



Federal Funding to Support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Two-Spirit, Plus (LGBTQIA2S+) Children, Youth, Young Adults, and Families

On June 30, 2024, states, territories and Tribes participating in the title IV-B program will submit a new Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP), a five-year plan outlining how child welfare agencies will provide a continuum of coordinated child welfare services for federal fiscal years 2025-2029.

This resource by the [Children's Bureau](#) (CB) outlines how child welfare agencies can use federal funds to support the provision of services, interventions, and supports to LGBTQIA2S+ children, youth, young adults, and their families/ caregivers. It also discusses ways to support training for the child welfare workforce, as well as foster and adoptive parents.

Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program (title IV-B, subpart 1)

The Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program (CWS) provides flexible funds to title IV-B agencies for development and expansion of community-based child and family services. The program purposes include protecting and promoting the welfare of all children, providing services to children, youth, and families at-risk of involvement with child welfare, promoting stability and well-being of children and youth in foster and adoptive homes, and providing training and professional development of the child welfare workforce. The program purposes are well aligned with building the capacity of child welfare agencies to serve LGBTQIA2S+ children, youth, young adults, and families.

MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) (title IV-B, subpart 2)

The MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program provides flexible funds for community-based family support, family preservation, family reunification and adoption promotion and support services. Federal regulations for the program define the term “families” broadly, including but not limited to, biological, adoptive, foster, and extended families. PSSF funds may be used to support family-level interventions and services such as family counseling and support programs to prevent or reduce behaviors associated with family rejection of LGBTQIA2S+ youth and training related to creating affirming home environments. Evidence supports that affirming and safe environments for LGBTQIA2S+ children, youth, and young adults promotes their overall well-being and reduces mental health stressors and suicide. Interventions can prevent entry into foster care, enhance protective factors, and decrease mental health issues associated with experiencing rejecting behaviors of LGBTQIA2S+ identities.



John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program) (section 477 of the Social Security Act)

The Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood provides flexible funding to child welfare agencies to support youth and young adults currently or formerly in foster care in their transition to adulthood. The Chafee program allows states and Tribes to provide critical resources to help youth participate in age-appropriate, normative activities while in foster care, and to assist young people as they transition out of foster care.¹ Promoting normalcy for young people in care encourages positive social and emotional development, supports well-being, and helps young people to heal from trauma.

Chafee funding may be used in a number of ways to support LGBTQIA2S+ youth and allow them to participate in positive, affirming, age-appropriate activities. For example, Chafee funds may be used to purchase personal items related to supporting a youth's expression of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation. Funds may also be used to partner or contract with community-based organizations to offer support groups to LGBTQIA2S+ youth in foster care. Participation in such support groups can have a profound impact on a youth's self-esteem, well-being, and self-advocacy skills. Support groups also provide a safe environment in which LGBTQIA2S+ youth/young adults can raise issues related to concerns about unsupportive or hostile foster care placements.²

Training to Support the Needs of LGBTQIA2S+ Children, Youth and Families

In addition to outlining the child welfare agency's vision, goals and planned use of funding, the CFSP must include a training plan. The training plan must outline training activities to be carried out in support of the title IV-B programs and title IV-E programs, including the title IV-E Foster Care, Adoption Assistance, optional Guardianship Assistance, and Chafee Programs. Training must be an ongoing activity and must include content from various disciplines and knowledge bases relevant to child and family services policies, programs, and practices. Training content must also support the cross-system coordination and consultation basic to the development of the CFSP.

In developing and reviewing the training plan to be submitted as part of the CFSP for fiscal years 2025-2029, CB encourages states to ensure that training provided to staff, foster and adoptive parents, kinship caregivers and professional partners prepares them to support the diversity of children, youth and families served by the child welfare system in a culturally

¹ In general, Chafee services are available to youth who experienced foster care at age 14 or older. However, Chafee program purpose 7 allows children "who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18" to have the opportunity to engage in age or developmentally appropriate activities. Therefore, if a state determines that a youth younger than 14 is likely to remain in foster care until age 18, the state may use Chafee funds to provide that youth opportunities to engage in age or developmentally appropriate activities.

² In [ACYF-CB-PI-23-01](#), CB noted that agencies, facilities and caregivers should not condition or restrict access to support groups or provision of gender identify-affirming items as part of a reward and punishment system for LGBTQIA2S+ youth/young adults. Removing or denying access to such activities and personal items as a form of punishment can negatively affect their mental health, safety, and well-being.



competent manner. (See [Child Welfare Policy Manual 8.1H Question 21](#) that addresses allowable title IV-E training topics related to protective factors including: evidence-based practice, screening and assessment, protective factors, resilience, relational competence, child social and emotional development and well-being, trauma, and cultural competence). In particular, training on cultural competence may address how to assess and serve the needs of children, youth, young adults, and families without bias and ensure their safety, including information related to the sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression of children and youth.

Additional Information- *Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention*

When states and Tribes are developing their CFSP for fiscal years 2025-2029, CB expects robust collaboration to create a shared vision across the broader child welfare system to support prevention and better outcomes for children and families. A critical program that can be a resource in the provision of prevention services for families with LGBTQIA2S+ children, youth, and young adults is the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program (CBCAP).

As a program under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the purpose of the CBCAP program is to provide grants to support: (1) community-based efforts to develop, operate, expand, enhance, and coordinate initiatives, programs, and activities to prevent child abuse and neglect and to support the coordination of resources and activities, to better strengthen and support families to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect; and (2) to foster an understanding, appreciation, and knowledge of diverse populations in order to be effective in preventing and treating child abuse and neglect. (Please see the [FRIENDS website](#) for more information.)

The governor of each state designates the [lead agency](#) to oversee the CBCAP program. The state child welfare agency is the lead for CBCAP in most states; however, in some states, the governor may designate another qualified entity (e.g., children's trust fund, state public health, early childhood agency, etc.) to be the lead entity to administer the program. Each year as part of the application of grant the CBCAP agency must describe the extent and nature of collaboration and coordination to strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment.

CBCAP funds can be used for outreach activities for special populations in order to provide community-based and prevention-focused programs and activities to maximize the participation of parents, racial and ethnic minorities, children and adults with disabilities, homeless families and those at risk of homelessness, unaccompanied homeless youth, adult former victims of child abuse and neglect or domestic violence, and members of other underserved or underrepresented groups.

Youth and families who identify as LGBTQIA2S+ are often underserved and the provision of prevention-based, affirming services increase the capacity of youth and families to thrive, preventing abuse and neglect. Conversations about how to provide a range of family-level interventions for prevention of LGBTQ2SI+ youth entering child welfare should be an important



conversation leading up to the submission of the CFSP for fiscal years 2025-2029 and the next CBCAP application.

Additional Information

If you have questions or need more information, please contact your CB [Regional Office](#).