

# OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ADMINISTERING THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT



## PROGRESS REPORT ON THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT

Biennial Report to the General Assembly, December 2019

In accordance with §2.2-2648.21, COV and the 2019 Appropriation Act Item 282 (H)

The Children's Services Act (CSA, §2.2-2648 et seq) was enacted in 1993 to create a collaborative system of services and funding for at-risk youth and families.

The CSA establishes local multidisciplinary teams responsible to work with families to plan services according to each child's unique strengths and needs and to administer the community's CSA activities.

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) is the administrative entity responsible for ensuring effective and efficient implementation of the CSA across the Commonwealth.

Guiding principles for OCS include:

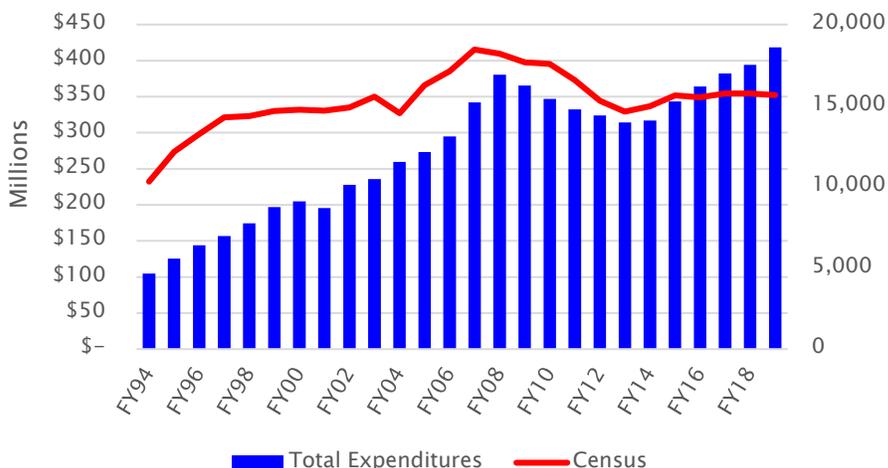
- Child and family directed care,
- Equitable access to quality services,
- Responsible and effective use of public funds,
- Support for effective, evidence-based practices, and
- Collaborative partnerships across state, local, public, and private stakeholders.



The Code of Virginia and the Appropriation Act require that the State Executive Council for Children's Services (SEC) biennially publish and disseminate a progress report on services for children, youth, and families and a plan for such services for the succeeding biennium. As the administrative entity of the Council, the Office of Children's Services (OCS) is pleased to submit the following report. For the FY2020–FY2022 biennium, the Council conducted a planning process that included a survey of various stakeholder groups and a collaborative, full day session with the State and Local Advisory Team (SLAT). The SLAT is established in §2.2–2501 of the Code to advise the Council and manage cooperative efforts at the state level and provide support to community efforts. The biennial plan can be found at the end of this report.

### CSA Expenditures and Utilization

Total Expenditures / Children Served through the CSA, FY1994 – FY2019



Annual CSA expenditures and the number of children served rose consistently from the inception of the Act in FY1994 through FY2008. A significant decline in the number of children receiving services and associated expenses then occurred through FY2013. Explanations for this decline include the impact of the Children's Services Transformation and the implementation of the differential local CSA match rates, which resulted in decreased utilization of more expensive residential treatment programs in favor of more community-based services. Since FY2013, expenditures have increased significantly while the number of children served has risen only slightly and have been essentially stable since FY2015. The increase in expenditures is overwhelmingly due to the rise in the number (and associated costs) of children receiving private day special education placements which account for almost all of the growth in both expenditures and census over the past five years. With the exception of FY2019, all non-special education expenditure categories have remained essentially flat or declined over this period. In FY2019 there were significant increases in costs for children in foster care, especially treatment (private) foster care (\$8.9 million or a 12% increase over FY2018). This may be explained by an increase (over FY2018) in the number of children in foster care (4,807 on July 1, 2018 to 5,307 on July 1, 2019, a 10.4% rise).

Additionally, as reported by the Department of Social Services, there was reduced federal Title IV-E eligibility (the IV-E penetration rate) which was 59.49% for children in foster care on July 1, 2019 as compared to 60.93% and 64.91% for children in foster care on July 1, 2018 and July 1, 2017 respectively. A reduction in the Title IV-E penetration rate results in a “shift” in costs from non-CSA (50% federal cost sharing and 50% state matching funds accounted for in the budget of the Virginia Department of Social Services) to CSA expenditures (CSA state pool and local CSA matching funds).

Increases in special education and foster care costs were partially offset in FY2019 by continued declines in the number of children served (and expenditures) for residential care. The number of children served in residential settings decreased by 7.3% (208 children) and expenditures for residential placements by 6.4% (\$4.8 million) from the prior year. This continues a steady downward trend over the past four years.

### State and Federal Funding Not Included in the CSA State Pool

	<b>FY2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>
Children’s Mental Health Initiative	\$ 5,648,128	\$ 5,648,128
Promoting Safe & Stable Families <sup>1</sup>	\$ 7,972,643	\$ 8,282,824
Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act	\$10,379,921	\$10,379,921
Title IV-E (Foster Care Maintenance) <sup>2</sup>	\$62,947,797	\$59,862,125
Social Services Block Grant <sup>3</sup>	\$ 9,419,998	\$ 9,419,998
Medicaid (Treatment Foster Care, Residential Care) <sup>2</sup>	<u>\$76,195,695</u>	<u>\$79,591,445</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$172,564,317</b>	<b>\$173,184,441</b>

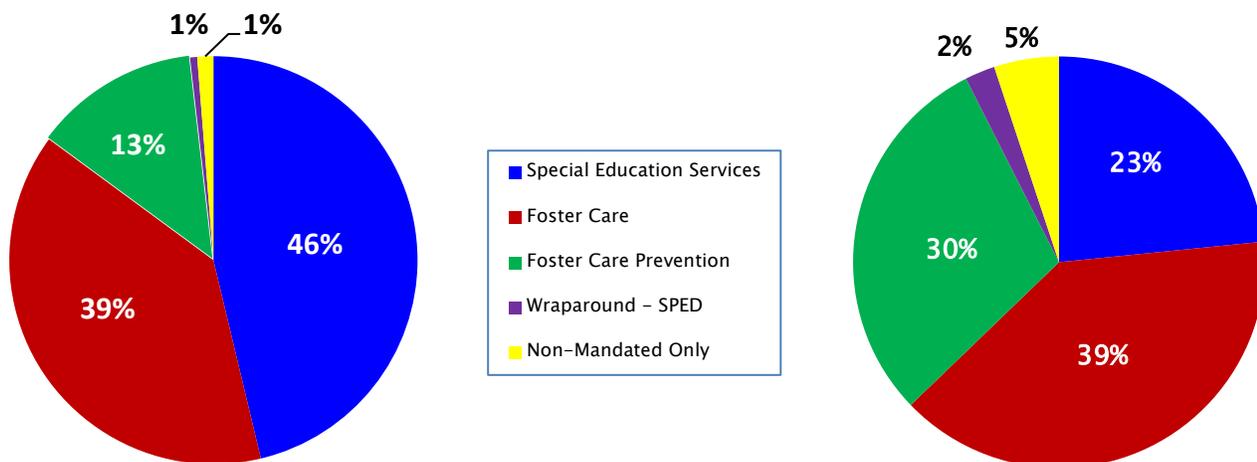
<sup>1</sup> 75% Federal Funds

<sup>2</sup> 50% Federal Funds

<sup>3</sup> 50% Federal Funds

The table above reflects the contributions of funding sources other than CSA pool funds to addressing the needs of at-risk children and families. These funds are “braided” with the “blended” CSA pool funds and are utilized for CSA eligible youth and services, in whole or in part, when available to support needed services. Medicaid funds for behavioral health services to children other than residential and treatment foster care are not reported here and are available from the Department of Medical Assistance Services.

### FY2019 CSA Expenditures and Mandate Types

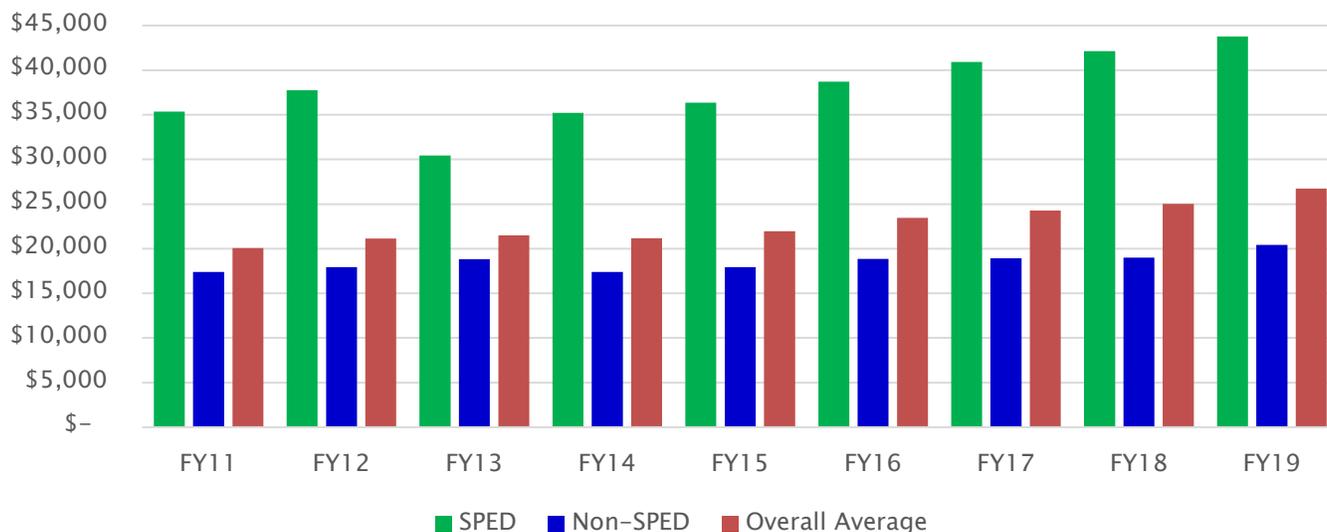


CSA Pool Fund Expenditures by Primary Mandate Type - FY2019  
(Total New Expenditures = \$418,208,262)

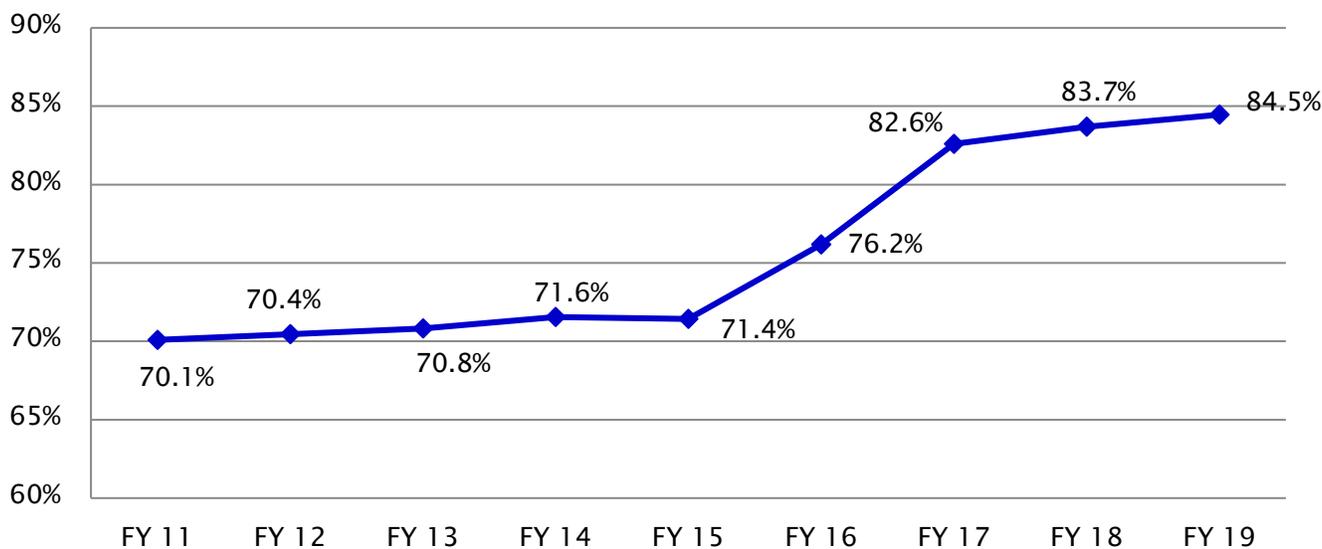
CSA Census by Primary Mandate Type - FY2019  
(Total Census = 15,645)

As seen in the graphs on the previous page, special education services accounted for 46% of the total CSA expenditures in FY2019. However, children in this category accounted for only 23% of the total CSA primary mandates. (Note: Children may have more than one Primary Mandate Type). This is because private day placements have an annual per child cost of \$44,000 compared to an average of \$20,000 for all other categories of children (the combined overall annual average expenditures for FY2019 was \$27,000). Children receiving foster care and foster care prevention services accounted for 69% of the CSA primary mandates, but only 52% of expenditures.

Average Annual CSA Pool Fund Expenditure per Child (FY2011 – FY2019)



Percent of Children Served in Community-Based Settings<sup>1</sup>



Serving children in community-based (as opposed to residential or congregate care) settings is at the core of the CSA system of care philosophy. An extensive body of evidence exists indicating that long-term outcomes are improved when children can be safely maintained in their families, schools, and communities. The avoidance, where possible given clinical needs and other concerns of placements in restrictive, congregate residential settings has long been a goal of the CSA. Performance on this indicator has continued to improve over time.

<sup>1</sup> Services included in this category were modified since the previous report to include community-based foster care and independent living. Data for all prior years was recalculated to reflect the new measurement approach.

## Major Accomplishments FY2018–FY2019

The following are a synopsis of major accomplishments related to the Goals and Strategies for the FY2018 – FY 2019 Biennial Plan submitted in December 2017.

### **Goal 1: Support implementation of a singular, unified system of care that ensures equal access to quality services for at risk youth across the Commonwealth.**

- Significantly increased utilization of Intensive Care Coordination using High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) by local CSA programs.
- Provided training to over 275 new HFW facilitators and Family Support Partners.
- Worked with the Virginia Department of Education and various stakeholders to develop 10 defined outcome measures for students receiving CSA funded private day special education. As instructed by the General Assembly, these indicators will be collected beginning no later than the 2020–2021 school year and will provide valuable information about these student’s progress, similar to the indicators for students in the public schools.
- Completed a legislatively directed cost study of private special education rates in Virginia.
- Worked collaboratively with agencies across the Secretariats of Health and Human Resources (DBHDS, DMAS, DSS), Public Safety and Homeland Security (DJJ), and Education (VDOE) on major initiatives to include: Family First Prevention Services Act, Behavioral Health Redesign, DJJ Transformation, and Tiered–Systems of Support.
- Continued development of a robust series of e–learning courses on various aspects of the CSA in the Virginia Learning Center including CSA Basics for Community Policy and Management Teams; CSA Basics for New LDSS Workers; CSA Finances for Local Government Finance Personnel, the CSA Audit Program, among others.

### **GOAL 2: Support informed decision making through utilization of data to improve child and family outcomes and public and private provider performance in the provision of services through the Children’s Services Act.**

- Developed and disseminated a comprehensive Data Dashboard and Continuous Quality Improvement model for use by local CSA programs to monitor and improve their efforts.
- Continued annual publication of the statewide CSA outcomes report and enhancements to the local–level outcomes application available on the CSA public website.
- Published the second study of juvenile and criminal justice outcomes (arrests) for youth who have completed their services under the CSA. The results indicate that post–CSA arrest rates for youth served through the CSA are comparable to overall arrest rates for youth on probation and other known Department of Juvenile Justice involved groups. Several recommendations are noted in the report.

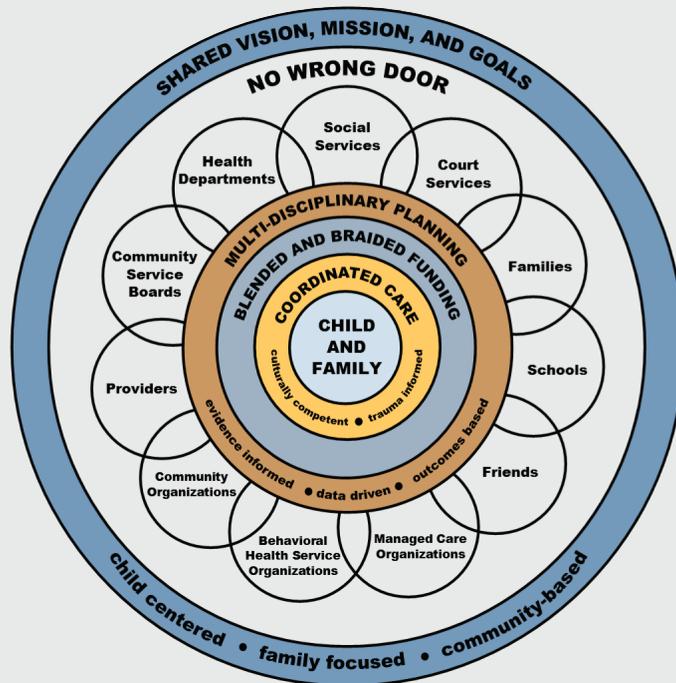
### **GOAL 3: Improve the operational effectiveness and accountability of CSA administration.**

- The State Executive Council for Children’s Services adopted significant policies concerning response to CSA audit findings, administration of the CSA mandatory uniform assessment instrument, the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS).
- Fully implemented the three–year CSA local program audit plan and completed reviews of all programs in accordance with expected time frames.
- Made major improvements to automated CSA financial and information technology systems (including the CSA website) to enhance the user experience, create efficiencies and improve accuracy and value.
- Developed new data analytic tools to allow more effective monitoring of the CSA program activities.

# FOUR YEAR TELESCOPE

In four years, Virginia will be well down a path to the successful implementation of more effective services to support its children and families. The Children's Services Act and the State Executive Council for Children's Services will be a key component in this effort. This will include support for the introduction of evidence-based approaches toward preventing children's entry into foster care, the redesign of the behavioral health components of the state Medicaid plan, equitable access to core services through community services boards, reduced recidivism and improved outcomes for juveniles involved with the justice system, and necessary school-based supports for students. Increased attention to and reporting of meaningful outcomes and metrics will be evident, as will efforts to ensure family voice and choice.

The hallmark of these activities will be cross-partner and cross-system leadership and alignment to create clarity, consistency, and collective impact at the state and local levels. Strong partnerships will be the mechanism by which improved practices and outcomes will be realized.



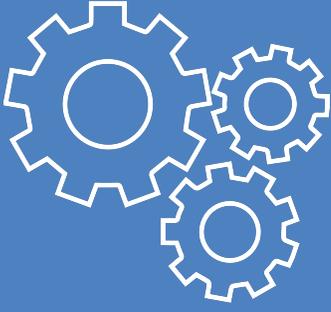
## STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES



STRATEGIC PLAN: 2020 - 2024

EMPOWERING LOCALITIES TO SERVE YOUTH

## POLICY + OVERSIGHT



Policy can either help or hinder alignment of shared efforts.

1. SEC with input from SLAT and others will determine which CSA policies need greater uniformity, flexibility, and alignment (internally and across partners.)

**Four Year Metric:** Complete revision of CSA policies supporting alignment.

**Two Year Metric:** Develop a policy revision committee with stated purpose and work plan and begin implementation of the work plan.

2. SEC will identify and capitalize on the practice enhancements occurring throughout the CSA participating systems.

**Four Year Metric:** Develop and implement an SEC process to leverage expertise and replicate best practices across partners.

**Two Year Metric:** Engage in regular updates and discussions of the various system improvement initiatives to identify areas requiring additional alignment.

## LEADERSHIP + COLLECTIVE ACTION



In order to promote alignment, we will lead by example and collaborate on a shared vision and key outcomes.

1. The SEC and SLAT will define and support development of core leadership competencies for local CSA leaders, Community Policy and Management Teams, and Family Assessment and Planning Teams.

**Four Year Metric:** Implement a comprehensive curriculum to address identified core leadership and operational competencies and a strategy for building local implementation of the competencies.

**Two Year Metric:** Identify desired core leadership and operational competencies and assess current training plans.

2. SEC will implement and support outcome-driven practices.

**Four Year Metric:** Assess and communicate shared measurable outcomes with a plan for implementing outcome driven practice.

**Two Year Metric:** Catalogue current measurable outcomes across systems including the ways that they are captured and communicated.

## EMPOWERING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES



An important contribution to alignment is honoring the voice + choice of families and youth as well as building capacity of the communities that serve them.

1. SEC, SLAT, and additional partners will develop a guide for youth and families to build understanding about access to needed services.

**Four Year Metric:** Develop and share a family and youth guide.

**Two Year Metric:** Identify and prioritize relevant categories to be included in the family and youth guide.

2. The SEC through OCS will build community capacity by preparing and assisting localities to successfully implement and sustain evidence-based practices.

**Four Year Metric:** Develop and adopt a process of selection and implementation of EBPs for localities across Virginia.

**Two Year Metric:** Create a work plan with a goal of assisting localities with selecting and implementing EBPs.