



## KEEPING KIDS SAFE AND FAMILIES HEALTHY 2.0

### *Enhanced Training and Resources for Colorado's Mandatory Reporters and County Child Welfare Personnel*

	FY 2012-13	FY 2013-14	FY 2014-15
Total Funds	\$188,250	\$309,937	\$309,937
General Fund	\$150,600	\$247,950	\$247,950
Federal Funds	\$37,650	\$61,987	\$61,987

#### **Summary of Request**

The Department of Human Services is requesting \$188,250 total funds (\$150,600 General Fund) for FY 2012-13 and \$309,937 total funds (\$247,950 General Fund) for FY 2013-14 and thereafter. This funding will expand the Training Academy course offerings to include training for mandatory reporters, and child abuse report screening staff.

#### **Problem/Opportunity**

- Colorado lacks consistent statewide standards and training for mandatory reporters, county department hotline staff, screening staff and child welfare staff. Recent review of the Training Academy's organizational model and course offerings has identified areas that need improvement.
- Offering web-based and classroom training for mandatory reporters, and county department staff allows for proper screening, information-sharing and informed decision making, which is essential in protecting children from child abuse.
- County departments will benefit from Training Academy improvements which will make it easier for staff to access training, ensure training is current and meets staff needs.

#### **Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes**

Front-end child welfare services can be improved by proposed changes to the Training Academy:

- *Educational Stipends* - Additional stipends will be provided to help recruiting efforts, especially for rural areas.
- *Training Curriculum Expansion* - Three training courses will be developed - hotline worker and case screening training, mandatory reporter training, and confidentiality training. Training classes will be delivered beginning in FY 2013-14.

The training academy enhancements will advance the Department and child welfare community's mission to serve Colorado children and their families. Anticipated outcomes include:

- *Educational Stipends*
  - ✓ Expanding educational stipends to support case aides and students of social work that are pursuing a career in public child welfare through higher learning institutions outside the Denver Metro area. Stipends allow current county department staff working in entry level positions an opportunity to advance.
  - ✓ The Department will partner with higher education institutions to determine if the institution's course offerings meet the personnel requirements for individuals seeking work in the public child welfare field. If the

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institution is eligible, the Department and institution will review current course participation and other data to determine the number of stipends that can be made available.

- ✓ The higher education institutions will continue to monitor stipend recipients pay-back and effectiveness in supporting rural county recruitment and retention.
- *Training Curriculum Expansion – Hotline and Screener Training*
  - ✓ The county staff receiving and processing referrals will be more knowledgeable about child abuse and neglect.
  - ✓ Improved communication allows county departments to make timely and better informed child protection decisions.
- *Training Curriculum Expansion – Mandatory Reporters*
  - ✓ Mandatory reporters will be educated to identify signs or warranted suspicions of abuse and neglect in order to appropriately act on their statutory responsibility.
- *Training Curriculum Expansion – Confidentiality Requirements*
  - ✓ County staff will know what information can be disclosed and shared in a manner that complies with federal and state confidentiality standards. An improved understanding of what confidentiality laws require will enable county department personnel to disclose fatality, near-fatality and egregious incident data more openly; enable county department personnel to share information with agencies partnering in providing services to children and families; and enable transparency and promote the public's trust of Colorado's child welfare system.

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