

PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM

The federally funded Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program reflects the Virginia Children's Services Practice Model concept that "Children are best served when we provide their families with the supports necessary to safely raise them. Services to preserve the family unit and prevent family disruption are family-focused, child-centered, and community-based."

PSSF services may be provided through local public or private agencies, individuals, or any combination of resources. The funding for the program is used for direct and purchased services to preserve and strengthen families, avoid unnecessary out-of-home or out-of-community placements, reunify children and their families, or to find and achieve new permanent families for those children who cannot return home. The program funding is flexible and each local Community Policy & Management Team (CPMT) determines (within applicable Federal and State laws and regulations as well as guidance) what community services in their respective communities will be funded or reimbursed on behalf of the children and families.

The PSSF Program provides services to families with children who are at risk of out-of-home placement or who are in foster care. Services include:

- ★ **Family Preservation Services (FPS)**, which are designed to help families (including birth, foster, adoptive, and extended families) alleviate crises; maintain the safety of children in their



own homes; support families who are preparing to reunify or adopt, and assist families to obtain support to address their multiple needs in a culturally sensitive manner. The definition also allows grantees to support infant safe haven programs (*refer to Code of Virginia § 18.2-371.1, § 40.1-103, § 63.2-910.1, § 8.01-226.5:2*).

★ **Eligibility for Services under FPS**

Families who may receive FPS are those with children ages birth through 17 years who are at imminent risk of out of home placement into the social services, mental health, developmental disabilities, substance abuse, or juvenile justice systems. The populations of children for whom these services shall be made available include those alleged or found to be abused, neglected, or dependent; emotionally or behaviorally disturbed; undisciplined or delinquent; and/or have medical needs, that with assistance, could be managed in the home.

- ★ **Family Support Services (FSS)**, which are primarily community-based preventive activities



designed to promote the safety and well-being of children and families; promote parental competencies and behaviors that will increase the ability of families to successfully nurture their children; enable families to use other resources and opportunities available in the community; create supportive networks to enhance child-rearing abilities of parents and help compensate for the increased social isolation and vulnerability of families; and strengthen parental relationships and promote healthy marriages. Public Law 112-34 amended the definition to include mentoring programs.



● **Eligibility for Services under FSS**

Each local CPMT (or its designee) determines the population eligible for FSS based on a plan approved by the Virginia Department of Social Services. For more information, please visit <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/pssf.cgi> or call (804) 726-7577.

☆ **Time-Limited Family Reunification Services**

(TLFRS), which are provided to a child who is removed from home and placed in a foster care setting and to the parents or primary caregiver. These services are available only for 15 months from the date the child enters foster care. Time-limited reunification services facilitate the safe and timely reunification of the child with the family. Funded services include counseling; substance abuse treatment; mental health services; temporary child care; and therapeutic services for families, including crisis nurseries; and transportation to services. In addition, Public Law 112-34 authorized the use of funds for peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups for parents and primary caregivers, and for services and activities to facilitate access to and visitation of children in foster care by parents and siblings.



● **Eligibility for Services under TLFRS**

Families who may receive TLFRS are those who have one or more children (ages birth through 17 years) that have been removed from the child's home and placed in a foster family home or a child care institution. Services are provided to the family in order to facilitate the reunification of the child safely and appropriately within a timely fashion, but only during the 15 month period that begins on the date that the child is considered to have entered foster care.

☆ **Adoption Promotion and Support Services**

(APSS) are designed to encourage more adoptions of children out of the foster care system when adoptions are in the best interests of the children. They include pre- and post-adoption services designed to expedite the adoption process and support adoptive families.

● **Eligibility for Services under APSS**

Families who adopt or express interest in adopting children out of the foster care system are eligible for APSS. In addition, families who adopt and the adoption are at risk of disruption are eligible.

For more information including contact information, please go to:

<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/pssf.cgi>



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

FAMILY SERVICES