



ST. LOUIS COUNTY CHILDREN'S SERVICE FUND KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2018-PRESENT

In November 2008, St. Louis County voters approved a quarter-cent sales tax which created a community children's service fund to provide behavioral health and substance use treatment services for St. Louis County children and youth ages nineteen and under. St. Louis County Children's Service Fund (CSF) is the administrator of the fund and strategically allocates resources to local nonprofit and governmental agencies to deliver mental health and substance use treatment services to the children, youth, and families of St. Louis County.

Since 2018, CSF has effectively allocated a total of \$107 million in CSF tax funds and \$24 million in CARES Humanitarian funds, while maintaining six percent overhead administrative expenses.

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| SOLIDIFYING INFRASTRUCTURE |
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- Built an immensely competent and stable staff while maintaining administrative overhead of just six percent, thus ensuring that 94 percent of all funds receive are disbursed back into the community.
 - a. Net rate of turnover has decreased from 60 percent in 2016 to 7 percent in 2020.
 - b. Comprehensive department reorganization in 2019 resulted in increased capacity in key areas of data, accounting, and grants management.
 - c. Investment in talented employees has resulted in a staff that boasts 73 percent employees with Master's Degrees and 80 percent women in management or leadership positions.
- Standardized policies and procedures and restructured the entire primary funding mechanism in accordance with stakeholder feedback to ensure partner agencies have stable footing to focus on outcomes and community impact.
 - a. One of the first improvements implemented after assuming role of Acting Executive Director was to standardize outcomes across agencies. Previously, CSF did not have standardized outcomes and therefore could not measure impact over time. A Data and Performance Analyst position was created and filled in 2018 to manage this process.
 - b. Primary core funding cycle was expanded from 24 to 36 months to allow agencies time to show program impact and outcomes, and to allow for smaller specialized funding cycles.
 - c. To ensure continuity of school-based services, CSF's moved from calendar year contracting period to a contract period that encompasses the entire school year.
 - d. Fee for service units were evaluated for opportunities to expand service provision and an entire telehealth segment was added to promote innovative methods of reaching children and families.
 - e. The site visit/contract audit process was completely revamped in 2018 to ensure thorough analysis of funded programs and recommendations for quality improvement. CSF also began regularly collecting feedback from partner agencies on this process.



STRATEGIC PLANNING

- In 2019, CSF completed the first comprehensive strategic planning process in the history of the fund. Over 100 stakeholders were engaged, representing school districts, partner agencies, local community leaders and other funders. CSF's three year strategic plan is grounded in equity and calls CSF to become a regional thought leader around issues impacting children and families.
 - f. As a part of the strategic planning process, the CSF board was repositioned to a thought leading entity that now holds open discussion around ideas for potential initiatives, emergent community needs, and long-term strategies with regard to the service safety net and Medicaid policy.
 - g. CSF is engaged in an innovative partnership with the St. Louis Mental Health Board, St. Louis City Health Department, and St. Louis County Department of Public Health that will result in an ongoing community engagement strategy to continuously gauge needs and enhance knowledge of resources available. This project was to be started in 2020 but was paused as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The collaboration is expected to continue in 2021.
 - h. In 2021, CSF will complete the first phase of a change management/quality improvement engagement that has resulted in a comprehensive plan for implementing and tracking process improvements, as well as an in depth team building and analysis component.
 - i. CSF began a rebranding engagement in 2020 to strengthen the organization's connection with the community and awareness of mental health and substance use resources.
 - j. In 2019, CSF began implementation of a highly effective and adaptive system that will greatly streamline internal processes and enable CSF to effectively clean, compile, and track data provided by agency partners to enhance transparency.
 - k. Assessing and researching leveraging federal Medicaid dollars to expand capacity and access to mental health services in the region.
 - l. CSF is currently seeking proposals for an engagement around long-term equity work both internally and externally. The ultimate goal of this work is to ground our community investments in equity.

ALIGNMENT AND COLLABORATION

- In 2019, CSF established a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) made up of thought leaders in the areas of mental health, prevention, government, child welfare, and funding. The CAC informs CSF on community needs, best practice, gaps in service areas and equity issues in St. Louis County and the region.
- CSF developed a School Based Advisory Committee in 2019 to bring together school district and school based provider representatives to address mental health needs of children and youth. The 15-member committee meets monthly and has made significant contributions to supporting school based mental health services during the pandemic.
- Partnerships with other St. Louis County departments have been strengthened, including the Department of Human Services and the Department of Public Health.
- CSF meets bi-monthly with the nine other Children's Service Funds throughout the state.



- Partnering with the St. Louis County Library to place social workers in five libraries across the county to serve high need residents.
- The following collaborations or initiatives have been joined by CSF since 2018:
 - m. Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative
 - n. Covid-19 Regional Response Team
 - o. Behavioral Health Network
 - p. Homeless Provider Network
 - q. Anti-trafficking Funder's Workgroup
 - r. Health Funder's Workgroup
 - s. Crisis Intervention Team
 - t. ReCAST
 - u. Regional System of Care
 - v. Continuum of Care on Homelessness
 - w. Funders Learning and Evaluation Group

COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

- In 2020, CSF pivoted from a focus on the many initiatives set for implementation in 2021 and beyond to disaster response. CSF developed and implemented internal strategies within days of lockdown and shortly thereafter began leading key St. Louis County CARES allocation efforts.
- As a measure to respond to emergent needs and stabilize agencies, CSF employed two strategies – releasing \$250,000 in emergency funding open to all agencies, and contract amendments to allow gap payments to agencies to maintain staffing levels and thus capacity to deliver services through the closure of schools and disruption of services during lockdown and through the summer of 2020.
- CSF played a leadership role in distribution and management of all St. Louis County CARES Humanitarian, Domestic Violence, Child Care Relief, and Digital Equity grants.
- In 2021, CSF is continuing to respond to the public health crisis by releasing an additional \$1 million in emergency funding, \$1.5 million in grassroots funding, and another round of contract amendments and extensions to help partner agencies remain stable and maintain the capacity of the service provider network.