

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) changes the child welfare system by allowing states to use federal funds under Title IV of the Social Security Act to support families and prevent foster care placements. Georgia began phased implementation of FFPSA in Fall 2021¹ and the state's Title IV-E Prevention Plan was approved in October 2022.²

FAMILY FIRST SERVICES IN GEORGIA

Evidence-based Programs: ^{3, 4, 5}

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) are evidence-based treatments that address behaviors of youth at-risk for out-of-home placement

Locations: ⁶

MST: Chatham and Richmond counties

FFT: Dekalb and Cherokee counties

Expansion plans: ⁷

May 2025: RFP released for Healthy Families America and Parents as Teachers programs

Funding:

All FFPSA services are currently **state-funded** pilot programs (as of August 2025)

EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN GEORGIA'S PREVENTION PLAN

Program	Who It Serves	Program Goal
Healthy Families America	Expectant families and families with children up to 2 years of age at risk for abuse, neglect, or other adverse experiences	Strengthen parent-child relationships, promote health development, and enhance family functioning
Parents as Teachers	Expectant families or parents of children up to kindergarten entry (around age 5)	Support positive parenting skills through home visits and evidence-based education
Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)	Families with children/adolescents (6-17) at risk for problem behaviors such as substance use, bullying, or truancy	Restructure family interactions to reduce risky behaviors and improve family functioning
Multisystemic Therapy (MST)	Youth aged 12-17 with serious emotional or behavioral needs and their families	Reduce criminal behavior and prevent out-of-home placements through intensive family- and community-based treatment
Functional Family Therapy (FFT)	Children aged 11-18 with disruptive or externalizing behaviors, including conduct disorders and substance use	Improve family functioning and reduce problem behaviors through structured family interventions

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FOSTER CARE PREVENTION AND SERVICE PROGRAMS

Who is eligible?⁸



Children at imminent risk of entering foster care (children who receive ongoing family preservation services)



Children/youth post permanency and their caregivers



Expectant and parenting youth in foster care



Eligibility is **not** dependent on family income

What services and programs are eligible for reimbursement for Title IV-E funds?⁹



Mental health services



Substance abuse prevention and treatment services



In-home parenting programs

How does a state obtain funding for services or program?

- State must maintain a **written** prevention plan for each eligible child and collect data on programs and services administered.
- Services or programs must be trauma-informed and evidence-based.
- Services or programs must be based on promising, supported, or well-supported practices.

Half of the cost of prevention services, training, and related administrative tasks can be covered by Title IV-E funds.

CONGREGATE CARE

FFPSA limits foster care payments for group homes for up to two weeks only. Although FFPSA limits federal reimbursement for foster care maintenance payments for group homes, the limitations do not currently impact the ability to place youth in group homes if it is determined to be the most appropriate placement. ¹⁰

Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (Q RTP)* must meet the following requirements: ¹¹

- Use a trauma-informed treatment model
- Have a registered or licensed nursing and clinical staff onsite
- Facilitate family outreach and participation
- Document family integration into the treatment process
- Provide discharge planning and family-based supports for at least 6 months after discharge
- Meet the treatment needs of children as determined by an assessment within 30 days of placement
- Be licensed and accredited by one of the following:
 - Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities
 - Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
 - Council on Accreditation
 - Other nonprofit accrediting organization approved by the Secretary

*Georgia is currently piloting a Q RTP model at Murphy-Harpst in Polk County which is completely state funded. ¹²

Note: States may be prohibited from claiming federal financial participation for Medicaid services delivered to children while they reside in a Q RTP that has more than 16 beds due to the "institution for mental disease" exclusion. ¹³

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FACTSHEET CITATIONS



REFERENCES FOR FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT

- 1 Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. The Family First Prevention Services Act in Georgia. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/document/document/blueprint-family-first-one-sheet-may-2022/download>.
- 2 Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. Webinar: Blueprint for Family First Update, December 2022. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/news/2022-12-13/webinar-blueprint-family-first-update-december-2022>.
- 3 FFT LLC. Functional Family Therapy. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://www.fftllc.com>.
- 4 Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse. Multisystemic Therapy - Prevention. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://preventionservices.acf.hhs.gov/programs/853/show>.
- 5 Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. Webinar: Blueprint for Family First Update, December 2022. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/news/2022-12-13/webinar-blueprint-family-first-update-december-2022>; Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. Webinar: Blueprint for Family First Update, December 2022. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/news/2022-12-13/webinar-blueprint-family-first-update-december-2022>.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. Prevention Services Plan. Retrieved July 25, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/about-us/blueprint-family-first/prevention-services-plan>.
- 9 Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. Webinar: Blueprint for Family First Update, December 2022. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/news/2022-12-13/webinar-blueprint-family-first-update-december-2022>; Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. Webinar: Blueprint for Family First Update, December 2022. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/news/2022-12-13/webinar-blueprint-family-first-update-december-2022>; Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. Webinar: Blueprint for Family First Update, December 2022. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/news/2022-12-13/webinar-blueprint-family-first-update-december-2022>; Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. Webinar: Blueprint for Family First Update, December 2022. Retrieved August 5, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/news/2022-12-13/webinar-blueprint-family-first-update-december-2022>.
- 10 Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services. "Prevention Services Plan." Retrieved August 22, 2025 from <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/about-us/blueprint-family-first/prevention-services-plan>.
- 11 National Association for Children's Behavioral Health. What is a Q RTP? Retrieved August 22, 2025 from <https://www.nacbh.org/assets/docs/Website/What%20is%20a%20Q RTP.pdf>.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Qualified Residential Treatment Program (Q RTP) Reimbursement: Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Requirements, Q & A, October 19, 2021. Retrieved September 11, 2025 from <https://www.medicare.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/faq101921.pdf>.