

Family First Prevention Services Act



Family First Prevention Services Act

What does Family First mean?

- ✓ Preventive services and support to strengthen the family and help children remain safely at home
- ✓ Improving the well-being of children in foster care by prioritizing family placements rather than group care settings
- ✓ Enhancing the quality of care for residential treatment programs



Who Will It Serve?

- Children at risk for entering or re-entering foster care
- A child whose family has substance abuse issues
- Siblings of children in foster care who live at home
- A child with psychological or behavioral health needs whose parent/caretaker needs additional support
- Parenting or pregnant youth who are in foster care or have recently exited care
- A child living with a relative or kin caregivers

What Services Can Be Provided?

Trauma-informed and evidence-based preventive services can include:

- Mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment and prevention services
- In-home, skill-based parenting programs
- Kinship navigator programs

Family-Like Placements

Emphasis on family-like placement settings:

- Family and kinship foster homes
- Placements for pregnant or parenting youth
- Supervised independent living for youth
- Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) for youth with treatment needs
- High-quality residential placements and supportive services for victims of sex trafficking



Work Underway

Family First Prevention Services Act:

- Reinforces DCFS's mission of keeping children safe and strengthening families
- Dovetails with work already underway through primary prevention programs like My Community Cares, Kinship Navigator, Workforce Development Prevention Team model

DCFS is currently facilitating workgroups to support early intervention and supports to at-risk families through identified services to prevent entry into foster care

- *Implementation will be incremental*

How to Help

Statewide collaboration with community partners and individuals with lived experience is essential to keeping families together.



DCFS welcomes input on how to attain the goal of strengthening families in Louisiana.

- Visit www.dcfs.la.gov/familyfirst for updates
- Email FamilyFirst.DCFS@LA.gov with specific inquiries



Are you eligible to participate in state or federally
financed work-study this school year?

-OR-

Do you have an expected family contribution (EFC) of \$0 this academic year?

If so, you may be eligible to receive aid through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)!

Under regular SNAP rules, students enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education are not eligible for SNAP unless they meet an exemption. However, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 has temporarily expanded SNAP eligibility to include students who are work-study eligible or have an EFC of \$0.

How do I know if I meet one of the new temporary exemptions?

-  Verification of your eligibility to participate in work-study, or an EFC of \$0, can be found on your **financial aid award letter from your institution** of higher education.
-  Verification of an EFC of \$0 can also be found on **your Student Aid Report (SAR)**.
-  **OR Contact your institution of higher education** for verification of either.

Students must still meet all other financial and non-financial SNAP eligibility criteria. These new temporary exemptions do not impact any other student exemptions. All other current student eligibility exemptions remain in effect.



SNAP NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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- Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- Email: program.intake@usda.gov

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NO PLACE TO TURN?

THERE IS A SAFE, LEGAL OPTION FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

Louisiana's Safe Haven Law offers a safe, legal, last resort to abandonment. Parents who are unable to care for their newborn and find the baby's well-being is threatened, can bring the newborn up to 60 days old to an emergency designated facility, or Safe Haven site. By leaving the baby in the care of an employee at a Safe Haven facility, parents can give up custody of the baby with no questions asked.

If a parent is unable to travel to a Safe Haven facility, he or she may call 911, and a law enforcement officer, fire fighter and/or EMS provider will be dispatched, confirm the Safe Haven relinquishment and transport the newborn to a hospital.

Designated Safe Haven Locations:

- Any hospital licensed in the state of Louisiana;
- The following medical clinics during normal and customary hours of operation: local or parish public health units, licensed rural health clinics, licensed ambulatory surgical centers, and Federally Qualified Health Centers;
 - Any manned fire station;
 - Any manned law enforcement station; and
- Any Child Advocacy Center accredited by the National Children's Alliance, during normal and customary hours of operation.

More information regarding the Safe Haven Law is available by calling toll-free 1-855-4LA-KIDS (1-855-452-5437).

WWW.LOUISIANASAFEHAVEN.COM



SAFE BABY SITE





FAMILY FIRST LOUISIANA

An Initiative of Louisiana Department
of Children & Family Services

The federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) gives the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) an exciting opportunity to build upon current efforts that connect families with the preventive services and support needed to strengthen the family unit and help more children remain safely at home. It also aims to improve the well-being of children in foster care by prioritizing family placements rather than group care settings and enhancing the quality of care for residential treatment programs.

What does Family First mean?

- 1 Preventive services and support to strengthen the family and help children remain safely at home
- 2 Improving the well-being of children in foster care by prioritizing family placements rather than group care settings
- 3 Enhancing the quality of care for residential treatment programs

» Prevention and Family Preservation

FFPSA recognizes that families can often provide safe and loving care if they have the support and services they need. The legislation allows states to use federal funds to provide prevention services and programs for up to 12 months to:

- Children at risk for entering or re-entering foster care
- A child whose family has substance abuse issues
- Siblings of children in foster care who live at home
- A child with psychological or behavioral health needs whose parent/caretaker needs additional support

- Parenting or pregnant youth who are in foster care or have recently exited care
- A child living with a relative or kin caregivers

These services include trauma-informed and evidence-based:

- Mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment and prevention services
- In-home, skill-based parenting programs
- Kinship navigator programs

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»» Family-Like Placements

FFPSA also emphasizes the preference for family-like settings in foster care by changing the federal reimbursement criteria for out-of-home placements. Federal funds may be used for:

- Family and kinship foster homes
- Placements for pregnant or parenting youth
- Supervised independent living for youth
- Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRT) for youth with treatment needs
- High-quality residential placements and support services for victims of sex trafficking

»» Work Already Underway

FFPSA reinforces DCFS's mission of keeping children safe and strengthening families, and dovetails with work already underway through primary prevention programs such as My Community Cares, Kinship Navigator, Workforce Development Prevention Team model, and the continued exploration of prevention and family support services. DCFS is working to create a robust continuum of prevention services, with FFPSA focusing on families at risk of removal and entry into foster care.

»» Next Steps to Implementation

DCFS is currently facilitating workgroups to support early intervention and supports to at-risk families through identified services to prevent entry into foster care. Implementation of the FFPSA requirements and service array will be incremental. Some services are planned to be available as early as this summer, while other services will become available over the next year.

» **How you can help:** Statewide collaboration with community partners and individuals with lived experience is essential to keeping families together. As we create an FFPSA plan, we welcome your input on how to attain the goal of strengthening families in Louisiana.

» **For more information:** Visit our website at www.dcf.la.gov/familyfirst for updates and email us at FamilyFirst.DCFS@LA.gov with specific inquiries. We will provide you with the next steps to be a part of these exciting changes to come in working with Louisiana families!