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Medicaid helps fund SPECIAL EDUCATION and related services for students with IEPs through reimbursement for school-based physical, behavioral, and mental health services. Some studies have shown a positive return on investment in special education, finding that for every dollar spent, there is a return of \$1.37 in terms of increased earnings, reduced crime, and lower welfare costs.

The Knapp School & Yeshiva provides a therapeutic learning environment for 66 students, 96% of those students have an IEP, including children like Lydia.

Lydia, a 12-year-old girl, has received early intervention and special education services since age 3. Through Medicaid Lydia received speech, physical, and occupational therapies, as well as respite care for her mother. When she started school, she qualified for special education services, including assistive technology for her speech delays and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy for her other needs. Cuts to Medicaid would significantly impact Lydia's education, development, and social-emotional growth. It would remove access to crucial assistive technology, increase her mother's out-of-pocket costs for care, and limit access to therapy and support services. Medicaid currently helps fund therapies, technology, and personal supports, and without it, Lydia's progress in her IEP goals would be jeopardized.

About 80% of individuals served by COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH centers are Medicaid recipients, and 60% of those receiving counseling at JCFS use Medicaid.

JCFS Chicago receives \$1,200,000 in Medicaid funding to provide counseling services for 478 people annually, including people like James.

James withdrew from college during his sophomore year after developing severe depression and paranoid thoughts. Illinois Medicaid coverage provided psychiatric evaluations (\$160), monthly medication management (\$90/visit), and weekly therapy sessions (\$70-90/session) totaling approximately \$5,500 for his first year of treatment. He returned to school within a year, graduated, became an engineer, and takes pride in earning a salary, pays his taxes and contributes to social security. With this intervention, James was able to receive the support he needed to manage his mental health, possibly preventing long-term unemployment and reliance on public benefits. His case highlights how access to behavioral health services can empower individuals, turning potential challenges into opportunities for independence.

JCFS Chicago currently operates seven group homes for adults with disabilities. Our Residential Supports program receives \$3,900,000 in Medicaid funding from federal and state sources. Without this funding, the 29 individuals living independently in our COMMUNITY INTEGRATED LIVING HOMES (CILA) could lose access to crucial support and stability. JCFS is committed to maintaining our residential care for adults with disabilities but can't grow to meet the increasing need as more individuals reach the age limit of the current system.

Diagnosed with a developmental disability at age three, Phillip lived at home with his mother, Bellene, until at age 31 he moved into a CILA supported by JCFS.

If Medicaid funding were cut, Phillip's life would be dramatically impacted. The support he receives in his integrated community living home, including the staff assistance and opportunities to socialize and participate in activities, could be severely reduced or eliminated.

The Medicaid-funded day program that Phillip regularly attends helps with cooking activities and socialization and would likely no longer be available. This program is an essential part of his routine, and its loss would be devastating, limiting his social interactions and opportunities for skill development. The elimination of Medicaid funding would essentially disrupt the structure and stability Phillip has grown accustomed to, leading to a significant decline in his quality of life.

HIAS Immigration & Citizenship case managers have connected more than 600 people over the last two and half years with vital services through the UNITING FOR UKRAINE (U4U) program, including obtaining work authorization, job placement and essential benefits that provide support as they work toward self-sufficiency.

The suspension of humanitarian parole programs like U4U that helped Anna and Aleksander, halts new applications for temporary entry to the U.S. and limits the vital resources many vulnerable individuals in desperate situations need to become self-sufficient.

When the war began, Anna and Aleksander had just graduated from college. A family friend sponsored their move to the U.S. through the U4U visa program but offered no additional support, leaving them on their own with limited resources. Struggling to find work and adjust to their new life, they eventually connected with JCFS, which provided financial and rental assistance. Anna found a job at a local flower shop, and with hard work and the short-term support from HIAS, they saved enough to open their own shop. Their business is thriving, and they employ two full-time florists while gaining a large social media following. The support HIAS and the U4U program provides is essential for helping recent arrivals like Anna and Aleksander navigate the challenges of starting over in a new country, offering them the stability needed to build a successful future.



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Maria visited the emergency room monthly for unexplained chest pain, migraines, and stomach issues, accumulating \$30,000 in medical costs annually. Medicaid coverage for her behavioral health treatment led her doctor to refer her to therapy, where childhood trauma and anxiety were identified as the root causes for her physical issues. After six months of weekly therapy sessions at Illinois Medicaid's rate of approximately \$70-90 per session (\$1,800 total) and psychiatric medication management (\$400), her ER visits stopped completely, and her symptoms decreased by 80%. This \$2,200 intervention saved the healthcare system \$25,000 in the first year alone while enabling Maria to work full-time and support her family without additional government assistance.

In Illinois 1 out of 3 adults with disabilities relies on Medicaid, including 222,693 Illinois residents who receive HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED (Waiver) SERVICES. These costs are estimated to be, on average, 62% less than institutional costs in Illinois. For example, an individual with intellectual/developmental disabilities using the Waiver program will cost Medicaid \$54,232 annually vs. care for an individual in a nursing facility will cost \$141,503.

JCFS provides support to 173 people through a range of programs for people with disabilities, and their families, including 52 people in our Home-Based Waiver program.

When Damon turned 22, he lost access to the school district's transition program, leaving him without the support and vocational training he had relied on. Many families call this time "the cliff," when school-based services end and other opportunities for people with disabilities are limited. Damon's mother, a single parent, worried about how this would impact her ability to work. Damon, who has autism, needs support to stay safe and engaged. After waiting 5 years, he was approved for the Medicaid Waiver for Adults with Developmental Disabilities, allowing him to attend a community day service (CDS) program and receive support from a Personal Support Worker (PSW). With these services, his mother can work, knowing Damon is cared for. Without the waiver, she couldn't afford these services and would likely need to quit her job, losing \$2,500 in income and risking housing and insurance. The waiver is essential for both Damon's care and their financial stability.

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Nine years ago, Barbara's adult son Bradley moved out of her home and began living in one of the integrated community living homes supported by JCFS Chicago. Bradley loves his three roommates, as well as the amazing staff at the home. He has benefited greatly from living independently and learning essential life skills. Bradley is living his best life and has shown he can do so much more than Barbara ever imagined possible.

Barbara's life has also greatly improved since Bradley moved into the group home. As an older parent, she has peace of mind that he is in a safe and supportive environment and she can now focus on being his mom, instead of his scheduler and only friend. Barbara worries about how drastically Bradley's life would change if federal funding were reduced or eliminated. If he could no longer live in his current home, he would lose his independence and be devastated, plus, Barbara knows she could no longer care for him alone.

Studies show that EARLY INTERVENTION is cost-effective, with every dollar spent potentially leading to significant savings later in terms of special education and other costly services later in life.

A reduction in early intervention funding in Illinois could lead to longer wait times for services, potentially delaying crucial interventions, like speech and language therapy and occupational therapy offered by JCFS Chicago's Integrated Pediatric Therapies, for children with developmental delays like Carolyn.

When Carolyn was 18 months old, she was referred to the Early Intervention program due to delays in her motor skills and language development. A team from JCFS Chicago started working with her, providing support at home. They provided Carolyn's parents with practical tools to support her growth, such as teaching them to read her communication cues, creating activities to build strength and motor skills, and offering more opportunities to model language. With the help of her JCFS Speech-Language Pathologist and Occupational Therapist, Carolyn was able to join a regular preschool without needing extra help. Thanks to Early Intervention, for every \$1 spent, there was a saving of \$16 over time.