

Help for Families Who Need it Most: The Community and Family Support System

Over 3,600 families rely on support from the Community and Family Support (CFS) system to avoid out-of-home placement for their children and adults with disabilities. The CFS program provides goods and services such as medical supplies and equipment, respite care or sitter services, personal assistance services, and diapers as well as flexible funds that allow families to purchase things not covered through other programs.

Raising children with significant disabilities takes incredible tolls on their families. A recent survey conducted by the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council on the CFS program found that the majority of respondents reported a substantial impact on their ability to maintain gainful employment. Families managing with these reduced earnings and resources have relied on the CFS program as a critical lifeline of support.

Does Family Support make a difference? Overwhelmingly, recipients say YES! In fact, this answer is made more emphatic by a very high 46% response rate; this alone shows how important these programs are for people who receive them.

- 67% report they altered their employment to meet the needs of the family member with a disability.
- 89% of families stated the CFS program improves their family's ability to care for their child.
- 88% of families stated the program reduces the financial stress associated with living with a disability.
- Currently 100% of the children receiving services through this program are able to remain at home with their families. Elimination of the program puts more children at risk of institutionalization, which is significantly more costly and risks Olmstead enforcement action by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Family comments:

- ❖ I'm a single mom. It saved my family.
- ❖ It has been a big help to us, wouldn't know what to do without the program.
- ❖ Payments for Personal Care Assistant help me to have a job as a single mother and support my family.
- ❖ I can keep my family member at home, work and not have to put them in an institution.
- ❖ This program enables me to keep my son at home where he is most comfortable and happy.
- ❖ Some relief from the 24/7 care required.
- ❖ They care enough to give a little extra to families stretched beyond belief.

For more information, please contact the Developmental Disabilities Council at 800-450-8108.