

2017 LIAISON REPORT

ChildServe

Liaison – Eric Adelmund

1. Need for Program

ChildServe is a non-profit agency with a center located in Ames Iowa. ChildServe offers a day care program, summer camp programming for children with special needs, supported community living, respite care, day habilitation (age 16-adult) and therapy services. ChildServe provides much needed services with therapy, nursing services and skill development for children with high medical acuity.

During 2017, approximately 560 children from Story County and surrounding counties utilized services from ChildServe; this represents an increase of 30 children from 2016. ASSET funding is a small portion of the overall services provided by ChildServe; approximately 6 of these children were qualified for ASSET funding during 2017.

2. Program Strengths

ChildServe continues to use a sliding fee scale which allows low-income families, not on DHS funding, to qualify for the ASSET subsidy. This practice is in keeping with the goals of ASSET funding to provide direct support to low-income families and young children.

ChildServe has increased their staffing levels with a few new therapists and 3 case manager positions.

Rachelle Flory (ChildServe Regional Manager) and Brendan Messmer (Childcare Site Supervisor) state their ability to serve any child from normal functioning to severe medical need is the primary strength of ChildServe.

Respite services are available to families and have the ability on weekends and evenings. Respite services continue to use DHS waiver funds; however, the recent changes to Medicaid (MCOs) have resulted in a waiting list for waiver funds in recent years. ChildServe sees an opportunity to increase Respite services to meet the need of the Story County Community.

3. Program Challenges

The current challenge facing ChildServe is finding more space as the existing building in Ames is completely full. The recent addition of care managers to the Ames staff was accommodated by converting a storage room into office space and subsequently a restroom into a storage space.

ChildServe has new playground equipment, but the playground area itself needs many improvements. Funds are needed to improve the ground beneath the playground equipment to provide for better drainage and ensure a safer environment for children.

Finding weekend respite staff, nursing staff, and Supported community living (SCL) staff can be a challenge for ChildServe at times as well.

4. Summary

While ASSET funds are a relatively small part of ChildServes budget, the funds help the agency serve a valuable need in Story County. It may be worthwhile to initiate discussions with this agency in attempt to identify additional opportunities which ASSET dollars could be used to provide or enhance ChildServe services to low-income families.