

Family Preservation Services

Program Report | FISCAL YEAR 2014



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Commissioner

Executive Summary
Family Preservation Services
Fiscal Year 2014 Program Report
(JULY 1, 2013 TO JUNE 30, 2014)

Family Preservation Services (FPS) is an intensive, in-home, crisis intervention and family education program targeted to families whose children are at imminent risk of abuse, neglect and out-of-home placement or those who are preparing for reunification. The goals of the program are to:

- ❖ ensure child safety,
- ❖ stabilize the family,
- ❖ prevent out of home placement,
- ❖ improve family functioning, and
- ❖ link families with appropriate community resources.

Services include: child and family assessments; skill based interventions, counseling and related support; linkages to community resources; limited financial assistance; and follow-up. Services are provided in the family's home or related environment as circumstances warrant.

FPS staff is available to families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for a period of up to eight weeks. Program interventions are intensive, providing each family five to 20 hours of direct face-to-face service per week depending on the nature and severity of their situation and presenting problems. All services are designed to build on family strengths and respond to a wide range of family needs.

All referrals for services are made by Child Protection & Permanency (CP&P) Local Offices and family participation in the program is voluntary. Families remain under CP&P supervision while receiving FPS services.

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) currently funds FPS programs in each of New Jersey's 21 counties for CP&P families. During Fiscal Year 2014:

- ❖ Total contract funding for FPS services remained at approximately six million dollars.
- ❖ 933 families and 2,070 children received FPS services.
- ❖ From initial intake to discharge, 94% of the families served remained preserved in their target home.
- ❖ Of the 2,070 children who received services, 52% were 6 years of age or younger
- ❖ Follow-Up Data indicates that 1,595 of 1,615 children served in SFY 2013 were successfully tracked one year after discharge from an FPS program. Of that figure, 1,431 were either at home or in another stable living arrangement, 29 had voluntarily relocated or were residing in an alternative living arrangement not related to child protective services, and 135 were in placement, constituting a 90% long-term rate of being preserved in their target home.

FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES
FISCAL YEAR 2014 PROGRAM REPORT
(JULY 1, 2013 TO JUNE 30, 2014)

SECTION I: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) funds Family Preservation Services (FPS) programs in each of New Jersey's 21 counties through contracts with 14 community-based provider agencies. Six agencies operate programs in more than one county. During Fiscal Year 2013, total annual funding for FPS services remained at approximately six million dollars. Based on this figure and statewide levels of service, the estimated average cost per family is \$6,430.87 dollars.

THE FPS MODEL

FPS is an intensive, in-home, crisis intervention and family education program that targets families under CP&P supervision and whose children are determined to be at imminent risk of out-of-home placement or preparing for reunification from an out-of-home placement.

FPS services are delivered by specially trained staff that provides a combination of counseling and concrete services that respond to each family's unique needs. As specified in the enacting legislation (N.J.S.A. 30:4C-74), direct service staff carry a caseload of no more than two families at any given time, except that during the last week prior to discharging one family, staff may carry a third case.

The goals of the FPS program are to:

- ❖ Ensure the safety of children,
- ❖ Stabilize the family,
- ❖ Improve family functioning,
- ❖ Prevent unnecessary out-of-home placement, and
- ❖ Link families with appropriate community resources.

Services are provided in the family's home or related environment as circumstances warrant and in accordance with the established program model set forth in the New Jersey Family Preservation Services Manual and the enacting statute.

Staff is available to families 24 hours a day, seven days a week for a period of up to eight weeks. Program interventions are intensive, providing families no less than five and no more than 20 hours of direct face-to-face service each week depending on the nature and severity of their situation. More specifically:

- ❖ Initial visits with the family are conducted within 24 hours of referral. The referring CP&P Case Manager is invited to attend the first home visit,
- ❖ Initial and final assessments of family functioning are conducted using the North Carolina Family Assessment Scales (NCFAS),
- ❖ Goal directed interventions are developed in consultation with the family to address the reason(s) for the risk determination and the identification of services and/or activities to be achieved within specified time frames,
- ❖ Using a behavioral/cognitive approach and building on family strengths, trained staff provide instruction and model skills that are designed to improve family functioning in areas including, but not limited to: parenting, stress management, communication and crisis management.

- ❖ Concrete services are provided to families as needed. Such services may include, but are not limited to: emergency financial assistance, food, clothing, transportation and housing assistance,
- ❖ Follow up evaluations are completed at three-, six-, and 12-month intervals after families are discharged.

SECTION II: SERVICE STATISTICS

This section provides aggregate data regarding program use rates and the delivery of services at each of the 21 county sites for the period July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

REFERRALS

CP&P is the sole source of referrals to FPS programs. Families are eligible for FPS when there is a presenting crisis that places at least one child at risk of being removed from home; or when a child is returning from out-of-home placement. Eligibility criteria include active CP&P cases in which:

- ❖ the child can remain safely in the home with intensive services
- ❖ the family has agreed to participate
- ❖ other less intensive services will not sufficiently reduce the risk, or are unavailable

Occasionally, FPS programs receive inappropriate referrals and must “turn back” cases to the referring CP&P office. This determination is made within 72 hours of receiving the referral.

According to FPS program standards, cases may be returned to CP&P when:

- ❖ the risk of placement is not imminent and the child can benefit from less intensive services
- ❖ the safety risk is too great for the child to remain at home
- ❖ the goal is to keep the family together until a suitable placement is secured
- ❖ the youth presents a significant risk to self and/or others
- ❖ the family's presenting problem indicates a need for longer term, less intensive services
- ❖ the family declines FPS services
- ❖ there is a lack of available program slots

Table 1 provides a statewide summary of FPS referrals and turn-backs during SFY 2014.

TABLE 1: TOTAL NUMBER OF FPS REFERRALS & TURN BACKS

COUNTY	FAMILIES REFERRED	TURN-BACKS
Atlantic	42	29%
Bergen	60	17%
Burlington	98	10%
Camden	69	3%
Cape May	61	3%
Cumberland	55	5%
Essex	73	15%
Gloucester	50	6%
Hudson	42	21%
Hunterdon	31	0%
Mercer	53	15%
Middlesex	55	45%
Monmouth	50	12%
Morris	37	16%
Ocean	55	4%
Passaic	54	35%
Salem	61	26%
Somerset	39	36%
Sussex	52	17%
Union	47	30%
Warren	30	0%
TOTAL	1,114	16%

Of the 1,114 families referred to FPS statewide during FY 2014, 181 were “turned back.” As in prior years, a family’s unwillingness to participate in FPS programming was the primary reason for “turn backs.” Table 2 lists reasons why 181 cases were returned to CP&P.

TABLE 2: REASONS FOR "TURN BACKS"

REASON FOR TURN BACK	NO. OF FAMILIES	PERCENTAGE
Active Domestic Violence	6	3%
Child not at imminent risk of placement	7	4%
Child placed prior to FPS intervention or during 72 hr. assessment period	11	6%
Family declined FPS services or is unavailable	124	69%
FPS recommended placement	2	1%
Lack of available program slots	13	7%
Other	18	10%
TOTAL	181	100%

Table 3 provides a statewide overview of the total number of families and children who entered FPS programs during the reporting period.

TABLE 3: FPS SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

COUNTY	FAMILIES	CHILDREN
Atlantic	30	69
Bergen	50	108
Burlington	88	184
Camden	67	188
Cape May	59	116
Cumberland	52	119
Essex	62	157
Gloucester	47	120
Hudson	33	68
Hunterdon	31	76
Mercer	45	99
Middlesex	30	61
Monmouth	44	89
Morris	31	55
Ocean	53	108
Passaic	35	79
Salem	45	89
Somerset	25	64
Sussex	43	80
Union	33	62
Warren	30	79
TOTAL	933	2,070

TABLE 4: AGE OF CHILDREN SERVED

0-6 Years	7-12 Years	13-18 Years	19+ Years	Total
1,073	630	367	0	2,070

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES CONCERNS AND DETERMINATIONS

Of the 933 families that entered FPS programs, the most frequently cited source of risk identified by DCF was child neglect. Table 5 lists the child protective services determinations that resulted in CP&P involvement in the family and eventual referral to FPS.

TABLE 5: SOURCE OF RISK

SOURCE OF RISK	NO. OF FAMILIES	PERCENTAGE
Neglect	630	68%
Physical Abuse	214	23%
Emotional Abuse	61	7%
Sexual Abuse	26	3%
Unification Failure*	2	0.2%
TOTAL	933	100%

*Unification Failure is used for those situations where a child is placed with a parent who was not involved in the circumstances that prompted a child's initial removal from home, but this living situation is determined to be a source of risk for the child and requires FPS intervention.

Many families involved with DCF experience many issues, conditions and circumstances (either acute, chronic, or cumulative) that impact their ability to ensure child safety and provide a stable home environment for their children. Table 6 lists the many stress factors that were identified among the 933 families that participated in FPS programs.

TABLE 6: FAMILY STRESS FACTORS

Family Stress Factors	Totals	Percentage of Families
Financial	418	45%
Mental health (parent)	380	41%
Mental/behavior health (child)	317	34%
Housing related	300	32%
Substance abuse (parent)	293	31%
Domestic violence history	251	27%
Delinquency	61	7%
Physical health (child)	55	6%
Physical health (parent)	49	5%
Disability (parent)	39	4%
Disability (child)	37	4%
Substance abuse (child)	34	4%
None Reported	4	0.4%
Daily routines/time management	1	0.1%
Household management	1	0.1%
Geographic Isolation	1	0.1%
Support health/medical care	1	0.1%

*FPS does not provide services to families that are currently experiencing domestic violence. DCF protocols and other specialized programs exist to address the needs of these families.

Each child under CP&P supervision has a case goal that drives the delivery of FPS services in their target home. Table 7 provides a summary of the CP&P case/service goals that were established for each of the 2,070 children whose families participated in FPS.

TABLE 7: CP&P CASE/SERVICE GOALS

Case/Service Goal	Children	Percentage
Reunification	187	9%
Stabilize in Home	1,854	90%
Stabilize in placement	29	1%
TOTAL	2,070	100%

SERVICE INTERVENTIONS

A referral becomes an intervention when the family and FPS program agree that FPS services are appropriate. For the period July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014, a total of 933 families and 2,070 children received FPS services.

While the method and focus of FPS service interventions varies from family-to-family, the service categories listed below are a broad picture of the assistance FPS provided to families.

TABLE 8: TYPES OF FPS SERVICES PROVIDED

SERVICES	UNITS PROVIDED	PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES
Parenting skills	570	61%
Stress management/Coping	374	40%
Concrete services*	293	31%
Communication skills	239	26%
Daily routines/time management	204	22%
Behavior management	192	21%
Household management	188	20%
Access resources	168	18%
Anger/Conflict resolution	161	17%
Safety Strategies	144	15%
Support mental health treatment	122	13%
Support substance abuse treatment	98	11%
Budget/Finance management	95	10%
Support health/medical care	64	7%
Employment assistance	33	4%

*Concrete Services may include emergency financial assistance, food, clothing, transportation, and housing assistance

FPS does not provide substance abuse, mental health, or medical services. FPS staff works with families to reinforce and complement specialized care and treatment plans from a family systems perspective. For example, individuals participating in substance abuse treatment programs require an environment, relationships, and life skills that support their on-going recovery and sobriety.

FPS service interventions span four to eight weeks, depending on each family's unique needs and case goals. During this period, each family receives no less than five and no more than 20 hours per week of direct services.

Programs are required to record the time spent on each case. Service hours are divided into two categories:

- ❖ Direct Service Hours: face-to-face contact between the FPS worker and the family
- ❖ Indirect Service Hours: all other time spent on behalf of the family, including but not limited to documentation, advocacy, collateral contacts, case consultation, supervision, and travel.

Table 9 lists the duration and frequency of FPS services provided to participating families:

TABLE 9: DURATION AND FREQUENCY OF SERVICES PROVIDED TO FAMILIES

COUNTY	No. FAMILIES SERVED	AVG. LENGTH OF STAY (Weeks)	DIRECT SERVICE HOURS PER FAMILY (Avg. per Week)	INDIRECT SERVICE HOURS PER FAMILY (Avg. per Week)	TOTAL SERVICE HOURS PER FAMILY (Avg. per Week)
Atlantic	30	6.0	7.0	9.5	16.5
Bergen	50	4.7	5.2	7.1	12.3
Burlington	88	3.6	6.0	5.5	11.5
Camden	67	3.9	8.8	9.4	18.2
Cape May	59	5.0	5.1	8.9	14.0
Cumberland	52	3.6	6.1	6.7	12.9
Essex	62	4.6	6.6	8.8	15.5
Gloucester	47	3.9	9.0	9.8	18.8
Hudson	33	4.8	5.1	7.2	12.4
Hunterdon	31	5.2	5.0	10.3	15.2
Mercer	45	5.4	6.4	5.8	12.1
Middlesex	30	4.7	5.4	9.1	14.5
Monmouth	44	4.2	7.9	10.0	17.9
Morris	31	5.6	4.5	3.7	8.3
Ocean	53	5.7	6.9	10.4	17.3
Passaic	35	5.9	5.4	5.4	10.9
Salem	45	5.5	5.8	10.9	16.7
Somerset	25	5.4	4.7	8.2	12.9
Sussex	43	4.9	5.4	2.1	7.5
Union	33	4.7	7.2	9.8	17.0
Warren	30	5.1	5.1	9.4	14.5
TOTAL	933	4.8	6.2	8.0	14.2

FPS programs provide very limited financial assistance to help families overcome barriers to success and reinforce the therapeutic process. Assistance may be used to:

- ❖ Address concrete needs that jeopardize the family’s stability
- ❖ Strengthen and promote family relationships
- ❖ Reward progress or goal attainment

Not every family served by FPS receives financial assistance. Disbursements are made at the discretion of programs based on the needs of each family. Allowable expenditures may include: essential household items; engagement activities; skill building aids such as books, videos, and games; and low-cost “reinforcement” to reward achievements. Table 10 describes the financial assistance provided by FPS programs.

TABLE 10: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO FAMILIES

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	
Total No. of Families Served by FPS	933
No. Families that Received Financial Assistance	495
Total Amount of Financial Assistance Distributed	\$20,911.18
Average Amount per Family	\$42.24
Percentage of Families that Received Financial Assistance	53%

The FPS Model has clear standards regarding a family’s termination or discharge from the program. Because FPS is a short-term intervention, discharge planning begins early with the goal of linking families to other community services and supports.

FPS is a voluntary program and families can withdraw at any time, however every effort is made to maintain their engagement. When families choose to discontinue their participation in the program, FPS informs the CP&P case manager, provides linkages to other relevant services, and closes the case.

Termination can and often does occur when families destabilize and safety concerns become too great for children to remain at home. FPS remains actively involved with families that experience short-term out of home placement for seven days or less. During this time, FPS works to facilitate the child’s timely return if possible. FPS must close the case when a placement exceeds seven days.

When FPS cases are closed and services terminated, interventions are classified into two categories:

- ❖ Full Intervention: FPS services last a minimum of 28 days or all case goals are achieved
- ❖ Interrupted Intervention: FPS services end prior to 28 days as a result of the family discontinuing FPS services or another reason beyond the control of FPS

Table 11 displays the intervention status of closed FPS cases by County.

TABLE 11: INTERVENTION STATUS (CLOSED CASES)

COUNTY	% FULL INTERVENTION	% INTERRUPTED INTERVENTION	TOTAL FAMILY INTERVENTIONS
Atlantic	93%	7%	30
Bergen	82%	18%	50
Burlington	80%	20%	88
Camden	78%	22%	67
Cape May	90%	10%	59
Cumberland	81%	19%	52
Essex	66%	34%	62
Gloucester	81%	19%	47
Hudson	85%	15%	33
Hunterdon	77%	23%	31
Mercer	91%	9%	45
Middlesex	63%	37%	30
Monmouth	86%	14%	44
Morris	90%	10%	31
Ocean	96%	4%	53
Passaic	83%	17%	35
Salem	89%	11%	45
Somerset	96%	4%	25
Sussex	84%	16%	43
Union	67%	33%	33
Warren	80%	20%	30
TOTAL	82%	18%	933

Treatment goals are formed within 10 days of the initial FPS assessment through a collaborative process that includes FPS, the referring CP&P worker, and the family. These goals are developed to address the reasons for the risk determination that precipitated the referral, and the information that was obtained during the assessment period. All treatment goals are specific to each family, clearly delineated, and achievable within the duration of the FPS intervention. Table 12 provides a summary of the extent to which participating families attained their respective treatment goals at the point of discharge.

TABLE 12: STATUS OF TREATMENT GOALS AT DISCHARGE

Individualized Treatment Goals	Total	Percentage
All Treatment Goals Met	497	53%
Significantly Met (50% +)	187	20%
Partially Met (49%-20%)	90	10%
Minimal or No goals Met (10%-0)	159	17%
TOTAL	933*	100%

*Includes 164 interrupted interventions which by definition, include families that did not complete the program or attain all of their respective treatment goals.

FPS programs track the whereabouts of all children from the time the case is accepted through discharge and beyond. Table 13 details the placement disposition of every child who received services in FY 2014 and whose case was closed by FPS during the reporting period.

TABLE 13: LOCATION OF CHILDREN SERVED AT DISCHARGE

Housing Location at Discharge	Total	Percentage
Foster Care	62	3.0%
Group Home	0	0.0%
In Home	1,917	92.6%
Incarcerated/Detention	1	0.0%
With Relative	43	2.1%
In-state Residential	15	0.7%
Other Family-like Setting	2	0.1%
Ran Away	2	0.1%
Shelter	6	0.3%
Substance Abuse Rehab.	0	0.0%
Unknown/Information Not Available*	16	0.8%
Other	6	0.3%
TOTAL	2,070	100%

*The "Unknown/Information Not Available" term describes the inability to provide the child's location at discharge. The majority of these children discharged as "interrupted interventions" causing FPS to be unable to complete full interventions with them.

Table 14 provides a broad overview of the levels, programmatic delivery, and impact of FPS services statewide.

TABLE 14: SUMMARY OF FPS SERVICE INTERVENTIONS

County	Clients Served		FPS Services Provided				Child's Status at Discharge*			% Preserved
	Families	Children	Avg. Length of Stay (Weeks)	DIRECT SERVICE HOURS PER FAMILY (Avg. per Week)	FULL INTERVENTION	INTERRUPTED INTERVENTION	Preserved	Placed	Other	
Atlantic	30	69	6.0	7.0	28	2	61	1	7	88%
Bergen	50	108	4.7	5.2	41	9	105	0	3	97%
Burlington	88	184	3.6	6.0	70	18	168	5	11	91%
Camden	67	188	3.9	8.8	52	15	186	0	2	99%
Cape May	59	116	5.0	5.1	53	6	114	1	1	98%
Cumberland	52	119	3.6	6.1	42	10	118	0	1	99%
Essex	62	157	4.6	6.6	41	21	128	20	9	82%
Gloucester	47	120	3.9	9.0	38	9	116	3	1	97%
Hudson	33	68	4.8	5.1	28	5	63	4	1	93%
Hunterdon	31	76	5.2	5.0	24	7	70	1	5	92%
Mercer	45	99	5.4	6.4	41	4	96	0	3	97%
Middlesex	30	61	4.7	5.4	19	11	58	1	2	95%
Monmouth	44	89	4.2	7.9	38	6	80	3	6	90%
Morris	31	55	5.6	4.5	28	3	50	5	0	91%
Ocean	53	108	5.7	6.9	51	2	103	3	2	95%
Passaic	35	79	5.9	5.4	29	6	78	0	1	99%
Salem	45	89	5.5	5.8	40	5	81	2	6	91%
Somerset	25	64	5.4	4.7	24	1	64	0	0	100%
Sussex	43	80	4.9	5.4	36	7	77	2	1	96%
Union	33	62	4.7	7.2	22	11	58	4	0	94%
Warren	30	79	5.1	5.1	24	6	73	0	2	92%
TOTAL	933	2,070	4.8	6.2	769	164	1,947	58	64	94%

*Child's Status at Discharge: "Preserved" means the child remained in the target home; "Placed" means the child was in a DCF out-of-home placement setting; "Other" means the child voluntarily relocated or was residing in an alternative living arrangement not related to child protective services.

SECTION III: FOLLOW-UP DATA

CASE FOLLOW-UP (SFY 2013)

Follow up evaluations are completed at three-, six-, and 12-month intervals after families are discharged from the program. The number of children who remain with their families one year after receiving services is clearly tied to the overarching goal of placement prevention and is considered an indicator of success for FPS agencies.

Table 15 displays information regarding 12 month follow up results for children who received services between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013 (SFY 2013).

TABLE 15: 12-MONTH FOLLOW-UP RESULTS FOR CHILDREN SERVED IN SFY 2013

County	No. Children Eligible for Follow-Up	% Contacts Made	Preserved	Placed	Other*	% Preserved*
Atlantic	60	100%	46	13	1	77%
Bergen	71	100%	63	7	1	89%
Burlington	127	100%	108	16	3	85%
Camden	120	100%	120	0	0	100%
Cape May	111	100%	109	2	0	98%
Cumberland	49	100%	48	0	1	98%
Essex	84	100%	70	14	0	83%
Gloucester	114	100%	112	2	0	98%
Hudson	103	94%	94	3	0	97%
Hunterdon	56	88%	45	2	2	92%
Mercer	131	100%	104	20	7	79%
Middlesex	84	100%	72	10	2	86%
Monmouth	54	100%	51	2	1	94%
Morris	55	100%	42	13	0	76%
Ocean	97	97%	81	10	3	86%
Passaic	25	92%	13	5	5	57%
Salem	74	100%	73	0	1	99%
Somerset	43	100%	43	0	0	100%
Sussex	60	100%	49	11	0	82%
Union	48	100%	43	3	2	90%
Warren	49	96%	45	2	0	96%
TOTAL	1,615	99%	1,431	135	29	90%

*Other means the child voluntarily relocated or was residing in an alternative living arrangement not related to child protective services.

*% Preserved is calculated based on the number of contacts made.

More specific information regarding the status and housing location of children served one year post-discharge is presented in Tables 16 and 17.

TABLE 16: STATUS OF CHILDREN SERVED IN SFY 2013

Follow-Up Status	Total	Percentage
Brief placement and reunified w/in period	6	0.4%
Other placement non-safety reasons	12	0.8%
Placed by CP&P safety reasons	117	7.3%
Preserved: Remains in home	1,351	84.7%
Preserved: Reunified with family	58	3.6%
Preserved: Stabilized in foster home	22	1.4%
Voluntary move or relocation	29	1.8%
TOTAL	1,595*	100.0%

*There were 20 children whose follow-up status was unknown or unavailable. These are children who could not be contacted by FPS or CP&P for a variety of reasons, i.e. their CP&P case was closed or the family moved out of NJ. These children were not included in the total number of follow-ups.

TABLE 17: HOUSING LOCATION OF CHILDREN SERVED IN SFY 2013

HOUSING LOCATION AT 12-MONTH FOLLOW-UP	NO. OF CHILDREN
Foster Care	122
Group Home	6
In Home	1,405
In-state Residential	5
Out-of-state Residential	6
Living Independently	4
Other family-like setting	15
Shelter	0
Substance Abuse rehab	1
With relative	31
Ran away	0
TOTAL	1,595*

*There were 20 children whose follow-up status was unknown or unavailable. These are children who could not be contacted by FPS or CP&P for a variety of reasons, i.e. their CP&P case was closed or the family moved out of NJ. These children were not included in the total number of follow-ups.

SECTION IV: CONCLUSION

DCF recognizes the role FPS programs have in supporting safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families involved with New Jersey's child welfare system. The FPS model complements the Department's mission to engage families and increase family participation in the identification and use of services that build upon their strengths and improve family functioning.

DCF is committed to maximizing its existing resources to ensure that FPS services remain available to children and families throughout New Jersey.