



Oregon

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ORS 418.485 and 418.580
Report to Legislative Assembly for 2018
Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families Programs
Department of Human Services - Child Welfare
July 30, 2019

The Department of Human Services is submitting this report to the Oregon Legislature as required by Senate Bill 964 enacted in the 2011 Regular Legislative Session and now part of Chapter 418 of the Oregon Revised Statute. This report relates to the Strengthening, Preserving, and Reunifying Families (SPRF) programs throughout Oregon. The specific requirements of the report are as follows: The Department, in consultation with programs, shall report annually to the Governor and the appropriate interim committees of the Legislative Assembly that address child welfare issues on the progress toward and projected costs of full implementation of ORS 418.575 to 418.598. This report consists of updated information regarding SPRF contracts and service array; program funds and allocation; and program outcomes and evaluation.

History of SPRF:

2011 – SB964 Legislation passed.

2012 – Three counties chosen to pilot SPRF.

2013 – SPRF expanded into four more counties.

2014 – All 36 counties have SPRF contracts in place.

2015 – SPRF contracts have outcome-based language added, baseline data collection begins.

2016-2019 – Service gaps reassessed, continued contract administration improvements, continued evaluation of providers regarding outcomes for the reason of renewal.

SPRF Contracts and Service Array:

The Department has had SPRF contracts executed for services in all 36 counties statewide since December 2014, and those services are consistent with those outlined in ORS 418.580.

SPRF objectives:

- Reduce trauma by maintaining children safely in their home whenever possible,
- Reduce length of stay in foster care
- Reduce the re-abuse rate, and improve permanency outcomes

The following list provides categories in the contracted service array across the state as well as family success stories (names have been changed for confidentiality) of how the goals have been achieved:

- **Navigators:** Specialists to help navigate social service agencies. Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Multnomah, Marion, Polk, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Lane, Douglas, Josephine, Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Grant, Harney, and Washington.

As a family navigator, I met a mom who lived with her boyfriend and two daughters in a run-down, but cheap apartment. The family faced many struggles, including substance abuse and inability to keep employed. They were evicted and moved into a small pup tent at a campground for several weeks. From there they couch surfed with distant relatives and friends, until moving into a garage together. The older daughter had not been in school for a year and half and was involved with drugs and running away from home. The younger one had not started school, even though she was almost 8. An incident of domestic violence between the mom and her boyfriend was reported to the police. I assisted Mom to receive help from a local women's resource center, and she filed a restraining order. I attended court with her and supported her move to a shelter where she decided to participate in a year-long sober living program. As a navigator, I assisted the mom with accessing food and clothing banks, counseling and groups for herself and her older daughter. I assisted the family with enrolling the older daughter in an alternative high school, where she completed an entire year. This daughter did complete several months at a treatment center during the summer. My navigator referral ended, but I do keep in contact with the family.

UPDATE: Mom has nearly completed a year at the shelter, assisting as a part time staff person. The older daughter is half way through another year at the alternative school and is doing well. The younger daughter is now enrolled in school. Mom helps new residents at the shelter, connecting them with local resources like WIC, Healthy Families, Health Department, Celebrate Recovery, food banks, community meals, and Women's Resource Center. She is positive and encourages others. In addition to her duties at the shelter, she works part-time. Soon she will receive a housing voucher when she completes her commitment to the reentry program. It has been exciting to watch the growth of this mother and her children.

- **Parent Educate and Coach/Mentoring:** Specialists to reinforce parenting behaviors, supportive services. Tillamook, Columbia, Clatsop, Multnomah, Marion, Polk, Yamhill,

Linn, Lincoln, Lane, Douglas, Coos, Curry, Josephine, Jackson, Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson Klamath, Lake, Umatilla, Clackamas and Washington.

In regards to my parent mentor:

Working with a parent mentor was very important in my circumstance. My parent mentor is one of the most sincere, genuine, selfless, helpful people that I had the opportunity to work with during my DHS case. I felt comfortable expressing my feelings and struggles with my mentor and always received beneficial suggestions while never feeling judged. With her being familiar to recovery it seemed she could always understand and relate to my frustration and happiness as I tackled the barriers and moved towards success. She helped me with time management, relating with my teenagers, healthy communication and setting boundaries. I truly benefitted from having her as a healthy role model in my life. -W C

My parent mentor has changed my life and has played a very big role as my children were removed from me thru DHS. She was there for me and she introduced me to the NA 12 step program and anytime I needed an ear or a hand she guided me. She has supported me at my court appearances and she has transported me when I needed her assistance. She helped me and directed me towards progress and has taught me to let go but to self-advocate. She transported me to rehab and helped me thru domestic violence and I couldn't ask for a better parent mentor. I am reunified with both of my children and have graduated my inpatient program. I just celebrated 6 months clean. We still stay in touch and she is always happy and positive no matter the situation even when I got upset because we had to close service.

To see a navigator/parent mentor success story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYdrFQeeJoI&feature=youtu.be>

- **Relief Nursery:** Childcare, parenting, support services. Lane, Douglas, Coos, Jackson, Josephine, Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson and Umatilla.

M and S have been sober for a year and moved to Sweet Home in August of 2017 with their son, hoping to make a fresh start. After struggling to find housing and resources, M and S were forced to live in a tent by the river. As a result, DHS became involved in their lives in October, and their child was removed from their care. They took a bus once a week to DHS to visit with their child. Imagine you are the child, a 4-year-old boy who loves his parents very much and hates only getting to see them once a week. He struggled with seeing his parents so stressed out.

In February of 2018, M and S were referred to Family Tree Relief Nursery by their DHS Child Welfare caseworker. Within a week of working with a Family Navigator and Visitation Coach, they moved into one of the shelters in Albany and were able to visit their child twice a week for 4 hours at Family Tree Relief Nursery, where we have therapeutic and welcoming visitation rooms. In their first week in Albany, they were connected to community resources like CHANCE, who assisted them in obtaining their Birth Certificates so they could get their Oregon IDs. Thanks to the kindness of our donors, we were also able to assist the father in getting steel-toed boots to start work at a job found through connecting him with All-Star Labor and Staffing in Albany. M was able to obtain a full-time position with benefits. S has also been connected with medical resources to help her deal with a chronic illness. They also enrolled in our weekly parent education class.

Since partnering with Family Tree Relief Nursery, M and S have made huge strides in meeting their goals. After months of hard work, they were able to clear their biggest hurdle: housing. After completing numerous applications, they were finally rewarded with their second chance and were approved for an apartment; their first home together. With the help of their Family Navigator and their DHS Child Welfare Caseworker, they were

able to move in less than a week after being approved. Staff connected them with Furniture Share in Corvallis and were able to get their new home furnished. They have moved into Community Visits with their Family Tree Visitation Coach, where they are able to take their son into the community during supervised visits. They enjoy many activities as a family including swimming at the YMCA, going to the arcade and visiting the Albany Carousel.

As a result of their hard work and partnership with Family Tree Relief Nursery, their child was able to be reunited with his parents in early June of 2018. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we were able to present him with a "Welcome Home Basket" full of toys, books, sheets, and more so he could truly celebrate being reunited with his parents.

- **Alcohol and Drug Treatment:** Inpatient/Outpatient alcohol and drug treatment or recovery focused services that focus on multi-dimensional issues such as parenting, domestic violence services, and childcare. Columbia, Marion, Yamhill, Benton, Lincoln, Linn, Deschutes and Washington.

My name is J. In March of 2018 I began working with IFS as my outreach worker. IFS worked with me through June of 2018. During this time she provided resources, helped with transportation, helped keep me on track, and was always checking in with me. She was phenomenal with her guidance, caring and gentle. There were times while IFS and I were working together, that I was ready to quit and go back to a lifestyle that would end my life. If IFS hadn't of been there, to help me see the fight for my life is worth it. I could possibly be dead. She worked above and beyond to help me get my life on a different path than what I had put myself on. She helped me to build a network of not only sober people, but sober women. Which has been a huge obstacle in my life. IFS has pointed me in the best direction to get help with my mental health as well. She really knows what resources would help each specific individual she works with. Also, if she doesn't know off the top of her head, she works her hardest to find a way to help.

My experience working with IFS has been an exceptionally memorable and most helpful experience. I feel truly indebted to my A&D Worker for everything she has done for my daughter and I. I am forever grateful for my experience with outreach workers, especially my A&D worker.

- **Housing:** Short-term, Long-term, Emergency, Treatment Based and Transitional Housing services. Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, , Multnomah, Yamhill, Marion, Benton, Lincoln, Lane, Douglas, Coos, Jackson, Josephine, Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson, Klamath, Umatilla, Malheur Clackamas and Washington.

I had opportunity to support a father who showed why continuum of care is so important. When I met this dad, he was living at a shelter in Portland with a short amount of time away from alcohol and drugs. His child welfare case was in Columbia County, a county that he was unfamiliar with. Shortly after I started supporting him, and in collaboration with other community providers, he was able to get into clean and sober housing in the county that his DHS case was in. This father had all four of his children returned to him at the clean and sober living house, completed and graduated from outpatient services, started working full-time, and regained his driver's license. His child welfare case closed earlier this year and he is now a support person for other fathers in the recovery community.

- **Front End Intervention:** Specialists (Alcohol and Drug, Mental Health, Domestic Violence, and human service generalists) responding with CPS workers. Multnomah, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Lane, Coos, Curry, Umatilla Baker, Union, Wallowa and Clackamas.

Hope beyond Hopeless

C, had been injured severely due to accidents and Domestic Violence, so had lost her job. C was attempting to keep caring for her children and a grandchild also, surviving on her savings, with some family and community assistance. When FPRS began working with C, C had returned home from the hospital after attempting to take her own life due to discouragement over the bills. The family's power was off, and water was scheduled to be shut off the next day. FPRS was able to connect C with Community services who partnered with the electric company, were able to get power restored that day, and also encouraged C to contact the water company and make arrangements. C needed reconnected with a physician, as well as connected to a mental Health counselor. During the weeks of FPRS services, FPRS was able to transport C to appointments, give her emotional support, and then connect her to transportation services as well as other local connections.

- **Reconnecting Families:** Specialists used to engage families and conduct relative searches for additional familial resources/placements. Marion, Polk, Lincoln, Crook, Jefferson and Deschutes.
- **Trauma Services and therapeutic services:** Mental Health services and Intensive services to trauma affected families and children. Coos, Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler and Clackamas.

“We were referred to Bright Horizons by DHS for my two children who have had a hard time getting along with each other and me. We all experienced domestic violence and have been through a lot in the last year. Bright Horizons has been the bright spot in my kid's week. Watching them have positive interactions and look forward to doing an activity together has been amazing. Both of them are really coming out of their shell, and I think these positive interactions have a lot to do with that. There is no way we would have known about such a neat therapeutic activity or be able to pay for these services without the help of DHS Child welfare. Both kids want to continue in the program. They have both shown more confidence, and my son is more willing to interact and have a sense of self-esteem both at home, school, and church. Some of the activities they do at Bright Horizons are interactions with the horses, working through new activities they never experienced before, working through being challenged and feeling frustration, but always reaching a goal each lesson so they walk away happy and proud. I think it is great that a therapeutic experience that does not force therapy on the kids is available. They address the issues the kids are working through, but it is through experiences rather than being put on the spot and asked to just “talk” about the things the kids do not want to think about. This service is directly for the wellbeing of my children, and we are really happy with the ongoing results and are grateful for DHS to have provided these services to our family to help us heal and grow.”

- **Family Visitation Support and Coaching:** Tillamook, Columbia, Clatsop, Benton, Lincoln, Lane, Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, Deschutes, Jefferson, Crook, Klamath and Lake.

I worked with a single mother of three whose case was on the verge of termination. During the therapeutic visitation process I encouraged the mother to engage with the child and provided the mother with encouragement. As the visits progressed, both the child and mother became calmer. Eventually, we were able to do the visits in the home and work towards reunification. The mother worked diligently on the skills taught during the sessions. Over the course of 1.5 years the mother learned to trust the provider and work with other service providers as well. Now all three children have been reunified with their mother.

- Therapeutic Visitation Provider

- **Transportation Services:** Lake and Klamath.
- **Family Strengths & Needs Assessment:** Linn, Benton, Lincoln Lane, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Clackamas and Washington.

I worked with a family where the Dad who was resistant to services. During the intake he refused to sign certain paperwork and refused my offer to help talk to the school about services for his sons. When I checked in with the caseworker about Dad's resistance she expressed frustration with his lack of participation. When we did the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA) Dad shared that he was raised in the foster care system and had a very real fear that because DHS was involved it meant that his kids were going to be removed. I explained to Dad that part of the FSNA process was to schedule a meeting with the caseworker to talk about the referral, the assessment, and anything else the Dad might want to talk about. I assured him that I would be there to mediate the conversation and that he could invite anyone he wanted for support. During the FSNA meeting the parent and the caseworker were able to have meaningful conversation about Dad's fear, the status of the case, and the expectations for the family. Dad was able to let go of his resistance and work with the Navigator Program. I was able to provide referrals, transportation, and emotional support to put services in place to stabilize and strengthen his family.

- **Enhanced Meeting Facilitation:** Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Multnomah, Marion, Polk, Yamhill, Curry, and Washington.

Child safety meetings and Oregon Family Decision meetings are an important step in our client's involvement with Child Welfare. Often times, Child Safety Meetings are the first introduction to their permanency worker. Working with a meeting facilitator helps mitigate the feelings of anxiety many of our client's experience and also provides a supportive environment for clients to be heard. The family was experiencing multiple barriers in their relationship with Child Welfare, and during their first Child Safety Meeting it was easy to see they were not feeling heard and were confused on the process in front of them. Introducing myself before the meeting, the parents were able to express several concerns they would like addressed but felt uncomfortable bringing up themselves. As an impartial party to the case, I was able to discuss barriers the family were feeling and directed them at the new case manager. Not only were concerns addressed, but the parents were able to feel heard in the meeting process while a positive first interaction with their permanency worker was established.

My favorite portion of meeting facilitation however, is the collaboration between community partners, DHS, attorneys and clients. Being able to ask community partners questions on progress, foster parents for child updates, and mitigate barriers parents might be experiencing is a highly positive experience. Today I saw happy tears as a Child Welfare case was moved to an in-home plan, and community partners shared the growth they have witnessed in the last year.

Please see the attachment to read more success stories from our Oregon families.

Program Budget and Allocation:

For the 2019-21 biennium, the budget is pending and will be determined after the legislative session is complete. Attached is the contract expenditures.

Program Outcomes and Evaluation:

We have defined outcomes measurements and have worked collaboratively on continuous improvement with our contracted providers. The emphasis has been on outcome-based contracting versus financial incentives or penalties. This work is foundational for our overall ability to report on outcomes associated with the SPRF program.

The following are examples of outcomes:

Navigator:

Achieved; Client accessed all necessary, available resources and services.

Partially Achieved; Client accessed one of more necessary, available resources and services.

Not Achieved; Client did not access any necessary, available resources and services.

Long Term Housing:

Achieved; Client obtained or maintained long-term housing by entering into agency approved lease or rental agreement or long-term commitment of cohabitation.

Partially Achieved; N/A.

Not Achieved; Client did not obtain or maintain long-term housing.

Parent Mentoring:

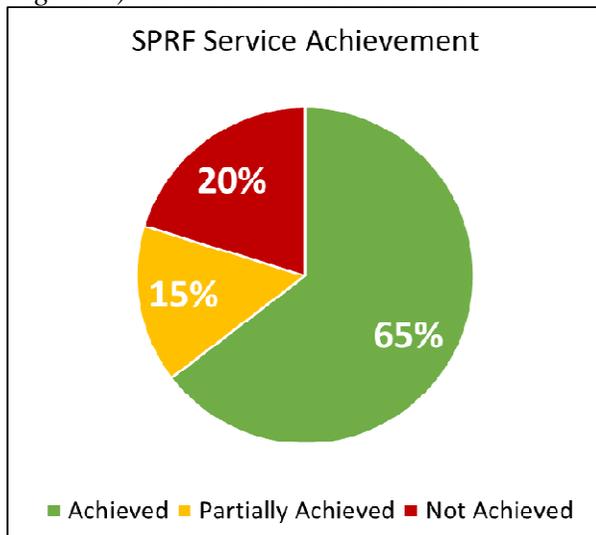
Achieved; Client met all agreed upon service goals.

Partially Achieved; Client met one or more agreed upon service goals.

Not Achieved; Client did not meet any agreed upon service goals.

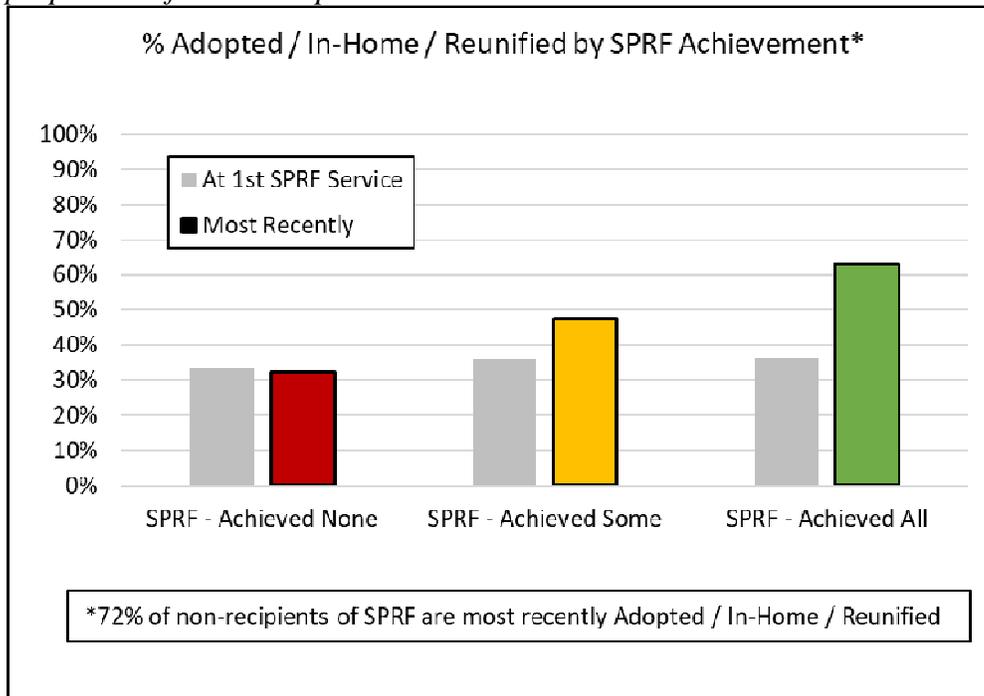
SPRF Achievement and Placement Analysis

Figure 1) Achievement level overall



- Period under review: Feb 2018 to Feb 2019
- # SPRF services opened: 9,924
- # kids linked to these services: 5,348

Figure 2) Proportion of SPRF-funded service recipients in “preserved / reunified / home”. The overall proportion of SPRF recipients is 54%.



This plot considers where children were placed at first SPRF-funded service (the gray bar) versus where they were most recently at the time of the analysis (the colored bars). The bar represents the % that are in a “preserved / reunified / home” family setting, meaning Adopted/In-Home/Reunified. It is then broken down by Achievement.

- None = none of the child’s SPRF-funded services were achieved.
- Some = some but not all were achieved.
- All = all were achieved.

In a matched sample of non-recipients, 72% were most recently in a “preserved / reunified / home” family setting. This can mildly be construed to demonstrate (although this is far from a causal study) that children associated with Achieved SPRF-funded services were also more likely to move from a substitute care setting to a “preserved / reunified / home” family setting.

Table 1) Achievement by SPRF-funded service

SPRF Service	SPRF Service Rollup	Kids Served	% Closed	Of Those Closed		
				% Achieved	% Partially Achieved	% Not Achieved
Enhanced Meeting Facilitation	Enhanced Meeting Facilitation	1490	45%	98%	1%	1%
Front End Intervention	Front End Intervention	846	66%	54%	20%	26%
Navigators	Front End Intervention	1149	60%	41%	31%	29%
Long-Term Housing	Housing	671	42%	53%	10%	38%
Short Term Emergency Housing	Housing	6	100%	0%	0%	100%
Short Term Housing	Housing	11	0%	-	-	-

Assistance						
Short-Term Supportive Housing	Housing	392	49%	59%	9%	32%
Transitional Housing	Housing	128	26%	100%	0%	0%
Treatment Based Housing	Housing	54	2%	-	-	-
Mental Health Therapy	Mental Health Therapy	421	80%	89%	6%	4%
Child Care	Other	74	22%	71%	0%	29%
Child-Focused Family Intervention	Other	11	37%	-	-	-
Reconnecting Families	Other	33	22%	100%	0%	0%
Transportation	Other	2	100%	-	-	-
Family Strengths and Needs Asmt (Unpaid)	Parent Training	47	100%	83%	5%	12%
Family Strengths/Needs Assessment (Paid)	Parent Training	29	89%	79%	5%	17%
Mentoring Services	Parent Training	1578	58%	47%	23%	30%
Parent Educate and Coach, Paid	Parent Training	746	34%	52%	15%	34%
Parent Education (Classroom)	Parent Training	415	66%	51%	24%	25%
Pos. Support Group & Coach/Skillbuilder	Parent Training	345	22%	36%	16%	47%
Visitation Support & Coaching	Visitation Support	493	40%	56%	25%	19%

**Note that the criteria for achievement qualitatively varies between service types
Table 2) Achievement by SPRF-funded service (Categories)*

SPRF Service Rollup	Kids Served	% Closed	Of Those Closed		
			% Achieved	% Partially Achieved	% Not Achieved
Enhanced Meeting Facilitation	1490	45%	98%	1%	1%
Front End Intervention	1888	63%	48%	25%	27%
Housing	1119	41%	56%	9%	35%
Mental Health Therapy	421	80%	89%	6%	4%
Other	120	24%	77%	0%	23%
Parent Training	2601	51%	51%	20%	29%
Visitation Support	493	40%	56%	25%	19%

**Note that the criteria for achievement qualitatively varies between service types*

The Office of Reporting, Research, Analytics and Implementation (ORRAI) has worked to refine how outcomes are captured with SPRF services. SPRF funded services are widespread, come in a variety of types, and children often receive multiple services throughout their case progression. ORRAI has used research methods to help mitigate some of the inherent limitations in evaluating the effectiveness of SPRF as a whole. These include: 1) Defining a matched sample described in Fig. 2 of attached. Specifically, a time-matched sample of non-recipients was defined using Propensity Score Matching on administrative data features. 2) Within-Service Comparison to determine whether achievement levels are critical for maintaining/promoting stability. The service level and service category analyses (Tables 1 & 2 attached) demonstrate which services are associated with positive outcomes. 3) Service

combination modeling was considered in the design phase to provide some indication of which combinations of SPRF funded services are associated with maintaining/promoting stability. However, the more ORRAI learned about the role of SPRF, (as a widespread, repeated service per child over time, as well as, there are similar services available that are not SPRF) it was determined the most straightforward and actionable analysis would be to consider the associations of the individual service levels with outcomes.

Moving forward we are gathering qualitative data to further assess the success of the service providers. This will include an analysis of how the services have been effective in the goals of 1) Family Preservation, 2) Reunification 3) Increased Parental Capacity and 4) Child Well Being. In addition to these efforts we have hired a Contract Optimization Specialist who will be reviewing and improving Child Welfare contracts.

Please contact Jana Mclellan at 503-945-6953 or jana.e.mclellan@state.or.us if you have any questions.

Thank you.