The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) changes the child welfare system by allowing states to use federal funds under Title IV of the Social Security Act to support families and prevent foster care placements. Georgia began phased implementation of FFPSA in Fall 2021.¹ There are two main components of the act:

1) optional foster care prevention services and programs
2) required changes to congregate care

Family First services will be offered in Chatham, Cherokee, DeKalb, and Richmond counties in the beginning of 2023. Services will include Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy, two evidence-based treatments to address behaviors of youth at risk for out-of-home placement.² ³

### Foster Care Prevention Services and Programs

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

- Children who are candidates for foster care, but who can safely remain at home
- Children in foster care who are pregnant or parenting
- Parents or kin caregivers of the children

Eligibility is **not** dependent on family income

**SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**

- Mental health services
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment services
- In-home parenting programs

For more details on who is eligible for these services and programs, see the definition for candidacy on Blueprint for Family First. The Prevention Plan identified BSFT, FFT, MST, HFA, and PAT for inclusion in 5 year plan.

**How does a state obtain funding for services or programs?**

- State must maintain a written prevention plan for each eligible child and collect data on programs and services administered.
- Services or programs must be **trauma-informed and evidence-based**.
- Services or programs must be based on promising, supported, or well-supported practices.

Half of the cost of prevention services, training, and related administrative tasks can be covered by Title IV-E funds.

If Georgia postpones the effective date of congregate care changes, it must also delay requesting prevention funds until the same date.

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¹ The Family First Prevention Services Act
² Foster Care Prevention Services and Programs
³ Half of the cost of prevention services, training, and related administrative tasks can be covered by Title IV-E funds.
Congregate Care

Starting September 30, 2021, FFPSA limits foster care payments for group homes for up to two weeks only. Although FFPSA limits federal reimbursement for foster care maintenance payments for group homes, the limitations do not currently impact the ability to place youth in group homes if it is determined to be the most appropriate placement.4

Qualified Residential Treatment Programs

QRTPs must meet the following requirements:5

- Use a trauma-informed treatment model
- Have a registered or licensed nursing and clinical staff onsite
- Facilitate family outreach and participation
- Document family integration into the treatment process
- Provide discharge planning and family-based supports for at least 6 months after discharge
- Be licensed and accredited by one of the following:
  - Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities
  - Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
  - Council on Accreditation
  - Other nonprofit accrediting organization approved by the Secretary
- Meet the treatment needs of children as determined by an assessment within 30 days of placement
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