

# Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183)

## **Background**

On September 29, 2014, President Obama signed the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (the Act) [P.L. 113-183] into law, which amended various provisions of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act.

## Purpose of the Act

The Act has two primary purposes:

- Protect and prevent at-risk children and youth from becoming victims of sex trafficking.
- Improve the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes of children and youth involved with the child welfare system.

## Regulations Supporting the Act

Regulations pertaining to the Act go into effect on September 1, 2015. Regulations have been developed to address each of the provisions identified below. Refer to <http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/legal/Regulatory/final/>, Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Regulations to review the new regulations.

## **Caregivers Need to Know**

Several provisions of the Act apply specifically to children and youth in foster care. These include:

### Protecting Children and Youth at Risk of Sex Trafficking

- Identifying, documenting, and determining services for children and youth at risk of sex trafficking.
- Locating and responding to children who run away from foster care.

### Promoting Normative Experiences for Children and Youth in Foster Care

- Supporting normalcy for children in foster care, including the application of a reasonable and prudent parent standard for the participation of a child in foster care in age or developmentally appropriate activities. A reasonable and prudent parent standard is defined as the standard characterized by careful and sensible decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of the child in foster care while at the same time encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child that a caregiver must use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.
- Improving another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA) as a permanency option. This provision includes changing the age in which a child may have the permanency goal of APPLA from age 14 to age 16.
- Empowering youth in foster care age 14 and older in the development of their case plan and transition planning for a successful adulthood. This includes the youth selecting up to two members of the case planning team who are not either the youth's foster parent or caseworker.
- Providing vital documents to youth when exiting care. For any youth who has been in foster care for six months or longer, he/she must be provided with his/her U.S. birth certificate (if eligible to receive), Social Security card (if applicable), health insurance information, medical health record, and a driver's license or state identification card.

## **Training on Provisions of the Act**

Trainings on protecting children and youth at risk of sex trafficking, and applying a reasonable and prudent parent standard will be available to caregivers via the Human Services Learning Center (HSLC) by the end of September. For caregivers who do not have access to HSLC, an account may be set up through the local department of social services or voluntary agency.

## **Additional Information**

Policies and additional information pertaining to the Act may be found at [http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/sppd/federal\\_acts.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/sppd/federal_acts.asp).

