

Supportive Housing and Child Welfare: Purpose, Services, & Policies

Supportive Housing

Purpose: The supportive housing field includes programs that provide families with social services, in conjunction with permanent housing (MinnLInK). This work is carried out in private and non-profit agencies and public housing. The development of supportive housing services allows homeless persons to live independently as possible (HUD). The field is an innovative and proven solution that helps people with complex living challenges achieve stability, autonomy, and dignity (CSH).

Services: In general, social services include job and life skills training, alcohol and drug abuse programs, and case management.

Child Trends & The Healthy Teen Network serve teen parents and provide case management, 24-hour access to caring adults and community resources, and skill development.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides funding to states, units of local government, governmental entities, and private non-profits for supportive housing initiatives that meet the objectives of: residential stability, increasing skill levels and/or incomes, and promoting self-determination.

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) addresses housing stability, employment, mental and physical health, school attendance, and substance abuse for vulnerable populations, including: kids in foster care and people in the criminal justice system.

Major Policies: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, Title IV, Subtitle C

Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009

In Minnesota – Long-Term Homeless Service Fund, Supportive Housing and Managed Care Pilot

Child Welfare

Purpose: The child welfare field includes human services in the areas of child protection, foster care, and adoption. This work is carried out in a state supervised, county administered system by government as well as non-profit agencies, and is supported by research and evaluation from government, academic institutions and non-profit organizations (Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare).

Services: The collective goal of child welfare is to promote the safety, permanency, and the well-being of children, youth, and families.

Child protection responds to situations of alleged maltreatment and helps support families to safely care for their children (MN DHS).

Foster Care provides a bridge with birth parents to enable children to return safely home or to an adoptive or permanent family (MN DHS).

In Minnesota, DHS aims to integrate housing, services, and income supports to enable adults to live in their communities. DHS also works with others to provide programming for at-risk youth, including: out-of-home placements, minor parents (MN DHS).

Child welfare has a need for programming like that offered by supportive housing. Bringing these fields together will benefit many vulnerable adolescents in Minnesota.

Major Policies: Social Security Act, Title IV-B and IV-E – Major funding provision

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974 (CAPTA) – Reauthorized in 2010

Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (ICWA)

Fostering Connections Act of 2008

*For a complete timeline of child welfare legislation see childwelfare.gov/pubs/otherpubs/majorfedlegis.cfm

A Few Items About Opening a Case in the Child Welfare System

Emergency Reports for Reasons of Imminent Harm¹

- Only law enforcement, or the courts, have authority to involuntarily remove a child from their home for reasons of imminent harm.

Failure to Provide Necessary Shelter²

- Failure to provide heat and sanitation that poses a safety risk.
- . . . unsafe window that reasonably pose a hazard to child safety.
- Dangerous drugs, controlled substances, or household poisons that are accessible to children.
- . . . blocked exits due to extreme clutter.
- Animal waste, feces, infestations of rodents and insects.
- Guns that are not safely stored.

Conditions of Domestic Violence Resulting in Mental Injury or Threatened Harm

- When a child inserts themselves as a shield to protect the parent, or a child is used as a shield in an incidence of violence.
- When a child is in fear for their life, or the life of a parent, or the life of a person responsible for their care, or for the life of someone else in relation to the incident.

Source: Minnesota Child Maltreatment Screening Guidelines, 2011, Minnesota DHS

¹ Minn. Statute § 626.556, Subd. 7

² Minn. Statute § 626.556, Subd. 2(f)(3)

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