

Frequently Asked Funding Questions About Healthy Families America



Healthy Families America allows for a great deal of flexibility at the program level. Thus there is much variability among programs and from state to state regarding program costs, budgets and funding sources. The cost of living varies from state to state; geographical difference can impact service delivery; and staffing models vary from program to program as they reflect the needs of the families being served by the program.

Following are some guidelines around these issues. This information comes from two main sources – an annual profile of program sites and a state systems survey. It is important to note that the figures represent averages, so each site or state may be somewhat different.

Q: What is the average cost per family per year?

A: The average cost is \$2,764.¹ The range is from \$1,550 to \$4,500. Programs differed in the methods used to determine costs per family. Some divide their program total budget by the number of families served. Others do not include functions that are often considered state level activities such as evaluation or training.

Q: What is an average Healthy Families America program budget?

A: \$530,000²

Q: What is the average amount being spent in states on Healthy Families America?

A: Costs range from just over \$100,000 to over \$40 million. The average cost per state budget was approximately \$5.8 million.³ Clearly expenditures within states are linked with the number and size of programs. The greater the number of programs in a state and/or the higher the number of families served in each program will impact how much money is allocated to Healthy Families America in a given state.

Q: What percentage of a state level budget goes directly to sites? To support state level activities?

A: According to survey results, approximately 88% of a state's budget goes to sites. Respondents indicated that on average, 8% of the budget supports state systems activities such as evaluation, training, the provision of technical assistance, advocacy, etc. The percentage of support for state systems goes up to 25% of the total budget in some states.

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Q: What are some of the critical start-up costs for a site?

A: There are many factors that a program should consider before beginning to serve families. These include at the very minimum paying salaries and benefits for staff providing assessment and home visiting services as well as a program manager/supervisor to provide oversight to the program. One of the tenets of Healthy Families America is a small caseload so determining staff size will hinge on the number of families being served.

Healthy Families America places a high priority on training, thus budgets should include adequate funding to ensure staff receive ongoing training. Staff also require travel reimbursements to provide services to families in the field. In addition, programs must account for overhead expenses such as rent, office and telecommunications supplies and expenses, computer hardware and software, any tools and/or trainings that might be required for evaluation purposes, and fees associated with affiliation and credentialing should be considered.

For more information on starting up an HFA program, get in touch with your Primary State Contact (list available on the national website www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org). Also available on the website is the *Healthy Families America Site Development Guide*, a comprehensive overview of the necessary steps to establish a program.

Q: Where can I get more information about Healthy Families America?

A: If you have additional questions about the program, please visit the website at www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org or call the national office at 312.663.3520.

¹ Average derived from the 11 states who answered this question on the 2002 State Systems Survey

² From the 2001 Annual Profile of Program Sites

³ Average state budget derived by utilizing program budget data from the 2001 Annual Profile of Program Sites - which had a higher response rate than the other surveys - extrapolating to all sites in a state to come up with an average state budget.