DHS has $369,000 in training grant funds remaining so more providers can offer prevention services that stabilize families and reduce foster care use

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Children and Family Services Division has $369,000 in training grant funds still available through August for agencies and professionals that want to learn how to provide one of the state’s nine approved evidence-based Title IV-E prevention services to children and families. Approved services focus on behavioral health and in-home parent skill-based programs.

In March, the agency announced it had $700,000 in grant funding available, including $400,000 in agency development grants and $300,000 in individual provider training grants.

To date, DHS has allocated $200,000 and has $123,000 pending in agency training and development grants and has allocated $8,000 for individual training and development grants.

The division is urging more agencies and professionals to apply for the remaining training grant funds.

Cory Pedersen, DHS Children and Family Services Division director said, “Grant funds are intended to help North Dakota increase access to supportive evidence-based prevention services shown to stabilize families and reduce child abuse and neglect.”

Lisa Bjergaard, director of the Division of Juvenile Services, North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, said the training grants provided her agency with an opportunity it would not have had otherwise.

“We applied for and received one of the grants and chose to implement Brief Strategic Family Therapy because of its broad application for families with children ages 12-18, including adolescents who display behavior problems and substance abuse. The goal is to improve a youth’s behavior by improving family interactions related to the child’s symptoms,” Bjergaard said.

According to Bjergaard, implementing the new Brief Strategic Family Therapy service has been demanding for both administrators and the clinicians who took up the challenge of learning a new intervention, but the results have exceeded expectations.

“Our clinicians immediately saw the benefit of this approach with families,” said Bjergaard. “Families were responsive and began to learn to support and rely on each other, and family interactions quickly turned from conflict to collaboration.”
Agencies can apply for development grants of up to $100,000 per agency. Funds can be used for staff training and development, staff recruitment or retention costs, up to three months of operating costs during a service start-up period, outreach and marketing of new services, technology costs supporting the prevention services work and required background checks.

Individual professionals can apply for grants of up to $15,000 to help pay for training on approved services and programs, travel to training, technology and equipment costs and background checks.

The deadline to apply is Aug. 31, 2022. Application forms, grant requirements and details are online at [www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/iv-e-prevention.html](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/iv-e-prevention.html).

DHS will award funds until the full amount has been allocated or until the application deadline has passed.

Evidence-based programs and services represent the cornerstone of North Dakota’s Family First Title IV-E Prevention Services and Programs Plan. Approved evidence-based programs eligible for Title IV-E reimbursement in North Dakota include the Family Check-Up program, Healthy Families, Parents as Teachers, Nurse-Family Partnership, Homebuilders, Brief Strategic Family Therapy, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy.

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