

Family Support Services Year End Report – June 2020

Mesa Developmental Services, 790 Wellington Avenue Grand Junction CO 81501



FY 2019-2020 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 **144** families were eligible to receive Family Support funding during the fiscal year ending June 2019. **98** 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 2019-2020 was **\$169281.06**, with specific spending per category as follows:

○ Respite:	\$99009.44
○ Assistive Technology:	\$18105.57
○ Professional Services:	\$15906.79
○ Other:	\$6268.23
○ Medical/Dental:	\$5772.49
○ Parent/Sibling Support:	\$5661.77
○ Environmental Engineering:	\$2962.10
○ Transportation:	\$2921.54
○ Program Expense:	\$12673.13

FY 2019-2020 was the first year we utilized the program expense category, and funding was used to establish a resource library consisting of various assistive technology items. Families often receive limited funding and having the ability to try an item prior to purchasing could be a huge benefit. Items for the library were purchased in late June, so we currently do not have exact numbers of the total amount of families to benefit, but this will be open to every family in FSS. Total cost for the resource library: \$9417.13. Expense cost for one full-time staff, to include outreach and participation with other community agencies in the development, maintenance, and operation of projects: \$3256.00

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 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. **The FSS Coordinator is a part of several committees with District 51 staff and Board of Education members and provides education and information on MDS services as needed. Outreach efforts to individual schools continue, as requested.***
2. *To increase our outreach efforts to families by developing support groups for parents and caregivers and implementing parent-to-parent support. **Several families have expressed interest in starting a support group, but efforts were halted due to COVID-19. Planning and implementation will continue in FY 2020-2021***
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 and continues to be a priority for our allocation committee.***

FY 2020-2021

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 will continue 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 2020-21:

1. *To increase our collaboration with the school district to include the Superintendent of District 51 in outreach efforts.*
2. *To continue outreach to families with the implementation of parent support groups, in addition, we will also use program expense funds to facilitate social events for families (i.e. Sensory Christmas and beginning of summer fun events).*
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 is an on-going goal.*