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## *Family First Prevention Services Act*

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Congress passed the Families First Prevention Services Act (Act) in February 2018.

**FamilyFirstAct.org:** <https://www.familyfirstact.org/>

This website includes the full text of the legislation, resources, and communication.

**Full Text of the Act:** <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-11001/pdf/COMPS-11001.pdf>

**Summary of the Act:** <https://www.familyfirstact.org/resources/casey-family-programs-family-first-prevention-services-act-summary-updated>

### **National Resources**

#### ***Leveraging the FFPSA for Older Youth: 3 Part Series by the ABA***

##### ***Prevention Provisions***

This three-part series—comprised of this article on prevention provisions and ones on [reduction of group care provisions](#) and [improving transitions](#)—takes a close look at how the FFPSA can be leveraged to bring benefit to older youth and suggests strategies to ensure that plans for implementation of the law keep older youth as a priority and that the youth are not lost in the immense efforts to implement all provisions of the law.

American Bar Association (January 2019)

<https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/childrens-rights/articles/2019/winter2019-leveraging-the-ffpsa-for-older-youth-prevention-provisions/>

##### ***Reduction of Group Care Provisions***

This is the second of three articles on how the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) might be leveraged to the benefit of older youth. In addition to increasing investments in [prevention services](#) so youth and families do not enter the system in the first place, the FFPSA seeks to limit the use of group care by restricting the use of Title IV-E funds for group settings.

American Bar Association (January 2019)

<https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/childrens-rights/articles/2019/winter2019-leveraging-the-ffpsa-for-older-youth-reduction-of-group-care-provisions/>

##### ***Improving Transitions***

This is the third of three articles—here are the [first](#) and [second](#)—on how the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) might be leveraged to the benefit of older youth. The

FFPSA seeks to respond to the transition needs of young people, recognizing that, in general, the transition to adulthood requires significant support and does not occur until a young person is in their mid-20s. The FFPSA also recognizes that successful transitions should begin early. To achieve these ends, the FFPSA expands the ages and time periods for which youth can be served. The following are some of the key changes.

American Bar Association (January 2019)

<https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/childrens-rights/articles/2019/winter2019-leveraging-the-ffpsa-for-older-youth-improving-transitions/>

### ***Family First Implications for Youth Homelessness***

This paper explores how Family First can be leveraged as one of the tools to address homelessness for youth and young adults involved in the foster care system. Family First offers important new options to prevent young people's entry into foster care and to challenge states to use congregate care only as a last resort — a short-term intervention to meet young people's treatment needs. While the Family First Act was not designed to address youth homelessness, there are aspects of the new law that could help fund services for these young people, prevent some of its root causes, and provide a stronger foundation for collaboration between child welfare, runaway and homeless youth providers, and other youth-serving systems.

National Network for Youth ChildFocus (2019)

<https://familyfirstact.org/sites/default/files/Family%20First-Implications-for-Youth%20Homelessness.pdf>

### ***A Historic Opportunity to Reform the Child Welfare System: Youth & Alumni Priorities on Older Youth Successful Transition to Adulthood***

It is the authors' intent by including the outlined priorities to engage youth at an earlier age to enhance successful outcomes that are critical for youth to thrive. Throughout this statement, the authors outline opportunities for engagement to implement or further these priorities. This engagement may include opportunities for stakeholders, service providers and agency administration. The purpose is to emphasize the critical role of young people with lived experience in moving towards a 21st Century Child Welfare System.

The National Foster Care Youth & Alumni Policy Council (December 2020)

<https://familyfirstact.org/sites/default/files/Older%20Youth%20Successful%20Transition%20to%20Adulthood%20%281%29.pdf>

### ***Implementing the Family First Prevention Services Act: A Technical Guide for Agencies, Policymakers, and Other Stakeholders***

A collaboration by many national organizations and foundations. (February 2020)

<https://www.childrensdefense.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/FFPSA-Guide.pdf>

### ***Tool for Engaging the Legal Community in Implementing Family First***

This tool lays the groundwork for state and local child welfare agencies to partner with the legal community to implement the Family First Prevention Services Act. This includes identifying and addressing the Act's potential legal implications. The overarching goal of the tool is to facilitate

conversations and collaboration with the legal community to maximize the legislation's positive impact for children and families.

American Bar Association, Center on Children and the Law (2020)

[https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/child\\_law/ffpsa-tool-legal-community-engagement.pdf](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/child_law/ffpsa-tool-legal-community-engagement.pdf)

## FFPSA in Colorado

### **Colorado Information: CDHS Hub for all Resources**

Main: <https://co4kids.org/familyfirst>

Judicial and Legal Community: <https://co4kids.org/family-first/legal>

### ***FFPSA 101: Colorado Convening on Children, Youth & Families (April 2021)***

This Family First Panel Discussion was presented at the 2021 Convening on Children, Youth, and Families. This video covers the implementation of FFPSA.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHW0lyw0czw>

## OCR Training

### ***FFPSA 3-Part Series: Practice Considerations for Legal Professionals***

This training was hosted by Colorado's Court Improvement Project in collaboration with the American Bar Association, The Office of the Child's Representative, The Office of Respondent Parents' Counsel, and the County Attorney's Association. CLE was provided by ORPC.

This training provide an overview for all legal professionals. (September 2021)

<https://coloradochildrep.org/family-first-prevention-services-act-practice-considerations/>

### ***Family First: Litigation & Advocacy Strategies for GALs***

This practical training will be tailored to the role of the Guardian ad litem and will provide guidance on effective litigation and advocacy strategies as required under FFPSA. The presenters will explain the service continuum and how to access services, analyze placement options and corresponding requirements under federal law, describe the assessment process, apply the requirements of FFPSA to juvenile delinquency cases, and discuss the effective use of case consultants. Presenters will share practice tips and in and out of court advocacy strategies for best interest and client-directed representation.

The Office of the Child's Representative (September 2021)

<https://coloradochildrep.org/family-first-prevention-services-act-litigation-advocacy-strategies-for-gals/>

### ***QRTP Benchcard Training for GALs***

This training was a collaboration between the OCR and Colorado's Court Improvement Program. The video and the QRTP Benchcard are both available on the OCR archived training

page. This training was presented in November 2020 and is the most recent training on the QRTP process.

The Office of the Child's Representative (November 2020)  
<https://coloradochildrep.org/qrtp-benchcard-training-for-gals/>  
Download the Benchcard: <https://coloradochildrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/QRTP-Benchcard.pdf>

### ***Family First & Juvenile Justice Reform in Colorado***

This training provides an overview of Colorado's Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) work relating to delinquency proceedings, an update on implementation of SB 19-108's juvenile justice reform provisions, and a summary of 2021 bills further reforming juvenile justice in Colorado. This training covers not only the statutory changes but also the various assessments and screens developed pursuant to SB 19-108 and FFPSA. Presenters and participants will identify how these legal reforms interplay and identify advocacy strategies and opportunities to advance the intent of this legislation and address some of the challenges presented in delinquency cases. \*A resource page specific to juvenile delinquency is included in the materials for this training.

The Office of the Child's Representative (October 2021)  
<https://coloradochildrep.org/family-first-juvenile-justice-reform-in-colorado/>

## **Qualified Residential Treatment Programs**

### ***QRTP Toolkit***

This toolkit maintained by CDHS includes numerous resources and documents for all stakeholders.

Colorado Department of Human Services  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1nwJHWHlkPhmdw4Ehzuqo-qUw6lk3dj5R>

### ***Family-Based Residential Treatment Director of Residential Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs for Parents with Children***

Volunteers of America, with support from Annie E. Casey, created a directory of residential substance use disorder treatment programs that have program models for parents and children in the same treatment facility to ensure that child welfare agencies and the public at large are aware of the residential family treatment programs that are currently available.

<https://www.familyfirstact.org/resources/family-based-residential-treatment-directory-residential-substance-use-disorder-treatment>

### ***Comparison of Federal Requirements for Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) and Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF)***

Building Bridges Initiative, with support from Annie E. Casey foundation, produced a comparison document to help with addressing questions on the differences, similarities and connections between new Family First-defined Quality Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) & Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF). It is a quick comparative reference of the federal requirements of the QRTPs and the PRTFs to help states, providers, families, youth, advocates and other residential stakeholders understand what the similarities and differences

are between the two. It must be noted that this document is not meant to identify residential intervention best practices, but rather outline the different federal requirements for QRTPs and PRTFs.

<https://www.familyfirstact.org/resources/comparison-federal-requirements-qualified-residential-treatment-programs-qrtf-psychiatric>

### **Crosswalk Tool for Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards**

This tool is designed to help states and tribes compare their licensing standards with both the Children's Bureau national model and the NARA model family foster home licensing standards.

<https://www.familyfirstact.org/resources/crosswalk-tool-model-family-foster-home-licensing-standards>

## **Family Friendly Resources by the Colorado Department of Human Services: Videos for Families & Youth**

### ***What is an independent assessment and what is it used for?***

This video was created to help families understand the independent assessment process.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQCDww6jJdw>

### ***What will happen with the Qualified Individual?***

This video explains what a Qualified Individual does when they are completing an independent assessment. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q9\\_oFcSQnE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q9_oFcSQnE)

### ***What is a QRTP?***

This video explains what a QRTP, or qualified residential treatment program, is and the services it offers. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXU5KdHEoRQ>

### ***What will I receive at the QRTP?***

The video gives more detail about the services available at a QRTP.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nPDFC5ti\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nPDFC5ti_s)

## **Prevention Services Clearinghouse**

### ***Federal Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse***

The Title IV- E Prevention Services Clearinghouse was established by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to conduct an objective and transparent review of research on programs and services intended to provide enhanced support to children and families and prevent foster care placements. The clearinghouse rates programs and services as *well-supported*, *supported*, *promising*, or *does not currently meet criteria*. This site allows you to search for specific programs.

<https://preventionservices.abtsites.com/>

### ***Colorado Proposed Service Array***

This chart lists the 8 initial proposed Evidence Based Programs. This is the most current draft as of September 4, 2021. Finalization is expected soon.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1trNCaA8pPwjHjg27ly1Fj9LEqFm73ZVN/view>

### ***Prevention Services Clearinghouse Handbook of Standards and Procedures***

The Prevention Services Clearinghouse Handbook of Standards and Procedures provides a detailed description of the standards used to identify and review programs and services for the Prevention Services Clearinghouse and the procedures followed by the Prevention Services Clearinghouse staff.

<https://www.familyfirstact.org/resources/prevention-services-clearinghouse-handbook-standards-and-procedures>

## **Articles – Systemic Change**

### ***The Court's Role in Reshaping the Child Welfare system to Focus on Prevention***

In adopting a prevention mindset, understanding the role of courts in preventing unnecessary removal of children from their homes, preventing compounding trauma while children are in foster care, and being aware of new requirements of Family First. Judges can have a tremendous impact on the lives of children and families and help promote child and family well-being and self-sufficiency.

<https://www.familyfirstact.org/resources/court%E2%80%99s-role-reshaping-child-welfare-system-focus-prevention>

### ***The Family First Prevention Services Act: Opportunities for Legislatures***

This presentation by the National Conference of State Legislatures provides an overview of the Act, description of prevention services, overview of reforms to congregate and residential care, and a description of the legislative role and response.

National Conference of State Legislatures (January 2019)  
[http://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/Documents/cyf/33145\\_FFPSA.pdf](http://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/Documents/cyf/33145_FFPSA.pdf)