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Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

**The Changing Landscape of Texas
Child Welfare Strategic Plan**

Agenda

- **Overview of Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)**
- **Texas' FFPSA Strategic Plan**
- **Questions**
- **Webinar will be posted on the DFPS public website.**



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What is FFPSA?

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) passed in February 2018.

FFPSA targets improved services and outcomes for four main populations:

- Children placed in congregate care;
- Kinship caregivers and the children they care for;
- Parents who struggle with substance abuse and their children; and
- Children who are at imminent risk, as defined by Texas, for entering foster care.



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What is FFPSA?

FFPSA aims to:

- Elevate the quality of specific types of prevention services provided to families with children at risk of entering foster care.
- Encourage and support kin placements.
- Support pregnant and parenting foster care youth.
- Decrease the use of, and time spent in, congregate care settings.
- Allow children to be placed with their parents in substance abuse treatment facilities.



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Texas' Decision

November 2018, Texas notified the Federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) that it intended to delay implementation of certain provisions of FFPSA until September 2021.



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State Legislation and Planning

- SB 355 requires DFPS to submit a strategic plan for implementation of the prevention services provisions of FFPSA.
- SB 781 requires DFPS to submit an analysis and recommendations associated with the placement provisions of FFPSA.
- Strategic plan provides information on the existing Texas landscape for the programs affected by FFPSA and the provisions of this important federal legislation and presents opportunities for its implementation in Texas.



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FFPSA Required Provisions

FFPSA includes five required provisions:

1. Creation of an Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) system to quickly and securely exchange data and documents for children placed across state lines;
2. Creation of a statewide fatality prevention plan to prevent abuse and neglect fatalities;
3. Establishment of protocols to prevent children from being inappropriately diagnosed and to ensure appropriate placements;
4. Implementation of procedures for providers to conduct abuse and neglect registry and criminal records checks, including fingerprint-based background checks; and
5. Compliance with proposed federal model licensing standards.



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FFPSA Optional Provisions

Evidence-Based Prevention Services

- FFPSA allows for a 50% federal match if the state invests in evidence-based prevention services for families with children at imminent risk of entering the foster care system, including children whose adoption or guardianship is at risk of disruption or dissolution, as well as pregnant and parenting foster youth.
- The services must meet criteria for three levels of evidence: well-supported, supported or promising practices as determined by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse.



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Current Clearinghouse Programs

• Mental Health

- Functional Family Therapy – Well-supported
- Multisystemic Therapy – Well-supported
- Parent-Child Interaction Therapy – Well-supported
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – Promising
- Brief Strategic Family Therapy-Well-Supported
- Child-Parent Psychotherapy-Promising
- Incredible Years-School age basic program-Promising
- Incredible Years-Toddler basic program-Promising
- Interpersonal Psychotherapy (Weissman, et al Manual)-Supported
- Multidimensional Family Therapy-Supported
- Triple P-Positive Parenting Program-Group (Level 4)-Promising
- Triple P-Positive Parenting Program-Self-Directed (Level 4)-Promising
- Triple P-Positive Parenting Program-Standard Level 4)-Promising



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Current Clearinghouse Programs

- **Substance Abuse**

- Families Facing the Future – Supported
- Multisystemic Therapy – Well-supported
- Methadone Maintenance Program – Promising
- Motivational Interviewing – Well-supported
- Brief Strategic Family Therapy-Well-Supported
- Multidimensional Family Therapy-Supported



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Current Clearinghouse Programs

- **Parenting Skills and Supports**
 - Healthy Families America – Well-supported
 - Nurse-Family Partnership – Well-supported
 - Parents as Teachers – Well-supported
 - Brief Strategic Family Therapy-Well-Supported
 - Safe Care-Supported
 - Home Builders-Intensive Family Preservation and Reunification-Well Supported
 - Multidimensional Family Therapy-Supported
 - SafeCare-Supported
- **Kinship Navigator**
 - None Approved



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FFPSA Optional Provisions

Congregate Care Settings Eligible for Title IV-E Reimbursement

- As of September 29, 2021, Placement requirements for Federal Foster Care reimbursement will change.
- If a placement does not meet new requirements, IV-E funding can only be used for 2 weeks of placement.
- The funding limitations of FFPSA will apply once a child is moved to new placement after September 29, 2021.

Federal match is available for the following placements:

- Foster Family Homes (based on guidelines outlined in FFPSA).
- Providers specializing in providing prenatal, post-partum, or parenting supports for youth.
- Supervised settings for young adults over the age of 18 who are living independently.
- Residential care for children and youth who are found to be, or at risk of becoming sex trafficking victims.
- Qualified Treatment Programs (QRTPs) Residential^{1,2}



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QRTPs

In order for a provider to have a program that is considered to be a QRTP, the program must meet all prescribed criteria as set out in FFPSA. These include having:

1. A trauma-informed treatment model.
2. Registered or licensed nursing staff and other clinical staff who are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and on-site during business hours.
3. A program that facilitates participation of family members in the child's treatment program.
4. A program that facilitates outreach to the family members of the child, including siblings, and involves documenting and maintaining contact information for any known biological family and fictive kin of the child.



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QRTPs

5. Documentation demonstrating how the family members were integrated into the treatment process, including post-discharge, and how sibling connections are maintained.
6. A program that provides discharge planning and family-based after care for at least 6 months post discharge.
7. Accreditation by one of three listed accrediting bodies, or any other independent, not-for-profit accrediting organization as approved by ACF.



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Additional FFPSA Optional Provisions

Placements in Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities

- Texas may claim Title IV-E reimbursement for foster care maintenance expenses for up to 12 months for a child in DFPS conservatorship who is placed with a parent in a residential family-based treatment facility for substance abuse.



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Kinship Navigator

- The Kinship Navigator Programs envisioned by FFPSA are unique because they do not require the family to be involved with a state child welfare program to access additional services. There are currently no approved Kinship Navigator Programs on the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse and thus no opportunities to draw down additional federal funds for this type of service.

FFTA Funding



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- In December 2019, the President signed into law the Family First Transition Act (FFTA), which will assist DFPS in FFPSA implementation efforts by providing states a one-time transition funding to assist with implementing FFPSA.
- By providing states transition funding, the federal legislature recognized the upfront investment that states must make in order to implement the provisions of FFPSA.
- This funding must be used to advance the goals of FFPSA.
- This funding is not eligible for additional federal match, unlike additional investment of new state funds.
- DFPS has received \$50,265,902 in funding under FFTA to spend through federal fiscal year 2025.

Considerations for Implementation

Current Title IV-E Foster Care Candidate

- Focusing on children at imminent risk of entering foster care, Texas currently has a definition for a Title IV-E foster care candidate in DFPS policy developed for FBSS.

Expanded Title IV-E Foster Care Candidate

- Should the Legislature direct, under FFPSA, the State may expand evidence-based services to the existing candidate population and also may expand the definition of foster care candidate. These changes will determine eligible populations for FFPSA prevention services.

Populations can include:

1. Children receiving family preservation services through DFPS.
2. Children who have exited DFPS conservatorship through reunification, managing conservatorship, or adoption and are at risk of disruption and re-entry.
3. Pregnant youth or parent in DFPS conservatorship.



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Implementation Options

1. Coordination of FBSS Services in CBC Catchment Areas

- a. Incorporate FBSS Services into existing CBC Model as a new stage of implementation
- b. Contract for FBSS Services in existing catchment areas under a new (non-SSCC) contract

2. FFPSA Implementation – Prevention Services

- a. Coordination of FBSS Services in CBC including FFPSA Prevention Services
- b. Build FBSS capacity for FFPSA Prevention Services
- c. Study the coordination of FBSS services in CBC, including FFPSA Prevention Services
- d. Pilot FFPSA Prevention Service coordination through PEI community grants
- e. Expand Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP) services for pregnant and parenting foster youth
- f. Expand capacity for FFPSA Prevention In-Home Parenting Programs
- g. CPS Rural Service Area: Evidence-Based Prevention Services Model

3. FFPSA options for Congregate Care and Children with a High Level of Need - ORTP Pilot



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Options to Increase Prevention Efforts

Coordination of FBSS Services in Community Based Care (CBC) Including FFPSA Prevention Services

- Includes implementing FBSS in the CBC model, but implementing in a way that draws down IV-E funding for evidence-based prevention services.

Build FBSS Capacity for FFPSA Prevention Services

- DFPS could use existing agency contracting structure to purchase evidence based-prevention services included on the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse, including but not limited to in-home parenting services not currently purchased today and therapeutic interventions.

Study the Coordination of FBSS Services in CBC, Including FFPSA Prevention Services

- In order to allow for further consideration of incorporating FBSS into the CBC model, DFPS could pay for a study to fully inform that transition.



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Options to Increase Prevention Efforts

Pilot FFPSA Prevention Service Coordination through PEI Community Grants

- PEI could pilot a model where a single community organization would be knowledgeable of their community resources and serve as a central hub to receive referrals, assess family information for best community service fit, and connect families to FFPSA prevention services.

Expand Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP) Services for Pregnant and Parenting Foster Youth

- DFPS can expand evidence-based prevention services eligible for federal match by serving additional pregnant and parenting foster youth through the HIP Program.

Expand Capacity for FFPSA Prevention In-Home Parenting Programs

- DFPS can expand existing evidence-based in-home parenting programs that are proven to increase parents' protective capacity therefore decreasing the likelihood of their child's entry into foster care.



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Options to Increase Prevention Efforts

CPS Rural Service Area: Evidence-Based Prevention Services Model

- Training FBSS caseworkers in an evidenced-based parenting model would ensure that the in-home training rural families receive in FBSS is high quality, consistent with FFPSA, and assures fidelity to an evidence-based prevention service model.



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QRTP Pilot

QRTP Pilot

- There is a small subset of children and youth in care that have extraordinarily high needs, for whom a QRTP may be appropriate.
- DFPS will use the results of the QRTP pilot to help inform an appropriate rate to reflect the requirements of a QRTP.
- The state could benefit from more information learned through a pilot that would have minimal state investment, as federal funds could be used to complete this work. At the end of the pilot period, DFPS will have the information necessary to make a recommendation about the costs and benefits of full implementation.



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QRTP Pilot

Estimated timeline

- Hire staff to project manage and oversee QRTP pilot program- September-December 2020
- Develop and release the RFA, design processes and protocols for QRTP pilot program including independent assessment, court requirements, etc. January 2021-January 2022
- Post RFA- January-March 2022
- Enter into contract(s) for QRTP pilot program- April 2022
- QRTP, DFPS, Court readiness work- April-June 2022



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Kinship Caregivers

DFPS received kinship navigator grants authorized by FFPSA since its enactment in 2018. DFPS was awarded funding for three consecutive grant years.

- DFPS used \$156,000 to conduct a study of various approaches to implement effective Kinship Navigator Programs. Additionally, DFPS used \$426,000 to partner with HHSC on specific enhancements for 2-1-1 to enhance responsiveness to kinship families seeking assistance from this statewide resource.



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Of the current grant year funding, DFPS plans to use:

- Approximately \$550,000 towards additional 2-1-1 enhancements.
- Approximately \$50,000 for evaluation of a Kinship Navigator Program in Harris County.
- Approximately \$450,000 for planning grants to develop and implement programming and strategies to serve kinship caregivers by the PEI division.

More Information

Visit our website to sign up for updates:

http://dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Family_First



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You may also send questions to:

DFPSFamilyFirstPreventionAct@dfps.state.tx.us