



Coalition for Family and Children's Services in Iowa

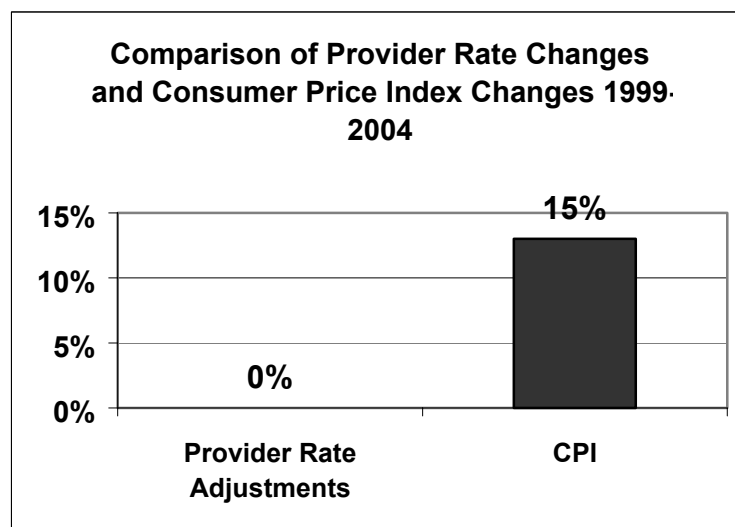
Priority Issue

Iowa has one of the worst records in the United States for supporting its neediest kids.

Private agencies providing care for abused and delinquent children have not had their rates adjusted for inflation for 5 years. In the past 5 years, the Consumer Price Index has increased by 15%.

Additionally, Iowa was one of only 14 states that cut funding for children's services from 2000 to 2002. About 30 states increased spending for abused and troubled children during that time period.

In order to provide adequate service to children, rates must keep pace with inflation. Providers need a 5% increase this year and rates adjusted each year based on the Consumer Price Index.



Source: Minneapolis Federal Reserve CPI Index



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Children's shelters are closing across Iowa due to lack of funding.

Emergency shelters for children provide a safe haven for abused and neglected children. Shelter funding has been cut by almost \$2.6 million and 140 children are being refused shelter services every day. Where are these children? Below are several examples of the children not receiving services:

- ⌘ A shelter received a phone call on 1/3/05 from a mom and stepfather of a fifteen-year-old girl who had been running away from home and using marijuana and probably other drugs. Her stepfather stated that she was being sexually active and was afraid that she was not using precautions. The parents said that she had been having out of control behaviors in the home, threatening them physically as well as her younger sister. Both parents stated that they have contacted DHS on numerous occasions. They finally got in touch with a private therapist who works with the family, and he suggested shelter as well. **DHS stated that they were unable to help the family until the situation worsened.**
- ⌘ On 12/27/04 the shelter received a call from a frantic mother wanting to drop her son off at the shelter. She had called DHS and was told that DHS would have no funding to place her child in shelter until at least March. Her child was self-harming, severely scratching on himself, and not coming home at night. The mother has cancer and isn't physically able to control him. **This child and mother cannot get the help they need.**

We ask the legislature to return shelter funding to the amount spent last year so that all children who need a safe haven can find shelter.