

Understanding the Evidence-Based Practice Requirements of the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018

For Prevention Programming in Wisconsin's Child and Family Serving Systems

Why Is It important To Know?

The new Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was signed into law on February 9th, 2018. This new law will require many changes in the child welfare system. One change will be a greater emphasis on evidence-based (EB) practice and models in the field of prevention. The target population for this funding (also referred to as Title IV-E candidates) are children and their families who are in imminent risk of entering out-of-home care. These prevention programs and services eligible to be funded will be programs that show promising, supported, or well-supported evidence (FFPSA Overview, 2018). This requires professionals and communities within the field of prevention, to build a shared language and understanding of what evidence-based practices are. It will also be important to begin to understand what the FFPSA requirements mean for levels of evidence based.

FFPSA Requirements for All EB Programs Regardless of Level of Evidence:

- **Book or manual:** The practice has a book, manual, or other available writings that explain the components of the practice protocol and describe how to administer the practice to fidelity.
- **No empirical risk of harm:** There is no measured evidence suggesting that, compared to its likely benefits, the practice constitutes a risk of harm to those receiving it.
- **Weight of evidence supports benefits:** If multiple outcome studies have been conducted, the overall weight of evidence supports the benefits of the practice.
- **Reliable and valid outcome measures:** Outcome measures are reliable and valid and are administrated consistently and accurately across all those receiving the practice.
- **No case data for severe or frequent risk of harm:** There is no data suggesting a risk of harm that was caused by the treatment and that was severe or frequent

Family First Prevention Services Act Definition of Types of Evidence-Based Models:

Promising	Supported	Well-Supported
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 study completed on the model's effectiveness • Rated by independent systematic review • Determined to be well-designed and executed • Used some form of control such as an untreated group, a placebo group, or a wait list study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 study completed on the model's effectiveness • Rated by independent systematic review • Determined to be well-designed and executed • Random Control Trial or quasi-experimental research design • Carried out in usual care or practice setting • Sustained effect measured at least 6 months after treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 studies completed of the model's effectiveness • Rated by independent systematic review • Determined to be well-designed and executed • Random Control Trial or quasi-experimental research design • Carried out in usual care or practice setting • Sustained effect measured at least 1 year after treatment

Ways to Learn More and Prepare:

Look at Existing Evidence-Based Clearing Houses:

There are several current evidence-based clearinghouses that rate the level of evidence of existing programs and practices. The FFPSA requirements were based upon some of the same criteria these clearinghouses use. In the coming years before new FFPSA funding opportunities become available, you can begin to familiarize yourself with the rated programs on these clearinghouses. You might even consider choosing one the next time you are writing for a grant.

- The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare: <https://www.cebc4cw.org/>
- Blueprints for Violence Prevention: <https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/>
- The Evidence-Based Practice Registries: <http://cfcrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/EBP-Registry-Doc-FINAL.pdf>
- The National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; SAMHSA): <https://www.samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center>
- What Works, Wisconsin: Effective Programs and Resources for Children, Youth and Families: <https://fyi.uwex.edu/whatworkswisconsin/evidence-based-programs/evidence-based-program-registries/>

Learn Best Practices in Identifying Evidence-Based Practices for Implementation:

The University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Wisconsin-Extension has created a list of best practices in identifying good evidence-based practices for community programs. Though these are not the only best practices, these provide a good framework to start with. If you combine these best practices with knowledge about what makes a program or practice evidence-based, you will be better prepared to plan for and choose appropriate programs for your community and context.

- What Works, Wisconsin – Guidelines for Selecting an Evidence-Based Program: https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/whatworkswisconsin/files/2014/04/whatworks_03.pdf

Resources to Learn More:

- Decisions Related to the Development of a Clearinghouse of Evidence-Based Practices in Accordance with the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/06/22/2018-13420/decisions-related-to-the-development-of-a-clearinghouse-of-evidence-based-practices-in-accordance>
- What Works, Wisconsin – Evidence-Based Programs: An Overview.: https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/whatworkswisconsin/files/2014/04/whatworks_06.pdf
- What Works, Wisconsin – Program Fidelity and Adaptation: Meeting Local Needs Without Compromising Program Effectiveness: https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/whatworkswisconsin/files/2014/04/whatworks_06.pdf
- The Child Welfare Information Gateway: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/management/practice-improvement/evidence/registries-resources/registries/prevention/>

Works Cited

Family First Preventions Act (FFPSA) Overview. (2018, May 5). Retrieved from National Conference of State Legislatures: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/family-first-prevention-services-act-ffpsa.aspx>

The Department of Children and Families is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need to access this information in an alternate format, or need it translated to another language, please contact (608) 266-3400 or the Wisconsin Relay Service (WRS) – 711. For civil rights questions, call (608) 422-6889.