President Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request

The President submitted his last budget to cover FY 2017 which begins on October 1, 2016.

The budget increases spending by just under 5 percent with the majority of that coming from various entitlements in particular Social Security and Medicare. Discretionary spending will total a little more $1.1 trillion. The President requested a discretionary increase of approximately 1 percent for all of domestic and defense spending. That spending was agreed to in the last two-year budget accord set late last year.

There is already opposition by the Congressional leadership to the President's budget with some congressional committees ignoring requests by the Administration to testify on the budget. In addition some more conservative elements of the House have indicated they would like to challenge the two-year budget agreement negotiated by Speaker John Boehner (R-OH).

Despite this the budget blueprint may offer some proposals that could form future policy particularly in child welfare.

The Obama Administration's fiscal year (FY) 2017 budget repeats some of the key child welfare proposals of last several years but includes a significant expansion of child welfare workforce training that is intended to increase the number and enhance the quality of the child welfare workforce that holds a MSW and BSW degree.

The Administration proposes an enhancement in the child welfare workforce by increasing Title IV-E training funding to obtain a Masters or Bachelors Degree in Social Work. States could draw down an enhanced Title IV-E match for workers that had BSWs and MSWs. The cost would be $50 million in the first year and $1.8 billion over ten years.

In regard to substance use, in addition to proposals that would expand services by $1.1 billion to address opioids and heroin addiction spread through several agencies, child welfare funding would also be increased. Under Title IV-B part 2, Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) the Administration proposes to increase the current $20 million in substance abuse regional partnerships to $60 million a year. This funding would be mandatory and not contingent on annual appropriations. Title IV-B must be reauthorized this year.

The Administration proposes $132 million over ten years in an enhanced Title IV-E match to assist states in the systems training and improvements that could assist in any implementation of new SACWIS and ACFARS regulations and rules.

The Administration also continues to propose two other initiatives included in previous budget, this includes a jointly funded demonstration project between the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) and the Centers on Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that target better access to health care services framed around the goal of reducing the over use of psychotropic medication for children and youth in foster care. It also continues a request of approximately $68 million to address family preservation (described as prevention) and post permanence services.

The Administration proposes a renewal of the Family Connection Grants at $15 million. They are also asking for $20 million in new discretionary funding through Promoting Safe and Stable Families to assist tribes to expand, strengthen and increase capacity child welfare support services.

The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) remains intact but the Administration proposes an increase of $300 million for an "Upward Mobility Project."

In addition, they propose an increased funding for Head Start and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

Title IV-E, Social Security Act

Title IV-E Foster Care Payments

As an entitlement, IV-E foster care funding is determined by the level of need and number of claims filed by states for reimbursement at the federal level. For 2017, the Administration projects that Title IV-E foster care maintenance and administrative costs will be at $4.992 billion, an increase from the projected cost of $4.801 billion in 2016. Total costs have been increasing in the past two years due to an increase in foster care placements.

The funding will cover an estimated 174,450 children in foster care, which the Administration indicates is an increase of 8,000 children from the projected 2016 number. Again the 2017 number is also an increase from last year's budget projections. Due to a decrease in eligibility resulting from the link to the 1996 AFDC standards, the Administration indicates that federal funding covered 51.8 percent of foster care placements in 2000 and was 42 percent in 2015.

For federal fiscal year 2014 (last complete data), over 415,000 children were in out-of-home (foster care), that represents the second straight year of increases in foster care placements and the most since 2009 when there were 418,000 in foster care.

Promoting the Child Welfare Workforce

A new proposal would allow the use of Title IV-E funding for BSW/MSW education. This proposal allows states to directly charge the costs of education to receive a BSW or MSW to the title IV-E program.

Title IV-E training funds is currently available for long-term training costs, including payments for persons preparing for employment or actually employed by the Title IV-E agency.   This proposal would eliminate the need for states to determine how much of a worker caseload is dedicated to IV-E eligible foster children and instead let states charge training costs regardless of the makeup of the caseload.

The current structure is called, “cost allocation.” That means that before a state can apply a federal match of 75 percent in the training of public and private agency child welfare workers they must determine how much of that worker’s time is spent to assist children who are eligible for Title IV-E foster care and/or adoption assistance. The Administration proposal would do away with this complicated and sometimes discouraging process.

This proposal would be tied to obtaining either a BSW or MSW for title IV-E agency caseworkers, including contracted staff, with foster care administrative responsibilities, or persons preparing for such employment.   By eliminating the allocation of costs it is hoped that the proposal will decrease the financial burden and incentivize states and encourage them to support more caseworkers in obtaining a BSW or MSW degrees.

The proposal includes a time-in-service requirement for recipients of this support.

In addition, the Administration proposes an enhanced Title IV-E match for BSW/MSW caseworkers. Citing recognized research that a better educated workforce will result in positive permanency outcomes for children in foster care and children who are at-risk of entering foster care, the proposal would encourage states to enhanced the workforce through this higher federal match rate for caseworkers with BSW or MSW degrees.

State agencies achieving substantial improvement in hiring caseworkers with BSW or MSW degrees will be eligible for an enhanced match as well.

ACF-CMS Demonstration Projects On Over Prescription of Psychotropic Medication
The Administration is again requesting funding for a joint project by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to address the over use of psychotropic medications by promoting evidenced-based interventions targeting children in the foster care system. The Budget proposes, for each of the next five years, $50 million a year through ACF matched by $100 million a year through Medicaid. Funding would be used for competitive demonstration projects. States would receive performance-based Medicaid incentive payments to improve care coordination paired with ACF funding to states that support state efforts to build provider and systems capacity.

The capacity building through ACF would include: Enhancing child welfare workforce; Providing reliable screening and assessment tools; Coordination between child welfare and Medicaid especially Early and Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT); Training for foster parents, adoptive parents, guardians, and judges; implementing an evaluation and providing data.

Prevention of Foster Care and Post-Permanency Services

The Administration proposes $586 million over ten years in matching funds that would be based on a child's case plan to prevent placement into foster care and to provide post-permanence services. The proposal calls for funding to be used for evidence-based practices that will reduce the likelihood that a child will be placed into foster care and to sustain permanency for recently placed children.

Child Support and Foster Care Proposal

The Administration is again recommending reforms to the child support program that would assure that child support payments made on behalf of children in Foster Care to be used in the best interest of the child, rather than as general revenue for the state. In the past the Administration has suggested this reform to align with other child support provisions that seek to pass through collected funds to the family/children involved. Currently states are required to recover these funds under Title IV-E Foster Care to reimburse the state and the federal government for part of the cost of care. The cost would be $46 million in 2017.

Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Payments

Title IV-E adoption assistance funding similar to foster care is based on claims filed by states for federal reimbursement. For 2017, the projected cost for Title IV-E adoption assistance payments and administrative costs are projected to be $2.780 billion, an increase of $106 million from FY 2016. An estimated 467,000 children will be helped by adoption assistance federal funding in FY 2017 which is a projected increase of 7,000.

Adoption assistance payments are designed to assist families that may need additional financial support when adopting a child who has special needs. States individually establish the definition of "special needs" children. Children considered special needs could include any child in foster care, siblings with a goal of being adopted together, older children, children in care for several years, children with physical disabilities or children with other challenges, developmentally, physically or for health purposes.

When Congress tied eligibility for foster care funding to 1996 AFDC eligibility standards, the same link between AFDC and Adoption Assistance was also created. In 2008, the passage of the Fostering Connections Act (PL 110-351) created a gradual de-link of Adoption Assistance eligibility from the AFDC. Starting in fiscal year 2010, children newly adopted who were 16 or older were eligible without regard to AFDC eligibility. This has been adjusted downward each year. In 2017, all new special needs adoptions for children 2 or older are eligible for federal support. The link to AFDC will be completely eliminated by FY 2018.

Title IV-E Adoption and Kinship Incentives

The Administration requests the same total for this year's adoption incentive fund which would be the $37.9 million. This year Congress must reauthorize the Incentive Fund. It was last reauthorized in 2014 and was adjusted to base awards on increases in subsidized guardianships in addition to adoptions. It now awards incentives based on increases in both adoptions and subsidized/kinship guardianship placements.

If enough funds are not available each states bonus or incentive are reduced accordingly. Funding and appropriations vary by year depending on state success in moving children to adoptive and now kinship families. When Congress passed the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), they created this incentive fund under Title IV-E. If states increased the number of children adopted from foster care over a previous year's high mark, they are awarded an incentive from this appropriation.

The next awards will cover adoptions and kinship placements that took place in federal FY '15 with the dollars coming from FY 2016. Total funding awarded last year was $18 million despite the appropriations of $38 million. Eighteen million dollars was distributed in this latest round because, as has been the case since the creation of the incentive fund, HHS made up for a shortfall of funding in the previous year by taking from current appropriations.

In FY 2014 (latest data) 50,898 children were adopted from foster care and 107,918 children in foster care were waiting to be adopted. This was a slight decrease in adoptions from the previous year and an increase of nearly 3000 in children in foster care waiting to be adopted.

The $18 million in incentives distributed last year went to all but five states (Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire and New Mexico). The $18 million total represents just 38 percent of what the states should have been awarded. To pay all states what they earned the appropriations should have been approximately $49 million.

Last year's award was revised (in the last reauthorization included in the 2014 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act) in several ways:

- In addition to rewarding an increase in adoption from foster care, states are awarded based on increases in subsidized guardianships.

- The awards were adjusted in terms of categories of adoptions/guardianship placements so that $5000 is earned per increased adoptions, $4000 for overall kinship placements $7500 per pre-adolescent (9 to 14) adoption/guardianship placements, $10,000 per increase in in older adoption/kinship placements (ages 14 and older)

- The awards as always are based on an increase over the previous year but this formula is based on a rate increase instead a specific number. That is intended to allow states that have been reducing their foster care population (thus reducing the pool of children waiting for adoption) to receive an award for positive permanency policies.
- All awards for guardianships are new and the formula and the subcategory targeting ages 9 through 14 is new and is an attempt to place a greater focus on a population that have represented an increased presence in the waiting to be adopted category.

If HHS adjusts next year's shortfall of 61 percent in FY '14 awards by taking from the FY 2016 funding (still to be determined) the program risks falling closer to pushing the awards a year behind.

Title IV-E Tribal Foster Care and Adoption Assistance

As a result of the Fostering Connections to Success Act, $3 million is allocated each year for technical assistance to tribal governments or consortia that seek to oversee their own Title IV-E programs. Funding is mandatory and provided each year. Planning grants, a prelude to taking over the program from the state, have been given to more than 22 tribes since FY 2009. The Administration also requests $241 million over ten years to provide enhanced start-up funding and matches to assist tribes seeking to take over their own Title IV-E program.

Title IV-E Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payments

As a state optional entitlement, states may establish a program to support kinship-guardianship placements. The Administration projects that 29,300 children will be covered under this program in FY 2017 which represents an increase of 3,000 children above a revised increase for 2016. The cost of $152 million in FY 2017 represents an increase of $29 million from 2016. As of January 2016, 32 states have been approved to implement Title IV-E programs.

Title IV-E John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

The John H. Chafee Independence program is set at $144 million in mandatory funds which represents an increase of $4 million. The increase would be dedicated to research and to develop innovate approaches to transitional services.

The (Title IV-E) Independent Living program is targeted to assist youth who have not been placed in a permanent family and who are aging out of foster care. There is no change in the mandatory funding total from FY 2016. In FY 2014 (latest data) 22,392 young people exited foster care through emancipation—"aged out." This is the lowest number since 2003 and it continues a steady decline in the number of youth aging out of care from a recent high of 29,556 in 2008.

The Administration is seeking legislative changes that would allow states to extend use of these funds to youth up to age 23 if a state has taken the option to extend foster care under Title IV-E foster care to age 21. This option was made available to states as part of the 2008 Fostering Connections to Success Act; approximately a dozen states have taken this option.

The administration also seeks $43 million for Education and Training Vouchers in FY 2017. The proposed funding is the same as 2016. Unused funds by one state are re-distributed.

Title IV-B, Social Security Act

Title IV-B Part 1, Child Welfare Services (CWS)

Title IV-B, Child Welfare Services is funded at $269 million the same as 2016. The total is maintenance of earlier cuts imposed through the sequestration process and continues cuts from the pre-sequestration levels of $281 million in 2011. It was reauthorized in 2011 and is scheduled for a reauthorization this year. Since 1980 it has been authorized for up to $325 million which is funded through the annual appropriations process. It has never been fully funded. Each state share is based on the state's population under age 21 as compared to other states. Funding can be used for a range of child welfare services, including prevention of child abuse, prevention of foster care placements and early intervention. Some states may use their funds to address adoption and foster care expenses.

Child Welfare Training and Research

Housed under Title IV-B, the funding total under this category is proposed at *$16 million in FY 2017.* In 2016 this line received split between:

- $7 million has been allocated to promote research and training for the child welfare workforce. Funding helps to provide leverage to institutions of higher learning and other non-profits by supporting their on-going projects. This initiative has been in place for more than a decade.

- Child Welfare Innovation and Research of approximately $11 million to continue funding for demonstration projects across the country to reduce foster care placements.

- $4 million to continue the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-being (NSCAW) study that provides on-going research and data on the well-being of children impacted by the child welfare system. Last year's funding was passed through CAPTA discretionary funding.

Family Connection Grants

The Administration proposes a restoration of these grants at the previous level of $15 million. This was a $15 million competitive grant created as part of the Fostering Connections to Success Act in 2008. Funding was mandatory but its authorization expired at the end of FY 2013 and Congress extended it through FY 2014.

Matching grants to states and tribes allowed funding for kinship navigator programs, intensive family-finding programs, family group decision making and family-residential substance abuse treatment and counseling. Applicants apply to HHS for grants lasting 1 to 3 years. Funding is mandatory and has been fixed at $15 million since its creation as part of the Fostering Connections to Success Act of 2008. The Administration is again requesting that Congress enact a reauthorization of the program through FY 2016 which would align its future reauthorization with the Title IV-B programs (CWS, PSSF).

Title IV-B part 2, Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF)

Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) is a combination of funding streams for different but related services. Like CWS, PSSF was reauthorized last year as part of the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act. In FY 2017, the President is requesting PSSF funding at the same levels for the four basic services but has added some additional request for separate purposes.

The funding for the original PSSF program has been divided into four broad categories: family preservation, family support, family reunification and adoption services. In addition, a portion of PSSF funding ($30 million) is allocated for court improvement programs. Furthermore, $20 million is designated for competitive grants to address substance abuse, while another $20 million is set aside for workforce development. These workforce grants are allocated to states if they meet a requirement to visit children in foster care at least once a month.

In 2016, PSSF receives $345 million in mandatory funding as well as an additional allocation of discretionary spending of $59 million. Currently in 2016, after allocating for the various funding categories and combining mandatory and discretionary spending, the approximate totals for FY 2016 is: $335 million for the four main services, $30 million for Court Improvement, $20 million for competitive grants to address substance abuse, and $20 million for workforce improvements.

Under the 2017 budget the President's budget increases discretionary funding from at $59 million in 2016 to $79 million in FY 2017 with the additional $20 million designated to assist tribes.

Substance Abuse Enhanced Funding (PSSF)
The Administration, through reauthorization of PSSF would maintain the $20 million for workforce improvements, $30 million for Court Improvements but they propose to increase the $20 million for competitive substance abuse (regional partnerships) to $60 million. The Administration indicates the rate of infants entering child welfare systems rose from 10.8 per 1000 to 11.4 per 1000 in 2014 over 2013 and that 30 percent of foster care placements were impacted by parental substance use.

Title IV-A, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Soc Sec Act

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) five-year reauthorization ran out in FY 2010 but it is currently extended until the end of FY 2016 on September 30. Since it expired Congress and the Administration have agreed to a series of short term extensions ranging from a few months to a year at a time.

The Administration proposes several changes and enhancements. In total TANF would increase from $16.5 billion to $17.6 billion with a change in the contingency fund and other funds to address workforce, poverty and intergenerational strategies. The based grant would receive a $750 million increase. The TANF block grant, created in 1996 has lost more than 30 percent of its value due to inflation.

In their budget proposal the Administration endorses several proposals that had garnered some bipartisan support in the House of Representatives in the past year. These proposals include adding the reduction of poverty to the purposes of the TANF Act and restricting how states calculate third-party contributions as part of their maintenance-of-effort state spending requirements.

The Administration also proposes that state be required to spend no less than 55 percent of federal and state TANF funds on the core services of cash assistance, child care and work activities. This proposal is an attempt to address the ever-dwindling use of TANF for cash assistance and other services and to place limits on just how much of the TANF program can be spend on other unrelated core state budget activities including some child welfare services.

Child Care/Child Care Development Block Grant/CCDG

Child Care Funding has three funding streams: discretionary funding, funding based on historic spending, and funding based on states matching federal funds. Discretionary funding is appropriated each year and provided to states both by a population formula while the mandatory funding is written into the TANF law and set for five or six years at a time. This mandatory funding is divided into two sets; one of which is allocated to states based on historic spending, while the second of which is provided to states only if each state provides a match in funding.

The President's initiative:
Building on recent budget increases the President's budget would increase funding for expanded prekindergarten (Pre-K), Head Start, including full day and Early Head Start, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

Pre-Kindergarten

The Administration is requesting $350 million for Pre-K development grants an increase from the 2016 funding level of $250 million. The program began in FY 2014 with 18 states receiving initial grants. The funding is now provided through the recently reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act. (ESEA).

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

The CCDBG generally refers to all child care funding both the discretionary (appropriated) funds and the mandatory funds written into the TANF law. Both funding sources are covered by the same CCDBG regulations currently pending an update.

The Administration proposes to build on last year's funding increase. Discretionary funding would increase from the current $2.751 billion in FY 2016 to $2.962 billion in FY 2017. The administration is building on last year appropriations increase to implement the reforms and potentially new CCDBG regulations likely to be released later this year. The Administration also proposes a dramatic expansion in the child care mandatory funding source increasing the $2.9 billion by more than $82 billion over ten years and $3.6 billion in the first year. This increase would have to be included by the authorizing committees through a long term reauthorization of TANF.

Head Start

Overall Head Start would receive funding of $9.6 billion, an increase of $434 million. The increase would split between $294 million to continue the expansion of Head Start to full day in some areas, and $142 million to address inflation and the recent expansion of Early Head Start.

Created in the 1960s, the Head Start program provides grants to local agencies with the aim of delivering comprehensive child development services to young children. Additionally, Head

Start targets familial needs by supplying the family with essential supports and services. Although the program focuses in particular on preschoolers, in 1995, it expanded its focus to infants and toddlers with the creation of Early Head Start. Funding is subject to sequestration.

21st Century Learning Centers

21st century Community Learning Centers were created through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). These centers were established to support after-school programs and to expand coverage beyond traditional child care. Eligible programs include local educational agencies (LEAs), cities, counties, and community-based agencies. Applicants are required to plan their programs through a collaborative process that includes parents, youth, governmental agencies, and representatives of participating schools or local educational agencies. Funding is allocated through the US Department of Education.

Funding will be reduced from the current FY 2016 level of $1.166 billion to $ 1 billion.

Promise Neighborhoods

The Promise Neighborhoods program was created under the Obama Administration and is based on the model established by the Harlem Children's Zone. The goal is to establish a school-based program that joins together public, private, philanthropic and business community interests to develop a comprehensive model. Early on in a child's life and continuing through elementary and secondary school years, programs will wrap a range of services around the prospective student and family with a goal of preparing students for success all the way to college and later employment. The initial grants were for planning. The Administration is seeking an increase from the current $73 million to $128 million in 2017.

Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, Title V Social Security Act

Maternal and Child Health Block Grant

Enacted in 1935 as a part of the Social Security Act, Title V provides formula funding to all states to address maternal and child health programs. The main block grant will be funded at $638 million in FY 2017 if the Administration's proposal is approved, approximately the same as this year. Of the total, 85 percent of funding is distributed to states with the remaining funds for national programs. States use funding for planning and allocating services to both mothers and children. States are required to work collaboratively with other organizations to conduct comprehensive needs assessments. Once needs are assessed, states must identify priorities to comprehensively address these needs and must serve as the payer of last resort for services that do not receive coverage from any other program.

Home Visitation Title V Social Security Act (MICEHV)

Created under the Affordable Care Act (ACA, PL 111-148) this program provides funding to all states to promote the use and expansion of home visitation programs. Funding must be used for evidenced-based models with a limited amount of funding available for innovative programs that show promise. To be eligible for funding, states are required to undergo a rigorous planning process and the home visitation programs must undergo substantial evaluation. Funding for the program is mandatory and includes scheduled increases. For FY 2016, funding is at $400 million and was extended last year for a two -year reauthorization. Last year Congress extended the program for one year, the President is requesting a continuance for this year at $400 million.

Title XX, The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), Social Security Act

The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) is a federal block grant and is an entitlement to the states. In federal fiscal year 2014, it was funded at $1.57 billion as a result of the budget agreement (PL 113-67) that left a 5.1 percent cut in effect from the previous sequestration reductions. Funding is proposed at the pre-sequestration level of $1.7 billion.

As part of SSBG the Administration proposes, as they did last year, $300 million for an initiative called an “upward mobility project” which is a proposal similar to social impact bonds and pay-for-success strategies.

SSBG is generally the biggest federal source of funds of Child Protective Services (CPS), with approximately 41 states allocating around $250 million in funds each year on purported CPS services. Part of that funding is funding transferred from the TANF block grant but even without those additional dollars SSBG still represents the biggest federal funding source of CPS. Almost all of the states will spend some potion of SSBG on protective services, foster care services, adoption services, services for displaced youth and other child welfare related services each year. However, it can vary from year to year. SSBG funds can be spent on more than 29 categories of services that range from elderly services (e.g., home delivered meals) to children’s services (e.g., child protection or child care) to disability services (e.g., to transportation or home chore services). States determine eligibility standards and can move dollars from year to year to address their most pressing needs.

Last month, the office of Community Services released two new annual reports on the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). The 2011 and 2012 reports show similar results as the 2010 report and reaffirms how the $1.7 billion in funding continues to support a range of child welfare services—especially as a prime funder of child protection. In addition, it continues as a significant funder of domestic violence services, special services for the disabled and a range of services for all ages including case management, prevention and intervention and counseling services.

States can transfer up to 10 percent of their TANF block grant into SSBG. Generally, states have transferred an annual total of $1.1 billion (of the $16.5 billion in TANF) but the 2012 report indicates that the amount of TANF transferred into SSBG has started to decrease especially after discounting the slight increase in 2010 which is likely the result of a temporary TANF boost from the stimulus funding. In 2012 the TANF transfer was down to just a little more than $1 billion. Funds transferred into SSBG are to be spent on families at 200 percent of poverty or less.

The report breaks out each state’s spending by 29 services both the direct SSBG funding and the TANF funding transferred into SSBG before being allocated.

Funds spent on *foster care* reached $394 million in combined SSBG/TANF dollars with SSBG providing $176 million not an insignificant total when you consider states spent $1.3 billion in maintenance payments through the main federal source of funding, Title IV-E foster care funding in that same year.

Child Protective Services (CPS) received $136 million in SSBG dollars and $331 million when TANF funding is included. Dollars provided through SSBG either alone or combined with the TANF transfer far exceeds what the Congress appropriates through the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) which continues to decrease down to $25 million in FY 2014. SSBG also provides $73 million in *prevention and intervention* services serving more than 2 million children in duplicated counts.

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), first authorized in 1974 (P.L. 93-247) is the only federal legislation exclusively dedicated to the prevention, assessment, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect. It is a continuum of child maltreatment services and supports. The three main funding streams from CAPTA are State Grants, Discretionary Grants for research and demonstration projects, and Community Based Grants to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect. The State Grants aim to help states improve their CPS systems and develop innovative approaches. To qualify for these grants, states must meet eligibility requirements, such as having a child protection system in place. Additionally, states must enact laws preserving victim confidentiality, appoint Guardians Ad Litem, and establish citizen review panels.

CAPTA discretionary funds support state efforts to improve their practices in preventing and treating child abuse and neglect. Funds support program development, research, training, technical assistance, and the collection and dissemination of data to advance the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. These funds also support the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, the only federal data collection effort to annually determine the scope of child maltreatment. Funding also supports the National Office of Child Abuse and Neglect, the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment, and the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect.

The Community-Based Grants support state efforts to develop, operate, and expand a network of community-based, prevention-focused family support programs that coordinate resources among a range of existing public and private organizations. Funding is allocated to states by a formula based on the number of children in a state's population.

The Administration proposes the same level of funding for two of the three CAPTA-related grants for FY 2017. State Grants would be funded at $25 million, CAPTA Community-Based Grants to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect would be funded at $40 million, but CAPTA Discretionary Grants would be funded at $44 million instead of the current $33 million.

Increased Discretionary CAPTA Grants
The additional funding for discretionary grants would provide $11 million to prevent trafficking with part of the funding set-aside for another Commission to study and make recommendations on sex trafficking of children and youth.

Abandoned Infants

The Abandoned Infants program is authorized as part of the CAPTA reauthorization. In FY 2016 Congress de-funded it at $0. Funding was allocated to public and private non-profit programs to prevent abandoned infants and to provide respite care in addition to safe havens for infants. The Administration does not seek to restore it.

Last year the administration was seeking a re-design of the Abandoned Infants program. The program gets reauthorized with CAPTA. The program has been funded at $11 million for more than a decade and addresses instances when an infant may be abandoned in safe places such as hospitals. Originally (in the late 1980s) numbers had been driven by the crack epidemic and the spread of AIDS. Citing reduced numbers of abandoned infants, the Administration is requesting a re-direction in the program's mission. The reauthorization request is dropped.

Adoption Opportunities

The Adoption Opportunities program was established in 1978 (P.L. 95-266) and was most recently reauthorized in 2003 (P.L.108-36, with CAPTA) and requires a reauthorization most likely as part of CAPTA.

Funding provided for Adoption Opportunities is administered by HHS and is distributed through competitive grants and contracts. The program provides grants to address post-adoption services, the recruitment of minority families and the adoption of older children. Programs such as AdoptUSKids are a national example of some of the programs funded through Adoption Opportunities. In 2015, Adoption Opportunities was funded at $39 million in FY 2015 and the Administration is seeking $42 million in FY 2016. The Adoption Opportunities program increased from $26 to $39 million (five years ago) when the Adoption Awareness Program ($12 million) was eliminated as a standalone program. (The Adoption Awareness Program was ultimately combined with Adoption Opportunities on account of their shared mission).

Non-CAPTA Child Abuse Prevention and Support

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs)

The Administration proposes a slight increase for the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). The funding is found in the Department of Justice. They propose to fund CASAs in FY 2017 at $6 million, a $3 million reduction from the Congressional increased placed in last year budget.

CASA's are trained volunteer adults who are appointed by the courts as officers of the courts to assist abused and neglected children. There responsibility is to make recommendations to the judge about what is in the best interest of the child.

Victims of Child Abuse

The Administration's Department of Justice budget also includes a proposal to reduce funding for the Victims of Child Abuse program to $11 million, a reduction from the FY 2016 total of $20 million inserted by Congress in the last budget.

Currently the funds help maintain over 750 Children's Advocacy Centers across the country. The centers goals are to work with professionals from law enforcement to child protection agencies to ensure that investigations of abuse both physical and sexual are conducted in a way that does not further victimize the child. The National Children's Alliance indicates that more than 286,000 children were helped in 2012 and that the Centers provided child sexual abuse prevention training to approximately 500,000 people including some school personal. The recent child sexual abuse prosecutions involving a former Penn State coach suggested a lack of basic training of state-mandated child abuse and neglect reporters.

Vulnerable Children and Youth

Consolidated Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs

This program is actually comprised of two: The Basic Center Program and the Transitional Living Program. The Basic Center program funds community-based programs that provide crisis intervention, temporary shelter counseling and family reunification. Centers will provide up to 21 days of shelter for a maximum of 20 youth. Funds are distributed to states by formula. The Transitional Living Program provides similar grants for youth age 16 to 22 that are living in adult-supervised group homes. Funding lasts up to 18 months. These are youth who cannot live safely at home.

Under the Administration request funding would increase to $106 million ($57 Basic Center, $49 million Transitional Living) an increase from the current FY 2016 total of $101 million ($54 million for the Basic Centers, $48 million for Transitional Living).

In addition, for FY 2017, the Administration proposes $2 million to develop national data on the number of homeless youth.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Children and Youth

Funding for this program would receive an increase to $85 million from the FY 2016 for a total of $70 million. In the FY 2016 appropriations funding increased from $65 million to $70 million for the first time in several years.

Limited funding is provided to states to assist homeless children in continuing their education despite the loss of their permanent home. Along with these funds, states are to meet specified safeguards and requirements, including having a homeless liaison designated in each school district. States must also offer transportation to and from the school of origin, immediate school enrollment if a child has moved to a new school district, continued enrollment in the school of origin if requested, and a prohibition against segregating homeless students.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Infants and Toddlers (IDEA Part C)
The President is requesting an increase to $504 million for IDEA Part C. Current funding is $463 million in FY 2016 which increased from 2015.

IDEA Part C provides formula grants to all states to help create systems of coordinated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, interagency programs that will provide early intervention to children with disabilities, aged birth through two. The targeted population includes families with infants and toddlers with disabilities that are experiencing developmental delays in one or more areas, including cognitive development, physical development, communication development, socio-emotional development, or adaptive development. The intervention may also include children who have a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. States have the discretion to provide services to infants and toddlers who are at risk of having substantial developmental delays if they do not receive appropriate early intervention services.

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