



**NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FOR FOSTER CARE
& PERMANENCY PLANNING**

at the Hunter College
School of Social Work

INFORMATION PACKET: *Family Preservation & Preventive Programs – Alternatives to Foster Care Placement*

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INFORMATION PACKET

FAMILY PRESERVATION AND PREVENTIVE PROGRAMS
Alternatives to Foster Care Placement

BY Kathy Horchak-Andino, MSW Student

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SUMMARY:

“It takes a village to raise a child” – African proverb. Imagine if children were all born into stable families in which there were no obstacles such as inadequate housing, substance abuse, domestic violence, physically or mentally disabled parents, unemployment, reliance on public assistance, sexual abuse or illiteracy. Imagine that everyone in that child’s neighborhood, from the teacher to the crossing guard, from the local storekeeper to the librarian, from the after school program to the local precinct all took an active approach to doing what they could to prevent a child from being removed from their home and placed in foster care due to abuse or neglect. To meet this challenge, family support and preservation programs exist as a structured way to provide services to enhance existing family functioning and prevent the fragmentation caused to a family when a child is removed based on abuse or neglect. Family preservation programs have become a cost-effective alternative to placement into foster care. These programs are also offered as a community service to families who are not formally involved with Child Protective Services but who present issues that place their children at risk of placement or re-placement. The terms preservation and prevention appear to be used interchangeably throughout the literature but there are distinguishing factors based on the particular practice model utilized such as the Homebuilders model or that of family support. According to data released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in April 2002, approximately 900,000 children were victims of abuse or neglect and about 1,200 children died of abuse or neglect in 2000 (nationally). "Behind these statistics are real children who are suffering real physical and

emotional pain," Wade Horn, HHS Assistant Secretary for Children and Families said in a statement. "We are working hard to reduce these numbers, and we must rededicate ourselves to successful prevention efforts."

FACT SHEET 1

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

All family support programs are based on the following assumptions:

- Families have primary responsibility for their children's development and well-being; they need resources and supports that will enable them to fulfill that responsibility effectively.
- Healthy families are the foundation of a healthy society. Families who are unable to promote their children's development ultimately place the entire society at risk.
- Families operate as part of a total system. Children cannot be viewed as separate from their families, nor can families be viewed separately from their communities, their cultural heritage or the society at large. Decisions made on behalf of children must consider the ways in which these various systems are interconnected.
- The systems and institutions upon which families rely for support must assist families' efforts to effectively raise their children. They must adjust and coordinate their services so as not to hinder families' abilities to maintain positive environments for their children.

[Excerpted from: [NATIONAL PARENT INFORMATION NETWORK - http://npin.org/library/pre1998/n00299/n00299.html](http://npin.org/library/pre1998/n00299/n00299.html)]

FACT SHEET 2

PREVENTIVE PROGRAMS

Preventive programs also operate on a grass-roots level to provide services to families at risk of having their children placed or returned to the foster care system. A working assumption of child abuse prevention programs is that parents neither desire nor intend to batter or neglect their children. At-risk parents often lack social supports. In the best of circumstances, raising children can be demanding and frustrating. In high-risk neighborhoods, resources are scarce and social isolation common.

Program areas that contribute to a sound prevention strategy are:

- Support programs for new parents, providing education in child development, parent-and-child relationships, and adult relationships; information on community resources; and programs enhancing parent-and-child bonding and infant stimulation;
- Education for parents directed toward the creation of social networks and the continuation of instruction in childcare and child development, home-visitor services, and special education support programs;
- Early and regular child and family screening and treatment;
- Childcare opportunities, including emergency, respite, and crisis-oriented care;
- Life skills training for children and young adults in the areas of child development, family management, self-development, methods of seeking help, education in sexuality, family planning, and issues relating to parenting;
- Self-help groups and other neighborhood supports;

- Family support services, including crisis care programs, home-based programs, counseling services, community resource information, and health care;
- Community organization activities; and
- Public information and education on child abuse prevention.

[Excerpted from: [NATIONAL PARENT INFORMATION NETWORK - http://npin.org/library/pre1998/n00299/n00299.html](http://npin.org/library/pre1998/n00299/n00299.html)]

FACT SHEET 3:

INTENSIVE FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES

IFPS stands for Intensive Family Preservation Services. These services are designed to support families in crisis in which children are either at imminent risk of placement or have been placed outside their homes.

These services are for birth and adoptive families and are effective as reunification services as well as for placement prevention. The goal is to keep children safe and avoid both unnecessary removal and unnecessarily long separations from family in out-of-home care. IFPS programs share the values, beliefs, and program characteristics outlined below.

IFPS PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

- Immediate response within 24 hours
- Accessibility of staff 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Small caseloads (2 to 4 families)
- Intensive interventions (5 to 20 hours per week as needed)
- Service delivery in the family's home and community
- Usually short-term services (4 to 8 weeks), to be followed by other support services
- Hard & soft services delivered by the same worker
- Recognizes importance of interaction between families and communities, and helps families to forge those links
- Goal-oriented with "limited" objectives
- Focused on teaching skills

The values, beliefs, and program characteristics of IFPS as described above are adapted from the core values and program characteristics of the HOMEBUILDERS model of IFPS.

HOMEBUILDERS is a registered trademark and may not be used without permission of the Institute for Family Development.

[Excerpted from: [NATIONAL PARENT INFORMATION NETWORK - http://npin.org/library/pre1998/n00299/n00299.html](http://npin.org/library/pre1998/n00299/n00299.html)]

FACT SHEET:

STATISTICS

[WHO IS BEING ABUSED? BY WHOM? FOR WHAT REASONS?](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/index.htm)

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm01/index.htm>

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) is the primary source of national information on abused and neglected children known to State child protective services agencies. The NCANDS reports include national and State level findings on the number and sources of child abuse and neglect reports, investigation dispositions, types of maltreatment, characteristics of children victimized, relationship of perpetrators to victims, and services provided for child maltreatment victims. Each year, the Children's Bureau within DHHS publishes an annual report and analysis of the most recent NCANDS data.

[HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO NOT PREVENT CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT?](http://www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/prevenres/pays.cfm#costs)

<http://www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/prevenres/pays.cfm#costs>

Besides having detrimental affects on children's physical, cognitive, behavioral and psychological development, child abuse and neglect has extensive implications for society as well. Costs to address child maltreatment are based two items: the direct expense related to those agencies associated with addressing child maltreatment and indirect costs associated with long term consequences of child maltreatment. Thus, the prevention of child abuse and neglect, the preservation of the family and the support of families with children already in care are cost effective measures.

[OUTCOMES OF STUDY ON FAMILY PRESERVATION PROGRAMS](http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/hsp/cyp/fpsyntbl.htm)

<http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/hsp/cyp/fpsyntbl.htm>

There exist some discrepancies among professionals as to the extent to which family preservation and prevention programs work to reduce entry of children into the foster care system and promote stable family functioning. This is due, in part, to the lack of comprehensive research available on the topic. However, family preservation has been proven to be a cost effective alternative to foster care placement and programs do enhance family functioning.

[CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE REVIEWS AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES](#)

[http://www.friendsnrc.org/CFS Reviews & Family Support Services.pdf](http://www.friendsnrc.org/CFS_Reviews_&_Family_Support_Services.pdf)

Safety, permanence and child well-being are the intended outcomes for the Child and Family Services Review process. The process is intended to provide technical assistance to participating agencies in areas that include but are not limited to family support program planning and evaluation and child abuse/neglect prevention.

[FAMILY SUPPORT AND CHILD PROTECTION \(http://www.friendsnrc.org/FactSheet6.PDF\)](http://www.friendsnrc.org/FactSheet6.PDF)

Discusses the history and role of family support in child welfare as it relates to ASFA and the Community-Based Family Resource and Support Program. Includes listing of organizations that exemplify best practice models.

[STATISTICAL DATA PERTAINING TO FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS](#)

<http://www.friendsnrc.org/FactSheet4.pdf>

Delineates child abuse and neglect data and the associated benefits of Family Support programs.

POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

[Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act \(CAPTA\)](#)

<http://www.hhs.gov/asl/testify/t010802.html>

CAPTA originally was enacted in 1974 (P.L. 93-247) and reauthorized in 1996. This Act provides federal funding to states to prevent, identify, and treat child abuse and neglect. It created the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, developed standards for receiving and responding to reports of child maltreatment, and established a clearinghouse on the prevention and treatment of abuse and neglect. Changes in 1996 established Community-Based Family Resource and Support Grants which are used to fund state programs. Currently, CAPTA is again before Congress for reauthorization (H.R. 14). (Visit <http://thomas.loc.gov>, track the status of the reauthorization.)

[Excerpted from [NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT INFORMATION](#) (<http://www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/factsheets/about.cfm>)]

[Adoption and Safe Families Act \(ASFA\)](#)

On November 19, 1997, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (P.L. 105-89) was signed into law. While the law's purpose was to promote timely adoptions and permanency planning for children needing stable homes, ASFA also continued to expand the Family Preservation and Support Services Program. Funding for the program, renamed the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, was reauthorized through FY 2001

[Excerpted from [CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA](#)
(<http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/asfap105-89summary.htm>)]

Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act, P.L. 96-272 (1980)

Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act required states to establish programs and make procedural reforms to serve children in their own homes, prevent out-of-home placement, and facilitate family reunification following placement.

[Excerpted from [NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE RESOURCE CENTER FOR FAMILY CENTERED PRACTICE](#)]

Family Preservation and Support Initiative, P.L.103-66 (1993)

The intent of the law was to help communities build a system of family support services to assist vulnerable children and families in an effort to prevent child maltreatment. Family preservation services were designed to help families experiencing crises that might lead to the placement of their children in foster care. Law was amended in 1997.

[Excerpted from [NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE RESOURCE CENTER FOR FAMILY CENTERED PRACTICE](#)]

SSBG (Social Service Block Grants)

SSBG funds states, territories, and insular areas for the provision of social services directed toward achieving economic self-support or self-sufficiency, preventing or remedying neglect, abuse, or the exploitation of children and adults, preventing or reducing inappropriate institutionalization, and securing referral for institutional care, where appropriate. In 2001, Congress appropriated \$1.725 billion and in FY02, \$1.7 billion. The SSBG is administered by the Office of Community Services, Division of State Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, DHHS.

[Excerpted from [SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT HOMEPAGE](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ssbg/index.htm)

(<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ssbg/index.htm>)]

Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program

Established under the ASFA of 1997, the primary goals of Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) are to prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families, improve the quality of care and services to children and their families, and ensure permanency for children by reuniting them with their parents, by adoption or by another permanent living arrangement. The programs include funding for states and eligible Indian tribes to promote family support, family preservation, time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support services. On January 17, 2002, President Bush signed into law the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments of 2001 (P.L. 107-133). The law amends the definitions of eligible activities to include infant safe haven programs under family preservation services and programs to strengthen parental relationships and promote healthy marriages under family support services.

[Excerpted from [CHILDREN'S BUREAU](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/fpfs.htm)

(<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/fpfs.htm>)]

Act to Leave no Child Behind (S. 940/H.R. 1990)

The Act to Leave No Child Behind is comprehensive legislation for America's children introduced on May 23, 2001 by Senator Christopher Dodd of Connecticut and Representative George Miller of California. The Act would help to ensure that more children are in safe, nurturing, and permanent families. It would extend supports to families before they suffer family breakdown and would help encourage permanency for children who cannot safely stay at home.

The law would also strengthen youth development efforts and address other critical safety issues, such as gun violence, juvenile justice, and effective delinquency prevention programs.

[Excerpted from [CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND \(http://www.childrensdefense.org/index.htm\)](http://www.childrensdefense.org/index.htm)]

MODEL PROGRAMS

[CENTER FOR FAMILY LIFE OF SUNSET PARK \(http://www.cflsp.org/\)](http://www.cflsp.org/)

The mission of the Center for Family Life is to provide a comprehensive range of preventive social services necessary to sustain and nurture the family, insure the well-being of the community's children, and create a supportive environment where they can emerge as confident, capable adults. Community building, youth employment, teen evening centers, after school programs, emergency services are what makes this preventive program unique.

[CRITTENTON FAMILY SERVICES \(http://www.crit.net/index.html\)](http://www.crit.net/index.html)

In partnership with the Children's Trust Fund, our highly acclaimed Healthy Families Program provides young families with weekly home visits to help them develop a positive parent-child relationship and healthy family environment. With a similar design to the Healthy Families model, Crittenton also implemented the Parent-Child Home Program, a model home-based family literacy program that works with the parents of young children to help them improve verbal interaction and educational play with their children in an effort to ensure school readiness.

[FAMILY-CHILD RESOURCES, INC. YORK, PA \(http://www.f-cr.com/index.htm\)](http://www.f-cr.com/index.htm)

We offer what is perhaps the largest Parent Education Program in the state, serving hundreds of parents in courses and workshops each year. We developed one of the earliest Elementary Student Support Programs in the country for children who are coping with child abuse, foster placement, substance abuse, divorce/separation, death or other trauma or changes in their families. We received the first grant in the state from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency to implement a model Bullying Prevention Program and played a lead role in

the state of Pennsylvania's statewide implementation. Our organization was one of fewer than ten in the country to develop a Perinatal Coaching Program to provide support and education to new parents and prevent many of the problems that lead to child abuse and neglect.

[FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER IN PITTSBURGH, PA](http://familysupportac.child.pitt.edu/fsc_6.html)
(http://familysupportac.child.pitt.edu/fsc_6.html)

The Family Care Connection provides on-site mental health and drug and alcohol counseling and licensed family respite care homes. The Center is also in partnership with Americorps National Services, which offer a drop-in center for parents and children, food and clothing, family mentors, recreational and social activities and events.

[HAWAII HEALTHY START PROGRAM](http://www.fsswh.org/index.htm) (<http://www.fsswh.org/index.htm>)

An effective preventive strategy for child maltreatment provides parents with education and support prior to or at the time their first child is born. The Hawaii Healthy Start Program offers a systematic, voluntary approach, targeting at-risk families of newborns. Eligible families are identified at local hospitals, making it possible to identify and serve nearly all at-risk families in a target area, and enabling the project to function as an integral part of a comprehensive health services delivery system.

[NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUB FOUNDATION](http://www.preventchildabuse.com/exchange.htm)
(<http://www.preventchildabuse.com/exchange.htm>)

The Foundation coordinates a nationwide network of nearly 100 Exchange Club Child Abuse Prevention Centers throughout the United States. These centers counter abuse by utilizing the parent aide program, and provide support to families at-risk for abuse or where abuse has occurred. Most Exchange Club Centers are active on the state and community levels with public awareness and educational campaigns on preventing child abuse.

ORANGE COUNTY CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION CENTER

<http://www.brightfutures4kids.org/>

The mission of the *Orange County Child Abuse Prevention Center* is to break the generational cycle of child abuse, domestic violence and teen pregnancy in Orange County, CA. This goal is accomplished by matching families at risk of child abuse, with a combination of professional social workers and volunteer parent mentors to work with them in their homes. In-home parenting education is endorsed by the U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect as the "*single most critical approach in the successful prevention of child maltreatment.*"

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LINKS AND RESOURCES

[AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND THE LAW](http://www.abanet.org/child/tom.html)
(<http://www.abanet.org/child/tom.html>)

[CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL POLICY](http://www.cssp.org/index.html) (<http://www.cssp.org/index.html>)

The Center's work is concentrated in the areas of family and children's services; income supports, neighborhood-based services, education reform, family support, disability and health care policy, and long term care for the elderly.

[CHAPIN HALL CENTER FOR CHILDREN](http://www.chapin.uchicago.edu/index.html) (<http://www.chapin.uchicago.edu/index.html>)

Chapin Hall seeks to bring sound information, rigorous analyses, innovative ideas, and an independent perspective by focusing its work on all children, while devoting particular attention to children facing poverty, abuse and neglect, and mental and physical illness.

[CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION ASSOCIATION](http://www.childabuseprevention.org/) (<http://www.childabuseprevention.org/>)

Community educational programs increase awareness of abuse and how to prevent it, while improving parenting skills and teaching personal safety skills to children.

[CHILDHELP USA](http://www.childhelpusa.org/) (<http://www.childhelpusa.org/>)

Childhelp USA® exists to meet the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of abused and neglected children. We do so by focusing our efforts in the areas of treatment, prevention, and research. Arizona, California, Michigan, New York, Tennessee and Virginia.

[FAMILY SUPPORT AMERICA](http://www.familysupportamerica.org/content/home.htm) (<http://www.familysupportamerica.org/content/home.htm>)

Grassroots, community-based programs designed to prevent family problems by strengthening parent-child relationships and providing whatever parents need in order to be good nurturers and providers.

[FAMILIES WORLDWIDE \(http://www.fww.org/index.html\)](http://www.fww.org/index.html)

The mission of Families Worldwide (based out of Salt Lake City, Utah) is to strengthen families through programs based on six principles which help form the benchmark of strong families. The family-strengthening and relationship-building principles are: Kindness, Commitment, Communication, Choices, Well-Being and Spirituality.

[NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT INFORMATION \(http://www.calib.com/nccanch/\)](http://www.calib.com/nccanch/)

The Clearinghouse is a national resource for professionals and others seeking information on child abuse and neglect and child welfare.

[CHILD WELFARE INSTITUTE \(http://www.gocwi.org/\)](http://www.gocwi.org/)

The Child Welfare Institute is nationally recognized for providing quality consultation services to state and local child welfare and human services agencies, as well as nonprofit organizations.

[NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE RESOURCE CENTER FOR FAMILY CENTERED PRACTICE](#)

[NATIONAL FAMILY PRESERVATION NETWORK \(http://www.nfnp.org/home.html\)](http://www.nfnp.org/home.html)

NFPN is the National Membership and Advocacy organization serving providers of Intensive Family Preservation and Reunification Services.

[NATIONAL PARENT INFORMATION NETWORK \(http://npin.org/index.html\)](http://npin.org/index.html)

The mission of NPIN is to provide access to research-based information about the process of parenting, and about family involvement in education.