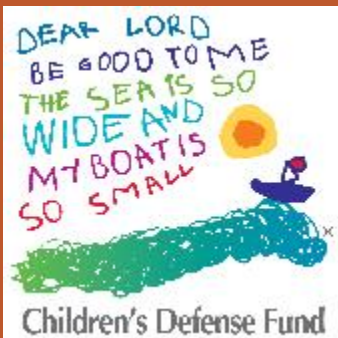




# The Family First Prevention Services Act

Historic Child  
Welfare Reforms  
will Improve  
Outcomes for  
Vulnerable Children  
& Families



**Stefanie Sprow**

Deputy Director, Child Welfare and Mental Health  
Children's Defense Fund  
[ssprow@childrensdefense.org](mailto:ssprow@childrensdefense.org)

# Background

- Challenges with federal child welfare funding
  - Majority of federal funds only available for foster care; need for upfront services
  - Too many children inappropriately placed in group care
- Progress over the years
  - Incremental improvements for families over past 30 years
  - Bipartisan and bicameral proposals in 2016
- Trends in foster care
  - Number of children in care rising
  - Opioid epidemic devastating families and overwhelming some systems
- Passed February 9, 2018 as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018

# Goals of Family First

- Five major goals:
  1. Keep children safely with family with prevention services and treatment
  2. Promote the involvement of kin
  3. Reduce the overreliance on group care
  4. Help address the opioid crisis
  5. Support youth transitioning from care

# 1. Keeping Children Safely with Family with Prevention Services and Treatment

Beginning **October 1, 2019**, Title IV-E funds guaranteed for eligible services to prevent entry/reentry into foster care:

- Eligibility:
  - “Candidates” for foster care, parents/kin caregivers, and pregnant or parenting foster youth
- Duration:
  - 12 months
- Services and Programs:
  - Mental health prevention and treatment
  - Substance abuse prevention and treatment
  - In-home parent skill-based programs (parent skills training, parent education, home visiting, individual and family therapy)
- Doesn't have to be statewide

# 1. Keeping Children Safely with Family with Prevention Services and Treatment (Continued)

## Other key details:

- Trauma-informed
- Approved evidence-based programs: promising, supported, well-supported
  - HHS to release guidance October 1, 2018 on pre-approved list of services and programs
- All children eligible, regardless of family income
- Maintenance of Effort
- Tribes and U.S. territories eligible
- Performance measures and data collection
- Reimbursement rates
  - FY2020-FY2026 – 50% federal
  - FY2027 and beyond – FMAP

# 1. Keeping Children Safely with Family with Prevention Services and Treatment (Continued)

Title IV-E funds available for children in residential family-based substance abuse treatment with a parent:

- 12 months
- Trauma-informed
- All children eligible, regardless of income
- **Effective October 1, 2018!**

## 2. Promote the Involvement of Kin

- Kin eligible for the new prevention services
  - Prevention services also for adoption and guardianships at risk of disruption or dissolution
- Kinship Navigator Programs (**Effective October 1, 2018!**)
  - Evidence-based, 50% federal match
  - *\*\*\$20 million additional funds for KNP's in omnibus passed last week!*
- Improving licensing standards for relative foster homes
  - Model licensing standards to be issued by HHS Oct 1, 2018
  - States notify HHS how they compare to the model standards by April 1, 2019

### 3. Reduce the Overreliance on Group Care

Beginning **October 1, 2019**, states need to safely reduce the inappropriate use of group care.

After 2 weeks of entering foster care, Title IV-E maintenance payments will *only* be available for certain settings:

- Foster family homes
- Placements for pregnant or parenting youth
- Supervised independent living for youth 18+
- Specialized placements for victims and those at risk of sex trafficking
- Children with parent(s) in a residential treatment facility for substance abuse
- Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP)

Title IV-E Administrative Costs still available for group care



### 3. Reduce the Overreliance on Congregate Care (Continued)

#### Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP)

- Trauma-informed treatment model
- For children with serious emotional or behavioral disorders or disturbances
- Has a registered or licensed nursing and other licensed clinical staff onsite, consistent with the QRTP's treatment model
- Facilitates outreach to the child's family and their participation in the child's treatment program
- Provides discharge planning and family-based aftercare supports for at least 6 months after the child is discharged
- Licensed and accredited

## 4. Help address the opioid crisis

- Improving the Regional Partnership Grants (**Effective Oct 1, 2018!**)
- New Title IV-E reimbursement for substance abuse prevention and treatment services
- Title IV-E foster care payments for children in family residential treatment programs (**Effective Oct 1, 2018!**)

## 5. Support Youth Transitioning From Care

### Improving the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (Effective **NOW!**)

- Extends Chafee services to age 23 (previously 18-21)
  - \*Only applies to states that extend foster care to age 21
- Extends eligibility for Education and Training Vouchers to age 26 (previously 23)
- Ensures youth provided official documentation to prove they were in foster care – needed for accessing Medicaid to age 26!

# Ready, Set, GO!!

- Don't wait!
- Start engaging your state and collecting information
  - Is your state using any evidence-based prevention models?
  - How is your state using Medicaid to support mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment?
  - Does your state have Kinship Navigator Programs?  
Residential family-based substance abuse treatment programs for children and parents?
  - What is the percentage of children in group care?
  - What is the percentage of children who exit care after a month?

# Learn More!

For more information on the Family First Prevention Services Act, visit:

<http://www.childrensdefense.org/policy/welfare/family-first-prevention.html>

- [Two-page summary](#)
- [Detailed summary](#)
- [Implementation timeline](#)
- [Law language](#)
- [Final enacted provisions compared to earlier House-approved language & prior law](#) (Drafted by CRS)
- [Broad support for the original version of the Family First Prevention Services Act passed by the House in June 2016](#)

Questions?

# For More Information

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Deputy Director, Child Welfare and Mental Health  
Children's Defense Fund

[ssprow@childrensdefense.org](mailto:ssprow@childrensdefense.org)

