



2007 Children's Administration

Performance Report

Public and Legislative Accountability for Child Safety, Permanency, and Well-being
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CA Children's Administration

I am pleased to present the eleventh annual Performance Report for the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Children's Administration. This report covers Fiscal Year 2007, from July 1, 2006, through June 30, 2007.

In Fiscal Year 2007, the Administration continued to maintain the safety of children as its top priority. We also worked closely with families, tribes, and the community to secure stable, permanent, and wherever possible, culturally familiar homes for Washington's most vulnerable children.

The Administration is in the process of undergoing ambitious infrastructure improvements toward the goal of improving child safety and family stability in the present and for years to come. These initiatives represent just some of the work Children's Administration and community partners have done in the past year.



SAFETY INITIATIVES

- Implemented the 24 hour and 72 hour response time to provide more immediate response to CPS reports. In March of 2005, 76 percent of children who were determined to be at imminent risk of harm were seen or the social worker attempted contact within 24 hours. By March of 2007, timely responses in emergent referrals had increased to 96 percent. In March of 2005, only 40 percent those children who were likely to be victims of abuse but were not at imminent risk were seen within 72 hours. By March of 2007, performance had increased to 95 percent.
- Provided refresher training on safety and risk assessment for all CA staff and supervisors.
- Implemented Family Team Decision-Making meetings to engage families, relatives, and providers to make the best decisions and plans to keep children safe.
- Developed and presented training for the new Neglect Legislation.

PERMANENCY INITIATIVES

- Implemented the Kinship Care Framework (Initial License, Relative Home Study, Relative Search, Respite, etc.) laying down the foundation for working more effectively with relatives.
- Developed the Visitation Guide to support parent/child and sibling visits.
- Implemented the Shared Planning policy which emphasizes the inclusion of parents, children, and foster parents in the decision making process.
- Strengthened policies to improve engagement with fathers and absent parents.

WELL-BEING INITIATIVES

- Implemented monthly visits for children whose case is established as an in-home dependency as well as for young children placed with relatives.
- Implemented the Child and Health Tracking (CHET) policy and guide to improve health care and education outcomes for children.
- Improved education support for children by implementing protocols with 126 school districts to improve communication, collaboration, and coordination. Also implemented the Educational Advocacy program to provide assistance and advocacy for school age children and youth.
- Developed Educational Advocacy Guides for caregivers and Practice Guide to Education for social workers.
- Developed a video for adolescents in the foster care system to explain their rights, how the system works, and how their voice can be heard.

ADDITIONAL SYSTEMIC INITIATIVES

- Established Chemical Dependency Counselors in local CA offices to help screen and support families through the substance abuse assessment and treatment process.
- Introduced Evidence Based Practice including multi-dimensional treatment foster care, functional family therapy, and Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PICT).
- Conducted a formal contract review process to help maximize resources and better support outcomes.

None of this work would be possible without the commitment and collaboration of legislators, stakeholders, community partners, engaged citizens, and the dedicated Children's Administration workforce.

While, it is always refreshing to pause for a moment and reflect on some of the accomplishments we've made, it is momentary. Our commitment drives us forward in constant pursuit of the best possible ways to help families help children.


Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary

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Protecting children. Supporting families. Providing quality care.

OUR VISION The Children's Administration seeks to be an organization that provides excellent services, which produce successful safety, well-being, and permanency outcomes for children and families. We strive to be innovative, results driven, responsive to changing needs, accountable, and guided by a commitment to professionalism and excellence in the field of child welfare. We promote teamwork and embrace our partnerships with parents and kin, Tribes, foster parents, and communities in the design and delivery of child and family services we would be proud to offer our own families.

OUR MISSION The mission of the Children's Administration is first to protect abused and neglected children, to support the efforts of families to care for and parent their own children safely, and to provide quality care and permanent families for children in partnership with parents and kin, Tribes, foster parents, and communities.

Guiding Principles of the Children's Administration

The Children's Administration's values reflect our agency's mission. Our values demonstrate our commitment to keep children safe while strengthening and preserving families and a commitment to our partners, Tribes, communities, and colleagues. We are individually and collectively responsible for upholding these values.

DIVERSITY

We value the diversity of our clients, staff, providers, and communities. We demonstrate a commitment to diversity when we consider their viewpoints and contributions, and courageously confront lack of equity in opportunities and outcomes for children, families, and staff.

RESPECT

We demonstrate a commitment to a respectful workplace when we communicate with common courtesy and active listening, encourage divergent opinions, and value and accept differences.

INTEGRITY

We demonstrate a commitment to act with integrity when we follow through with commitments, have the courage to act with honor, are trustworthy, and consistently act in ways that reflect the values, goals and decisions of the agency.

COMPETENCE

We are competent when we use knowledge, skills, understanding, and practical ability to perform effectively in our work. We demonstrate our commitment to competence through continued training, reviewing and reflecting on our work, meeting or exceeding performance standards, achieving outcomes, and fulfilling our legal mandate as a public service agency.

CRITICAL THINKING

We use critical thinking when we make decisions by actively seeking out facts and information, considering the opinions and observations of others, recognizing our biases and assumptions, and remaining open to new information even after decisions are made.

TEAMWORK

We demonstrate teamwork through a collaborative approach to achieve common work goals and outcomes. As team members, we respectfully acknowledge the beliefs and experiences of our colleagues, we value the differences and are considerate when we express opinions and challenge issues.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We demonstrate accountability when we do all we can to get the job done right while being consistent with our mission and applicable laws and policies. We are accountable when we self-monitor, take responsibility by being vigilant and following through, admit our own mistakes and address those of others constructively.

LEARNING COMMUNITY

We demonstrate that we are a learning community when we seek diversity of thought and approach, make time for reflective thinking, promote and participate in educational opportunities and share what we learn. We demonstrate that we are a learning community when we use data and research to continuously improve, are open to different solutions, and learn from experiences.