



Iowa Department of Human Services

Terry E. Branstad
Governor

Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor

Charles M. Palmer
Director

December 28, 2012

Michael Marshall
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol Building
LOCAL

Carmine Boal
Chief Clerk of the House
State Capitol Building
LOCAL

Dear Mr. Marshall and Ms. Boal:

Enclosed please find the Independent Living Services Report.

This report was prepared pursuant to Iowa Code Section 234.35, Section 4.

This report is also available on the Department of Human Services website at
<http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/Partners/Reports/LegislativeReports/LegisReports.html>.

Sincerely,

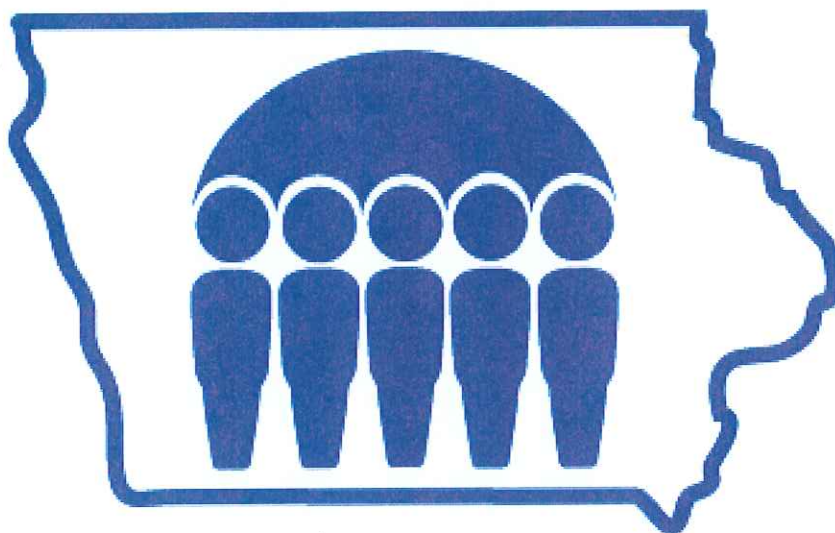

(dy)

Jennifer Davis Harbison
Policy Advisor

Enclosure

cc: Governor Terry E. Branstad
Senator Jack Hatch
Senator David Johnson
Representative David Heaton
Representative Lisa Heddens
Legislative Services Agency
Kris Bell, Senate Majority Staff
Josh Bronsink, Senate Minority Staff
Carrie Kobrinetz, House Majority Staff
Zeke Furlong, House Minority Staff

Iowa Department of Human Services



Independent Living Services Report

December 2012

Table of Contents:

	Page
Executive Summary	2
Introduction	2
Overview	2
Outcomes	3
Data Summary	4
Exit Reasons	7
Conclusion	8

Executive Summary:

Iowa Code 234.35 (4) requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to report annually on the independent living foster care placement (now called supervised apartment living, SAL). The report must include any enhancements to the program.

Beginning in SFY2012, there were four significant enhancements:

- Increased minimum age for youth to be placed in SAL foster care to better ensure appropriateness and maturity necessary for successful placement;
- Increased youth's monthly maintenance stipend (payment) to strengthen the ability to rent a secure and stable living arrangement and to focus primarily on education (as opposed to employment "in order to make ends meet");
- Contractors are required to meet specific outcomes related to safety, permanency, and well-being, through various performance measures;
- Enhanced required services necessary for youth to be successful in the program.

Introduction:

Iowa Code 234.35(4) requires the department to "report annually to the governor and general assembly by January 1 on the numbers of children for whom the state paid for independent living services during the immediately preceding fiscal year. The report shall detail the number of children, by county, who received such services, were discharged from such services, the voluntary or involuntary status of such services, and the reasons for discharge." The legislative action was a result of a Citizen's Aide/Ombudsman report, dated January 14, 2003, regarding a youth, Reggie Kelsey, who was in the foster care system and eventually aged out. On May 28, 2001, Reggie's body was found in the Des Moines River. Reggie's death was ruled a suicide.

The independent foster care program (renamed in 2004 to SAL) is the least restrictive type of foster care placement in Iowa. The program is set up for older youth for whom neither reunification nor adoption is likely and who have the maturity needed to live in the community with supervision. Services and supports aimed at preparing the youth for self-sufficiency are provided.

Overview:

During SFY2011 a competitive request for proposals was released for agencies to provide supervised apartment living foster care services. Seven agencies were awarded a two year contract effective 07/01/11. The SAL contractors are Florence Crittenton Home of Sioux City, Hillcrest Family Services, Lutheran Services of Iowa, Inc., Quakerdale, Woodward Youth Corporation, Youth Homes of Mid-America, and Youth and Shelter Services, Inc. There are two types of SAL living arrangements, scattered site and cluster. Youth placed in a scattered site setting live in an apartment unit with services and supports centered on supervision and development of life skills to assist in preparation for self-sufficiency. Youth have access to SAL staff 24/7 (typically

by phone) but live on their own. Cluster site settings are those in which four to six youth reside in apartments located in one building and are supervised by one agency, with staff on site at all times when more than one youth is present in the cluster setting.

In order to focus on outcomes, several key program components were changed. The minimum age for placement into a SAL program was raised from 16 years of age to 16 ½ years of age for cluster site settings, and 17 years of age for scattered site settings. Increasing the minimum age is expected to increase the appropriateness and maturity of youth placed in SAL. In addition it will allow a youth to live in a cluster site setting with basically 24/7 staffing prior to moving to a scattered site setting, in which the youth live on their own in an apartment unit.

The RFP also required programs to place emphasis on education, removing the former requirement that youth in SAL both attend school and work part time. Youth are expected to be attending school to obtain their high school diploma (or, when deemed more appropriate, their GED) and are not required to work unless doing so would not comprise their education. If youth are under 18 years and no longer attending high school, they may attend post-secondary school or choose to work at least an average of 80 hours per month.

Another change increases the monthly stipend from \$573.90 per month to \$750 per month. The previous amount was well below poverty guidelines and contributed to participants living in rundown neighborhoods that were often infested with drug activity. The low stipend also caused youth to drop out of school and find jobs to pay bills. With fewer youth eligible for the service due to the age change, more resources became available for stipends and support.

Outcomes:

Effective 07/01/11, SAL contracts are outcome-based and are lined up with federal Child and Family Service Review outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being. The expected outcomes:

- Safety outcome performance measure: There will be no founded cases of abuse or neglect of the youth in the SAL contractor's care by the contractor or subcontractor or by other youth in the contractor's SAL foster care program.
- Permanency Outcome 1 performance measure: The contractor will ensure that permanent connections are maintained or secured through active connections with the youth's family members and/or other people important in the youth's life, with 60 percent of youth served during year one of the contract maintaining at least twice a month contact with the youth's positive support system, and 70 percent of youth served during year two of the contract.

- Permanency Outcome 2 performance measure: The contractor will ensure youth engagement within the community, with 60 percent of youth served during year one of the contract regularly participating (at least weekly) in organized community activity (including extra-curricular school activities, faith based activities, community clubs, volunteer work), and 70 percent of youth served during year two of the contract.
- Well-Being Outcome performance measure: Emphasis on educational achievement for youth, with 70 percent of youth served during year one of the contract complying with satisfactory school attendance leading to a high school diploma or GED, and 75 percent of youth served during year two.

Here are the cumulative results for the first year.

- Safety Outcome – 100 percent met.
- Permanency Outcome 1 – 87 percent met.
- Permanency Outcome 2 – 58 percent met.
- Well-Being Outcome – 86 percent met.

The result in Permanency Outcome 2 went from 31 percent compliance in the first quarter of SFY2012 to 83 percent compliance in the fourth quarter. This indicates that providers are helping youth to get involved in community activities such as extracurricular school activities, faith based activities, volunteering in places such as animal shelters, etc. Community involvement helps the youth meet others with similar interests, prevents isolation, and can be a good way to find mentors.

DHS staff meets with SAL contractors on a quarterly basis, with the primary goal being continual improvement of the program. The meetings have proven to be effective in problem solving and networking among contractors.

Data Summary:

The total number of unduplicated youth for whom the state paid for SAL services during SFY2012 was 174. The spreadsheet below shows the number of youth served by county; under the responsibility of either the DHS or juvenile court services, by legal status, whether discharged from such services, and the reasons for discharge.

Of the seven contractors, the majority provided services in Iowa's more urban areas, primarily due to availability of apartment units and landlords willing to rent to youth under the age of eighteen.

For SFY2012, about 3 percent of youth in the SAL program are on a voluntary basis (placement status for youth 18 through 19 years of age still working on their high school education). In order for youth to continue to be served past their 18th birthday, the youth must agree to stay in care in addition to completing their high school education. Additionally, funding must be available for the services. While funding is always an issue, it is not uncommon for youth who could remain in foster care past 18 years of age

to choose not to. The SAL foster care program is Iowa's only foster care program that allows for a youth who has left foster care at age 18 to voluntarily return into care prior to their 20th birthday in order to complete their high school education or obtain a general equivalency diploma. This is an important option for youth who leave the system and who later learn they need help.

County	County Number	Total Served FY2012	Remaining in SAL as of 6/30/2012	Placement Responsibility		Legal Status					Exit Reason							
				DHS	JCS	Voluntary	CINA	Delinquent	TPR	Custody Transferred	Total	Return Home	Placement w/ Suitable Person	Independent Living	Aged Out	Change in Placement	Runaway	Total
Adair	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adams	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Allamakee	3	2	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Appanoose	4	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Audubon	5	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benton	6	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Black Hawk	7	7	0	6	1	0	4	1	1	1	7	1	0	1	3	2	0	7
Boone	8	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Bremer	9	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Buchanan	10	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Buena Vista	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Butler	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carroll	14	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cass	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cedar	16	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Cerro Gordo	17	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Cherokee	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chickasaw	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clarke	20	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Clay	21	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Clayton	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clinton	23	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Crawford	24	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Dallas	25	6	2	4	2	0	4	2	0	0	6	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
Davis	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Decatur	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delaware	28	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1

Des Moines	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dickinson	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dubuque	31	5	1	3	2	0	3	2	0	0	5	1	1	0	1	0	0	4
Emmet	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fayette	33	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Floyd	34	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Franklin	35	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Fremont	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greene	37	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Grundy	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guthrie	39	2	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Hamilton	40	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hancock	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hardin	42	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Harrison	43	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Henry	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Howard	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Humboldt	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ida	47	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Iowa	48	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Jackson	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jasper	50	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Jefferson	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Johnson	52	4	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Jones	53	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Keokuk	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kossuth	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Linn	57	11	2	8	3	0	8	3	0	0	11	2	0	0	6	0	1	9
Louisa	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lucas	59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lyon	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	61	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mahaska	62	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Marion	63	2	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Marshall	64	3	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
Mills	65	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Mitchell	66	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monona	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monroe	68	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery	69	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Muscatine	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Obrien	71	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Osceola	72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Page	73	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Palo Alto	74	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plymouth	75	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Pocahontas	76	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Polk	77	63	14	41	22	0	24	27	10	2	63	5	1	0	34	4	4	49
Pottawattamie	78	6	2	6	0	0	5	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	3	1	0	4
Poweshiek	79	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ringgold	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sac	81	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scott	82	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shelby	83	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Sioux	84	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Story	85	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Tama	86	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Taylor	87	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union	88	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Van Buren	89	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wapello	90	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Warren	91	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Washington	92	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne	93	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Webster	94	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Winnebago	95	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Winneshiek	96	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Woodbury	97	15	2	10	5	0	7	4	3	1	15	1	0	0	10	0	2	13
Worth	98	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wright	99	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		174	32	122	52	5	92	54	18	5	174	11	2	1	102	9	9	142

Exit Reasons:

There were 142 youth discharged from the program during the year. Of those discharged, 72 percent aged out of care (left care because they attained 18 years of age or older). Another 8 percent were discharged to return home, 6 percent had a change in placement or level of care (typically to a more restrictive placement due to behavior issues, often due to substance abuse and/or mental illness), and 6 percent ran away from placement.

Exit Reason		
Return Home	11	8%
Placement w/ Suitable Person	2	1%
Independent Living	1	1%
Aged Out	102	72%
Change in Placement	9	6%
Change in Level of Care	8	6%
Runaway	9	6%
Total	142	100%

Conclusion:

The SAL program continues to be a small but valuable alternative program for older foster youth who will not be reunified or adopted and who are mature enough to live on their own with guidance and support. Important recent improvements include: a revamped contract requiring providers to meet goals that are in line with other federal child welfare outcomes; an increase in minimum age for participation; an increase in the monthly maintenance stipend, and; enhanced required services to youth participants.