

Family Support Services Year End Report – June 2019

Mesa Developmental Services, 790 Wellington Avenue Grand Junction CO 81501



FY 2018-2019 Review

Family Support Services (FSS) provides support to families who have a child with a developmental disability with costs that are beyond those normally experienced by other families. The primary purpose of FSS is to reduce caregiver stress, ease the burden of care, and support children with disabilities in remaining within their own nurturing family home. FSS is a family driven program and was developed as a partnership between families and publicly funded supports. The individual's and family's circumstances and needs are the primary consideration for determining the appropriate types of services that can best assist a family with the least disruption to family lifestyle. Allocations are twice per year and can be used to pay for services such as respite care, professional services, home modifications, assistive technology and medical and dental services not covered by insurance. A total of **158** families were eligible to receive Family Support funding during the fiscal year ending June 2019. **113** families were actively funded within the program, while the remainder chose to receive only case management services. We had no families on the waitlist.

The total amount of funds expended for FY 2018-2019 was \$162,522.23, with specific spending per category as follows:

Respite:	\$91224.58
Professional Services:	\$34568.03
Assistive Technology:	\$15287.16
Home Modification:	\$6905.25
Medical/Dental:	\$6153.81
Other:	\$3936.10
Transportation:	\$3542.30
Parent/Sibling Support:	\$905.00
Program Expense:	\$0.00

The highest utilization in funding continues to be respite care, with **56%** of the budget being used for this resource. Respite care is vital in helping reduce family stress, caregiver burnout, and helping parents better manage the care of their child on a day to day basis. Parents complete a Family Support Services Survey annually. The survey asks parents to rate changes that occurred as a result of receiving support. **100%** of families report that respite has benefitted

their family and reduced stress. **93%** of parents feel that FSS funding has contributed to an increased quality of life for their child and family. MDS will update their family satisfaction survey to address updated rule effective June 30, 2019.

The intended outcome for this program is an improved quality of life for everyone in the family. The following objectives were set forth by the Family Support Council for fiscal year 2018-19:

1. *To continue supporting families in the transition process when their child turns 5 and in need of the developmental disability determination, but also expanding efforts to provide a greater support to families whose children are transitioning into adult services. This will be accomplished by continuing our partnership with the Aging and Disability Resource Coalition (ADRC) to provide initial intake and determination services to our families and by educating families on not only the logistics of enrolling into adult services, but also the emotional impact of transitioning out of the school system. –objective met*
2. *To continue providing educational materials and outreach to our families and to the community and increasing public awareness of services. This will be accomplished by updating the Family Support Services handbook (dependent on State timeline) and by launching an MDS specific website. We will also be looking into helping implement a community –based Parent Liaison who will be able to guide families in their transitions. –objective partially met (the FSS handbook will be updated FY 19-20)*
3. *To continue to prevent unwanted out -of -home placement by ensuring our highest needs children receive funding priority. This will continue to be accomplished by categorizing needs as “high”, “moderate” and “low” and funding accordingly. This will be an on-going goal. –objective met*

FY 2019-2020

Our outreach and education efforts continue as we regularly present to outside agencies on the services MDS provides, and an overview of FSS is given on the MDS website, including how to access the program. Our Family Support Council has voted to have quarterly meetings in order to provide greater assistance with the implementation of the program. In addition, our FSS allocation committee is a strong sampling of community agencies working together to identify and fill gaps in support for our families. Children’s Services and FSS support the State philosophy that ‘families are the greatest resource available to individuals who have a developmental disability and families must be supported in their role as primary caregivers.’ We are continually striving to ensure FSS is a valuable part of our families’ support network.

The following objectives were set forth by the Family Support Council for fiscal year 2019-20:

1. *To continue supporting families in all areas of transition with an emphasis placed on educating District 51 on MDS services for students currently enrolled, and those transitioning out of the school system.*
2. *To increase our outreach efforts to families by developing support groups for parents and caregivers and implementing parent-to-parent support.*

3. *To continue to prevent unwanted out-of-home placement by ensuring our highest needs children receive funding priority. They will continue to be accomplished by categorizing needs as "high", "moderate", and "low" and funding accordingly. This is an on-going goal.*

Budgetary recommendations from the allocation committee-

1. *The average respite for a family in a six month period is \$750.00.*
2. *Families should be placed into the appropriate programs (adult services, CES waiver) as quickly as possible to utilize the correct available funding sources.*
3. *Emergency fund established, per State recommendation, to address short-term crisis or emergency situations that arise during the fiscal year -\$2500.00 set aside.*