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The Intimate Community

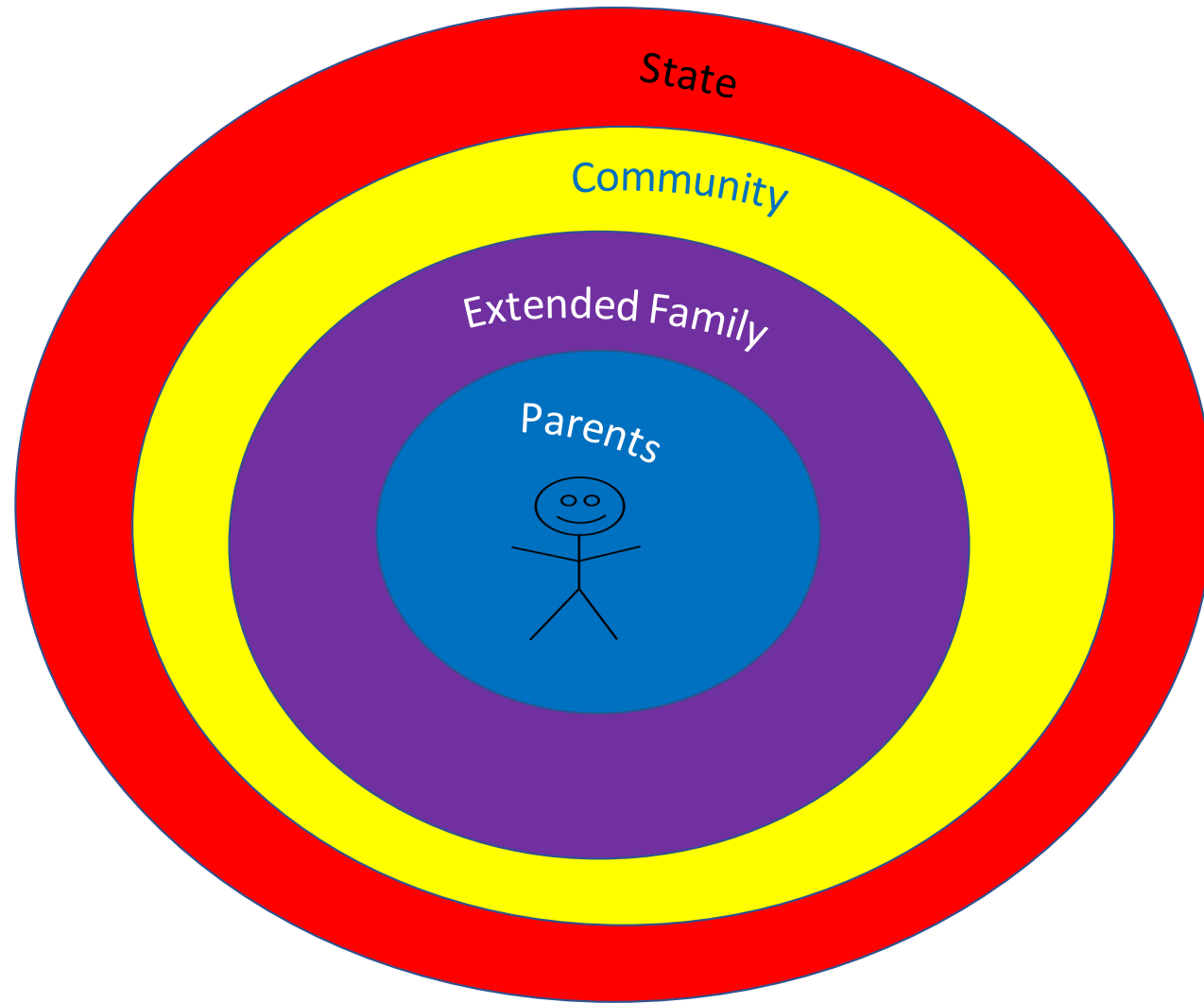
Strengthening Relationships to Support Families

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Georgia Division of Family & Children Services

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Circles of Support and Intervention

Strengthening Parents

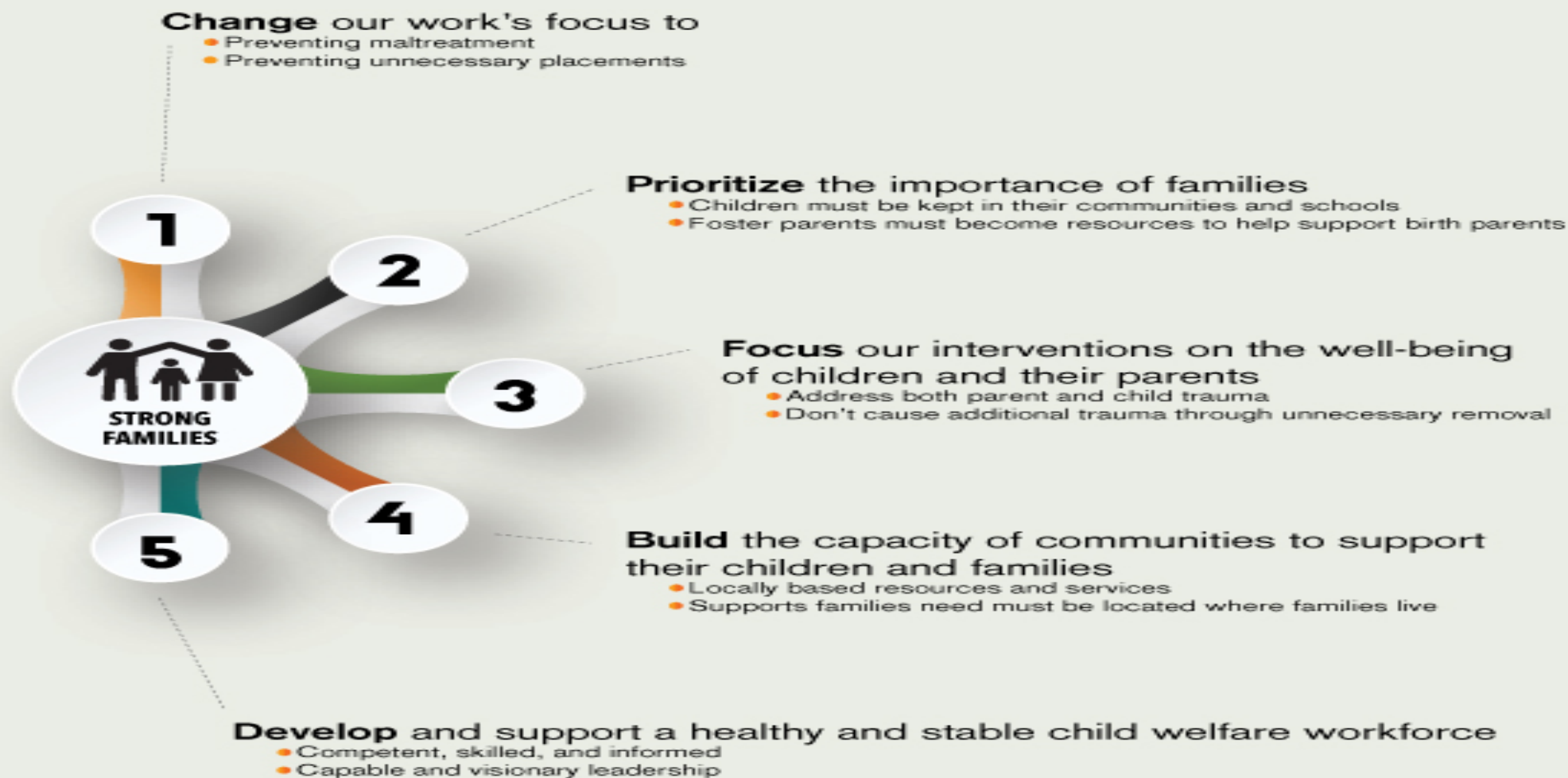
Reunification
Celebrations

Family First Prevention
Services Act (FFPSA)





STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN FAMILIES: THE CHILDREN'S BUREAU'S VISION FOR CHANGING NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE



FFPSA Prevention Services

- States will now be able to use funds derived from Title IV-E of the Social Security Act for “time-limited” services (12 months) aimed at preventing the use of foster care in maltreatment cases. Currently, IV-E is only allowable for spending on foster care placements and for assistance to adoptive families.
- There are three areas of services that states can spend this money on:
 - *Services to address mental health challenges.
 - *Substance abuse treatment.
 - *In-home parent skill-based programs.

FFPSA Prevention Services

Services offered to:

- **Candidates for foster care:** a child who is identified...as being at **imminent risk of entering foster care**...but who can remain safely in the child's home or in a kinship placement as long as services or programs...that are necessary to prevent the entry of the child into foster care are provided.
- **Parents or kin caregivers of candidates**
- **Expectant or parenting foster youth**

Building Prevention Services Program

- Pilot
 - Policy, practice, and SHINES changes
 - Evaluation
- Needs Assessment:
 - Determine service needs statewide
 - Identify appropriate evidence-based programs
- Build Service Capacity

Strengthening Kin



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- Temporary Alternatives to Foster Care [HB 472]
- Legal Definition of Fictive Kin
- Senate Bill 167
- Evolution of Georgia's Kinship Continuum

Are You Ready?

Clara, age 14

Violet, age 8

Olive, age 5

Jasper, age 1



House Bill 472

Adds O.C.G.A. § 15-11-133.1 and amends O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2

- Allows the juvenile court to consider reasonable alternatives to removal and to order, ex parte or at the preliminary protective hearing, temporary alternatives to foster care in lieu of protective custody, including:
 - A temporary order authorizing the child to be cared for by a relative or fictive kin
 - A temporary protective order pursuant to the provisions of Code Section 15-11-29; 94 or 19
 - An order that the DFCS investigate and report to the court whether removal necessary
- Includes timelines for preliminary protective hearings and adjudicatory hearings following any order for temporary alternatives to foster care;
- Defines temporary alternatives to foster care as measures that a juvenile court may order in lieu of removal of or placement of a child or children alleged to be dependent in protective custody which will prevent or reduce the trauma or removal; allow a child to be cared for by persons with whom the child has an existing bond or attachment; or that ensure the safety of the child pending further action by the court on the dependency complaint or petition;
- Updates the definition of fictive kin to mean a person not related to the child by blood, marriage, or adoption but who prior to his or her placement in foster care is known to the family, has a substantial and positive relationship with the child, and is willing and able to provide a suitable home for the child.

Senate Bill 167

Amends O.C.G.A. § 15-11-202, §15-11-21, §15-11-215, §15-11-321

- Provides that if a relative fail to demonstrate interest and willingness to provide a permanent home six months after notice is received, the court may excuse DFCS from considering the relative as a placement.
- Allows a court to presume that it is in a child's best interest to remain in placement where a child has been with current caregivers for 12 months and removal from them would be detrimental. The court may find that any change in the placement will be a failure by DFCS to make reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan.
- Removes provision for the court to initially attempt to place the child with an adult who is a relative or fictive kin if such individual is willing and found by the court to be qualified to receive and care for such child when determining which placement is in a child's best interests following a TPR or voluntary surrender.

Evolution of Georgia's Kinship Continuum

- Statewide Implementation Complete by October 2019!!
 - Urgent Diligent Search
 - Maintaining Existing Relationships
 - Importance of the Kinship Coordinator Role
- Full Disclosure (short & long term)
- Meeting Immediate Needs
- System Navigation
- Full caregiver (foster home) approval within 120 days of placement
 - Georgia's Pursuit of an Evidence Based Kinship Navigator Program

Strengthening Community

- SAFE home study & National Training & Development Curriculum
- Public-Private Community Caregiver Partnerships
- Exploring Therapeutic Foster Care
- Coordinated, Strengthened Care for Children with Complex Needs
- State of Hope



Focused Foster Home Recruitment

- Support for Birth Parents
- Teens
- Therapeutic
- Large Sibling Groups

Strengthening State Systems

- Multi-System Collaboration for Serving Complex Needs (Amerigroup; DBHDD; DPH; DCH)
- Just Culture & Focus on Front Line Staff
- Usual and Unusual Partnerships



Limits on Federal Reimbursement for Foster Care

Beginning 14 days after a child enters foster care, federal reimbursement for foster care payments is limited to children in:

- A foster family home
- A setting specializing in providing prenatal, post-partum or parenting supports for youth
- A supervised setting for youth 18+ who are living independently
- A setting providing high-quality residential care and supportive services to children who have been or are at risk of being sex-trafficking victims
- A Qualified Residential Treatment Program

Assessment to Determine Appropriateness of QRTP Placement

- Must be completed within 30 days of QRTP placement
 - Develop short and long term mental and behavioral health goals
- Completed by a qualified individual who is not a state employee or affiliated with any placement setting
- Tool must be age appropriate, evidence-based, validated and approved by HHS
- Assessment must be conducted in conjunction with family and a permanency team including relatives, fictive kin, as well as professionals (teachers, medical providers, etc.)
 - Children over 14 can choose members of permanency team

Monitoring of Children in QRTPs

- Court review within 60 days of QRTP placement
- At every status and permanency hearing, state must submit evidence:
 - Ongoing assessment that confirms need for QRTP placement
 - Specific treatment needs that will be met
 - Length of time child is expected to need additional treatment
 - Efforts made to prepare child to transition to a family
- In cases of extended placement (12 months consecutive/18 months total; 6 months for children under 13) State Child Welfare Director must submit documentation to HHS Secretary