



2011 Cost of Services for a Typical Family

Project Self-Sufficiency provided services to 183 single parent families who were enrolled during all or part of 2011. Advisors reported that 165 of the 183 families (91%) received four or more services, and 128 of the 183 (70%) received six or more services. Additional services tracked separately include parenting and self-esteem classes, children's programs, holiday programs, and volunteer car repair. When these services are included, the number of services per family is even higher.

See the **2011 Annual Program Report** for a complete list of services provided in 2011. Some participants were new to the program at the end of 2011 when the data was collected, while others had been enrolled in the program most or all of the year. In many cases, participants have been with PS-S for multiple years.

On the following page is an example of services a typical participant might receive over a four year period. Most participants are enrolled in the program between two and seven years, depending on their career goal, the amount of help they need, and their interest in going the distance with PS-S. A participant who needs a four year degree to reach her or his career goal will typically need one year to complete career planning, remedial studies, and applications for school and financial aid. Degree completion will take 4-6 years. The final year is spent job searching and adjusting to a new career.

Those with a career goal that requires an Associate degree may graduate from PS-S with a job in four to five years, including all phases of the process described above.

Some participants choose to start out with PS-S and then finish school on their own. This makes data collection later more challenging, but does open up a spot in the program for someone on the wait list.

Calculation of Cost Per Family and Per Person

This calculation can be accomplished in a number of ways. The most straightforward is to take the total cost of operating the organization for one year and divide by the number of families that benefitted. When that formula is used for 2011, the cost per family is \$6,549 for that year. When the value of donated cars is removed, the annual cost changes to \$6,134.

If the formula includes family members rather than just number of families served, the cost per person for 2011 becomes \$2,305 (183 parents and 337 children) when the in-kind value of cars is included and \$2,159 when car values are not included.

Another approach is to calculate **value** to a family per year. In the following example of a recently graduated participant, the family received an average of \$8,327 per year in program services. This example is fairly typical in that services can vary for a specific family from year to year and change most dramatically when a large ticket item is added such as a donated car, a WISP scholarship, child care assistance, or expensive classes for two children. The true **value** to this participant includes services that are paid by outside sponsors who donate to PS-S for this specific purpose as well as partner funded services such as scholarships and in-kind donations such as a donated car.

Cost of Serving a Typical Program Participant with an Associate Degree Career Plan

PARTICIPANT - Year 1		SERVICES - First 12 months		
<i>Parent + 2 children</i>	<i>Credits Earned</i>	<i>Services Received</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Value</i>
Earned GED	GED	Emergency Fund	PS-S Financed	\$275.00
Completed Career Plan		PS-S Scholarship	PS-S Financed	\$250.00
Applied to Community College		Self-Esteem Class	PS-S Financed	\$170.00
Applied for Financial Aid		Help with GED	PS-S Financed	\$100.00
Started 1st Semester		<i>PS-S Financed Total</i>		<i>\$795.00</i>
		New Clothes (2 children)	Outside Sponsor	\$200.00
		Holiday Help	Outside Sponsor	\$300.00
		Music Lessons - 6 mos (2 children)	Outside Sponsor	\$900.00
		Review Learning Disability (parent)	Outside Sponsor	\$300.00
		<i>Outside Sponsor Total</i>		<i>\$1,700.00</i>
		Car Repair	In-Kind Donation	\$300.00
		<i>In-Kind Donation Total</i>		<i>\$300.00</i>
		120 Advisor Hours	Staff Salary/Benefits	\$3,120.00
		<i>Staff Salary/Benefits Total</i>		<i>\$3,120.00</i>
TOTAL CREDITS	0	TOTAL VALUE - YEAR 1		\$5,915.00

PARTICIPANT - Year 2		SERVICES - Second 12 months		
<i>Parent + 2 children</i>	<i>Credits Earned</i>	<i>Services Received</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Value</i>
Completed Two Semesters	24	Emergency Fund	PS-S Financed	\$275.00
		Parenting Class	PS-S Financed	\$200.00
		PS-S Scholarship	PS-S Financed	\$500.00
		<i>PS-S Financed Total</i>		<i>\$975.00</i>
		New Clothes (2 children)	Outside Sponsor	\$200.00
		Holiday Help	Outside Sponsor	\$300.00
		Music Lessons - 1 yr (2 children)	Outside Sponsor	\$1,800.00
		<i>Outside Sponsor Total</i>		<i>\$2,300.00</i>
		WISP Scholarship (1 semester)	Partner Funded	\$750.00
		Philo Scholarship	Partner Funded	\$250.00
		<i>Partner Funded Total</i>		<i>\$250.00</i>
		Donated Computer	In-Kind Donation	\$150.00
		<i>In-Kind Donation Total</i>		<i>\$150.00</i>
		120 Advisor Hours	Staff Salary/Benefits	\$3,120.00
		<i>Staff Salary/Benefits Total</i>		<i>\$3,120.00</i>
TOTAL CREDITS	24	TOTAL VALUE - YEAR 2		\$7,545.00

Continued...

PARTICIPANT - Year 3		SERVICES - Third 12 months			
Parent + 2 children	Credits Earned	Services Received	Category	Value	
Completed Two Semesters	27	Emergency Fund	PS-S Financed	\$275.00	
		PS-S Scholarship	PS-S Financed	\$750.00	
		<i>PS-S Financed Total</i>			<i>\$1,025.00</i>
		New Clothes (2 children)	Outside Sponsor	\$200.00	
		Holiday Help	Outside Sponsor	\$300.00	
		Music Lessons - 1 yr (2 children)	Outside Sponsor	\$1,800.00	
		<i>Outside Sponsor Total</i>			<i>\$2,300.00</i>
		WISP Scholarship (2 semesters)	Partner Funded	\$1,500.00	
		Philo Scholarship	Partner Funded	\$500.00	
		<i>Partner Funded Total</i>			<i>\$2,000.00</i>
		Donated Car	In-Kind Donation	\$3,500.00	
		Volunteer Tutor	In-Kind Donation	\$240.00	
		<i>In-Kind Donation Total</i>			<i>\$3,740.00</i>
110 Advisor Hours	Staff Salary/Benefits	\$2,860.00			
<i>Staff Salary/Benefits Total</i>			<i>\$2,860.00</i>		
TOTAL CREDITS	27	TOTAL VALUE - YEAR 3		\$11,925.00	

PARTICIPANT - Year 4		SERVICES - Fourth 12 months			
Parent + 2 children	Credits Earned	Services Received	Category	Value	
Completed Final Semester Earned Associates Degree Completed Internship Hired by this company as an Accounting Clerk Earns \$15 x 40 hrs / wk Receives Health Insurance Employer will help with more classes PS-S GRAD !	0	Emergency Fund	PS-S Financed	\$275.00	
		PS-S Scholarship	PS-S Financed	\$1,000.00	
		<i>PS-S Financed Total</i>			<i>\$1,275.00</i>
		New Clothes (2 children)	Outside Sponsor	\$200.00	
		Holiday Help	Outside Sponsor	\$300.00	
		Music Lessons - 1 yr (2 children)	Outside Sponsor	\$1,800.00	
		<i>Outside Sponsor Total</i>			<i>\$2,300.00</i>
		WISP Scholarship (1 semester)	Partner Funded	\$750.00	
		Philo Scholarship	Partner Funded	\$600.00	
		<i>Partner Funded Total</i>			<i>\$1,350.00</i>
		Car Repair	In-Kind Donation	\$400.00	
		<i>In-Kind Donation Total</i>			<i>\$400.00</i>
		110 Advisor Hours	Staff Salary/Benefits	\$2,600.00	
<i>Staff Salary/Benefits Total</i>			<i>\$2,600.00</i>		
TOTAL CREDITS	0	TOTAL VALUE - YEAR 4		\$7,925.00	

Note: The **value** of services shown above for this particular family over a four year period totals \$33,310 for the four years with an average of \$8,327 per year. In this example, the participant's sister watches her children before and after school. If this family had accessed PS-S child care assistance, the value of services would have increased by about \$1,200 for year two and year three. Not included in the costs on the charts are overhead expenses for office space, administration, and fundraising.

Cost-Benefit Comparison

The graduated participant in the example was earning \$15 per hour full-time when she left the program, resulting in a first year annual income of \$31,200. Her first year income is close to the \$33,310 in total services provided by PS-S. For each year this person is employed, the value of her employment increases and the cost-benefit impact increases. The additional value of medical coverage is not calculated, but creates additional benefit and a higher level outcome.

In these situations the benefit is clear and far outpaces the cost of helping the participant become self-sustaining. While this person is no longer living in poverty as currently defined by the federal government, she is still not totally self-sufficient as measured by the Colorado Center on Law and Policy. Typically those participants graduating with medical careers are most likely to be totally self-sufficient when leaving PS-S. Those participants who leave the program early while still enrolled in school will not demonstrate dramatic outcomes immediately, but they will be much better positioned to become self-sufficient in the future.

This participant selected a career plan that requires a two year Associate's degree. Additional education would likely lead to even higher annual income. This program participant set a career goal of becoming an accounting clerk. She also hopes to later complete a longer term goal by earning a Bachelor's degree after she leaves PS-S. With this current job, she is no longer considered to be living in poverty but is not quite fully self-sufficient according to the 2011 Self-Sufficiency Standard that indicates at least \$16 per hour for a parent with two children in school.

PS-S frequently assists participants with Bachelor's degrees. The participant described above is on a faster track and not prepared to go to school for four years or longer at this point in her life. She is fortunate to have a new employer willing to help her take additional classes.

The PS-S advisor time required to assist this participant is higher the first and second year, as the participant completes career planning and then begins school. The third and fourth year are less intensive in this particular situation, as the participant was very motivated and active in both her job search and internship planning and did not require as much advisor time and assistance. Some participants continue to have a high need for advisor services throughout their time with PS-S.

A cost-benefit comparison for a typical participant earning a four year degree can be made available as well. The scenario is similar in that the PS-S graduate's first year family income and growth potential outpace the cost of services provided. Less tangible but nonetheless significant are the benefits gained by the children. The single parents in Project Self-Sufficiency model successful behaviors for their children. As parents succeed, children learn by their example.