

**Joint Subcommittee Studying the
Comprehensive Services Program for At-Risk
Youth and Families
SJR96(2006)**

The third meeting of the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Comprehensive Services Program for At-Risk Youth and Families was held on Tuesday, November 20th at the General Assembly Building in Richmond. Following opening remarks, the joint subcommittee heard three presentations then discussed potential recommendations for the upcoming General Assembly session.

Hampton Comprehensive Services Program

Mr. Walter Credle, Director of the Hampton Department of Social Services, Ms. Wanda Rogers, Assistant Director of the Hampton Department of Social Services, and Ms. Denise Gallop, CSA Coordinator for Hampton, provided a comprehensive overview of the Hampton CSA program. Their presentation stressed core values and beliefs which shape the Hampton CSA program, the development of Hampton's comprehensive range of services including the program's emphasis on identifying outcomes then establishing a process to reach those outcomes and building services to meet individual child needs as those needs are identified, and the program's success in limiting the use of residential care and group homes.

Local Government Perspective

Mr. George Drumwright, Deputy County Manager for Henrico discussed challenges that the Comprehensive Services Act and Program created for local government. These included increased costs of the program resulting from changes brought about in response to the custody relinquishment issue, increased number of cases, and increased severity of specific cases; and general funding challenges for local governments. Mr. Drumwright suggested increasing funding for the Community Services Board system, to avoid creating a dual system of mental health care with one system for children falling under the CSA and another for all other adults and children.

Mr. Woody Harris, City Council Member from Emporia, offered additional insight into the relationship between the Comprehensive Services Program and local government administration. Mr. Harris noted that many of the factors leading to increased spending for the Community Services Program were beyond the control of localities, including the number and severity of cases arising in any given year. Mr. Harris suggested that additional administrative funding could increase local government's ability to handle needs arising under the Comprehensive Services Act. He also suggested that increasing funding to the Community Services Board program would allow localities to better serve children with behavioral health care needs.

Potential Recommendations

Following presentations from representatives of the Hampton CSA program and local governments, the joint subcommittee considered a series of potential recommendations. It was the sense of the joint subcommittee to move forward with fourteen of these recommendations for the next meeting. Four other recommendations were identified for further consideration and study.

Next Meeting

The fourth and final meeting of the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Comprehensive Services Program for At-Risk Youth and Families has been scheduled for Wednesday, December 5th at 10:00 a.m., at the General Assembly Building in Richmond.