



# DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform

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## DUPAGE COUNTY IMPACT STATEMENT

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The proposed Illinois budget leaves critical health and human services programs with only 50 percent of the funding they need to maintain existing programs for State Fiscal Year 2010, which begins July 1. The budget cuts, set to take affect on July 1<sup>st</sup>, will seriously impact children, the elderly, the disabled, the homeless, survivors of violence, the hungry, and many other people in need.

Human services are not fluffy, 'feel good' services than can be discontinued when times get tough. Health and human service professionals investigate and treat child abuse or domestic violence, and counsel rape victims or troubled teens. They take care of seniors without families, or those whose care needs have exhausted their families. They get treatment to people with tuberculosis so they don't infect others. In short, they provide often life saving services to the most vulnerable members of our society, and are part of the safety net that our society cannot do without.

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## HUMAN SERVICES

### Child Care Assistance

Among the state programs on the chopping block is the Child Care Assistance Program, which provides money for low-income families to pay for quality child care. Under the proposed budget, Illinois will eliminate approximately \$271 million in funds across the state, and \$10,782,277 in DuPage County. This represents a 72.5 percent cut in state General Revenue funds for child care that will impact approximately 2,400 childcare programs state-wide.

The state currently has 175,000 children in the program, of which about 5,575 are in DuPage County. If the proposed cuts are implemented, 142,085 children across the state and nearly 2,800 in DuPage County would lose their child care subsidies.

Presently, working relatives who are raising grandchildren or other relatives and receiving TANF are able to obtain child care support from the state. However, in order for the state to save \$3 million, relatives (or representative cases) over the income standards will no longer receive this essential child care support.

**Consequences:** For working poor families, this child care assistance is the main lifeline that makes work pay more than welfare. As more child care programs go out of business and more low-income families lose access to quality child care, the unemployment rolls will continue to grow.

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The Federation's mission is to improve  
the lives of vulnerable people in DuPage County  
by leveraging relationships and knowledge  
to build an effective and efficient health and human service system.

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## Community Health Services

The State of Illinois will cut funding for community health programs, such as Teen REACH, Healthy Families, and Domestic Violence, by 75% or \$78 million. In DuPage County, the reduction of sexual assault prevention, advocacy, and counseling services will result in approximately 25,000 children and adults losing access to resources that could save their lives. There will no longer be a 24-hour rape crisis hotline.

Family Shelter Service, Metropolitan Family Services of DuPage, Outreach Community Ministries, and Teen Parent Connection will lose a significant percentage of their state funds, affecting over 1,000 low-income children, adults, and families in need of therapeutic counseling, early intervention and prevention services.

**Consequences:** These cuts will actually result in closures of domestic violence shelters, sexual assault prevention and treatment programs, and substance abuse prevention and early intervention services. The loss of these critical services will severely affect the crime rate, placing increased burdens on the systems that benefit from these services, including the police, courts, hospitals, and schools.

## Developmental Disability Services

The State of Illinois will cut approximately \$103 million in funds from current developmental disability services, which will eliminate community based programs for people with these severe, life-long disabilities, including residential and group home services for children and adults, autism programs, respite and family assistance programs, and other support systems that keep people out of institutions. The State of Illinois will also cut rates by 40% for the remaining providers who serve children and adults with developmental disabilities. These providers already suffer from low rates and slow payments, and it is expected that many will be unable to continue providing services.

*If there was a way I could think of to get better funding, I would. But I'm not rich. If I were, I'd give it all to Ray Graham so that we can stay open.*

- Steve, Ray Graham Client

In DuPage County, Ray Graham Association will lose 100% of its state grants, which will have a direct impact on about 900 persons with developmental disabilities. 701 DuPage area families who utilize Ray Graham's respite programs or receive reimbursements for the provision of care to their loved ones with developmental disabilities will be affected. PACT, which helps families plan and navigate the system, will also lose approximately 57 percent of its state funds for case coordination, impacting over 700 persons with developmental disabilities.

**Consequences:** Working families will be on their own to find services and assistance for their dependents. Some may need to leave their jobs to care for their adult son or daughter with a disability. Elderly parents of adults with disabilities will be forced to provide care at risk to their own health. Persons with disabilities will have a more difficult time maintaining or even obtaining jobs with the loss of this essential support network of job coaches, skilled caseworkers and life skills training workshops. Without supported living arrangements, a number of adults with disabilities will become homeless.

## Mental Health Services

The State of Illinois will reduce funding for community mental health programs by \$108 million across the state. The DuPage County Health Department will lose \$4 million in funds reserved for mental health services.

**Consequences:** The cuts to mental health services impact low-income, vulnerable or at-risk residents who are not severely or persistently mentally ill. These are the people who when they receive mental health service are able to remain in stable housing, maintain their jobs, and keep their lives in order. However, without access to community mental health programming, these individuals will end up unemployed, accessing food stamps, and seeking unemployment benefits, all at the cost of taxpayers. Expect also to see a dramatic increase in homelessness, institutionalization and incarceration rates as thousands of vulnerable individuals are left with untreated mental illness.

## Substance Abuse Services

The State of Illinois will completely halt addiction treatment for 20,800 adolescents and adults by cutting \$56 million across the state.

*Without these services, I would have been out on the streets, lost my family, lost my daughter, and I could have lost my life.*

- Christina, Serenity House Client

DuPage County, which already ranks 101 of 102 counties in the per capita amount of substance abuse funding, will lose a significant portion of its funding to serve the approximately 2,800 area residents with substance abuse issues. The 2010 state contract for Serenity House will negatively impact their ability to provide much needed services to hundreds of men and women seeking services. Serenity House is the only extended residential care facility available in DuPage County. With the elimination of these extended residential treatment services, over 200 men and women in recovery for substance abuse and chemical dependence in DuPage County will have no where to go for help. The majority of these individuals are homeless or at risk of becoming

homeless, and simply need a little time to get back on their feet.

**Consequences:** Untreated alcohol and substance abuse wreaks havoc on the community, increasing the likelihood of traffic fatalities and injury, increasing the frequency of child abuse, domestic violence, burglary, robbery and other criminal activity, and overwhelmingly burdening Emergency Room hospital staff and facilities.

## AGING

### Senior Services

The result of the state's proposed \$315 million cut in community care services for frail elderly includes the elimination of all in-home services, adult day services and emergency home response services for 20,000 lower-income seniors who are not eligible for Medicaid and reducing benefits to 55 percent for the remaining 35,000 Medicaid-eligible community care clients. \$18 million in funding to support case management services for 55,000 frail seniors state-wide will also be slashed, and Circuit Breaker Grants will be cut by 50 percent, saving the state \$24 million that would otherwise be used to provide property tax relief to 238,000 low-income seniors and people with disabilities.

In DuPage County, over 500 seniors will lose the essential services that allow them to remain living somewhat independently in the community. Another approximately 1,000 active Medicaid community care recipients in DuPage County will experience a 45-50 percent reduction in services.

**Consequences:** Basic services such as help with bathing, grooming, meal preparation, grocery shopping, laundry, etc. will be reduced or eliminated for many frail seniors. Without these community care services,

a number of seniors will be forced to forfeit their last source of independence and move into nursing homes, many under Medicaid at a much higher cost to federal and state tax payers. In addition, the loss of adult day services that allow family caregivers to work while their loved one receives appropriate support and supervision will place a greater strain on struggling families who cannot afford the cost of a nursing home placement.

It is impossible for us to understand how eliminating community support for the elderly and people with disabilities can save money. Someone who cannot live safely at home without caregivers will have no alternative except a nursing home or state institution at a cost of over \$100,000 per year. So because the state won't spend \$10,000 or \$20,000 to keep someone at home, they'll be forced to spend \$100,000 for a nursing home.

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

### **Adoption & Foster Care Services**

The State will reduce payments by 50% to 23,000 families who adopt children in foster care. Payments to foster parents caring for 14,000 children who are wards of the state will also be cut in half. These cuts will save the state \$109 million and \$54 million respectively, but will directly impact the ability of foster families to continue providing the comprehensive care that is necessary. All state funding for 36 Child Advocacy Centers that serve abused children will be also terminated.

Among the services that will be completely eliminated are support services for families that have adopted abused children, foster care support services, and daycare for foster children, reducing the state budget for community services by \$40 million. In addition, foster care caseloads will triple on July 1<sup>st</sup> from 15 children per caseworker to 50 children.

Approximately 600 children in state care and the families that care for them will be impacted by these cuts in DuPage County. Over 1,400 kids and families enrolled in adoption preservation services at Metropolitan Family Services in DuPage will lose access to caseworkers who understand the dynamics of families formed through adoption or subsidized guardianship.

**Consequences:** Adoption preservation services and certain caseload ratios are required as part of a consent decree; therefore, the state's decision to eliminate these services is in violation of the court order and may cost the state penalties. In addition, fewer children who are wards of the state will be placed in foster family homes, more at-risk youth will end up on the streets, and many complicated adoptions will fall apart, costing the state more money in other areas of services. Other outcomes may have longer lasting impacts on our community. In 2006, there were 3,707 documented reports of child abuse, of which 705 were substantiated after investigation. With the closure of advocacy centers and the reduction in services, the ability of the state to investigate and intervene in thousands of child abuse incidents will be seriously impaired.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Illinois Department of Public Health will experience a \$61 million cut in preventive services that protect the health of the people of Illinois, nearly \$6.6 million of which will be eliminated from the DuPage County Health Department's budget. Thousands of residents in DuPage County will be affected by these cuts.

## **Community Health Services**

All grants to sustain new Community Health Centers will be dissolved. These centers are essential parts of the health care safety net and particularly serve uninsured and low income persons. Some will likely close. Four million in community health initiatives will be terminated. These include: the Communities of Color Prostate Cancer Initiative, which provides outreach, education, and screening to 75,000 Illinois men and the Communities of Color HIV/AIDS Initiative, which provides education and HIV testing to more than 300,000 youth and adults. Another \$9 million cut in state funds for women's health services will reduce the number of women screened and treated through the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program by 44 percent.

The State will also close the Vaccines for Children Plus Program, eliminate Vision and Hearing Screening grants, and terminate all grants to eleven Regional Perinatal Centers providing services to high-risk newborns.

In DuPage County, approximately \$2 million will be reduced in funding for community health services provided by the DuPage County Health Department. These cuts will cut off access for health services to 110,000 children in DuPage County who receive mandated vision and hearing screening and immunizations through the Vaccine for Children Program. Another 10,000 low income high risk women and children will lose linkage to necessary social service and medical care, and 2,942 foster children that are placed in foster homes by DCFS will not receive preventive and necessary medical care. With the reduction in funding for breast/ cervical cancer screening 1,240 women are at risk for undetected and untreated cancer.

**Consequences:** Reductions in Community Health Services will increase ongoing health costs related to poor birth outcomes and increase birth mortality rates. Women who have no access to healthcare will go undetected for treatable cancers, which will increase one of the leading causes of death in DuPage County. Low income children will not be fully immunized by 2 years of age, increasing the risk of severe illness and spread of communicable disease throughout the DuPage County community.

## **Environmental and Disease Control**

Grants to Local Health Departments for food, water, sewage and infectious disease services will be cut by \$17 million statewide, and the Illinois Poison Control Center's 24-hour hotline, prevention and treatment grant will be terminated. A \$1 million grant for Juvenile Diabetes Research will also be eliminated.

The DuPage County Health Department will lose \$720,000 in funds that help assure healthy indoor and outdoor air, safe drinking water, and the provision of care and help to control the spread of health threats like tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases.

**Consequences:** Although DuPage County is currently experiencing an increase in active cases of tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases, these cuts will reduce the Health Department's ability to test and treat these and other diseases. There will also be a significantly decline in communicable disease control capacity as the Health Department plans for the upcoming influenza season and the continued spread of the H1N1 virus.