

256I.13 Family support program — funding intent.

1. In order to implement the legislative intent stated in [sections 135.106](#) and [256I.9](#), that priority for family support program funding be given to programs using evidence-based or promising models for family support, it is the intent of the general assembly that ninety percent of state funds expended for family support programs shall be used for evidence-based or promising program models. The remaining ten percent of funds may be used for innovative program models that do not yet meet the definition of evidence-based or promising programs.

2. For the purposes of [this section](#), unless the context otherwise requires or unless otherwise provided under federal law:

a. “*Evidence-based program*” means a program that is based on scientific evidence demonstrating that the program model is effective. An evidence-based program shall be reviewed on site and compared to program model standards by the model developer or the developer’s designee at least every five years to ensure that the program continues to maintain fidelity with the program model. The program model shall have had demonstrated significant and sustained positive outcomes in an evaluation utilizing a well-designed and rigorous randomized controlled research design or a quasi-experimental research design, and the evaluation results shall have been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

b. “*Family support programs*” includes group-based parent education or home visiting programs that are designed to strengthen protective factors, including parenting skills, increasing parental knowledge of child development, and increasing family functioning and problem solving skills. A family support program may be used as an early intervention strategy to improve birth outcomes, parental knowledge, family economic success, the home learning environment, family and child involvement with others, and coordination with other community resources. A family support program may have a specific focus on preventing child maltreatment or ensuring children are safe, healthy, and ready to succeed in school.

c. “*Promising program*” means a program that meets all of the following requirements:

(1) The program conforms to a clear, consistent family support model that has been in existence for at least three years.

(2) The program is grounded in relevant empirically based knowledge.

(3) The program is linked to program-determined outcomes.

(4) The program is associated with a national or state organization that either has comprehensive program standards that ensure high-quality service delivery and continuous program quality improvement or the program model has demonstrated through the program’s benchmark outcomes that the program has achieved significant positive outcomes equivalent to those achieved by program models with published significant and sustained results in a peer-reviewed journal.

(5) The program has been awarded the Iowa family support credential and has been reviewed on site at least every five years to ensure the program’s adherence to the Iowa family support standards approved by the state board or a comparable set of standards. The on-site review is completed by an independent review team that is not associated with the program or the organization administering the program.

3. a. The data reporting requirements adopted by the state board pursuant to [section 256I.4](#) for the family support programs targeted to families expecting a child or with newborn and infant children through age five and funded through the state board shall require the programs to participate in a state-administered internet-based data collection system. The state board’s annual report submitted each January to the governor and general assembly under [section 256I.4](#) shall include family support program outcomes.

b. The data on families served that is collected by the family support programs funded through the early childhood Iowa initiative shall include but is not limited to basic demographic information, services received, funding utilized, and program outcomes for the children and families served. The state board shall adopt performance benchmarks for the family support programs.

c. The state board shall identify minimum competency standards for the employees and supervisors of family support programs funded through the early childhood Iowa initiative.

d. The state board shall adopt criminal and child abuse record check requirements for the

employees and supervisors of family support programs funded through the early childhood Iowa initiative.

e. The state board shall develop a plan to implement a coordinated intake and referral process for publicly funded family support programs in order to engage the families expecting a child or with newborn and infant children through age five in all communities in the state.

[2013 Acts, ch 141, §13](#); [2016 Acts, ch 1113, §10](#); [2023 Acts, ch 19, §1009, 1010](#)