

Press Release



Children's Services Fund of Jackson County Makes Largest Investment in Its History: \$42.1 Million for Children's Mental Health and Family Support

Two-year awards support 81 programs at 71 local organizations, providing child and family well-being services

KANSAS CITY, MO. (Oct. 23, 2026) The Children's Services Fund of Jackson County (CSF) will invest \$42.1 million over the next two years in programs that support the mental health and social-emotional well-being of Jackson County children and youth. It is the largest single investment in the fund's history. The 2027-2028 Core Funding awards support 81 programs delivered by 71 partner organizations across Jackson County, that assist children, youth and their families to navigate challenges, build resilience, and thrive.

CSF is funded entirely by Jackson County taxpayers through a voter-approved quarter-cent sales tax. Voters created the fund in 2016 and increased the tax from one-eighth to one-quarter cent in 2022. Every dollar CSF awards is raised in Jackson County and invested in Jackson County youth, so residents can see their own sales tax at work in their neighborhoods, schools and service providers. The need behind those dollars is significant. Local organizations submitted 112 applications requesting more than \$65 million.

"Every dollar we award started as a purchase someone made in Jackson County. Voters asked us to turn that quarter cent into support for children in our area, and this is the biggest return on that promise we have ever made," said Rob Whitten, chief executive officer of the Children's Services Fund of Jackson County.

Funded programs range from home visiting for new parents to emergency shelter and street outreach for youth. They also provide court advocates for children in the foster care system and counseling for children affected by sexual violence. CSF funding connects Jackson County children and youth age 19 and younger and their families with assessments, counseling, and crisis intervention to help children work through grief and trauma. Temporary shelter and transitional living support youth without stable housing, while services for teen parents help young mothers, fathers, and their babies. Family support interventions, respite care and prevention programs strengthen families, including those caring for children with autism, Down syndrome or visual impairment.

“These awards make it possible for children to receive counseling, for youth to find safe shelter and for parents to get support caring for their families,” said Jovanna Rohs, chief program officer of the Children’s Services Fund of Jackson County. “Our partners provide services that help children and families navigate a crisis, build stability and strengthen connections.”

In 2025, CSF invested more than \$32.8 million, and its partners served more than 77,853 children and youth.

A complete list of funded programs is available at JacksonCountyKids.org.

About the Children’s Services Fund of Jackson County

The Children’s Services Fund of Jackson County provides funding to partner organizations focused on children’s social-emotional well-being and mental health. Jackson County voters created the fund in 2016 with a one-eighth-cent sales tax and reauthorized it at a one-quarter-cent rate in 2022. A board appointed by the County Executive oversees the fund, which has awarded more than \$260 million to nonprofits and schools since its inception. Learn more at JacksonCountyKids.org.