



Seen and Heard

A Newsletter of the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families

Volume 7 - No. 1 - August 1998

Letter From The Secretary

Productive Session

The General Assembly has concluded and left the Governor with several bills of importance to the children and families we serve. House Bill 649, sponsored for us by Representative Maier, overhauls our ability to serve children who have been abandoned by their parents in making more timely determinations by the Family Court in consideration of DFS petitions to terminate parental rights. It redefines the "reasonable efforts" we are expected to make to a more practicable standard and does not require us to make such efforts at all in extreme cases where the parent has committed a homicide against another child, for example. New time frames mean petitioning the Family Court to make permanency decisions on placement of a child being removed from the home, so that children do not languish in foster care. The recent Samantha Frazer case has put a face on the issues addressed by this legislative reform, which Governor Carper announced in January as part of his State of the State message.

Another measure, Senate Bill 142, authored by Senator McDowell, sets caseload standards for child protective services and child care licensing. The standards will help protect these vital functions when caseloads rise, not unlike the way the authorization for teachers increases when more students show up. Incidentally, today we have sufficient positions authorized to meet Child Welfare League of America standards for investigations and treatment, the challenge is to keep them filled with experienced staff.

Toward that end, special provisions in the budget bill provide for increased compensation opportunities for veteran investigative and treatment staff to address recurrent turnover problems in the ranks of these critical staff. All of these steps are part of our

commitment to achieve excellence in providing for the safety and well being of our most vulnerable children.

The budget also includes additional positions allowing us to make annual unannounced visits to all licensed child care providers. Additional positions are also being added to our mental health program to address caseload issues there as well. We are very proud that our Division of Child Mental Health's managed care network consisting of some 38 public and private sector providers, is now accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO), under its new standards for behavioral health care.



Secretary Thomas Eichler; Governor Thomas R. Carper; and Julian R. Taplin, Ph.D., Director receive accreditation certification from Thomas Kozlowski, Ph.D., JCAHO. The DCMHS service and delivery system were measured against more than 800 standards in a dozen different areas of performance.

We have come a long way from the days when most children were served by hospitalization and out of state

placements. Our program is getting extensive scrutiny nationally as other states attempt to tackle these issues.

It is noteworthy, too, that Ferris School continues to progress in its commitment to being a "total learning environment". We are proud of a new partnership with the DuPont Corporation which is sponsoring student mentoring at Ferris using the HOSTS (helping one student to succeed) model which is also used in many public schools. Last year the State of Maine sent a delegation to visit. We have since learned they are going to build two juvenile facilities using the new Ferris School model.



HOSTS volunteers are working with youth in Ferris School.

We are continuing to progress in our ability to make better decisions based on real client data with our FACTS system, as illustrated in this newsletter with our (VENN diagram). I recently gave one of my counterparts in Maryland permission to "swipe" our FACTS source code to provide the basis for their client tracking system. Our mission is to "facilitate positive change in the behavior and condition of the children and families in our care." We have many partners in this mission, and success requires sharing of information. In addition to our newsletter and more traditional means of communication, we have added a website which can be reached on the Internet at www.state.de.us/kids.

FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT

Forming Partnerships to Care for Children

There is a growing number of abused and neglected children needing out-of-home care. Today, about 620 children are being cared for by foster parents.

On June 1, 1998, Delaware's First Lady, Martha Carper, launched the formation of a partnership among the DSCFY Family Services, WHY TV 12, local community groups and businesses. The partnership campaign, entitled "*Foster Families Care: Countdown!*" has established a goal of increasing the number of foster parents by 100, before the new year. This event drew participation from organizations statewide which are helping in many different ways: paycheck or billing inserts; employee brown bag informational sessions; sponsoring radio ads and more.

If you are interested in becoming a foster parent or helping to get the word out, please contact Darlene Lantz, 633-2674.

CHILD MENTAL HEALTH ACCREDITATION

DSCYF continues to strive to meet the highest standards in the services we provide for children, youth and their families. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) is the leading accrediting body and sets the standard for excellence in the health care field. We are pleased to report that Child Mental Health Services has received accreditation as a managed behavioral health care organization from JCAHO. The JCAHO surveyors reviewed thousands of pages of documents and interviewed DCMH staff, treatment providers, and client families in order to rate DCMHS on over 800 standards in 12 different areas of client care and management. As the first child system and the first public entity to be accredited under these standards, DCMHS has set an example for the rest of the nation. Terry Center, which has been JCAHO accredited as a hospital in the past, and Silver Lake Treatment Consortium are applying for accreditation as behavioral health care organizations and will be surveyed this fall.

SECURE CARE BEDS IN DYRS

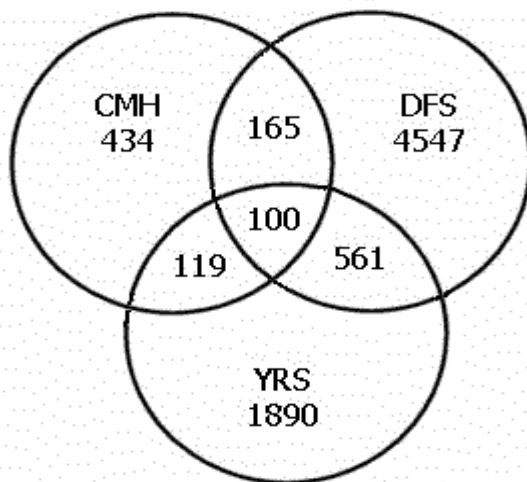
The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services requested and was granted FY99 resources to conduct a long-term study of the secure care bed needs throughout the state. Based upon the analysis done by the Statistical Analysis Center, we have identified the need for more programmatic slots over the next five to ten years. The next step in the process is to assess our current continuum of services against that demand and to identify and develop, when possible, community based programs to accommodate this increased population. Where it is not possible to effectively and

safely program for new youth in the community, secure care capital initiatives will be undertaken and could involve projects in New Castle and Kent or Sussex Counties.

An interim report is required from the consultants in September of 1998 outlining short term solutions to our overcrowded detention centers. The long term solutions will follow in December of 1998. If necessary, we can begin design and planning with respect to new capital facilities with a \$500,000 appropriation for FY99. Two sixteen bed additions were added this year to the New Castle County Detention Center to accommodate the increased pre-adjudicated youth population, bringing the capacity of that facility to 64.

TRACKING CLIENT ENROLLMENT

Frequencies by Division		
	Frequency	Percent
CMH	434	5.6
DFS	4547	58.2
YRS	1890	24.2
DFS&CMH	165	2.1
CMH&YRS	119	1.5
DFS&YRS	561	7.2
DFS&CMH&YRS	100	1.3
Total	7816	100.0



June 1998

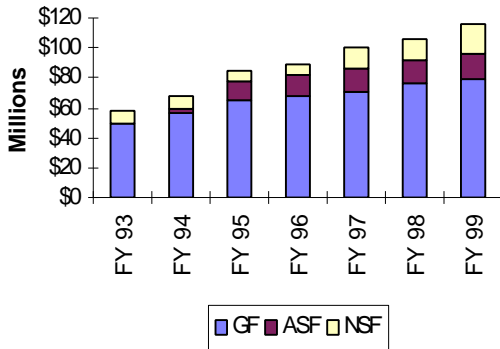
DSCYF has produced monthly since June 1997 a snapshot which illustrates the number of client enrollment records active on the fifteenth of each month. The charts above provide the distribution of enrollments by division. Notice that 12 percent of the

children we serve are working with two or all three divisions at the same time.

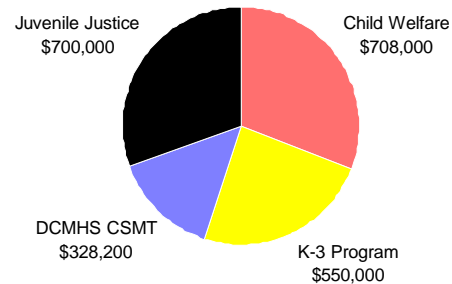
For further information on client services broken down by age, race, gender, and out of home placement, please visit our web site at www.state.de.us/kids and access our "Statistics" page.

FY 1999 BUDGET AT A GLANCE

**DSCYF Budget Growth
FY 93 - FY 99**



FY 1999 Major Initiatives



The Department's FY 1999 total funds budget is \$115,878,800. This is made up of \$79,474,500 in General Funds (GF), derived primarily from personal income, franchise, and corporate taxes; another \$16,930,800 in Appropriated Special Funds (ASF), which are primarily federal reimbursements for services the Department provides to Medicaid eligible clients and administrative costs for foster care and adoption services; and \$17,976,400 in Non Appropriated Special Funds (NSF), which are primarily federal grants.

FY 1999 Major Budget Initiatives

The DSCYF budget for FY 1999 contains over five million dollars in new initiatives or adjustments. These initiatives will enhance the Department's ability to deliver quality services to our clients.

Child Welfare Initiatives

Through several new initiatives, DSCYF continues to build on the mandate of the Governor's Child Protection Act of 1997. Over \$700,000 in new funds will be available for a variety of Child Welfare initiatives in the Division of Family Services. This includes \$247,000 to hire six new employees in the Office of Child Care Licensing for increased inspections of child care facilities and for Child Abuse Registry checks. An additional Family Services Supervisor is authorized in the budget. The budget also allows the Division of Family Services to over-hire for positions in the Intake and Investigation unit and provides a contingency of \$300,000 to cover the extra personnel costs.

Clinical Services Management Team

The FY 1999 budget includes \$328,000 for seven new positions in Child Mental Health Services. This enhancement will enable DCMHS to augment crisis service, outpatient service management and to fill out two clinical services management teams managing deep end services.

Juvenile Justice Initiative

The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services will receive over \$700,000 in new funds under the Juvenile Justice initiative. Part of the new funds will pay for aftercare and accountability services, state-wide, for youngsters who are violators of probation or parole.

K-3 Program

The Governor and the Delaware General Assembly have recognized the success of the K-3 program by authorizing an additional \$550,000 for the program this year. The funds will come from the Department of Education to hire more Family Crisis Therapists to work in the local schools with children and their families before serious problems develop.

Other Items

The FY 99 budget also includes volume and inflation increases (\$1,737,600) for various client service programs in the Department. The cost of annualizing positions that were added to the Department's budget in FY 98 (\$340,000), pass through funding for various programs (\$300,300), and some miscellaneous initiatives are also included in the budget.