with both the Sisseton Wahpeton and Oglala Sioux Tribes, assisting a youth with a request for funding to pay for online school and updating tribes about monthly CRP meetings and upcoming Age 17 meetings. November 2024 saw eight contacts across the Sisseton Wahpeton, Oglala Sioux, and Standing Rock Tribes, including a mix of email communication, in-person visits, and Age 17 meetings. CRPs supported youth in signing up for online high school, provided funding for cell phones, and coordinated post-secondary meetings and Age meetings. In December 2024, CRPs continued monthly visits with the Sisseton Wahpeton, Oglala Sioux, and Crow Creek Tribes, focusing on future planning, driver's license requests, and Age 16 meeting preparations. February 2025 involved four visits with tribal youth, where discussions on education, money management, and employment took place, along with presentations on Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) and services for youth up to age 21.

In March 2025, the CRP visited the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Reservation to assist a youth interested in purchasing a vehicle. On April 14, 2025, the ILS Program Specialist received three referrals from the Oglala Sioux Tribe for assignment of CRPs to assist three tribal youth.

Services to
Native American
Youth

GOAL: Native American Youth, both the youth involved with the State Child Welfare System, and the Tribal Child Welfare Agencies will be engaged in the Independent Living Skills Program.

2026 APSR Update:

The ICWA Program Specialist has created a contact list for each of the tribes. This information has been shared with the CRPs. The CRPs use this information to make connections with the tribes regarding the Independent Living Program for services such as CLSA, ETV funds, Young Voices, ILS Advisory Workgroup, ILS Workshops, ILS Teen Conference and to confirm placement contact information to make contact with youth. The CRPs will continue to be responsible for identifying resources and networking with BIA and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies on the reservations in their coverage areas throughout the state.

Refer to all information provided prior which supports progress towards this goal in SFY2025.

Overarching Action Steps for State Fiscal Year 2026:

In SFY26, the Independent Living Services (ILS) Program will focus on strengthening partnerships with tribal nations and increasing access to ILS for Native youth through several targeted goals. These include: expanding tribal youth participation in statewide ILS events such as workshops and the annual conference; enhancing programming by incorporating tribal customs, language, and lived experiences into training and activities; increasing collaboration with tribal child protection programs by scheduling regular virtual engagement sessions each quarter; improving coordination between Community Resource Persons (CRPs) and tribal caseworkers to streamline referrals and service delivery; and increasing outreach to Native youth to join Young Voices, the statewide youth advisory group, to ensure stronger tribal representation in shaping ILS programming. Additionally, the ILS Program aims to improve follow-up and outcome tracking for tribal youth who receive Chafee services, Education and Training Vouchers (ETV), or participate in the Independent Living Preparation Program (ILPP), ensuring equitable access and measurable impact across all tribal communities.

Section C. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) State Plan Requirements and Update

CAPTA State Liaison

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CAPTA 2024 Progress Update

There were no changes in South Dakota's laws or regulations that affect the State's eligibility for the CAPTA State grant. South Dakota has provisions in place for the public disclosure of child abuse and neglect fatalities or near fatalities as required by 106(b)(2)(B)(x) of CAPTA.

On January 7, 2019, the President signed the Victims of Child Abuse Act Reauthorization Act of 2018, which included an amendment to CAPTA. The amendment expands the scope related to the legal immunity for good faith reports of child abuse and neglect. South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL) 26-8A-14 is already in place and covers the amendment. This law states, "Any person or party participating in good faith in the making of a report or the submitting of copies of medical examination, treatment, or hospitalization records pursuant to §§ 26-8A-3 to 26-8A-8, inclusive, or pursuant to any other provisions of this chapter, is immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed, and has the same immunity for participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from the report. Immunity also extends in the same manner to persons requesting the taking of photographs and X rays pursuant to § 26-8A-16, to persons taking the photographs and X rays, to child protection teams established by the secretary of social services, to public officials or employees involved in the investigation and treatment of child abuse or neglect or making a temporary placement of the child pursuant to this chapter, or to any person who in good faith cooperates with a child protection team or the Department of Social Services in investigation, placement, or a treatment plan. The provisions of this section or any other section granting or allowing the grant of immunity do not extend to any person alleged to have committed an act or acts of child abuse or neglect."

CPS continues to use CAPTA funds to support the objectives described in the FFY 2012 CAPTA State Plan, including maintenance of and enhancements to the CPS system and processes for receipt of reports of child abuse and neglect, response to reports of child abuse and neglect, and intervention when there are threats to child safety.

CAPTA funds were used to purchase services from interpreters to assist in Initial Family Assessments (IFA) and Protective Capacity Assessments (PCA) when working with non-English speaking families or for parents with other needs.

CAPTA funds were used to pay for substance and alcohol assessments and for monitoring of parents' substance and alcohol use to assess parental capacity and assure safe reunification. CAPTA funds were used to pay for drug testing during IFAs and Ongoing services. CAPTA funds were used to purchase equipment for office interview and visitation rooms.

CPS continues to train new staff through the Certification Training Program, which provides comprehensive knowledge and skill training to CPS staff. CPS provides ongoing and advanced training on safety, permanency, and well-being to all staff. (See the APSR section on Training.) CAPTA funds were used to purchase training resources to help support some of these training activities.

CAPTA funds were used to contract with an attorney to assist in child abuse and neglect court cases in a Tribal Court to expedite the permanency process, whether it is reunification or some other permanent plan.

CAPTA funds were used for printing CPS brochures for educating and informing the public about Child Protection Services and child abuse and neglect.

CAPTA funds were used for case management services including mental health assessments, counseling, anger management assessments, and domestic violence counseling.

Intake Restructure

The Intake Assessment is the first and one of the most important determinations in the Division of Child Protection Services Safety Intervention Model (CSI). State law requires reports of abuse and neglect to be made either to the county State's Attorney, law enforcement, or Child Protection Services. The county State's Attorney and law enforcement are then required to inform Child Protection Services about reports they receive. Previously, South Dakota had a regionally based Intake system where calls from within the Region were handled by the Intake Specialists within the respective Region. The structure did not allow for equal distribution of intake reports and created concerns with consistency. Child Protection Services restructured the intake system in January 2015 and has entered the tenth year of implementation. The restructured system allows all the calls to be distributed among the pool of Intake Specialists through a single 1-800 number, regardless of where the call originates. CJA funds were used to restructure the system at that time and have been used since the restructure to support the sustainability of the intake system, including supporting ongoing costs of maintaining the system, additional equipment as needed, training of staff, and improvements.

With advancing technology, South Dakota has transitioned its statewide phone systems to web-based platforms, eliminating the need for physical telephones. These platforms enable Intake Specialists to answer calls from any location, if they have access to power and an internet connection. This flexibility allows Intake Specialists to remain available remotely during inclement weather or other disruptions to on-site operations.

As the Intake Assessment is the first source of knowledge about a family when a concern has been expressed to the agency by a reporting party, it is of utmost importance Intake Specialists gather specific and sufficient information from the reporter to ensure accurate and prompt decision making regarding next steps for our agency. South Dakota Child Protection Services partnered with Action for Child Protection to increase the Intake Assessment fidelity by examining practices of Intake Specialists as they receive calls, document the concerns, and decision making for screening and determining response time. In May 2023, Action for Child Protection conducted a fidelity review and analysis of Intake Assessment reports and interviewed and observed Intake Specialists to gain further insight regarding workload, competency, and intervention fidelity.

As a result of the fidelity review, it was recommended to increase the competency, effectiveness, and efficiency across the Intake Unit, the staff and supervisors would benefit from formalized training and coaching. A Request for Proposal regarding coaching for intake staff and supervisors was sought and Action for Child Protection was selected for the vendor.

The kick-off meeting for Intake Coaching and Consulting was held in-person in Pierre on July 9-10, 2024. A survey self-assessment and base knowledge was conducted with Intake Specialists and Intake Supervisors on July 24, 2024. The first group coaching session was held in Rapid City on August 12-12, 2024, and in Sioux Falls on August 20-21, 2024. The second round of coaching sessions were held in-person September 24-26, 2024, and September 30-October 2, 2024, and the third round was held October 29-31, 2024. The final on-site coaching sessions were held on November 18-20, 2024, and December 17-19, 2024. These coaching sessions focused on enhancing critical thinking skills, strengthening the knowledge and skills of the staff, and supports effective transfer of learning into practice. Intake staff have also participated in virtual collaboratives in which they listen to calls and discuss information collection and next steps.

The coaching concluded with on-site visits in Rapid City and Sioux Falls on January 28 - 30, 2025. During these visits, staff received individualized feedback, discussed strengths and areas for improvement, and participated in the development of ongoing coaching goals. Practice standards were distributed, and staff contributed to the identification of their professional development needs. Action will complete the project by conducting final self-assessments and a fidelity review focusing on increased competency and intervention fidelity.

Sex Trafficking

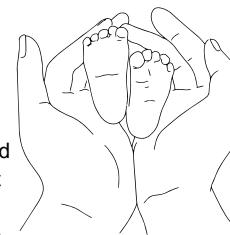
Intake Specialists have been provided information regarding responding to reports of sex trafficking and potential victims of sex-trafficking. The Intake Specialist must identify and document in FACIS, children who Child Protection Services has a reasonable cause to believe are sex trafficking victims or are at risk of being sex-trafficking victims. On October 31, 2017, South Dakota added a new maltreatment type to FACIS (CCWIS) to track the number of children known or suspected to be victims of sex trafficking.

There are instances in which a referral is received by the Department, but the allegations do not involve a parent, guardian, or custodian. In these situations, and in accordance with SDCL 26-8A-2, the referral is forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agency to investigate. Along with the Department, law enforcement is the other agency mandated by state law to investigate reports of child abuse and neglect. The investigation can be completed by either agency or jointly. The Department does not have the legal authority to investigate any cases of child maltreatment or sex offenses that do not meet the definitions within SDCL 26-8A-2. In these situations, the safety of the child is paramount, and it is important to ensure the parent, guardian, or custodian responsible for the child is able and willing to protect the child. If the report indicates the parent, guardian or custodian, or another person responsible is not protecting the child or the child is otherwise unsafe through fault or no fault of the parent, the report is further assessed for assignment and for additional services by Child Protection Services.

Child Protection Services also coordinates with other agencies and service providers needed to ensure the child's safety and to implement services that provide for the physical and emotional needs of the child. The Department considers requests by law enforcement and child protection agencies from other states for a Family Services Specialist to conduct a courtesy interview and assist with ensuring the safety of the child.

Drug Affected Infants

South Dakota has provisions in state law that include prenatal exposure to abusive use of drugs and alcohol as part of the definition of child abuse and neglect. In addition, South Dakota Codified Law 26-8A-3 addresses requirements of health care providers, and other professionals, to report child abuse or neglect. This law lists out several professionals mandated to report child abuse and/or neglect and a failure to do so, could result in a misdemeanor charge. South Dakota Codified Law 26-8A-6 is further specific to hospital personnel in that, "Any person who has contact with a child through the performance of services as a member of the staff of a hospital or similar institution shall immediately notify the person in charge of the institution or his designee of suspected abuse or neglect..."



The South Dakota Health Department has guidelines defined in South Dakota Administrative Rule 44:65:02:01 and 44:65:02:02 that require reports by physicians or hospitals to the Health Department in situations where a diagnosing physician attends to a person suspected of having FAS or when hospital personnel are aware of a person who is suspected of having FAS was served by the hospital. The rules also state that reporting under these provisions does not relieve the physician or hospital from the obligation to report FAS as child abuse or neglect. In 2018, Senate Bill 105 was introduced and passed by the Legislature authorizing health care practitioners to administer a toxicology test to an infant during the first 28 days of life under certain circumstances with or without parental consent. If a health care practitioner has reason to believe, based on a medical assessment of a mother or a newborn infant, that the mother used a controlled substance for a nonmedical purpose during the pregnancy, the practitioner may administer, with or without the consent of the newborn infant's parent or guardian, a toxicology test. The test is to determine whether there is evidence of prenatal exposure of a controlled substance. If the test results are positive, the practitioner shall report the results according to South Dakota's mandatory reporting law, which is SDCL 26-8A-8.

Child Protection Services' safety focused model includes services for those infants affected by abuse of drugs or alcohol. When a child who is born drug affected or suspected of suffering from FASD is ready for discharge from a hospital and cannot be placed safely in their home through a Safety Plan, Child Protection Services seeks the assistance of relatives and/or foster homes that can address the child's needs and provide a safe environment for the child, which includes a safe care plan. The caregiver and the Child Protection Services' Family Services Specialist work closely with the physician to ensure the continuity of care.

If a child is ready for discharge and can safely remain in their home and the danger threats are able to be managed, Child Protection Services opens the case for in-home services, providing additional support to the family with a Safe Care Plan. The Child Protection Services Family Services Specialist continues to monitor the child's safety while arranging for additional services, based on the parent's needs, and assuring the child's needs are being met in the home.

Citizen Review Panel Report- FY2024

The Children's Justice Act Task Force, Justice for Children's Committee (JCC), was first established in 1988 and continues to focus on efforts to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases in the various stages of the process. The South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection Services (CPS) has representation on the JCC Task Force and the JCC Task Force remains a joint committee with the Citizen Review Panel.

The Task Force meets quarterly. Historically two of the meetings were in person and held in Pierre, South Dakota, which is home of the state capital and a central location. The other two meetings are held via conference call. Since the COVID 19 pandemic, all the meetings have been held virtually.

Due to at least six hours round trip travel required for nearly all the Task Force members; the members have agreed to continue to meet virtual. This allows for more members to participate and assists with time management.

The Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection and the Task Force continue to use Children's Justice Act grant funds to reach a level of an investigative and judicial process that is consistent in practice, effective in protecting children, limits the risk of further trauma to the child, and provides fairness to the accused. Children's Justice Act grant funds are used to fund Task Force activities that are focused on the areas emphasized in the Act.

At each Task Force meeting, members share updates from their respective agencies. This practice keeps all participating organizations informed about available state grants, upcoming training opportunities, and ongoing projects. Additionally, these updates foster stronger relationships and collaboration among the agencies.

2025 Proposed Activities

The operation of the Justice for Children's Committee Task Force is required by the Children's Justice Act (CJA) to be eligible for grant funds. To assure the continued operation of the Justice for Children's Committee Task Force, CJA funds will be used to pay for expenses and administrative costs related to activities within the scope of the CJA grant program.

Recommendation I: Mandatory Conference Attendance

Children's Justice Act funds are used to pay for travel, lodging, and meeting room expenses for task force members. CJA funds are used for the CJA Coordinators to attend the National Children's Justice Act grantee meeting held in Washington, DC. Task Force members are reimbursed for expenses to attend quarterly meetings and other task force related activities. Funds are used for meeting costs, printing costs related to reports, and duplication costs for reports and written material to be used by the task force. Funds are also used for other administrative and miscellaneous costs that are within the scope of the grant program.

Action Steps:

1. Task Force Member(s) attends the annual CJA grantee meeting in Washington DC.
2. Attendance contingent on approved funding.
3. Reimburse Task Force members for expenses to attend quarterly meetings

The Children's Justice Act grant further outlines required categories for use of CJA funds. The grant states State task force projects selected for CJA funding must support front-end efforts or intake and investigation phases of child welfare cases. CJA grantees must implement recommendations in each of the following categories, as required by legislation:

A. Investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect.

Recommendation II: Continuation of the Out of Home Investigation Contracts

It is often contradictory for Child Protection Services staff to have the dual role to investigate reports of abuse and neglect while providing support to families and children. During a previous three-year assessment, the Task Force recommended the roles should be handled by separate entities whenever possible. The Task Force continues to recommend assistance be provided to Child Protection Services staff to respond to reports of abuse and neglect for children in out-of-home care. Child Protection Services has experienced improved timeliness in the completion of Out-of-Home investigations from outside consultants. These investigations continue to benefit Child Protection staff and the children and families involved, by providing a less adversarial role and are a more neutral approach.

Child Protection Services utilizes CJA funds to contract with consultants who have law enforcement backgrounds to investigate reports of abuse and neglect involving children in out-of-home care. Out-of-home care includes foster homes, kinship placement resources, group/residential facilities, daycare, and other situations involving children under the care of a custodian as defined by state law. The consultants work with Child Protection staff to coordinate the investigations, determine response time, determine remedial steps that need to be taken to assure the safety of children, and determine the disposition of the investigation. The consultants submit a report to Child Protection Services to be incorporated into the final report that includes the disposition and appropriate corrective actions.

Action Steps:

1. Contract with consultants who have law enforcement backgrounds to investigate reports of abuse and neglect involving children in out-of-home care.
2. Continue utilizing CJA funds to support out-of-home care consultants.

B. Experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches.

 **Recommendation III: Sexualized Behaviors Training**

Research and provide trainings related to sexualized behaviors in children. Problematic Sexual behaviors have been identified by the Justice for Children's Task Force members and stakeholders across the state as an area needing attention. The number of child-on-child sexual assaults continues to rise and often, families, caregivers, community members, and stakeholders struggle to ensure the children's needs are met. The goal of the training program would be to identify and respond to sexualized behaviors, coordinate effective interventions for the population, and educate caregivers and stakeholders to improve the response to the behaviors.

Action Steps:

1. Explore other states' training regarding responding to sexualized behaviors.
2. Explore curriculum to be used in conjunction with Enough Abuse campaign.
3. Collaborate with the Child Advocacy Centers and South Dakota Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment regarding the selected training programs.

Progress:

Analysis of Patterns of Denial Among Sex Offenders (APOS) has been identified and recommended as a training to be supported by the Task Force and will be implemented during the coming grant year. In this presentation, Dr. Darrel Turner explores personality traits and disorders common among sexual offenders as well as information regarding sexually deviant disorders that often fuel offending. This information is combined with deception techniques identified by the APOS to help better approach and navigate interviews and interrogations for maximum value.

APOS is a 12-item checklist that has been peer-reviewed and was published in the field in 2022. The instrument identifies patterns of denial techniques that differ among people who are being deceptive and people who are truthfully denying their guilt (falsely accused individuals). The APOS is designed for use by investigators, clinicians, supervisors, and others who work with this population. The APOS distinguishes the manner in which guilty suspects engage in denial versus falsely accused suspects. This allows the interviewer to compare the subject's response pattern to these two groups with significant scientific accuracy.

The training is a two-day, 16-hour certification in use of the APOS. Day one begins with an examination of personality traits of offenders as well as a close look at sexual deviant interests that fuel offending behaviors. In addition, grooming behaviors are discussed. Attendees are taught how these factors impact the way in which subjects respond in interviews and interrogations. As APOS items are introduced and training progresses, attendees will learn to use effective and research informed responses to counter deception and illicit more helpful information from subjects in interviews, evaluations, interrogations, treatment contexts, etc. This involves instruction on individual APOS items and clips or whole interviews from actual cases. Attendees will also learn coding rules and scoring. Attendees will also score cases collectively together with Dr. Turner, and they are invited to bring their own case interviews to use during their training.

C. Reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols, and procedures.

 **Recommendation IV: Continued Support of Intake System Restructure:**
Continue to support and sustain the Child Protection Services Intake System. This includes supporting ongoing costs of maintaining the system, additional equipment as needed, training of staff, and improvements. The use of the funds will continue to provide quality assurance efforts, improve consistency, improve customer services, improve sufficiency of information for more informed screening decisions, and decrease overall stress put on the Intake Specialists in offices with a larger volume of abuse and neglect reports.

Action Steps:

1. Continue utilizing CJA funds to support centralized intake and screening.
2. Support fidelity reviews of the intake system, information gathering, and make recommendations for additional training.

Progress:

Action for Child Protection will complete a fidelity review related to increased competency and intervention fidelity following the coaching project. Recommendations will be provided, and a plan will be developed for continuous fidelity reviews through Child Protection's CQI team to support continual learning within the team. This would include periodic refresher courses and updates on policy and practice. In addition, CPS is preparing to examine workload, overtime, and emergency response among staff statewide to identify what workload is manageable for staff, establish equity among staff statewide, and identify areas needing staff development. Prior to the CPS workload study occurring, an analysis of caseload statewide needs to occur. A workgroup has been meeting since March 2024 to update the state's information system to complete an accurate caseload analysis. A caseload analysis must occur first as there needs to be an accurate assessment of a caseload statewide before determining what workload looks like to manage the caseload.

 **Recommendation V: Support Plans of Safe Care**

The Task Force will defer to the Plans of Safe Care workgroup regarding any further review and next steps related to substance impacted infants.

Action Steps:

1. The Task Force will stay informed regarding the work and developments of Plans of Safe Care.
2. The Task Force will consider the recommendations of Plans of Safe care in relation to any further work needed by the Task Force.

American Rescue Plan Act Funding (ARPA)

The increase in the State's CAPTA funds through the 2021 American Rescue Plan assisted in continued efforts to support and address the needs of infants born and identified as being affected by substance use or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure. Funding was utilized to assist parents with drug assessments and subsequent treatment if recommended, and/or ongoing monitoring in the form of substance use testing. Safe Care Plans developed for the infants to avoid the child being placed in custody may include additional case management services and costs for the alternative providers. These services may include but are not limited to temporary daycare for the child or training related to providing care for the infant's medical needs.

CAPTA Annual State Data Report Items

Information on Child Protective Services Workforce

The State of South Dakota personnel qualifications for individuals to apply for CPS positions is based on knowledge, skills, and abilities. CPS hires staff with relevant degrees and experience for all positions. There are minimal circumstances when an individual was hired without a college degree. Those usually occur in areas of the state where filling positions is problematic. The training for new Family Services Specialists and ongoing training are described in the Staff Training section of the APSR.

Based on demographics of a rural state, turnover, staffing, and the number of small offices, it was determined by management that caseload standards would be difficult to establish and maintain. All CPS staff share a rotation for emergency response, therefore, are trained and complete intake, screening and safety assessments.

Strategic Plan: The Department of Social Services goal was focused on recruiting, developing, and retaining quality staff. The main focus was to work towards enhancing recruitment efforts that target quality candidates who align with the agency's mission, invest in ongoing and individualized professional growth and skills training of staff, and create a culture focused on engaging and empowering staff.

Becklar Safety App: In response to valuable feedback received through staff exit interviews and surveys, the state has taken significant steps to enhance the safety of field staff, particularly during emergency response and when responding to situations that may pose a threat to staff safety. One key initiative is the implementation of the Becklar Field Safety App, a tool designed to provide staff with immediate access to emergency assistance in unsafe situations. Each staff member is equipped with the app on their state-issued cell phone, along with a wearable button that enables them to quickly summon help if needed. To support staff working in remote areas without cellular service, satellite sticks have also been distributed to ensure uninterrupted emergency communication. The application was downloaded to staff's cell phones and three virtual training sessions were offered in April and May 2025. All staff have received proper training and have begun utilizing the application in May 2025. For new hires, the Training and Learning Development Program Specialist will ensure the app is installed and assign the corresponding virtual webinar through SD Learn upon notification of the hire. Separately, all field staff are now required to complete Safety Crisis Management Training, which includes self-defense instruction and is offered multiple times per year. This training serves as an additional layer of protection, equipping staff with practical skills to navigate potentially dangerous situations. These combined efforts reflect the state's ongoing commitment to prioritizing employee safety through proactive planning, continuous education, and the integration of advanced safety tools.

Workload Capacity Study: In May 2025, the Division of Child Protection Services (CPS) submitted a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify a qualified vendor to conduct a Workload Capacity Study for Family Services Specialist Supervisors and Specialists.

Workload Capacity Study Continued: This study is a critical step in understanding and addressing workload challenges within the agency. The need for this initiative emerged from an Organizational Assessment conducted in 2020, which revealed a significant discrepancy between caseload, the number of cases assigned to staff, and workload, the amount of time and effort required to effectively manage those cases. In practice, child welfare professionals typically spend only 20-35% of their time on direct or collateral client contact. The remaining 65-80% is devoted to essential case-related activities such as documentation, court involvement, and coordination with service providers. Workload demands vary due to multiple factors, including the complexity of individual cases, the experience and skill level of staff, and the extent of required travel across the state. These variances can lead to inequitable workloads, staff burnout, and ultimately, reduced quality of service for children and families.

The Workload Capacity Study will enable CPS to

- Identify areas where workload imbalances exist;
- Strategically allocate and support existing staff;
- Explore the development of centralized specialty units;
- Determined where additional resources or supports are needed to promote workload equity;
- Forecast staffing needs;
- And assess the agency's existing program management structure and duties assigned to Program Specialists/Management Team to determine capacity to meet the agency's goals

A balanced workload is essential for retaining a skilled child protection workforce and for improving outcomes for the families served. By ensuring staff have manageable responsibilities, CPS can enhance its ability to protect and promote the welfare of children, prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation, support children in remaining safely with their families or achieving timely reunification, promote safety, permanency, and well-being for children in foster and adoptive care, and invest in ongoing training and professional development.

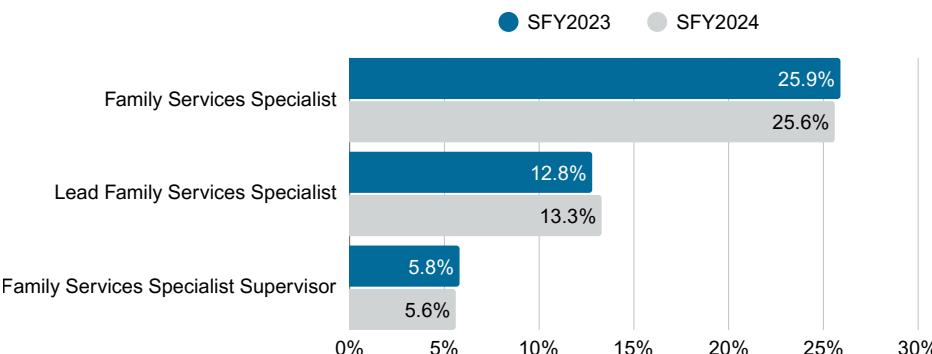
USD IV-E Contract: The Department of Social Services collaborated with the University of South Dakota and through an inter-agency agreement, supported the work of Kay Casey Consulting, Inc. A final report was received from the consultant and through work with USD, a proposal appears below.

An inter-agency agreement is requested between DSS and USD. The purpose of this contract is to provide tuition reimbursement for Social Work students, with the overall goal to strengthen the child welfare workforce. Students who utilize the tuition reimbursement program for one school year will commit to working with CPS for two calendar years in exchange and agreements will be signed acknowledging this. The elements of the inter-agency agreement include coverage of the following utilizing IVE-E dollars:

- Student costs (tuition, books, and materials for one semester)
- USD Faculty costs associated with attending meetings, conferences, and trainings related to the work.
- Administrative costs including project management, cost report completion, annual program evaluation, and other related activities by USD faculty.
- Two students per year can participate based on current calculations.

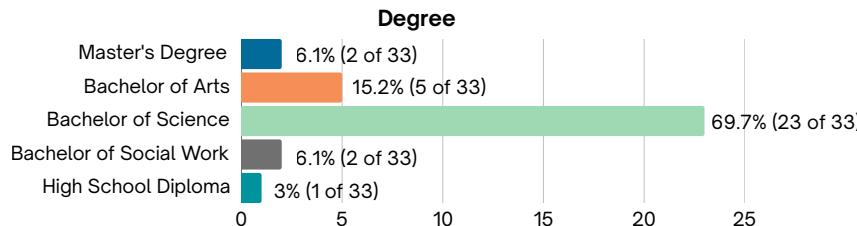
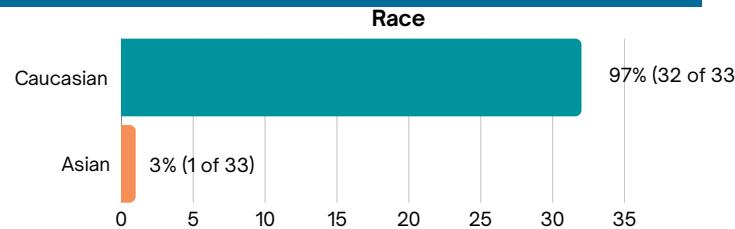
A start date is still tentative as the University of South Dakota works to finalize their student contract and complete their cost flow analysis.

Child Protection Services Turnover Rate

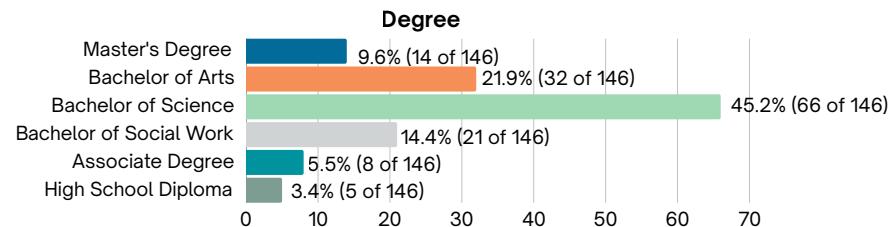
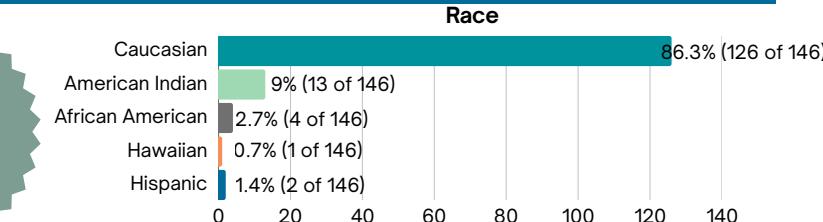


Staff Demographics

Supervisors



Family Services Specialist



Juvenile Justice Transfers

There was one juvenile who transferred from CPS custody to the Department of Corrections in SFY 2025. The youth included in this population are those who were in the custody of CPS, custody through CPS was terminated, and the youth was committed to the Department of Corrections. This information is gathered through the South Dakota CCWIS System.

Section D. Updates to Targeted Plans within the 2025-2029 CFSP



Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan



Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan



Disaster Plan



Training Plan

Section E. Financial Information

Payment Limitations

- CPS does not spend more Title IV-B, Subpart I for child care, foster care maintenance, and adoption assistance payments in any fiscal year the State expended for those purposes in FY 2005. FY 2005 Title IV-B funds \$640,797; match funds \$213,599.
- CPS did not spend Title IV-B, Subpart I funds in FY 2005 for administrative costs. The submitted CFS-101, Part III, includes \$0 for administrative costs.
- In FY 2018, the State did not use federal funds awarded under Title IV-B to supplant federal or state funds for existing family support, family preservation, family reunification and adoption support services based upon the State's FY 1992 expenditures.

Reallotment of FY 2024 (Current Year) Funding

South Dakota does not have any reallotments.

FY 2025 Budget Request—CFS-101, Parts I and II

Please see CFS-101 Part I and II attachment.

FY 2022 Title IV-B Expenditure Report—CFS-101, Part III

Please see CFS-101 Part III attachment.

Expenditure Periods and Submission of Standard Form 425 (SF-425) Federal Financial Report

The Department of Social Services Finance Department submits the Federal Finance Reports annually in the Payment Management System within 90 days of the end of the federal fiscal year based on the terms and conditions of the federal award.

Section F. Appendices

Appendix A: Update to the Assessment of Current Performance in Improving Outcomes Attachments

- Attachment A1: Stakeholder Engagement
- Attachment A2: Recruitment and Retention Activities
- Attachment A3: Quality Assurance Initiatives
- Attachment A4: FACIS Reports
- Attachment A5: Annual Surveys
- Attachment A6: Review Schedule
- Attachment A7: Service Array Table
- Attachment A8: Family First Prevention Services Act Activities
- Attachment A9: Tribal Engagement

Appendix B: Update on the Service Descriptions Attachment

- Attachment B1: Child Abuse Prevention Activities

Appendix C: Consultation and Coordination Between States and Tribes Attachment

- Attachment C1: Ongoing Collaboration and Technical Assistance

Appendix A: Update to the Assessment of Current Performance in Improving Outcomes

SFY2025 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT/COLLABORATION

Attachment A1

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
August 2024	Parent	A meeting was held with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment to discuss the creation of a parent feedback group.
August 2024	Parent	The ICWA Program Specialist had three interactions with parents regarding ICWA issues.
August 2024	Foster/Kinship	The Kinship Workgroup met on 08/07/2024 and foster/kinship with lived experience attended the meeting.
August 2024	Prevention Community Stakeholders	Invitations for the October Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Board meeting were sent out with requests to update membership from participating partner agencies.
August 2024	Independent Living Services Stakeholders	A meeting was held to discuss ways that ILS and Community Resource Persons can work together with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Program operated by Department of Labor and Regulation regarding a program called Career Launch.
August 2024	ICWA Stakeholders	Oglala Sioux Tribe Task Force meeting was held this month. The ICWA Program Specialist had 25 interactions with Tribal ICWA/CPS programs to resolve issues this month.
August 2024	Community Stakeholders	Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.
September 2024	Youth	The Youth Survey was sent to youth with lived experience.
September 2024	Youth	Through engagement with an older youth with lived experience, a social media post was created about the youth attending a University this fall and utilizing ETV funds.
September 2024	Parent	The Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment presented CPS with a proposal for the creation of a parent feedback group.
September 2024	Foster/Kinship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A professional video was created of two foster families' testimonials to utilize for recruitment efforts. • A foster parent was invited to participate in the DSS/Communications monthly recruitment meeting.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
September 2024	Kinship	Kinship lived experience was provided during the Kinship Workgroup meeting on 09/04/2024.
September 2024	Parent	The case pull was created to send surveys to parents with lived experience.
September 2024	Community Stakeholders	The Stakeholder Survey was sent to community stakeholders as well as individuals who reported abuse/neglect. A total of 1,727 surveys were sent.
September 2024	Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crow Creek Sioux Tribe was invited to participate in Region 4's Foster and Adoption Recruitment Team. Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.
September 2024	Adoption Stakeholders	A meeting with Lutheran Social Services was held this month to discuss implementation of the new Post Adoption Contract.
September 2024	Foster/Kinship Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lutheran Social Services provided input at the September Kinship Workgroup Meeting. A monthly meeting was held this month with Lutheran Social Services to discuss the Kinship Home Study, Kinship Locator, and Kinship Navigator contract for services.
September 2024	Community Stakeholders	A meeting was held with KVC of Nebraska and the Department of Human Services to discuss and collaborate on how KVC can support youth in South Dakota with Developmental Delays.
October 2024	Youth	Youth survey results were received and analyzed this month.
October 2024	Youth	Three Young Voices members spoke to staff at the Human Services Center. Youth focused on sharing their foster care journeys and ways that residential treatment providers can support youth while in residential placement along with how staff can help prepare youth for their next placement or when aging out.
October 2024	Parents	The Continuous Quality Improvement Team sent parent surveys to closed parents who had worked with the agency in the previous year.
October 2024	Kinship	Kinship lived experience was provided at the Kinship Workgroup meeting this month.
October 2024	ICWA Stakeholders	Surveys were sent to ICWA directors this month.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
October 2024	Parent	The ICWA Program Specialist had 10 parent interactions on ICWA issues in the month of October.
October 2024	Prevention Stakeholders	The October Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Board Meeting occurred. Parents, Instructors, Site Administrators, Contracted Consultants, CPS leads, and other state agency representatives were in attendance.
October 2024	Recruitment and Retention Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A planning team was established to support the Governor's Office in engaging the Rapid City area faith community for the upcoming "Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot" event. This event is scheduled to take place on November 13, 2024 in Rapid City. Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.
October 2024	Independent Living Services Stakeholders	The Assistant Director, Independent Living Services Program Specialist, and Community Resource Person Team met with staff regarding the partnership with the Career Launch program. A PowerPoint was presented with a checklist for the referral process, services, and documentation. The partnership between Independent Living and Department of Labor and Regulation focuses on supporting youth adults, ages 18-24, who are out of school and either currently in or aged out of foster care. It offers post-secondary training, work-based learning opportunities, and on-the-job training where employers receive wage reimbursements for helping participants gain essential job skills. The goal is to provide these individuals with career development resources and employment opportunities.
October 2024	Adoption Stakeholders	A follow-up meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services to discuss the implementation of the new Post Adoption Services contract.
October 2024	Kinship Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lutheran Social Services provided input at the October Kinship Workgroup Meeting. A monthly meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services and CPS to discuss the Kinship Home study, Kinship Locator, and Kinship Navigator contract for services.
October 2024	Permanency Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A meeting between Department of Education and Department of Social Services was held this month. Child Protection Services had weekly phone calls with the Social Security Administration regarding children's benefits.
October 2024	Residential Treatment Stakeholders	The Upper Level Placement Program Specialist, Assistant Director, and Family First Program Specialist met with the staff at Lutheran Social Services to tour Summit Oaks and Arise Emergency Shelter East. The team also met with staff from Children's Inn Shelter for Family Safety to tour their new facility.
October 2024	Foster Parents	A Stakeholder Survey was sent to foster parents this month.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
November 2024	Youth	Two Young Voices members were invited to the November Rapid City Sound of Hope movie presented by the Governor's Office. These youth were seated in the VIP section and thanked in person by Secretary Althoff for being present.
November 2024	Prevention Stakeholders	A contract was signed with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment to form a parent collaborative workgroup. An initial meeting was held this month to discuss next steps. Once parent surveys are received, the responses will be utilized to inform next steps with this project.
November 2024	Adoptive Parents	A Webinar on Post Adoption Services and Adoption through different agencies was held this month. The webinar was open to all adoptive parents and to the public.
November 2024	Foster Parent Recruitment Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some churches who attended the showing of the "Sound of Hope, the Story of Possum Trot" planned follow up recruitment events this month. Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.
November 2024	ICWA Stakeholders	All 9 tribes were invited to the Kinship Workgroup meeting this month to review the Lutheran Social Services Kinship process. Six tribes attended and participated in the discussion (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe)
November 2024	Kinship	Kinship lived experience was provided at the Kinship Workgroup meeting this month.
November 2024	Foster Parent Recruitment Stakeholders	Approximately 18 different churches from Rapid City had a showing of "Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot". Over 300 individuals attended the showing including several leaders from the Rapid City area such as Mayor Salamun, Governor Noem, Lt. Governor Rhoden, Second Lady Rhoden, and Cabinet Secretary Althoff. The morning following the showing, three "Learn More About Foster Care" cards were received by the Rapid City office.
November 2024	Kinship Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lutheran Social Services provided input during the Kinship Workgroup meeting this month. A monthly meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services to discuss the Kinship Home Study, Kinship Locator, and Kinship Navigator contract for services.
November 2024	Social Security Administration	CPS had weekly phone calls with the Social Security Administration regarding children's benefits.
November 2024	Residential Treatment Stakeholders	The Assistant Director, Upper Level Placement Program Specialist, and Office of Licensing and Accreditation staff toured the Hughes County Juvenile Detention Center Emergency Shelter this month.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
November 2024	Parent	The ICWA Program Specialist had eight parent interactions on ICWA issues this month.
November 2024	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist sent the four IV-E contract tribes an updated listing of Therapeutic Foster Care homes.
December 2024	Foster Parent Recruitment Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ICWA Program Specialist sent Oglala Sioux Tribe a reminder for the Foster and Adoptive Parent Training. The ICWA Program Specialist emailed two individuals from Friends of the Children-HeSapa to facilitate a meeting with the Stronger Families Together Program Specialist. The ICWA Program Specialist sent a link to the National Foster Parent Association training Institute to the contract tribes for foster parent development. The ICWA Program Specialist sent the December Flyer for online learning for foster/kinship parents to the contract tribes.
December 2024	Youth/ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist notified all 9 tribes of Independent Living Services that can benefit youth ages 14-21 who are in out of home care or who have aged out of custody. The Program Specialist also highlighted beneficial financial incentives for youth who participate in these services.
December 2024	Youth	The Independent Living Services Program Specialist engaged 2 Young Voices members and requested their assistance to present their lived experience during foster parent training in January. Both youth confirmed their attendance.
December 2024	Parent	Parent survey results were submitted to the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment for analysis and next steps towards focus group meetings.
December 2024	Foster Parent	The Strategy and Outcomes Program Specialist analyzed the results from the foster parent survey this month.
December 2024	Community Stakeholders	The Strategy and Outcomes Program Specialist analyzed the results from the stakeholder survey this month.
December 2024	Prevention Stakeholders	A Peer Review was held in Rapid City at Catholic Social Services and partner community agencies were invited to participate.
December 2024	Foster Parent Recruitment Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A follow-up meeting from the Rapid City South of Hope showing was held. A subgroup was developed to reach out to other churches whose members attended the showing in order to keep the momentum of the movie moving in the church community. Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
December 2024	Community Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services to discuss implementation of the new Post Adoption Contract. • Collaboration occurred with Private Agencies to host a webinar regarding adoption options. This webinar was available to the public.
December 2024	Social Security Administration	CPS had weekly phone calls with the Social Security Administration regarding children's benefits.
December 2024	Community Stakeholders	CPS attended the South Dakota Association of Youth Care Providers (SDAYCP) quarterly meeting this month.
December 2024	Parent	The ICWA Program Specialist had three parent interactions regarding ICWA issues this month.
January 2025	Youth	The youth survey results were analyzed and included in the Statewide Assessment.
January 2025	Parent	The Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment reviewed and analyzed the results of the parent survey. The results were reviewed by the Continuous Quality Improvement Team.
January 2025	Community Stakeholders	The foster parent and stakeholder survey results were analyzed and entered in the Statewide Assessment.
January 2025	Kinship	Kinship caregivers participated in the Kinship Workgroup meeting this month and provided feedback regarding the drafted Kinship Licensing Standards.
January 2025	Foster Parent Recruitment Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger Families Together shared a booth with the Department of Tribal Relations at the Lakota Nation Invitation. Over 548 individuals stopped at the booth and were spoken to about the need for more Native American foster families. Three "Learn More About Foster Care" cards were received after this event. • Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.
January 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist attended the Oglala Sioux Task Force meeting this month.
January 2025	Community Stakeholders	A virtual meeting was held with the Department of Labor/Career Launch who reported that they have participated in 3 Transition Meetings and have 1 young adult enrolled into their program.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
January 2025	Community Stakeholders	A monthly meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services to discuss the Kinship Home Study, Kinship Locating, and Kinship Navigator contracts.
January 2025	Social Security Administration	CPS had weekly phone calls with the Social Security Administration regarding children's benefits.
January 2025	Youth	Two Young Voices members presented their lived experience at the foster parent training in hopes of recruiting more foster providers to take older youth.
January 2025	Parent	The ICWA Program Specialist had three parent interactions on ICWA issues this month.
January 2025	Foster Parent Recruitment Stakeholders	Region 4 Foster and Adoptive Care Recruitment Team hosted their first in-person meeting which was held on the Crow Creek Indian Reservation.
January 2025	Youth	A Continuous Quality Improvement Program Specialist met with the Lutheran Social Services Community Resource Persons to discuss ways to engage with youth and to have youth with lived experience involved.
February 2025	Youth	Four Young Voices members presented at the group and residential treatment providers quarterly meeting. Following the meeting, the youth attended the social event where they engaged one-on-one with other meeting participants.
February 2025	Adoptive Families	The Lutheran Social Services newsletter was sent to adoptive families to introduce the new LSS Post Adoption program and invite adoptive families to support groups, trainings, and the Facebook group for additional support. Adopted youth were also invited to attend a support group for children who have been adopted.
February 2025	Foster Care Recruitment Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist attempted to engage with Friends He Sapa to collaborate with Stronger Families Together for foster care recruitment.
February 2025	Foster Parent	The Independent Living Program Specialist presented information about the ILS program and resources available to older youth to include CRP case management at the foster parent training.
February 2025	Community Stakeholders	The Learning and Development Program Specialist connected with South Dakota Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault to provide 4, in person trainings per year for staff.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
February 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist participated in a Tribal Communities Workgroup to begin planning an ICWA Conference.
February 2025	Foster/Adoptive Parent	A meeting was held with the WRAP Around Program director to provide information about the program to the Lutheran Social Services Post Adoption Team.
February 2025	Adoption Stakeholders	A meeting was held with the National Training Institute to continue discussion about ways the NTI Adoption Competency Training can be implemented in South Dakota.
February 2025	Community Stakeholders	A monthly meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services to discuss the Kinship Home Study, Kinship Locating, and Kinship Navigator Contracts.
February 2025	Social Security Administration	CPS had weekly phone calls with the Social Security Administration regarding children's benefits.
February 2025	Parents	The ICWA Program Specialist had eight parent interactions regarding ICWA issues this month.
February 2025	Community Stakeholders	Surveys were sent to all individuals who reported abuse/neglect.
February 2025	Foster Recruitment Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Dakota Kids Belong hosted their Spearfish event, "Celebrating Our Foster Care Community: Every Step of the Way!". Office of Licensing Supervisor represented DSS by speaking at the event and recognized the work foster families, OLA, and CPS staff do for children and families. Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.
February 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist attended Oglala Sioux Tribe Task Force Meetings this month.
March 2025	Youth	Nine youth were invited to be interviewed as stakeholders for the CFSR process to provide insight from youth with lived experience. No youth attended this scheduled virtual meeting.
March 2025	Youth	A presentation about child welfare and CPS was given to middle schoolers through the Discovery Days program.
March 2025	Youth	The Independent Living Services Program Specialist and a Community Resource Person had a scheduled Zoom meeting to prepare 8 youth who committed to being part of the Youth Focus Group with the Federal Partners. One youth attended the meeting and agreed to represent and lead the youth discussions.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
March 2025	Foster Parents	A group of foster parents participated in stakeholder interviews for the CFSR.
March 2025	Adoptive Families	The Lutheran Social Services newsletter was sent to adoptive families to introduce the new LSS Post Adoption Program and invite adoptive families to support groups, trainings, and the Facebook group for additional support.
March 2025	Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A contract was finalized with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment to create a parent workgroup. One-on-one interviews were conducted this month to continue progress towards implementation of the workgroup. • A group of parents from across the state were invited to participate in stakeholder interviews for the CFSR. Two caregivers attended the interview.
March 2025	Community Stakeholders	Community stakeholders, both contracted and public agencies, participated in stakeholder interviews for the CFSR.
March 2025	Prevention Stakeholders	The Center for Disabilities was asked to share information related to resources and current trends in the disability field relative to children at the next Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Board meeting.
March 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist had collaborative meetings with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and Oglala Sioux Tribe this month.
March 2025	Independent Living Program Stakeholders	The Independent Living Services Program Specialist and Community Resource Persons Supervisor met virtually with the Housing Partners through Yankton and the surrounding counties. Yankton housing is interested in partnering with DSS and Lutheran Social Services through a Memorandum of Understanding to provide FYI vouchers in their county and also the counties of Tripp, Bon Homme, Gregory, and the city of Lake Andes. These vouchers would allow young adults to apply for Section 8 housing, but be moved to the top of the waiting list and receive assistance for rent.
March 2025	Community Stakeholders	A monthly meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services regarding Post Adoption service developments.
March 2025	Community Stakeholders	A meeting was held with the National Center for Adoption Competent Mental Health Services and the South Dakota Department of Behavioral Services to discuss a Technical Assistance opportunity through the National Center which would provide the group technical assistance with a team of subject matter experts to facilitate cross-systems collaboration between Child Welfare and Mental Health Systems.
March 2025	Community Stakeholders	Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
March 2025	Kinship Workgroup	A survey was sent to the Kinship Workgroup regarding input for the new proposed kinship licensing standards.
March 2025	Community Stakeholders	A monthly meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services to discuss the Kinship Home Study, Kinship Locating, and Kinship Navigator contracts.
March 2025	Social Security Administration	Child Protection Services had weekly phone calls with the Social Security Administration regarding children's benefits.
March 2025	Parents	The ICWA Program Specialist had 7 parent interactions on ICWA issues this month.
March 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist attended Oglala Sioux Tribe Task Force meetings this month.
March 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	Tribal Independent Living Skills training was held this month. Ten participants from Oglala Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe attended.
March 2025	Kinship	Kinship Licensing Training was provided and all 9 tribes were invited. Sixteen participants from Oglala Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs were present.
April 2025	Youth	The Independent Living Program Specialist reached out to 2 youth with lived experiences to share their experience and the importance of caseworker contact at the upcoming Supervisor and Management Team meeting.
April 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The Oglala Sioux Tribe Family Developer and Crow Creek ICWA Department joined the Stronger Families Together Steering Committee.
April 2025	Kinship Stakeholders	The drafted Kinship Licensing Standards were sent to the Kinship Workgroup and CPS Kinship Caregivers to gather input for the new proposed kinship licensing standards.
April 2025	Office of Licensing and Accreditation	The Independent Living Program Specialist presented information regarding Independent Living Services to the Office of Licensing and Accreditation staff.
April 2025	Regional Teams	The Continuous Quality Improvement Team collaborated with all regions to identify stakeholders to engage in CQI planning.
April 2025	Prevention Stakeholders	Head Start data was presented to the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Board. Information on services was shared with Lifeline informally and through formal information requests to help with service planning through faith-based community partnerships.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
April 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	Oglala Sioux Tribe's President passed a resolution declaring April as <i>Wakanyeja Wiyawapi Ethanhan</i> "Month of the Child". This information was shared with the Child Protection Management Team.
April 2025	Community Stakeholders	The Independent Living Services Program Specialist, Lutheran Social Services, Yankton Housing Redevelopment Commission, and the South Dakota Housing Development Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the expansion of the FYI vouchers within Yankton and the surrounding counties of Trip, Bon Homme, Gregory, and the city of Lake Andes.
April 2025	Community Stakeholders	Monthly meetings were held with Lutheran Social Services regarding post adoption service developments and frequent contact regarding planning for the upcoming Adoption Conference.
April 2025	Community Stakeholders	A monthly meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services to discuss the Kinship Home Study, Kinship Locating, and Kinship Navigator contracts.
April 2025	Social Security Administration	CPS had weekly phone calls with the Social Security Administration regarding children's benefits.
April 2025	Community Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPS and Abbott House held a monthly meeting to discuss Treatment Foster Care Services. • Children's Home Society and CPS held a meeting to discuss SFY26 Treatment Foster Care contract. • Drafted Kinship Licensing Standards were sent to all Private Child Placement Agencies.
April 2025	Community Stakeholders	Weekly GRIT meetings occurred and were ongoing.
April 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist attended Oglala Sioux Tribe Task Force meetings this month.
April 2025	Prevention Stakeholders	Efforts to promote child abuse prevention were hosted in April throughout the state in various platforms.
April 2025	Parents	The ICWA Program Specialist had eight parent interactions on ICWA issues this month.
April 2025	Staff	The Independent Living Program Specialist presented about the Independent Living Services Program to the Vermillion CPS staff.
April 2025	Community Stakeholders	Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children's Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
May 2025	Adoptive Parents	A newsletter was sent to adoptive parents regarding post adoption services.
May 2025	Parents	Parent feedback was captured through the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment feedback youth. An initial report was received from the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment.
May 2025	Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two young adults who have aged out of DSS care spoke at the Supervisor and Management Team meeting. The youth shared their person stories, spoke about caseworkers who impacted them, and the importance of workers being consistent and how those relationships have impacted them into adulthood. A request has been submitted from the Rapid City CPS office for Young Voices to speak to staff during their all staff meeting in June. The presentation would highlight the importance of relationships with youth and their workers.
May 2025	Foster Parent Recruitment Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “May the 4th Be With You” was held in Pierre, SD. This community event brought together DSS Child Protection, the Office of Licensing and Accreditation, and several community stakeholders to raise awareness and recruit foster families. The event also highlighted support for families such as the WRAP program. Volunteers from local schools helped run children’s activities including inflatables, face painting, and a photo booth. Marketing efforts included social media, email invites, and outreach through local churches. Three “Learn to Know More” cards were received. Region 1 recruitment team comprised of stakeholders from Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Children’s Home Society, Lutheran Social Services, South Dakota Kids Belong, church partners, foster parents, and Catholic Social Services met to discuss Region 1 recruitment efforts.
May 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist made outreach efforts to gain letters of support or testimony for the Administrative Rules Committee. Letters were received by the Oglala Sioux Tribe CPS Director and ICWA Coalition Lead.
May 2025	ICWA Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist facilitated a Stronger Families Together meeting with the Department of Tribal Relations.
May 2025	Kinship	A Kinship caregiver provided written input regarding the new proposed kinship licensing standards for the interim rules committee.
May 2025	Legal Representatives	Legal representatives were asked for input regarding Program Improvement Plan Initiatives during the State’s Attorney’s Conference.
May 2025	Foster Parent Recruitment Stakeholders	The ICWA Program Specialist and Stronger Families Together Program Specialist met with Friends of the Children He Sapa Director and Program Director. This program offers services in Rapid City and within 30 miles of the Pine Ridge Reservation. They have paid, professionally trained mentors for Native American children, starting at age 4-6 for 12 years. They also offer assistance to the children’s parents in accessing community services, including transportation. They would like to create a Memorandum of Understanding with DSS in order to keep track of children if they come into care. The Program Director is willing to participate in the Black Hills’ Region foster and adoptive care recruitment team as a community representative.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
May 2025	Community Stakeholders	A virtual meeting was held with representatives from Vermillion Housing, SD Housing Authority and Lutheran Social Services to discuss a potential partnership for FYI vouchers to assist young adults who have experienced foster care and are at risk of homelessness in the Vermillion area.
May 2025	Community Stakeholders	Monthly meeting was held with Lutheran Social Services regarding post adoption service developments and frequent contact regarding planning for the upcoming Adoption Conference.
May 2025	Community Stakeholders	Correspondence with the National Center for Adoption competent Mental Health Services occurred this month. Permission was granted to be accepted as their next state to participate in an 18-month intensive technical assistance project which will tentatively begin in July 2025.
May 2025	Community Stakeholders	CPS and Lutheran Social Services held a monthly meeting to discuss the Kinship Home Study, Kinship Locating, and Kinship Navigator contracts.
May 2025	Social Security Administration	CPS had weekly phone calls with the Social Security Administration regarding children's benefits.
May 2025	Community Stakeholders	CPS and Abbott House held a monthly meeting to discuss Treatment Foster Care services.
May 2025	Community Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly GRIT meetings are ongoing. • Psychotropic Medication Workgroup met and had participation by outside stakeholder representatives of provider agencies.
June 2025	Youth	Music in the Park event was organized by The Right Turn. DSS assisted in sponsoring a children-focused musician to perform.
June 2025	Parent	Additional referrals for parent input opportunities were shared with consultant (The Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment). Continued development occurred regarding a contract with CPCM for fatherhood symposium events in August 2025.
June 2025	Community Stakeholders	Lifeline presented information on their parenting education program plans. Two churches will undergo training in July 2025.
June 2025	Youth	One Young Voices member spoke at the Homeless Summit Conference in Pierre. This session offered provider's insights into how to better meet the needs of young adults experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Month	Stakeholder Type	Engagement
June 2025	Adoptive, Foster, and Kinship Parents	The Adoption Conference was held on June 12, 2025. All adoptive, foster, and kinship parents were invited to attend.
June 2025	Community Stakeholders	Psychotropic Medication Workgroup met this month and had participation by outside stakeholder representatives of provider agencies.

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025 FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT & RETENTION EVENTS

Attachment A2

Recruitment Events

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
August 28, 2024	The Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot Showing	Sioux Falls, SD	This special movie screening about the true story of Donna & Reverend WC Martin and their local church in Possum Trot, TX in which 22 families adopted 77 children, was organized by the Governor's Office in collaboration with the Department of Social Services (DSS). Governor Noem invited representatives from local churches to attend. Stronger Families Together (SFT) provided swag and distributed information on the need for more foster homes and the licensing process. Governor Noem and a local foster family spoke at the event.
September 12, 2024	Lunch and Learn with the Optimist Club	Watertown, SD	Stronger Families Together was invited to participate in a Lunch and Learn sponsored by the Watertown Optimist Club. A representative from the Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA) spoke about the need for more foster homes and distributed SFT swag and materials.
September 16, 2024	Foster Fest	YMCA- Pierre, SD	Organized by the Region 3 Foster/Adoptive Recruitment and Retention Team, this event featured collaboration among DSS, Sotera Youth and Family Services, Capital Area Children's Services, and South Dakota Kids Belong. SFT swag and foster care information were provided to attendees.
October 3-4, 2024	Annual Community Response to Child Abuse Conference	Sioux Falls, SD	Stronger Families Together hosted an exhibitor table staffed by local Child Protection Services (CPS) and OLA. Attendees received informational materials, SFT swag, and a chance to win a small door prize.
October 4, 2024	South Dakota Kids Belong Fundraising & Recruitment Event	Rapid City, SD	This event highlighted children in DSS adoptive custody with posters and a featured I Belong Project video. DSS Cabinet Secretary Matt Althoff spoke at the event and Rapid City Mayor Jason Salamun served as the keynote speaker. Mayor Salamun shared his own experiences of being in foster care as a child and highlighted the need for more foster families in Rapid City and the Black Hills.
October 25, 2024	Trunk or Treat at Siegrist Library	Vermillion, SD	Held annually, this community Halloween event draws many families. SFT participated by handing out branded stickers and candy, and providing information on the need for foster care.
October 29, 2024	The Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot Showing	Aberdeen, SD	Foster families were encouraged to bring a friend to this event. The local movie theater donated popcorn and soda. After the screening, DSS shared information about the urgent need for more foster homes and distributed SFT brochures.

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
October 29, 2024	The Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot Showing	Rapid City, SD	In collaboration with local churches, DSS, and the local recruitment and retention team, area churches and youth groups were invited to a special showing of The Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot. Governor Kristi Noem and then-Lt. Governor Larry Rhoden attended the event. Governor Noem introduced a local foster family, who shared their experience and spoke about the critical need for additional foster homes. (Note: Larry Rhoden now serves as the Governor of South Dakota.)
November 10, 2024	Sunday Belong Event- Homestead Bible Church	Hot Springs, SD	Hosted by South Dakota Kids Belong, this faith-based recruitment event featured a panel discussion with DSS, a local foster parent, and SDKB representatives. The conversation focused on the foster care experience and ways the church community can get involved.
November 17, 2024	Church-Based Follow-Up to The Sound of Hope Screening	Rapid City, SD	Open Bible Church hosted a follow-up event to the Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot screening. The church pastor and a foster parent who serves as the Wrap Coordinator shared personal stories and encouraged congregants to support foster families. Representatives from DSS were available to answer questions about the licensing process. This church is collaborating with other local churches to bring more viewings of the movie as well as to engage in becoming church friendly.
December 2, 2024	Festival of Trees- Stronger Families Together Display	Chamberlain, SD	Stronger Families Together decorated a themed Christmas tree as part of the Chamberlain Chamber of Commerce's Festival of Trees. A video highlighting the event and the Stronger Families Together (SFT) tree was shared on the Chamber's social media. DSS also featured the tree and local staff on its own platforms to raise awareness about foster care needs.
December 19, 2024	Lakota Nation Invitational (LNI)	Rapid City, SD	At this major Native American basketball and cultural event DSS hosted a vendor table in partnership with the Department of Tribal Relations. Swag and recruitment materials were also shared with Oglala Sioux Tribe – Child Protection Services for distribution as a collaboration. An infant's Star Quilt was featured as a giveaway, attracting families to the table. The event highlighted the urgent need for Native American foster families to help children remain connected to their culture and community.
January 16, 2025	Children's Day at the Capitol	Pierre, SD	Child Protection Services and the Office of Licensing and Accreditation collaborated with the Division of Behavioral Health at a shared vendor table. In collaboration, CPS and DSS engaged with legislators and visitors, highlighting the greatest areas of foster home need (Black Hills, Region 3, and Region 4). SFT information and swag were distributed during the event.
February 21, 2025	South Dakota Kids Belong Fundraising & Recruitment Event	Spearfish, SD	"Celebrating Our Foster Care Community; Every Step of the Way!" Although Governor Larry and First Lady Sandy Rhoden were unable to attend in person, their video message expressing support for SDKB and the Stronger Families Together initiative was warmly received by attendees. Andrea Hemeyer, Office of Licensing and Accreditation supervisor, spoke about the dedication of current foster families and emphasized the need for more. Cade Thompson, a young local Christian recording artist now based in Nashville, TN, delivered an acoustic performance. Through music and humor, he effectively conveyed the serious need for more foster families in South Dakota communities.

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
March 6, 2025	Stanley County Elementary School Family Night	Pierre Area, SD	DSS hosted a booth at this school-based event to promote the need for foster care and explain the licensing process to families in the area. SFT swag and material was distributed.
March 8, 2025	Custer Family Resource Fair	Custer, SD	Stronger Families Together and South Dakota Kids Belong partnered at this local fair, sharing a vendor booth and engaging with families about how to become foster parents or support foster families in their community.
March 23, 2025	The Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot Community Screening	Hot Springs, SD	Hosted by Hot Springs Right to Life at the Mueller Civic Center Theater, this event featured South Dakota Kids Belong discussing how to build a foster-friendly community. In collaboration, CPS and OLA emphasized the need for foster homes to support large sibling groups, youth with complex needs, and children who benefit from staying connected to their community and culture.
March 27, 2025	Rapid City Church Coalition Recruitment Event	Rapid City, SD	Formed as a sub-workgroup of the Black Hills Recruitment and Retention Team, the Rapid City Church Coalition partnered with local nonprofit Love Inc. to host a recruitment event aimed at engaging more faith communities in foster care support. Churches including Open Bible and Fountain Springs donated lunch for attendees. DSS was present to lead a Q&A session and answer questions related to the foster care process.
April 4, 2025	CASA Child Abuse Awareness Event	Rapid City, SD-Mother Butler Center	Hosted at the Native American community center, this event focused on raising awareness of child abuse and promoting the need for Native American foster homes. DSS provided Stronger Families Together culturally relevant information about why Native American Families were needed as well as swag.
April 8, 2025	Early Learners Celebration- Week of the Young Child	Brookings, SD	This event, hosted by the Brookings United Way, brought together early childhood providers and families. Stronger Families Together was present to raise awareness about the ongoing need for foster families and to share information about the licensing process.
April 12, 2025	Easter Fair- K.O. Lee Library and 5 th Circuit CASA	Aberdeen, SD	In collaboration with CASA and CPS, OLA staff participated in this family-friendly Easter event by sharing Stronger Families Together materials, swag, and information about how to become a licensed foster family. The event featured an Easter egg hunt and attracted many local families.
May 2, 2025	Family Unity Day	Lower Brule Indian Reservation-SD Community Center Fair	To celebrate Family Unity Day, CPS and OLA attended this event hosted at the Lower Brule Community Center. The event focused on the recruitment of Native American foster families and shared Stronger Families Together resources with attendees.

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
May 4, 2025	Foster Fest	Pierre, SD-Faith Lutheran Church	This family-centered recruitment event was held in collaboration with Stronger Families Together, Sotera Youth and Family Services, Capital Area Counseling Services, and South Dakota Kids Belong. The theme, "May the Force Be With You," featured food trucks, inflatables, a photo booth, and face painting. The event took place after church services and focused on educating visitors about the need for foster families and how to support those currently fostering.
May 16, 2025	The Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot Movie Showing	Sioux Falls, SD	Prairie Hills Church hosted a community screening of The Sound of Hope. Stronger Families Together and South Dakota Kids Belong attended to speak about becoming a foster-friendly community and emphasized the need for additional support and resources for children in foster care.
June 5, 2025	Fort Thompson Regional Community Health Fair	Fort Thompson, SD	Held on the Crow Creek Indian Reservation and sponsored by Indian Health Services, this health fair featured participation from the Office of Licensing and Accreditation. The focus was on recruiting Native American foster families, with brochures and swag available to visitors.
June 5, 2025	Conference Call with Kathleen Belanger and Rebekah Weigel	Conference Call	<p>A collaborative conference call was held with Kathleen Belanger, Professor Emeritus of Social Work at Stephen F. Austin State University, and Rebekah Weigel, co-producer and writer of The Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot. Participants included Program Manager with the Office of Licensing and Accreditation; Child Protection Services Program Specialist; DSS foster/adoptive parent and member of Open Bible Church in Rapid City; and Community Catalyst for South Dakota Kids Belong.</p> <p>The purpose of the call was to support Kathleen Belanger's research efforts on behalf of the film's producers to gather information on where the movie has been shown, who has attended, and the outcomes following viewings. Kathleen, at the request of the producers of the movie, is working on the development of educational materials for students, child welfare professionals, and foster/adoptive families.</p> <p>Discussion included the multiple showings of the film in South Dakota and what community outcomes were observed, and some challenges with tracking inquiries towards licensure. Catlin Young and Kristen Keller shared local efforts, including the Rapid City Foster Friendly Church Coalition's engagement strategies to mobilize churches to host the film and support foster and adoptive families.</p> <p>Kathleen, who completed her dissertation on the Possum Trot adoptions and worked directly with the Bennett Chapel families, expressed interest in partnering with South Dakota to develop a Faith Community Engagement Toolkit. She shared research demonstrating the impact of faith-based involvement in foster and adoptive recruitment. Further exploration of this toolkit will occur in SFY2026.</p>
July 19-20, 2025	Hills Alive Festival	Rapid City, SD	This large-scale Christian music festival, sponsored by LifeLight Communications, will feature a strong collaborative presence from South Dakota Kids Belong, Stronger Families Together, and South Dakota child placement agencies, and Esthers Rising (non-profit to support human trafficking victims). South Dakota Kids Belong has been awarded stage time both days and have invited Rapid City Mayor Jason Salamun to speak in support of foster care and family recruitment efforts.

Support and Retention Events

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
Ongoing	Foster Friendly Church Coalition	Rapid City, SD	The Foster Friendly Church Coalition is a sub-workgroup of the Black Hills Regional Recruitment and Retention Team. This coalition was created following the Sound of Hope: The Story of Possum Trot screening in Rapid City as an ongoing strategy to engage faith communities in foster care support and recruitment. The group meets monthly at the Fountain Springs Church Business Office and includes faith leaders, DSS staff, foster families and nonprofit partners working collaboratively to support local foster families and promote foster-friendly initiatives across Rapid City and the surrounding areas.
Ongoing (see specific dates below)	Resource Training	Rapid City, SD	Foster, kinship, and adoptive families, along with their friends, family members, and child welfare professionals, are invited to attend regular support and training events designed to build skills, encourage connection, and offer community support. Each event typically includes a free meal, professional childcare, and resource-sharing opportunities. These are organized as part of the BH Recruitment and Retention team, are organized and held at the Fountain Springs church.
July 15, 2024	Human Trafficking 101- Resource Training	Rapid City, SD	Speaker from the South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation, Mary Holsworth Foster/adoptive/kinship caregivers received foundational training on the signs and risks of human trafficking.
July 25, 2024	Back-to-School Support Event	Rapid City, SD	Hosted by Light of Mine Ranch at Run Wild Indoor Adventure Park in Rapid City, this event supported families preparing for the new school year. Free backpacks filled with school supplies were distributed to children in foster care and a free dinner was provided for participating families.
October 21, 2024	Dysregulation & Parenting Discussion- Resource Training	Rapid City, SD	Presenter from the Children's Home Society, Tifanie Petro, provided caregivers practical parenting strategies to address dysregulation and explosive behaviors in children.
January 20, 2025	Youth Panel & Foster Care Awareness Event- Resource Training	Rapid City, SD	DSS Program Specialist Tanya Septka and two foster care alumni presented to foster/kinship/adoptive families. Youth shared their lived experiences in foster care—highlighting both challenges and successes—and answered audience questions.
April 21, 2025	A Parent's Journey- Resource Training	Rapid City, SD	Hollie Strand, a DSS foster parent and Forensic Examiner with the Pennington County Sheriff's Office, spoke about the negative impacts for children and youth of social networking, time management, stress, addiction, bullying, and exploitation.

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
May 2, 2025	Hope for the Journey Conference	Rapid City, SD	Hosted by Open Bible Church in Rapid City, this two-day training was open to all caregivers (foster/kinship/birth), professionals, and church leaders in the area. This event was free to all participants and supported by Stronger Families Together partners. The conference explored Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) through five teaching sessions. Attendees were equipped with tools to build trust and connection with children and youth in their care who have experienced trauma

Stronger Families Together Workgroups

Name	Purpose	Participants	Responsibilities/Mission/Vision
Stronger Families Together Steering Committee	The Steering Committee was established at the launch of the Stronger Families Together initiative to guide strategic planning and implementation of recruitment and retention efforts across South Dakota.	Child Protection Services, Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Private child placement and adoption agencies, Tribal agencies, Nonprofit organizations, Faith communities, Individuals with lived experience, Business and community leaders	<p>Mission: To recruit, retain, and support foster and adoptive families by developing recruitment strategies, planning monthly activities, guiding messaging, and sharing stories that reflect our values.</p> <p>Vision: To strengthen community collaboration across South Dakota to recruit, retain, and support foster and adoptive families.</p> <p>Responsibilities: Develop and monitor recruitment strategies, plan and implement monthly recruitment activities, guide messaging for the Stronger Families Together Initiative, collect and share stories that reflect the initiative's guiding principles.</p>
Building Capacity for the Steering Committee	This workgroup was created to increase engagement and consistent participation in the Steering Committee. The goal is to build a highly committed committee aligned with the SFT initiative's mission and principles.	Members of the Steering Committee and the Stronger Families Together Program Specialist	Development of a clear and unified vision, mission, and goals, review and refinement of meeting frequency, roles, and membership, creation of recommendations to improve Steering Committee operations.
DSS/Communications Monthly Team	This cross-agency team meets monthly to support and enhance recruitment messaging and outreach efforts.	Representatives from DSS Communications, Child Protection Services, Office of Licensing and Accreditation, and South Dakota Kids Belong	<p>Team Goals: Collaborate on strategic action planning to support targeted recruitment, Develop engaging social media content, press releases, and storytelling assets, Ensure that all messaging is aligned with monthly recruitment themes and statewide goals, Inspire community involvement and elevate awareness of the need for foster and adoptive families across South Dakota.</p>

Name	Purpose	Participants	Responsibilities/Mission/Vision
Annual Recruitment Activities Plan	An Annual Recruitment Activities Plan is developed each year to guide statewide efforts. The plan aligns monthly recruitment activities with strategic themes and messaging.	Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Stronger Families Together Program Specialist	Looking ahead to SFY2026, the plan will include clearly defined problems and long-term objectives, action steps, benchmarks, and measurable timelines, and strategies for assessing progress toward recruitment goals.
Department of Tribal Relations Collaboration	Foster collaboration between the Department of Tribal Relations, Department of Social Services, and SD Tribes.	Representatives from Child Protection Services (CPS), Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA), Department of Tribal Relations, and tribal representatives.	The group meets monthly to foster collaboration between the Department of Tribal Relations and the Department of Social Services (DSS) and enhance tribal engagement and develop partnerships to recruit Native American foster families.
Youth Bureau of Speakers- Ongoing Planning and Collaboration	Design effective recruitment events and outreach strategies involving youth voices.	The SFT Program Specialist, Lutheran Social Services (Community Resource staff), and the Independent Living Program Specialist	Throughout the year, all Independent Living Services (ILS) events—including youth workshops and workgroup meetings—have integrated discussions with youth and their supportive adults on using lived experience to support recruitment efforts. Strategies include in-person presentations and social media engagement.
Recruitment Toolkit for Foster Parents	The goal of this team is to develop and distribute a toolkit to empower current foster families to become active advocates in recruiting new families.	CPS, OLA, DSS Communications, private child placement agencies, a foster parent representative with lived experience, tribal partners, and South Dakota Kids Belong.	The group meets regularly throughout the year and is led by a supervisor from the Office of Licensing and Accreditation and foster family representatives. The toolkit is publicly available on www.strongerfamiliestogether.sd.gov

Name	Purpose	Participants	Responsibilities/Mission/Vision
Virtual Adoption Fair	The Virtual Adoption Fair was developed to showcase children in DSS adoptive custody using a child-centered and family-centered approach to expedite placement.	Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, Adoption Program Specialists	<p>Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey sent to adoptive families assessing how many families are highly interested in adoption to gauge interest in a potential “reverse match” approach. Reverse match approach, families share information about themselves and their adoption preferences, allowing workers to assess potential matches with waiting children.- This approach is still being developed and proposed as a strategy. In collaboration with South Dakota Kids Belong, a training video was created to guide CPS adoption specialists on using I Belong Project videos to recruit adoptive families for children/youth who do not have identified placements The format of the videos has evolved to include narratives from the child’s Family Services Specialist, offering personalized and strengths-based information about each child. Additional training sessions with CPS staff were held throughout SFY 2025
Stronger Families Together Newsletter	Produced quarterly, the newsletter is designed to engage and retain existing foster families, celebrate and highlight their contributions, and provide relevant resources and updates.	<p>Team Membership: DSS Communications, CPS, OLA, private placement agencies.</p> <p>Invitations have been extended to tribal representatives and individuals with lived experience.</p> <p>Distribution Includes: DSS, Private Agencies, Foster Families, Tribal Foster Families, Child Welfare Professionals Statewide</p>	Starting in June 2025, each newsletter will include a SurveyMonkey link to gather feedback and improve future editions.
Black Hills Foster and Adoption Recruitment Team	To collaborate with community partners in protecting and supporting families and promoting permanency and stability for youth.	Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, Continuous Quality Improvement Program Specialist, Community Stakeholders	The group meets monthly in person and virtually to provide services and support to families in crisis, raise awareness about the need for foster and adoptive families, and ensure every child has the opportunity to grow up in a safe, loving home. The group developed a sub-workgroup- The Rapid City Foster Friendly Church Coalition.

Name	Purpose	Participants	Responsibilities/Mission/Vision
Region 3 (Pierre Area) Foster and Adoption Recruitment Team	To foster an informed community that builds relationships and provides resources for foster families—significantly increasing and sustaining the number of homes available for children in need.	Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, Continuous Quality Improvement Program Specialist, Office of Licensing and Accreditation, South Dakota Kids Belong, Sotera Youth and Children Services, and local placement agencies	The group focuses on the Pierre area, the region's most densely populated area, and organizes multiple events to recruit foster families.
Region 4 Foster and Adoption Recruitment Team- Chamberlain, Mission, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe	To support and inform tribal communities about foster care, with an emphasis on recruiting and sustaining Native American foster families.	Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Community Stakeholders	Meets monthly to focus on addressing barriers such as limited housing availability for potential foster families. The team strategizes culturally appropriate recruitment messaging and community engagement.
Region 6 Foster and Adoption Recruitment Team (Sioux Falls Area)	To organize and activate the existing community support system for foster families and identify targeted recruitment strategies.	This team is currently in the development phase and will launch in SFY2026	While Sioux Falls has a high number of children in foster care, it also has a large pool of foster families. The focus of this group will be to mobilize a highly engaged community, address gaps for youth with complex needs and/or large sibling groups, and strengthen collaboration among service providers, faith communities, and civic organizations.

QUALITY ASSURANCE INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

Attachment A3

INTERNAL CASE REVIEWS						
Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
ICWA Fidelity Review	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	ICWA Program Specialist and ICWA Capacity Building Workgroup	This is an internal review.	Assess ICWA compliance and CPS policy and practice.	A randomized sample is reviewed every six months using a standardized review instrument. Findings are reviewed to determine if there is a gap in policy and practice and/or a staff learning/development need.	An ICWA Fidelity Review was completed by the CQI Team in January 2025.
Kinship Fidelity Review	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Permanency Program Specialist and Kinship Workgroup	This is an internal review.	Assess current policy and practice of identifying, locating, informing, and evaluating relatives.	A randomized sample of the children in custody are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument. Findings are reviewed to determine if there is a gap in policy and practice and/or a staff learning/development need.	A Kinship Fidelity Review was completed by the CQI Team in September 2024.
Child Case Plan Fidelity Review	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Permanency Program Specialist	This is an internal review.	Ensure compliance with completing quality child case plans that address needs and services for youth in care.	A randomized sample of the children in custody are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument. Findings are reviewed to determine if there is a gap in policy and practice and/or a staff learning/development need.	A Child Case Plan and Caseworker Visit Fidelity Review was completed in August 2024.
Psychotropic Medication Oversight Review	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Upper Level Placement Program Specialist	Acentra Health	Assess compliance with oversight and monitoring of psychotropic medications for children in care.	A randomized sample of the children in custody are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument. Findings are reviewed to determine if there is a gap in policy and practice and/or a staff learning/development need.	A Psychotropic Medication Oversight Review is occurring in June and July 2025 due to a delay with the agency that provides the case pull. Once the fidelity review is complete, data will be analyzed by the CQI team and shared with the Upper Level Placement Program Specialist. Updates to policy and/or practice will be made based on the findings.
Well-Child Checks	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Permanency Program Specialist	Medical Services	Assess compliance with well-child checks to occur within 30 days of a child entering the agency's care and annually.	Review a list of children, provided by the Department of Health, who did not receive an annual well-child check. The agency reviews documentation to ensure the list is accurate and identify barriers in the child having a well-child check.	A list of children without a well-child check billed to Medicaid in calendar year 2024 was received and reviewed by Child Protection Services in April 2025. The list was reviewed by a CQI Program Specialist to determine accuracy.

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Parent Case Plan and Caseworker Visits	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Protective Services Administrator, CSI Protective Services Program Specialist	This is an internal review.	Assess compliance with engagement of parents and caretakers to complete parent case plans and monthly caseworker visits.	A randomized sample of parents/caretakers who have been involved with the child welfare agency are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument. Findings are reviewed to determine if there is a gap in policy and practice and/or a staff learning/development need.	<p>Parent caseworker visits were captured during the Child Case Plan Fidelity Review in August 2024. Parent Case Plan and Caseworker Visit reports are being monitored by a CQI Program Specialist in SFY2026 to identify trends related to parent case plans and caseworker visits.</p> <p>The Supervisor Advisory Group is reviewing data to determine areas where policy needs enhanced to support positive outcomes.</p> <p>The Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA) Workgroup is reviewing recommendations from ACTION to determine where enhancements should be made to training curriculum, policy, and practice surrounding parent case planning.</p>
Missing in Care	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Permanency Program Specialist, Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	This is an internal review.	Assess compliance with policy for youth who are missing in care and concerted efforts to locate them in a timely manner.	A randomized sample of children who were missing in care are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument. Findings are reviewed to determine if there is a gap in policy and practice and/or a staff learning/development need.	A fidelity review was completed in October 2024.
Youth Education Credits	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	This is an internal review.	Assess compliance with youth receiving educational credits to meet graduation requirements.	A randomized sample of youth 14 and older are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument to ensure educational requirements are being obtained appropriately in order for successful graduation.	In SFY2025 the CQI Team collaborated with the Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist to create a fidelity review tool. This tool will be utilized in SFY2026 when a fidelity review is completed.
Foster Kinship Placement Payment	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Permanency Program Specialist, Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	This is an internal review.	Assess compliance with foster kinship placement provider payments.	A randomized sample licensed kinship providers are reviewed each year to ensure they are receiving the same foster care payment as licensed non-kinship placements.	A fidelity review was completed for SFY2024 (July 1, 2023-06/30/2024). A fidelity review will be completed for SFY2025 in July once the fiscal year has been completed.

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Initial Family Assessment and Intake	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Protective Services Administrator, CSI Protective Services Program Specialist	This is an internal review.	Assess compliance with Initial Family Assessment and Intake protocol.	A randomized sample of assigned reports of maltreatment are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument to ensure compliance with policy. Findings are reviewed to determine if there is a gap in policy and practice and/or a staff learning/development need.	<p>A fidelity review was not completed by the CQI team in SFY2025 due to ACTION's ongoing intake coaching and new training curriculum.</p> <p>In SFY2025, the Initial Family Assessment workgroup received recommendations from ACTION for Child Protection related to the Initial Family Assessment and Intake Process. The workgroup reviewed the recommendations, made revisions to policy, proceeded with training supervisors and staff on the enhanced curriculum.</p>
Family Time	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Permanency Program Specialist	This is an internal review.	Assess compliance to ensure children and families are provided adequate family time.	A randomized sample of children are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument to ensure quality family time is occurring for children and families involved with the child welfare system.	<p>The Permanency Program Specialist and CQI Team collaborated to develop a family time fidelity review tool in SFY2025. This tool will be implemented during the SFY2026 fidelity review.</p>
Split Sibling	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Permanency Program Specialist	This is an internal review.	Assess compliance with siblings being placed together while in foster care.	A randomized sample of siblings who are not placed together are reviewed each year using a standardized review instrument. Findings are reviewed to determine if there is a gap in policy and practice and/or a staff learning/development need.	<p>A fidelity review was completed in May 2025.</p> <p>The CQI Team has been observing regional split sibling meetings in SFY2025 to identify trends and areas for enhancement.</p> <p>The CQI Team has been assisting the Black Hills Region in implementing split sibling meetings in their region. These will begin in June 2025.</p> <p>The CQI Team and Permanency Program Specialist have been reviewing the findings from the split sibling fidelity review and observations during split sibling meetings. Collaboration is occurring to develop split sibling policy and structured meeting guidelines.</p>

INTERNAL WORKGROUPS

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Comprehensive Safety Intervention (CSI) Workgroup	Protective Services Administrator and Comprehensive Safety Intervention Program Specialist	Regional Managers, Supervisors, Family Services Specialists, Continuous Quality Improvement Team	This is an internal workgroup.	Focus on the State's safety model to ensure quality application.	The team meets on a quarterly basis to review policies, trends, complete fidelity reviews, and make recommendations to the CPS Management Team to ensure practice is implemented as intended.	<p>The team began reviewing recommendations from ACTION for Child Protection regarding the Protective Capacity Assessment.</p> <p>In SFY26, the workgroup will continue to review these findings, make enhancements to policy, revise training curriculum, templates, and FACIS screens, and train supervisors and staff on changes.</p>
Psychotropic Medication Workgroup	Upper Level Placement Program Specialist	Family Services Specialists, Supervisors, Permanency Program Specialist, and Independent Living Program Specialist	Aurora Plains, Wellfully, and Human Services Center	To ensure proper oversight of children prescribed psychotropic medications	The group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss data and trends regarding prescribed psychotropic medication for children in foster care. The group works collaboratively to identify areas needing enhancement and then make recommendations to CPS policy and practice. The leader of the group reports back to the Continuous Quality Improvement Team on their findings, progress, and next steps.	<p>The Psychotropic Medication Workgroup has been meeting throughout SFY2025. The workgroup has looked at current policy, specifically surrounding oversight and informed consent.</p> <p>The workgroup has worked collaboratively with placement agencies for youth in care and are comparing their process for medication oversight with the current policy. The workgroup has been presented SFY2024 fidelity review results and in SFY2026 will be presented with the SFY2025 fidelity review results to look at trends.</p>
Adoption Optimization Work Group	Adoption Program Specialist	Adoption Supervisors, Adoption Family Services Specialists	Center for Adoption, Support, and Education Representative	Increase knowledge of adoption staff to better meet the needs of youth moving through permanency in adoption or guardianship settings.	The team meets on a quarterly basis to discuss adoption trends, policy, and enhancements. At this time, the group is working collaboratively with the Center for Adoption, Support, and Education to implement training to increase the capacity of adoption staff.	<p>In SFY2025 the adoption workgroup was created and met for their first meeting in June 2025. In SFY2026 (July 2026) the group will start work with ACTION for Child Protection.</p>

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Kinship Workgroup	Permanency Program Specialist	Director of Field Services, Regional Managers, Supervisors, Kinship Specialists, Family Services Specialists	Youth with Lived Experiences, Kinship Resource with Lived Experiences, Rosebud Sioux Tribe ICWA Directors (Rosebud Sioux Tribe and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe), Sicangu Child and Family Services Family Developers, Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Kinship Home Study Specialists, LSS Kinship Supervisor, and LSS contracted Kinship Locators	Enhance engagement of children and families regarding relative searching	Meet on a monthly basis to discuss relative searching and relative placement for children in the child welfare system. The team identifies barriers and ways to improve the system.	In State Fiscal Year 2025, the workgroup drafted new kinship licensing and adoption approval rules package to eliminate barriers for kinship families to obtain a license and receive Foster Care Maintenance Payments. The rule package was adopted by the Interim Legislative Rules Committee on May 6, 2025 and went into effect on June 2, 2025.
Staff Safety Workgroup	Learning and Development Program Specialist	Family Services Specialists, Supervisors, Regional Managers	DSS Operations, JKM Training Inc, Bureau of Human Resources and Administration	Establish practices to protect child protection workers when completing their job duties.	The group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss trends and needs to support staff safety. Currently the group is working to implement a safety software for staff to utilize in the field when faced with emergent situations. DSS Operations is working through the contract process and once this is in place, implementation will continue. This work group also discusses training opportunities for field staff. Safety Crisis Management Trainings were provided in-person to employees. Safety Crisis Management Instructor Training was completed for twelve attendees.	In State Fiscal Year 2025, the workgroup implemented a pilot for the Becklar staff safety app and eventually implemented this statewide. The workgroup will continue to evaluate the use of the staff safety app in order to identify any areas needing focus and/or enhancements.
INTERNAL PROJECTS						
Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY 2025 Updates
Office of Licensing and Accreditation Interface into FACIS	FACIS Team	CPS Management Team	Office of Licensing and Accreditation Program Manager, Office of Licensing and Accreditation Supervisor, Red Mane Technologies, Bureau of Information and Telecommunications	To gather data needed to support AFCARS and federal requirements and to monitor the placement of children in foster care.	The team has been working collaboratively to develop this interface. Development is still in progress. The tentative roll out day is September 2024.	In State Fiscal Year 2025, the project was put on hold by the Office of Licensing and Accreditation. In April 2025, the project was taken off hold status and a restart meeting was held. The team will continue to meet to review documents in order to ensure all necessary requirements are included.

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Caseworker Visit Project	Supervisor Advisory Group (SAG)	Supervisors	This is an internal project.	Identify ways to overcome barriers that prevent monthly child and caseworker visits to ensure that all children in DSS/CPS custody are safe in their placement setting.	SAG team reviewed FY23 data and reasons for all children that were not seen. SAG group discussed patterns and brought back the information to all supervisors. Short- and long-term interventions were identified. The SAG team presented on this project in April 2024 at the Management Team/Supervisor yearly meeting. The short-term interventions have been put in place and long-term interventions are being actively worked on being put into place	In SFY2025 enhancements to policy were made and presented to the supervisors and management team in May 2025. Enhancements to policy included specified responsibilities for Family Services Specialists, Supervisors, Regional Managers, and State Office as well as a structured approach to assigning a secondary caseworker. A webinar is scheduled for June 17, 2025 where staff will be informed of the updates made to policy. The enhanced policy will go into effect on July 1, 2025.
Permanency Round Tables	Permanency Program Specialist	Regional Manager, Supervisors, Consultant Team	This is an internal project.	To address timely placement with a permanent family for children in out-of-home care.	A team composed of a facilitator, case worker, supervisor, inside consultants, outside consultants, and scribe meet on a quarterly basis to discuss a specified child's permanency plan. The team discusses previous action steps, barriers, and brainstorms new action steps to support the child's permanency in a timely manner.	South Dakota is partnering with Casey Family Programs to provide training and technical assistance in SFY2026.
Intake Assessment Project	Protective Services Administrator and Comprehensive Safety Intervention Program Specialist	Intake Specialists	ACTION for Child Protection, Bureau of Information and Telecommunications	To increase the intake assessment fidelity	Examines practices of Intake Specialists as they receive calls, document the concerns, and decision making for screening and determining response time.	In SFY2025 Intake Coaching was implemented through a contract with ACTION for Child Protection. Refer to Safety Outcome 2 for further information.
BEES Interface into FACIS	FACIS Team	CPS Management Team	Bureau of Information and Telecommunications Application/Business Project Manager, Red Mane Technologies	To maintain Medicaid eligibility	When a child comes into care interface notifies Medicaid to determine if the child is a previous Medicaid client. The team has been working collaboratively to test the system's effectiveness and make changes as needed.	The BEES interface was implemented in March 2024, however in SFY2025 ongoing assessment of system errors has been occurring. In SFY2026, continued monitoring will occur until all system errors have been resolved.

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Fatherhood Initiative	Family First Program Specialist	Fatherhood Workgroup	Parenting Education Partners, Independent Contractor Consultants, Great Plains Tribal Leaders Health Board Representative, Boys Town Common Sense Parenting, National Indian Child Welfare Association Positive Indian Parenting	Enhance the awareness of the importance of fathers in the lives of their children.	Monthly activities were given to each office to complete throughout the year to focus on engagement with fathers. Parent surveys are administered to measure efforts being provided to parents and families. Parents with lived experience work groups are being developed to further enhance services being provided to parents, specifically fathers.	Refer to Well-Being Outcome 1 for further information regarding QA initiatives that occurred in SFY2025.

INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT STAFF RETENTION

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Workload Analysis Project	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	To be determined	To be determined	Identify what workload is manageable for staff, establish equity among staff statewide, and identify areas needing staff development.	Examine workload, overtime, and emergency response among staff statewide.	A Request for Proposal for the Workload Analysis Project was posted in April 2025. The submissions were due and reviewed in May and June 2025. The Workload Analysis Project will continue in SFY2026 once the contracted agency is selected.
Caseload Analysis Project	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	FACIS Program Specialists, Regional Managers, Supervisors, Data Program Specialist	Bureau of Information and Telecommunications	Monitor and assess worker caseloads across the state to guarantee balanced assignments.	Identify current reports and processes in the information system to determine what needs to be enhanced in order to prepare the caseload analysis. Once this is completed, data can be extracted from the system to identify caseload trends to help support the workload analysis project.	Refer to Information System Systemic Factor for further information regarding progress made in SFY2025 and plans for SFY2026.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM PROJECTS

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Region 5 In Home Safety Plan Provider Project	Region 5 Regional Manager	Brookings, Aberdeen, and Huron Supervisors and Family Services Specialist	Gracepoint Wesleyan Church	Identify and utilize community members who are willing to support families through the reunification process.	Community members are trained in Child Protections' safety model and Conditions for Return to assist families through the reunification process. These individuals act as safety plan providers for families who may not have positive, natural, supports to support them through reunification with their children.	Refer to Safety Outcome 2 for further information.

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Independent Living Services (ILS) Advisory Workgroup	Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	Regional Managers, Supervisors, Family Services Specialists, ICWA Program Specialist	Department of Corrections, Group and Residential Facilities, Community Resource Persons, Tribal Representative, CASA, Office of Housing, Department of Education, Division of Economic Assistance, Independent Living Placement Programs, and Youth with Lived Experiences	Assess Independent Living Services to determine what enhancements are needed in services to better support teenagers in foster care.	The team meets twice a year to discuss the biannual Teen Conference, the Regional ILS training workshops, program development, and service delivery to youth. The team discusses data to measure progress and make needed adjustments in independent living services.	Refer to Section VI. Consultation and Coordination between States & Tribes Goals, Well-Being Outcome 2, and John H. Chafee Goals for further information.
OLA Recruitment/Retention and ICWA Placement Recruitment Project	Stronger Families Program Specialist	Assistant Director of Child Protection Services and ICWA Program Specialist	Office of Licensing and Accreditation, South Dakota Native American Tribes	Increase the number of foster homes and Native American foster homes in South Dakota and to support current foster families.	The Office of Licensing and Accreditation team utilizes the Family and Children Information System (FACIS) to collect real time data regarding the specifics of children in foster care and trends throughout the state. The team then creates a targeted recruitment plan to recruit foster parents to meet the needs of their specific districts. The State of South Dakota has a large population of Native American children in care. In order to ensure Native American children are able to maintain their culture and traditions while in foster care, the The Office of Licensing and Accreditation team works collaboratively with South Dakota Native American tribes and the ICWA Program Specialist to brainstorm effective ways to recruit Native American foster homes.	Refer to Section III, Goal 2 and Diligent Recruitment Plan for further information.
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study	Data Analyst Program Specialist	There are no internal partners for this study.	University of South Dakota	To recognize ACEs as part of a family's environment to better understand behavior and provide appropriate services.	Data is collected to identify populations and regions that are experiencing child adversity. The information will be used to identify existing supports and areas of need to promote resiliency in these communities. Data will further support service providing agencies to train their staff to address ACEs and promote resiliency within the families and children they serve.	In SFY2025, the Data Analyst Program Specialist sent data to the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment on two occasions. Data will continue to be shared in SFY2026.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM PROJECTS

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
Kinship Licensing Standards Project	Assistant Director of Child Protection Services	Director of Child Protection Services, Adoption Family Services Specialist Supervisor, Permanency Program Specialist, Adoption Program Specialist, Stronger Families Program Specialist, CQI and Outcomes Administrator, and Regional Manager	Change and Innovation Agency, Office of Licensing and Accreditation	To optimize recruitment, licensing, adoption approval, placement, and retention processes to operate with utmost efficiency and effectiveness.	Child Protection Services, the Office of Licensing and Accreditation, and Change and Innovation Agency are working collaboratively on this project. The project is in the beginning stages and a kick-off meeting with the Change and Innovation Agency has occurred. The next steps of the project are to develop focus groups comprised of Staff, foster parents, and stakeholders to gather input about current processes. After data and information is collected, the Change and Innovation Agency will provide findings and recommendations to enhance current processes and an action plan will be developed and implemented.	Refer to Permanency Outcome 2 for further information.
Stronger Families Together Initiative	Stronger Families Program Specialist	Assistant Director of Child Protection Services and ICWA Program Specialist	The Governor's Office, Tribal Relations, South Dakota Kids Belong, Tribal Child Welfare Programs (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek), ICWA Specialist (Rosebud Sioux), foster and adoptive parents, foster care alumni, business leaders, faith-based organizations, private adoption agencies, Office of Licensing and Accreditation, OLA Communications and child placement agencies	The <i>Stronger Families Together</i> initiative was launched to recruit and support foster parents in South Dakota. The initiative includes a focus to recruit foster parents who are able to support family connections and reunification efforts.	Stronger Families Program Specialist works collaboratively with Child Placement Agencies, Office of Licensing and Accreditation, and local faith-based groups to help recruit and train foster families throughout South Dakota. The established partnerships help provide ongoing support and training to new and experienced foster parents.	Refer to Permanency Outcome 1, Permanency Outcome 2, and Section III Goal 2 for further information.
LSS CARES - Pilot Sites Region 5 and 6	Family First Program Specialist	CQI team, Region 5 and 6 Regional Manager, Supervisor	Lutheran Social Services	Wrap-around prevention service to support families in achieving their goals.	Families are referred to this program by school social workers or counselors. An LSS CARES Wraparound team member will then contact the family to schedule an introductory meeting to discuss the services offered. Services are altered to meet the specific needs and goals of the family and can include crisis planning, support planning, care planning, and skill development.	Refer to Section III, Goal 1 for further information.

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Updates
ILS Young Voices Youth Group (Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Mitchell, and Aberdeen)	Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	ICWA Program Specialist	Community Resource Persons, Community Resource Persons' Supervisor	Provide youth an opportunity to share their views and experiences in foster care.	Community Resource Persons attend ILS Young Voices Group meetings and share input with the CPS program specialist. The information gathered is used to measure progress and make adjustments in independent living services.	Service Array Systemic Factor Goal, Refer to Section III, Goal 3, and John H Chafee Sections for further information.
Dual Status Youth Project	Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	Region 1 Family Services Specialist Supervisor and Region 6 Regional Manager	Robert F Kennedy National Resource Center, South Dakota Unified Judicial System	To positively impact outcomes for youth involved in both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.	The team works together to discuss trends and data to identify areas needing enhancement. The team makes changes to policy, practices, programs, and services for youth who are in contact with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to support better outcomes for their future.	Refer to Collaboration Section.
GRIT Collaborative Group	Upper Level Placement Program Specialist	Supervisors, Regional Managers	Representatives from each group care facility and each Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility	Identify placement possibilities for youth with high acuity needs.	The team meets weekly to discuss the youth's strengths, needs, previous placements and level of care needed in attempt to problem solve and keep the youth in South Dakota. Youth continue to be discussed on a weekly basis until placement is found.	Weekly calls continued to occur in State Fiscal Year 2025 and will continue in SFY2026 to identify placements for youth with high acuity needs.
System of Care (Yankton)	Family First Program Specialist and Continuous Quality Improvement Team	CQI Team	Division of Behavioral Health, Yankton School District, Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Services	A school-based child abuse prevention program that reaches families and provides services prior to a family experiencing a crisis which prevents them from safely caring for their child.	The System of Care-CPS Prevention Position was implemented in August 22, 2021. Families are referred to this program and then provided services based on their needs and their family's goals. The lead members meet on a monthly basis to discuss questions and the status of the program.	Refer to Section III, Goal 1 for further information.
USD IV-E Contract Program	Learning and Development Program Specialist	No Internal Partners are involved in this program.	University of South Dakota (USD), Office of Finance	A IV-E Tuition Stipend Program with USD to provide tuition reimbursement to graduating students with BSW degree who sign an agreement to work in an entry level FSS position where CPS needs to fill vacancies for a designated amount of time (ex: 2 years).	There is currently an inter-agency agreement between DSS and USD to contract with a national IVE expert to assist in developing a proposal for this program specific to USD BSW program, as well as South Dakota DSS needs and resources.	Refer to Section C. CAPTA State Plan Requirements and Update for further information.

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Update
Cognitive Interviewing-Parent Surveys	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Family Services Specialists	Parents and caregivers who have been or are currently working with the child welfare system in South Dakota	Collect data from parents who have been or are currently involved in the child welfare system to enhance practice.	Parent surveys are sent out to all parents in the Summer of 2024. Prior to administering surveys, parents and caregivers were recruited in the Brookings, Pierre, and Sioux Falls area to assist with cognitive interviewing. Cognitive interviewing is a technique used to evaluate survey questions to determine whether the true meaning of the question, as intended by the evaluator, is conveyed to respondents and is functioning as intended. One question on the survey asks parents and caregivers if they want to participate in a focus group that will review the results of the survey and participate in joint planning on how to improve children and parents experience with the child welfare system in South Dakota. After the survey results are received, parents will be contacted to review the results of the survey and determine next steps.	This project was completed in SFY2024 and utilized for the parent surveys that were administered in SFY2025. In SFY2025, surveys were administered to parents and respondents had the opportunity to provide input regarding their interest in being part of a workgroup. The workgroup is currently active through a contracted agency and will continue in SFY2026.
Court Improvement Program	Administrator of CQI and Outcomes	4 Child Protection Services Staff are appointed to serve on the committee	Court Improvement Program Committee, South Dakota Supreme Court	Assesses the child welfare system's handling of child abuse and neglect cases and recommends improvements for achieving safety, permanency, and well-being in a timely manner.	Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being performance outcomes from South Dakota's CFSR Data Profile, as well as performance outcomes from onsite reviews are shared with the Court Improvement Program Committee. This helps to keep CIP well-informed on where South Dakota is performing and to identify areas they can provide support or insight to assist in improvement outcomes for children and families. CIP conducts monthly Lunch and Learn trainings since March 2021 to provide relevant up-to-date information as it relates to the child welfare system.	Refer to Section III, Goal 3 and Section V for further information.

Initiative/Project	Staff Responsible	Internal Partners	External Partners	Purpose	Process	SFY2025 Update
Youth Surveys	Continuous Quality Improvement Team	Independent Living Services Program Specialist	Youth with lived experience	Collect data from youth with lived experiences to improve outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being.	Youth Survey: Administered on an annual basis to youth in foster care age 14 or older to provide their input on the child welfare system and suggested improvements. ILS Survey: Administered to youth transitioning from care to gather their insight on the Independent Living Services Program and services they were provided. Data from these surveys are analyzed by the Continuous Quality Improvement Team and shared with the CPS Management Team to identify ways in which change can positively impact the outcomes of youth who experience the child welfare system.	Refer to Well-Being Outcome 2, and Service Array Systemic Factor for further information.
National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)	FACIS Information System Program Specialist	Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	Children's Bureau-Administration for Children and Families	Ensure that Independent Living Services are adequately preparing and supporting youth from foster care to independent adulthood.	Gathers information such as sex, race, ethnicity, foster care status, employment, and education on youth in foster care. States provide what services and financial assistance they provide. South Dakota surveys youth on a variety of outcomes such as financial self-sufficiency, experience with homelessness, educational attainment, positive connections with adults, and high-risk behavior. Youth are given a survey at the age of 17 and again when they turn 19 and 21.	Refer to Service Description section for further information.

REPORTS BY PROGRAM AREA USED IN ANALYSIS OF OUTCOMES

Attachment A4

Program Area	Report	Target Users	Report Purpose	QA Benefit
Request for Services	Dispositions of CPS Investigations per RFS	Administrator of Services for Families, CSI Program Specialist	Lists number of substantiated and unsubstantiated investigations and disposition regarding service provision.	CPS uses this report to monitor case disposition including how many cases are opened for services.
Request for Services	Status of Assigned IFAs and Investigations	Administrator of Services for Families, CSI Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Lists number of days IFAs are pending for defined periods of time so CPS will know how many IFAs are overdue and how many days overdue.	CPS has been addressing the issue of overdue IFAs by local offices by evaluating and monitoring status of timeliness through use of this report.
Request for Services	IFA Safety Outcomes	Administrator of Services for Families, CSI Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Reports number of IFAs & number meeting response time, number with diligent efforts to make initial contact, number with identified safety threats, and number by safety response when a safety response is required.	CPS uses this report to monitor initial contact time and for budget indicators.
Request for Services	Number of Requests for Services by State Total, Region, Office & County	Administrator of Services for Families, CSI Program Specialist, Regional Managers, Family Services Specialist Supervisors	Reports number of Requests for Services (RFS) that have been received and number that have been assigned.	CPS uses this report to monitor screening rates.
Ongoing Services	Caseworker Visits for In Home Cases	Administrator of Services for Families, CSI Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Reports by each case visits expected, visits made, and visits not entered by month.	CPS uses this report to monitor compliance with in-home visits with children.
Ongoing Services	Family Protective Capacity Assessments	Administrator of Services for Families, CSI Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Reports by month the number of PCAs started by month and the number within the required timeframe and the number 30, 60, or more days overdue	CPS uses this report to monitor timeliness of Protective Capacity Assessments (parent case plans).

Program Area	Report	Target Users	Report Purpose	QA Benefit
Ongoing Services	Caseworker Visits Report with Parents	Administrator of Services for Families, CSI Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Reports by each case visits expected with parents, visits made, and visits not entered by month.	CPS uses this report to monitor compliance with in-person visits with parents who are identified caretakers.
Placements	Children in Alternative Care	Permanency Program Specialist, Upper Level Placement Program Specialist, Regional Managers, Family Services Specialist Supervisors	Reports by month the number of children in type of placement setting, average length of stay for children discharged and for children in care by placement setting, and discharge reason for children discharged	CPS uses this report to monitor timeliness of permanency and types of permanent placement discharges. The report will be used by the Permanency Workgroup along with the SPWB Reviews and state data indicators to monitor any efforts put in place to improve permanency efforts.
Placements	Demographics of Children in Alternative Care	Permanency Program Specialist, Upper Level Placement Program Specialist	Reports number of children by placement setting by age, race, sex, and tribal affiliation.	CPS uses this report to assist with keeping aware of trends in demographics including placements by race and assist in determining placement resource needs.
Placements	ICWA Directors Report	ICWA Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Lists children by tribal affiliation, time in care, permanent plan, last type of hearings, hearing date, office, and FSS.	CPS provides this report monthly to Tribal ICWA Directors. Used for the ICWA Fidelity Review case pull and to review accuracy of related FACIS data.
Placements	Caseworker Visits Report form Visits Screen	Permanency Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Reports by each child visits expected, visits made, and visits not entered by month.	CPS uses this report to monitor compliance of face-to-face visits with children placed out of the home.
Placements	Child Assessment Case Plans	Permanency Program Specialist	Reports number of children in care 60 days or more with/without a child case plan. For children with a child case plan, counts number of children with a case plan evaluation.	CPS uses this report to monitor timeliness of child assessment case plans.
Placements	Closed Cases Open Medicaid	FACIS Information System Program Specialist	Displays clients whose case status is closed but Medicaid coverage is still active.	CPS uses this information to ensure children who no longer have an open CPS case appropriately have Medicaid coverage terminated.

Program Area	Report	Target Users	Report Purpose	QA Benefit
Placements	DCS_ORFI	FACIS Information System Program Specialist	Displays payment, demographic and biological parent information.	Child Support uses this report to cross-reference information with their data system with what is entered in FACIS.
Placements	PISN Monitor	FACIS Information System Program Specialist	Lists children that have an initial placement date within the report parameters includes PISN and worker	Used for QA to ensure staff are matching children on SSPA & importing PISN.
Payments	Random 522 Claim Checking Report	FACIS Information System Program Specialist	Random report run monthly to review claims paid during past selected month.	CPS uses this information to ensure 522 are being completed and processed correctly.
Payments	1099 Claims for Finance	FACIS Information System Program Specialist	Pulls claims for which resources could potentially need a 1099 for tax purposes.	CPS uses the information to verify file is accurate before providing final version to Finance.
Payments	Paid Claims by Service Type	FACIS Information System Program Specialist	Displays claims paid to resources for claims which may require a 1099.	CPS uses this report to ensure claims have the correct code so the appropriate claims are flagged for potential 1099 to the resource.
Payments	IVE Claims Adjustment Results	Interstate Compact Placement of Children and Title IV Program Specialist	Displays claims for which the monthly claims process changed the funding source either to IV-E or to a non-IV-E fund source based on changes to either eligibility or reimbursability.	CPS uses the information to verify claims were adjusted properly and to identify any errors in IV-E eligibility or reimbursability.
Adoption	Legal Status of Children with Termination of Parental Rights and Plan of Adoption	Adoption Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Lists children with at least one parent's rights terminated where adoption is the permanent plan, and when the TPR appeal expires. Also, includes total number of children, average age, number by race, number by tribal affiliation, and number enrolled	CPS uses this report to monitor timeliness of movement toward adoption.

Program Area	Report	Target Users	Report Purpose	QA Benefit
Adoption	Children in Care Greater than 12 Months with the Plan of Adoption	Adoption Program Specialist, Regional Managers	Lists children by placement date, months in care, placement setting, last hearing and court of jurisdiction.	CPS uses this report to monitor timeliness of movement toward adoption.
Adoption	Adoption Averages with Race and Primary Basis	Adoption Program Specialist	Report lists number of initiated and finalized adoptions, average months between placement date and date of adoption, average months between TPR and finalization, number of adoptions by foster parent, relative, relative foster parent, non-relative, number of Native American children adopted by White and Native American parents and number of white children adopted by White and Native American parents.	CPS uses this report to monitor timeliness of adoption and monitor number of adoptions by relatives and foster parents.
Resource/Licensing	Licensed Foster Homes by Race	Stronger Families Program Specialist	Reports number of foster homes by race, number of new homes, number closed, and how the foster parent first learned about foster parenting.	CPS uses this information in foster parent and adoptive parent recruitment and retention planning.
Resource/Licensing	Resource Inquiries	Stronger Families Program Specialist	Lists the number of inquiries by month by type of license.	CPS uses this information in foster parent and adoptive parent recruitment planning.
Independent Living Services	Independent Living Expenditures	Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	Calculates claims totals by Independent Living service code. Calculates dollar amounts, number of claims and number of clients for these claims.	CPS uses this report to ensure accuracy of billing and data entry related to Independent Living Services.
Independent Living Services	Resource Claims Summary	Permanency and Independent Living Program Specialist	Calculates claims totals by service code, number of units and amounts.	CPS uses this report to ensure accuracy of billing and data entry related to Independent Living Services.

Continuous Quality Improvement and FACIS Information System Program Specialists oversee and utilize all of the following reports on a routine basis

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES: CQI ANNUAL SURVEYS

Attachment A5

Month	Survey	Survey Recipients	Parameters
JULY	Stakeholder Survey	List of stakeholders from all 6 Regions	Collect Stakeholder contact lists from each region & state office by mid-July
	Staff Survey	All Field Staff: Aides, FSS, LFSS, FSSS, RMs	Collect staff contact lists from each region by mid-July
AUGUST	Caseworker Visits: Black Hills Region	All resource providers for children placed from Black Hills Region	<p>Report: Children in Placement w/ IVE Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filter by Region • Collect email addresses from FACIS • Collect remaining email addresses from the Region • Send out surveys by end of month • Send out reminders after 1 week
SEPTEMBER	Caseworker Visits: Region 3	All resource providers for children placed from Region 3	See Black Hills Region parameters
OCTOBER	Caseworker Visits: Region 4	All resource providers for children placed from Region 4	See Black Hills Region parameters
NOVEMBER	Caseworker Visits: Region 5	All resource providers for children placed from Region 5	See Black Hills Region parameters
DECEMBER	Caseworker Visits: Region 6	All resource providers for children placed from Region 6	See Black Hills Region parameters
JANUARY	Caseworker Visits: Region 7	All resource providers for children placed from Region 7	See Black Hills Region parameters
FEBRUARY	Youth Survey	Youth in Care Age 14+ (Statewide)	All youth 14+ that are developmentally appropriate at the time of survey distribution

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES: CQI ANNUAL SURVEYS

Month	Survey	Survey Recipients	Parameters
MARCH	Parent Survey	Parents receiving Ongoing Services (statewide)	This survey be conducted by the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment in SFY2026. Previously surveys were administered in March 2025, however CPCM and CPS will determine the timeframe for SFY2026.
APRIL			
MAY			
JUNE			
OTHER	Motivational Interviewing 2 Month Follow Up Survey		
	Motivational Interviewing 6 Month Follow Up Survey		
	Certification Training Feedback Surveys		
	Parenting Education Class Surveys		

YEARLY REGIONAL REVIEW SCHEDULE

Attachment A6

Region	Month
Black Hills Region (Rapid City, Hot Springs, Sturgis, Spearfish) *Realignment between Region 1 and Region 2 has occurred	February
Region 3 (Pierre, Mobridge, Eagle Butte)	January
Region 4 (Mission, Winner, Chamberlain)	July
Region 5 (Brookings, Huron, Watertown, Aberdeen)	August
Region 6 (Sioux Falls)	October/November
Region 7 (Mitchell, Lake Andes, Yankton, Vermillion)	April

*review schedule is subject to change if scheduling conflicts arise

YEARLY FIDELITY REVIEW SCHEDULE

Month	Fidelity Review(s) Scheduled	Data Quality Tasks in FACIS
July	ICWA Protective Capacity Assessment/Parent Visits	<p>PCA/Parent Visits: The date of the signature on the PCA/PC-Eval matches the date entered in FACIS, the impending danger threats on the case plan/evaluation match what is entered in FACIS, and the safety plan determination responses match what is entered in FACIS</p> <p>ICWA: ICWA Affidavit was completed for the 48-hour hearing, language in the ICWA Affidavit was sufficient, tribal affiliation in FACIS matches documentation in the file, and enrollment status in FACIS matches</p>
August	Child Case Plan/Caseworker Visits	<p>Child/Placement Provider signature matches date entered in FACIS, the child's permanency goal on their child case plan/evaluation matches what is entered in FACIS, the education information in the case plan matches what is entered on the education screen within a reasonable timeframe, and narrative information on where the child was seen matches the selection on visited in residence yes/no</p>
September	Kinship Permanency Round Tables	<p>Kinship: All relatives who were identified within the first 60 days of placement are listed in the Relative Search Screen and at the time of the case review, all relatives documented in the relative search screen are accurately reflected as to their status as a potential placement resource</p>
October	Missing in Care Foster Kinship Placement Payment	<p>Missing in Care: The placement screen correctly reflects the dates the child was missing from care and the Youth Missing From Care Runaway form is generated in FACIS</p> <p>Foster Kinship Placement Payment: The payment screen reflects that foster kinship providers are being paid at a minimum the basic foster care rate.</p>

Month	Fidelity Review(s) Scheduled	Data Quality Tasks in FACIS
November	Split Sibling Family Time	Family Time: The Family Time Agreement document is generated in FACIS, mothers and fathers are entered in the biological parent screen and open for services.
December	Split Sibling (continued from November) Family Time (continued from November)	Family Time: The Family Time Agreement document is generated in FACIS, mothers and fathers are entered in the biological parent screen and open for services.
January	ICWA IFA/Intake	ICWA: ICWA Affidavit was completed for the 48-hour hearing, language in the ICWA Affidavit was sufficient, tribal affiliation in FACIS matches documentation in the file, and enrollment status in FACIS matches
February	Psychotropic Medication	Consent form for psychotropic medication is in the file for children in group care and residential treatment and diagnosed conditions are accurately coded in the Diagnosed Conditions FACIS screen
March	Well-Child Checks Youth Education Credits	Well-Child Checks: Assessment screens show appointment within the first 30 days of placement and/or annual appointments. Youth Education Credits: The client's educational credits on their education assessment screen matches educational records and the child case plan.
April	No Reviews	Not Applicable
May	No Reviews	Not Applicable
June	No Reviews	Not Applicable



SOUTH DAKOTA'S ARRAY OF SERVICES

Attachment A7

Department of Social Services: Behavioral Health

COMMUNITY-BASED MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Behavior Management Systems	Provide high quality and effective mental health and substance use disorder services helping clients lead full and productive lives while contributing to the health and well-being of our communities	Medication evaluation and management, psychological evaluations, psychological testing, individual therapy, group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, 24-hour crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services, Drug and Alcohol Services.	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Harding, Butte, Lawrence, Meade, Pennington, Custer, Fox River, Oglala Lakota, Jackson, and Bennett Counties https://www.wrmentalhealth.org/
Brookings Behavioral Health and Wellness	To provide comprehensive, integrated behavioral health services that promote well-being and quality of life for all	Walk-in Substance Use Disorder Assessments, Screenings, Case Management, Individual therapy, Group therapy, crisis intervention, psychiatric evaluation, medication management, Children, Youth, and Family (CYF) Services, Comprehensive Assistance with Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Services, and Individualized and Mobile Program of Assertive Community Treatment (IMPACT), Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Systems of Care (SOC).	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Brookings County https://brookingsivycenter.org/
Capital Area Counseling	Provide exceptional and effective care to individuals and families in central South Dakota by empowering those we serve, focusing on strengths, and promoting wellness within our communities	Medication evaluation/management, evaluations, testing, individual and group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services. Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Substance Abuse (CBISA) Provider, Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Systems of Care (SOC).	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Haakon, Stanley, Jones, Lyman, Buffalo, Hyde, Hughes, Sully, and Potter Counties https://cacsnet.org/
Community Counseling Services	To promote healthy individuals and families in the communities we serve	Medication evaluation/management, evaluations, testing, individual and group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services. Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Substance Abuse (CBISA) Provider, Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Systems of Care (SOC).	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Hand, Beadle, Jerauld, Kingsbury, Miner, Lake, and Moody Counties https://www.ccs-sd.org/

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Human Service Agency	To provide high quality human services to enable people to develop their fullest potential while maintaining the highest standard of ethical and fiscal responsibility	Medication evaluation/management, evaluations, testing, individual and group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services. Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Substance Abuse (CBISA) Provider, Walk-In Substance Use Disorder Assessments,	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Roberts, Grand, Codington, Deuel, Hamlin, and Clark Counties https://humanserviceagency.org/
Lewis & Clark Behavioral Health Services	Pioneer and sustain comprehensive, integrated mental health and substance use treatment services that promote the health and quality of life for community members	Medication evaluation/management, evaluations, testing, individual and group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services. CBISA Provider, Walk-In Substance Use Disorder Assessments, Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Systems of Care (SOC).	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Charles Mix, Douglas, Hutchinson, Bon Homme, Yankton, Union, and Clay Counties https://www.lcbhs.net/
Northeastern Mental Health Center	Community treatment center dedicated to the health, wellness, and recovery of those with mental health and substance use disorders	Medication evaluation/management, evaluations, testing, individual and group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services. Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Systems of Care (SOC).	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Campbell, Walworth, McPherson, Edmunds, Brown, Faulk, Spink, Day, and Marshall Counties https://nemhc.org/
Southeastern Behavioral Healthcare	Ensure the well-being of our community is being supported	Medication evaluation/management, evaluations, testing, individual and group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services. Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Systems of Care (SOC).	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	McCook, Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Turner Counties https://www.southeasternbh.org/about
Southern Plains Behavioral Health Services	Fulfill social and emotional health needs in the community	Medication evaluation/management, evaluations, testing, individual and group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services. Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Systems of Care (SOC).	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Mellette, Todd, Tripp, and Gregory Counties https://spbhs.net/

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Three Rivers Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Center	Provide mental health and chemical dependency services	Medication evaluation/management, evaluations, testing, individual and group therapy, emergency commitment evaluations, nursing home consultation, crisis intervention via crisis line, EAP Services. Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Systems of Care (SOC).	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Perkins, Carson, Dewey, and Ziebach Counties No office specific website https://dss.sd.gov/behavioralhealth/agency_county.aspx

SERVICES FOR JUSTICE INVOLVED AND AT-RISK YOUTH/ADULTS

[HTTPS://DSS.SD.GOV/FORMSANDPUBS/DOCS/BH/JJRI_FLYER.PDF](https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/BH/JJRI_FLYER.PDF)

Systems of Care (SOC)	Support youth and families to become self-reliant	Case management services to help families to navigate and access services, while also giving them skills they need to become self-reliant.	Youth and Families with Complex Needs	Statewide- specific counties are shown on website link above
Functional Family Therapy (FFT)	Help youth and families build skills	Family-based therapy that focuses on building skills to improve family relationships, reduce behavioral issues, and improve school performance.	Youth and Families	Telehealth Services Available Rapid City, Brookings, Pierre, Huron, Mitchell, Watertown, Yankton, Aberdeen, Sioux Falls, Winner, and Lemmon
Aggression Replacement Training (ART)	To alter behaviors of chronically aggressive youth	Teaches coping skills for managing anger and impulsiveness using three interventions: social skills, anger control, and moral reasoning. Provides group discussion to correct anti-social thinking.	Youth	Telehealth Services Available Rapid City, Brookings, Pierre, Huron, Mitchell, Watertown, Yankton, Aberdeen, Sioux Falls, Winner, and Lemmon
Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT)	Assist participants in overcoming negative thought and behavior patterns	Combines education and structured exercises to assist participants in addressing negative thought and behavior patterns. A 12 step process which focuses on issues such as honesty, trust, acceptance, healing relationships, and setting goals.	Youth and Adults	Statewide and Telehealth Services Lutheran Social Services, Volunteers of America, Compass Point, Capital Area Counseling Services, Martin Addiction Recovery Center, South Dakota Urban Indian Health, Pennington County Sheriff's Office Addiction Treatment Services, Addiction Recovery Center of the Black Hills Rapid City, Brookings, Pierre, Huron, Mitchell, Watertown, Yankton, Aberdeen, Sioux Falls, Winner, and Lemmon

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Substance Use Disorder Services	Aide individuals in overcoming addiction to substances	Cannabis Youth Treatment (CYT) and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions (CBISA)	Youth and Adults with a Substance Use Disorder	Statewide and Telehealth Services Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Services, Dakota Counseling Institute, Glory House, Volunteers of America, Carroll Institute, Community Counseling Services, Human Service Agency, Lutheran Social Services, Compass Point, Avera Addiction Care Center, Capital Area Counseling Services, Martin Addiction Recovery Center, Pennington County Sheriff's Office, Addiction Treatment Services, Addiction Recovery Center of the Black Hills

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

South Dakota Parent Connection (SDSC)	Connect families who care for individuals with disabilities to resources	Individualized guidance, training, support groups, camps/activities, and online resources for caretakers.	Families who care for individuals birth to age 26 with disabilities or special health care needs	Online Resources, Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Aberdeen https://sdparent.org/about
National Alliance on Mental Illness- South Dakota (NAMI)	Advocate for better lives for individuals who have a mental illness	Provides advocacy, education, support, and public awareness so that individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives. Classes, programs, and wellness activities are offered in Sioux Falls, Sisseton, and Milbank.	Individuals and families impacted by mental illness	Statewide Peer Leadership Council, Aberdeen, Brookings, Huron, Pierre, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Watertown https://namisouthdakota.org/

SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

Face It Together	Help anyone impacted by alcohol and other drugs	One-on-one peer recovery coaching to help those struggling with addiction and/or their families. Coaches provide emotional support, translate goals into action, discuss barriers, support individuals after setback, and much more.	Persons recovering from an addiction and/or their families	Virtual Services and Sioux Falls https://www.wefaceittogether.org/
Bethany Christian Services ReNew Program	Support expectant mothers who have a history of opioid or other substance use	Case management and peer support for the first year of a baby's life. They assist the mother in her recovery, help connect to community resources, and share parenting practices to help with attachment and bonding.	Mothers with newborns and/or expectant mothers who have a history of substance use	Sioux Falls and Rapid City https://bethany.org/media/branch-specific-services/renew/renew-program-guide-download.pdf

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Intensive Methamphetamine Treatment (IMT)	Support individuals with severe methamphetamine use disorders	Residential services, outpatient treatment, and case management to support long-term recovery. Individuals attend a minimum of three group sessions per week in addition to individual sessions, family sessions and case management.	Adults who are assessed with a severe methamphetamine use disorder	Sioux Falls: Carroll Institute, Glory House, Keystone Outreach Mitchell: Dakota Counseling Institute-Stepping Stones Rapid City: Pennington County Sheriff's Office-Addiction Treatment Services Rosebud: Rosebud Sioux Tribe Treatment Program Aberdeen: Avera Addiction Care Center https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/BH/1_MT_brochure.pdf
Behavior Management Systems- Full Circle	Help clients lead full and productive lives	Residential program that allows mothers to include their children in their treatment journey. Mothers learn the skills needed to balance parenting, work, and sobriety. Services offered include specialized, trauma-informed treatment, parenting skills, employment support, health and wellness skills, access to prenatal, postpartum, and well-baby care, support with reunification, and linkage to community services.	Adult, Pregnant, and Parenting Women who have a substance use disorder	Rapid City https://www.wrmentalhealth.org/full-circle-inpatient-addiction-services/
Alateen Meetings	Fellowship for teenagers who have been impacted by alcohol use	Support group to allow teenagers to meet other individuals their age with similar struggles and situations.	Teenagers whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking	Virtual Services https://al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/
Al-Anon Meetings	Fellowship for friends and family of persons with an alcohol addiction	Support group of peers who share their experience in applying the Al-Anon principles to problems related to the effects of a problem drinker in their lives.	Families and friends of persons addicted to alcohol	Spearfish, Sturgis, Rapid City, Hill City, Custer, Hot Springs, Francis, Gregory, Platte, Armour, Mitchell, Chamberlain, Philip, Pierre, Huron, Aberdeen, Sisseton, Watertown, Brookings, Madison, Sioux Falls, Viborg, Vermillion and Virtual https://al-anon.org/
Narcotics Anonymous (NA)	Support and accountability for people in recovery from drugs	Fellowship of people in recovery from drugs who meet regularly to help support each other to practice abstinence from all drugs.	Persons in recovery from drug use	Aberdeen, Brookings, Custer, Deadwood, Sioux Falls, Sisseton, Rapid City, Mitchell, Mobridge, Piedmont, Spearfish, Sturgis, Yankton, Watertown https://www.na.org/

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)	Support individuals in their sobriety from alcohol	Fellowship of people who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.	Persons in recovery from alcohol abuse	Statewide Support Group. For specific locations, please use the link below: https://area63aa.org/meeting-zips/
Supported Housing for Addiction Recovery and Empowerment (SHARE)	Address the recovering person's need for a safe and healthy living environment	Individuals reside together in a drug free and structured environment outside of a formal treatment setting and are supported in managing their overall care while learning responsible behavior, values, and positive habits to assure continued sobriety.	Person's older than 18 who are recovering from an addiction	Aberdeen (Oxford House), Huron (Hope House), Sioux Falls (Kingdon Boundaries Prison Aftercare Ministry, Tallgrass Recovery, Washed Clean Ministries, Glory House, Southeastern Behavioral HealthCare, Oxford House), Watertown (Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership), Brookings (Teen Challenge, Oxford House), Redfield (Reflections Recovery Home), Rapid City (Oxford House), Yankton (Oxford House), Mitchell (Oxford House), Sturgis (Oxford House) https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/BH_BH1_SHARE_flyer.pdf
Volunteers of America- New Start	Residential program for pregnant and parenting women with co-occurring substance use disorders	Long-term support, which includes a stable living environment throughout the duration of treatment. The program assists in supporting the client's participation in psychiatric and medical care, childcare needs, parent education and child development, employment services and job training, as well as treatment interventions.	Pregnant Women and/or Women with Dependent Children who are overcoming an addiction	Sioux Falls https://www.voa-dakotas.org/services/substance-abuse/
South Dakota Prevention Resource Centers (PRC)	Focused on helping people develop the knowledge, attitude, and skills they need to make good choices about harmful behaviors of substance misuse or abuse	Provide regional support for those looking for prevention resource materials such as videos, DVDs, books, CDs, brochures, and curricula. Staff can provide training and education in the area of prevention.	Students, Parents, Educators, community groups, community agencies, law enforcement.	Statewide Western PRC: Youth and Family Services- Rapid City, SD Northeastern PRC: Human Service Agency- Watertown, SD Southeastern PRC: Volunteers of America, Dakotas- Sioux Falls, SD Contracted Prevention Providers Locations: Sturgis, Sisseton, Rapid City, Aberdeen, Brookings, Sioux Falls, Huron, Hot Springs, Watertown, Herrick, Yankton, White River, Aberdeen, Redfield, Lemmon, Vermillion, and Newell https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/BH_SUD_Prev_flyer.pdf

Department of Social Services: Economic Assistance

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	Provides health insurance at little or no cost	Provides coverage to help pay for necessary medical expenses individuals need to stay healthy such as hospital stays, doctor visits, and prescriptions. Provides coverage to help pay for the costs of long-term care for seniors and individuals with disabilities in their homes, communities, and medical facilities.	Children, Adults, & Families, Older Adults & People with Disabilities	Apply online, print a paper application, or visit any DSS office https://dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/medical_programs.aspx
Energy and Weatherization Assistance	Provides assistance to low income families to help pay for heating bills and weatherization of homes	Education on energy conservation, financial assistance to assist paying for home heating costs.	Low-income South Dakotans Eligibility and assistance amounts are based on the number of people in the home, income, type and cost of heating and location.	Statewide Coverage https://dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/energy_weatherization_assistance.aspx
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	Provides assistance to low income families to help them buy food to remain healthy	Financial assistance with purchasing the food needed for a nutritionally adequate diet, nutrition education.	Low-income South Dakotans The amount of SNAP benefits a person or family receives is based on household size, income, and allowable expenses.	Statewide Coverage Apply online, print a paper application, or visit any DSS Office https://dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/snap.aspx
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Provides temporary monthly cash to assist families in need	Parent Work Program assists individuals to reach their employment goals- work clothing, transportation, vehicle repairs, tools, relocation expenses, GED testing fees. Temporary payments to assist individuals and their families with items such as food, clothing, shelter, utilities, household items, and personal care items.	Needs-based program for families with children under age 18 (or under age 19 if the child is in high school) who needs financial support because of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the death of a parent• a parent is absent from the home; or• the physical or mental incapacity or unemployment of a parent	Statewide Coverage Applications at any DSS Office https://dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/tanf.aspx
Quality Control	Help low-income families pay for child care as they work, attend school, or both	Provides Federal Child Care and Development Block Grant funds to help families pay for child care expenses.	Families who meet the income requirements	Statewide https://dss.sd.gov/childcare/linksandresources/

Department of Health: Programs for Children and Families

DATA CAN BE FOUND AT: <https://doh.sd.gov/a-z-reports/>

SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Avoid Opioid Prescription Addiction	Joint effort between Department of Health and Department of Social Services to address opioid abuse and misuse	Online education, resource hotline, opioid texting support, medication-assisted treatment, care coordination, Face It Together- peer coaching, Better Choices, Better Health SD- educational workshops.	Persons with an opioid use disorder	Statewide and Online https://doh.sd.gov/programs/avoid-opioid-prescription-addiction/
Be Tobacco Free South Dakota/Quit Tobacco SD	Promotes prevention, cessation, and education to reduce tobacco use rates and tobacco-related diseases in South Dakota	Online tribal tobacco advocacy toolkit, webinars, educational articles, and a variety of resources to promote a tobacco-free lifestyle. Partners with QuitLine Services to offer personalized support.	Youth, Adults, and Native American Tribes	Statewide and Online https://quittobaccosd.com/
SD Quit Line	Support to those wanting to quit tobacco use	Personalized health coaching and/or access to NRT products to support those wanting to overcome their tobacco use. Support is offered through three programs including phone coaching, Kickstart Kit, and 2Quit SD text coaching. Resources are mailed directly to the participant.	Youth, Pregnant and Postpartum, Women, Parents of Youth Users, Native Americans, Seniors	Statewide and Online https://www.sdquitline.com

INFANT HEALTH & SAFETY

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Newborn Screening Program	To detect potentially fatal or disabling conditions and birth defects in newborns as early as possible	Newborn blood spot screening and hearing screening to detect fatal or disabling conditions. Offers continued follow-up medical care to infants who have a diagnosed disorder.	Newborns	Screening services: Statewide- local doctor's office Follow up care: Sioux Falls, SD Genetic services: Aberdeen, Pierre, Sioux Falls, Rapid City https://doh.sd.gov/programs/newborn-screening/
Safe Sleep	Educes parents and caretakers on safe sleeping practices for their newborns and infants	Online education on safe sleep practices for newborns and infants. Information on incentive programs and resources in communities to provide a safe infant sleep environment.	Parents and Caregivers	Statewide and Online https://doh.sd.gov/programs/safe-sleep/
Women, Infants & Children	To better the health of women, infants and young children who are part of low-income families	Personalized nutrition information, breastfeeding education and support, referral to healthcare/social services, and vouchers to access nutritious foods.	South Dakota women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum Infants and children under the age of 5 who need assistance with their health or nutrition	Statewide Mobile clinics for patients in rural and underserved populations https://doh.sd.gov/programs/wic/
For Baby's Sake	Help give every baby the best possible start to a healthy life	Online education in regard to early signs of pregnancy, prenatal care, post partum, breast feeding, safe sleep, immunizations, and much more.	Parents and Caregivers	Statewide and Online https://doh.sd.gov/topics/maternal-child-health/pregnancy-early-childhood/first-1000-days/

EXPECTING MOTHERS

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Pregnancy Care Program	Promote the health and well-being of infants and their families in South Dakota	Offers a range of case management services and initiatives designed to address various aspects of maternal and child health including prenatal care, infant health, early childhood development, and parenting support.	Parents, Caregivers, and Healthcare Professionals	Statewide https://doh.sd.gov/programs/pregnancy-care-program/#:~:text=The%20Pregnancy%20Care%20Program%20promotes,developmental%2odelays%20or%20health%20issues.
Bright Start	Provide support to mothers through each step of their pregnancy	One-on-one, in-home support through the journey of pregnancy. Nurses assist in finding prenatal care services and provide education and support to mothers until their child turns two years old. Indigenous Lactation Counselor- Five trained professionals who connect with and offer culturally sensitive breastfeeding support to the Native American population.	Expecting, First-Time Mothers	Statewide https://doh.sd.gov/programs/bright-start/

HEALTH & SAFETY

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Seat Safety and Seat Belt Safety	Educate individuals on proper seat belt and car seat use	Online resources and toolkits to educate caregivers, youth, and adults on proper seat belt and car seat use to prevent needless deaths.	Caretakers, Adults and Youth	Statewide and Online https://doh.sd.gov/programs/seat-belt-safety/
Suicide Prevention	Prevent suicide by learning about warning signs	Online education, 988 hotline, links to behavioral health resources, suicide prevention apps, and access to toolkits and trainings.	All South Dakotans	Statewide and Online https://sdsuicideprevention.org/

HEALTH & SAFETY

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Lost & Found	Deliver comprehensive, data-driven, and resilience-focused suicide prevention and postvention programs and services	Peer2Peer Mentoring program connects students with campus and community supports and resources, so the resources are more likely to be used when needed.	Young Adults (ages 15-34) and their support networks- parents, educators, employers, and friends	Dakota Wesleyan University, South Dakota State University, University of South Dakota, and Augustana University. Online Resources are available https://resilienttoday.org/
Helpline Center	Reduce the risk of youth suicide	Offers a wide range of suicide prevention and postvention support services, including the 24/7 operated 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. They are currently in the process of implementing the evidence-based peer support program, Hope Squad, in nine South Dakota K-12 schools. Hope Squad is comprised of students selected by their peers who are trustworthy and caring. The squad members are trained by advisors to watch for at-risk students, provide friendship, identify warning signs, and seek help from adults.	Youth & Parents	Harrisburg North, East, and South Middle School, Harrisburg Freshman Academy, Brookings High School, Wagner Middle and High School, Chamberlain High School, Hanson Middle School https://www.helplinecenter.org/
Long-Term Follow Up	Improve health outcomes and quality of life for children with medical complexity and their families through better care coordination	Care coordination for families who have a child with a medical complexity. Follow-up appointments with a licensed social worker and resources to increase their knowledge and ability to care for their child.	Parents of children who are diagnosed with a medical complexity	Statewide
ON Track SD	Innovative treatment program for adolescents and young adults to help them achieve their goals for school, work, and relationships	Care and support from a specialized team, medication treatment, help with achieving goals, such as finding a job or completing school.	Individuals between the ages of 15 and 40 and are recently experiencing thoughts and behaviors that seem out of the ordinary, disorganized thinking, feelings of suspiciousness or fear, hearing voices, sounds, or seeing images that others don't.	Sioux Falls and Rapid City
Community Health Worker Program	To bridge the gap between communities and health/social service systems	This program began in 2019. Community Health Workers serve as a liaison between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. A community health worker also builds individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support, and advocacy.	Individuals receiving health/social services	As of June 1, 2023, there are over 115 Community Health Workers and over 85 Community Health Representatives across the nine tribes in South Dakota. https://chwsd.org/

HEALTH & SAFETY

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
WOW- Wellness on Wheels	To bring community health services to underserved communities across South Dakota	WIC, Pregnancy Care, Immunizations, Oral Health, Safe Sleep, Maternal Depression Screening, Developmental Screening, Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Testing.	Individuals who experience barriers to accessing community health services including but not limited to: adults, expecting mothers, post-partum mothers, newborns, children	Underserved communities across South Dakota. Individuals can request Wellness on Wheels to visit their community. https://doh.sd.gov/programs/wow/
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP)	To eliminate childhood lead exposure as a public health problem	Provides lead exposure prevention education and support to the families of children exposed to lead.	Children 6 years and younger and their parents/family	Statewide https://doh.sd.gov/topics/diseases/infectious/sd-clPPP/#:~:text=The%20South%20Dakota%20Childhood%20Lead,of%20children%20exposed%20to%20lead.
South Dakota PLAN	To provide judgement-free care and help clients make decisions about when or if they want to have children	Birth control, information, education, and counseling, community education, pregnancy testing and planning, STI and HIV testing, basic infertility services, annual checkups, screenings for health issues such as breast or cervical cancer, follow-ups and referrals to specialists.	Women, men, and couples who are interested in achieving their desired number and spacing of children	Aberdeen, Alcester, Brookings, Eagle Butte, Elk Point, Fort Thompson, Hot Springs, Huron, Plankinton, Pierre, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Spearfish, Watertown, Winner, Woonsocket, Yankton https://doh.sd.gov/programs/sd-plan/
Healthy SD	Provide information and inspiration to individuals as they explore all of the ways to live better and grow stronger	Nutrition, Physical Activity, Health & Wellness, and Workplace educational resources to enhance individuals' overall health and well-being.	Adults, Children, and Parents	Online https://healthysd.gov/
Indian Health Services	To raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level	Comprehensive healthcare delivery system, inpatient and outpatient care, and conduct preventive and curative clinics. Research efforts for diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and the application of health risk appraisals in all communities.	Adults, Children, and Families	Cheyenne River (Eagle Butte), Fort Thompson, Mobridge, Lower Brule, Pine Ridge, Rapid City, Rosebud, Sisseton, Wagner https://www.ihs.gov/

Department of Human Services: Programs for Children and Families

DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Filling My Day	To assist a person with an intellectual or developmental disability to live a meaningful day	Companion services, recreational opportunities, specialized therapies such as horse, art, and music, and programs to teach basic living skills.	Persons with an intellectual or developmental disability	Statewide https://dhs.sd.gov/en/division-developmental-disabilities/filling-my-day
Respite Care Program	To provide temporary relief care for children or adults with special needs	Respite care breaks to allow families time to tend to the needs of their other children, spouse, or themselves.	Any family having a child or adult with a: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developmental Disability, Developmental Delay, Serious Emotional Disturbance (children), Severe and Persistent Mental Illness, Traumatic Brain Injury, Child they have adopted	Statewide https://dhs.sd.gov/en/division-developmental-disabilities/respite-services-for-caregivers-of-people-with-developmental-disabilities
Family and Self-Advocate Training and Resources Program	Learn skills to prevent, minimize, and manage behavioral challenges with dignity, safety, and possibility of change	Online trainings, support groups, guardianship funding services, employment resources, ABLE Accounts to assist with saving money.	Those impacted by an intellectual or developmental disability	Statewide and Online https://dhs.sd.gov/en/division-developmental-disabilities/family-and-self-advocate-training-and-resources
Family Support 360	Helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families get the services they need to live in their own home and community as independently as possible	Home and vehicle modifications, companion services, in-home personal care, medical adaptive equipment and supplies, nutritional supplements,	People with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families	Statewide https://dhs.sd.gov/en/division-developmental-disabilities/family-support-360
CHOICES (Community, Hope, Opportunity, Independence, Careers, Empowerment, Success)	To support children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities	Case management services to determine further services needed, Community Service Providers to provide direct services to individuals, Individual assistive technology, residential services, day services, etc.	Children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities	Statewide https://www.dhs.sd.gov/en/division-developmental-disabilities/choices-waiver
South Dakota Developmental Center	To develop a person's interests and personal goals	Individualized care and case management services regarding the person's physical development and health, communication, mental health, and needs. On campus services to meet the individual needs of each person.	Individuals with developmental disabilities who would benefit from individualized care and treatment	Redfield, SD https://www.dhs.sd.gov/en/south-dakota-developmental-center

DIVISION OF SERVICE TO THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Job Services	To help people with disabilities choose and prepare for careers	Professional rehabilitation counselors provide guidance and deliver services such as vocational counseling, work skills training, skill of blindness training, assistive technology devices and training, job site accommodations, job placement, employer services, and financial assistance for training and employment preparation costs.	Individuals with visual impairments	Statewide https://dhs.sd.gov/en/rehabilitation-services/job-services-for-adults-with-disabilities
Independent Living Services	To increase a person's ability to live independently	Rehabilitation teachers provide services in the individual's home to provide skills and alternative methods for doing everyday activities. Services include but are not limited to: training to travel safely, communications, homemaking, counseling, low vision training, and leisure activities.	South Dakota residents with a significant visual impairment that limits their ability to live independently	Statewide https://dhs.sd.gov/en/rehabilitation-services/independent-living-services-for-adults-with-disabilities
Assistive Technology Clinics	To learn about devices and technology to help with vision loss	Training and education related to devices and technology that can assist persons with visual impairments.	South Dakota residents who have visual impairments	Sioux Falls, SD https://dhs.sd.gov/en/division-developmental-disabilities/assistive-technology-for-people-with-developmental-disabilities
Career Preparation	Prepare students for higher education and employment	Job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on higher education enrollment opportunities, workplace readiness training, self-advocacy instruction. Transition week for high school students in South Dakota.	Students who work with a vocational rehabilitation counselor in South Dakota	Statewide Transition Week: Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD https://dhs.sd.gov/en/rehabilitation-services/career-preparation-for-students-with-disabilities

Department of Education Services

SERVICES FOR YOUTH, PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Birth to Three	Support children with developmental delays and their families by providing dynamic, individualized early intervention services and supports	In-home services to provide training, education, and support to children with developmental delays and their families.	Children age birth to 36 months with developmental delays or disabilities and their families	Statewide https://doe.sd.gov/Birthto3/ https://doe.sd.gov/Birthto3/documents/homevisiting.pdf
Student Wellness and Supports	Provide assistance and resources for all students to learn, thrive, and grow	Project Aware: partnership with Department of Social Services-Division of Behavioral Health to bring mental health services to schools for children to access more readily. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports: systemic school-wide, group, and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behavior with all students. SDMyLife: Helps students better understand themselves and how their interests, skills, and knowledge relate to real-world academic and career opportunities.	School-aged youth	Statewide https://doe.sd.gov/studentwellness/
Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)	Donate food for distribution to food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens and community action programs	Individuals complete an intake application form and are provided food through this program.	Individuals whose household and financial circumstances are at or below 185% poverty level and/or any family who qualifies for reduced price meals	Statewide https://doe.sd.gov/CANS/tefap.aspx
General Educational Development (GED) Services	Support individuals who are interested in obtaining their GED	Preparation for tests, online testing, list of testing centers, and contact information.	Individuals seeking their GED	Statewide https://doe.sd.gov/GED/
Head Start	Provide free comprehensive services to pregnant women and children birth to five years	In-home and center-based services to support children's education and help families find assistance during challenging times. Provide medical, dental, hearing, vision, behavioral, and developmental screenings.	Children birth to five years old and their families	120 centers across South Dakota. Specific sites can be found at this website: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/center-locator?latitude=43.970&longitude=-99.902&state=SD

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
SUN Meals- Summer Food Service Program	Provide meals to children in low-income areas when school is not in session	Meals-to-go and on-site meals are provided to children during the summer months while they are not receiving meals at school.	Area with 50% of the area's population qualified for free or reduced priced meals.	Several Locations across the state. Specific sites can be found at this website: https://www.fns.usda.gov/summer/sitefinder
Path2Impact	Offer a safe and secure place for youth to go during non-school hours	Before and after school program as well as summer youth program to ensure children's safety while they are not at school.	School-aged youth	Statewide https://doe.sd.gov/path2impact/

Community and Private Agency Services

PARENTING CLASSES

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Positive Indian Parenting	Help parents and families remember teachings and practice them	Eight sessions of parenting training and coaching including: traditional parenting, lessons of the storyteller, lessons of the cradleboard, harmony in child rearing, traditional behavior management, lessons of mother nature, praise in traditional parenting, and choices in parenting.	Parents	Virtual In-Person training as requested https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/PAR ED/CPS05_positive_indian_Parenting_brochure.pdf
Common Sense Parenting	Improve a parent's skills and ability to parent in an effective manner	Training series to teach easy-to-learn techniques that address issues a parent may have with communication, discipline, decision-making, relationships, and self-control when parenting.	Parents	Wagner, Watertown, Rapid City, Pine Ridge, Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, Huron, Pierre, Mitchell, Yankton, Gregory, Winner, and Lake Traverse Reservation https://dss.sd.gov/childprotection/parentingprogram.aspx
Responsive Parenting	Increase the enjoyment and satisfaction of parenting young children	Six-week class series for parents to increase their knowledge on their child's temperament, needs, how children learn, how to encourage children, the parent child relationship, and the stress of parenting.	Parents with children ages birth to three years old	Online, Aberdeen, Brookings, Huron, Watertown https://dss.sd.gov/childcare/educationalopportunities/responsiveparenting.aspx

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Understanding Me Up to Age 3	Help parents understand the world from a child's perspective	Four-week series to help parents understand why children act the way they do, how to keep children safe, how children learn, and how to help children manage their feelings.	Parents with children younger than 3 years old	Online, Aberdeen, Brookings, Huron, Watertown https://dss.sd.gov/childcare/educationalopportunities/responsiveparenting.aspx

PLACEMENT RESOURCE SUPPORT SERVICES

The Foster Network	Empower and support families who care for children placed through a licensing agency	Clothing closet, bedroom furniture, scholarship opportunities, Christmas presents, support group, and training.	Foster Parents	Headquarters- Sioux Falls Serve the entire state of South Dakota https://www.thefosternet.org/
Sotera Youth and Family Services Collaborative	Provide children and families the support they need to be successful and thrive	training, retention events, supply closet consisting of clothes, diapers, furniture, formula, and toys.	Foster Parents	Pierre https://www.facebook.com/SoteraFamily/
Black Hills Foster Care Association	Improve the experiences and outcomes for kids in foster care	Provide backpacks with basic necessities for children when they come into care and host retention events.	Foster Parents	Western South Dakota https://americaskidsbelong.org/lp/foster-friendly-black-hills/
The Light of Mine Ranch	Provide healthy, family environments for children to develop and grow	Assist in purchasing Regalia for Native American children to be able to dance, furniture assistance, retention events, foster closet, and provide school supplies for children in foster care.	Foster Parents	Western South Dakota https://www.lightofmineranch.com/
Foster Friendly App	Promote foster friendly businesses in South Dakota	Businesses in South Dakota provide discounted services to show their support to area foster families.	Foster Parents	Statewide https://americaskidsbelong.org/foster-friendly-communities/foster-friendly-app/

PSYCHIATRIC RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT FACILITY

Aurora Plains Academy	Facilitate lasting change in residents and their families	Intensive residential treatment in the areas of mental illness, emotional problems, conduct problems, learning problems, chemical abuse problems, sexual abuse/offender issues, and peer and family problems. This facility offers therapy services, alternative day schools, recreational activities, and residential services.	Youth ages 10 to 20	Plankinton https://www.clinicarecorp.com/aurora-plains/
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PRIVATE MENTAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS: LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Behavioral Health Services	Provide outpatient behavioral health services to those in need of support	Individual and group counseling for depression, anxiety, stress, grief, strain on relationships, isolation, job loss, anger, family conflict, couples' conflict, divorce adjustment, marriage preparation, mental health assessments and evaluations, mediation, critical incident treatment, and behavioral healthcare for victims of crime.	Children, Adults, Families, Couples	Telehealth Aberdeen, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Brookings, Mitchell, Watertown, Milbank, Sisseton https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/behavioral-health-services/
CARES Wraparound Services	Early-intervention service that follows a high fidelity wraparound approach to service delivery by providing care coordination to families	Care coordination to support families with crisis planning, support planning, care planning, skill development, referrals, and support identification. LSS CARES partners with other formal supports who create one collaborative and comprehensive plan to help families work towards their goals.	Families	Sioux Falls and statewide based on availability Referrals are made through school social workers or counselors, then a team member will contact families to determine services in their area. https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/cares-wraparound-services.html
Center for New Americans- Immigration Services	Help refugees become self-sufficient through services	Initial consultation, USCIS documentation preparation, Asylum application, photograph services for immigration and passport purposes, liaison between clients and USCIS offices, citizenship interview preparation, and citizenship classes.	Individuals seeking assistance with immigration and/or citizenship issues	Aberdeen, Huron, Rapid City, Sious Falls, Yankton https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/center-for-new-americans/
Interpreter Services	Serve people who have limited English skills	On-site in-person interpretation, video and audio remote services, written translation, message relay, interpretation using telephone or conference call. Available languages: Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Croatian, Dinka, Karen, Mai-Mai, Nepali, Oromo, Russian, Serbian, Somali, Spanish, Sudanese, and Ukrainian	Individuals seeking assistance with interpretation	Sioux Falls and Virtual https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/interpreter-services/
Canyon Hills Center	Assist youth in building skills to overcome their emotional, behavioral, and/or educational challenges	Psychiatric residential treatment facility to serve individuals through a specialized education program, extensive outdoor recreation, opportunities for community involvement, and evidence-based programming including cognitive behavior therapy groups.	Boys and girls ages 10 to 17 who have emotional, behavioral health and educational challenges.	Spearfish https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/residential-services-for-children-youth/canyon-hills-spearfish.html

PRIVATE SOCIAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS: LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Community Resource Program	Provides independent living skills	Provide case management support to youth in-care, and after the youth leave the care and custody of the Department of Social Services. Case management services include one-to-one education, workshops, and conferences. Helps youth access funding for post-secondary education, housing assistance, and startup support for graduating high school seniors.	Young adults ages 16 to 21 who are or have been in foster care or juvenile justice	Statewide https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/independent-living-services/community-resource-program.html
Kinship Services	To locate relatives or fictive kin who are interested in being a placement option for a child/children in the custody of the state	Complete comprehensive home studies with relatives or fictive kin who are interested in being a placement option for a child or children in the custody of the state. Conduct relative searches to locate, identify, and engage relatives or fictive kin who may be potential placements and/or connections for children.	Children, Adults, Families who are working with the Department of Social Services-Child Protection Services	Statewide services based in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Aberdeen, Mitchell, and Pierre https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/kinship-services.html
Youth Mentoring Services	Empower young people to succeed by establishing trusting relationships with adult volunteers	In school, high school, and community mentoring for youth and teenagers. Mentors spend one hour per week with their mentee and spend time doing a variety of activities together to build a supportive relationship.	Children in grades Pre-K through teenagers in 12th grade	Sioux Falls Area Sioux falls, Aberdeen, Baltic, Brandon Valley, Canton, Dell Rapids, Garretson, Harrisburg, Lennox, Tea Area, Tri-Valley, and West Central School Districts https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/mentoring/
Resource Family Services	To identify and develop resource families to meet the needs of South Dakota's children and families	Screening, training, and assessment to individuals interested in becoming foster or adoptive families for the SD Department of Social Services.	Individuals interested in becoming foster parents	Statewide https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/resource-family-services.html
Summit Oaks Center	Help youth gain skills to care for themselves and others	Psychiatric residential treatment center for youth. They offer a comprehensive therapeutic program and a specialized education program to help youth learn to care for themselves and others.	Boys and girls ages 10 to 17 who have emotional, behavioral health and educational challenges.	Sioux Falls https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/residential-services-for-children-youth/summit-oaks-sioux-falls.html
Treatment Foster Care	Offer a safe, nurturing environment for youth and children who have behavioral, emotional, developmental, medical, or social needs	Foster parents provide 24-hour care and supervision for children who are separated from their families. LSS is a licensed Child Placement Agency through the Department of Social Services and foster parents are certified to provide family foster care at the treatment level of care.	Youth and children who have behavioral, emotional, developmental, medical, or social needs	Sioux Falls https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/foster-care/

Arise Youth Center	Provides shelter care to youth without a placement	Short term group care facility that assists youth and their families through a screening process to identify needs and community resources along with a discharge plan in collaboration with the court system.	Youth	Minnehaha and Pennington Counties https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/detention-alternatives/ariseyouthcenter.html
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PRIVATE SOCIAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS: CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility	Empower children to overcome the trauma that has affected their lives	A therapeutic, home-like environment where staff work to help children re-establish healthy relationships with others and learn the skills necessary to be successful at home, school, and in the community. Services include individualized treatment plan, education services, individual and group therapy, family therapy, psychiatric services, nutritious meals, and cultural education.	Children ages 4-14 who have experienced abuse or other traumatic life events and struggles with emotional and/or behavioral needs	Rapid City and Sioux Falls https://chssd.org/residential-treatment-and-education/
Emergency Shelter and Crisis Intervention (Children's Home Shelter for Family Safety)	Empower victims to overcome trauma and rebuild their lives	Emergency shelter, crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy, and support	Victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, child abuse, and/or neglect	Sioux Falls https://chssd.org/shelter/
Children's Home Child Advocacy Center	Provide a safe environment for children to discuss the trauma they have faced	Provides support and a safe, child-friendly environment for conducting expert forensic interviews of children who are alleged victims of abuse.	Children disclosing abuse and/or neglect	Rapid City https://chssd.org/CAC/
Adoption and Therapeutic Foster Care	Unite children with families and empower them to be safe, healthy, and strong	Education and training to become a foster parent as well as support services after becoming a licensed foster parent.	Individuals interested in becoming a foster parent and/or current foster parents	Sioux Falls, Rapid City https://chssd.org/foster-care-and-adoption/
Prevention Education and Training	Empower individuals to end abuse and build safe, healthy, and strong communities	A variety of training events to become trauma-informed. Trainings topics include Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), Resilience, Child Abuse and Neglect, Child Safety, and Vicarious Trauma.	Parents and caretakers	Virtual and Statewide https://chssd.org/prevention/

PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT SERVICES: OUR HOME

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Our Home Rediscovery Drug & Alcohol Treatment	Assist youth in overcoming their addiction	Primary inpatient drug and alcohol services, short-term substance abuse rehab program, specialized groups and individual counseling to address the specific needs of the youth, cultural, spiritual, and educational opportunities. Treatment is completed in approximately 45 days.	Male and female youth with a primary diagnosis of substance dependency disorder	Huron and Parkston https://www.ourhomeinc.org/rediscovery
Our Home Psychiatric Residential Treatment Center-Huron	Develop healthier mindsets and coping skills for youth	Treatment for sexually aggressive males. Services include specialized groups and individual counseling to address the specific needs of the youth, cultural, spiritual, and educational opportunities.	Male youth ages 10-17 that have identified treatment needs, which are beyond community-based services	Huron https://www.ourhomeinc.org/asap-treatment
Our Home Psychiatric Residential Treatment Center- Parkston	Work with youth to develop healthier attitudes and coping skills	A multidisciplinary treatment team works with the youth and family to design a treatment plan that addresses each youth's individual needs and objectives.	Female youth ages 12-17 that have experienced concerning legal, school, or family behaviors	Parkston https://www.ourhomeinc.org/parkston
Connections Treatment Foster Care	Enhanced foster care services to prevent placement in a more restrictive setting	Foster care for youth who have emotional, developmental, or medical disabilities to be provided appropriate out of home therapeutic placement and other services to enhance their emotional and social functioning and well-being. Person centered 24/7 case management services, crisis management, person centered treatment planning, skill building groups, community resources, evidence-based assessments, educational activities, and extra-curricular activities.	Youth who have emotional, developmental, or medical disabilities	Huron/Parkston https://www.ourhomeinc.org/connections

PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT SERVICES: MCCROSSAN BOYS RANCH

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Group Care	Support youth to learn responsibility, social skills, life skills, and a sense of community	Residential care, therapy, psychiatric care, chemical dependency, restorative justice, moral development, spiritual programs,	Boys age 12-17	Sioux Falls https://mccrossan.org/programs
Transitional Program	Prepare young men for success in the Independent Living Program	A program that is a step between group care and independent living and focuses on preparing young men for success in the Independent Living Preparation Program. The residents have direct supervision and focus on social and life skills development, job seeking skills, and more	Male Adolescents age 16-18	Sioux Falls https://mccrossan.org/programs
Independent Living Preparation Program	Prepare youth for independent living	Youth have support in learning how to cook, clean, and manage finances, gain employment, earn their high school diploma or GED, or go on to higher education.	Males age 17-20	Sioux Falls https://mccrossan.org/programs
Short-Term Assessment Services	Provide referring agency with recommendations for services a youth needs	30-60 day program to complete a comprehensive assessment through evaluations, observations, and monitoring of youth in a structured setting.	Youth Males age 12-18	Sioux Falls https://mccrossan.org/programs
Respite Care	Allow caretakers to tend to matters not related to the youth	Planned, short-term stay for youth in a safe and structured environment while their caretakers attend to other matters.	Kinship Providers, Guardians, and/or Foster Parents	Sioux Falls https://mccrossan.org/programs
Community Reintegration	Assist residents in becoming integrated in their community after treatment	60-90 day program to assist residents that are discharged from a psychiatric residential treatment facility and are in need of transitional services into their home community. Structure, supervision, family and individual therapy, educational services, and assistance securing community resources are provided.	Youth Males age 12-18	Sioux Falls https://mccrossan.org/programs
Crisis Stabilization	Provide support to youth during a difficult time in their life	7-10 day program for boys who are experiencing difficulties, with the goal of preventing placement outside of the home. Staff support the youth to stabilize prior to returning home.	Youth Males age 12-18	Sioux Falls https://mccrossan.org/programs

PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT SERVICES: WELLFULLY

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
WellFully Addiction Recovery Program	Provide inpatient and outpatient addiction recovery for youth	24-hour supervision, residential treatment, intensive counseling, intensive outpatient program, and educational support to help youth develop effective coping skills, make better life choices, and receive ongoing support for a successful future.	Youth ages 11-18 who have substance abuse issues and co-occurring disorders	Rapid City https://www.wellfullypacc.org/addiction-recovery
WellFully Behavior Health Program	Help youth across the state of South Dakota who need group care or respite care	Individual, group, and family therapy, physical and therapeutic activities, mental health clinical treatment plans, 24-hour supervision, and educational support.	Youth ages 10-17 who have been abused and neglected, and/or struggling with behavioral health issues	Rapid City https://www.wellfullypacc.org/behavioral-health-care
WellFully Adolescent Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility	Support youth while they gain skills to overcome their complex trauma	24-hour supervision, residential treatment, intensive counseling, psychological and psychiatric care, mental health clinical treatment plans, specialized groups in intimate partner violence, grief, and anger, and educational support.	Female youth who have a harder time controlling their behaviors due to complex trauma	Rapid City https://www.wellfullypacc.org/psychiatric-residential-treatment
WellFully Adolescent Crisis Care Center	Support youth who are experiencing thoughts of suicide or crisis	A safe space for youth to breathe and be provided resources.	Middle and high school age youth who are in crisis or may be considering suicide	Rapid City https://www.wellfullypacc.org/crisis-care-center
WellFully Academy	Provide sufficient educational services	Educational services for the children residing at WellFully.	Youth residing at WellFully	Rapid City https://www.wellfullypacc.org/wellfully-academy-lab
WellFully LAB Class	Provide educational services during the summer months	Summer program to provide a safe place for youth.	Youth with risky behaviors	Rapid City https://www.wellfullypacc.org/wellfully-academy-lab

PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT SERVICES: ABBOTT HOUSE

Abbott House Residential Treatment	Provide therapeutic residential treatment support services to young women	Intensive trauma-based treatment services such as therapeutic groups, medical services, educational services, and community engagement to help youth overcome the burdens facing them.	Female youth, ages 7 to 18 who have needs requiring a higher level of care to address their therapeutic needs	Mitchell https://www.abbotthouse.org/our-services/residential-treatment/
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Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Abbott House Independent Living	Opportunities for youth to live a more independent lifestyle while still receiving support	Independent living locations to support young adults through the transition into adulthood while still receiving therapeutic services. Youth sign a lease, find and maintain a job, often attend college or a technical school and care for themselves. Staff members are available and offer assistance to help the individuals build skills such as cooking, laundry, and finances.	Male and Female youth ages 18-21	Mitchell and Rapid City https://www.abbotthouse.org/our-services/larson-independent-living/
Abbott House Therapeutic Foster Care	Home away from home for youth who have faced abuse and neglect	A salaried couple lives in each home and serves as the parental figures for the young people living in the home. Homes provide a family environment where girls and boys learn skills needed to transition into adulthood.	Youth who have completed Abbott House Residential Treatment and/or youth with extensive trauma	Mitchell, Rapid City, and soon to be Sioux Falls https://www.abbotthouse.org/our-services/bridges-therapeutic-foster-care/

GROUP CARE

Falls Academy	Provide trauma-informed treatment to promote recovery and resiliency in youth	Educational services (High School Programming, Credit Recovery, GED Preparation and Completion, Special Education Services), Group and Individual Based Therapy Services (The Seven Challenges, Moral Reconation Therapy, Individual/Family Counseling, Aggressive Replacement Therapy, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, Brain spotting), Daily Community Meeting, Daily Life Skills Programming (Community Employment Preparation), Community Based Activities (Recreational Programming, Community Service Opportunities, Community Employment).	Male and Female Adolescents	Sioux Falls https://www.brightertransitionyc.com/falls-academy/
Sacred Heart	Provide care for youth experiencing conflicts	Psychological evaluations, chemical dependency evaluations, family evaluations, and behavioral needs assessment. Staff monitor and document observations of the child's behavior on a daily basis to support improvement.	Youth of all ages	Eagle Butte https://shconline.org/child-services/group-care-services/

EMERGENCY SHELTER CARE

Emergency Shelter Care	Shelter services to youth awaiting a placement	Shelter Care	Youth	Arise East and West, Hughes County Shelter Care, Cheyenne River Sioux, Ogalala Sioux Tribe, Spotted Tail
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INTERPRETER SERVICES

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Division of Rehabilitation Services	Provide services to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech impediments	Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS), Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program (TED), Project Link South Dakota, Hearing Aid Assistance Program (HAAP), Cochlear Implant Program, I CanConnectSD- Deaf Blind Equipment Program, Communication Assistance Services, Non-ADA Interpreting Requests, Interpreter Certification, Mentoring Services, and Interpreter & Mentoring Resources	Residents of South Dakota who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and late-deafened	Statewide https://dhs.sd.gov/en/rehabilitation-services/services-for-people-who-are-deaf-or-hard-of-hearing
Lutheran Social Services Interpreter Services	Serve people who have limited English skills	On-site in-person interpretation, video and audio remote services, written translation, message relay, interpretation using telephone or conference call. Available languages: Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Croatian, Dinka, Karen, Mai-Mai, Nepali, Oromo, Russian, Serbian, Somali, Spanish, Sudanese, and Ukrainian	Individuals with a primary language different from English and/or individuals who experience hearing impairments	Sioux Falls and Virtual https://lsssd.org/what-we-do/interpreter-services/
Proprio	Serve people who have a primary language different from English	Over the phone interpretation, video remote interpretation, and document translation in over 300 languages. This vendor also has American Sign Language interpreters available through virtual services for individuals who experience hearing impairments.	Individuals with a primary language different from English and/or individuals who experience hearing impairments	Statewide- Virtual https://proprio.com/proprios-language-and-technology-solutions/
A to Z World Languages	Help individuals overcome language barriers	24/7 translation, transcription, and interpretation services in over 100 languages and dialects as well as American Sign Language.	Individuals with a primary language different from English and/or individuals who experience hearing impairments	Sioux Falls and by phone https://www.atozworlrlanguages.com/

RURAL SOUTH DAKOTA SERVICES

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Program-- Dakota Transit Association	Authorizes capital, administrative, operating assistance and training grants to state agencies, local governments, Indian tribes, and nonprofit organizations providing rural public transportation services.	Provides up to 80% federal share of the costs for administrative expenses, up to 80% for capital costs and up to 50% of the net operating deficit for rural transit operations.	All projects must benefit residents in non-urbanized areas (under 50,000 population) of South Dakota	Refer to Map for specific locations: https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6b7a8552f9e45b886fbb82c03ed18ca
Telehealth Services	Provide substance use and mental health services to individuals who experience barriers to receive services in person	Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Services	Individuals needing substance use and mental health support	https://dss.sd.gov/docs/behavioralhealth/agency_county/telehealth_services.pdf

Community Assistance Programs

INTER-LAKES COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

Service Area: Brookings, Clark, Codington, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Kingsbury, Lake, Lincoln, McCook, Miner, Minnehaha, Moody, Turner

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Home Rehab	Enhance a pre-existing home to increase safety and accessibility	Zero-interest, five-year decreasing balance loan to be used for accessibility modifications for persons with disabilities, in addition to making necessary repairs for health, safety, and code compliance. Eligible participants work with a Self-Help Rehabilitation Representative to determine their specific needs, create a plan, and identify funding sources.	Families with financial needs who qualify for the program	Above Counties- excludes Sioux Falls https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/home-rehab
Financial Assistance	Support individuals and families who have financial barriers	Financial assistance is available to help individuals and families with security deposits, emergency utility assistance, and/or rent assistance. Vouchers are available for eligible households to purchase emergency clothing at thrift stores.	Families with financial needs who qualify for the program	Clothing assistance excludes Sioux Falls https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/programs
Weatherization/LIEAP	Make housing for low-income persons more energy-efficient and less costly	The residence is audited and a list of needs is developed. The program provides materials and pays contractors for labor to weatherize the home. Furnaces may be repaired or replaced through the program. In addition, some inefficient/high-cost non-operating appliances can also be replaced in certain circumstances. The furnace repair/replacement program is available for homes that have been weatherized.	Weatherization Program: Persons at or below 200% of poverty-level income LIEAP (fuel assistance) Program: Persons at or below 175% of poverty-level income	All counties listed above https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/weatherizationlieap https://www.wsdca.org/weatherization
Angel Tree	Provide families and children with gifts during the holiday season	Businesses host "Angel Trees" that contain separate cut out angels that list the age and desired item of each eligible participant	Low-income families	Clark, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Kingsbury, Moody, and Turner Counties https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/angel-tree
Food Distribution Program	Support those in need of food	Food pantry that provides a three-day supply of food for eligible participants.	Families in need of food	All counties listed above https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/food-distribution-program
ESG	Help those who do not have secure and safe shelter	Case management, security deposit, and rent assistance services aimed at helping participants retain their housing or to re-enter appropriate and permanent housing.	Persons at risk of becoming without a home and Persons who have become without a home	All counties listed above https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/esg

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Youth Recreation	Financially support youth activities	When funding is available, ICAP partners with Park and Recreation Department to provide Summer Recreation vouchers to eligible families. Clark and Turner counties provide financial assistance for swim passes. Children in foster care automatically qualify for this assistance.	Eligible families and children	Brookings, Clark, and Turner Counties https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/young-recreation
Bright Futures	Rapid rehousing for families without a home	This program eliminates most barriers to move into safe housing as quickly as possible. Eligible families are required to agree to case management services and work with a Housing Stabilization Coach to create a housing stability plan. Participants can receive assistance for a security deposit and up to 24 months of rental assistance based on their individual progress.	Families with children who have the desire and ability to increase their financial self-sufficiency through employment	All counties listed above https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/bright-futures
ESG	Help those who do not have secure and safe shelter	case management, security deposit, and rent assistance services aimed at helping participants retain their housing or to re-enter appropriate and permanent housing.	Persons at risk of becoming without a home and Persons who have become without a home	All counties listed above https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/esg
Employment Related Services	Decrease barriers for individuals to obtain employment	Assists with the financial barriers to obtaining a job such as gas vouchers and bus passes	Persons in need of financial assistance	All counties listed above https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/employment-related-services
VITA	Increase person's knowledge on taxes	Opportunity to meet with volunteers trained by the IRS to process their returns.	Eligibility is based on household income which is set by the IRS each tax season	All counties listed above https://www.interlakescap.com/custom/vita
Helpline Center	Make lives better by giving support, offering hope and creating connections all day, every day.	211 Helpline: Online platform that outlines services by a variety of categories in the individual's city, county, or surrounding area. 988 Lifeline: Suicide and crisis lifeline, in-person crisis assistance, resources for a variety of categories including: assessments, treatment facilities, financial assistance, substance use, domestic violence support, counseling, legal, support groups, veterans, Native American/Tribal Communities, and basic needs, mental health screenings, resources for counseling services, support groups, Volunteer Connections, Suicide Grief Support, Caregiver Support, Outreach Support, Child Care Helpline	This center is beneficial for individuals of all ages experiencing a variety of circumstances	Varies based on service type. Website has the ability to be translated to a variety of languages. https://www.helplinecenter.org/

WESTERN SD COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Service area: Bennett, Butte, Corson, Custer, Dewey, Fall River, Jackson, Haakon, Harding, Lawrence, Meade, Pennington, Perkins, and Ziebach counties

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Get Covered- South Dakota Affordable Care Act Navigators	Provide individuals unbiased support in securing health care coverage	Individuals complete an application and are then assigned a navigator. Navigators assist in providing education on health insurance, assist with insurance applications, determine eligibility for premium tax credits to reduce the cost of insurance, and assistance in selecting the plan that is right for each person.	All South Dakotans	Sioux Falls, Virtual https://communityhealthcare.net/get-covered-sd/
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Weatherization: See above- Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership				Rapid City, Phone, Email
VITA Program: See above- Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership				Rapid City, Phone, Email
SHINE	Educate individuals about Medicare, and how to avoid fraud to protect their benefits	A team of trained staff and volunteers educate individuals to understand Medicare options, assist and provide information on plan comparisons or enrollments, Medicare appeals, fraud prevention and education, Medicare billing issues, and application assistance for low-income programs	Medicare beneficiaries in South Dakota	Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Milbank, phone, or email https://dhs.sd.gov/en/ltrs/shiine

GROW SD

Service area: Beadle, Brown, Campbell, Day, Edmunds, Faulk, Hand, Hughes, Hyde, Marshall, McPherson, Potter, Roberts, Spink, Stanley, Sully, and Walworth Counties

Housing Assistance	Provide housing development statewide	Home Mortgage Loans, Down Payment/Closing Cost Assistance, USDA 502 Direct Loans, Homeownership Education and Housing Counseling	Individuals needing financial or educational assistance regarding housing	Sisseton, online applications, available by phone and email https://www.growsd.org/about-us/resource-library/?cat=Applications
Emergency Furnace Repair	Ensure individuals have adequate access to heat	Assistance in repairing or replacing furnaces to low-income individuals	Owners of homes who are eligible participants of the South Dakota Low Income Energy Assistance Program	Sisseton, online applications, available by phone and email https://www.growsd.org/about-us/resource-library/?cat=Applications
Weatherization: See above				All counties served by Grow SD

RURAL OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Service area: Aurora, Bon Homme, Brule, Buffalo, Charles Mix, Clay, Davison, Douglas, Gregory, Hanson, Hutchinson, Jerauld, Jones, Lyman, Mellette, Sanborn, Todd, Union, and Yankton Counties

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
ROCS Transit	Provides affordable and accessible transportation services for all outings	Transportation services for individuals' medical, educational, profession, and social needs	Individuals in need of transportation	Aurora County, Beresford-Alcester, Brandon City, Canton, Charles Mix County, Brule-Lyman County, Kingsbury County, Madison area, Gregory County, Harrisburg area, Hartford area, Miner County, Moody County, Parker, Parkston (Hutchinson County), Salem area, Tea area, Union County, Viborg-Centerville, Wagner (Bon Homme, Charles Mix, and Douglas Counties), Wessington Springs, and Winner
ROCS Dining Services	Provides nutritious and diabetic-friendly lunches	Provides nutritious and diabetic friendly lunches 5 days a week. Meals are available on a donation basis according to suggested income guidelines. Prices vary per location. EBT cards are accepted at all locations and individuals may be eligible for free meals through Medicaid	Individuals in need of nutritious lunches	22 locations in southeastern South Dakota: Armour, Avon, Burke, Canton, Chamberlain, Corsica, Delmont, Gregory, Kimball, Lake Andes, North Sioux City, Parker, Plankinton, Platte, Springfield, Stickney, Tyndall, Vermillion, Wagner, Wessington Springs, White Lake, and Winner
ROCS Community Engagement	Provide support to those who are experiencing emergency hardships	Services vary based on location, but may include: Rental Assistance, Utility Assistance, Transit Passes, Vita Program, Garden Project, Food Pantry.	Individuals experiencing emergency hardships	Yankton (Yankton and Bon Homme County), Wagner (Charles Mix, Gregory, Douglas, and Hutchinson County), Vermillion (Clay County), North Sioux City (Union County), Mitchell (Aurora, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld, Sanborn, and Tripp County), Lake Andes (Charles Mix, Gregory, Douglas, and Hutchinson County), Chamberlain (Brule, Buffalo, Jones, Lyman, Mellette, and Todd County)
ROCS Community Closet	Reduce waste, mitigate financial strain, and support the community	Thrift store that offers a wide variety of merchandise including clothing for the whole family, shoes, coats, appliances, vintage items, books, jewelry, toys/games, lamps, dishes, and more all at affordable prices. Foster Friendly business that offers 20% discount to those presenting a foster friendly card.	All Individuals	Mitchell and Wagner
ROCS Weatherization	Help low-income households overcome the high cost of energy through conservation measures	Emergency furnace repair and/or replacement, energy audits, education on conservation measures, fee based audit service to families who don't qualify for weatherization services.	Low-income households	Online Application Business office- Wagner, Yankton Outreach Office, Mitchell Outreach Office

South Dakota Housing

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
SD Cares	Offer financial assistance to help stabilize individual's housing situation	Provide emergency housing and utility assistance	<p>South Dakota residents who have been financially impacted due to COVID-19.</p> <p>Eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income qualify based on county of residence • Have one or more individuals in the household who has qualified for unemployment benefits, experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs or experienced other financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the coronavirus outbreak. • One or more individuals in the household have a past due utility bill or mortgage statement or are able to prove that they are at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability. 	<p>Statewide</p> <p>Online Application</p> <p>Website has the ability to be translated to a variety of languages.</p> <p>https://www.sdhousing.org/ready-to-buy/save-my-home/sdcares</p>
Security Deposit Assistance	Support renters in emergency situations, prevent homelessness, and assist low-income families in moving into stable housing	Funding to be used for the payment of security deposits of rental units.	First come, first served basis for low-income families whose households income does not exceed 60% of the area median income by household size and county	<p>Statewide</p> <p>Contact information for specific locations is available through:</p> <p>https://www.sdhousing.org/ready-to-rent/rental-assistance/security-deposit</p>
Homeowner Rehabilitation	Expand the supply of decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing for very low-income and low-income households.	Funding to eligible homeowners to assist with the repair, rehabilitation or reconstruction of owner-occupied units.	Low-income families and households	<p>Statewide</p> <p>Online Application</p> <p>https://www.sdhousing.org/develop-housing/available-development-programs/home-program</p>
Sustainable Housing Incentive Program (SHIP)	Seeks to be another tool for communities to break the cycle of homelessness.	Provides one-time assistance and works in collaboration with other housing assistance and supportive services for households that need longer term support.	<p>Individuals and families with a household income below 50% of area median income, per HUD standards.</p> <p>Households at greatest risk of housing instability due to multiple barriers such as poor rental history, homelessness, formerly incarcerated, those with chronic physical or mental disabilities, chronic substance abusers, transitioning youth, or disable veterans.</p>	<p>Aberdeen, Brookings, Canton, Chamberlain, Clark, Clear Lake, DeSmet, Flandreau, Hayti, Howard, Lake Andes, Madison, Milbank, Mitchell, Parker, Rapid City, Redfield, Salem, Sioux Falls, Vermillion, Wagner, Watertown, Yankton</p> <p>Office locations provide services to the county</p> <p>https://www.sdhousing.org/forms/sustainable-housing-incentive-program-plan-and-application#:~:text=SHIP%20seeks%20to%20be%20another,that%20one%20longer%20term%20support</p>

Program	Purpose	Services	Population Served	Location
Coordinated Entry System	Ensure individuals are receiving appropriate services within a consistent streamlined approach	Assesses the individual's needs and connects them to the appropriate services.	Individuals without a home or at the risk of becoming without a home	<p>Statewide services</p> <p>Seven physical access points: Chamberlain, Lake Andes, Mitchell, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Vermillion, Wagner, Watertown, Yankton</p> <p>Toll free phone line</p> <p>https://www.sdhousing.org/housing-partners/housing-for-the-homeless</p>
Rural Development (USDA 515)	Help improve the economy and quality of life in rural America	Rural rental housing loans, rental assistance, multifamily housing loan guarantees.	<p>Ownership: Individuals, partnerships, limited partnerships, for-profit corporations, nonprofit organizations, limited equity cooperatives, Native American tribes, and public agencies are eligible to apply.</p> <p>Tenancy: Very low, low-, and moderate-income families; elderly persons; and persons with handicaps and disabilities.</p> <p>Very low income is defined as below 50 percent of the area median income; low income is between 50 and 80 percent; moderate income is capped at \$5,500 above the low-income limit.</p>	<p>Aberdeen, Watertown, Huron, Mitchell, Sioux Falls, Yankton, Pierre, and Rapid City have office locations however individuals statewide can be provided services.</p> <p>https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/1956_5_515_RURALRENTAL.PDF</p>

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION AND SERVICES ACT ACTIVITIES

Attachment A8

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
July 2024	Subteam Meeting	Virtual	The group continued momentum in reviewing assessment materials and methods to capture the data required by federal partners of participants. A second Subteam Meeting was held on July 30, 2024.
July 2024	Core Team Meeting	Virtual	Shared updates on the Prevention Plan Submission and shared the draft candidacy and program recommendations. The team planned an internal Core Team meeting to outline the specific procedures and practices to obtain feedback on from the larger Subteam to maximize the remaining year of contract with ICF through planning and implementation.
September 20, 2024	Prevention Team Meeting	Pierre/ Virtual	Status updates were provided to the team. Discussion of strategy regarding implementation and remaining planning elements occurred. Tribal representatives were present at this meeting.
October 3, 2024	Presentation	Sioux Falls	Division of Behavioral Health and Child Protection Services presented on prevention services, family first planning, and the history of the Family First Prevention and Services Act at the Child Abuse Prevention Conference hosted by the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment.
October 17, 2024	ICWA Meeting	Pierre	ICF consultants joined CPS in discussing the FFPSA and cultural adaptations policy with the ICWA tribal group and Casey Families.
October 23rd and 24th, 2024	Planning Meeting	Sioux Falls	A focused planning meeting was held of remaining elements of FFPSA and response to federal feedback occurred. The Division of Behavioral Health, Child Protection Services, Continuous Quality Improvement, and ICF played key roles in this meeting and collaborated closely.
November 8, 2024	Department of Health Meeting	Virtual	A meeting with the Department of Health was held to discuss Nurse Family Partnership (Bright Start) and Parents As Teachers.
December 10, 2024	West River Mental Health (WRMH) Meeting	Rapid City	Conversations were held regarding early piloting.
December 31, 2024	West River Mental Health (WRMH) Meeting	Virtual	Early piloting conversations were held with a focus on financial aspects of claiming.

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
January 17, 2025	Kinship Navigator	Virtual	Discussion of kinship incorporation into the FFPSA was held.
January 21, 2025	DSS Finance Meeting	Virtual	A discussion was held regarding fiscal readiness for the FFPSA.
February 6, 2025	Communication Planning Meeting	Virtual	Deliverables for communication planning were discussed and ICF began work towards this plan.
February 13, 2025	Department of Health Office of Home Visiting Meeting	Virtual	Early data sharing and potential to braid and blend funding were discussed.
February 14, 2025	Prevention Plan Resubmission Discussion	Virtual	Specific responses to federal partners and a timeline for resubmission were discussed.
March 24, 2025	Debrief of Structured Decision Making	Virtual	Meeting was held to discuss logic model and application through prevention plan steps.
March 2025	ICF drafted revised Prevention Plan and finalized Communication Plan	Virtual	Established the Prevention Plan Draft to be due at the end of March to DSS in order to begin approvals.
March 2025	IV-B Utilization	Email	The ICWA Program Specialist consulted with the Bureau of Indian Affairs regarding utilization of Title IV-B funding.
March 2025	Contact Information	Email	The ICWA Program Specialist provided ICF with up-to-date contact information for the tribes.
April 2025	Review of Prevention Plan Revisions	Virtual	Completed a review of the revisions made to the Prevention Plan.
May 2025	Weekly Progress Updates	Virtual	Weekly touch-base meetings to discuss tasks established.
May 6, 2025	Division of Behavioral Health	Virtual	Discussed ongoing collaboration, West River Mental Health pilot, and plan resubmission progress.
May 19, 2025	Department of Health Meeting	Virtual	Discussed ongoing collaboration, program updates from DOH on cessation of their Parents as Teachers pilot due to budget constraints, and plan resubmission process.
May 2025	ICF Contract	NA	Executed an amendment to the ICF contract. ICF began developing CPS policies and updating the pre-print to accompany plan resubmission.

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
June 4, 2025	Training Plan Meeting	Virtual	ICF consultants who are developing the training plan and materials met with CPS to frame the forthcoming work.
June 5, 2025	West River Mental Health Piloting Meeting	Virtual	Discussed grant opportunity and outlined next steps. WRMH will obtain information on travel costs for consultants.

SFY 25 TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT

Attachment A9

In addition to specific engagements captured below, the ICWA Program Specialist engages in ongoing contact with tribes through email, phone, and letter correspondence regarding a variety of topics such as staff changes, utilization of state foster homes, courtesy supervision for IV-E children, case consultation, correspondence to schedule meetings, reminders for Cost Allocation Time Studies, and assistance regarding questions. In addition, the ICWA Program Specialist assists in distributing monthly reports as well as court reports when staff shortages pose as a barrier to these tasks.

Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
July 2024	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email	Three email correspondences this month regarding caseworker visits and IV-E eligibility.	SRST-CPS Director, SRST CPS Staff, ICWA Program Specialist
July 2024	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe	Email	Three email correspondences this month regarding ICWA Interpretation, Licensing, and Training	CCST ICWA Director, BIA Social Services Acting Supervisory Social Worker, ICWA Program Specialist
July 1, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- Discussed technology challenges	OST Task Force Members
July 12, 2024	Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe	Email	Requested materials to share at a foster care booth for recruitment purposes.	CRST ICWA Director, ICWA Program Specialist
July 15, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- ICWA advocacy, court processes	OST Task Force Members
July 18, 2024	Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee	Pierre, SD	Reviewed committee's purpose, presentation by Chrissie Young (Director of the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment) who provided an overview of child maltreatment, and presentation by Pamela Bennett (Division Director for CPS) and Alex Mayer (Chief of Child and Family Services for DSS) who provided an overview of the child welfare system.	Committee Members, Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment, DSS, Media
July 25, 2024	All Nine Tribes	Email	Distributed Children Home Society's training schedule	NA
August 2024	Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate	Email and Phone Correspondence	The CPS ICWA Program Specialist had 5 contacts by email and phone with the SWO tribe this month regarding Cost Allocation Time Study, scheduling meetings, and placement searching.	Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Child Protection Program Director, ICWA Director, CPS ICWA Program Specialist
August 2024	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email	Five email correspondences this month regarding Cost Allocation Time Study, caseworker visits, and staffing updates.	SRST-CPS case managers, SRST-CPS staff, ICWA Program Specialist
August 2024	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe	Email and Phone	Six correspondences this month pertaining to tribal court, licensing, data request, and staff changes.	CCST ICWA Assistant, CCST ICWA Director, ICWA Program Specialist

SFY 25 Tribal Engagement

Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
August 2024	Rosebud Sioux Tribe	Email and Phone Correspondence	4 occurrences of correspondence regarding process questions and Tribal Court Judge vacancy.	ICWA Program Specialist, RST ICWA Director, RST Tribal Court
August 12, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- Request for DSS, IVE Policy, ICWA Advisory Council	Oglala Sioux Tribe Task Force, ICWA Program Specialist
August 26, 2024	Bureau of Indian Affairs	Virtual	Planning for the ICWA Conference to include national speakers.	Teresa Nieto, BIA Social Services Acting Supervisory Social Worker, Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, Region 4 Regional Manager, ICWA Program Specialist
September 2024	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email and Phone Correspondence	Correspondence related to transportation of a child in care and caseworker visits were had this month.	North Dakota Tribal Liaison, SRST Case Manager, ICWA Program Specialist
September 2024	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe	Email and Phone Correspondence	Three correspondences this month pertaining to the Memorandum of Understanding, workgroup invite, and central registry.	CCST ICWA Director, ICWA Program Specialist
September 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Email	Six correspondences this month regarding placement searches, staffing update, request for office space and billing.	OST-CPS Family Services Specialist, OST Accountant, OST Administrative Assistant, ICWA Program Specialist
September 18, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Case consult regarding relative searching/placement	DSS Family Services Specialist, ICWA Program Specialist, OST-CPS Director
September 18, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Program update regarding staffing issues OST-CPS	OST-CPS Director, ICWA Program Specialist
September 30, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- Tiwahe Program	Oglala Sioux Tribe Task Force, CPS ICWA Program Specialist
October 2024	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email	Provided the tribe with updated caseworker visit report.	All SRST-CPS Staff and ND Tribal Liaison
October 2, 2024	All Nine Tribes	Virtual	All tribes were invited to join the Kinship Workgroup Meeting.	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Representatives
October 16, 2024	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe	Email	ICWA Program Specialist offered onsite training on licensing requirements for Title IV-E purposes.	SWO-CPP Director, CPS ICWA Program Specialist
October 16, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Phone Call	Request for licensing training	OST Family Developer, ICWA Program Specialist

SFY 25 Tribal Engagement

Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
October 17, 2024	State Tribal Child Welfare Consultation Meeting	Pierre, SD	Kinship South Dakota, Kinship Licensing, State Child Support, Secretary Althoff commentary on the last Advisory Council meeting, Unity versus Pride foster parent licensing, Lawyers for Families, Qualified Expert Witness under ICWA and question of malpractice insurance, Family First Prevention Services Act update, and Child and Family Services Review update	SWO CPP Director, SWO Tribal Secretary, OST-ICWA, OST CPS, RST ICWA, RST SCFS, CCST ICWA, CCST-ICWA, FSST CPS, DSS-CPS Director, DSS-CPS Assistant Directors, DSS-OLA Program Manager, DSS-CPS-Administrator, DSS-CPS-ICWA Program Specialist
October 31, 2024	Sicangu Child & Family Services (SCFS) and ICWA	Mission, SD	Update on Direct IVE process, issues with ICWA Director Report, State Tribal Agreement options, Transfer Protocol Checklist usage and transfer process.	RST SCFS Director, Finance, ICWA Director, Case Management, DSS-CPS-Director, DSS-CPS-Assistant Directors, DSS-CPS-ICWA Program Specialist
November 2024	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email and Phone Correspondence	Ten correspondences occurred this month regarding Cost Allocation Time Studies, placement searches, staffing updates, licensing, contract amendment, guardianship, and IV-E redetermination.	SRCS Director, IV-E Tech for SD and ND, SRCS Case Managers, Tribal Courts, ICWA Program Specialist
November 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Email	Six correspondences regarding Cost Allocation Time Study, technical assistance, contracts, merit pay, and letter of support.	OST Family Support Specialist, Compliance Specialist for OST Contract and Grants Department, OST-CPS Director, OST Family Developer, Tribal Courts, ICWA Program Specialist
November 4, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting-Presentation on OLC Justice Center	Alicia Mousseau, Linda Herzberg, Lucille Echohawk, Shaina Johnson, Misty Brammer, Arlana Bettelyoun, Dakota High Hawk, Joseph Ashley
November 13, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Pine Ridge, SD	IV-E Technical Assistance and Licensing- Discussed updates on number of IVE cases, foster homes and suggestion on increasing those numbers. Reviewed licensing process with the new Family Developer.	OST-Supervisors, OST Family Developer, ICWA Program Specialist
November 18, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- Discussion on culturally based training for staff. Discussed lower caseload for OST-CPS workers.	Task Force Members
November 18, 2024	All Nine Tribes	Email	ILS Service Information for youth ages 14-21 who are in out of home care or who have aged out of custody.	Tribal CPS, ICWA, and Tribal Programs
December 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Phone Correspondence	Two correspondences this month regarding a letter of support and placement search.	ICWA Supervisor, OST-CPS Director, ICWA Program Specialist
December 2024	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email and Virtual Meeting	Request for courtesy case worker visits	Raquel Thompson, Teresa Nieto, CPS Director Pam Bennett, CPS Deputy Director Sara Sheppick, ICWA Program Specialist Joe Ashley
December 9, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- ICWA Court, Culturally Tolerant Placements	Task Force Members

SFY 25 Tribal Engagement

Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
December 9, 2024	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email	Request for courtesy caseworker visits	SRCS Director, ICWA Program Specialist
December 16, 2024	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- Groups and Booth at LNI	Task Force Members
December 23, 2024	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe	Email	Invited tribal representatives to Region 4 Stronger Families Together Regional Meeting.	BIA Supervisory Social Worker, CCST Child Welfare Specialist, ICWA Program Specialist
December 26, 2024	Tribal Foster Parents	Email	Payments	Tribal Foster Parents receiving IV-E Payments
January 2025	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email and Phone Correspondence	5 correspondence this month regarding contract amendments, tribal foster payments, and staffing updates.	Director of Standing Rock Children and Family Services, SRCS Office Manager, Tribal Courts, IVE Tech, SRCS Director, and CPS ICWA Program Specialist
January 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Email	Two correspondences regarding staff changes and billing.	OST Family Developer, OST Accountant, ICWA Program Specialist
January 7, 2025	Ponca Tribe, NE	Phone Call	Discussed case specific question	Charise Richardson, ICWA Program Specialist
January 10, 2025	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Case Consult regarding pending IFA.	Kim Long, SRCS Acting Director, Michelle Harrison, ICWA Director, Rique Moore Briggs, Region 4 Regional Manager, Joseph Ashley, Program Specialist
January 13, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- "A Call To Greater Consciousness" Feedback from event, SD Advisory Council tribal representative	Task Force Members
January 27, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting-National Training & Development Curriculum- Tribal Implementation	Task Force Members
January 31, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	IVE Guardianship Assistance Program	Susan Schrader, OST-CPS Director, Keena Clausen, OST-CPS Supervisor, Katie Larson, PS, Joe Ashley, PS.
January 31, 2025	All Nine Tribes	Letter and Email Correspondence	All Nine tribal ICWA and CPS Contract tribes were invited to have individual meetings with DSS-CPS leadership.	ICWA Directors, Contract Tribes CPS Directors, ICWA Program Specialist
February 3, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- Federal Changes, Tiwahe Initiative Update	Task Force Members
February 7, 2025	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Quarterly meeting, Home Study timeframe, State's Attorney notice	Michelle Harrison-Director, Pam Bennett, Sara Sheppick, Joe Ashley

SFY 25 Tribal Engagement

Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
February 11, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST-CPS program Update, ILS Training, Salary/Pay for staff, Training for staff IVE and Licensing	Susan Schrader, Pam Bennett, Sara Sheppick, Eric Grover, Joe Ashley
February 18, 2025	Quarterly Check-Ins	Email	Scheduled quarterly check-in meetings for Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, and Rosebud Sioux Tribe. No response was received from Yankton Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, or Crow Creek Sioux Tribe	ICWA Directors, ICWA Program Specialist
February 20, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Email	Inquiry regarding vacant Family Developer position.	OST-CPS Director, ICWA Program Specialist
February 24, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- Tiwahe Program Update, ICWA Coalition Meeting Update	Task Force Members
February 24, 2025	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe	Virtual	Use of State Licensed Foster Home, Placements for violent youth, Family First Update, Child Abuse Conference hosted by SWO, Staff training	Deborah "Mickey" Divine, SWO-CPP Director, Sara Sheppick, Eric Grover, Joe Ashley
February 25, 2025	Tribal Communities Workgroup	Virtual	Planning for ICWA Conference	Paulette Red Willow, (Chair), Teresa Nieto, (Vice Chair), Christina Young (CPCM Director), Jess Murano, Kathleen Waage, Karla Nelson, Susan Scrader, Doreen Holding Eagle, Tiffany Petro, Kathy LaPlante.
February 25, 2025	Department of Tribal Relations/ Stronger Families Together Workgroup	Virtual	Monthly Updates, CCST Foster Care program	ICWA Program Specialist, Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, Sadie Gourneau, Brittney Buckman, Todd Lashley, Damen Woolsey, Abby Marquardt, Jes Helmbrecht, Dani Henkel, Donita Loudner
February 28, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Adoption Consultation- Discussion on finalization courts and licensure for family on OST/Pine Ridge with children placed through State CPS	ICWA Supervisor, OST FSS/Family Developer, CPS Supervisor, CPS Family Services Specialist, Adoption Program Specialist, ICWA Program Specialist, Denise & Ron Black Feather
March 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Email	Five correspondences this month regarding licensing, caseworker visits, email hack, and training request.	OST-CPS Director, ICWA Program Specialist
March 3, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- Tiwahe Program updates, new Family Developer	Task Force Members
March 3, 2025	Statewide Assessment Tribal Meeting	Virtual	Prepared tribes for Stakeholder Interviews	Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, Yankton Sioux Tribe, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, and Oglala Sioux Tribe

SFY 25 Tribal Engagement

Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
March 5, 2025	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe	Email	Licensing Consultation- Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Director provided necessary documents to license a new foster home.	SWO-CPP Director, CPS ICWA Program Specialist
March 7, 2025	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Email	Caseworker Visits not Entered	Director of Standing Rock Children and Family Services, ICWA Program Specialist
March 10, 2025	All Nine Tribes	Email	ILS Training Invitation	All tribal representatives
March 13, 2025	All Nine Tribes	Virtual	ILS Training	Ten participants from Oglala Sioux Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe
March 13, 2025	All Nine Tribes	Email	Reminder of the Kinship Licensing Informational Session	All Nine Tribes tribal representatives
March 14, 2025	All Nine Tribes	Virtual	Kinship Licensing Informational Session	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Director and Staff, Oglala Sioux Tribe staff, Bureau of Indian Affairs staff, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Pennington County State's Attorney
March 17, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST Task Force Meeting- Qualified Expert Witnesses	Task Force Members
March 19, 2025	All Nine Tribes	Email	Training opportunity notice to all tribes	All tribal representatives
March 21, 2025	Yankton Sioux Tribe	Email	Requested a certification training for YST CPS Staff	YST-CPS Director, BIA Supervisory Social Worker, ICWA Program Specialist
March 24, 2025	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe	Phone Call	Discussion regarding the Memorandum of Understanding	ICWA Program Specialist, CCST ICWA Director
March 24, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST Task Force Meeting- Child Abuse Awareness Month, Qualified Expert Witnesses	OST Task Force Members
March 31, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST Task Force Meeting- Planning for Child Abuse Awareness Month activities, barriers to data sharing, Tribal Central Registry	OST Task Force Members
April 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Email	Four correspondences this month regarding Resolution No. 35-92 declaring April as Wakanyeja Wiyawapi Etanhan (Month of the Child), Licensing Boundaries, and Request for Input regarding Kinship Licensing Standards.	OST VP Senior Advisor, OST-CPS Director, ICWA Program Specialist
April 2025	Yankton Sioux Tribe	Email	Yankton Sioux Tribe staff requested to participate in the Initial Family Assessment Training in Sioux Falls	Yankton Sioux Tribe staff, ICWA Program Specialist

SFY 25 Tribal Engagement

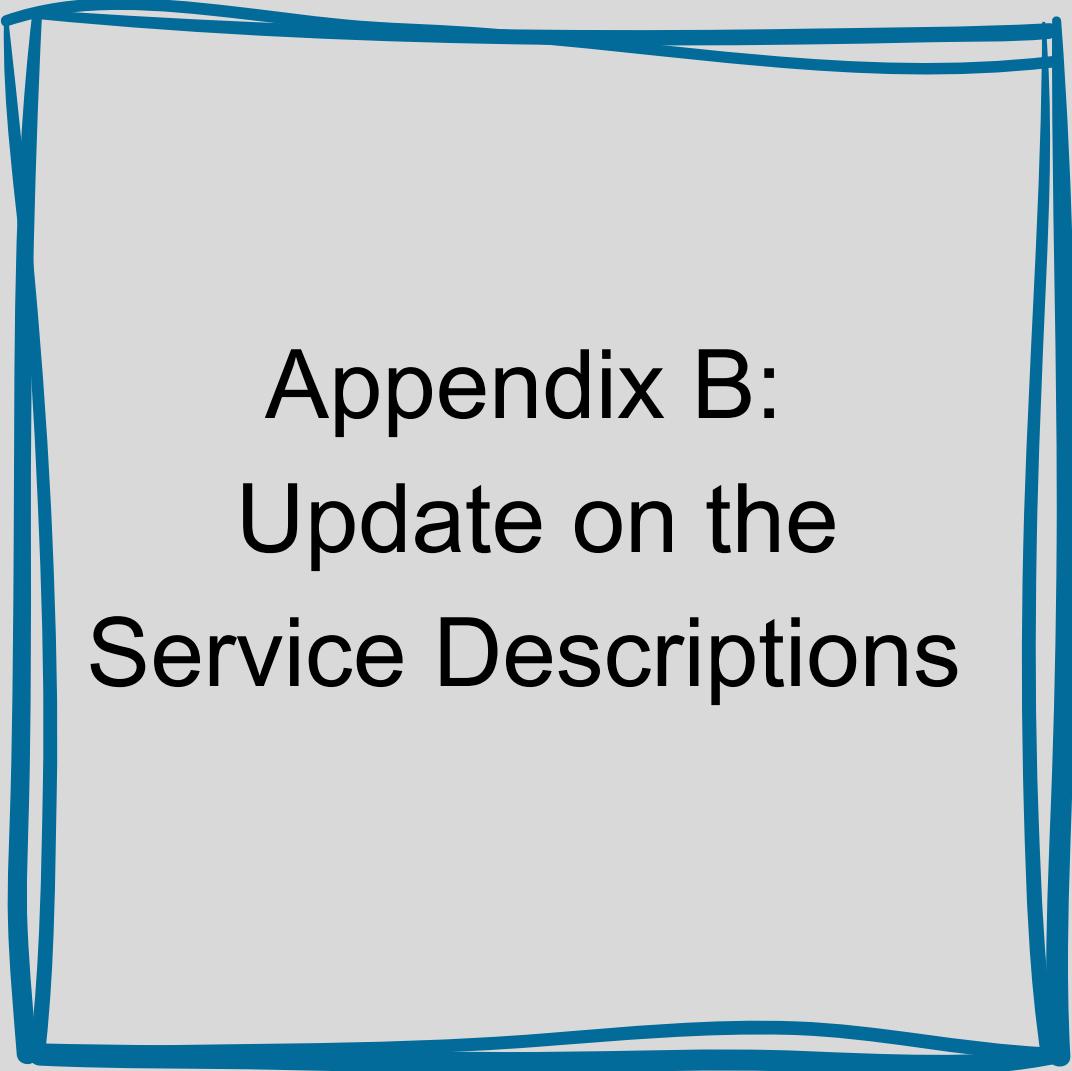
Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
April 2025	Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe	Email	Two correspondences were sent this month regarding ICWA Notices and Proposed Kinship Standards.	ICWA Director, CRST Tribal Chairman, ICWA Program Specialist
April 14, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST Task Force Meeting- Child Abuse Prevention Month	Task Force Members
April 16, 2025	All Nine Tribes	Email	Provided information regarding the 2025 South Dakota Adoption Conference	Tribal Representatives
April 24, 2025	All Nine Tribes	Email	Request for a quarterly check-in	ICWA Directors and/or CPS Directors for all nine tribes
April 28, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting-Internal Updates, Creation of Interagency Meetings (MDTs) and Child Protection Teams	Task Force Members
April 30, 2025	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe	Email	CPS reached out to tribes for support regarding the upcoming Public Hearing on Administrative Rule change concerning Kinship and Relative Licensing.	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribe, and Oglala Sioux Tribe
May 1, 2025	Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Discussed the proposed kinship licensing rule change. Jessica wrote a letter of support on behalf of the ICWA Coalition.	Jessica Morson (Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe Social Services Director, DSS Deputy Director, ICWA Program Specialist
May 2, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST Task Force Meeting- Proposed Kinship Licensing Standards	Task Force Members
May 5, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST Task Force Meeting- Tribal Court Guide, Memorandum of Understanding, Native American Training Institute, Planning for ICWA Coalition Meeting	Task Force Members
May 12, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST Task Force Meeting- Kinship Licensing Standards	Task Force Members
May 12, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Email	Request for two additional Kinship Locators for OST-CPS and ICWA.	OST-CPS Director, ICWA Program Specialist
May 13, 2025	ICWA Coalition	Virtual	Planning meeting for the ICWA Coalition meeting in Sioux Falls on June 25-27 th , 2025. Potential agenda items discussed included ICWA Training, Measuring Progress, creating universal forms for interventions/transfers, clarify purpose of the group, training needs, and tribal state agreements.	ICWA Coalition Members

SFY 25 Tribal Engagement

Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
May 14, 2025	Friends of Children He Sapa	Virtual	Foster Care Recruitment meet and greet meeting to discuss goals. This program is a long term program working with families with a 12-year commitment.	Walt Swan, Director, Tyresha Grey Horse, Assistant, Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, ICWA Program Specialist
May 19, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	OST Task Force Meeting- Students from Oglala Lakota College presented findings from community assessment survey.	Task Force Members
May 20, 2025	Rosebud Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Quarterly Check-In- Discussion regarding state tribal agreement in light of the passage of RST Resolution No. 2025-70 which designates RST-SCFS to explore Tribal State Agreement opportunities with DSS occurred.	Director of Sicangu Child and Family Services, DSS-CPS Division Director, DSS-CPS Deputy Directors, Region 4 Regional Manager, and CPS ICWA Program Specialist
May 22, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Quarterly Check-In- ICPC, Licensing, Transfers, IV-E, Guardianship Assistance Program, LSS Kinship Data Request, IFA Training	Director of Oglala Sioux Tribe, CPS Divisional Director, CPS Assistant Director, Regional Manager
May 27, 2025	Stronger Families Together-Department of Tribal Relations Subworkgroup	Virtual	Monthly meeting to discuss social media strategies, kinship licensing, and upcoming trainings.	Representatives from the Office of Licensing and Accreditation, Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, DSS Communications, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, South Dakota Kids Belong, Department of Tribal Relations, and Crow Creek Sioux Tribe
May 28, 2025	Contract Tribes	Virtual	Training from Family First Program Specialist on the Qualified Residential Treatment Program (Q RTP) process.	Oglala Sioux Tribe CPS Supervisor, Oglala Sioux Tribe CPS Director, Oglala Sioux Tribe representatives, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe representatives, Standing Rock Sioux Child and Family Services Director
May 29, 2025	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	Fort Yates, ND	Technical Assistance- ICWA Program Specialist assisted the Family Developer with licensing and Title IV-E requirements.	ICWA Program Specialist and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Family Developer
June 2, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Monthly Task Force Meeting- An update was provided regarding data work at OLC Justice Center and upcoming interagency meetings.	Task Force Members
June 2, 2025	Standing Rock Sioux ICWA	Virtual	2 nd Quarterly Meeting- Collaboration regarding processes between DSS and the Tribe and discussed ideas for improvement.	Standing Rock Sioux ICWA Director, DSS-CPS Director, DSS-CPS Assistant Directors, Region 3 Regional Manager, and ICWA Program Specialist
June 6, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Discussed a licensing complaint regarding an Oglala Sioux Tribe child and reviewed expectations for utilizing state licensed foster homes.	OST Director, Office of Licensing and Accreditation Supervisor, ICWA Program Specialist
June 9, 2025	Lower Brule Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Quarterly Check-In for case consultation and licensing discussion.	LBST ICWA Director/Enrollment Specialist, DSS Director, DSS Assistant Directors, Region 4 Regional Manager, ICWA Program Specialist

SFY 25 Tribal Engagement

Date	Tribe	Location	Topic/Type of Engagement	Attendees
June 9, 2025	Yankton Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Quarterly Check-In to discuss staffing, training feedback, and case consultations.	YST Director and staff, DSS Director, DSS Assistant Directors, ICWA Program Specialist
June 10, 2025	Rosebud Sioux Tribe Sicangu Child and Family Services	Virtual	Meeting to discuss the kinship contract/licensing and explore a State Tribal Agreement.	RST Sicangu Child and Family Services Representatives, DSS Director, DSS Assistant Directors, Office of Licensing and Accreditation Administrator, OLA Program Manager, Region 4 Regional Manager, and Permanency Program Specialist
June 12, 2025	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Child Protection Program	Sisseton, SD	Discussion was had regarding licensing, Title IV-E compliance, and potential collaboration in workgroups with the state.	SWO-CPP Family Developer, ICWA Program Specialist
June 16, 2025	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate	Phone Call	Discussion regarding assessment of the progress on the SWO group care center.	Director, Tribal Secretary, Director of Group Care Center, ICWA Program Specialist
June 16, 2025	Rosebud Sioux Tribe	Onsite and Conference Call Options	Meeting to provide Rosebud Sioux Tribe with information regarding Lutheran Social Services' kinship process.	Rosebud Sioux Tribe Representatives, Lutheran Social Services, and ICWA Program Specialist
June 23, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe	Virtual	Task Force Meeting- discussed staffing and the use of Qualified Expert Witnesses.	Task Force Members
June 24, 2025	Stronger Families Together Department of Tribal Relationship Sub workgroup	Virtual	Monthly meeting- discussed the upcoming Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association meeting.	Representatives from Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, South Dakota Kids Belong, Stronger Families Together Program Specialist, Department of Tribal Relations, DSS Communications, Office of Licensing and Accreditation, and ICWA Program Specialist
June 26, 2025	Oglala Sioux Tribe Licensing	Virtual	Meeting to assist OST on Mandated Reporter Training, licensure requirements, and update on the status of kinship licensing rules.	DSS Assistant Director, Permanency Program Specialist, ICWA Program Specialist, Educational Consultant, and OST Representative
June 30, 2025	Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate	Virtual	Quarterly Check-In	SWO Director, DSS Director, DSS Assistant Directors, Region 5 Regional Manager, and ICWA Program Specialist



Appendix B: **Update on the** **Service Descriptions**

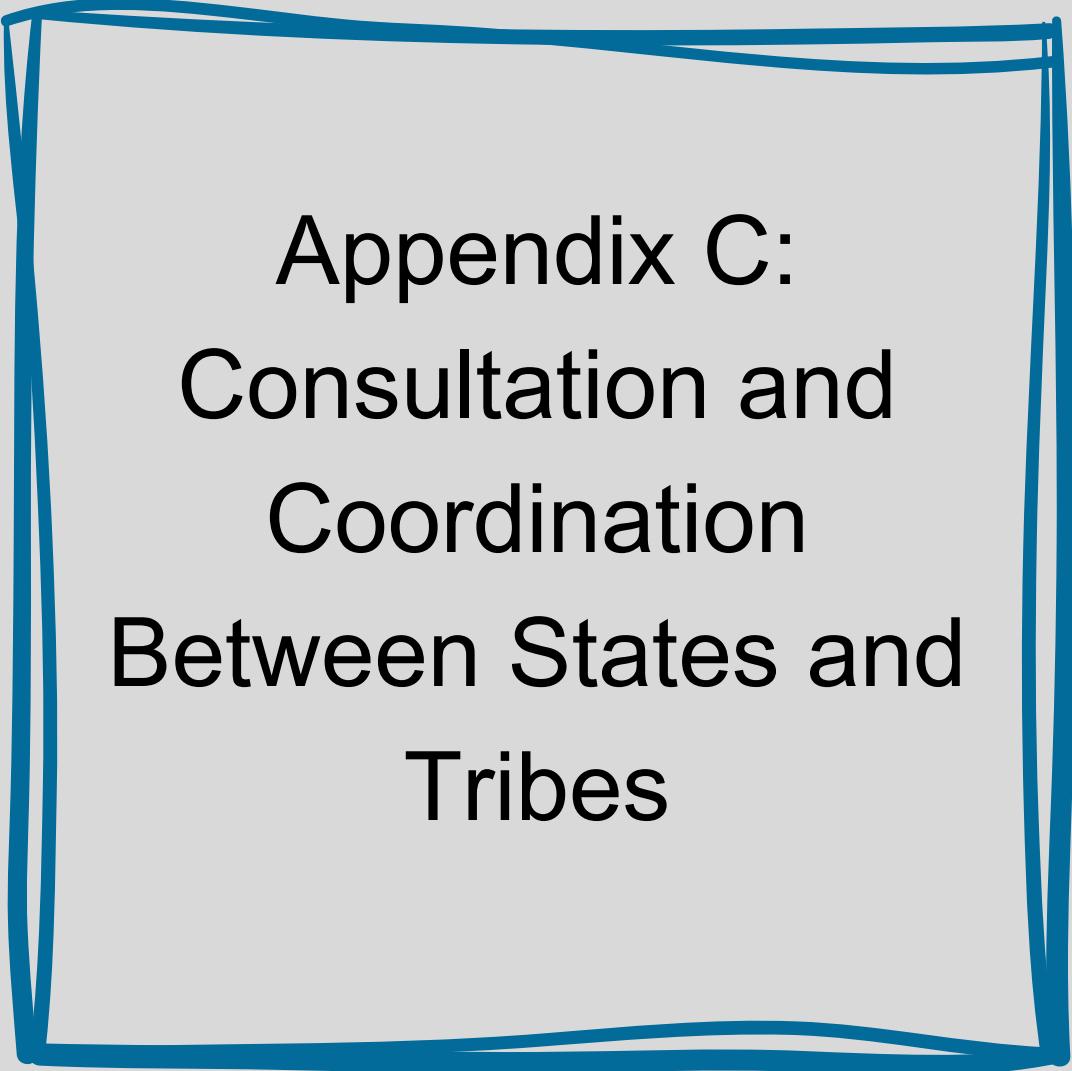
STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025 COMMUNITY BASED CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

Attachment B1

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
July 23-25, 2024	Common Sense Parenting Training	Mitchell, SD	A new instructor Common Sense Parenting Training was presented by Boys Town of Nebraska to several attendees.
July 24-25, 2024	Culturally Effective Organizations	St. Paul, MN	South Dakota participated in a Culturally Effective Organizations training to learn more about the importance of these areas of focus in organizational initiatives.
August 1, 2024	Rollout of Updates	Virtual	A rollout of updated survey procedure instructional webinar, new version of invoice, and attendee survey introduction occurred.
August 27, 2024	Peer Review	Brookings, SD	A peer review was held on the South Dakota State University campus to walk through program progress, needs, and strengths. Strengths identified are the close community collaborations of SDSU. Areas of enhancement include retention of trained instructors and the request for more sustainable funding to support classes ongoing.
September 13, 2024	Parenting Data Retraining	Aberdeen, SD	A meeting with the Lutheran Social Services instructor of Common Sense Parenting took place to provide retraining on the updated data collection elements.
September 17, 2024	BHSSC Peer Review	Rapid City, SD	A peer review was organized for the Career Enhancement Center within the Black Hills Special Services Cooperative which provides Common Sense Parenting classes.
October 2, 2024	Touch Base	Sioux Falls, SD	A meeting with the instructor from a Shelter for Family Safety took place to discuss program status and enhancements to the parenting program.
October 8, 2024	CBCAP Board Meeting	Agency Village/Virtual	An evening opportunity for the CBCAP Advisory Board was organized for the first time to help better meet the schedules of parents and instructors who may instruct as a second job. Charnelle Gill of the Early Childhood program with the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe presented on their experiences in providing parenting education. Data regarding ACES within CPS and FFPSA plans were shared and feedback elicited regarding provision of services.
November 14-15, 2024	Positive Indian Parenting Train the Trainer	Pierre, SD	Kari Ewalt presented Positive Indian Parenting to several attendees.

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
December 16, 2024	Peer Review of Catholic Social Services	Rapid City, SD	The biannual peer review was held. Data was reviewed from the past year of survey entries.
January 10, 2025	Meeting with Federal Partners	Virtual	Program highlights were shared and plans were outlined for full obligation of grant dollars awarded for prevention services.
January 2025	Annual Report	Online	Annual CBCAP Grant Report was submitted in January.
January 29, 2025	Culturally Effective Organization Training	Virtual	A second follow up meeting was held to review progress made on focused efforts.
February 27, 2025	Peer Review at Jan Manolis Family Safe Center	Huron, SD	A peer review was completed. The review was positive, noting an interest in participating in the Toddler and Preschooler focused training this spring, working on smaller group trainings, and an interest in working to identify and training a Spanish-language instructor for more direct instruction to citizens.
March 13, 2025	Discovery Days	Pierre, SD	A presentation to middle schoolers on child welfare and CPS was presented through their Discovery Days program.
March 31, 2025	Annual CBCAP Grantee Meeting	Rockville, MD	The annual grantee meeting was cancelled by federal partners.
April 2025	Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month	Statewide	Governor Larry Rhoden proclaimed April as Child Abuse Prevention Awareness month. Robust efforts were rolled out statewide to promote prevention of child abuse through a variety of community events, social media posts, community fairs, gatherings, and presentations.
April 28, 2025	CBCAP Advisory Board	Pierre, SD/Virtual	Data trends, and parenting education data for the previous Federal Fiscal Year was reviewed. Plans for Child Abuse Prevention Month in areas and the discussion of high level data to be forthcoming related to the CFSR Review were expressed.
April 29-May 1, 2025	Common Sense Parenting for Toddlers and Preschoolers	Fort Pierre, SD	Up to nine registered attendees received training from Boys Town on Common Sense Parenting focused on Toddlers and Preschoolers to complement the work they are doing to reach the whole family unit through existing contracts.
May 6-8, 2025	Common Sense Parenting for Toddlers and Preschoolers	Sioux Falls, SD	Up to nine registered attendees received training from Boys Town on Common Sense Parenting focused on Toddlers and Preschoolers to complement the work they are doing to reach the whole family unit through existing contracts.

Date	Activity	Location	Summary
May 13-15, 2025	Common Sense Parenting for Toddlers and Preschoolers	Rapid City, SD	Up to eleven registered attendees received training from Boys Town on Common Sense Parenting focused on Toddlers and Preschoolers. This training opportunity was focused on civilian and enlisted social work professionals and educators from the Ellsworth Air Force Base in Box Elder, SD. The base is anticipating expansion in coming years and this was a great opportunity to help promote early interventions focused on prevention.
June 17, 2025	Peer Review Avera	Wagner, SD	The peer review for Avera in Wagner for their delivery of Common Sense Parenting was held. Data on participants and quality ratings of services provided were reviewed as well as strengths and areas to improve on within the agency. CPS, community organizations, and parents who have taken the class were invited to participate.
June 20-22, 2025	Positive Indian Parenting Training	Eagle Butte, SD	A Positive Indian Parenting Training was offered for 32 registered attendants.



Appendix C:

Consultation and

Coordination

Between States and

Tribes

TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT-TRIBAL ONGOING COLLABORATION

Attachment C1

Participants	Focus	Further Information
CPS, All tribes related to child	Permanency Planning, Cultural Connections	CPS ensures collaboration with the tribe as it relates to Permanency Planning. Including but not limited to contacting the tribe and involving them in discussions and decisions about, relative searching, ICWA placement options, and when appropriate providing the tribe with a copy of the kinship home study. When the child's tribe has intervened, the tribe is provided notice of permanency reviews and permanency hearings to provide input related to services and a permanency plan. Tribes are invited to participate in permanency planning meetings as well as adoption committee meetings to staff adoptive families and select an adoptive resource.
CPS, Stronger Families Together, Teresa Nieto (BIA Supervisory Social Worker-Crow Creek Sioux Tribes) Department of Tribal Relations, Office of Licensing and Accreditation (OLA)	Recruitment/Retention of Native American Foster Homes	Stronger Families Together is the foster/adoptive recruitment campaign that DSS CPS continues to promote. The primary focus of the campaign is to highlight the need for foster families to support the child and their family with the reunification process. Involvement, collaboration, and input from the tribes assists in recruitment of new Native American foster homes to better support the demographics of the children in foster care in South Dakota. A workgroup was created with the Department of Tribal Relations (DTR), focusing on increasing tribal engagement and partnerships to increase Native American foster families to comply with the ICWA Placement Preferences.
CPS, Tribes, STCWC	Jurisdictional Transfers, IV-E Funding, Technical Assistance	Transfer protocol developed with SD ICWA Coalition in 2005 and revised by the STCWC in 2015. Transfer protocol established a list of documents and information provided to the Tribe at the time of transfer to ensure continuity of services. The STCWC discussed transfer of jurisdiction to explore how the tribes facilitate a transfer from state custody back to tribal jurisdiction. The standard procedure is for the tribe to issue a petition to transfer filed by the ICWA Director which is heard in state court and the state court issues a transfer order which is followed up by a tribal court order accepting jurisdiction. If the child is Title IV-E eligible and the tribe has a State Tribal Agreement for the pass through of Title IV-E funds then it is possible for the eligibility to follow the child back to tribal jurisdiction. It was found it was not standard practice for some tribes to issue follow up court orders and extenuating circumstances usually caused an interruption in the tribal court prohibiting the order from being produced.
CPS, SD ICWA Directors Coalition, Unified Judicial System	Qualified Expert Witnesses	The SD ICWA Directors Coalition developed a training for individuals interested in becoming a Qualified Expert Witnesses (QEWS) as an effort to increase the capacity of QEWS in South Dakota. The goal is to continue to offer this training on an ongoing basis in order to have a list of QEWS that are separate from the Tribe's ICWA Directors.
FFPSA Program Specialist, South Dakota Tribes, ICWA Program Specialist	FFPSA	The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) plan has been developed. Tribal input was vital to the overall success of the plan development. CPS has met with Tribes on all Tribal lands for input into the final FFPSA plan. Some of the meetings have been virtual due to weather or tribal preference. Tribal involvement was obtained prior to the launch of the request for proposals to obtain the vendor, through the contract development process, robust tribal representation is in place in the Core and Prevention Teams, and sub team work. As the plan is approved tribal involvement will continue in the implementation planning roll out stages as well.
ICWA Capacity Building Workgroup	ICWA Education	At the recommendation of the ICWA Coalition it was decided to create the ICWA Capacity Building Workgroup within DSS-CPS. The workgroup is made up of representatives from the seven regions in CPS, the ICWA Program Specialist, CQI Program Specialist, and FACIS Program Specialist. This workgroup is not only responsible for completing ICWA compliance reviews but also a capacity building process with training and awareness of ICWA trends locally and nationally. Casey Family Programs has expressed support for the workgroup and offered to schedule presenters for the group. The members from each region are able to bring back knowledge from this workgroup and serve as subject matter experts within their regions.
Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council	Ongoing Communication and Collaboration	Through House Bill 1232, an Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council has been created that will begin in July 2024. The hope for the Advisory Council is "to facilitate communication, collaboration, and cooperation between the tribes, the department, and other subject matter experts; to promote the exchange of ideas and innovative solutions related to Indian child welfare; to expand partnerships with applicable stakeholders; and to assist the department in formulating policies and procedures relating to Indian child welfare."

TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT - TRIBAL ONGOING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Focus	Further Information
Ongoing Education	ICWA Program Specialist provides facilitation and education to tribes and state entities on how their agencies can best work together to serve families and children. OLA provided licensing process training for the five tribes who license their own foster homes, which was recorded for new tribal licensing staff to utilize for onboarding with foster home licensing. ICWA Program Specialist regularly provides Title IV-E training to new staff with the four tribes with State-Tribal IV-E agreements. Training regarding Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) requirements has been provided to the four tribes with Title IV-E agreements. CPS provided a modified certification training for Oglala Sioux Tribe CPS in 2022 and invited all tribes with their own child welfare programs to participate in CPS certification trainings going forward.
Tribal Input and Engagement- Services	ICWA Program Specialist receives feedback from tribes and incorporates it, when possible, to enhance services and collaboration.
Tribal Input- Federal Reporting	ICWA Program Specialist consults the tribes in all aspects of the CFSP and APSR, including, but not limited to, development, assessment of agency strengths and areas needing improvement, review and modification of goals, objections, and interventions, and monitoring of progress. Both documents are provided to the tribes once completed.
Case Consultation	ICWA Program Specialist consults on case specific questions and provides guidance to the tribe or states when needed.
IV-E Foster Home Licensing	ICWA Program Specialist monitors foster care licensing compliance on an ongoing basis with renewals and any newly licensed foster homes to keep tribally licensed homes in compliance with Title IV-E.
IV-E Eligibility, AFCARS	ICWA Program Specialist reviews tribal children who are Title IV-E eligible to ensure data entry of required AFCARS elements are completed, which are outlined in the State-Tribal Agreement. If data is missing, the ICWA Program Specialist notifies the Tribal Case Manager and Supervisor of the missing data, requests it be entered or will enter it himself, if needed.
Adoption Assistance and Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP)	As a part of the State-Tribal Agreement, The ICWA Program Specialist assists Tribal Case Managers regarding Tribal children who are adopted or in a guardianship to ensure the Adoption Assistance Program and Guardianship Assistance Program guidelines are followed.
Legal, Qualified Expert Witnesses (QEWS)	ICWA Program Specialist assists the Court Improvement Program (CIP) Coordinator with managing the Qualified Experts Witness (QEWS) listing on the Unified Judicial System's Website
Chafee, Educational Training Vouchers (ETV)	ICWA Program Specialist provides technical assistance to the tribes for Chafee, ILS Programs, and ETV funds.