

Virginia Three Branch Team Implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

The Family First Prevention Services Act was adopted in February 2018 as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act (HR. 1892). Family First makes federal resources available through reimbursement for mental health services, substance abuse treatment and improved parenting skills for families of children at imminent risk of entering foster care. Family First is the first major modernization and overhaul of Title IV-E and IVB funds in three decades and represents a significant milestone in ongoing efforts to transform the child welfare system.

VISION

Keep children safe, strengthen families and reduce the need for foster care whenever it is safe to do so

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Prevention Services

Family-Based Placements

Non-Family-Based Placements

Evidence-Based Programs

Resources & Financial Accountability

GOALS

Target resources and services that prevent foster care placements and help children remain safely in their homes

Ensure children maintain family connections needed for healthy development and emotional well-being while finding safe, permanent homes for children as quickly as possible

Safely reduce the inappropriate use of non-family-based placements; when a non-family-based placement is needed, ensure children are placed in the least restrictive, highest-quality setting appropriate to their individual needs

Advance the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based, trauma-informed programs that appropriately and effectively improve child safety, ensure permanency, and promote child and family well-being

Build capacity and leverage resources to provide effective services to prevent foster care placement while ensuring financial accountability

STRATEGIES (Initial implementation by October 1, 2019)

PS1: Develop the prevention services workflow including prevention services planning, case management process, and practice guidance and training
PS2: Improve ease of access to prevention services
PS3: Ensure quality of programs and services through implementation of a Quality Assurance and Continuous Quality Improvement Process

FBP1: Increase the number of children placed in the care of relatives when removal from the home is necessary
FBP2: Create a Kinship Navigator program to help kinship caregivers learn about, find, and use programs and services; provide technical assistance and evaluate the effectiveness of Kinship Navigator Programs
FBP3: Design Virginia-specific model licensing standards for foster care placements
FBP4: Increase foster care placements in family-based residential treatment programs

NFBP1: Develop licensing requirements for non-family-based placements to attain status as a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP), defined as a program that:

- Has a trauma-informed treatment model
- Has registered or licensed nursing staff or other licensed clinical staff providing care
- Facilitates family outreach and participation in child's treatment program
- Provides discharge planning and family-based aftercare supports
- Is licensed and nationally accredited

NFBP2: Develop a system for timely assessments to determine appropriateness of placement in QRTP setting

EBP1: Promote the use of evidence-based programs; if evidence-based programs cannot be used, encourage programs at a minimum to collect quality data and follow research-based standards to evaluate effectiveness
EBP2: Increase and enhance evidence-based programs consistent with the FFPSA focus on trauma, mental health, substance abuse, and in-home parent skills-based programs
EBP3: Identify programs that show promising practice and establish strategies to help those programs move to becoming evidence-based
EBP4: Create an evaluation system to ensure fidelity to the practice model and determine outcomes achieved and how information learned can be used to refine and improve practices

R1: Clearly define Maintenance of Effort (MOE) as it relates to FFPSA
R2: Design and implement a fiscal auditing system for monitoring expenditures and assessing effectiveness of services
R3: Promote partnerships to leverage and increase funding; repurpose funding streams to better meet the needs of children and families
R4: Develop payment procedures in compliance with FFPSA, including procedure for IV-E ineligible payments for prevention services and non-family-based placements

To achieve the Vision of keeping children safe and reducing the need for foster care, the Family First Prevention Services Act will be grounded by **four key principles:**

Data: Implementation will be done in a data-driven manner, ensuring services developed and provided are informed by outcomes

Communication: VDSS will promote reliable, accurate, transparent, and timely two-way communication among all stakeholders

Integration: FFPSA implementation will be carefully aligned with the Child & Family Services Plan (CFSP), Process Improvement Plan (PIP), IV-E Plan, and the Virginia Children's Services Practice Model

Track and Adjust: The Implementation Plan will be continually monitored and adjusted to meet emerging needs, and updates to the plan will be communicated on a regular basis