Family Preservation

Trainer Guide

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Family Preservation

Course Description

The on-line course, Family Preservation, describes the values and goals of a family preservation program and the purpose of the services for families. Family preservation emphasizes a strengths focused model with its legal base in Federal law. Florida Statute and administrative rule for family preservation are also included in this course.

Course Goals

The goal of Family Preservation is to provide the newly hired investigator/counselor with basic instruction about

- federal and state law for family preservation
- the purpose of family preservation services
- the values and goals of family preservation

Objectives

Module One: Introduction & Overview of the History of Family Preservation

- Understand how family preservation services fit in the overall continuum of services
- Describe federal laws that resulted in family preservation services
- Know how family preservation services are implemented in Florida
- Know the eligibility requirements and goals of Florida’s Family Builder program

Module Two: Working With families

- Define family and family systems
- Recognize the keys to successful family functioning: Roles, Communication & Boundaries
- Know the concepts of a strengths based approach

Module Three: Adopting Family Preservation Values & Attitudes

- List the seven values of Family Preservation Services
- Know how to incorporate the seven values into casework practice
- Recognize the benefits of a strengths based approach when working with families
Florida Statutes for the Family Builders Program

39.311 Establishment of Family Builders Program.--
(1) Any Family Builders Program that is established by the department shall provide family preservation services:
   (a) To families whose children are at risk of imminent out-of-home placement because they are dependent;
   (b) To reunite families whose children have been removed and placed in foster care; and
   (c) To maintain adoptive families intact who are at risk of fragmentation. The Family Builders Program shall provide programs to achieve long-term changes within families that will allow children to remain with their families.

(2) The department may adopt rules to implement the Family Builders Program.

39.312 Goals.--The goals of any Family Builders Program shall be to:
(1) Ensure the protection of the child's health and safety while working with the family.
(2) Help parents to improve their relationships with their children and to provide better care, nutrition, hygiene, discipline, protection, instruction, and supervision.
(3) Help parents to provide a better household environment for their children by improving household maintenance, budgeting, and purchasing.
(4) Provide part-time child care when parents are unable to do so or need temporary relief.
(5) Assist and educate parents in household maintenance, budgeting, and purchasing when parents are unable to do so on their own or need temporary relief.
(6) Assist parents and children to manage and resolve conflicts.
(7) Assist parents to meet the special physical, mental, or emotional needs of their children and help parents to deal with their own special physical, mental, or emotional needs that interfere with their ability to care for their children and to manage their households.
(8) Help families to discover and gain access to community resources to which the family or children might be entitled and which would assist the family in meeting its needs and the needs of the children, including the needs for food, clothing, housing, utilities, transportation, appropriate educational opportunities, employment, respite care, and recreational and social activities.
(9) Help families by providing cash or in-kind assistance to meet their needs for food, clothing, housing, or transportation when such needs prevent or threaten to prevent parents from caring for their children, and when such needs are not met by other sources in the community in a timely fashion.
(10) Provide such additional reasonable services for the prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect as may be needed in order to strengthen a family at risk.
39.313 Contracting of services.--The department may contract for the delivery of Family Builders Program services by professionally qualified persons or local governments when it determines that it is in the child's best interest. The service provider or program operator must submit to the department monthly activity reports covering any services rendered. These activity reports must include project evaluation in relation to individual families being served, as well as statistical data concerning families referred for services who are not served due to the unavailability of resources. The costs of program evaluation are an allowable cost consideration in any service contract negotiated in accordance with this section.

39.314 Eligibility for Family Builders Program services.--Family Builders Program services must be made available to a family at risk on a voluntary basis, provided the family meets the eligibility requirements as established by rule and there is space available in the program. All members of the families who accept such services are responsible for cooperating fully with the family preservation plan developed for each family under s. 39.315. Families in which children are at imminent risk of sexual abuse or physical endangerment perpetrated by a member of their immediate household are not eligible to receive family preservation services unless the perpetrator is in, or has agreed to enter, a program for treatment and the safety of the children may be enhanced through participation in the Family Builders Program.

39.315 Delivery of Family Builders Program services.--Family Builders Program services delivered to eligible families must be provided in accordance with the following requirements:

1. Each Family Builders Program caseworker, whether employed by the department or a contractor providing family preservation services, may provide intensive services to a maximum of six families.

2. Each family will receive intensive family preservation services for up to 4 months. Upon termination of family preservation services, the caseworker shall close the case for further action or refer the family for other appropriate services.

3. Family Builders Program services will normally be provided in the family's own home and community consistent with the needs of family members. Caseworkers shall be available by telephone and on call for visits to families at all times including evenings and weekends during the period of service to each family.

4. Within the first week of initiating family preservation services, and after thorough consultation with the family receiving such services, the family preservation caseworker shall develop a family preservation plan which shall clearly state the specific goals and priorities, tasks, and approaches to be used to reach these goals, and the estimated timeframes for when these goals will be reached.
39.316 Qualifications of Family Builders Program workers.--

(1) A public or private agency staff member who provides direct service to an eligible family must possess a bachelor's degree in a human-service-related field and 2 years' experience providing direct services to children, youth, or their families or possess a master's degree in a human-service-related field with 1 year of experience. A person who supervises caseworkers who provide direct services to eligible families must possess a master's degree in a human-service-related field and have at least 2 years of experience in social work or counseling or must possess a bachelor's degree in a human-service-related field and have at least 3 years' experience in social work or counseling.

(2) A person who provides paraprofessional aide services to families must possess a valid high school diploma or a Graduate Equivalency Diploma and must have a minimum of 2 years' experience in working with families with children. Experience in a volunteer capacity while working with families may be included in the 2 years of required experience.

(3) Caseworkers must successfully complete at least 40 hours of intensive training prior to providing direct services under this program. Paraprofessional aides and supervisors must, within 90 days after hiring, complete a training program prescribed by the department on child abuse, abandonment, and neglect and an overview of the children, youth, and families program components and service delivery system. Program supervisors and caseworkers must thereafter complete at least 40 hours of additional training each year in accordance with standards established by the department.

39.317 Outcome evaluation.--The outcome evaluation report of the department shall include, but is not limited to, the following information, which the contract providers must maintain and provide:

(1) The number of families receiving services.

(2) The number of children placed in emergency shelters, foster care, group homes, or other facilities outside their homes and families.

(3) The average cost of the services provided to families receiving services.

(4) An overall statement of the progress of the program along with recommendations for improvements.

39.318 Funding.--The department is authorized to use appropriate state, federal, and private funds within its budget for operating the Family Builders Program. For each child served, the cost of providing home-based services described in this part must not exceed the costs of out-of-home care which otherwise would be incurred.
Are Family Preservation Services Appropriate?

Directions:

1. Identify whether or not the Concord and the Wilkins families meet the criteria for family preservation services. (TG5-6)

2. Circle “Yes” or “No” and write the rationale for your answer beneath each scenario.

3. Submit your completed activity sheet to your trainer for review and discussion.

Concord Family

18-year old Susan Concord has two children: ages 2 and 3. The investigation indicated a maltreatment of physical abuse. The father is unknown, and there are no relatives to care for the children. Susan currently does not have a place to live, and she does not work. She has been drinking heavily for the past year and has recently been arrested for possession of cocaine. She has four prior investigations involving physical abuse. One of the priors that took place four years ago and involved the removal of a 1-year old, and Susan’s parental rights were terminated involuntarily. The two children were taken to the Child Protection Team for examination. The medical report indicated that the 2-year old had a skull fracture, and the 3-year old had multiple broken ribs. The CPT report identified that the injuries were consistent with abuse.

YES NO

Rationale:

Children are at High Risk:

- Four Priors - One involving physical abuse.
- Four years ago mother’s parental rights were involuntarily terminated.
- 2 year old - skull fracture
- 3 year old - multiple broken bones
Wilkins Family

Mary and John Wilkins have four children: ages 2, 4, 8, and 14. John works for a factory that produces car products. Mary works at home taking care of household responsibilities and the children. John recently lost his job and is currently looking for work. Mary is willing to work; however, she lacks job skills and does not have anyone to care for her 2 and 4-year old during the day if she were to get a job. The electricity in the home has recently been shut off due to lack of payment. The 8 and 14-year old children have reported to the school that they are hungry, and they often do not have lunch at school or money to buy lunch. Tabitha, the 14-year old, has been behaviorally acting out in school. She has recently been reported for truancy. Mary and John are willing to work with Tabitha’s behavioral concerns, but they do not know what else to do. The stress level is high in the Wilkins home. An abuse intake revealed allegations of neglect. There are no other prior intakes/investigations.

**YES**  **NO**

Rationale:

- Parents are cooperative
- Mother and Father willing to work.
- No Priors
- Appears to be a stressful time due to Father losing his job
Assessing Family Strengths

Directions:
1. Read both family scenarios. (TG7-8)
2. List the family's strengths beneath each scenario.
3. Submit your completed activity sheet to your trainer for review and discussion.

Butler Family

The Butler household consists of an 18 year-old mother and her 9 month-old child. They live in a housing project with subsidized rent. The child's father had been involved with the family until recently. The hospital called the hotline when the child was taken to the emergency room with a suspicious fracture. The mother states that the child fell out of his crib.

The mother meets willingly with the investigator and discussion seems to go well, until the child cries. The mother then becomes angry and wonders why the child is doing this to her and why he does not love her.

The mother lacks effective parenting skills, as well as coping/stress management skills. The mother appears to have an interest in developing these skills. She has attended parenting skills classes and parent support groups on an occasional basis.

The child is at high risk due to his age.

STRENGTHS:
- They live in a home
- Mother is cooperative
- Mother interested in developing coping and stress management skills
- Mother has attended some parenting classes and support groups
Assessing Family Strengths

Elk Family

The Elk family consists of a 23 year-old father, 22 year-old mother and a 7 year-old son. The mother is well known by the Child Welfare staff due to her years spent in foster care. The mother admits that her husband has been drinking a lot, but states that everything will be okay, since he has just obtained a job at the local convenience store.

The mother notes that the father loves his son and would not hurt him; the injuries the child has suffered when alone with the father, have all been unfortunate accidents.

The child is currently in a special needs class. The mother is active in the child's school and regularly attends teacher/parent conferences. The mother has expressed some concern in dealing with the child's behavior at home. She has tried to implement behavior management techniques suggested by the school but has not been able to do this consistently. She has also not been able to obtain support from her husband in implementing the techniques.

Recently, the child was observed by the worker to have bruises on his right arm. The child reports his father grabbed him. The father was reportedly drinking at the time of the incident. The child is believed to be in a high risk situation.

STRENGTHS:

• Two parent household - Mother/Father
• Mother is active in child's school
• Mother has tried to implement behavior management techniques suggested by the school
Values of Family Preservation

Directions:

1. Complete each of the following statements by using one of the words from the word list to fill in the blank.

2. Submit your completed activity sheet to your trainer for review and discussion.

WORD LIST

Safety   Family
Children  Culturally Competent
Immediate  Power
Model

1. **Family** drives the system: the power for change resides with the family.

2. All **children** need families.

3. **Model** family strengths: every one is doing the best they can, with the resources they have.

4. **Immediate** response: crisis = opportunity for change. Not all problems need to be addressed.

5. Leave the **power** with the family: Most family members really care about each other.

6. You must be **culturally** competent.

7. 1st concern is **safety**.