

December 2010 Braam Oversight Panel Meeting

Updates by Denise Revels Robinson, Children's Administration Assistant Secretary



Federal Title IV-E Review

- The Children's Administration completed a Federal Title IV-E onsite review November 4, 2010.
- The regulatory review focuses on whether a child meets title IV-E eligibility requirements for foster care maintenance payments. Federal Reviewers examine records to determine whether foster care eligibility criteria was met and whether our state complied with laws governing background checks, safe placement into foster care, and permanency planning.
- Washington State's review included 80 cases and a review of records between October 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010.
- The federal review team shared preliminary findings that indicate Washington was found to be in substantial compliance in 79 of 80 cases. One case is pending federal review of the foster home background clearance information from another state.
- CA anticipates receiving the written report with final review findings in December 2010.
- Washington State has successfully passed all primary IVE reviews since the federal government implemented them in 2000.

Children's Administration Budget Update

- This has been a particularly difficult economic time at both the state and national level. Declining revenues have resulted in projected GF-State and federal shortfalls and difficult situations have been made worse as the latest revenue forecast shows continued revenue shortfalls.
- Based upon the September Revenue Forecast, the Governor issued Executive Order 10-04 which requires all state agencies reduce GF-State obligations by 6.287%, or a reduction of \$19,298,000 GF-State, nearly \$31,000,000 in total funds, for the Children's Administration.
- Since then, the November 18, 2010 revenue forecast projects an additional \$385 million shortfall for this state fiscal year and an \$809 million shortfall in the 2011-13 budget, which creates an overall deficit of \$5.7 billion for the next biennium.
- Without a special legislative session, a \$385 million shortfall would add an additional 4.6 percent reduction to the already mandated 6.287 percent across the board reductions. Although no final decision has been made to implement across the board reductions or to hold a special legislative session, further reductions are anticipated.
- On the national level, the state of Washington is projected to receive fewer TANF dollars requiring a \$3.5 million reduction within the Children's Administration.

Children's Administration Budget Update (*Continued*)

- As we move forward in during these difficult economic times, it is important to note that reduction decisions are made with every child at the center of our discussions. Priority funding will be given to:
 1. Services that help to ensure the safety of children and families.
 2. In-home services that help to keep a child safely at home and prevent costly out of home placements.
 3. Services that enhance our ability to provide quality wrap-around service.
 4. Children with open dependency cases.
 5. Statewide consistency to realize efficiencies.
 6. An organizational structure that positions the Children's Administration for successful implementation of Performance Based Contracts
- Link to access information regarding the DSHS/ CA budget on the web: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/Budget/>

2106 Washington State Child Welfare Transformation Design Committee (TDC) and Performance Based Contracting (PBC)

- In response to 2SHB 2106 legislation, Children's Administration has continued to collaborate with Tribes, the Child Welfare Transformation Design Committee (TDC), community stakeholders, foster parents, and social workers on implementation of part one, Performance-Based Contracting.
- The Draft Request for Proposal was released on November 22, 2010. It will allow providers to comment prior to release of the RFP and may help CA identify gaps and prioritize additional information that responders may need to develop proposals. Comments are due December 8, 2010. Based on comments, the RFP may undergo modifications prior to the official release.
- Denise Revels Robinson, Children's Administration Assistant Secretary will be providing a quarterly update to the Children's Legislative Oversight Committee on December 8, 2010. A copy of the report will be provided to the Braam Oversight Panel members when it is published.
- Children's Administration is actively involved in the Transformation Design Committee (TDC). Much of the effort toward 2SHB 2106 Part II, demonstrations sites, has been suspended during release of the Request for Proposals and early implementation of Performance-Based Contracting.
- Meeting materials presented and discussed at TDC meetings continue to be posted on the TDC website: <http://joinhandsforchildren.org>.

National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month

- November was National Adoption Month and National Adoption Day was celebrated on November 20, 2010.
- 17 celebration events hosted by the courts and Children's Administration were held between November 12 – 20 to celebrate the adoption of children who have been in out of home care, who will have legal permanency with their forever family. Last year a record 209 children were adopted during the events.
- From July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, 1533 children were adopted from Washington foster care. As of October 2010, there were 1323 Washington children in foster or out-of-home care who were legally free and waiting to be adopted.

Children's Administration Updates - *Continued*

Washington State Hosts National Governors Association Learning Lab on Improving Education Outcomes for Youth In and Transitioning Out of Foster Care

- Washington State was selected by the National Governors Association (NGA) to co-host a three-day learning lab November 16-18, 2010 for seven competitively selected states to share information about Washington State strategies and initiatives to improve the education of youth in and transitioning out of foster care.
- Approximately 60 education and child welfare policymakers from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York and North Carolina had the opportunity to engage in peer to peer learning about strategies and initiatives in Washington State.
- The agenda included the following presentations by Washington State legislators, community partners and program staff:
 - Children's Administration programs and services, including education policies, child welfare social worker practices, and the array of programs available to foster children and youth
 - Foster Care to College Partnership Pilot Program
 - Post-Secondary Education Panel
 - Education Advocacy Program
 - Building Bridges
- Learning lab participants were also provided the following resources: Field Guide for Information Sharing, The Social Workers Guide to Education Advocacy and the recent Washington State Institute for Public Policy report on Foster Youth High School Graduation.

Joyce James, Nationally Recognized Consultant & Expert on Disproportionality Speaks to DSHS Department Leadership and Key Partner and Stakeholder Groups

- Joyce James, a nationally recognized consultant and expert on disproportionality in the child welfare system, visited Washington State last week with funding and support from Casey Family Programs.
- Ms. James is a renowned national expert dedicated to advocating for families and children, increasing public awareness about the disproportionate number of African American children in the child welfare system, promoting the importance of creating diversity in the workplace and being a role model for strong and effective leadership. Her vision led to the first community engagement model currently used in every Texas CPS region.
- Ms. James spoke to several audiences, some by video conference, during her visit to Washington, including the DSHS Executive Leadership Team, a select group of managers and staff from the Children's Administration and Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, and a larger group that included DSHS leadership and representatives from key advisory, community partner and stakeholder groups. The larger group presentation included an expert panel discussion with Judge Patricia Clark, Dr. Marian Harris, and other disproportionality experts.
- Like other states, Washington is focusing our attention on raising awareness of racial disproportionality for all children and families of color, investigating reasons for it, and taking steps to eliminate it in the child welfare system. As a follow up to Ms. James visit to Washington, the Children's Administration will facilitate:
 - A short survey to participants of the sessions to gather information for future planning.
 - CA leadership discussion of lessons learned in the sessions to help future planning to reduce racial disproportionality and disparity.
 - Development and revision of plans to continue moving forward in reducing racial disproportionality and disparity in partnership with the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee.

Children's Administration Updates – Continued

Implementing Initial Health Screens (IHS) for Children Newly Entering Foster Care

- CA implemented a statewide policy requiring children receive an Initial Health Screen as soon as possible, but no later than five (5) days after the child is placed into out-of-home care effective October 31, 2010. CA staff received in-service training to the new policy expectation during the month of October 2010.
- A preliminary FamLink Report was developed and CA staff are in the process of refining the methodology and validating the data.
- CA Assistant Secretary, Denise Revels Robinson, sent a letter to 190 healthcare providers on November 3, 2010 thanking them for their commitment to provide Initial Health Screens for foster children. The letter also included information about the purpose of Initial Health Screens, the difference between an Initial Health Screen and the Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) exam, CA's commitment to healthcare providers, and the reason accurate billing and account coding is important.
- The December 2010 issue of the *Caregiver Connection* featured information about healthcare for children in foster care, including Initial Health Screens and ongoing EPSDT exams. A copy is posted on the foster parent website at: http://www.dshs.wa.gov/pdf/ca/Caregiver_Connection_DEC10.pdf
- On December 1, 2010 the DSHS Fostering Well-Being Program (FWB) began mailing caregivers Medicaid health history informational reports for children and youth newly placed into out-of-home care with guidance to bring the report to the child's medical appointments. FWB staff also upload the reports into FamLink.
- Regions are continuing to work out arrangements with local healthcare providers for children to receive Initial Health Screens as soon as possible and no later than 5 days after the child or youth enters out of home care.
- *Example of Local Partnerships:* Spotlight on Region 5, Pierce and Kitsap Counties. During the Braam Oversight Panel public meeting Barb Geiger, Bremerton Area Administrator will share how they are working with a local network of nurses to make arrangements for children to receive Initial Health Screens in their community.