



Joint Committee on Child Welfare System Oversight

June 26, 2024

Chair Concannon, Vice Chair Gossage, Ranking Minority Member Ousley, and Members of the Committee:

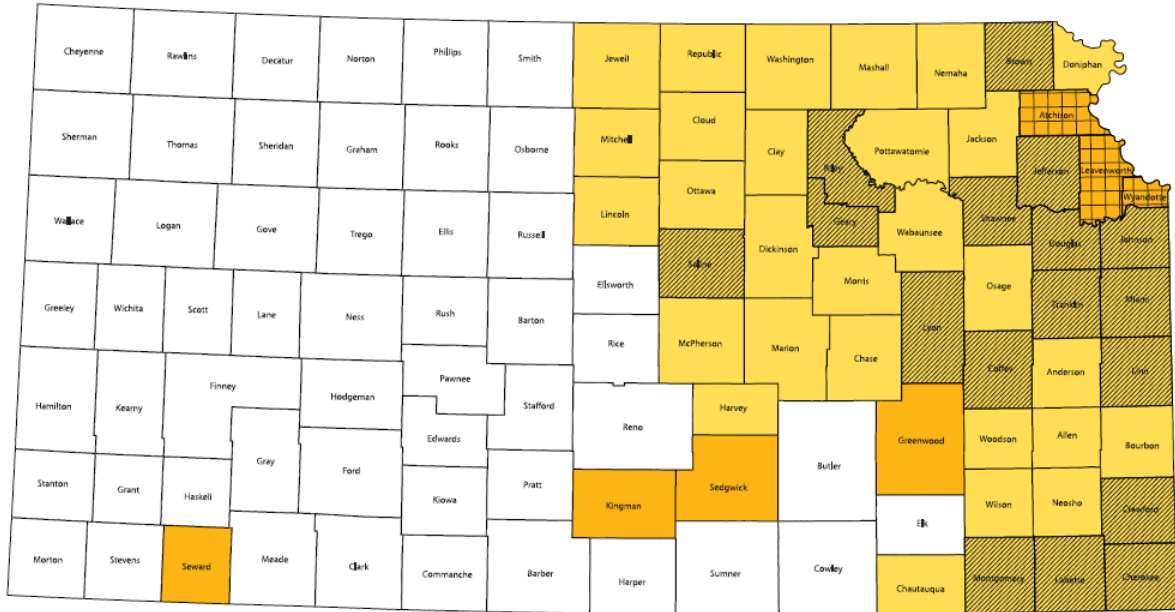
This submission was prepared by Cornerstones of Care Chief Programs and Innovation Officer, Justin Horton. On behalf of our organization, team members, and community of supporters—thank you for the opportunity to present today.

Who We Are

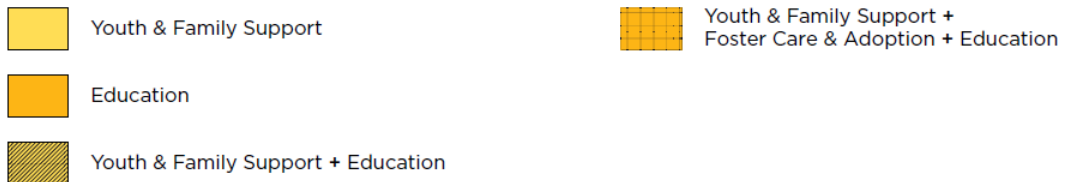
Cornerstones of Care is a behavioral health organization with a 154-year history of providing prevention, treatment and support services to children and their families. The children that we serve have all experienced trauma. Trauma resulting from events, such as abuse or neglect, separation from/loss of a loved one, and witnessing or experiencing violence in their community, as well as trauma stemming from ongoing, cumulative experiences like poverty, addiction, and mental illness.

Cornerstones of Care is a certified trauma-informed organization by The Sanctuary Institute. This model recognizes trauma can be pervasive to the human experience. It acknowledges the vulnerability of clients, organizations, and systems to the adverse effects of trauma and guides the approach that our almost 750 team members across our organization take to recognize, understand and respond to trauma in a manner that mitigates its' negative effects. This model also fosters a restorative organizational culture and framework for creating trauma informed communities, and promotes healthy team member engagement, safety, self-awareness, and self-care.

Cornerstones of Care has been providing services to the children and families of Kansas since 1999. Today, we have more than 250 team members in Kansas within eight offices, supporting citizens in 52 counties.



Cornerstones of Care Program Service Area



The map depicts, with overlap:

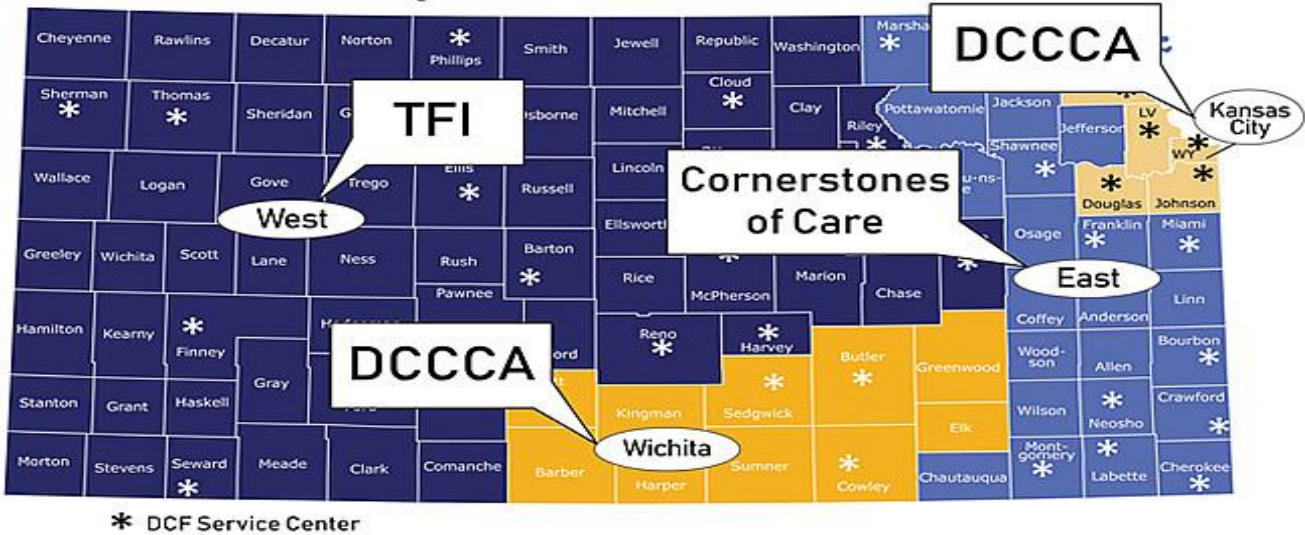
- Family Preservation to families in twenty-five (25) counties
- Foster Care Case Management to children and families in three (3) counties
- Therapy Services to children, families, and adults in forty-eight (48) counties
- Behavior Intervention Support to families and schools in twenty-four (24) counties
- Transitional Living to teens in one (1) county



Prevention and Protective Services: Family Preservation

Cornerstones of Care is the Family Preservation provider in the East Department for Children and Families (DCF) region. Our Family Preservation program has offices in Brown County, Crawford County, Montgomery County, and Shawnee County. Beginning July 1, 2024, the East region will become two regions: the Northeast and Southeast.

Family Preservation DCF Regions and Catchment Areas



Cornerstones of Care East Region Family Preservation Data

	March 2024	April 2024	May 2024
New Referrals	35	31	37
Successful Case Closure: Goal is 85%	89%	88%	82%
Families Served Who Did Not Have Children Placed in Foster Care: Goal is 90%	98%	98%	97%
Client Satisfaction Survey Results <i>Measures whether families thought our service helped them meet the needs of their children and family</i>	100%	100%	100%



Family Preservation: July 1, 2024, Contract Enhancements

The Request for Proposal (RFP) released by the DCF allowed organizations to consider current needs and challenges, and predicted opportunities in order to optimally address internal recruitment and retention and external health, safety, permanency, and well-being for the children and families in Kansas. Leveraging the opportunity facilitated by DCF, Cornerstones of Care will continue the primary case delivery model that consistently sees successful case outcomes, families safely staying together, and satisfied families, but will be adding on additional supports and services.

- **Family Engagement Coordinator:** One in the Northeast and one in the Southeast
We want families to agree to services and be motivated to participate. The Family Engagement Coordinator will work in partnership with DCF to engage families by attending Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings to explain Family Preservation services to families. The Family Engagement Coordinator will educate families and community partners about the services provided through Family Preservation. The position will follow families through services (in addition to the assigned case management), contacting them prior to and at initiation of services as well as attempting to follow up after services have ended to discuss any needs they may have.
- **Addictions Counselor:** One in the Northeast and one in the Southeast
Accessing drug treatment can be delayed to waitlists or difficult to access due to geography/transportation challenges. Our Addictions Counselor will work with families who are engaged in Family Preservation and struggle with drug/alcohol misuse. They will work closely with the case management team to provide extra support to the individual struggling with drug/alcohol misuse, as well as the family. They will assist in locating resources for drug/alcohol assessments as well as locating resources for individuals to engage in drug/alcohol treatment. The Addictions Counselor will advocate for individuals to get into treatment as well as support them while they are in treatment. The Addiction Counselor will provide coaching and counseling to individuals and families regarding substance misuse, until treatment in the community begins.



- **Functional Family Therapy Providers: Two in the Northeast and two in the Southeast**
None of us want to see a youth enter foster care due solely to their behaviors. Cornerstones of Care provides Functional Family Therapy (FFT) in-home services as a short-term intervention for youth, ages 11-18, who are exhibiting delinquent behaviors to prevent them from being removed from the home. FFT is a Title IV-E and SAMSHA-certified evidence-based practice that targets the whole family to build understanding and improve communication that reduces delinquent behaviors in youth, such as truancy, drug use and run-ins with the law. The Cornerstones of Care FFT Team has partnered with the Johnson County (Kansas) Drug and Alcoholism Council for 23 years to support youth facing substance use issues. Cornerstones of Care has partnered with the Kansas Department of Corrections – Juvenile Services since 2017 to provide alternatives to sentencing/diversion from institutionalization for youth in 10 Kansas Judicial circuits in 29 counties. In 2019, Cornerstones of Care started working with DCF referred families via the Families First Prevention Services Act to provide FFT for the prevention of foster care for families who had been reported for suspected abuse or neglect.
- **Behavior Intervention Support Team (BIST) Training**
The Cornerstones of Care BIST model supports the adults working with children who have problematic behaviors. The BIST model allows adults to support children by establishing and maintaining an unconditional relationship while guiding children through accountability and problem-solving processes that help them to learn and grow. Families are supported in developing an environment that increases predictability through clear procedures and language that reduces resistance while increasing problem-solving skills. Children learn how to utilize their words to get their needs met.

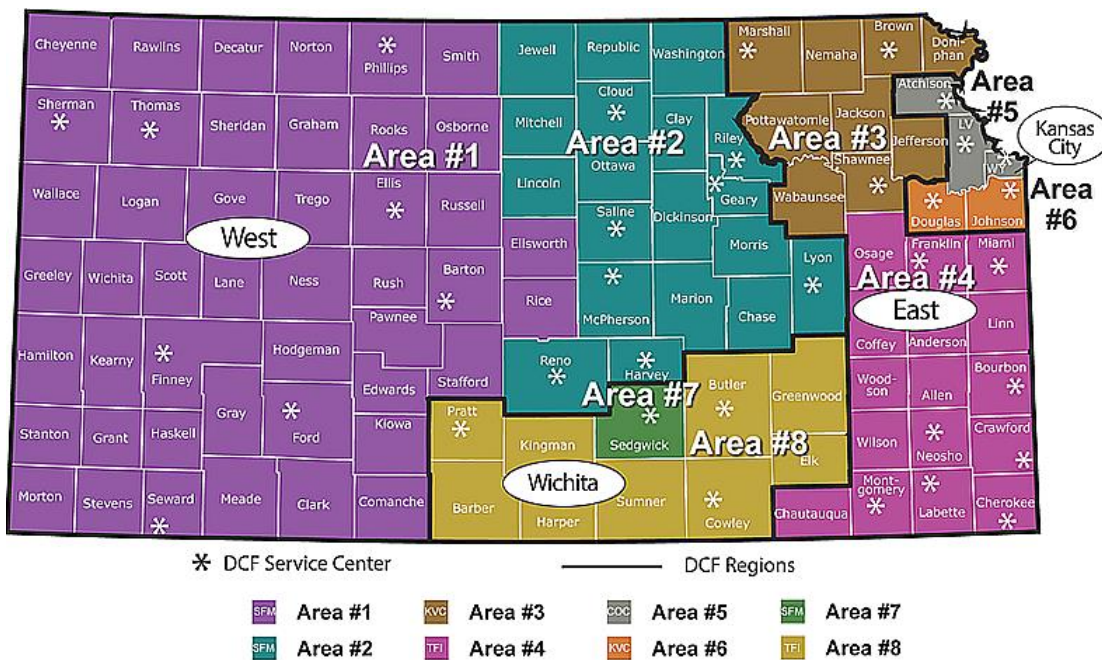
Our Family Preservation Case Managers and Managers will be trained and certified to provide BIST interventions, as another tool to utilize in working with families. The certification process will start with at least eighteen (18) BIST model initial training hours. Also, nine (9) hours of training in de-escalation techniques, crisis intervention and emergency protocol procedures will be provided. After initial training, BIST will provide two (2) hours per month of ongoing problem solving and support for staff. In addition, a BIST Coach will shadow staff into family homes at a minimum of one day per month. A Family Preservation Case Manager is considered certified after they attend all required training, two (2) months of ongoing consultation, and four (4) hours of shadow time with a consultant.

Family Preservation staff will be able to conduct a BIST assessment that allows parents and the Case Manager to determine areas of need and areas of strength within the family. The areas of focus are clarity in appropriate boundaries, procedures, routines, clarity of directions, voice tone in direction, problem solving mistakes, and family meetings.



Foster Care/Adoption Case Management

Cornerstones of Care is the Foster Care provider in Area 5. Our geographic area covers three counties in Kansas: Atchison, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte. Our program has offices in Leavenworth County and Wyandotte County.



Area 5 Client Population

As of June 17, 2024, Cornerstones of Care is providing services to 519 foster care clients, which is down 39% from our grant inception (October 1, 2019). We started the grant with 842 foster care clients. We are thankful to the teams, agencies, and people that have helped make this happen. We realize it is because of the work of many different entities.



Cornerstones of Care Foster Care Case Management: Area 5												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Out of Home youth 2019	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	842	847	822
OOH youth 2020	825	809	815	788	781	775	761	756	734	745	745	743
OOH Youth 2021	746	750	733	715	683	661	691	681	676	652	651	650
OOH Youth 2022	631	613	617	615	634	606	616	632	645	630	618	600
OOH Youth 2023	600	579	579	569	581	575	564	567	573	562	554	545
OOH Youth 2024	534	518	519	524	528	519						

Youth Sleeping in Agency Offices/Failure to Place Data

Month	SFY24 (As of 6/2/24)	TFI	COC	SFM	KVC
JUL	14	1	0	10	3
AUG	1	0	0	1	0
SEP	1	0	0	1	0
OCT	6	1	0	1	4
NOV	0	0	0	0	0
DEC	2	0	0	0	2
JAN	0	0	0	0	0
FEB	6	0	0	4	2
MAR	12	0	0	4	8
APRIL	54	0	0	49	5
MAY	40	0	0	39	1
Total Nights/Incident of Failure To Place for SFY by CMP	136	2	0	109	25
Percentage of Total Nights/Incidents of FTP for SFY 2024	100%	1%	0%	80%	18%

Yearly Failure to Place Report Data

Month	SFY18	SFY19	SFY20	SFY21	SFY22	SFY23	SFY24
JUL		4	33	7	12	25	14
AUG		9	9	4	13	24	1
SEP		11	17	8	44	8	1
OCT		0	12	7	48	8	6
NOV		0	9	9	10	12	0
DEC		0	18	8	9	8	2
JAN		4	19	2	5	6	0
FEB		4	6	2	6	6	6
MAR		12	6	4	8	7	12
APR	85	35	1	3	38	8	54
MAY	69	39	4	2	63	20	40
JUN	6	21	17	5	43	8	0
Total for SFY	160	139	151	61	299	140	136



Report Card (<https://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSreports.aspx>)

Measure	Target	Performance as of Feb 2024	Performance July 2023-April 2024	Trend	Rank Out of Eight Geographic Areas	State Average	Performance to Target
Progress Towards Adoption	45.8%	31.8%	38.2%		5 of 8	41.2%	
Timely Adoption in Less than 24 Months	26.8%	6.3%	6.5%		7 of 8	14%	

Measure	Target	Performance as of Jan 2024	Performance July 2023-April 2024	Trend	Rank Out of Eight Geographic Areas	State Average	Performance to Target
Achieving Permanency for all Children with Termination of Parental Rights	96.8%	92.5%	92.6%		2 of 8	88.9%	
Children in Care 3+ Years at the Time of Permanency	47.8% (lower % is better)	18.9%	18.2%		5 of 8	26.6%	
Placement Stability	% of children 4.4 or fewer	55.8%	48.6%		8 of 8	61.3%	
Placement in a Family Like Setting	90%	88.9%	88.7%		7 of 8	91.3%	



Measure	Target	Performance as of Jan 2024	Performance April 2024	Trend	Rank Out of Eight Geographic Areas	State Average	Performance to Target
Permanency in 12 months	40.5%	25.2%	24.4%		7 of 8	32.3%	
Re-entry into Foster Care within 12 months	8.3% (lower % is better)	6.2%	4.7%		1 of 8	8.7%	
Maltreatment in Foster Care	8.50 (lower is better)	1.99	4.06		6 of 8	3.65	
Children Living with Relatives or Non-Related Kin	50%	53%	47.2%		4 of 8	46.6%	
Sibling Placement	78%	72.8%	71.1%		6 of 8	73%	

Foster Care: July 1, 2024, Contract Enhancements

Several positions and services will begin with the new foster care contract. The additional resources are aimed at addressing team member recruitment and retention, as well as healthy, safety, permanency, and well-being for the children and families of Area 5.

- Compensation Adjustments
 - Average Annual Salary Increase of \$4,723 for Foster Care Supervisors
 - Average Annual Salary Increase of \$2,462 for Foster Care Case Managers

- Addition of Three Medicaid Therapists

These therapists that would specialize in treating trauma symptoms in youth who have suffered physical and or sexual abuse, are experiencing mental health issues, and those with developmental disabilities with cooccurring disorders. Services for children include Individual Therapy, Family Therapy, Group Therapy, Assessment, Intake/Screening, and Treatment Planning. The goals of our therapists are to support children and families for timely reintegration, timely permanency, successful school stability and progress, and successful home/placement stability during care and in Aftercare.



- **Addition of a Director of Education Continuity**
The Director supervises the existing Education Liaison position. The Director and Liaison focuses on home community school continuity, educational progression, 12th grade completion, and transition planning for our foster care program.
- **Addition of Two Case Plan Coordinators**
The Case Plan Coordinators are responsible for administrative assistance, including maintaining client records, data entry, preparation of mailings, coordination of meetings and events, and generating reports as needed for the foster care case management unit specifically related to the scheduling and completion of case plans. The Case Plan Coordinators will collaborate with DCF to ensure that timely and quality case plans are completed. The aim is that the Coordinators work will increase outcomes in case planning and lead to higher quality case planning documents.
- **Addition of a Compliance Specialist**
The Compliance Specialist will coordinate with foster care teams to assist in the development, writing, and implementation of our foster care policy and procedure.
- **Addition of a Kansas Informatics Liaison**
Using advanced knowledge of our foster care program processes, outcomes, and success indicators and our current Electronic Health Record, the Kansas Informatics Specialist will act as the subject matter expert to work alongside DCF staff, Information Technology Services, and other external vendors, with the design, development, and deployment of the state's Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) for DCF's prevention and protection department.