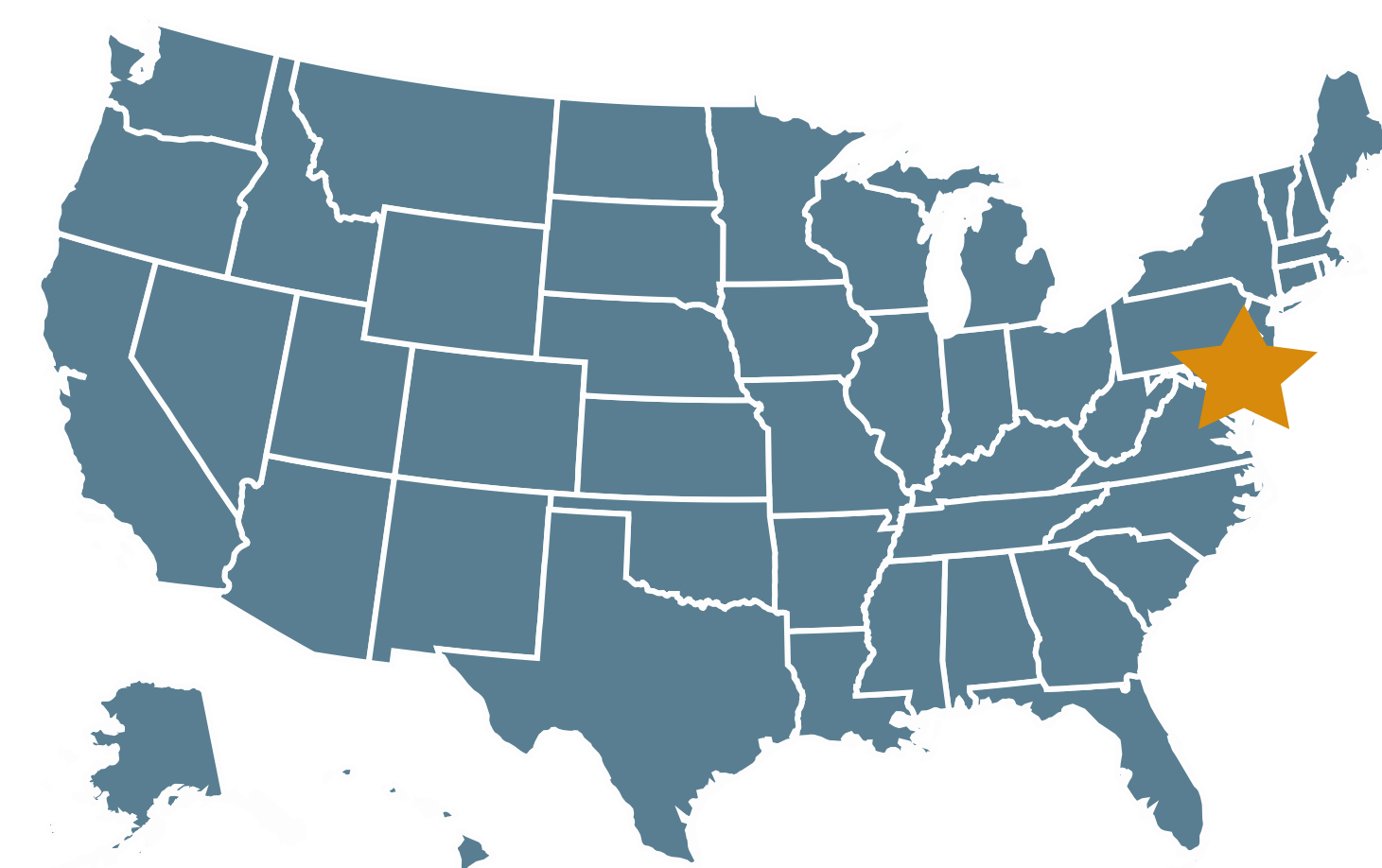


# Family Treatment Court Peer Learning Court Program

**Baltimore City  
Family Recovery Program, Inc. (FRP)  
Baltimore City, MD**



Peer Learning Courts (PLC) are Family Treatment Courts (FTC) that operate in alignment with the [FTC Best Practice Standards \(2019\)](#)\* — using sound, evidence-supported practices and policies to improve child welfare and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment outcomes for families. PLCs feature strong cross-system collaborative leadership teams that include champions among courts, child welfare, SUD treatment, and other family-serving agencies.

\*Contact [fdc@cffutures.org](mailto:fdc@cffutures.org) to access a copy of the FTC Best Practice Standards.

## Baltimore City FRP Overview and Background

**Date of Operation: August 2005**  
**Model: Parallel**  
**Jurisdiction Type: Urban**  
**Presiding Judge: Magistrate Kristin Peacock**  
**County Population: 585,708**  
**Capacity: 120 parents**  
**Average Duration in the Program: 18-24 months**  
**FTC Population Demographics:**  
**Female: 74%**  
**Male: 26%**  
**Race of Parents (2022):**  
**Caucasian: 40%**  
**Native American: 0%**  
**African American: 58%**  
**Hispanic: 0%**  
**Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian: 0%**  
**Biracial: 2%**  
**Age of Children (2022):**  
**Less than 1 year: 21%**  
**1-3 years: 23%**  
**4-5 years: 20%**  
**6-8 years: 13%**  
**9-12 years: 20%**  
**13 years or older: 3%**

### Mission Statement

At FRP, we "S.E.E. our families." *Strengthen. Engage. and Equip.* We strengthen families affected by trauma, substance use, and behavioral health conditions by providing equitable and inclusive services. We engage families in a diverse array of holistic services. We equip families with the necessary trauma-informed skills for resilience in order to live a self-directed life.

The mission of the Family Recovery Program is to reduce a child's length of time in out-of-home placements when that child is removed from their parent's/legal guardian's care due to the parent's substance use disorder (SUD). FRP will perform its' mission through providing judicially managed community-based services, intensive case management supervision, substance use disorder treatment referrals, and other supportive services to parents whose SUD threatens the safety and permanency of their dependent child(ren).

### History

In August 2005 private philanthropic partners, including the Abell Foundation, the Baltimore Community Foundation, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation—along with the Maryland State Departments of Budget and Management, Human Resources, and the Governor's Office of Children—joined with the Safe and Sound Campaign and the Family League of Baltimore City to initiate the Family Recovery Program (FRP): Maryland's first Opportunity Compact. FRP was designed to put the principles of the Maryland Opportunity Compact into action by:

- Reducing children's length of stay in foster care
- Saving state resources through reduced lengths of stay
- Using the savings to sustain the effort and expand effective programs and opportunities for children and families: the goal is to prevent future foster care engagement

### Key Partners

- Baltimore City Department of Social Services
- Baltimore City Office of the Public Defender
- Powell Recovery Center (residential and outpatient substance use disorder treatment)
- Divine Light (residential substance use disorder treatment)
- Step by Step (mental health and substance use disorder treatment, and housing support)
- Recovery Network (residential substance use disorder treatment)
- Gaudenzia (residential substance use disorder treatment)
- Chrysalis House (residential substance use disorder treatment for women)
- House of Change (residential substance use disorder treatment)
- Concerted Care Group (mental health and substance use disorder treatment)
- MedMark (medication assisted treatment [MAT] services)
- John Hopkins University Medical Center (residential and outpatient substance use disorder treatment and MAT services)



## Baltimore City FRP Operation Highlights

Continued...

- Legal Aid Bureau
- Children's Legal Services
- Wakefield and Associates (child representation)
- Franklin Law Group (child representation)
- Public Defenders Office and Panel Attorneys (parent representation)
- Healthcare Access Maryland
- Sage Center (housing)
- House of Ruth (intimate partner violence support and services)
- DORS (Maryland's Division of Rehabilitation Services)
- Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) (GED/Educational Support)
- CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)



### FTC Eligibility Criteria

FRP serves parents of children removed by Baltimore City Department of Social Services as a result of substance use disorder (SUD)-related neglect.

A person is eligible for FRP referral if:

- The individual is a parent or legal guardian of a presenting child
- The parent's substance use is a substantial factor for the removal of a presenting child
- The parent is physically present at court for referral

The term "presenting child" indicates a child 0-13 (at the time of the original shelter care petition) who has spent at least one night in shelter care. FRP aims to reduce the time children spend in out-of-home placements by providing intensive substance use treatment services and judicial oversight to families. The Juvenile Court of Baltimore City administers these services.

### Case Flow - Overview of FTC Services and Support for Families

FRP efforts target Baltimore City parents or legal guardians whose children (age 13 and under) have been removed from their care due to parental alcohol or illegal drug use. An eligible parent may voluntarily enroll or follow a mandate to enroll at the presenting child's dispositional hearing. FRP parents are immediately assessed to determine necessary treatment modalities.

Enrolled FRP parents receive intensive case management, weekly court oversight, placement in an appropriate substance use treatment program (within 24 hours of their FRP enrollment), and other supportive services—including transitional housing, mental health, education, parenting classes, and employment assistance over a 18- to 24-month period. These services aim to meet the needs of parents who are often in crisis and unable to move forward without intensive ongoing help.

*The FRP Horizon Program, a subset of FRP Standard Program, offers case management and referral services to prevent the removal of children from their parent or legal guardian's custody due to substance use. The Horizon Program provides intensive case management, referrals to appropriate SUD treatment programs within 24 hours (if applicable), and other supportive services. Unlike the Standard FRP program, the children have not been removed from the parent or legal guardian and there is no current court oversight. If the child/children are removed, parents can seamlessly transition to the Standard FRP program.*

Housing remains one of FRP's most innovative practices. As a means to link housing, recovery, and family stability, FRP opened a premier housing development—The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Building at Sage Center (Sage I)—in 2016. The 23-unit transitional apartment complex houses families in early reunification and recovery. As those families continue to garner support from the court, they also receive additional help from case managers who guide them through receiving services while continuing to support them in the family recovery process.

FRP discovered the importance of post-reunification support since the current family structure *still* needs attention once a case is closed. Ideally, FRP families move on to find permanent housing in the community and accomplish their education, employment, mental health, and substance use goals—resulting in a better community for all. FRP expanded housing access in March 2021 with the addition of five new townhomes—referred to as Sage II at Monarch View—so families preparing to move, but still in need of affordable housing, have support as they transition.



# Baltimore City FRP Court Operation Highlights

Continued...

Reengagement/Engagement - FRP utilizes the role of a Re-engagement/Engagement Specialist to help locate parents who have either failed to report to FRP for their initial intake process for 7 consecutive days (engagement) or have stopped active participation in FRP for 14 consecutive days (reengagement). The Re-engagement/Engagement Specialist assists in arranging immediate communication with their case manager to report/schedule an appointment and providing transportation assistance to report to FRP to meet with their case manager, if necessary.

FRP also assigns Parent Mentors/Navigators to assist parents with their recovery and progress. Parent Mentors/Navigators engage individuals either seeking access to treatment or preparing to re-establish life in the community post-treatment, as well as recent program graduates needing recovery support services. They advocate for recovery and positive change through community service projects and by connecting community members with those already in recovery.

According to a recent independent evaluation by NPC Research, **FRP is a cost-effective nationwide leader in permanent outcomes.**

## Program Services

### Parenting & Family Strengthening Programs:

- Circle of Security (parenting education)

### Developmental & Therapeutic Services for Children:

- Community evidence-based therapeutic interventions

### Substance Use Disorder Treatment & Related Support Services:

- Residential/inpatient treatment
- Outpatient/intensive outpatient treatment
- Aftercare/continuing care

- Medication assisted treatment
- Psychiatric care, including medication management
- Trauma-specific services (*Seeking Safety, Knowledge is Power, and Women's Empowerment Group*)

## Key Outcomes

Total number of parents served (FY 2022) = 112

- Total Reunifications/Permanencies (FY 2022) = 81
- Children reunified with FRP parent = 34
- Children reunified with non-FRP parent = 10
- Custody & Guardianship = 20
- Adoption = 17
- Total FRP parents/families residing in FRP Sage Center Housing programs (FY2022) = 30

**Are you interested in observing a Baltimore City FRP Staffing and Court Session?**

**Pre-docket staffing Fridays 8:30 am – 9:30 am ET**  
**Court immediately following 9:30 am ET**

### PLCs provide the following peer-to-peer learning opportunities:

- Virtual and in-person observation of FTC staffing and court sessions
- Discipline-specific discussions
- Technical assistance support
- Access to operational documents (e.g., policy and procedure manual, parent handbook, reporting templates, MOU, etc.)
- And much more

**To learn more about the FTC Peer Learning Court Program or to participate in a peer-to-peer connection, contact us**



[peerlearningcourts@cffutures.org](mailto:peerlearningcourts@cffutures.org)



<https://www.cffutures.org/plc/>