The Family First Prevention Services Act (P.L. 115-123)

Christine Calpin
Managing Director – Public Policy

SAFE
STRONG
SUPPORTIVE

casey family programs

safe children | strong families | supportive communities
Casey Family Programs

• The nation's largest operating foundation focused on safely reducing the need for foster care and building Communities of Hope for children & families.

• We work to influence long-lasting improvements to the safety and success of children, families and the communities where they live.
  – We operate in all 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.
  – We have direct agreements with 16 tribes.
  – We operate 7 field offices providing direct services to youth in care.
Federal-State Dynamic in Child Welfare

• State has primary responsibility to ensure child welfare.

• Federal role in child welfare.
  – Financial assistance to states for certain activities and populations.
  – Majority of dedicated federal child welfare dollars support foster care.
  – Receipt of federal assistance is tied to state performance measures of safety, permanency and well-being (CFSR).
After years of decline, the number of children in foster care has steadily risen in recent years.
Children enter foster care overwhelmingly due to neglect.

% of children entering care for each removal reason*

(note: multiple reasons may be selected for a single child, Federal Fiscal Year 2015)

- Neglect: 35%
- Parent Substance Abuse: 14%
- Caretaker Inability to Cope: 14%
- Physical Abuse: 13%
- Child Behavior Problems: 11%
- Inadequate Housing: 10%
- Parent Incarcerated: 8%
- Abandonment: 5%
- Sexual Abuse: 4%
- Child Substance Abuse: 2%
- Child Disability: 2%
- Parent Death: 1%
- Relinquishment: 1%

Source: Adoption and Foster Care Reporting System (AFCARS) FY2016
Nationally, the percentage of children entering foster care due to parental substance use has risen.
Children Exiting Foster Care

What happens to children who end up in foster care? Most are safely reunited with their own parent or extended family. A significant number are adopted. Communities across America have shown that they can help more children to grow up in safe, stable families by providing appropriate and timely services after they return home.

Among children who exited foster care in 2016:

- 51% were reunified with their families
- 23% exited to adoption
- 17% exited to live with relatives or guardians
- 8% aged out
- 2% other*

"Other" includes transferred to another agency, ran away or died.
Numbers may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Data source: AFCARS Report #24
Child Welfare: What do we know is best for children and families?

- The goal in child welfare should be to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of children and their families.
- We know to support child well-being, it is important to intervene as early as possible.
- We know that the act of removing children from their families and homes creates emotional distress and trauma that should be avoided whenever possible.
- We know some children can be better served by remaining safely at home while their parents receive the community services and support they need.
Child Welfare Spending

• States spent $29.1 billion in federal, state, and local funds for child welfare purposes in State Fiscal Year 2014.

• States receive federal dollars for child welfare activities from a variety of sources.
Child Welfare Funding: What is the Challenge?

• The major federal funding source for foster care is not aligned with best practice.
  – It is triggered when a child enters out-of-home care.
  – It is tied to a non-existent eligibility program.
  – It does not promote the integration of well-being with work to promote safety and permanency.

• Efforts to support prevention activities have largely been funded through state and local dollars.
National Child Welfare Funding
SFY2014: $29.1 billion

Source: Data from Child Trends Report 2016
Federal funds for child welfare
SFY2014: $12.8 billion

Source: Data from Child Trends Report 2016
Federal Funding: Why must it change?

• Dedicated Funding
  – Title IV-E primarily pays for maintaining eligible children in licensed settings.
  – None of this funding can be used for prevention or post-reunification.

• Other Child Welfare Funding
  – Other funding sources provide flexibility, but are limited.
  – Child welfare is not the primary focus.
Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018

• New option for States and Tribes to claim Title IV-E funds for prevention activities
• New policy to ensure appropriate placements for children in foster care
• Reauthorization of numerous child welfare funding streams
• And much more…. 
## Big Opportunities for Child Welfare

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<td>New federal $$ for prevention</td>
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<td>$$ for children placed in group homes with little oversight</td>
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<td>No $$ for child placed with parent in residential treatment</td>
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New Funding for Prevention Services

• Beginning October 1, 2019, states may receive open-ended entitlement (Title IV-E) funding for evidence-based prevention services.

  **Who:** 1) Children at imminent risk of placement in foster care or 2) pregnant and parenting youth in foster care are eligible. Their parents or kinship caregivers also are eligible.

• No income test for eligibility.

• Defines children who are “candidates for foster care” as those who can remain safely at home or in a kinship placement with receipt of services.
New Funding for Prevention Services

• Services eligible for federal reimbursement:
  – mental health services
  – substance abuse prevention services
  – in-home parenting skills

• Services will need to be evidence-based.

• There is no limit on how many times a child or parent can receive prevention services.
Ensuring Appropriate Placements in Foster Care

• Beginning October 1, 2019 there will be new requirements on what foster care placements receive federal reimbursement.
  – Goal is to encourage placement in family settings.
  – To address concerns around an overreliance on congregate care, the law creates “qualified residential treatment programs” with a number of requirements.
Ensuring Appropriate Placements in Foster Care

The following placement options already are allowable under current Title IV-E and will continue under Family First:

• Facility for pregnant and parenting youth
• Supervised independent living for youth 18 years and older
• Specialized placements for youth who are victims of or at-risk of becoming victims of sex trafficking
• Foster Family Home (defined) – no more than 6 children in foster care, with some exceptions
Ensuring Appropriate Placements in Foster Care

• Beginning as early as October 1, 2019, after 2 weeks in care, Title IV-E federal support will be available for foster care maintenance payments for eligible youth placed in a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP).

• States may opt to delay this provision for up to 2 years. However, delays in implementation of these provisions requires a delay in when they state may receive prevention services funding.
What is a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP)?

• Has a trauma informed treatment model and a registered or licensed nursing and other licensed clinical staff onsite, consistent with the QRTP’s treatment model.
• Facilitates outreach and engagement of the child’s family in the child’s treatment plan
• Provides discharge planning and family-based aftercare supports for at least 6 months
• Licensed by the state and accredited

There are no time limits on how long a child can be placed in a QRTP and receive federal support as long as the placement continues to meet his/her needs as determined by assessment.
New Resources to Address Opioid Crisis

• Beginning, October 1, 2018, states may receive funding for children in foster care placed with their parent in a licensed residential family-based treatment facility for up to 12 months.

• Competitive Grant Funding for Regional Partnership Grants to Address Substance Use is currently available.
  – Applications are due August 13.
  – The state Child Welfare agency must partner in the application.
Additional select items to promote safety, permanency, and well-being

• Provides Title IV-E support for evidence-based kinship navigator programs at 50%, beginning October 1, 2018.

• Requires HHS to identify model foster parent licensing standards; states have to then identify the licensing standards they implement.

• Requires the development of a statewide plan to prevent child abuse and neglect fatalities.
As a legislator, what opportunities does Family First provide to improve outcomes for children and families?
1. Funding to help all at-risk children and their families

2. Supports to find families for children

Select Outcomes for children who age out of foster care

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH
• 39.0% have at least one past-year mental health diagnosis
• 44.1% have had any substance abuse or dependence in their lifetime
• 30.3% have experienced PTSD in their lifetime

EDUCATION AND TRAINING
• 48.4% have a high school diploma

EMPLOYMENT, FINANCES, AND ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS
• 46.9% are currently employed
• 29.2% have been unable to pay their rent or mortgage during the past year

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION
• 37.7% have been homeless since leaving foster care
• 43.7% of those who were homeless have been homeless four or more times

3. Supports to keep children safe

Child Maltreatment Fatalities are Increasing

Most maltreatment-related fatalities involve very young children

Many (44%) are babies under the age of 1. Most (77%) are children under the age of 4.

What’s Next?

• Reach out to your state child welfare agency to engage and be informed as plans are being developed.

• Engage with stakeholders in your state to learn about the opportunities.
  – Numerous agencies – including child welfare, Medicaid, early childhood, the courts and many others – will all play a role.

• Talk to constituents – foster youth, birth parents, kin caregivers, foster and adoptive parents.
Evidence-Based and Promising Community-Based Family Support such as ACEs and NEAR

Evidence-Based Child Maltreatment Prevention Strategies

Evidence-Based Interventions for Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

Evidence-Based Interventions for Permanence and Child Well-Being

Evidence-Based and Promising Community-Based Family Support such as ACEs and NEAR

Short Term Emergency Foster Care Placements

Non-specific Psychotherapy

Long-Term Shelter and Group Care

Ineffective Parenting Skills Classes

De-scaling what doesn’t work

Investing in what does work

INEFFECTIVE APPROACHES

RESEARCH-BASED APPROACHES

Investing savings to bridge from ineffective to effective practices.

Source: Casey reinvestment brief: http://www.casey.org/Resources/Publications/pdf/ShiftingResources.pdf
Questions?

Christine Calpin  
ccalpin@casey.org  
202-728-2001