



DEBRA K. DAVENPORT, CPA
AUDITOR GENERAL

STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE
AUDITOR GENERAL

WILLIAM THOMSON
DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

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Members of the Arizona Legislature

The Honorable Janet Napolitano, Governor

Ms. Tracy Wareing, Director
Arizona Department of Economic Security

Transmitted herewith is a report of the Auditor General, an Information Brief on the Department of Economic Security, Division of Children, Youth and Families' In-Home Services Program. This information brief was prepared pursuant to and under the authority vested in the Auditor General by Arizona Revised Statutes §41-1966.

This information brief is the fourth we have issued on various topics relating to Child Protective Services. We have created the information brief at the request of key stakeholders who indicated a need for information on various topics, but did not want a full audit. We hope that these information briefs will fill a need and provide you with timely and useful information on topics of particular interest. My staff and I will be pleased to discuss or clarify items in the information brief.

This information brief will be released to the public on November 2, 2006.

Sincerely,

Debbie Davenport
Auditor General

Attachment

INFORMATION BRIEF

Summary

In fiscal year 2006, the Division began implementing a more formal in-home services program (program) that seeks to prevent further child abuse and neglect and the need to place children in out-of-home care by providing enhanced in-home services. To help staff the program, the Division was appropriated an additional \$8.8 million in state and federal funds.

The Division also awarded and renewed contracts with community agencies to provide moderate- and intensive-level in-home services throughout the State. Through the use of CPS staff and contractors, the Division plans to offer a variety of services to stabilize and preserve families, such as crisis intervention counseling, anger management, and parent education. Finally, the Division reports that it is taking various actions to monitor the impact of in-home services.



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In-Home Services Program

Division implementing more formal in-home services program—In fiscal year 2006, the Division began implementing a more formal in-home services program that seeks to prevent further child abuse and neglect and the need to place children in out-of-home care by providing enhanced in-home services. Although the Division previously provided some level of in-home services, the array of services was not as comprehensive, nor was the service delivery as structured. For example, although District 1 (Maricopa County) had two units of dedicated in-home services staff, there was no state-wide effort to establish dedicated CPS in-home services units.¹

Rather, in-home services would typically be provided and monitored by CPS case management staff who were responsible for investigating CPS reports of abuse and neglect, or managing ongoing cases (i.e., cases that remained open for services after the investigation was completed) where some or all of the children may have been placed in out-of-home care. As a result, according to division management, some children at risk for abuse and neglect who might have been able to safely remain with or return to their families with adequate services and supports were instead placed or remained in out-of-home care as a means to ensure their safety.

Division received \$8.8 million appropriation for additional in-home services staff—For fiscal year 2006, the Division requested and the Legislature approved funding for additional staff positions to be used primarily for providing in-home services. Specifically, the Division was appropriated \$2.8 million in State General Fund and \$6 million in federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) monies for 174 additional full-time case management and support positions to be phased in over the fiscal year.² The Division used these monies, in conjunction with federal Title IV-E reimbursement dollars and other sources, to establish 216 positions for its in-home services program. The Division intends to use these staff to enhance its ability to facilitate and monitor the delivery of in-home services, thus potentially reducing the number of children having to be placed in out-of-home care.

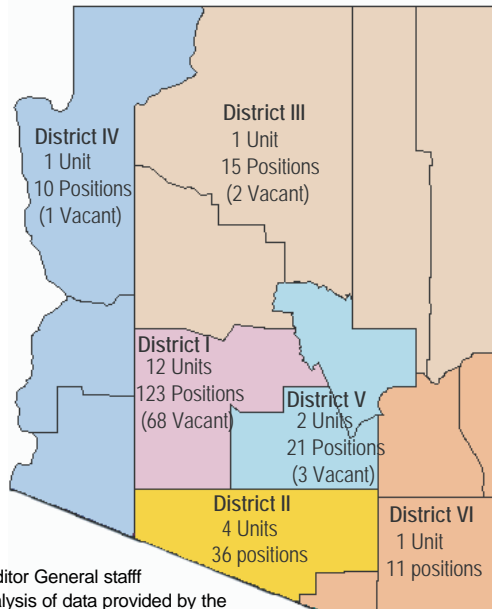
The Division is assigning the majority of the 216 staff to 21 in-home service units located throughout the State. An in-home unit typically consists of a supervisor, 5 or 6 case managers, a case aide, and a secretary. In addition, the Division intends to assign one or two in-home case managers to some child protective services offices without an in-home unit. For

¹ Prior to fiscal year 2006, District 1 had two units dedicated to monitoring families referred to contracted providers of moderate- and intensive-level in-home services (see textbox, page 3). These two units are still operating and have been incorporated into the Division's more formal in-home services program.

² The funding for the 174 positions has not been annualized for fiscal year 2007. As a result, the \$8.8 million would not be enough funding if all positions were filled an entire fiscal year. Division management estimates a \$1.4 million shortfall if all positions were filled during fiscal year 2007.

example, although the CPS offices located in Safford and Page, Arizona, do not have a typical in-home services unit, the Division has assigned one in-home services case manager to each of these offices. As of August 2006, 142 (66 percent) of the 216 in-home services staff positions were filled, including 98 case manager positions. Further, 15 of the Division's 21 planned in-home units were staffed and operational. Division management indicates that it anticipates having the remaining 6 units (5 in District 1 and 1 in District 4) staffed and operational by January 2007. See Figure 1 for the number of units and staff assigned in each of the Division's 6 geographical districts.

Figure 1: Distribution of in-home services units and staff by district as of August 2006



Source: Auditor General staff analysis of data provided by the Department of Economic Security.

In addition to monies spent on staffing, the Division spent \$22 million to pay for the in-home services provided to families in fiscal year 2006. These monies included \$2 million in State General Fund and \$20 million in federal TANF and other funds, including Title IV-B Part II (Promoting Safe and Stable Families) monies.

CPS staff and contracted service providers deliver program—In addition to hiring additional CPS in-home services staff for the program, the State awarded new contracts to ten community agencies

effective January 2006 to provide moderate- and intensive-level in-home services throughout the State (see textbox, page 3). This was intended to increase the array and coordination of available in-home services, and to better ensure families receive the appropriate intensity of services. These contracts may be renewed annually for a maximum of 5 years. The Division also has the option to extend existing contracts through October 2008 with ten community agencies for intensive-level in-home services in District 1.

Generally, under this program, a CPS case manager investigating a child abuse or neglect report will determine whether a family needs in-home services, and if so, the case manager will refer the case to a CPS in-home unit. According to CPS staff auditors interviewed, if there is an immediate need for services so that the children can remain safely at home, the case typically will be referred first to a contracted in-home service provider as their services are crisis-oriented, and initial client contact will be made within 4 to 12 hours of receipt of the referral. In addition, the case will be referred to a CPS in-home unit for monitoring. The primary responsibilities of CPS in-home case managers and the contracted in-home service providers include:

- **CPS in-home services case managers**—CPS in-home services staff are responsible for assessing the family's strengths and risks, developing a case plan addressing the issues necessitating CPS involvement, making referrals for and monitoring the provision of services, and regularly monitoring the families. According to CPS policy and staff, monitoring the families through frequent home visits is especially important to ensure the continued safety of the children as these are families where there is a known risk for child abuse and neglect. It is also critical to ensure the families are making progress in addressing the issues that place the children at risk. CPS staff auditors interviewed reported that they typically try to ensure weekly visits with these families.
- **Contracted in-home service providers**—Similar to the CPS in-home services staff, the contracted providers are responsible

for assessing the family's service needs, developing a case plan, providing or making referrals for needed services, and monitoring the family. As outlined in the scope of work for the contracts awarded in January 2006, the contracted providers are expected to provide short-term, time-limited (approximately 6 months), moderate- and intensive-level services based upon the needs of the child and family. See textbox for a description of the minimum service requirements for contractors providing moderate- and intensive-level services and the expected number of families to be served in 2006 and associated costs.

Program provides a variety of services to support and enhance family functioning

—Under this program, the Division offers a variety of services to stabilize and preserve families involved with CPS. The services offered include crisis intervention counseling; individual, family, and marital therapy; anger management; parent education; job-readiness training; home management and nutrition; and assistance with developing linkages with community resources such as Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, CPS or contracted in-home service providers help families access services for a variety of other issues, including developmental disabilities, substance abuse, domestic violence, juvenile probation, housing, behavioral health, and childcare. Intensive services and frequent monitoring is provided first to address any issues jeopardizing child safety; after which, more moderate services and less-frequent monitoring may be provided to address any remaining family risk factors. Although this phased approach may result in a family remaining in the program longer, the Division believes it will be more effective. The services are provided through collaborative partnerships between CPS, community social service agencies, family support programs, and other community organizations. The services are generally provided to families in order that their children can safely remain at home, but may also be provided when a child is in an out-of-home placement to help him or her move back home or to a less-restrictive

Moderate-level services

- **Response time**—Contractor must respond to the CPS referral within 2 business days.
- **Services**—Contractor must provide, at a minimum, case management and parent aide services (e.g., informal instruction in such areas as cleaning, budgeting, meal planning, and effective discipline) the first month, and thereafter, at a minimum, monthly based upon the family's needs.
- **Visitation**—Contractor must see each child living in the home twice a week for the first month, and thereafter, at a minimum, monthly based upon the family's needs.
- **Families served/costs**—The Division estimates that in calendar year 2006, 4,170 families will be referred for moderate services at an average cost of \$2,150 to \$3,750 per case.

Intensive-level services

- **Response time**—Contractor must respond to the CPS referral within 4 to 12 hours, including holidays and week-ends.
- **Services**—Contractor must provide, at a minimum, case management, parent aide, and crisis intervention services.
- **Visitation**—Contractor must have a master's-level therapist visit the family in the home at least three times per week during the intensive intervention period (up to 2 months), then, at a minimum, monthly thereafter.
- **Families served/costs**—The Division estimates that in calendar year 2006, 950 families will be referred for intensive services at an average cost of \$3,300 to \$4,750 per case, excluding District 1. The Division reports that the contractors providing intensive in-home services in District 1 were paid \$6 million in fiscal year 2006 and accepted 1,737 referrals for services.

tive placement, such as from a residential treatment center to a foster home.

Program staff receive training—To facilitate the delivery of the appropriate services to the families, both CPS and contracted in-home services case management staff are required to be knowledgeable about working with families and providing in-home services. CPS case managers acquire this knowledge through completing the initial CPS case manager training program. As of August 2006, staff in 24 of the 98 filled CPS in-home services case manager positions had not yet completed this training. In addition, CPS in-home case managers attend a 2-day specialized training on family engagement developed by the Center for Community

Partnerships in Child Welfare.¹ This training has been provided five times since the spring of 2006 and addresses skills in engaging families, building family teams composed of individuals who can help support the family, assessing families and developing case plans based on family strengths, and tracking and adapting case plans. According to division management, this training is being incorporated into the CPS advanced case management training curriculum effective December 2006, and will be mandatory for all in-home services case managers. The in-home service contracts also require that the contractors ensure their employees have knowledge and experience in a variety of areas, including understanding family dynamics, relating to families with varied backgrounds, working with multi-problem families, accessing community resources, and various interventions.

Division monitoring program—The Division reported that it is taking various actions to monitor the impact of in-home services. For example, the Division indicated that it is tracking the number of in-home cases and children in out-of-home care to measure the impact of using in-home services as an alternative to out-of-home care. In addition, information is being compiled on the contracted service providers' achievement of division-specified outcome goals. See textbox for the outcomes required of the contracted providers. The Division also indicated that it will hold periodic meetings with the contracted in-home service providers to evaluate whether appropriate cases are being referred for in-home services, resolve any barriers to in-home service provision, and monitor the quality of services provided. The first meeting was held on September 15, 2006. In addition, the Office of the Auditor General plans to complete a performance audit of this program during fiscal year 2008.

¹ The Center for Community Partnership in Child Welfare is part of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, an independent, nonprofit organization located in Washington, D.C., that provides public policy analysis and technical assistance to states and localities.

Outcome goals for contracts awarded in January 2006

1. 90 percent of families referred for services will express satisfaction with the contractor's service delivery based on a survey issued at closure.
2. 90 percent of case managers who received services provided by the contractor during the year will express satisfaction with the contractor's service delivery based on an annual survey.
3. 90 percent of referred families will not have an abuse or neglect report, excluding reports made by the contractor, during program participation.
4. 80 percent of families successfully completing the program will have no reports of abuse or neglect within 6 months of case closure.
5. 90 percent of families will not have a child enter into department custody during program participation.
6. 85 percent of families successfully completing the program will not have a child placed into department custody within 6 months of case closure.

Outcome goals for renewed District 1 intensive services contracts

1. 95 percent of families referred for services will express satisfaction with the contractor's service delivery based on a survey issued at closure.
2. 90 percent of case managers who received services provided by the contractor during the year will express satisfaction with the contractor's service delivery based on an annual survey.
3. 80 percent of referred families will not have a substantiated abuse or neglect report during program participation.
4. 80 percent of families successfully completing the program will have no substantiated reports of abuse or neglect within 6 months of case closure.
5. 90 percent of families will not have a child in department custody during program participation.
6. 85 percent of families successfully completing the program will not have a child placed into department custody within 6 months of case closure.