



SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT FISCAL YEAR 2017 FOCUS REPORTS

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The Office of Community Services (OCS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), administers the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). ACF has grouped the 29 SSBG service categories into eight High Level Service Areas (HLSA) for analysis. This report reviews the Total SSBG Expenditures for and recipients of the services in the Self-Sufficiency HLSA as well as provides detail on the programs states are administering within these categories.

This section provides an overview of the policy and regulations that established and govern the SSBG. In this report, “states” also include the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

BRIEF HISTORY ON POLICY AND REGULATIONS

The Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981 (P.L. 97-35) amended Title XX to establish the SSBG. The SSBG is a capped entitlement program. This means that states are entitled to their share of funds, according to a formula, from an amount of money that is capped in the statute at a specific level (also known as a funding ceiling). Since its establishment in 1981, SSBG has allocated federal funds for states to support services for at risk children, adults, and families.

In addition to their annual SSBG fund allocation, states may transfer up to 10 percent of their Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grants to the SSBG.¹ Funds transferred from TANF to SSBG are to be used only for programs or services to children or their families whose income is less than 200 percent of the federal income poverty guideline applicable to a family of the size involved.²

Each year, Congress determines the level of funding to be appropriated to the SSBG and allocates funds to each of the states and the District of Columbia according to their relative population size.³ States have broad discretion in determining which services to provide and may provide these services through public or private agencies.

All social services funded by SSBG must be linked to one or more of the five statutory broad goals established by federal law.⁴



Achieve or maintain economic self-support to prevent, reduce, or eliminate dependency 1	Achieve or maintain self-sufficiency, including reduction or prevention of dependency 2	Prevent or remedy neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults unable to protect their own interests or preserve, rehabilitate, or reunite families 3	Prevent or reduce inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, or other forms of less intensive care 4	Secure referral or admission for institutional care when other forms of care are not appropriate, or providing services to individuals in institutions 5
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This focus report presents expenditure and recipient data reported in the Self-Sufficiency HLSA for fiscal year (FY) 2017.

DEFINITIONS OF EXPENDITURES AND RECIPIENTS

The following are definitions of several terms used in this report.

Total SSBG Expenditures: Total SSBG Expenditures refers to the sum of two separate funding sources reported by states, expenditures of the SSBG allocation (referred to as SSBG Expenditures; see below) and expenditures of the funds transferred into the SSBG from the TANF block grant (referred to as TANF transfer funds; see below).

SSBG Expenditures: States report dollars from the SSBG allocation spent for services and administrative costs. The total reported amount may differ from the amount of the annual SSBG allocation if the full amount was not expended in the fiscal year during which it was allocated, or if a portion of the SSBG allocation from the previous year was expended during the reporting year.

TANF Transfer Funds: States report any expended dollars transferred from the TANF block grant into the SSBG. A state may transfer up to 10 percent of its annual TANF block grant allocation into its SSBG program.^{5,6}

Other Federal, State, and Local Funds: States report the total amount of other federal, state, and local funds spent for each service supported in part or in whole with Total SSBG Expenditures. States do not report other federal, state, and local funds for services in which no Total SSBG Expenditures are reported. Other federal, state, and local funds do not appear in calculations or in the narrative of this report when discussing Total SSBG Expenditures. However, states report on these other funds to indicate a more accurate total cost of service provision.

Recipients: States report the actual or estimated number of adult and child recipients for each service category funded, in part or in whole, with SSBG Funds.^{7,8}

HIGH LEVEL SERVICE AREAS AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

There are 29 service categories (including Other Services) established by SSBG regulations. To facilitate the evaluation and analyses of data related to the service categories, the services are grouped into eight HLSAs. Among the 29 services, three are grouped in the Self-Sufficiency HLSA. These services are Education and Training Services, Employment Services, and Independent/Transitional Living Services. Each is defined in the Uniform Definition of Services⁹:

1. Education and Training Services

Education and training services are those services provided to improve knowledge or daily living skills and to enhance cultural opportunities. Services may include instruction or training in, but are not limited to, such issues as consumer education, health education, community protection and safety education, literacy education, English as a second language, and General Educational Development (G.E.D.). Component services or activities may include screening, assessment and testing; individual or group instruction; tutoring; provision of books, supplies and instructional material; counseling; transportation; and referral to community resources.

2. Employment Services

Employment services are those services or activities provided to assist individuals in securing employment or acquiring or learning skills that promote opportunities for employment. Component services or activities may include employment screening, assessment, or testing; structured job skills and job seeking skills; specialized therapy (occupational, speech, physical); special training and tutoring, including literacy training and pre-vocational training; provision of books, supplies and instructional material; counseling, transportation; and referral to community resources.

3. Independent/Transitional Living Services

Independent and transitional living services are those services and activities designed to help older youth in foster care or homeless youth make the transition to independent living, or to help adults make the transition from an institution, or from homelessness, to independent living. Component services or activities may include educational and employment assistance, training in daily living skills, and housing assistance. Specific component services and activities may include supervised practice living and post-foster care services.

States provide an intended use plan to briefly describe to which programs they intend to allocate SSBG funds. However, states are not required to provide further details on actual services provided, how those funds were allocated between programs in the same service category, or recipient distribution between the programs.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY OVERVIEW

The amount of expenditures and the number of recipients for each service category can be affected by several factors including population needs, awareness of the available services, planned expenditures, and the effort and resources required to provide the service.

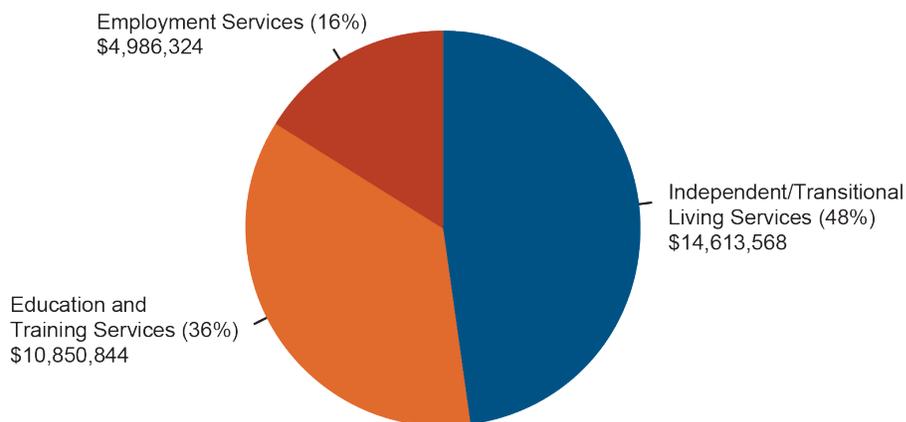
TOTAL SSBG EXPENDITURES



In FY 2017, 24 states reported over \$30 million in Total SSBG Expenditures for Self-Sufficiency services. This accounts for one percent of the Total SSBG Expenditures in FY 2017, making the Self-Sufficiency service category the smallest HLSA by Total SSBG Expenditures.¹⁰ Of the total amount, over \$24 million (80 percent) were from SSBG Expenditures and almost \$6 million (20 percent) were TANF transfer funds.

Within the Self-Sufficiency services, under \$15 million (48 percent) was used to provide Independent/Transitional Living Services, almost \$11 million (36 percent) was expended for Education and Training Services, and \$5 million (16 percent) was for Employment Services (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. Total SSBG Expenditures for Self-Sufficiency



The five states with the highest Total SSBG Expenditures were Connecticut (27 percent), Texas (19 percent), Iowa (13 percent), Ohio (8 percent), and Illinois (7 percent; see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. Total SSBG Expenditures for Self-Sufficiency, Top Five States

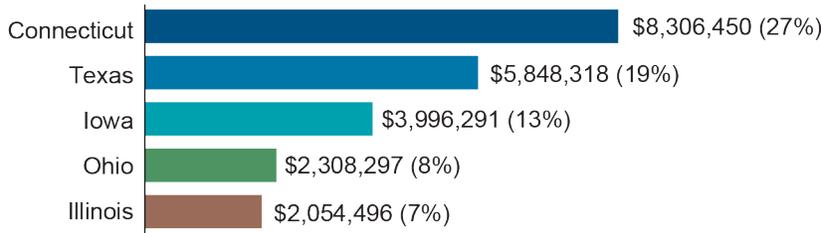


Figure 3 lists the five states that expended the largest proportions of their state’s Total SSBG Expenditures for Self-Sufficiency.

FIGURE 3. Percent of State’s Total SSBG Expenditures for Self Sufficiency, Top Five States

State	Total SSBG Expenditures	Percent of State’s Expenditures
Connecticut	\$8,306,450	19%
Iowa	\$3,996,291	14%
New Hampshire	\$918,876	12%
Northern Mariana Islands	\$119,818	9%
Nevada	\$1,032,424	8%

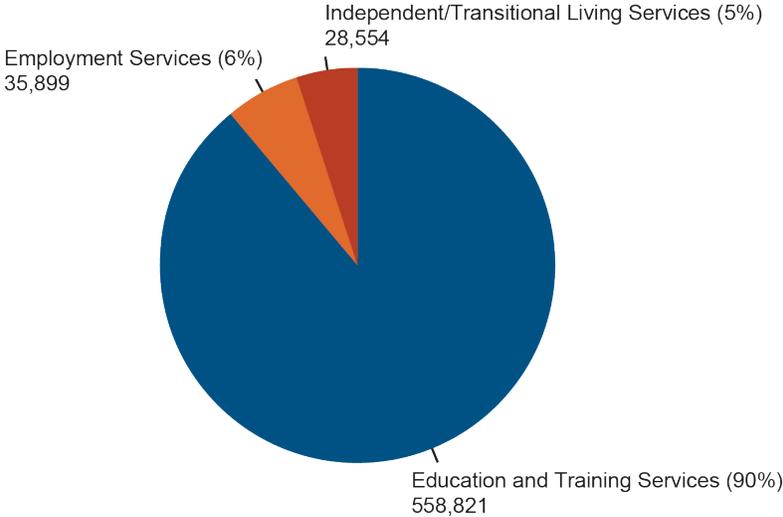
TOTAL RECIPIENTS



In total, 24 states reported 623,274 recipients of Self-Sufficiency services in FY 2017, accounting for 3 percent of the total FY 2017 recipients. Adults made up 95 percent (594,350) of all recipients in this service category, while children accounted for the remaining 5 percent (28,924).

Education and Training Services reported the most recipients in this HLSA with 558,821 (90 percent) recipients, followed by Employment Services with 35,899 (6 percent) recipients, and Independent/Transitional Living Services with 28,554 (5 percent) recipients (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. Recipients of Self-Sufficiency Services¹¹



The five states reporting the most total recipients for this HLSA were Florida, Illinois, Arizona, Texas, and Indiana, and accounted for 93 percent of the total recipients for Self-Sufficiency services ([see Figure 5](#)).

FIGURE 5. Total Recipients of Self-Sufficiency Services, Top Five States



EDUCATION AND TRAINING SERVICES

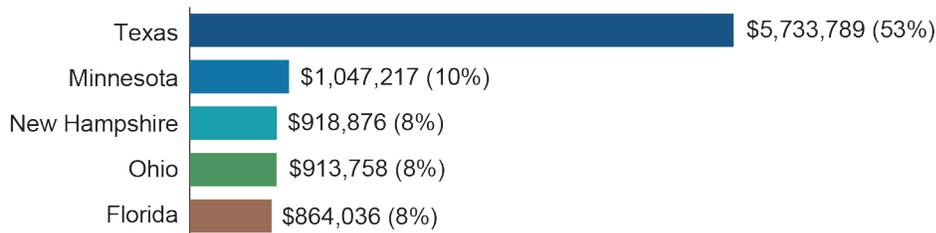
TOTAL SSBG EXPENDITURES



In FY 2017, 13 states reported almost \$11 million in Total SSBG Expenditures for Education and Training Services. This accounts for 36 percent of Total SSBG Expenditures for this HLSA and less than 1 percent of all Total SSBG Expenditures for FY 2017. Of the Total SSBG Expenditures for Education and Training Services, \$6 million (57 percent) were from SSBG Expenditures and \$5 million (43 percent) came from TANF transfer funds. Only 6 of the 13 states used TANF transfer funds to support these services.

The five states with the most Total SSBG Expenditures for Education and Training Services were Texas, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Florida, and accounted for 87 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditures for this service category (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6. Total SSBG Expenditures for Education and Training Services, Top Five States



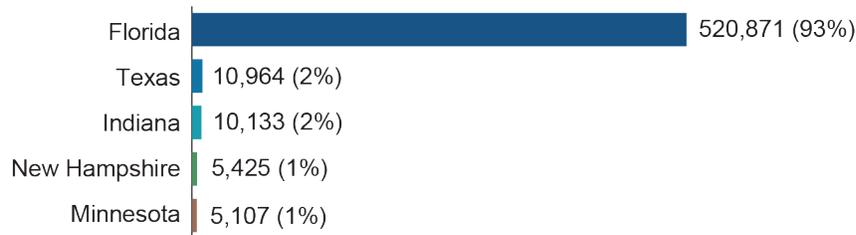
TOTAL RECIPIENTS



States reported 558,821 recipients of Education and Training Services accounting for 90 percent of all recipients of Self-Sufficiency services and 2 percent of all total SSBG recipients in FY 2017. Of the total recipients for Education and Training Services, 14,581 (3 percent) were children and 544,240 (97 percent) were adults.

Florida reported over 500,000 recipients of Education and Training Services accounting for 93 percent of recipients in this service category (see [Figure 7](#)).

FIGURE 7. Recipients of Education and Training Services, Top 5 States



SERVICE DETAILS

All states have discretion to fund a variety of programs within a single service category. States are not required to provide a detailed account of funds or recipients for individual programs; however, states do provide an intended use plan stating the activities to be conducted in the programs for each service category. This subsection provides details from several states that offered additional information about the types of services provided in those states.

Florida implemented statewide programs to provide Education and Training Services through contracted providers. The programs supported the first and third SSBG Statutory goals. The services included screening, assessment, and testing; individual or group instruction, and tutoring; provision of books, supplies and instructional materials; counseling, transportation, and referral to community resources.

In Texas, Education and Training Services were provided through instruction or training in consumer education, health education, community protection and safety education, literacy education, English as a second language, and General Education Development (GED).

New Hampshire provided Education and Training Services to current and potential foster and adoptive parents. Foster parents were given mandatory yearly training needed to retain their foster care licenses and first-time foster parents were given the initial “foundation for fostering” training. Adoptive parents were also given similar training.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

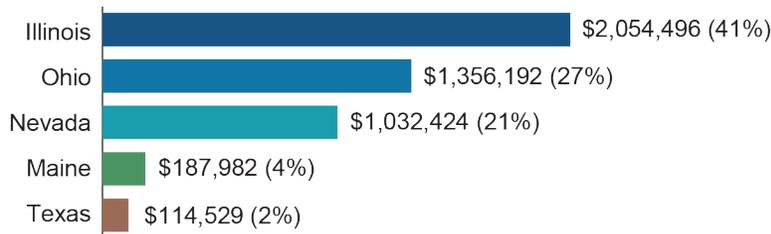
TOTAL SSBG EXPENDITURES



In FY 2017, 11 states reported almost \$5 million in Total SSBG Expenditures for Employment Services. This accounts for 16 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditures for this HLSA and less than 1 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditures for FY 2017. Of the Total SSBG Expenditures for Employment Services, \$4.6 million (92 percent) were from SSBG Expenditures and only \$375,732 (8 percent) came from TANF transfer funds.

The five states with the most Total SSBG Expenditures for Employment Services, i.e. Illinois, Ohio, Nevada, Maine, and Texas, accounted for 95 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditure for this service category. Of the five states, Illinois, Ohio, and Nevada accounted for approximately 89 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditures ([see Figure 8](#)).

FIGURE 8. Total SSBG Expenditures for Employment Services, Top 5 States

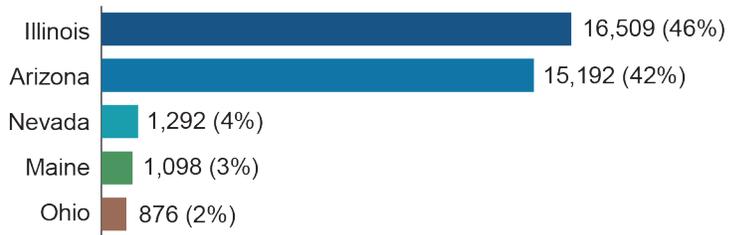


TOTAL RECIPIENTS



States reported 35,899 recipients of Employment Services accounting for 6 percent of all recipients of the Self-Sufficiency category and less than 1 percent of the total SSBG recipients in FY 2017. Of the total recipients for Employment Services, 4,525 (13 percent) were children and 31,374 (87 percent) were adults. Recipients in Illinois and Arizona accounted for about 88 percent of all recipients in this service category ([see Figure 9](#)).

FIGURE 9. Recipients of Employment Services, Top 5 States



SERVICE DETAILS

All states have discretion to fund a variety of programs within a single service category. States are not required to provide a detailed account of funds or recipients for individual programs; however, states do provide an intended use plan stating the activities to be conducted in the programs for each service category. This subsection provides details from several states that offered additional information about the types of services provided in those states.

Nevada provided employment services that include programs for employment screening, assessment, or testing; structured job skills and job seeking skills; specialized therapy (occupational, speech, physical); special training and tutoring, including literacy training and pre-vocational training; provision of books, supplies and instructional material; counseling, transportation; and referrals to community resources.

Employment services in Ohio included employment screening, assessment, or testing; structured job skills and job seeking skills; specialized therapy (occupational, speech, physical); special training and tutorial, including literacy training and pre-vocational training; provision of books, supplies, and instructional material; counseling; transportation; and referrals to community resources.

In Maine, Employment Services were comprised of career exploration and education supports. They assisted clients with mock interviews, resume development, informational interviews, and job development supports.

INDEPENDENT/TRANSITIONAL LIVING SERVICES

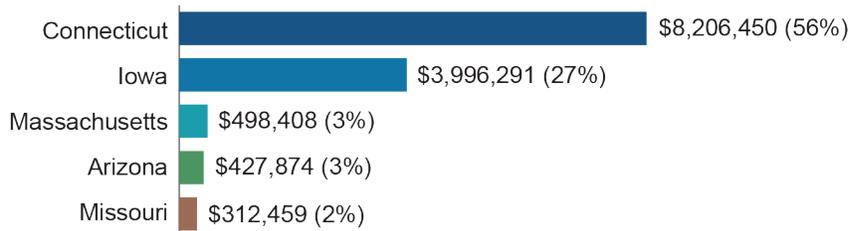
TOTAL SSBG EXPENDITURES



In FY 2017, 13 states reported almost \$15 million in Total SSBG Expenditures for Independent/Transitional Living Services. This accounts for 48 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditures for Self-Sufficiency and less than 1 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditures in FY 2017. Of the Total SSBG Expenditures for Independent/Transitional Living Services almost \$14 million (94 percent) were from SSBG Expenditures and \$887,531 (6 percent) came from TANF transfer funds.

The five states with the most Total SSBG Expenditures for Employment Services were Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, Arizona, and Missouri, and accounted for 95 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditure for this service category. Of the five states, Connecticut and Iowa accounted for approximately 83 percent of the Total SSBG Expenditures (see Figure 10).

FIGURE 10. Total SSBG Expenditures for Independent/Transitional Living Services, Top 5 States



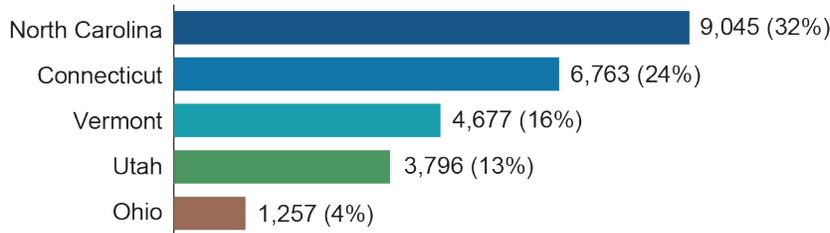
TOTAL RECIPIENTS



States reported 28,554 recipients of Independent/Transitional Living Services, accounting for five percent of all recipients of Self Sufficiency services and less than 1 percent of the total SSBG recipients in FY 2017. Of the total recipients for Independent/Transitional Living Services, 9,818 (34 percent) were children and 18,736 (66 percent) were adults.

The five states with the most Total SSBG Expenditures for Employment Services were North Carolina, Connecticut, Vermont, Utah, and Ohio, and accounted for 89 percent of the total recipients of this service category.

FIGURE 11. Recipients of Independent/Transitional Living Services, Top 5 States



SERVICE DETAILS

All states have discretion to fund a variety of programs within a single service category. States are not required to provide a detailed account of funds or recipients for individual programs; however, states do provide an intended use plan stating the activities to be conducted in the programs for each service category. This subsection provides details from several states that offered additional information about the types of services provided in those states.

Connecticut provided grants to transitional living programs that provide funding for multiple homeless shelters. Shelters provide services including case management, relapse prevention, follow-up aftercare, and referral to substance abuse treatment, referral for housing, employment opportunities, and job training.

In Iowa, young people leaving foster care gained services through the Iowa Aftercare Services Program. Individuals were provided with services including strength-based assessment, individualized goal planning, and personalized guidance and skills training. Among participants in state fiscal year 2017, 63 percent were employed at exit, compared to 43 percent of the same youth at intake (<http://www.iowaaftercare.org/ProgramResults.html>).¹²

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services utilized SSBG funds to provide Independent/Transitional Living services through The Bridge substance abuse treatment program in Hastings, Nebraska. Results from the program show that 95 percent of participants maintained or increased their level of employment and 100 percent of participants were employed either full or part time (<https://thebridgenebraska.org/>).¹³

ENDNOTES

- 1 The original welfare reform law (P.L. 104-193) set the limit on transfers from TANF to SSBG at 10 percent of the TANF block grant. P.L. 105-178 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century) reduced funding for SSBG and the transfer authority from TANF to SSBG to 4.25 percent, effective FY 2001.
- 2 As defined and revised annually by the Office of Management and Budget, 42 U.S.C. §604(d)(3)(B).
- 3 SSBG appropriations for Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are determined according to standard ratios established at the inception of the SSBG.
- 4 42 U.S.C. §1397.
- 5 The original welfare reform law (P.L. 104-193) set the limit on transfers from TANF to SSBG at 10 percent of the TANF block grant. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (P.L. 105-178) reduced funding for SSBG and the transfer authority from TANF to SSBG to 4.25 percent, effective FY 2001. TEA also established a new, lower SSBG funding ceiling of \$1.7 billion starting in FY 2001. However, annual appropriation bills and temporary extension legislation (that continued TANF on the terms of previous years) have provided for a 10 percent transfer limit for FY 2001 and each subsequent fiscal year.
- 6 Funds transferred from TANF to SSBG are to be used only for programs or services to children or their families whose income is less than 200 percent of the federal income poverty guideline applicable to a family of the size involved (as defined and revised annually by the Office of Management and Budget). – 42 U.S.C. §604(d)(3)(B).
- 7 “In reporting recipient and expenditure data, each state must report actual numbers of recipients and actual expenditures when this information is available. For purposes of this report, each state should, if possible, count only a single recipient for each service. States should also consider a service provided to a recipient for the length of the reporting period (one year) or any fraction thereof as a single service. Data based on sampling and/or estimates will be accepted when actual figures are unavailable. Each state must indicate for each service whether the data are based on actual figures, sampling, or estimates and must describe the sampling and/or estimation process(es) it used to obtain these data in the annual report. Each state must also indicate, in reporting recipient data, whether the data reflects an unduplicated count of recipients.” – 45 C.F.R. §96.74(b)(3).
- 8 “Each state must use its own definition of the terms “child” and “adult” in reporting the data required in paragraphs (a) (1) through (5) of this section.” – 45 C.F.R. §96.74(b)(5).
- 9 <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/uniform-definition-of-services>
- 10 For more information on Total SSBG Expenditures in FY 2017 see the SSBG FY 2017 Annual Report available at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/ssbg-annual-reports>
- 11 The percentages in this figure do not sum to 100 due to rounding.
- 12 <http://www.iowaaftercare.org/ProgramResults.html>
- 13 <https://thebridgenebraska.org/>