



PRESS RELEASE

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The Children’s Bureau Approves DC Child and Family Services Agency’s Federal Family First Prevention Plan

The first plan in the nation submitted to and approved by the Children’s Bureau

(WASHINGTON, DC) – Today, Jerry Milner, Associate Commissioner of the Children’s Bureau, joined Brenda Donald, Director of the District of Columbia (DC) Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) to announce the approval of DC’s federal Family First Title IV-E Prevention Program Five-Year Plan: “Putting Families First in DC” (Family First Prevention Plan).

The District of Columbia was the first jurisdiction in the country to submit its plan to the Children’s Bureau, an office of the Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. The Family First Prevention Plan lays out how DC will implement the federal Family First Prevention Services Act, which expands prevention services to help stabilize and strengthen families.

“The Children’s Bureau is incredibly delighted to be able to approve the first prevention plan in the country under the Family First Prevention Services Act. The District’s CFSA and its community partners have developed a plan that is grounded in a commitment to preventing child abuse and neglect and unnecessary removal of children from their families and to strengthen the ability of families to care for their children safely,” says Jerry Milner, Associate Commissioner of the Children’s Bureau. “The plan represents a thoughtful re-conceptualization of the way public child welfare agencies serve children and families, and we in the federal government look forward to working closely with the District to implement this landmark plan.”

“I want to thank our partners for their hard work to pull this visionary comprehensive prevention plan together, including our sister agencies and community stakeholders,” says CFSA Director Brenda Donald. “Family First is an enhancement to our current work and is the next evolution of the prevention work the District is already doing.”

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CFSA's Family First Prevention Plan deepens the agency's reach into communities in need of family strengthening support to help prevent child abuse and neglect and keep children and youth from coming into care by:

- making community-based services more widely known and more easily accessible to help strengthen families in need.
- providing supportive services to families who may have engaged with CFSA, but have been able to safely remain, or reunify with their children by connecting them to community-based prevention services.
- providing supportive services to families who have an open case with CFSA.

CFSA's comprehensive approach to preventing child abuse and neglect goes beyond the Family First Prevention Services Act. Mayor Bowser's Families First DC Plan – to be unveiled in December 2019 – will further expand the city's primary prevention services through neighborhood driven resources in Wards 7 and 8, to ensure more families have a fair shot at living and thriving in the District of Columbia.

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