

# A PEATC

Do You Know....



## Factsheet for Virginia's Parents

### What You Need to Know About the Children's Services Act

#### What is the Children's Services Act (CSA)?

The Children's Services Act (CSA) is a Virginia law passed in 1993 to **help eligible youth and families receive the services and supports they need to overcome significant challenges**. Previously called *The Comprehensive Services Act*, the CSA is designed to be **child-centered and family focused and provide for a continuum of collaborative, integrated services**.

By using the state pool of CSA funds and local matching funds local agencies, parents, and service providers **work together to plan and provide services to children**, who have serious emotional or behavioral problems, are in or at risk of entering foster care, or have serious educational disabilities.

#### Goals of the CSA

The goal of CSA is to **keep families together and provide services within the child's home and community** whenever possible. Specifically, CSA seeks to:

- Preserve and strengthen families.
- Identify needs and help families as early as possible.
- Provide services in the least restrictive setting possible.
- Develop service plans to meet the specific needs of a child.
- Increase communication between families and agencies.
- Encourage public-private partnerships in serving families.
- Provide more community control and flexibility in the use of funding.

#### CSA Referral and Eligibility

You can refer your child for services by **calling the school social worker or by contacting your Individualized Education Program (IEP) team lead or your local CSA program**. Tell them about **your child's behavior issues** (e.g., aggression, running away, self-injurious behaviors) and the challenges you are having managing your child at home. **A case manager** at any of the involved local agencies can also make a referral. After referral, **a meeting is scheduled** for the family and youth with CSA program staff or the local FAPT Team.

#### Who is in Charge of CSA at the Local Level?

**A Community Policy and Management Teams (CPMT)** manages the local CSA program by coordinating agencies' efforts, managing funds and establishing local program policies.

**A Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT)** is a multi-disciplinary group that helps assess the strengths and needs of youth and families, recommends services, prepares a plan, and monitors progress towards goals.

Both the CPMT and FAPT include **parents and staff** from community services boards, court services, social services, public schools, and private providers.

[www.csa.virginia.gov](http://www.csa.virginia.gov)

#### Contact Us:

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Services may be available to youth who meet one of the following criteria:

- Youth who require private school placement for special education as determined by their Individual Education Plan (IEP);
- Youth who are in foster care or eligible for foster care;
- Youth who are eligible for services through a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) CSA Parental Agreement; and
- Youth who have significant emotional or behavioral problems who require services not available from a single agency, require services from multiple agencies, or may be at risk of residential placement.

## My Child has an IEP. What Services are Available through CSA?

In addition to tuition for a private educational placement as specified in your child's IEP, all students with an IEP may receive CSA funded "wraparound" supports to ensure a seamless plan for children and families. An **Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP)** is developed for eligible students to address **non-educational needs that extend beyond the IEP**. Services are aimed at helping your child be successful in the home, community, or school setting.

Services may be provided in the public school, a private day school, or in a residential program as needed to maintain your child in, or transition him to, a less restrictive home, community, or school placement. **Services may include** in home counseling, behavioral supports, respite, crisis services, therapies, and more. The *Virginia Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)* assessment must be conducted at least annually to evaluate progress and current/future needs.

## Do I have to Pay for Services Under CSA?

A co-pay for services may be charged for certain services under an IFSP. Since these are non-educational services they do not fall under the right to a "free appropriate public education." Copays are on a sliding scale based on income; you cannot be denied services based on an inability to pay. Be sure you understand your copayment agreement includes before you sign it.

## What Happens at a FAPT Team Meeting?

- You and your child will participate in the meeting to **discuss challenges and needs**.
- The FAPT team will decide **if your child is eligible** for CSA services.
- If eligible, an **Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP)** is developed.
- **If you agree with the plan, you will sign it and services will begin. If you disagree with the plan you can ask that the local CPMT review it.**
- If your family does not already have a **case manager**, one will be assigned to you.

Learn more about CSA including your rights and responsibilities here:

<http://www.csa.virginia.gov/Home/Parents/0>

**CSA rules may be complex. Contact your local CSA program for more detailed information.**

PEATC's mission focuses on building positive futures for Virginia's children by working collaboratively with families, schools and communities to improve opportunities for excellence in education and success in school and community life.

For more information about us, please contact:

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