



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for Human Services

August 23, 2022

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION:

- **DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS, SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**
- **STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNER AGENCIES**

SUBJECT: Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Update

REQUIRED ACTION: Immediate Time Sensitive **Information Only**

PURPOSE: INFORM COUNTIES AND STAKEHOLDERS OF PROGRESS ON FFPSA IMPLEMENTAION

I am excited to provide news on North Carolina's implementation of the 2018 Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). As you know, FFPSA allows states to use Title IV-E funds to purchase services to prevent the need for foster care by helping families safely care for children at home. Specifically, FFPSA allows states to submit a detailed plan to use evidence-based practices (EBPs) for federal approval. The EBPs must be rated on the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse and must address the needs of families with children who are candidates for foster care. Many of you have contributed input into North Carolina's planning efforts, and we thank you.

- **We have big news to celebrate. North Carolina's FFPSA Prevention Plan was approved by the Children's Bureau (CB) on August 17, 2022.**
- Implementation of the prevention plan is underway, and NC expects that the first prevention services funded under FFPSA to be available in the first half of 2023. Here are highlights of North Carolina's approved plan and implementation activities:
 - The plan calls for a phased roll-out of EBPs for candidates for foster care, beginning with Homebuilders, which is rated "well-supported" by the Title IV-E Prevention Series Clearinghouse, followed by Parents as Teachers, which is also rated "well-supported." A webinar or office hours providing an overview of FFPSA EBPs will be scheduled in the future.
 - To assure full compliance with FFPSA requirements for reporting and model fidelity, all FFPSA funded EBPs will be provided by vendors who contract with NCDHHS. North Carolina plans to contract with the Institute for Family Development for Homebuilders training, implementation support, and coaching and to have a competitive bidding process for a Homebuilder's service provider for each of the state's regions.
 - New policy is being developed to allow counties to determine candidacy for foster care and refer to prevention services during a CPS assessment. This will allow families to be referred to Homebuilders and other FFPSA funded EBPs when child welfare first determines a child is at imminent risk of entering foster care.

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

- NCDHHS is working with partners to prepare training and support for county child welfare workers on new policy related to FFPSA and for referral criteria and reporting requirements for FFPSA EBPs.
- As part of efforts to help counties respond to the FFPSA limits on reimbursement for congregate care placements, NCDHHS is preparing a statewide foster parent recruitment campaign and strategies to engage and support kinship care providers to assure that family placements are available for children who can thrive living with families.
- NCDHHS has begun exploring developing qualified residential treatment programs (QRTPs). NCDHHS believes treatment settings that meet all QRTP requirements including the provision of 6 months of family-based aftercare will strengthen the state's residential treatment continuum and improve youth outcomes. Stakeholder engagement will be part of the process in determining next steps.

We will be providing regular communications about FFPSA in the coming months to keep you updated on progress and to provide additional detail on key aspects of implementation. If you have questions, please contact Heather McAllister at Heather.McAllister@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



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Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services
Division of Social Services
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Cc: Susan Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations
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