
What is FFPSA?

The Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) is federal legislation that promotes innovation and flexibility via prevention services reimbursement for children and youth who meet a State's candidacy for Foster Care definition with federal approval. Previously, federal dollars were only made available for out-of-home care. FFPSA funds support early prevention and Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) that help keep families together.

Why is this important to Nebraska and stakeholders?

- Creates an additional IV-E claiming pathway
To date, we have claimed approximately \$2.25 million in FFPSA IV-E Prevention dollars
 - Approximately \$441,200 was Nebraska's state match funds
 - Approximately \$1.81 million was federal funding claims
- Allows for increased access prior to a crisis or incident of maltreatment
- Establishing public/private partnerships and capacity building in communities

For FFPSA funding and programming to apply, a child must:

1. Meet the candidacy definition (see back side for definition of candidacy)
2. Have an active Prevention Plan documented in NFOCUS, DHHS system of record, that describes the services needed, and
3. Be engaged with an EBP on the FFPSA Clearinghouse to support the Prevention Plan.

What is an FFPSA Evidence Based Program (EBP)?

An EBP is a program or service that has been proven to be effective in preventing foster care entry. Nebraska's FFPSA plan has an array of EBPs available covering mental health, substance abuse, and in-home parenting skills. All children and families can receive an EBP from the state continuum of care; however, it is only eligible for FFPSA funding if the child meets the candidacy definition.

Nebraska's current landscape for FFPSA and implemented EBPs

Nebraska has utilized a phased launch approach to ensure EBPs are implemented with fidelity. Utilization of these EBPs is contingent on the family's willingness to engage, and the intent is on voluntary participation vs. court orders. EBPs that have been implemented statewide include:

- Healthy Families America
- Parents As Teachers
- Family Centered Treatment
- Additional EBPs are in various stages of implementation and exploration.

Between August 2024 - August 2025, 550 families have been referred to these EBPs.

Want to learn more?

- Email us: dhhs.familyfirst@nebraska.gov
- <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Family-preservation-and-child-welfare-prevention.aspx>
- Hear more information at the CIP Children's Summit in Kearney, September 23-24.

Current Candidacy Definition

A candidate for foster care is a child who is at imminent risk of entering foster care but can remain safely in his or her home or an Approved Informal Living Arrangement if Prevention Services are in place to prevent the youth from entering foster care. In Nebraska's current FFPSA candidacy definition, this includes:

- A child who is residing in a family home accepted for assessment, with an active, ongoing case, including Court, non-Court, and Alternative Response involved youth
- A child who was previously in out-of-home care but has been reunified with his/her parent/caregiver;
- A child with a 3c case filed in Juvenile Court; this is a child found to be “mentally ill and dangerous” as defined by Nebraska Revised Statute 43-247 (3)(c);
- A pre-natal infant and/or child(ren) of an otherwise eligible pregnant/parenting foster youth in foster care (including placed in Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) or participating in the Bridge to Independence program);
- A child whose adoption or guardianship is at risk of disruption or dissolution that would result in foster care placement;
- A child with extraordinary needs and whose parents/caretakers are unable to secure assistance for them; and,
- Youth involved with Juvenile Probation and living in the parental/caretaker home.