



Family Preservation Services

Intensive, in-home crisis intervention and education for at-risk families



2013 – 2019 EVALUATION BRIEF

Key Findings

- **FPS serves families with complex needs – 60% of FPS families experience substance use and mental health challenges at referral and about half of families are experiencing multiple challenges.**
- **Over 80% of families that participate in FPS remain intact within 18 months of referral.**
- **Caregivers who experience financial instability, mental health issues, and substance use challenges are more likely to have a child placed in foster care within 18 months of referral to FPS.**
- **More than three-quarters of FPS families significantly or fully achieved their program goals. Families that significantly or fully achieved their program goals are less likely to experience a removal within 18 months of referral than ones that do not achieve their goals.**

About Family Preservation Services (FPS)

Family Preservation Services (FPS) is an intensive, in-home crisis intervention and family education program primarily targeted for families whose children are at imminent risk of abuse, neglect, or placement in foster care and who are referred to the Division of Child Protection and Permanency in the Department of Children and Families. Specially trained staff provide a combination of counseling and services to meet each family's needs. Staff are available to families 24 hours a day, seven days a week for up to eight weeks. Program interventions are intensive, strengths-based and flexible, providing families with direct, face-to-face services, aimed at strengthening families and helping them to acquire the skills and resources they need to remain together in a safe, stable home environment.

Evaluating Family Preservation Services (FPS)

Our evaluation of FPS included **3,500** families that were referred to and participated in the FPS program between **2013 and 2018**. Families received an average of 30 hours of face-to-face services with an FPS staff member.

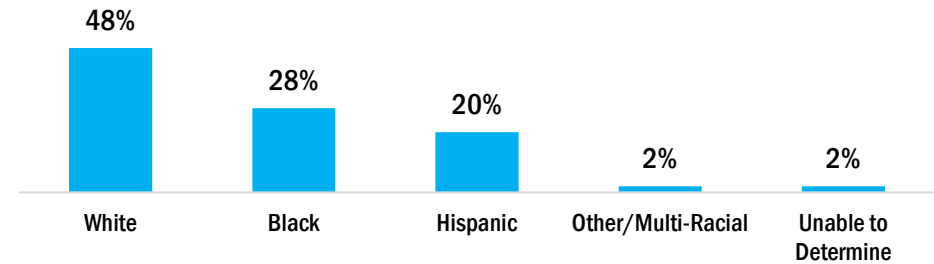
This evaluation sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of families who participate in FPS?
2. To what extent was the program implemented as planned?
3. What is the impact of exposure to FPS on families' child welfare outcomes?
4. For whom does FPS work best?

Family Characteristics

Families served by FPS had an average of 3 children. The majority of children served by FPS programs were under the age of 12, with nearly 50% of them 6 years of age or under. The average age of the youngest child at referral was 5 years; the average age of the primary caregiver was 34 years old. Approximately half (48%) of caregivers who received FPS were white. Twenty-eight percent were Black and 20% were Hispanic.

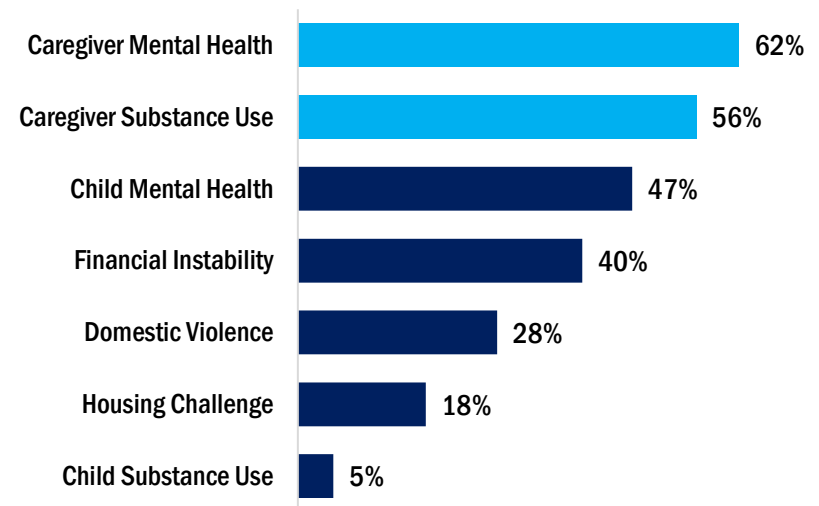
Almost **half** of caregivers who received FPS services were White.



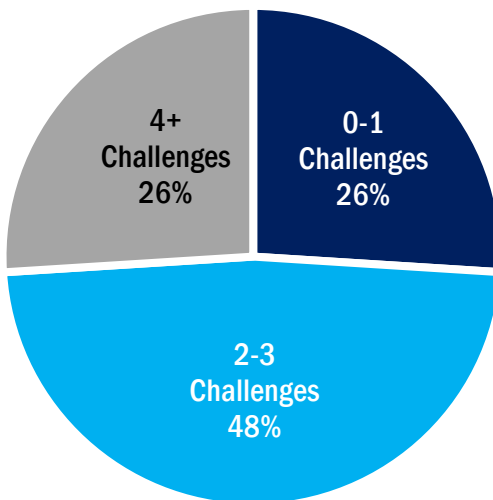
Family Challenges

FPS served families with complex needs - approximately **60%** experienced **substance use** and **mental health challenges**, and **40%** experienced **financial instability** at referral. Seventy-four percent (74%) of FPS families experienced multiple challenges at the time of referral. About **half** of families experienced 2-3 challenges, and one in four (26%) FPS caregivers experienced 4 or more challenges.

Approximately **60%** of caregivers experienced challenges with **substance use** and **mental health** at referral.



Almost **one half** of caregivers experienced **2-3 challenges** at referral.



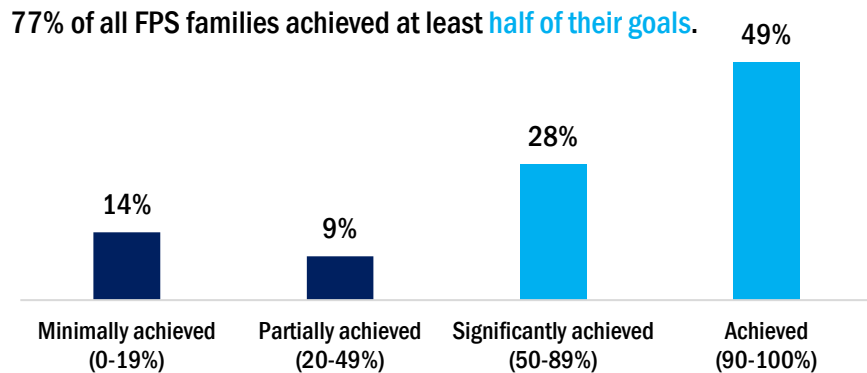
Participating families that experienced financial instability, mental health issues, and substance use challenges were significantly more likely to have a child placed in foster care within 18 months of referral than families without these challenges.



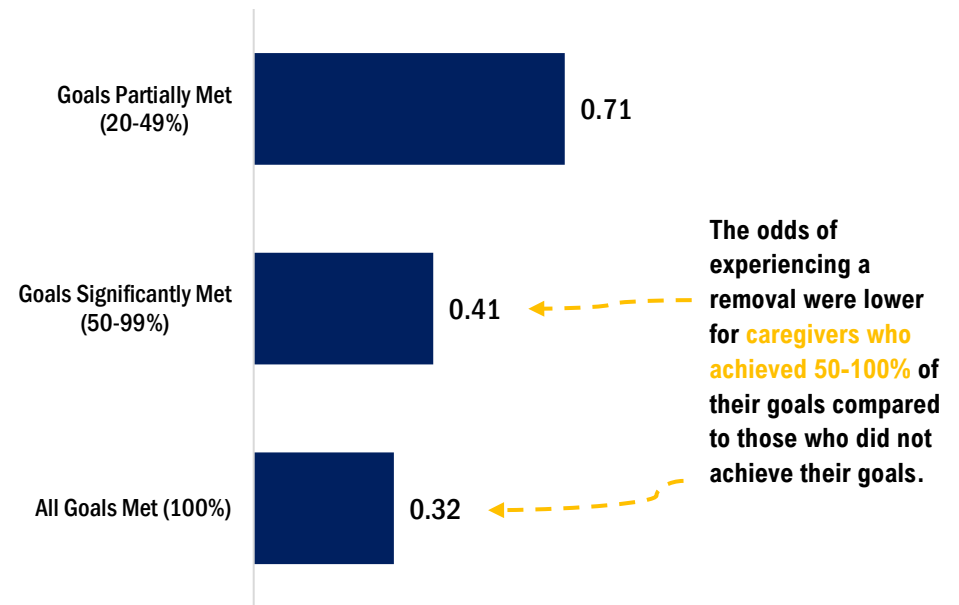
Program Implementation & Outcomes

The median time from Child Protection & Permanency case opening to FPS referral was 14 weeks; most families were referred to FPS within 1 to 8 weeks of their case opening. The majority of families (77%) achieved their goals in the FPS program and 80% remained intact within 18 months of referral to the program.

Higher goal completion was associated with incrementally lower odds of experiencing a removal, insomuch as families that completed all their goals were the least likely to experience a removal, followed by those who achieved 50-99% of their goals.



Caregivers who met most of their goals were less likely to have a child removed.



Evaluation Methods

FPS service data, participant demographic information and child welfare outcome data were collected through monthly service reports submitted by implementing agencies as well as through DCF's child welfare administrative data system. Data were analyzed for means, frequencies and proportions. To assess associations between variables, chi-square tests were calculated, along with multivariate logistic regressions to assess statistical significance at the .05 level.

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