



Children's Bureau

Mission Statement

The Children's Bureau, an agency within the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, seeks to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children through leadership, support for necessary services, and productive partnerships with states, tribes, and communities.

Program Description

The Children's Bureau has the primary responsibility for administering federal programs that support state child welfare services. Programs administered by the Children's Bureau seek to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children through leadership, support for necessary services and productive partnerships with state, tribes, and communities. With an annual budget of almost \$10 billion, the Children's Bureau provides support and guidance to programs that focus on:

- Strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect
- Protecting children when abuse or neglect has occurred
- Ensuring that every child and youth has a permanent family or family connection

Program Administration

To achieve its goals, the Children's Bureau participate in a variety of projects, including the following:

- Providing guidance on Federal law, policy and program regulations
- Funding essential services, helping States and Tribes operate every aspect of their child welfare systems
- Supporting innovation through competitive, peer-reviewed grants for research and program development
- Offering training and technical assistance to improve child welfare service delivery
- Monitoring child welfare services to help States and tribes achieve positive outcomes for children and families
- Sharing research to help child welfare professionals improve their services

Structure

The Children's Bureau comprises the following eight divisions and teams that work to support its mission.

- Child and Family Service Review Team
- Division of Child Welfare Capacity
- Division of Policy
- Division of Program Implementation
- Regional Program Units

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- Division of Program Innovation
- Division of State Systems
- Office on Child Abuse and Neglect

Visit [Children's Bureau Organization Structure](#) for more information.

History

The Children's Bureau is the first federal agency within the U.S. Government—and in fact, the world—to focus exclusively on improving the lives of children and families. Since its creation by President William Howard Taft in 1912, the Children's Bureau has tackled some of the nation's most pressing social issues, including the following:

- Infant and maternal death
- Child labor
- Orphanages
- Child health and recreation
- Delinquency and juvenile courts
- Family economic security
- Abused and neglected children
- Foster care

In each of these areas, the Children's Bureau has provided groundbreaking leadership and garnered critical resources to improve the lives of children and families. The Children's Bureau celebrated its centennial anniversary on April 9, 2012, marking a full century of progress on behalf of children and families.

Number of Children/Youth Served by the Foster Care System

FY	Served
2021	606,000
2020	632,000
2019	676,000
2018	690,000
2017	685,000

This table shows an estimated count of all children who were in the public foster care system during the Federal fiscal year. This number is the sum of two mutually exclusive groups of children: the children who are already in care on the first day of the fiscal year (as of October 1) and the children who entered foster care during the year. An individual child is counted only once for each year.

Source: [Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System](#)