

# Family Preservation Programs Report

(FY 2019 Appropriation Bill - Public Act 207 of 2018)

February 15, 2019

***Sec. 523. (1) By February 15 of the current fiscal year, the department shall submit to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on the department budget, the senate and house fiscal agencies, the senate and house policy offices, and the state budget office a report on the families first, family reunification, and families together building solutions family preservation programs. The report shall provide population and outcome data based on contractually required follow-up evaluations for families who received family preservation services and shall include information for each program on any innovations that may increase child safety and risk reduction.***

*(2) From the funds appropriated in part 1 for youth in transition and domestic violence prevention and treatment, the department is authorized to make allocations of TANF funds only to agencies that report necessary data to the department for the purpose of meeting TANF eligibility reporting requirements.*



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## **Families First of Michigan (FFM)**

Families First of Michigan (FFM) serves families that have at least one child at imminent risk of placement in out-of-home care. Families with children in out-of-home care are eligible for referral to the program when it is determined that reunification is not appropriate without intensive services and the Family Reunification Program is not available. In fiscal year (FY) 2018, FFM served 3,000 families. Follow-up contacts with families occurring 12 months after case closure revealed 88 percent of the families avoided out-of-home placement.

FFM contracts were amended to include Strengthening Families: Protective Factors Framework ®; a research-based, adjunct service model that promotes knowledge and skills that strengthen families and reduces the risk out-of-home placement. FFM service providers assess each family served and help them maintain the Protective Factors they demonstrate and promote the ones needing growth. Additionally, two Family Preservation Specialists received extensive training in Protective Factors Framework ® to provide technical assistance to our contractors.

## **Family Reunification Program (FRP)**

The Family Reunification Program (FRP) provides services to families when a plan for return of the children has been established and the foster care worker has initiated reunification with the family and the court. In FY 2018, FRP served 870 families. Follow-up contacts with families occurring 12 months after case closure indicated 86 percent of families did not re-enter the foster care system.

Provisions under the Child and Family Services Act (P.L. 112-134, IV-B Social Security Act), requires states to implement trauma screening as a process for children affected by out-of-home placement. As the effects of trauma can still be seen in children during the reunification process, FRP contracts were amended to include trauma screening. As there are many evidence-based and effective screening tools available, contractors are not prescribed a specific screening tool or format. When auditing case files, Family Preservation specialists review case records to ensure trauma screening is occurring with all children being reunified with their parents.

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## **Families Together Building Solutions (FTBS)**

The Families Together Building Solutions (FTBS) program provides services to low-risk families that require a less intensive intervention to reduce the risk of placement. FTBS is a short-term, in-home service utilizing strength-based, solution-focused techniques. In FY 2018, FTBS served 1,600 families. Follow-up contacts 12 months after closure revealed 91 percent of the families did not require out-of-home placement for their child(ren).

During FY 2018, a new tool was created to capture specific data from each contracted provider of FTBS services. The tool requires contractors to submit monthly statistical reports which reflect the number of cases closed, new referrals, referral source, and follow-up data to determine placement of youth from the previous fiscal year. The report also included data to satisfy federal reporting to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). The monthly reporting tool has been useful in assessing regional need of services and how often the service is utilized by Children's Protective Services and Pathways to Potential School Success Coaches.

## **All Programs (FFM, FRP and FTBS)**

The Child Abuse and Prevention Act (P.L. 114-198, The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act) requires states to implement provisions regarding substance affected infants. Contracts were amended to reflect this requirement. Under this provision, contractors help families create Infant Plans of Safe Care, which provide supportive services and care to substance affected infants, as well as address the addiction recovery needs of the parent(s). When performing case audits, Family Preservation specialists evaluate these plans for compliance, relevance, and effectiveness. Feedback is also provided to the contractors to address technical needs and to ensure safety.