

CHAPTER 4

Considerations For Targeted Populations

This chapter provides guidance on identifying and considering targeted populations with a focus on the community planning process. Three broad categories of targeted populations are discussed. These three categories include:

- Low Income Job Seekers and Workers,
- People with Barriers to Obtaining or Retaining Employment, and
- Children and Families.

There are many instances where individuals within families fit into more than one target population and where services may benefit more than one target population.

All services provided to these targeted purposes under the PRC program must meet one of the four purposes of the TANF program and must also be considered “non-assistance.” Chapter 1 of this guide provides an overview of the federal and state requirements of the TANF and PRC programs.

This chapter also provides a broad outline for counties to engage in a community planning process to inventory and then identify those in need of services within their local community plans. From that process counties may then tailor services for targeted populations within their PRC Plans. All federal and state regulations apply for PRC services to targeted populations discussed in this chapter.

An example for a specific benefit or service is reflected in the chart “Example: List of Services & Benefits” found in Appendix J. All of the benefits and services in the chart are meant to meet purposes 1 and 2 of TANF, with the exception of pregnancy prevention services which are provided to meet purpose 3 of TANF.

4000 Community Planning

Locally, the County Family Services Planning Committee is responsible for the community planning process that advises each Board of County Commissioners. By involving local stakeholders, the community planning process inventories available services, assesses gaps in services, and most importantly determines priority strategies to meet local service needs. The planning process should identify targeted populations that are most in need of services. Some targeted populations will need services that must be funded by other community stakeholders, and other targeted populations may be served with TANF-funded PRC services. The services identified in the community plan by the local County Family Services Planning Committee provides critical information to Boards of County Commissioners as well as local CDJFS to determine what services to

targeted populations should be included in the county PRC Plan. Please see Chapter Two for additional information.

4010 Low Income Job Seekers and Workers

An essential goal of TANF is to assist needy families to move toward self-sufficiency. The target population of low income job seekers and workers includes those adults with minimal job skills or employment history seeking employment and those adults employed at low wages. Often these families are referred to as the working poor. Services are directed at helping those individuals enter, maintain, and improve their employment. The focus may include both the custodial and non-custodial parents. Some of the services that may assist families include training, employment, and career advancement; transportation assistance; and work supports.

A. Training, Employment & Career Advancement Services

These are services that offer general or specific strategies for developing job skills, securing employment and advancing a career for job seekers on OWF and low wage employed parents not on OWF. While such services are allowable under the TANF program, many counties are maximizing the services delivered to low-income families by collaborating with other workforce and human service agencies, especially relative to the Workforce Investment Act, the One-Stop workforce system and adult education.¹

Services provided under a PRC plan may include, but are not limited to:

- Employability assessment,
- Job search, job placement, and transportation,
- Work experience opportunities and case management provided to individuals with employment barriers, such as little or no work history,
- Subsidized wages paid to an employer who employs an OWF participant,
- Job skills training, re-training, job search, employment assistance, or other work-related services targeted at unemployed, needy non-custodial parents as well as TANF eligible custodial parents,
- Job retention services or post-employment follow-up services, such as counseling, employee assistance, or other supportive services,
- Linguistic and culturally appropriate services that help TANF eligible refugees obtain employment or participate in work activities,
- Specialized training (or reimbursement for training) for private industry supervisors or job coaches to assist newly hired TANF individuals who have serious barriers to employment, and
- Outreach activities to encourage employers to hire TANF recipients.

¹The Department of Health and Human Services has issued a Program Instruction to provide examples of allowable activities related to job placement and development. See TANF-ACF-PI-2005-02, April 19, 2005, "Using Federal TANF or State MOE to purchase a business."

1. Workforce Investment Act

As a result of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Ohio requires that TANF agencies (i.e., CDJFS) partner in the One-Stop workforce system so that TANF recipients will have access to more information about employment opportunities and services. As a one-stop partner, CDJFS agencies participate in developing workforce investment strategies that help cash assistance recipients secure lasting employment. It is important to note that the WIA regulations require that TANF recipients be given priority when adult training and employment funds are limited in a local area.

A CDJFS PRC plan can be developed to coordinate with WIA programs to provide workforce development for TANF-eligible individuals. Programs for work and training services for TANF-eligible families which meet one of the four federal purposes of TANF are allowable under the TANF program. Counties must assure that PRC work and training programs offered are specifically identified in the county's PRC plan and that eligibility requirements are stipulated in the plan.²

2. Adult Education

Education and training programs can assist in breaking the poverty cycle for low-income individuals by helping them to qualify for and keep well-paying jobs. Some of these individuals have personal barriers such as low literacy and skills levels which interfere with successfully participating in educational assignments. Oftentimes a recipient's low basic skills can be attributed to learning disabilities and limited English proficiency (LEP). See Section 4020 of this chapter for additional information on learning disabilities and LEP. Most counties collaborate with other non-profit community organizations that have adult education programs designed to properly address educational barriers. Resources include Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) programs, certificate programs provided by local community colleges, and on-the-job training that may also be provided through local community colleges.³

² Resources

- For information on Ohio's WIA Program, visit www.ohioworkforce.org
- Government Accounting Office (GAO). 2002. "Workforce Investment Act: Coordination between TANF Programs and One-Stop Centers is increasing but Challenges Remain." Available at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d02739t.pdf>
- Welfare Information Network. Information for Decision Making. "Workforce Development: Coordination between the Workforce Development Systems." Available at http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/workforce/workforce_coordination.asp

³ Resources

- MDRC. 2002. "Improving Basic Skills: The Effects of Adult Education in Welfare-to-Work Programs." Available at <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/179/execsum.html>
- Welfare Information Network. 1998. "Education and Training under Welfare Reform." Available at <http://www.welfareinfo.org/edissue.htm>
- "New Strategies to Promote Stable Employment and Career Progression." February 2002. Available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/>

B. Work Supports

The Economic Success Clearinghouse reports that work supports complement the efforts of welfare reform and workforce development agencies to help move low-income individuals into jobs. Work supports encourage employment and promote job retention because they provide incentives for people to take jobs and help stabilize family income as families move from welfare or unemployment into work. PRC-funded work supports may include work expenses, emergency housing assistance, and transportation, among others.

Supplementing the incomes of low-wage, low-skilled workers is an approach many states and counties are using to help lift families out of poverty. Income supplements can be used as work supports to help reduce poverty and increase the incentive to work for families to leave welfare for work. The income supplements include food stamps and nutrition programs, child care assistance, health insurance, and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) among others. In most cases PRC does not fund the aforementioned income supplements; however, PRC can be used to inform PRC participants of the availability of such assistance.

1. Work Expense Allowance

Counties may use work expense allowances to help families meet work-related costs such as uniforms and tools. Such payments can help families escape poverty and promote job stability. When issuing work expense allowances counties must consider whether the allowance is reasonable. Under the PRC program counties can fund expenses for working families since the work allowance does not meet the family's basic needs and is therefore considered "non-assistance." Examples of such work expenses include uniforms, work tools, or other employment-related costs.

2. Wage Subsidies

Counties can provide temporary wage subsidies to employers as an incentive to hire eligible individuals. Wage subsidy programs assist individuals to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment, especially individuals who face barriers to employment. Work subsidies are considered as non-assistance and as such counties can provide work subsidies under the PRC program. Such subsidies may include payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training. Section 5101:1-3-16 of the Ohio Administrative Code sets forth the parameters of OWF and PRC subsidized employment programs.

3. Transportation

Providing transportation for low income families for employment and/or short-term training is a critical component of an employment-focused strategy. Transportation assistance is allowable up to the limits of the individual county's PRC plan.⁴

Examples of possible PRC-allowable transportation services include:

- Transportation allowance to cover incidental expenses and participation-related expenses for unemployed families,
- Transit passes or tokens,
- Arrange with another agency to use its buses or vans or share in the costs of purchasing transportation services,
- Reimbursement for mileage, auto repairs, or auto insurance to facilitate finding employment and job retention,
- Contracts with a private organization or service to refurbish previously owned cars and provide the cars to TANF recipients or provide financing support that enables recipients to purchase a car, and
- Subsidies for transporting needy children to child care.

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) awards Transportation Coordination grants to communities to facilitate use of resources. Priority is given to counties with no public transportation. Applicants may also apply for funding to wrap around and fill gaps in existing services.

OWF work participants must have access to employment opportunities in order to successfully enter and remain in the labor force. For this reason, ORC 329.041 requires a CDJFS to meet with the representatives of the county transit system or the regional transit authority at least once each calendar quarter to discuss the transportation needs of the county's OWF participants, to review existing efforts and develop new options to meet those needs, and to measure the accomplishments of those efforts.

Since personal transportation is critical for families to maintain employment, transport children to school activities, and accomplish basic household tasks such as grocery shopping, CDJFS may provide PRC services so that an individual can obtain an automobile or driver's license. Payments can be made for reinstatement fees and license

⁴ Resources

- Mark H. Greenberg. Beyond Welfare: New Opportunities to Use TANF to Help Low-Income Working Families. 1999. Center for Law and Social Policy. Available at www.clasp.org.
- U. S. Department of Health & Human Services. Policy Q's & A's – Definition of Assistance. Available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/polquest/assist.htm>
- Ohio Department of Transportation. Ohio Public Transportation Network. Ohio Coordination Program. Available at www.dot.state.oh.us/planning/ACCESS%20OHIO/DraftDocument.htm
- "Use of TANF, WtW, and Job Access Funds for Transportation", a Joint Guidance Letter from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, U.S. Department of Labor, and the Federal Transit Authority on using TANF dollars to support initiatives serving TANF eligible families, available at <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa/testmny.htm>
- ODJFS. Office of Family Stability/Work Activities. "Transportation Services for Low Income Families." Available at <http://innerweb/infocenter/ICFRformsreports.shtml#train>

plate fees. Two separate state agencies will accept county voucher payments for payment of vehicle services: 1) Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicle Regional offices and 2) Ohio Deputy Registrars. The procedures and options for payment by a CDJFS are detailed in Appendix K. ODJFS does not condone or endorse the use of PRC to make payment for fines/reinstatement fees for individuals who have DUI convictions. Each CDJFS should contact their local county prosecutor regarding this issue.

4. Food Stamps and Medicaid Outreach

Food Stamps along with other work supports often make the difference in low-income workers transitioning into the workforce. Since the de-linking of Food Stamp and Medicaid eligibility from cash assistance, it has become increasingly important for counties to assure that those families applying for PRC services are considered for Food Stamp eligibility. A possible PRC-allowable program can include outreach for the Food Stamp and Medicaid programs.

5. Earned Income Tax Credit

Counties are encouraged to use the federal EITC as a means to increase the income of low- and moderate-income working families. The EITC is a refundable tax credit that provides tax reductions and wage supplements for eligible families. Most beneficiaries receive the credit as part of their annual federal income tax filing and refund process. However, arrangements can also be made with the employer and the Internal Revenue Service to claim the credit on a monthly basis. Research has found that the EITC is effective in encouraging work among cash assistance recipients. A possible PRC-allowable program can include outreach for the Earned Income Tax Credit program.⁵

C. Asset Building

Asset building strategies can help low-income families begin to build their economic security. Asset building strategies may include small business development, homeownership, or higher education. The Center for Social Development, a unit of the George Warren Brown School of Social Work (GWB) at Washington University in St. Louis, has found that accumulating assets affect an individual's confidence about the future, willingness to deter gratification, avoidance of risky behavior, and investment in communities. The Center reports that in families where assets are owned, children do

⁵ Resources

- The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. The 2004 Earned Income Tax Credit Outreach Kit. Available at <http://www.cbpp.org/eic2004/index.html>
- The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. "States and Counties are Taking Steps to Help Low-Income Working Families Make Ends Meet and Move up the Economic Ladder." 2001. Available at <http://www.cbpp.org/5-18-01wel.htm>
- The Finance Project, "Information for Decision Making: Workforce Development/Work Supports." Available at <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/publications/worksupportsIN.htm>
- Welfare Information Network. "Issue Notes. Food Stamp Education and Outreach Working to Provide Nutrition Benefits to Eligible Households." Vol. 3. No. 11, December 1999. Available at <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/publications/foodstampout.htm>

better in school, voting participation increases, and family stability improves. Other key outcomes reported by the Center are that reliance on public assistance decreases as families use their assets to access higher education and better jobs, reduce their housing costs through ownership, and create their own job opportunities through entrepreneurship. Two of the most used tools to help low-income families achieve economic self-sufficiency are Individual Development Accounts (IDA) and micro-enterprise development.

1. Individual Development Accounts

Federal and state laws allow TANF-eligible individuals to participate in individual development account (IDA) programs. IDA programs are similar to savings accounts and enable participants to save for a home, an education or the start-up of a business. Money earned by participants is placed into the account and is typically matched by other sources, including TANF. The IDA account does not affect a recipient's eligibility for Ohio Works First, food stamps or Medicaid. IDAs can serve as incentives for recipients to find jobs and to use their earned income to save for the future.

On the HHS TANF Program Policy Q&As website, HHS has stated that under the broad flexibility of the TANF program, a state may use federal TANF funds in other types of asset-building programs that would support TANF purposes. Revised Code Sections 329.12, 329.13, and 329.14 allow CDJFS agencies to establish IDA programs for residents in their respective counties. The legislation allows families with incomes at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level to save earned income, which may be matched with \$2 for every \$1 saved, for an education, to purchase a house, or to start a business. Matching funds may be provided by corporations, individuals, other entities, or the CDJFS. Section 329.14 details the specific information required for reporting on the IDA program activities. For additional information on reporting requirements, refer to Chapter Five.⁶

2. Micro-enterprise Development

Micro-enterprise development is defined by the Corporation for Enterprise Development⁷ as a strategy that provides loans, training, and technical assistance to help low-to moderate-income people to build income, assets, and economic self-sufficiency through entrepreneurship. Micro-enterprise is an allowable work option for public assistance recipients. Research has found that micro-enterprise development helps build lifelong skills and self-esteem, encourages further education and training, creates jobs, contributes to local community economic development, and increases local tax revenue.

⁶ Resources

- National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices, "Building Assets and Economic Independence through Development Accounts", Available at www.nga.org
- Center for Social Development. Individual Development Accounts. Available at <http://gwbweb.wustl.edu/csd/asset/idas.htm>
- Ohio CDC Association at www.ohiocdc.org

⁷ Web site: <http://www.cfed.org/>

CDJFS can encourage and support micro-enterprise development by using PRC to fund the cost of micro-enterprise training; provide subsidized employment related to a participant's area of interest; provide work expense allowances; and provide support services for participants during the initial months of business operations.⁸

D. Community and Economic Development

The community planning process provides an opportunity for collaboration among stakeholders that include employers as well as economic development professionals. In order to be allowable PRC activities, economic development activities must meet the purposes of TANF and serve TANF-eligible families. PRC programs centered around economic development should be used to supplement existing economic development funds and programs. The economic development activities supported by PRC funds should demonstrate an evident benefit to TANF-eligible families⁹.

A local Family Services Planning Committee could form subcommittees to examine community and economic development issues within the context of the community plan developed for a particular county. Programs developed as a result of the planning process serve to enhance local communities by identifying human service/economic development needs and strategies to address those needs. However, strategies that become part of a CDJFS PRC plan must identify activities that target low-income families in the community.

Collaborative approaches that target the needs of low-income families should:

⁸ Resources

- The Department of Health and Human Services has issued a Program Instruction to provide examples of allowable activities related to job placement and development. See TANF-ACF-PI-2005-02, April 19, 2005, "Using Federal TANF or State MOE to purchase a business."
- Welfare Information Network. Issue Notes. Microenterprise Development: An Employment Option for Welfare Recipients. Vol. 5. No. 2, January 2001. Available at www.financeprojectinfo.org.
- Ohio Small Business Development Center, <http://www.odod.state.oh.us/edd/osb/sbdc/>

⁹ Resources

- The Department of Health and Human Services has issued a Program instruction providing examples of allowable activities related to job placement and development. See TANF-ACF-PI-2005, April 19, 2005, "Using Federal TANF or State MOE to purchase a business."
- Welfare Information Network (WIN), Vol.6, No.1, 2002. "Increasing Work Opportunities for Low-Income Workers through TANF and Economic Development Programs" by Pamela Friedman. Available at <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org>
- David J. Wright, Ingrid G. Ellen, & Michael H. Schill (2001). Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government. "Community Development Corporations and Welfare Reform: Linkages, Roles, and Impacts." Available at: http://www.rockinst.org/publications/press_releases/CDCReportPart1.pdf
- National League of Cities (2000). "Connecting Poverty Reduction, Workforce Development and Economic Development." Available at: www.nlc.org
- Ohio Department of Development. Community and Economic Development. www.odod.state.oh.us

- Assess existing community and economic conditions and problems,
- Develop and assist in the implementation of specific strategies for meeting the human service/economic development needs of the community,
- Guide public and private organizations responsible for the provision of human services/economic development,
- Assist public and private organizations to coordinate the provision of services in an efficient, non-duplicative way, and
- Work with local Workforce Investment Boards to coordinate employment activities for TANF-eligible people.

Although not an exhaustive listing, examples of possible allowable PRC programs include, but are not limited to:

- Staffing a community planning process for the County Family Services Committee or subcommittee that identifies the specific needs of TANF recipients toward achieving stable employment,
- Loans to local small businesses that hire and train TANF recipients,
- Supporting local micro-enterprise efforts and encouraging the creation and use of individual development accounts (IDA) to support micro-enterprise development,
- Covering a share of the planning and development financing for local organizations or community development corporations that employ TANF recipients
- Subsidized work programs or wage support can be used in conjunction with economic development funds to community development corporations,
- Expansion or retention of employment opportunities,
- Collecting and distributing information about job opportunities and/or prospective changes in the demand for specific occupations,
- Providing information for job seekers of new job prospects and employers of available personnel, and
- Providing job skills and remedial skills training for employees and potential employees through local community colleges.

4020 Individuals with Barriers to Obtaining or Retaining Employment

Many TANF recipients have barriers that affect their ability to successfully move from welfare to work. A significant number face multiple barriers to employment. CDJFS are encouraged to work with OWF recipients in light of time limits and work requirements. Time limits and work requirements are challenges for CDJFS as they try to serve individuals with multiple barriers. This section discusses some strategies to address these barriers.

A. Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Many research studies have found that up to a third of current public assistance recipients may be affected by substance abuse or mental illness. A number of the studies report that more than half of the individuals with substance abuse and mental health problems have two or more disorders. It has been reported that welfare reform's time limits, work requirements, and sanction policies make it difficult to find solutions to substance abuse and mental health problems. Many counties are collaborating to address this urgent need by using creative strategies such as:

- Identifying individuals who have substance abuse or mental health problems by training caseworkers and co-locating trained specialists,
- Helping individuals enter and follow through with treatment by improving access, monitoring participation, and providing wraparound support services,
- Coordinating employment, substance abuse services, and mental health services that are supported with different funding streams, and building service delivery capacity, and
- Determining appropriate combinations of work activities and treatment.¹⁰

Ohio operates a TANF separate state program (SSP) designed to provide substance abuse prevention and treatment services for TANF-eligible families. Services are provided through the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS). Clients focus on treatment first without being subject to TANF work requirements and time limits during treatment. The ultimate purpose of this program is to reduce dependency. The ODADAS SSP program is administered via a state-level interagency agreement between ODJFS and ODADAS. Counties need to coordinate with their local ADAMH board in referring TANF-eligible individuals for service.

B. Affordable Housing

Research has found that the lack of affordable housing is a barrier to moving people from welfare to work and out of poverty. To address this issue, counties have developed strategies to address the affordable housing crisis.¹¹ Some of the allowable PRC

¹⁰ Resources

- National Conference of State Legislators. 2003. "Welfare Reform State Policy Choices. Substance Abuse and TANF." Available at www.ncsl.org
- National Governors Association. Center for Best Practices. Issue Brief. Available at www.nga.org

¹¹ References and Resources

- Ohio Department of Development. Office of Housing and Community Partnership. Housing, Shelter and Supportive Services Programs at <http://www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/ohcp/hssp.htm>
- National Governors Association. Center for Best Practices. Issue Brief. "Increasing Access to Housing for Low-Income Families. 2002. Available at www.nga.org
- Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) at www.cohhio.org
- Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change. "Issues of Housing Affordability and Hardship among Cuyahoga County Families Leaving Welfare." Available at <http://povertycenter.cwru.edu/public.htm>

programs being used to increase access to housing for low-income families and to increase affordable housing include but are not limited to:

- Pay families' rental costs by paying utilities, security deposits or rent,
- Promote homeownership among low-income families by providing credit counseling, or credit repair services, mortgage down payment assistance, and
- Help families save to buy a home by establishing IDAs (see Section 4010 for more information regarding IDAs).

C. Mental and Physical Disabilities

Severe mental or physical disabilities are significant barriers to employment. The Government Accounting Office (GAO) recently reported that individuals with disabilities and family members of such individuals represent approximately 44 percent of the national TANF cash assistance population.¹² Many of these individuals have previously unidentified or undisclosed disabilities that present multiple and significant barriers to employment.

PRC programs can include services and supports to address barriers to employment for individuals facing mental and physical disabilities.¹³ Some of the possible services and supports include, but are not limited to:

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- Welfare Information Network. "Welfare Reform and Housing." Available at <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/WIN/housing.asp>

¹² TANF and SSI: Opportunities Exist to Help People with Impairments Become More Self-Sufficient, GAO-04-878, September 15, 2004. Available at <http://www.gao.gov>

¹³ Resources

- American Public Human Services Association. "Opportunities for Collaboration across Human Services Programs." Available at <http://www.aphsa.org>
- Welfare Information Network. "TANF Recipients with Disabilities." <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/disabled/>
- Disability.gov online resource for federal governmental disability related information and resources, <http://www.disability.gov>
- Welfare Information Network Publications:
 - "Screening and Assessment for Physical and Mental Health Issues that Impact TANF Recipients' Ability to Work," February 2001.
 - "Screening and Assessing TANF Clients for SSI Eligibility," July 2000.
 - "Assessing TANF Recipients Who May Be Eligible for SSI," November 2003.
 - "Serving Welfare Recipients with Disabilities,"
- Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, <http://rsc.ohio.gov>
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. 2001. "HHS Guidance Explains How Federal Laws Barring Discrimination Against People With Disabilities Apply in State and County TANF Program." Available at <http://www.cbpp.org/2-26-01wel.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Policy Q's and A's, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/polquest/usefunds.htm>.

- Conducting employability assessments, reviewing cases and providing services and consultation, directly or through contracts,
- SSI case management and/or legal representation for TANF-eligible individuals to pursue SSI eligibility,
- Developing screening tools to identify mental and physical disabilities,
- Training of staff regarding disabilities and impact on employability, and
- Supporting partnerships with other agencies and organizations to collaborate to serve the needs of disabled TANF-eligible individuals in the community.

Every county department must be cognizant of the applicable civil rights laws when dealing with individuals potentially identifiable as disabled. In addition to ensuring that the agency is accessible, county departments must consider legal implications of any screening tools or programs that are developed to serve the disabled. A helpful guide to understanding the requirements imposed by civil rights laws is the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights Guidance: “Prohibition against Discrimination on the Basis of Disability in the Administration of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).” This document is available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/tanf/ocrguidance.html>.

Coordinating and collaborating with other agencies (i.e., Vocational Rehabilitation and Supplemental Security Insurance program) who serve individuals with mental and physical disabilities is essential in ensuring that individuals receive appropriate services.

1. Vocational Rehabilitation

For individuals with disabilities, the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program provides a comprehensive array of services and supports including:

- assessment of eligibility and need for VR services,
- vocational counseling and guidance,
- job development and placement services, rehabilitation technology services, training and post-secondary education, and
- other services and supports to facilitate meaningful participation in employment and training services.

The Ohio General Assembly appropriates funds to the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (ORSC) to be used as a match to provide vocational rehabilitation services to mutually eligible clients served by ORSC and ODJFS. The agencies are required to enter into an interagency agreement to exchange information to match the services provided to their mutual clients. ORSC works with the designated staff at each CDJFS agency to coordinate referrals of TANF eligible clients for vocational rehabilitation services.

2. SSI Case Management

The federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides needs-based cash benefits to individuals 65 and older and individuals with disabilities, including disabled children. Receipt of SSI benefits can supplement purpose one of the TANF program by

helping needy families care for a disabled child in their own home. The SSI program can provide these individuals with more appropriate services and long-term income support, without the work requirements and time limits associated with Ohio Works First. Shifting severely disabled cases from Ohio Works First to SSI also avoids counting these families in the 20% hardship cap or in the work participation rate.

County agencies may use different techniques to assess and screen TANF applicants and recipients with disabilities and to determine their potential eligibility for SSI. Ohio does not require any particular method of assessing and screening applicants for Ohio Works First or PRC, but it has a model for disability screening with the SSI Case Management program. Rule 5101:1-5-60 of the Ohio Administrative Code describes the program objective and structure.

(a) The SSI Case Management program is an effort to identify participants applying for or in receipt of disability financial assistance (DFA) who may be potentially eligible for supplemental security income (SSI) and to help the participant in obtaining financial assistance from the social security administration (SSA).

(b) The objective of the SSI case management program is to ensure that individuals applying for or in receipt of DFA who are eligible for SSI receive the benefits to which they are entitled and to ensure that Medicaid is provided to all eligible participants....

HHS has determined that case management services, including information and referral and counseling, to help potential TANF recipients apply for SSI eligibility, constitute program expenditures, not administrative costs. HHS has also determined that states may use TANF funds for costs associated with providing legal representation to members of needy families who are pursuing SSI benefits.

D. Learning Disabilities (LD)

The National Council on Disabilities estimates that between 20 and 30 percent of persons receiving TANF benefits are learning disabled. It is further estimated that as many as 50 and 80 percent of persons in adult education, social service programs, or employment-seeking programs may have some form of a learning disability that has prevented them from achieving academic and employment success in their lives.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), a research arm of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, reviewed several programs used by state and local agencies and found that there were at least four broad strategies to address the physical and learning disability needs of welfare clients:

- ? **Staff education and awareness.** Programs provide training to staff from welfare agencies and other community organizations to increase the understanding and of
- 1) how disabilities can affect clients and their prospects for employment, and
 - 2)

what types of special services and accommodations clients need to move from welfare to work.

- ? **Client identification.** Programs aim to improve accuracy in identifying clients who have disabilities, particularly learning disabilities. This objective is met by offering advanced training to welfare case managers to improve their ability to identify, support, and refer clients with disabilities for further assessment and specialized services. Some agencies also include specialized initiatives to develop brief screening tools that staff can use to detect learning disabilities.
- ? **Service coordination.** Programs use this strategy to improve coordination between agencies in order to help clients obtain available services. Coordination can be formal or informal.
- ? **Employment integration.** Programs with this strategy offer services directly related to employment, including vocational assessment, vocational training, remedial education, job training, job search and placement assistance, and transitional employment support. These programs are generally operated by organizations to which welfare agencies make referrals, i.e., nonprofit service providers.

According to ASPE, agencies generally will design their programs using a combination of the above strategies in order to meet their clients' needs.

In Ohio, ODJFS, the Ohio Department of Education, and ORSC are working collaboratively to build the state's capacity to serve TANF clients with learning disabilities. The agencies have formed an LD/TANF Task Force with state staff representation from ODE, ODJFS, Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, ORSC, Ohio Board of Regents, Ohio Literacy Network, and the Governor's Council on People with Disabilities. ODJFS, ODE, and ORSC have signed an interagency agreement to promote and lend support to Ohio's welfare and workforce system and its vision, principles, and priorities through implementation of policies and resource sharing related to learning disabilities.

Several results have emanated from the collaborative efforts. Local county interagency partnerships have developed streamlined processes for providing services to shared customers with learning disabilities. A Psychologist Network has been developed to support the diagnosis of individual's learning disabilities at affordable rates. Counties may email the ODJFS Work Activity Coordinators at wacta@odjfs.state.oh.us for assistance with developing and implementing LD initiatives.¹⁴

¹⁴ **Reference and Resources**

- LD/TANF Task Force. Ohio University. Central/Southeast ABLE Resource Center network at www.able-ohiou.org
- Ohio Department of Education. ABLE Program. Available at www.ode.state.oh.us/ctae/adult/ABLE

E. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

The National Governors Association’s Center for Best Practices reports that more than forty percent of foreign-born families in the United States live in poverty. Many low income individuals with limited English skills also have limited educational attainment, test lower on basic skills tests, have poorer health compared to the native population and face limited opportunities for employment. To address this problem, many communities have developed special programs to assist limited- or non-English speaking public assistance recipients to move into the workplace by integrating language instruction with employment preparation. Examples of some of the programs include:

- Incorporating employment readiness skills development based upon the SCANS workplace competencies¹⁵,
- Orienting English language instruction to the specific vocabulary, procedures and concepts needed for particular field or job, and
- Providing English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction in the work environment so that the language objectives are determined by the worker, employer, and work tasks.
- Providing interpreters and translators for TANF-eligible individuals.

As recipients of federal financial assistance, counties are required under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to provide meaningful access to their programs by LEP persons. Meaningful access means that the LEP person’s situation can be effectively communicated to the service provider; the LEP person is able to understand the services and benefits available; and the LEP person is able to receive those services and benefits for which he or she is eligible in a timely manner.

Counties may contact ODJFS’ LEP Coordinator in the Bureau of Civil Rights at arbinij@odjfs.state.oh.us to request assistance in developing initiatives to serve their LEP customers.¹⁶

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- National Governors Association. Center for Best Practices. “Serving Individuals with Learning Disabilities and Developmental Disabilities.” Available at <http://www.nga.org>
 - Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network. TA Summaries. “Hard to Serve/Barriers: Learning Disabilities.” Available at <http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/>
 - Ancillary Services to Support Welfare to Work: Disability Issues. ASPE. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/HSP/isp/ancillary/disability.htm>

¹⁵ SCANS refers to the Department of Labor Security Commission of Achieving Skills.

¹⁶ **References and Resources**

- National Governors Association. Center for Best Practices. “Enhancing Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency and Cultural Barriers.” Available at <http://www.nga.org>
- Center for Law and Social Policy. Workforce Development Series. “The Language of Opportunity: Expanding Employment Prospects for Adults with Limited English Skills.” Available at http://www.clasp.org/DMS/Documents/106210218.74/LEP_report.pdf

F. Domestic Violence

Many low-income mothers with children experience domestic violence. Domestic violence disrupts the safety and stability of the family. In addition to both the emotional and physical violence, these families' problems are compounded by all the other poverty-related issues. Research indicates that a substantial number of individuals and families known to child welfare and public assistance systems are past or current victims of domestic violence. For these families, efforts to achieve self-sufficiency must not jeopardize safety.

There is a continuing need for collaboration among providers at the local level who work with this population to provide more seamless service delivery, and to ensure that families are referred to service providers who have the requisite expertise. In communities across the country research points to a system of combined strategies in order to meet the needs of low-income abused women. This means that county agencies need to collaborate with domestic violence service providers. Clients are more inclined to acknowledge domestic violence to a domestic violence service provider than to a TANF caseworker. These domestic violence service providers offer specialized services that are frequently beyond the scope of most TANF agencies.

Coordination, collaboration, or contracting with other systems or service providers will ensure victims of domestic violence will have access to a wide range of services to meet their needs. Systems and organizations that TANF agencies should consider for coordination, collaboration, or contracting include law enforcement, child welfare agencies, child support enforcement agencies, health care providers, employers, schools, child care providers, education and training providers, substance abuse and mental health counselors and providers, legal services organizations, and the courts. Counties may want to consider these relationships through each county's community planning process in their County Family Services Committee.¹⁷

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- Department of Health and Human Services. Office of Civil Rights. LEP Policy Guidance. Federal Register/Vol. 65, No. 169/Wednesday, August 30, 2000/Notices.
 - Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Bureau of Civil Rights. Available at <http://innerweb/Oebs/Bcr/CvlRgtsLaborRelats.shtml>

¹⁷ **References and Resources**

- Welfare Information Network (WIN), Vol.3, No.10, 1999. "Domestic Violence as a Barrier to Women's Economic Self-Sufficiency" by Heidi Sachs. Available at: <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/domesticviolence.htm>
- Welfare Information Network (WIN), Vol.6, No.13, 2001. "Strategies for TANF Agencies to Identify and Address Domestic Violence" by Michelle Ganow. Available at: http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/tanf_dvissuenote.htm
- Welfare Information Network (WIN), Vol.1, No.8, 1997. "Domestic Violence and Welfare Reform" by April Kaplan. Available at: <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/domesticissue.htm>

The provision of services to the entire family when violence is occurring is essential in order to assist them in achieving self-sufficiency, and a safe, stable family environment. TANF agencies must offer benefits and services for an array of service needs, and ensure that staff is trained with appropriate domestic violence screening and assessment tools (or consider co-locating domestic violence professionals for this purpose).

1. Potential Services

PRC services provided by county agencies to TANF-eligible families experiencing domestic violence may frequently address a broad array of needs and supplement services provided by domestic violence shelters. Allowable PRC services may include, but are not limited to:

- Temporary shelter services,
- Personal and family support services, including domestic violence counseling,
- Housing,
- Relocation assistance,
- Household expenses, and
- Community outreach.

2. Screening and Assessment Tools

Research indicates that disclosure rates of family violence in TANF agencies are lower than the prevalence of domestic violence identified by research. This is in line with research that shows that domestic violence advocates obtain four and five times more disclosures than TANF caseworkers. Working against disclosure to caseworkers are client concerns about trust, expertise, and confidentiality. The discrepancy between rates of family violence reported by researchers and the rates reported by TANF agencies suggests that agencies need to improve their screening and assessment practices. These discrepancies can be mitigated through the co-location of trained domestic violence

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- Richard Tolman and Jody Raphael (2000). University of Michigan School of Social Work, Center for Impact Research. “A Review of Research on Welfare and Domestic Violence”. Available at: http://www.umich.edu/trapped/jsi_tolman_final.pdf
 - Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), Brief No.1, 2003. “A Vision for Eliminating Poverty and Family Violence: Transforming Child Welfare and TANF in El Paso County, Colorado” by Rutledge Hutson. Available at: http://www.clasp.org/Pubs/DMS/Documents/1043875759.17/El_Paso_Brief.pdf
 - Ohio Domestic Violence Resource Center: <http://www.ohiodvresources.org> . Sponsored by Ohio State Legal Services Association.
 - The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) at: <http://www.APHSA.org> or “Charting the Path to Employment: States’ Client Assessment Policies and Practices to Support Welfare Reform” at: gcyphers@aphsa.org
 - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. “Screening and Assessment in TANF/Welfare-to-Work: Ten Important Questions TANF Agencies and Their Partners Should Consider.” Executive Summary” at: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/daltcp/reports/scrasmes.htm>
 - “Screening and Assessment in TANF/Welfare-to-Work: Local Answers to Difficult Questions; Executive Summary” at: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/daltcp/reports/dfqueses.htm>

providers or possibly through improved training of TANF caseworkers using screening and assessment tools.

4030 Children and Families

An integral part of welfare reform is the prevention of welfare dependency among future generations. Counties have the flexibility to develop PRC programs to promote early childhood education, teen pregnancy prevention, stay-in-school initiatives, and other programs that aim to give children and youth the support they need for healthy development. PRC programs cannot fund foster care services, juvenile justice services, or medical services. Please see Chapter 1 for more information regarding PRC limitations.

A. Help Me Grow

Early childhood is a critical period of a person's development. It is critical to developing skills, emotional attachments, and intellect necessary to be a successful adult. A significant percentage of young children in Ohio live in poor families. The development of these children may be at risk because the families lack resources and information necessary for healthy child development. Failure to address these needs may result in school failure, health problems, and future welfare dependency. A strategy to promote healthy child development will pay dividends in the promotion of school success, reduction of abuse and neglect, and government dependency. Ohio uses the services of the Help Me Grow (HMG) program to support families' success in raising healthy children.

Help Me Grow is a program of coordinated services and supports for parents of newborns, infants and toddlers who have or are at-risk of developmental delay or disability. Each CDJFS receives a separate HMG allocation. In order to use this allocation, the county must identify HMG in its PRC plan.

HMG is designed to support local efforts to:

- Provide home visits to assess the health of newborns,
- Help new parents by providing information on child development and available programs and services,
- Provide early identification of children with developmental delays, as well as information, guidance and therapeutic interventions,
- Provide screening for children's health, hearing and vision, and overall development, and
- Provide literacy training for all parents and support them as full partners in their child's education.

Eligible populations may include families with children under the age of three and pregnant women with incomes at or below 300 % of the federal poverty level. The

CDJFS sets the poverty threshold for TANF HMG services for their county (not to exceed 300%). Eligibility criteria are listed in the county PRC plan.

The HMG program was established by Am. Sub. H.B.95 of the 125th Ohio General Assembly to integrate the existing programs of Early Intervention, Early Start and Welcome Home in order to promote service coordination. HMG is administered by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). The Family and Children's First Council (FCFC) is the entity designated to administer the HMG program at the county level.

HMG is funded by three different funding sources: Ohio General Revenue funds (GRF), Federal Part C (34 CFR 303), and federal funds from the TANF program. The GRF and Part C funds are distributed by ODH directly to the FCFC. ODJFS allocates the federal TANF funds to the CDJFS. The CDJFS is required to include a description of HMG services in their county PRC plan.¹⁸

The funding sources are coordinated at the local level by the FCFC. State law requires contracts between the CDJFS and county FCFC governing the transfer and utilization of federal TANF funds. If the CDJFS is the administrative agent for FCFC then no contract for transfer of federal TANF funds is required. Since HMG funds include federal funds, federal procurement requirements apply unless state and local requirements are more restrictive, in which case, the most restrictive procurement standards apply. Refer to the following references for fiscal information pertaining to HMG: Administrative Procedure Letter (APL) No. 261 for fiscal guidance related to the Help Me Grow allocation, APL No. 276 for detailed information on federal procurement regulations pertinent to HMG, Administrative Procedure Manual (APM) Chapter 4000 for guidance on general procurement.

HMG funds are specifically allocated to provide services. No more than 10 % of the HMG allocation can be used for administrative costs related to the HMG program. The PRC program may be used to support the following HMG services:

- Parent education,
- Linkages to existing services,
- Case management and service coordination,
- Family support,
- Individual family service plans,
- Information and referral to other services, and
- Home visitation.

¹⁸ **References and Resources**

- Help Me Grow website available at <http://www.ohiohelpmegrow.org/>
- National Governors Association. 2000. "Serving Children and Youth through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant." Available at www.nga.org

ODH is responsible for operating the HMG program. ODJFS provides PRC funds to support the HMG program as well as technical assistance to maximize PRC funds and program referrals. The CDJFS is responsible for establishing eligibility requirements for PRC benefits and services. The CDJFS, in many cases, serves as the administrative agent for the FCFC.

Coordination between the HMG and Healthchek programs is encouraged. The intent of this effort is for ODJFS, CDJFS and ODH staff to coordinate their services so that these programs can assure permanent health care “homes” for families and immunizations for low-income children. The ODMR/DD and local MR/DD boards are also major collaborators for HMG services.

The federal Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act (CAPTA) requires that a child under age three in a substantiated case of child abuse and/or neglect are to be referred by the county children services board to the HMG program for an evaluation for early intervention services. For more information regarding this requirement refer to rules 5101:2-34-32 and 5101:2-39-07 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

B. Children at Risk of Abuse or Neglect

Purpose 1 of the TANF program is to provide services to assist families so that children may remain in their own home. Children who have been abused and neglected are at great risk of failure to thrive and not becoming productive members of society. The risk can be minimized by strategies to help their parents improve their parenting skills. Efforts to reduce harm, as well as reduce foster care placement, can improve the health and safety of children. There are many causes of abuse and neglect including substance abuse in the home, domestic violence, and a variety of other stressors within families such as severe financial problems.

1. Interface with Child Welfare

There are situations where families being served by a CDJFS intersect with the child welfare system. Counties should give consideration to these situations when developing their PRC plans.

A county that chooses to use their PRC program to support child welfare services delivered through a separate PCSA must identify these services in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the CDJFS and the PCSA as well as include them in the county PRC Plan. See earlier chapters for more specific guidance regarding PRC Plan requirements.

Certain recipients of OWF cash assistance must have a self-sufficiency plan. Some of these recipients also have a child welfare case plan. PRC services may be incorporated in either plan or both plans. Coordination of these plans between the CDJFS and PCSA with the family is essential for supporting a family's success. For example, one case plan/self-sufficiency coordination issue is the timing of reviews. Agencies may wish to set up the self-sufficiency plan and case plan so that the Semi-Annual Administrative

Review and six-month re-application for OWF can be conducted at the same time. It is also good practice for the PCSA and the CDJFS workers to develop the self-sufficiency plan and case plan together with the family.

Each CDJFS and PCSA should work closely together to coordinate child safety issues for families that may include PRC services. Below are some recommended elements for consideration that may incorporate PRC services:

- **Assessment:** Define a process for a face-to-face meeting with parents to determine the ongoing needs of the family and continued safety of the children. Develop appropriate strategies that will assist families in meeting the needs of their children.
- **Services:** Provide information to the family regarding available services to meet the needs of the family.
- **Communication and Support with the PCSA:** An ongoing working relationship between staff of the CDJFS and PCSA to ensure child safety. A staffing plan should be developed to specify how this function will be managed by both the CDJFS and PCSA.
- **Monitoring:** The coordination of child safety issues should be monitored by both the CDJFS and PCSA and reviewed on a regular basis for any needed improvements.

2. Family-Focused PRC

A PRC program may include preventative or protective services to address treatment issues for eligible families. Some of the services that may be provided include family preservation services, family reunification services, respite care services, kinship care/navigator services, and community outreach. The following services are allowable PRC services for this targeted group. This is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of services but merely the more common PRC services funded by county agencies to serve this population:

a. Family Preservation

The objective of family preservation services is to preserve the family as a unit and prevent unnecessary placement of the children in alternative living arrangements. Family preservation services augment and expand the protection, supervision, care, and support that are provided through the primary family unit.

Adoptive families may be eligible for these services to the extent that they meet PRC requirements. Services include a variety of short-term, intensive, home-based intervention services. This would include case management and counseling for families experiencing a crisis that is so severe the children are at imminent risk for placement outside the family setting. Services are aimed at ameliorating the underlying causes of family dysfunction, are generally time-limited, of short duration and available on a twenty-four hour basis. Services may also include classes or other educational opportunities for parents or potential parents who want to acquire the knowledge and skills to be effective in their parenting role.

b. Family Reunification

These services target families with children in foster placement whose prospects for successful reunification are good. Reunification services include an array of supportive services needed by the family to attempt reunification, including supervised visitation in the home by the child, trial placement with the family and whatever home-based services are required to facilitate permanent reunification. Services may include home management instruction, parenting skills development, stress management, counseling, case management and tutoring. Services may also include classes or other educational opportunities for parents or potential parents who want to acquire the knowledge and skills to be effective in their parenting role.

c. Respite Care

Respite care services are those designed to provide temporary relief of child-caring functions that may include, but are not limited to crisis nurseries, day treatment, and in-home services.

d. Kinship Care/Kinship Navigator

These services provide information, referral and supportive services for relative caregivers, legal guardians or court-ordered legal custodians responsible for the day-to-day care of a minor child (not their biological child) residing with the caregiver. These may also include Kinship Navigator services such as identification of kinship caregivers, assessing needs, facilitating access to services, and information and referral to appropriate providers (e.g., legal services, child care services, respite care services, training, support groups and financial assistance). Some programs may include the development of community services to meet the needs of the kinship caregivers. Services may include classes or other educational opportunities for caregivers/custodians who want to acquire the knowledge and skills to be effective in their parenting role.

e. Community Outreach

Community outreach may include the use of billboards, print, and broadcast media, and other general community information/awareness activities designed to inform a general or targeted population about community needs and services available. Often community outreach is designed to prevent problems or at least prevent community and individual conditions from becoming more severe.

C. Youth in Transition

Youth in transition include teenagers and recent high school graduates who need to become productive, employable adults. A youth is a child who is less than 18 or is a child less than 19 if enrolled full time in secondary school or equivalent. Many of these youth face greater risk than middle- or higher-income children of poor educational, health, and social outcomes. Counties have the opportunity to focus on improving the well-being of youth within the welfare system by developing PRC programs to support a variety of

initiatives and programs. Youth education and support and teen pregnancy prevention are examples of some of the programs counties can use to serve youth.

1. Youth Education and Support Services

Youth education and support services can help communities prevent welfare dependency among future generations. Counties can provide creative services such as early childhood education, teen pregnancy prevention, stay-in-school initiatives, and other programs that aim to give children and youth the support and care they need for healthy development.

Some of the allowable PRC services for TANF-eligible youth include but are not limited to:

- After school programs,
- Family and youth intervention services (truancy prevention, mentoring and tutoring for personal growth, peer support, lice eradication, counseling and linkages), and
- Youth workforce preparation and employment programs.

Many counties are creating PRC programs to support initiatives under WIA to serve mutually-eligible youth. CDJFS are serving on the WIA Youth Councils to help coordinate youth development services in their local areas.

2. Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Preventing and reducing out-of-wedlock pregnancies is the third purpose of TANF. The federal law requires Ohio to establish annual, numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies, with a special emphasis on teenage pregnancies. For information on the county goals refer to the Teen Birth Charts contained in Appendix D of Ohio's State TANF plan available at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owf/plan>.

Research has found that out-of-wedlock childbearing has many negative economic and social impacts, particularly for teenagers and their children. Teen parents who bear children early are less likely to finish high school, which contributes substantially to diminished employment prospects; and are more likely to receive government assistance. Children of these parents are more likely to be in poor health, experience fewer successes in school, and have more behavior problems (National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2001). Pregnancy prevention services are not limited to needy families and can be targeted to individuals at risk of out-of-wedlock pregnancy regardless of economic need.¹⁹

¹⁹ Resources and References

- Welfare Information Network. January 2004. Resource for Welfare Decisions. "After School Programs for School Age Youth." Available at <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/OST/>
- Welfare Information Network. 2001. Issue Notes. "Teens in TANF Families – Overcoming Barriers to Self-Sufficiency." Available at <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/youthtransitionissuenote.htm>

According to the Department of Health & Human Services' guide, "Helping Families Achieve Self-Sufficiency", the following are some of the services that a county could consider for its PRC program that would accomplish purpose three of the TANF program:

- Family planning (including birth control), clinical and follow up services,
- Abstinence education programs,
- Pregnancy prevention programs and services for youth,
- Teen pregnancy prevention campaigns, and
- After-school programs that provide supervision when school is not in session.

D. Family Formation

Research studies support the belief that family formation and maintenance of two-parent families can play a crucial role in reducing many poor families' dependence on public assistance. In addition, findings from several studies have reported that children growing up in households without two parents are at greater risk of academic, physical, emotional and behavioral problems. Counties have the flexibility to design programs and policies to support families who want to form or strengthen their marriages.

Purpose 4 of the TANF program encourages formation and maintenance of two-parent families. The Department of Health & Human Services' guide "Helping Families Achieve Self-Sufficiency" includes the following allowable activities that a county may consider for its PRC program:²⁰

- Parenting skills training,
- Premarital and marriage counseling and mediation services,
- Activities to promote parental access and visitation,
- Job placement and training services for noncustodial parents,
- Initiatives to promote responsible fatherhood and increase the capacity of fathers to provide emotional and financial support for their children,
- Crisis or intervention services, and
- Employment & training and related support services.

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- Welfare Information Network. March 2003. Resource for Welfare Decisions. "Youth Development: An Update." Available at <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/youthdevelopmentRN.htm>
 - National Governors Association. 2000. "Serving Children and Youth through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant." Available at www.nga.org .
 - National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. <http://www.teenpregnancy.org> .

²⁰ **Resources and References**

- Center on Law and Social Policy's (CLASP) Resource Center on Couples and Marriage Center. Available at www.clasp.org
- Center for Research on Child Wellbeing. Fragile Families and the Marriage Agenda. Available at <http://crrw.princeton.edu>

E. Out-of-Wedlock Pregnancies

Preventing out-of-wedlock pregnancies is purpose three of the TANF program. Counties have the flexibility to develop comprehensive approaches to prevent unwed births among several populations: young females and males before they become sexually active; young people of both sexes who are sexually active, teen parents who are at higher risk of subsequent pregnancies; and adult unmarried men and women. See section 4030 Youth Transitions, Teen Pregnancy Prevention of this chapter for allowable pregnancy prevention services.²¹

F. Noncustodial parents

Historically, a significant number of noncustodial parents (NCP) have found limited employment opportunities, and have not been engaged financially or emotionally in the lives of their children. Many noncustodial parents are involved in the lives of their children to some extent and provide some financial support, but would like to do much more. Federal regulation defines a non-custodial parent as: “a parent of a minor child who: 1) lives in the state; and 2) does not live in the same household as the child” 45 CFR 260.30.

Under the TANF program, states have the flexibility to develop fatherhood programs to assist low-income fathers with increasing their employability and parental skills. Fathers who are employed are more likely to become emotionally connected to their children, thus reducing the risks of negative outcomes among our youngest generation. Consistent payment of child support by non-custodial parents to their families is likely to alleviate child poverty.

A CDJFS may provide PRC services to a noncustodial parent of a minor child(ren) who resides in the state but not in the household with their child(ren).²² Services such as

²¹ **Reference**

- Welfare Information Network. 2001. “Reducing Out-of-Wedlock Childbearing through Pregnancy Prevention”. Available at <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org>

²² **References and Resources**

- Welfare Information Network (WIN), Vol.6, No.10, 2002. “Addressing the Needs of Noncustodial Fathers.” Available at: <http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/Publications/noncustodialfathersRN.htm>
- Social Policy Action Network, 2000. “Restoring Fathers to Families and Communities: Six Steps for Policymakers” by Kathleen Sylvester and Kathy Reich. Available at: <http://www.caseyfoundation.org/publications/fathers.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Welfare Peer TA Network. “Addressing the Needs of Non-Custodial Parents in TANF Families Workshop.” Available at: <http://fatherhood.hhs.gov>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Welfare Peer TA Network. “Bringing Hope to Children with Incarcerated Parents.” Denver, CO: November 19-20, 2003. Available at: <http://fatherhood.hhs.gov>

paternity establishment, location and collection services, however, are funded through the IV-D program. Counties may not include these services in their PRC plans.

Those CDJFS who wish to provide PRC services to this assistance group have options in the types of eligibility criteria to consider for issuing PRC services. Examples of eligibility criteria for noncustodial parents (NCPs) include, but are not limited to, the following:

- NCPs who are ordered into an employment program by a court or referred by the child support enforcement agency (CSEA) and are also complying with the employment program to find a job;
- NCPs who are currently cooperating with child support;
- NCPs who establish or who are in the process of establishing responsibility for their child(ren) through the CSEA;
- NCPs who have at least made one payment to the CSEA within a specified time period prior to PRC application;
- NCPs who are employed a set minimum number of hours per week;
- NCPs who have a current child support order and the intent to meet his/her financial obligation; and
- NCPs who have a current seek-work court order and are referred by the CSEA administrative order.

Allowable PRC services under TANF for non-custodial parents may include, but are not limited to:

- Employment-related expenses, financial management services, job search, job placement, education, and job training services;
- Transportation services for employed individuals or for unemployed individuals as a non-recurring, short-term benefit only;
- Nonrecurring short-term basic needs;
- Counseling, including a broad array of services such as parenting classes, mediation services, premarital and marriage counseling, activities to promote parental access and supervision, responsible fatherhood initiatives, and increasing the capacity of fathers to provide emotional support for their children;
- Paternity establishment counseling;
- Anger management; and
- Access and visitation mediation.

Counties have also begun to pay special attention to the parenting needs of incarcerated parents. To address the needs of this special population, some counties are implementing

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- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Welfare Peer TA Network. "Fathers Behind Bars: Final Conference Report." Denver, CO: November 2002. Available at: <http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/taevents/family.htm#incarceration>
 - U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Welfare Peer TA Network. "Uniting Incarcerated Parents and Their Families." Denver, CO: May 2002. Available at: http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/pdf/seminar_summary2.pdf

programs to improve the relationships with children and their parents while the parent is incarcerated. Some of the programs are focusing on providing the services to promote fatherhood, increasing the capacity of fathers to provide emotional and financial support for their children, and crisis or intervention services.

G. Emergent Needs

Families can become unstable for a variety of reasons. Families experiencing poverty are least able to cope with a crisis due to a lack of resources as well as a lack of social support systems. Services for families in crisis may include, but are not limited to, TANF-eligible families in need of disaster assistance, and services to address nonrecurrent short term needs. These services provide families with limited, nonrecurring financial assistance that enables them to cope with crisis situations or episodes of need.

The following are types of services that can be funded using TANF; however, these types of service are not intended to be a comprehensive listing of services but merely some of the more common services to address the needs of families in crisis:

1. Disaster Assistance

These services provide benefits to eligible families who have sustained losses as a result of state-declared natural disasters. Counties are encouraged to consider disaster assistance as part of their PRC Plan to expedite assistance when necessary. When the governor declares a county to be in a state of emergency, the CDJFS becomes eligible to receive up to \$200,000 in PRC funds to serve families affected by the disaster. Families can receive up to \$1500 to cover losses incurred as a result of the disaster. The CDJFS can exceed the \$1500 by providing additional services under their PRC plan. In these situations, the economic need standard should not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Even without additional funding due to a governor-declared emergency, counties may authorize PRC benefits as a result of local disasters, provided that it is addressed in their PRC plan. The economic need standard should not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Please see the Disaster Plan Resource Guide located on the ODJFS inner web at: <http://innerweb/Ofam/pdf/DisasterPlan.pdf>

2. Nonrecurring Short Term Benefits

Ohio provides TANF cash assistance to meet a family's ongoing basic needs through the Ohio Works First Program. Therefore, county agencies may not provide any benefit or service that falls within the TANF definition of "assistance" through the PRC program (see Chapter 1). This prohibition does not preclude providing PRC benefits and services for nonrecurring, short-term needs not to extend beyond four months. These services and non-assistance benefits address a specific crisis situation or episode of need that may include food, clothing, shelter, utilities, home repairs, household goods, personal care items, and general incidental expenses.

It is important to reiterate that HHS stated in the preamble to the federal regulations 64 Fed. Reg. 17761 (April 12, 1999) that:

We did not want a state to bundle several months' worth of assistance into a single assistance payment in order to avoid TANF requirements for itself or the family....It is not appropriate for States merely to condense the time period over which they pay assistance to needy families so that they can categorize the benefits as "non-assistance" and avoid TANF requirements.

As a result, a CDJFS cannot design a PRC program that provides a benefit that lasts four months so that it fits within the definition of "non-assistance." The program must also meet the requirements that it is meant to deal with a short term crisis situation or episode of need, is not intended to extend beyond four months and is not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs.