

# THE FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT IN GEORGIA

Because Kids Deserve to Grow Up in Families



Georgia's Blueprint for Family First is our state's plan for transforming the child welfare system over the next several years. The **Georgia Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Children Services** remains focused on strengthening families so more children can safely grow up at home and, over time, reducing removals to foster care overall.

The federal Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 is one of the essential tools we're using to make these changes. The Act allows federal funding to be used for certain evidence-based mental health, parenting and substance abuse treatment and prevention services that help keep families together and kids out of foster care.

## SERVICES INCLUDED IN THE PREVENTION PLAN

Based on the recommendations of the Prevention Services Workgroup, the Division has selected the following services for inclusion in its Title IV-E Prevention Plan:

- Brief Strategic Family Therapy
- Healthy Families America
- Parents as Teachers
- Functional Family Therapy
- Multisystemic Therapy

These services address many of the critical areas of need identified through data, focus groups and the Prevention Services Workgroup and implementing them will enable the Division to better serve children and families in community-based settings.

### STRENGTHEN FAMILIES

Expanding prevention & family strengthening supports & services so that children are safe at home with family & communities thrive.

### REDUCE THE TRAUMA OF REMOVALS

Reducing reliance on foster care and congregate care so that children spend less time in foster care and more time with family.

### CARE FOR KIDS IN SAFE & STABLE HOMES

Expanding parent partnering and aftercare services to foster family connections and promote timely and lasting permanency.

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## IMPLEMENTATION

These are Georgia's current priorities for Family First Act implementation:

- Building the infrastructure necessary for a Prevention Services program. This includes finalizing policies required for Prevention Plan approval; updating SHINES to support case work and data collection; training; and building a robust Continuous Quality Improvement program.
- Implementing initial Functional Family Therapy and Multisystemic Therapy services in select regions. More details will be shared later this year.
- Communicating effectively with all impacted stakeholders as we begin the process of Family First implementation.

These steps bring us closer to the Blueprint for Family First vision of enabling more children to safely grow up at home.



## PLACEMENT

On Oct. 1, 2021, Family First Act limitations on federal reimbursement for foster care maintenance payments for CCIs, or group homes, went into effect.

- These limitations do not currently impact the ability to place youth in group homes if it is determined to be the most appropriate placement.
- The Division continues to strive to have a placement continuum where children and youth can be placed in the least restrictive, most family-like setting that appropriately meets their needs.



## STAY UPDATED

Stay updated on Family First by visiting [blueprintfamilyfirst.org](https://blueprintfamilyfirst.org) and signing up for the Family First newsletter. You can also contact the Family First team at [support@blueprintfamilyfirst.org](mailto:support@blueprintfamilyfirst.org).

