

# Family First Prevention Services Act Leadership Advisory Council

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## Date

August 25, 2020  
1 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

## Minutes

### I. Welcome & Partner Updates (10 minutes)

Shelby Zimmer, DFCS Family First Program Director, lead the meeting and introduced Julia Day Neighbors at Georgia State University who shared a brief update on Georgia's Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Plan which is being finalized and published very soon. Information can be found at <https://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/canpp/>.

Donna Johnson of DECAL announced the September 1<sup>st</sup> launch of SOLVE, a new program that provides financial assistance for eligible families with students enrolled in a Georgia public school system that is only offering a virtual learning model.

### II. Leadership Message and Q&A with Director Rawlings (30 minutes)

Ms. Zimmer introduced Georgia DFCS Director Tom Rawlings who spoke to the overall mission and key goals of Blueprint Family First, a vision for the child welfare system in Georgia, focused on the scientific evidence that kids simply have better outcomes in their own families/extended families, supported by capable parents and communities.

The work of the entire child welfare system (which includes other state agencies like DECAL, DHS, DBHDD, as well as non-profits and community resources) has 3 key goals:

- 1) If a problem arises in a family, to work quickly resolve this as close to the family as possible (with family support and prevention services) and with the goal that children deserve to grow up in a safe and caring family;
- 2) Supporting parents, extended families, local communities and providers with the tools and resources to prevent removal to custody, including evidenced-based and high-fidelity services; and
- 3) Custody by the state should be an exception, not the norm, and should be focused on timely permanency.

### III. Agency Family First Updates (15 minutes)

Ms. Zimmer reminded the group of an upcoming input meeting of CCIs on the development of a QRTPs in Georgia. She also mentioned the new involvement of Chapin Hall, who has helped several states implement some of the technical aspects of FFPSA. Some of this work will be specifically focused on the selection of evidence-based services and continuous quality improvement processes to monitor and oversee prevention services.

### IV. Communication Tools (20 minutes)

Tiffany Bivins, Georgia's Family First Program Manager, described the efforts of the DFCS in collaborating with leadership in the field and case management teams across the state on readiness for FFPSA implementation. She announced the FFPSA Toolkit and the process to inform and prepare DFCS staff across the state for the capacity-building and process evolutions around implementation.

Ms. Zimmer announced the departure of Dahlia Dell-Brown from the DFCS team and wished her well.