



# Social Services Block Grant

A publication of  
**ASAAPS**

American Society of Adult Abuse  
Professionals and Survivors

March 2005

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## Underappreciated APS Funding

The primary way in which the Federal government provides financial support to vulnerable adult abuse services is through the Social Services Block Grant, or SSBG.

SSBG funds are allocated to states on a formula basis. State legislatures then decide where the money will be spent. Because of this two-step process, many professionals in elder abuse do not realize the importance of SSBG to adult protective services (APS), Bill Benson, member of the SSBG Coalition and National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) National Policy Advisor, told ASAAPS. There is evidence to support this assertion: in the National Center on Elder Abuse's "2000 Survey of State Adult Protective Services," only 30 of all 50 states' (plus the District of Columbia) respondents were able to give funding information for their state APS program, and of these, only 13 claimed their program got SSBG funds (pp. 37, 65-66). Yet Federal reports show that more than 3/5 of states -- 32 -- use SSBG funds to fund APS (SSBG FY 2001 report, chapter 3).

Indeed, in FY 2001 an estimated 44% of all APS funding came from SSBG. Put another way, \$151.5 million in SSBG funds -- about 6% of total SSBG funds -- went to state APS programs. Three jurisdictions -- District of Columbia, Michigan, and Rhode Island -- funded their whole APS program through SSBG funds. SSBG funding made up more than half of all APS funding for nine states. New Mexico used 31% of its total SSBG funds for APS. An estimated 433,000 adults benefited from SSBG-funded APS services in FY 2001, at an average cost of \$493 per recipient. (SSBG FY 2001 report, chapters 3 and 4)

However, this is not the full SSBG story. Other programs upon which APS and its clients rely are also funded by SSBG. The following chart lists only the most relevant programs, using FY 2001 figures:

### **ASAAPS — American Society of Adult Abuse Professionals and Survivors**

6990 N. Rockledge Avenue, Glendale, WI 53209  
414-540-6456 (phone) 414-540-6489 (fax)  
[www.ASAAPS.org](http://www.ASAAPS.org) (web) [director@ASAAPS.org](mailto:director@ASAAPS.org) (email)



<b>Service</b>	<b>Number of States Funding Through SSBG</b>	<b>Percentage of total program funding provided through SSBG</b>
Adult day care	25	8%
Adult foster care	13	34%
Case management	28	19%
Congregate meals	11	11%
Home-based services	37	7%
Home-delivered meals	15	26%
Information and referral	16	39%
Legal services	15	24%
Residential treatment	22	5%
Transportation	23	21%

In total, 45 states used \$201 million for “Services for Elderly in the Community,” and 41 used a total of \$352 million for “Services for Adults and Children with Disabilities” (SSBG FY 2001 report, Chapter 3).

## **History and Future**

SSBG is sometimes also known as Title XX, which was the name under which it was added to the Social Security Act in 1975. Title XX authorized an entitlement to states for social services. Previously, states received “matching Federal funds for specified categories of services, with eligibility for services limited to receipt of public assistance under several titles of the Social Security Act.” (FY 2001 SSBG Report, chapter 1) In 1981, an amendment to Title XX established the Social Services Block Grant program to provide states with even greater flexibility. Matching funds are not required, and the allocations are based on overall state population. Services funded by SSBG must be directed at one or more of five broad statutory goals:

- Achieving or maintaining economic self-support to prevent, reduce, or eliminate dependency;
- Achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency, including reduction or prevention of dependency;
- Preventing or remedying neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults unable to protect their own interests or preserving, rehabilitating, or reuniting families;
- Preventing or reducing inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, home-based care, or other forms of less intensive care; and



- Securing referral or admission for institutional care when other forms of care are not appropriate or providing services to individuals in institutions.

Historically, SSBG authorization caps hovered between \$2.5 and \$2.9 billion per year. However, SSBG was caught up in the welfare reform changes of 1996. Under an agreement between Congress and the various state Governors, SSBG funding would be reduced to \$2.38 billion for 5 years, and returned to its former level of \$2.8 billion in 2003. This did not happen. Instead, repeated cuts have resulted in a current appropriation of \$1.7 billion. For the past several years, the SSBG Coalition has fought to return SSBG funding to its promised \$2.8 billion.

## **Featured Links**

### **The Social Services Block Grant (Fact Sheet)**

[National.unitedway.org/files/pdf/publicpolicy/SSBGInfoSheetI.pdf](http://National.unitedway.org/files/pdf/publicpolicy/SSBGInfoSheetI.pdf)

### **Reports on SSBG**

[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ssbg/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ssbg/)

### **“A Response to the Abuse of Vulnerable Adults: The 2000 Survey of State Adult Protective Services,”**

<http://www.elderabusecenter.org/pdf/research/apsreport030703.pdf>