



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #518

Family Support Program (DHFS -- Community Aids and Supportive Living)

CURRENT LAW

The family support program provides services to families with children who have severe disabilities. The program helps families cope with the specialized care needs of children whose disabilities seriously limit their capacity to care for themselves, to communicate, to move around, to learn and to become independent.

The family support program was created to enable parents of children with disabilities to care for their children in their own homes, rather than placing them in institutions or other out-of-home placements, thereby enhancing their quality of life; improving the availability and coordination of community services to families; and increasing the control of families over the types of services and goods provided to them.

Funding for the family support program is budgeted as a categorical allocation within the community aids appropriation. Under the family support program, the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) may distribute up to \$4,339,800 GPR annually to counties to pay for services that enable parents to keep children who have severe disabilities at home.

GOVERNOR

Maintain base funding of \$4,339,800 GPR annually for the family support program.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. During public hearings on the Governor's budget recommendations, the Committee heard testimony from numerous individuals in support of programs that provide community-based

services to persons with disabilities, including the family support program. This paper provides information on the program and several options the Committee may wish to consider to respond to this testimony.

2. In order to be eligible for program services, a child must have a severe physical, emotional or mental impairment which is diagnosed medically, behaviorally or psychologically and which is characterized by the need for individually planned and coordinated care, treatment, vocational rehabilitation or other services and which has resulted, or is likely to result in, a substantial functional limitation on at least three of the following seven functions of daily living: (a) self care; (b) receptive and expressive language; (c) learning; (d) mobility; (e) self-direction; (f) capacity for independent living; and (g) economic self-sufficiency.

3. For the purposes of the program, a child is defined as a person under the age of 24. However, a county must receive approval from DHFS to provide services for families of children ages 21 through 23. Although family income is not a basis for eligibility, cost-sharing may be required on a sliding fee scale.

4. Under the family support program, families receive an assessment to determine which services are needed to enable a child with a disability to live at home. Counties are required to ensure that the family participates in the assessment and that the assessment process involves other persons who are knowledgeable about the child's condition. The assessment also includes a review of available services and sources of funding, such as the family's health insurance or medical assistance. A written service plan is then developed with family support program funds used to provide services for which other funding sources are not available. Up to 10% of the funds allocated to a county may be used to pay for staff and other administrative costs.

5. In 1999, 91.4% of the reported 2,291 children who received services under the program had developmental disabilities. Approximately 21% of the children who received services were age six or under, 39.2% were age seven through 12, 39.5% were age 13 through 20 and 0.2% were age 21 or over. Of the reported children that received services in 1999: (a) 40.8% required personal care services because they were unable to help with their personal care; (b) 55.3% required assistance with some personal care activities; (c) 34.9% could not walk; (d) 16.5% required assistance with walking; (e) 38.4% had a severe developmental delay; and (f) 50.0% had a moderate or mild developmental delay.

6. Although the program provides up to \$3,000 in services and goods annually to eligible families (along with additional amounts that may be provided with the Department's approval), the average per child cost for the reported 2,291 children served in 1999 was \$1,705. Of these children, 540 were served on a one-time basis or considered underserved.

7. The family support program is not an entitlement program. Consequently, counties may establish waiting lists for persons eligible for services. As of December, 2000, 2,505 children were on waiting lists to receive services under the family support program. The following table shows the number of children receiving services and the number of children on waiting lists from

1992 through 2000. As the table shows, the number of children on waiting lists has increased 114% from 1991 to 2000. In addition, DHFS staff indicate that waiting lists do not fully capture the demand for the program's services because parents may decide not to place their eligible child on the list. Attached to this document are the estimated number of children served and number of children on waiting lists, in each county, as of December 1, 2000.

TABLE 1

**Family Support Program
Total Number of Children Served and Number of Children on Waiting Lists
(as of December 1 of each year)**

<u>Calendar Year</u>	<u>Number of Children Served</u>	<u>Number of Children on Waiting Lists</u>
1991	2,749	1,169
1992	2,813	1,489
1993	2,762	1,851
1994	2,575	1,859
1995	2,568	1,862
1996	2,465	1,980
1997	2,802	2,220
1998	2,692	2,209
1999	2,291	2,333
2000	2,370 (est.)	2,505 (est.)

8. The family support program is funded entirely with GPR. State funding has remained at the current funding level of \$4,339,800 annually since 1994-95. All of this funding is provided directly to counties as a categorical allocation under community aids to support counties' family support programs. Under the Governor's budget proposal, this funding level would be maintained in each year of the 2001-03 biennium. In addition, while there is some anecdotal evidence that additional resources are being provided in counties to support services similar to those provided under the family support program, quantitative data are not available.

9. Table 2 identifies expenditures for the family support program, by service category, in calendar year 2000. In addition to these service expenditures, counties spent \$533,300 GPR on administrative and program support costs.

TABLE 2

**Estimated Family Support Program Expenditures, by Service Category
Calendar Year 2000**

<u>Service Type</u>	<u>Program Expenditures</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Architectural Modifications of Home	\$299,200	8%
Child Care	319,500	8
Counseling/Therapeutic Resources	143,100	4
Dental and Medical Care	127,100	3
Diagnosis and Evaluation	13,100	0
Diet, Nutrition and Clothing	116,000	3
Equipment and Supplies	1,141,900	30
Homemaker Services	26,700	1
In-Home Nursing Services - Attendant Care	24,700	1
Home Training/ Parent Courses	50,400	1
Recreation/Alternative Activities	409,900	11
Respite Care	800,500	21
Transportation	147,100	4
Utility Costs	46,100	1
Vehicle Modification	88,600	2
Other, as approved by DHFS	<u>52,600</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	\$3,806,500	100%

10. Waiting lists exist statewide because this program, unlike the birth-to-three program, is a non-entitlement program. In addition, interest in the program has grown as more families become aware of this program. In some counties, families are on a waiting list for services for five to seven years. Because of this, the number of children on the waiting lists do not solely represent new family support service needs.

11. Based on the public testimony presented to the Committee, the Committee could decide to increase funding for this program to help eliminate waiting lists. Using the average cost per child in calendar year 1999 of \$1,705, there are different levels of funding that the Committee could consider, which are presented in the table below.

TABLE 3

**Projected Costs
Expanding Family Support Program
2001-03 Biennium**

<u>Alternative</u>	<u>Estimated Number of Additional Children Served</u>			<u>Total Cost (State GPR)</u>			<u>Annual GPR Costs to Continue</u>
	<u>FY 02</u>	<u>FY 03</u>	<u>Cumulative Total</u>	<u>FY 02</u>	<u>FY 03</u>	<u>Biennium</u>	
1	250	250	500	\$213,100	\$639,400	\$852,500	\$852,500
2	500	500	1,000	426,300	1,278,800	1,705,100	1,705,000
3	750	750	1,500	639,400	1,918,100	2,557,500	2,557,500
4	1,000	1,000	2,000	852,500	2,557,500	3,410,000	3,410,000
5	1,250	1,250	2,500	1,065,600	3,196,900	4,262,500	4,262,500

Alternative 5 would provide sufficient funding, based on the current average cost of service per child, over the biennium to support families currently on the wait list for the family support program, if the funding was only used to provide services to families on the waiting lists and not to provide additional services to those families currently receiving services.

12. The family support program is administered on a calendar year basis. The funding alternatives presented in this paper would provide increased funding to counties beginning January 1, 2002.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Provide \$213,100 GPR in 2001-02 and \$639,400 GPR in 2002-03 to DHFS to increase funding for counties to provide services to families currently on a waiting list under the family support program. This would provide services to an estimated 250 children in 2001-02 and 500 children in 2002-03.

Alternative 1	GPR
2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	\$852,500

2. Provide \$426,300 GPR in 2001-02 and \$1,278,800 GPR in 2002-03 to DHFS to increase funding for counties to provide services to families currently on a waiting list under the family support program. This would provide services to an estimated 500 children in 2001-02 and 1,000 children in 2002-03.

<u>Alternative 2</u>	<u>GPR</u>
2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	\$1,705,100

3. Provide \$639,400 GPR in 2001-02 and \$1,918,100 GPR in 2002-03 to DHFS to increase funding for counties to provide services to families currently on a waiting list under the family support program. This would provide services to an estimated 750 children in 2001-02 and 1,500 families in 2002-03.

<u>Alternative 3</u>	<u>GPR</u>
2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	\$2,557,500

4. Provide \$852,500 GPR in 2001-02 and \$2,557,500 in 2002-03 to DHFS to increase funding for counties to provide services to families currently on a waiting list under the family support program. This would provide services to an estimated 1,000 children in 2001-02 and 2,000 children in 2002-03.

<u>Alternative 4</u>	<u>GPR</u>
2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	\$3,410,000

5. Provide \$1,065,600 GPR in 2001-02 and \$3,196,900 GPR in 2002-03 to DHFS to increase funding for counties to provide services to families currently on a waiting list under the family support program. This would provide services to an estimated 1,250 children in 2001-02 and 2,500 children in 2002-03.

<u>Alternative 5</u>	<u>GPR</u>
2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	\$4,262,500

6. Maintain current law.

Prepared by: Yvonne M. Arsenault

Attachment

ATTACHMENT

Family Support Program Estimated Number of Children Served and Number of Children on Waiting Lists (as of December 1, 2000)

	Estimated Number of Children Served	Number of Children on Waiting List		Estimated Number of Children Served	Number of Children on Waiting List
Adams	11	11	Marinette	19	31
Ashland	9	18	Marquette	8	8
Barron	33	25	Menominee	20	0
Bayfield	19	15	Milwaukee	290	549
Brown	114	203	Monroe	18	12
Buffalo	9	3	Oconto	26	33
Burnett	N.A.	N.A.	Outagamie	69	77
Calumet	17	0	Ozaukee	27	19
Chippewa	40	35	Pepin	11	0
Clark	N.A.	N.A.	Pierce	43	21
Columbia	38	19	Polk	24	37
Crawford	6	4	Portage	27	31
Dane	110	238	Price	10	0
Dodge	2	37	Racine	89	94
Door	36	11	Richland	11	13
Douglas	14	34	Rock	86	57
Dunn	24	41	Rusk	11	7
Eau Claire	67	50	St. Croix	23	93
Florence	7	0	Sauk	20	9
Fond du Lac	51	62	Sawyer	30	2
Forest/Oneida/Vilas	36	36	Shawano	31	24
Grant/Iowa	32	10	Sheboygan	40	12
Green	15	8	Taylor	16	3
Green Lake	9	4	Trempealeau	12	12
Iron	5	1	Vernon	15	0
Jackson	14	13	Walworth	27	0
Jefferson	41	18	Washburn	12	12
Juneau	22	7	Washington	101	8
Kenosha	75	9	Waukesha	85	194
Kewaunee	N.A.	N.A.	Waupaca	26	24
LaCrosse	48	78	Waushara	19	0
Lafayette	16	0	Winnebago	70	0
Langlade	50	66	Wood	<u>34</u>	<u>10</u>
Lincoln	31	0			
Manitowoc	19	57	Total	2,370	2,505