

# Foster Care (KS)

**Recommendation #1:** Fully funding evidence-based prevention and early intervention programs for youth and families before youth are placed in the foster care system, including intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) services, support for families in the home, behavioral programs, and substance abuse programs, among others.

**Implementation Date:** Implemented

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - Funding for evidence-based prevention programs through Family First in the DCF budget for SFY23 increased \$7 million all funds to a total of \$20 million. Family First Prevention Programs are federal and state funded programs to support children remaining safely in their home through in-home prevention services.
  - Family Preservation services are offered to families where there are identified needs that place the child(ren) in the home at risk for removal. Family Preservation offers in-home treatment and/or case management services to support the family.
  - TANF Grant funds are utilized to help support prevention services (Families First and Family Preservation), as well as after school and community-based programs, including Communities in Schools, YouThrive, Kansas Early Head Start, Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), Heartland RADAC, KS Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs, Project Rise (KVC). Youth and Stability TANF Grants support programs which include: The Mirror Inc Work for Success Program, The International Rescue Committee (IRC) Trauma Adapted-Family Connections, Mental Health Association Strengthening Families Program, Healthy Families Program (KCSL), Connections to Success.
- 10/19/2022 Update
  - DCF funds many well-supported, evidence-based prevention programs in family first, family preservation as well as evidence-based home visiting programs with TANF and do so to the fullest extent of our allocated budget.
- 4/14/2023 Update
  - DCF announced grants for Family First Programming to take effect July 1, 2023. These grants provide an array of services for families throughout the state, to include services focused on mental health services, parent skill building, kinship navigation, and substance use services. Please see attached information regarding the Family First Prevention Services Act Referral and Outcome Summary for more information on how these in-home services are impacting families throughout the state.

**Recommendation #2:** Requiring the Child Placing Agency and/or Case Management Provider has a local contact trained in mental health crisis response on call by phone 24/7 to guide foster families facing a mental health crisis toward mobile mental health responders and other local resources; and create consequences for any agency not following this requirement.

**Implementation Date:** Implemented

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - DCF has implemented the Family Crisis Response Helpline- 24/7 crisis line that offers crisis intervention and mobile response to families and individuals experiencing a mental health crisis, as well as connection to local Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs).
  - Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL) has a free, confidential support line for families in the state: 1-800-CHILDREN. This information is provided to Foster Care Case Management Providers and Child Placing Agencies to share with foster and birth/kinship families.
  - Foster Care Case Management Providers and Child Placing Agencies have protocols in place regarding having an on-call crisis staff available to families.
  - DCF will consider and develop further protocols through our grant and provider agreement processes, as well as community conversation sessions which will be held in Summer of 2022, as required by HB2510 omnibus for DCF to gather information on performance-based contracts.
- 12/5/2022 Update
  - Foster Care Case Management Providers and Child Placing Agencies have protocols in place regarding having an on-call crisis staff available to families. DCF, the Child Placing Agencies and Case Management Providers are engaged in ongoing policy workgroups to continue to address timely access to mental health services.
  - DCF completed a number of community conversations during the Summer of 2022, as required by HB2510 omnibus to gather information on performance-based contracts. The Wichita Region hosted a meeting at the Wichita Service Center on Aug.24, 2022 as reported to the members of the taskforce on Aug. 29 at the Ninety-Day Task Force Follow-up meeting, At the request of taskforce members in attendance during the follow-up meeting, DCF hosted a special virtual session specifically for members of the taskforce to have the opportunity to offer additional input. This meeting occurred on Aug. 30 over the lunch hour. All information gleaned from both Wichita meetings was forwarded to Central Office and is being put into a report to the Kansas State Legislature to be shared during the 2023 Legislative Session.
- 4/14/2023 Update

- The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline became available on July 16 across the state and nation. This line is available for anyone who needs support for a suicidal, mental health and/or substance use crisis. Information on this resource has been provided to CPAs and CMPs to share with families.
- DCF, SFM, the Wichita Police Department, Sedgwick County Sheriff's Department and Sedgwick County JIAC have been regularly meeting to better partner around how to more effectively address crisis situations that involve calls to SFM on-call and law enforcement. Policy and process are being reviewed to ensure each agency has a clear understanding of how other systems are required to respond and where we can make improvements to ensure youth and families receive the response needed for the situation.

**Recommendation #3:** Creating an eco-system that connects community resources, grassroots organizations, advocates, coaches, champions, and others with the Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF), Law Enforcement, Sedgwick County COMCARE, Juvenile Intake and Assessment Center (JIAC) and Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF) and other systems that serve foster care children in a mental health crisis.

**Implementation Date:** In Progress

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - The Interagency and Community Advisory Board (ICAB) is a Kansas cross-system multi-agency and community collaboration, including law enforcement and corrections sectors, that was established to support two statewide implementations: the Family First Prevention Services Act and Kansas Strong for Children and Families.
  - Sedgwick County has its own board, with a feedback loop to the Statewide board and other regional boards in the state.
  - DCF works in collaboration with several agencies in the Sedgwick County Community to bring systems and community supports together to address the needs of cross-systems youth. This group has been designated as a Multidisciplinary Team and meets monthly to discuss processes and protocols related to serving cross-systems youth in the community. This work is done in conjunction with the work done in the Crossover Youth State Implementation Team.
- 12/5/2022 Update
  - DCF continues to engage with the Sedgwick County Department of Corrections and other community stakeholders to evaluate the use of an Individual Justice Plan (IJP) to create better cross-system support for youth diagnosed with mental health and/or developmental disability. Wichita State University's Community Engagement Institute (CEI) was recently brought on

board to help facilitate this process, with the first meeting facilitated by CEI to be held on 12/9/2022.

- 4/14/2023 Update
  - Wichita State University's Community Engagement Institute (CEI) has been facilitating community-based discussions around processes and protocols for how best to respond to this population in a crisis situation.
  - The Interagency and Community Advisory Board (ICAB) is a Kansas cross-system multi-agency and community collaboration that was established to support two statewide implementations: the Family First Prevention Services Act and Kansas Strong for Children and Families. The ICAB's overarching goal is to support and activate a comprehensive service array that spans a broad continuum of care for families by: (1) building cross-sector knowledge of needs, gaps, challenges, and best practices; (2) using data and continuous quality improvement to monitor processes and outcomes; and (3) developing and executing action plans to address service gaps.
  - Sedgwick County has its own board, with a feedback loop to the Statewide board and other regional boards in the state. The Sedgwick County group is currently focusing efforts on prevention work for youth ages 13-17 who come to the attention of DCF for "child problem behaviors" and youth ages 10-12 who may need additional support in their home to strengthen the family's capacity to address the needs identified in their home.

**Recommendation #4:** Formalizing standard procedures so both the Child Placing Agency and Case Management providers are legally responsible for the foster children in their care.

**Implementation Date:** Implemented

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - Both the Child Placing Agency and Case Management Providers have guidelines that reflect their responsibilities for children in foster care in Kansas. Both entities have requirements to ensure safety and wellbeing for children in care placed in foster homes in Kansas.

**Recommendation #5:** Developing and implementing standardized training for foster care, law enforcement, 911, JIAC and JDF personnel, to include topics on de-escalation, mental health first aid, adolescent brain development and de-stigmatization of mental health, as well as when and under what circumstances a youth can and should be taken to Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph, as opposed to JIAC. *[See also in Recommendations for 911, WPD, Juvenile Corrections]*

**Implementation Date:** In Progress

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - DCF will work with the other entities identified on partnership with training to ensure a shared understanding across agencies. Trainings around de-escalation, mental health first aid, adolescent brain development and issues related to mental health and wellbeing are frequently offered by provider agencies; further work can be done to extend invitations across agencies to open up trainings to those identified by the Taskforce.

**Recommendation #6:** Requiring foster families to complete a standardized program in adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and trauma-informed care that are culturally relevant, and gender-responsive.

**Implementation Date:** Implemented

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - Children's Alliance of Kansas offers an array of trainings to address these areas for foster parents. In addition, the Child Placing Agencies also offer training and support for their foster families. ACES is addressed as part of the TIPS-MAPP curriculum, which is the required pre-services training for all foster parents. Kansas Administrative Regulations (K.A.R.) 28-4-806 sets out Training requirements related to licensure of foster parents/families. These recommendations will be shared with existing advisory groups for further exploration.

**Recommendation #7:** Requiring DCF and its contracting foster care agencies to ensure employees, foster families and foster children receive benefits that include mental health and mindfulness coaches; additionally, ensure staffing to cover employee caseloads so that employees can utilize benefits such as mental health/mindfulness, vacations, etc., and not return to a backlog that prevents them from providing the best care to youth and families.

**Implementation Date:** In Progress

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - DCF has an employee assistance program (EAP) that offers supports to employees, which includes mental health services. Foster children are referred to the appropriate services at CMHC's and local providers, based on their needs and location in the state. The State Budget has included \$7.5 million in

funds to help with recruitment and retention of DCF and provider staff. Market increases were provided to DCF Child Protection Specialist staff and supervisors.

- 10/12/2023 Update
  - Foster children are referred to the appropriate services at CMHC's and local providers, based on their needs and location in the state. Policy changes as of July 1, 2023, dictate enhanced communication between the Case Management Providers and Community Mental Health Agencies, which includes a dedicated email box to communicate and refer children for services. Foster parents and relative/kinship providers are now able to provide for consent for mental health treatment for children in DCF custody, if efforts to obtain parental permission have failed. This will allow for more timely referrals to services for children in care.

**Recommendation #8:** Expanding the Crossover Youth Practice Model for sharing data and system protocols between DCF, school districts, and the juvenile justice system, to allow those agencies to effectively serve the foster youth in their care.

**Implementation Date:** In Progress

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - DCF, Kansas Dept. of Corrections Juvenile Services (KDOC-JS) and the Office of Judicial Administration (OJA) are working with Georgetown University on bringing the Crossover Youth Practice model (CYPM) to the entire state of Kansas. The CYPM work is being developed in Sedgwick County, and there are pilot sites in Shawnee and Montgomery County.
- 12/5/2022 Update
  - Currently in Sedgwick County, we are outlining protocols for how all system agencies respond when a cross-systems youth is identified or comes to an agency for services. We will use that information to identify areas for improvement in the system to target to better serve youth who are dually involved in the CINC and JO systems.
- 4/14/2023 Update
  - The CYPM Oversight Committee has almost completed the process for outlining protocols for how our overall system responds when a crossover youth is identified. We are currently working with Georgetown University to further refine the process and develop a system response to these youth. Beginning in April 2023, a multi-disciplinary team will convene when we have a crossover youth identified to plan for services and supports for the youth and their family.

**Recommendation #9:** Supporting the passage of HB 2468 and HB 2469, which establishes the foster youth and foster parent bill of rights and requires distribution to each foster youth and foster family; ask Sedgwick County to add HB 2468 and HB 2469 to its 2023 Legislative Agenda.

**Implementation Date:** Implemented

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - DCF policy outlines rights as a foster youth in care in Kansas (DCF PPM, Appendix 7D): [Rights for Kansas Foster Youth \(ks.gov\)](#), as well as rights of a foster parent in Kansas (DCF PPM, Appendix 5O): [Appendix 5O.pdf \(ks.gov\)](#). DCF has supported both bills and provided testimony in favor of 2468; however ultimately, neither bill became law.
- 10/19/2022 Update
  - DCF provided written proponent testimony in support of both of these bills during the 2022 legislative session.
- 4/14/2023 Update
  - HB2194, the Rep. Gail Finney Memorial Foster Care Bill of Rights, is proposed legislation in the 2023 Legislative Session, which addresses certain rights for children in need of care and foster parents.
- 4/24/2023 Update
  - [Governor Kelly Signs Gail Finney Memorial Foster Care Bill of Rights - HB 2024](#)

**Recommendation #10:** Administering an assessment (using disaggregated data) of the youth in the foster care system that allows root cause issues to be identified and a strategic plan developed that will address barriers and systemic issues.

**Implementation Date:** Implemented

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - Current efforts are underway with the Capacity Building Center for States in examining roots causes related to placement instability for youth in foster care. Through that, data and information around reasons for entry into foster care are being reviewed. TFI and the University of Kansas recently completed a study regarding youth who are absent from placement, looking at root causes and factors related to instability in placements for youth. The findings will be provided to others through research briefs and webinars.
- 10/19/2022 Update
  - The TFI and KU study referenced in our [8/29 report](#) has been published.
- 12/5/2022 Update

- Current efforts are underway with the Capacity Building Center for States in examining root causes related to placement instability for youth in foster care. Through that, data and information around reasons for entry into foster care are being reviewed. DCF and Case Management Providers are bringing this data and information to stakeholders across jurisdictions across Kansas to help those who impact entry into foster care better understand the root causes of entry into care, limitations of the foster care system, and how they can support prevention efforts for families.
- 4/14/2023 Update
  - DCF continues to work with the Capacity Building Center for States in examining data and information around why youth enter foster care and what factors contribute to placement instability. Continued partnership in communities across the state is occurring to examine the data and gather input from those who work with system-involved youth. Attached is a document that outlines data and information found in this work regarding root causes of placement instability and entry into foster care.

**Recommendation #11:** DCF design and disseminate a roadmap to assist foster families in accessing local community services and support to aid in the care of youth in the foster care system.

**Implementation Date:** In Progress

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - Roadmaps were created by DCF and KDADS to provide information about the Family Crisis Response Helpline and crisis response services. These were provided to Child Placing Agencies and Foster Care Case Management Providers to share with foster families and birth/kinship families.
  - Each community is unique and offers different types of general support services through non-profit organizations that may assist families, such as food banks, rental assistance, and other opportunities. In each community, DCF contractors may connect families with the United Way 211 resources to help identify what is available in their local communities for services and supports: Call 211 for Essential Community Services | United Way 211.

**Recommendation #12:** Supporting the enactment of SB 12 (approved in 2022), which requires DCF to develop an implementation plan for a set of performance-based contracts to provide an array of evidence-based prevention and early intervention services.

**Implementation Date:** Implemented

**Implementation Details:**



- 8/29/2022 Update
  - DCF begins conversations with stakeholders and community agencies in Summer 2022 to gather feedback and information on performance-based contracts related to SB12 (origin language) which ultimately passed in omnibus bill. Foster Care has 15 data child and family outcomes (many federal) monitored for performance and we report those on the DCF website. [Foster Care\Adoption Case Management Contract Performance Outcomes - Prevention and Protection Services \(ks.gov\)](#).
  - Case read reviews are conducted for quality performance. Performance improvement plans are developed and monitored as needed. Standards of service are contained in our grant documents, policy and procedure manual [Policies - Prevention and Protection Services \(ks.gov\)](#) and Placement Services standards manual [Placement Standards July 2021.pdf \(ks.gov\)](#). The grants have provisions of penalties and incentives related to progress with grant outcomes.
  - More information on DCF quality assurance procedures is located at in Section 8000, Continuous Performance Improvement [CFS PPM2 \(ks.gov\)](#).
- 10/19/2022 Update
  - Stakeholder meetings were held in Sedgwick County and across the state in Aug. 2022. The report will be presented to the Legislature during the 2023 session.
- 12/5/2022 Update
  - DCF completed a number of community conversations during the Summer of 2022, as required by HB2510 omnibus to gather information on performance-based contracts. The Wichita Region hosted a meeting at the Wichita Service Center on Aug. 24, 2022 as reported to the members of the taskforce on Aug. 29 at the Ninety-Day Task Force Follow-up meeting, At the request of taskforce members in attendance during the follow-up meeting, DCF hosted a special virtual session specifically for members of the taskforce to have the opportunity to offer additional input. This meeting occurred on Aug. 30 over the lunch hour. All information gleaned from both Wichita meetings was forwarded to Central Office and is being put into a report to the Kansas State Legislature to be shared during the 2023 Legislative Session.
- 4/14/2023 Update
  - DCF completed a number of community conversations during the Summer of 2022, as required by HB2510 omnibus to gather information on performance-based contracts. The information gleaned from those sessions was provided to the Legislature in the [Performance Based Contracts Implementation Plan](#).

**Recommendation #13:** Extending a thank-you to foster families for the support and sacrifice they make in providing homes for children in need of care.

**Implementation Date:** In Progress

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - CPAs regularly host events to show gratitude and thanks to foster parents for their commitment and care for children in Kansas.

**Recommendation #14:** Developing and implementing a pre/post survey to evaluate satisfaction of families who participate in Family First and Family Preservation programs. Utilize feedback to enhance program and service delivery.

**Implementation Date:** In Progress

**Implementation Details:**

- 8/29/2022 Update
  - This recommendation will be shared with our advisory groups for further exploration.
- 10/19/2022 Update
  - Family first has engaged KU School of Social Welfare and Center for Public Partnership as an evaluator.
- 4/14/2023 Update
  - The Family First Prevention Services Act Referrals and Outcomes Summary was published with information on outcomes related to Family First Prevention Services. Many Family First Providers include surveys and quality assurance components to their programming.