



2010 Agenda SAFE AND HEALTHY FAMILIES FACT SHEET: **Family Preservation**

All children need a safe environment and caring adults to thrive. Children who experience abuse and neglect are at risk for a variety of adverse outcomes as they mature and develop into adults. The negative outcomes often include involvement in the juvenile justice system, mental health problems, and lagging behind in school or school failure.

While it is unsafe for some children to remain in their homes, many families can benefit from prevention and treatment efforts. Family preservation programs work to ensure that children can safely remain in their homes when at all possible and appropriate. They give children a sense of permanency and stability in their living situations and help parents improve their skills in providing for their children.

FACTS:

Family Preservation Programs and Family Reunification Services keep children safe and families together. Family Preservation services teach life-skills, promote and model positive parenting, and connect families with community services. These services help prevent entry into out-of-home care, speed and support reunification with parents, and maintain adoptive and relative placements. Family reunification services focus on helping the family prepare for reuniting and address the issues that will enable the child to safely remain in the home.

Family Preservation services work. Children and families who receive these services are more likely to maintain employment, avoid welfare use, and become productive working adults, making a greater return on investment.

Family Preservation services save Kentucky money. Family Preservation services provide dramatic cost savings to the state over the more traditional method of placing children outside the home. In 2007, the average cost to provide family preservation services to one family was \$4,564 compared to \$21,282 for one child to be placed in out-of-home care for nine months. Family preservation programs, in 2007, helped Kentucky avoid spending at least \$17.5 million dollars on out-of-home care placements.

SOLUTIONS:

- Expand access to all families who are appropriate candidates for the service
- Increase duration of family preservation services for families that are still struggling when their case is closed
- Maintain adequate funding for these successful and cost effective programs

No bill filed, budget request