

To whom it may concern:

My name is Grant Kozisek. I am 17 years old and have a brother who is 20 who has a disability. As someone who has been around kids with challenges since birth, these friends mean the world to me. This is why I am concerned about the effectiveness of Medicaid and the implications that it has on the everyday life of my friends.

Social Security Disability Income:

- While Social Security is a Federal program and Medicaid is a state program, the impacts of the 2 systems and their lack of resources correlate closely with each other.
- A single adult in Kansas needs \$27,378 in order to live just above the poverty line in Kansas ([Link](#))
 - This does not account for the countless medications, doctor's appointments, procedures, care, etc. that might be needed to pay out of pocket.
- My brother, for example, gets around \$900 a month from SSDI, preventing him from covering his own cost and achieving an adequate standard of living.
 - Jackson receives \$10,800 per year - \$27,378 (average income to be above the poverty line) = -(\$16,578)
 - This leaves people with disabilities thousands of dollars below the poverty line, often requiring families to support them.
 - If a child with a disability has a job, it takes an even further toll, removing some of their Social Security benefits.
 - Therefore they are punished for holding a job resulting in reduced benefits.
 - All in all, Social Security does not adequately provide income for people with disabilities, worsening the impacts of the flawed Medicaid system.

Family Income:

- Having a child with a disability impacts the families income as well
 - When a child with a disability ages out of the school system, it puts a burden on families. The families are required to find assistance, enroll their children into a Day Program or be accountable 24/7. While Medicaid will pay for these services, it is up to the families to find the needed care/program for their children.
 - If the child is able to be enrolled in a Day Program, the next challenge is transportation which is not currently available.
 - Therefore, the family is required to ensure that the dependent gets to and from their respective locations.
 - This service is not covered by Medicaid unless the child works.
 - Remember earlier, I stated that if the child works, they receive a reduction in their Social Security benefits.
 - Often, this requires a family member to retire or quit their job, just so they can transport their dependents to the programs they rely on throughout the day.
 - This takes away income from families that so desperately need it already, just so they can provide necessary resources to their kids.

Group Homes & Day Programs:

- With group homes and care being paid by Medicaid, their reimbursement is so low that it doesn't provide adequate support.
 - For example, group homes often have to pay for food via food stamps, because their reimbursement doesn't cover all of their expenses.
 - With my parents looking at possible day programs, many programs that would be perfect for my brother don't accept Medicaid because of the low amount of funding that Medicaid provides to group homes and day programs
 - This further proves the need for improved funding

Poverty & Homelessness:

- Together, these all push the ableist mindset that is in place today, saying that no matter what these kids do, they are forced to live on programs that are meant for the impoverished or completely homeless unless they live on their parents income for the rest of their lives
 - People with disabilities make up 12.3% of the homeless population because of the inability to provide for themselves due to the poor funding of programs like Medicaid ([Link](#))

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to reach out if you have any comments or questions.
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