

EVIDENT CHANGE

Inform Systems. Transform Lives.

FAMILY FIRST INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW

WHAT IS A FAMILY FIRST INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW?

To receive funding under the Family First Prevention Services Act, jurisdictions must establish an evidence base for programs designed to prevent children from entering foster care. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) allows jurisdictions to contract with an independent reviewer to document the evidence base for programs that have not yet been rated by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse. This type of review enables jurisdictions to:

- Get funding to continue programs that have worked locally.
- Claim funding earlier for programs that are still in the Clearinghouse queue.
- Make informed plans if the review determines that a program will not be approved. Jurisdictions can pursue formal evaluations to inform future approval attempts or to identify alternative program models that can be funded immediately.

WHY IS THE REVIEW PROCESS NEEDED?

The Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse has different standards than other clearinghouses.



Some programs approved by other clearinghouses will not meet Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse standards, while other programs may be eligible for Family First funding even if other clearinghouses did not rate them as evidence based.

WHAT WILL EVIDENT CHANGE DO?

- Identify all literature pertaining to programs that the jurisdiction wants to fund.
- Review evidence for research design and execution standards, including:
 - » Method and integrity of assignment
 - » Attrition standards
 - » Baseline equivalence



- » Acceptable methods of controlling for pre-tests
- » Statistical model, measurement, design confound, and missing data standards
- » Recording, correcting, and summarizing impact estimates
- Correspond with original study authors as needed to obtain and clarify information required for program rating.
- Complete Attachment B of the ACF Program Instruction ACYF-CB-PI-19-06 on behalf of the jurisdiction, designating the program as promising, supported, or well-supported based on the evidence reviewed and Clearinghouse guidelines.

- Prepare a comprehensive memo to ACF outlining the basis for recommendations.
- Respond to any questions ACF has regarding the quality and availability of research evidence.

WHY EVIDENT CHANGE?

Evident Change’s independent technical review is the first to be approved by ACF and has resulted in a program receiving a “well-supported” designation.

Evident Change staff have expertise in Family First as well as deep experience in child welfare practice. Staff with doctoral degrees supervise and manage all statistical analysis.



LEARN MORE

For more information about the Family First Independent Technical Review, contact Cynthia Burnson, PhD, Senior Researcher at Evident Change (cburnson@evidentchange.org), or call (800) 306-6223.