

THE FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT (FFPSA) IMPLEMENTATION 5 KEY ACTIONS PROVIDERS CAN TAKE



KEEP MEANINGFUL RESULTS AT THE CENTER

- ▶ Base your engagement with stakeholders on the results children and families need to be safe, healthy and well.
- ▶ Seek out evidence based practices that are results oriented and determine how you can potentially implement them within your organization.
- ▶ Always track your data regardless of the service you are providing.



WORK TO INTEGRATE SYSTEMS

Think of FFPSA as an “energy center” for focusing on implementing what is in the law, but also for seizing windows of opportunity that FFPSA implementation processes and conversations are offering up, such as:

- ▶ Doing more with multi-generational family-based approaches;
- ▶ Thinking about how to leverage the FFPSA-built infrastructure for delivering evidence-based practices to populations beyond those who are eligible for FFPSA;
- ▶ Serving children and families further upstream before the child welfare system is engaged; and
- ▶ Connecting public leaders across agencies for shared learning and planning.



ALIGN YOUR ORGANIZATION WITH THE FUTURE STATE

- ▶ Align your work to the state's values and goals. Find out if your state agency has a set of guiding principles for systems design that they are following and if they have a directive from the Governor that is directly or indirectly related to FFPSA implementation. Crosswalk your organization's vision, mission, goals, guiding principles, etc. with those of the state agency.
- ▶ Remain open to transforming your organization within the provisions of FFPSA.
- ▶ Engage in strategic thinking and planning with your leadership team around how you keep your footprint in your community while transitioning into evidence based and best practices aligned with FFPSA.
- ▶ Prepare to articulate, to the state agency and other decisionmakers (e.g. elected officials, community foundations, donors) the cost of optimal implementation of FFPSA for your organization.

5 ACTIONS PROVIDERS CAN TAKE (CONTINUED)



BE A PARTNER IN LEADING CHANGE

- ▶ Be a champion within the state efforts and be proactive in engaging with the public child welfare agency as a supportive partner. Do not wait for them to come to you.
- ▶ Learn how your state is approaching FFPSA implementation. For example, in Virginia they are using the Three Branch Model. In Iowa & Oklahoma, there are multi-sector leadership efforts.
- ▶ Determine your critical value-add to the discussion, including bringing ideas for solutions to challenges. For example, draft proposed definitions and parameters for concepts in the FFPSA law like “after care supports” and “family engagement”, that are up to a state to define. Another example is being a voice for a data-informed roll out of the FFPSA Prevention Services like Saint Francis did for Kansas.



SHARE INFORMATION AND USE FRAMING SCIENCE

- ▶ Effectively communicate the role that providers and community based organizations play in a successful FFPSA implementation.
- ▶ Use framing science and the “Constructing Well-Being” frame to describe the work that you do.
- ▶ Avoid catch phrases like “three hots and a cot” and “we’re a X# bed facility” and use descriptive terms for the substantive work you do that improves outcomes for children who need treatment.
- ▶ Meet with the elected officials at all levels of government who represent your jurisdiction to share information about FFPSA provisions, how your organization is aligning with implementation efforts and what is needed going forward. Saint Francis has framed communications tools to assist you with this.
- ▶ Advocate with your congressional delegation for: the Family First Transition Act, a solution to the interplay between the Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTT) designation and the IMD Exclusion, and the reauthorization of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

PROGRAM POPULATIONS

FFPSA provides an important opportunity to focus on program populations that currently make up a large percentage of the child welfare system.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Fifty percent of children who enter foster care in the U.S. are age 5 or younger. Most states foster care entries hover around that same percentage. A specialized FFPSA implementation strategy focused on addressing the distinct needs of young children and their families is advisable as part of an overall state plan. Such an approach is a vital complement to efforts to safely keep a greater number of children with their families and out of foster care.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Two-thirds of juvenile justice-involved youth have also had some contact with the child welfare system. It is incumbent upon providers to take the opportunities created in both FFPSA and recent reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act to better serve this population.

In addition, two of the Prevention Clearinghouse’s Well-Supported practices, Functional Family Therapy (FFT) and Multisystemic Therapy (MST) are models traditionally and successfully utilized with justice involved youth.

Saint Francis and Grutza Consulting are doing in-depth work on both of these populations and can advise your efforts.

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