

Date – April 29, 2021

Manual – Child and Family Services Manual, Chapter B, Prevention Services

Transmittal # – (290)

The purpose of this transmittal is to provide notice of new and revised guidance for Chapter B. Prevention Services of the VDSS Child and Family Services Manual. Unless otherwise stated, the provisions included in this transmittal are effective upon release.

The guidance presented in the prevention chapter is a reflection of the concept that prevention services are an integral part of the continuum of all child welfare services. Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) will continue to enhance prevention services and programs to ensure that all Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) have the resources needed to provide In-Home services for children and families, particularly those at risk of entering foster care.

The prevention chapter, which is incorporated into the larger VDSS Child and Family Services Manual, will be organized in the following order:

- Section 1: Overview of Prevention for Practice and Administration.
- Section 2: Prevention and In-Home Services to Families.

Significant changes in Section 1 and Section 2 include:

- Public education and awareness activities that LDSS offer and examples of national community outreach, education, and awareness programs.
- The concept of cultural humility as central to and an extension of culturally competent practice.
- Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First) and its impact on the provision of evidenced-based and trauma-informed prevention services in Virginia.
- The framework for In-Home services and foster care prevention throughout the casework process, to include guidance for initial assessment, service planning, reassessment, and decision-making in three (3) child safety scenarios.
- Guidance on use of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) to streamline the assessment process and utilization of a comprehensive assessment tool to create and inform individualized service plans.
- Guidance regarding the determination of a reasonable candidate and candidate for foster care and its documentation in the child welfare information system.
- Subsection that defines safety services in service planning.

This guidance was developed with the assistance of the statewide Prevention Advisory Committee which includes state and regional staff, community partners, and representatives from LDSS.

When the language in a section is italicized, it signifies new, revised, or clarified guidance. Additionally, all electronic links have been updated throughout the chapter.

This transmittal and guidance manual are available on FUSION:
<https://fusion.dss.virginia.gov/dfs/DFS-Home/Prevention-Services/Prevention-Services-Guidance>

Significant changes to the manual are as follows:

| Section 1 Overview of Prevention for Practice and Administration | |
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| Subsection | Significant Changes |
| Numbering | Due to some sections and appendices being relocated or new heading titles added within the Overview section, the numbering sequence has changed. |
| Entire Section | Replaces the term “Early Prevention” with “Prevention” in the overview section. |
| 1.6.1 Legal authority to provide prevention services | <p>Renames subsection to reflect new content.</p> <p>Adds further statutory authority for the provision of child welfare and others services by LDSS.</p> |
| 1.6.2 Definition of foster care prevention services | Updates guidance to reflect a revision to the Virginia Administrative Code (22 VAC 40-201-20) that defines foster care prevention services. |
| 1.6.3 Funding prevention | Adds new federal authority that enables Virginia to provide title IV-E evidence-based prevention services. |
| 1.8 Definitions | <p>Adds definitions for the following terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate Caregiver • Candidate for foster care. • Imminent risk. • Reasonable candidate. • Safety services. |
| 1.10 Vision for the future of prevention | Highlights the passage of Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First) and its impact on the provision and oversight of prevention services in Virginia. |

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| 1.13.3 Cultural humility | Introduces the concept of cultural humility as central to and an extension of culturally competent practice. |
| 1.14 Levels of prevention services | Adds revised information regarding the continuum and the levels of prevention services: primary, secondary, and tertiary. |
| 1.15 Primary prevention: Public education and awareness activities for all families | Relocates 2.3 Primary prevention: Public education and awareness activities for all families and incorporates into Section 1. |
| 1.16 Secondary prevention: Early prevention services with at-risk families | Relocates 2.4 Secondary prevention: Early prevention services with at-risk families and incorporates into Section 1. |
| 1.17 Tertiary prevention: In-Home services and foster care prevention | Adds new section that introduces the framework and principles of In-Home services and foster care prevention. |
| 1.18 Group models for prevention education | Relocates group models to own section |
| 1.20.3 Measuring program outcomes | Adds revised guidance regarding Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and achieving targets and outcomes |
| 1.20.4 Professional development | Adds revised guidance regarding training requirements for prevention and In-Home services staff. |
| 1.21 Appendix C: Virginia's prevention initiatives | Adds information regarding the Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First) and Three Branch Model initiative. |
| 1.30 Appendix I: Online resources for information and funding | Provides updated links for the identified online resources and adds a link for the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse. |

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| Section 2: Prevention and In-Home Services to Families | |
| Subsection | Significant Changes |
| Numbering | Due to some sections and appendices being relocated or new heading titles added within the Prevention Services section, the numbering sequence has changed. |
| Entire Section | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replaces the term “Early Prevention” with “Prevention” in the services section. • Replaces the term “CPS: Ongoing Services” with “In-Home services” in the services section. • Replaces “Relative/Kin” with “Relative/Fictive Kin” |
| 2.2 Definition of prevention services to families | Adds revised information regarding the levels of prevention services: primary, secondary, and tertiary. |
| 2.3 Tertiary prevention: In-Home services and foster care prevention | Adds new section that introduces the framework and principles of In-Home services and foster care prevention. |
| 2.4 Opening a case | Relocates section. |
| 2.4.2 Information and referral only | Relocates subsection. |
| 2.4.4 Opening case narrative | Adds subsection to provide guidance on the documentation of an opening case narrative in Family Support and In-Home services cases. |
| 2.4.5 Case type | Adds new guidance for the Family Support, In-Home, and Dual In-Home & Foster Care case types in the child welfare information system. |
| 2.4.6 Transfer case within LDSS | Adds subsection to provide guidance on the transfer of In-Home services cases within LDSS. |

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| <p>2.5 Child safety scenarios in an In-Home services case</p> | <p>Adds new guidance for initial assessment, service planning, reassessment, and decision-making in the following child safety scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth living with parent(s) or relative/kin caregiver(s). • Child or youth temporarily living with relative/kin caregiver(s) and will return to the parent(s) or caretaker/guardian(s) within six (6) months. • Child or youth permanently living with relative/kin caregivers(s). |
| <p>2.6 Initial contact and assessment in an In-Home services case</p> | <p>Adds new, revised, and clarified guidance on providing services to individual families served by LDSS and presents a model for initial contact and assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.6.1 Frequency of worker visits. • 2.6.2 Additional contacts defined. • 2.6.3 Parental permission to speak to a child. • 2.6.4 Contact information. |
| <p>2.6.5 Consideration of safety at initial contact</p> | <p>Adds subsection to provide guidance on assessing initial safety in an In-Home services case.</p> |
| <p>2.6.6 Determining risk level at initial contact</p> | <p>Adds subsection to provide guidance on determining initial risk level in an In-Home services case.</p> |
| <p>2.6.6.5 Candidacy determination in an In-Home services case</p> | <p>Adds revised guidance regarding the determination of a reasonable candidate or candidate for foster care and its documentation in the child welfare information system.</p> |
| <p>2.6.6.6 Family Partnership Meeting (FPM)</p> | <p>Relocates subsection.</p> |
| <p>2.6.6.7 Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM)</p> | <p>Relocates subsection.</p> |
| <p>2.6.8 Reasonable diligence to locate family</p> | <p>Adds subsection to provide guidance on reasonable diligence to locate family in an In-Home services case.</p> |
| <p>2.7 Comprehensive assessment of the family's needs and strengths</p> | <p>Relocates section.</p> |
| <p>2.7.1 Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)</p> | <p>Relocates Section 2.8.4 Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS). Adds revised guidance regarding use of the CANS.</p> |

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| <p>2.8 Service planning</p> | <p>Relocates section.</p> <p>Adds new and revised guidance regarding service planning.</p> <p>This section includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.8.1 Definition of service plan. • 2.8.2 Timeframe to complete service plan. • 2.8.3 Information needed to develop service plan. • 2.8.4 Develop the plan with the family. • 2.8.5 Components of an effective service plan. • 2.8.6 Living arrangement. • 2.8.7 Share and document the service plan. • Supervisory review of the service plan • 2.8.8 Supervisory review of the service plan. • 2.8.9 Funding the service plan. • 2.8.10 When parents and caregivers are not engaged. |
| <p>2.9 Tools and strategies that can be utilized in the assessment process</p> | <p>Relocates section.</p> |
| <p>2.9.4 Valid and reliable instruments</p> | <p>Relocates the list of instruments to Appendix C: Valid and reliable instruments.</p> |
| <p>2.10 Service delivery</p> | <p>Relocates subsection.</p> |
| <p>2.12.2 Safety services</p> | <p>Adds subsection that defines safety services in service planning.</p> |
| <p>2.10.7 Trauma focused treatments</p> | <p>Adds Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) as examples of trauma focused treatment services.</p> |
| <p>2.10.8 Evidenced-based programs</p> | <p>Adds new subsection that defines evidenced-based programs.</p> |
| <p>2.10.9.1 Caretaker services</p> | <p>Adds subsection that provides suggested services for a caretaker.</p> |
| <p>2.10.9.2 Child services</p> | <p>Adds subsection that provides suggested services for a child.</p> |
| <p>2.10.10.1 Family refuses services</p> | <p>Adds subsection that provides guidance regarding a family’s refusal of services.</p> |

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| 2.10.10.2 Court refuses request for assistance | Adds subsection that provides guidance regarding a court refusal of a LDSS' request for assistance. |
| 2.11 Service plan review and reassessment | <p>Renames and relocates section. Adds new and revised guidance regarding service plan review and reassessments in an In-Home services case. This section includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.11.1 Risk reassessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2.11.1.1 Risk reassessment considerations. ○ 2.11.1.2 Risk reassessment decision. • 2.11.2 Update the CANS. • 2.11.3 Update service plan. • 2.13.4 Update candidacy determination. |
| 2.12 Closing an In-Home services case | <p>Renames and relocates section. Adds new and revised guidance regarding the closure of an In-Home services case. This section includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.12.1 Update safety assessment. • 2.12.2 Update risk reassessment. • 2.12.3 Closing the CANS. • 2.12.4 Closing notification/summary. • 2.12.5 Supervisory approval. |
| 2.13 Transferring an In-Home services case outside the LDSS | Adds subsection that provides guidance regarding the transfer or an In-Home services case to another LDSS or another state. |
| 2.19 Appendix D: Online resources for information and funding | Provides updated links for the identified online resources and adds a link for the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse. |

Questions about this transmittal should be directed to: Morgan Nelson, Prevention Program Manager, Division of Family Services at 804-726-7521 or by email at morgan.nelson1@dss.virginia.gov.

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Commissioner