Implementing Family Preservation Services for Adoptive and Guardianship Families: Lessons from the Field

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Adrian Owens, Georgia DFACS
Nathan Ross, FosterAdopt Connect
Mary Boo, AdoptUSKids Family Support Team
Housekeeping

- This webinar will be 90 minutes.
- We will record this webinar. We will share the recording with you and post it on the AdoptUSKids YouTube channel and website (professionals.adoptuskids.org).
- Your line will be muted throughout the webinar.
- The webinar will include polls and opportunities for you to share information via the “questions” pod in the control panel.
- Please evaluate the session. You will receive an email from AdoptUSKids Evaluation.
About AdoptUSKids

Our mission:

• Raise public awareness about the need for foster and adoptive families for children in the public child welfare system

• Assist states, territories, and tribes to recruit, engage, develop, and support foster and adoptive families
Goals for the webinar

- Share how systems can create or improve family preservation services for adoptive and guardianship families
- Hear from leaders in the field on program implementation considerations
- Discuss strategies to ready your system for new or expanded family preservation services
Improving Family Preservation Services for Adoptive and Guardianship Families

Many adoptive and guardianship families need support services at some point to encourage child and family well-being. Some families will need more intensive support services—family preservation services—to keep them intact.

Adoptive/guardianship family preservation services are specific support services designed for families whose children are at risk of disruption, dissolution, or out-of-home placement. They are usually short term, high intensity, and family focused, addressing both the current crisis and the ongoing needs of the family as a whole.

Adoptive family preservation as prevention

By investing in family preservation for adoptive and guardianship families, child welfare systems are fulfilling the promise of permanency and preventing young people from reentering foster care. For this reason, it’s important that we consider the work of adoptive/guardianship family preservation as prevention services.

Family preservation services can require a larger resource investment than less intensive services. But as administrators seek to build on their family preservation services, it’s important to consider the costs—both human and financial—of having children reenter foster care. There are two main strategies administrators can consider to help preserve adoptive/guardianship families:

1. Expand post-permanency services to include more intensive supports.
2. Make existing family preservation services more adoption- and guardianship-competent.

The Family First Prevention Services Act allows federal Title IV-E funding to be used on evidenced-based services provided to families whose children are at risk of entering the child welfare system. The law includes all families who are at risk of out-of-home placement, including adoptive and guardianship families. By building an evidence base of effective family preservation services designed for adoptive and guardianship families, systems are more likely to ensure the sustainability of these services because they will be able to access the funding made available through Family First.

1 Section 47902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 679) defines a CSE as a state foster care or adoptive or guardianship arrangement in which the child is in foster care placement.
Let’s start with some poll questions
Family First Prevention Services Act:

A candidate for foster care includes “a child whose adoption or guardianship arrangement is at risk of a disruption or dissolution that would result in a foster care placement.”
Services designed for adoptive and guardianship families

- Core issues in adoption
- Unique needs of population
- Grief and loss
- Trauma of foster care system
Adoptive/guardianship family preservation programs

Crisis Intervention Teams
Georgia DFACS

Behavioral Intervention FosterAdopt Connect
Questions

Type into the "questions" pod in the control panel.
Crisis Intervention Teams
Georgia DFACS

Adrian Owens
Social Services Administration Unit Director
Primary program components:

• 72-hour crisis response
• Short-term, intensive services, including in-home crisis response, behavioral therapy, and service navigation
• Referral to ongoing supports to promote positive interactions and family functioning
• Families receiving adoption or guardianship assistance eligible
Crisis Intervention Teams
Georgia DFACS

How did this program come to be? How was it designed?

How was funding secured? How do you sustain it?
Crisis Intervention Teams
Georgia DFACS

How is it staffed?

How are the services tailored to fit adoptive/guardianship families?
Crisis Intervention Teams
Georgia DFACS

How do you evaluate the program?

What outcomes can you share?
What recommendations do you have for other administrators seeking to implement, expand, or improve a family preservation program for adoptive and guardianship families?
Behavioral Intervention
FosterAdopt Connect

Nathan Ross
Vice President of Children and Youth Programs
Primary program components:

- Intensive in-home services for children whose behavioral or emotional challenges put their placement at risk
- One-on-one neuro-developmental activities with child to improve self-regulation
- Respite and education for caregivers
How did this program come to be? How was it designed?

How was funding secured? How do you sustain it?
How is it staffed?

How are the services tailored to fit adoptive/guardianship families?
How do you evaluate the program?

What outcomes can you share?
What recommendations do you have for other administrators seeking to implement, expand, or improve a family preservation program for adoptive and guardianship families?
Questions from the audience

Type into the “questions” pod in the control panel.
Other examples

- Seneca Family of Agencies, CA Permanency Wraparound Program
- Illinois Adoption and Guardianship Preservation
Readying your system for new or expanded services

Needs assessment available in AdoptUSKids publication Support Matters
Readying your system for new or expanded services

• Review displacement, disruption, and dissolution data.
• What services are families accessing?
• What are the outcomes of your current services? Do these outcomes demonstrate efficacy?
• What do families tell you they need?
Readying your system for new or expanded services

AdoptUSKids Support Services Assessment Tool

Service quality and accessibility assessment

- Information and referral
- Peer support
- Advocacy
- Respite
- Camps and events
- Training
- Therapeutic supports
Readying your system for new or expanded services

Meaningfully engage parents, caregivers, and youth.
Importance of data and continuous quality improvement

Revisiting our earlier polls
Importance of data and continuous quality improvement
Share with us!

What’s one action you will take to improve adoptive/guardianship family preservation in your system?
Resources and services from AdoptUSKids

- Assessment tool and guide
- Capacity-building services
- Publications and webinars

Find out more: professionals.adoptuskids.org

We can help! consultation@adoptuskids.org
Other federally funded projects

Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation (QIC-AG)

National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Institute (NTI)
Contact information

Britt Cloudsdale
AdoptUSKids Family Support Program Manager
brittcloudsdale@nacac.org
651-644-3036 x 116

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