



Activities in State Government Related to Youth and Families 2008

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES • CHILD WELFARE • KINSHIP CARE, ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE • CHILD CARE • PUBLIC SAFETY
JUVENILE JUSTICE • SUBSTANCE ABUSE • MENTAL HEALTH • EDUCATION • HEALTH • HUMAN SERVICES

Prepared by the Virginia Commission on Youth

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The Virginia Commission on Youth is a standing, bipartisan legislative commission of the General Assembly which, by mandate, provides a legislative forum in which complex issues may be explored and resolved. The Commission was enacted in 1989 and began operations in 1991. According to the *Code of Virginia*, the role and function of the Commission is "to study and provide recommendations addressing the needs of and services to the Commonwealth's youth and families." The Commission monitors the development of laws and policies in federal, state and local governments which impact youth and their families and contribute to the General Assembly's ability to make sound policy decisions based on well-studied and reasoned recommendations.

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*One House of Delegates seat is vacant as of
January 2008.*

GENERAL

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Executive and Legislative Branch Representatives	The Council on Virginia's Future (Council) is established in §2.2-2682 as an advisory council in the executive branch. The purpose of the 18-member Council is to advise the Governor and General Assembly on the implementation of the Roadmap for Virginia's Future process as part of the larger state budgeting process. The Council was enacted in 2003 to develop a vision and long-term goals for Virginia's future. It was also tasked with developing a performance leadership and accountability system for state government that aligns with and supports achievement of the vision. Its mandated purpose is to: • Provide a long-term focus on high-priority issues; • Create an environment for improved policy and budget decision-making; • Increase government accountability and transparency; • Improve government performance; and • Engage citizens in dialogue about Virginia's future. The Council regularly reviews progress on implementation of the Roadmap process and updates the Roadmap as needed. To facilitate assessment, it has developed Virginia Performs, a performance leadership and accountability system whose most public face is the website, Virginia Performs. This "scorecard" for Virginia aligns agency-level outcomes with broader statewide goals for the Economy, Education, Health & Family, Public Safety, Natural Resources, Transportation, Government & Citizens. There are eight legislative members and ten non-legislative members. General Assembly membership includes the Senate President Pro Tempore, the House Speaker, the Senate and House Majority and Minority Leaders, and chairs of the money committees. Other Council members include Cabinet staff and leaders from the private sector. The Governor serves as chair. The Council is assisted by the Department of Planning and Budget, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, the Auditor of Public Accounts, and the money committees. Commission's involvement: Senator Yvonne Miller serves on the Council as a Senate Finance Committee member.	The Council met on January 10, 2008 to discuss its 2007 accomplishments and plans for 2008, which include an in-depth study of the core factors affecting both high school and post-secondary educational attainment. The Council approved its 2008 Work Plan, which includes a special focus on educational attainment issues, most specifically high school graduation rates. The Council plans to launch an in-depth study of the core factors affecting both high school and post-secondary outcomes, and engage Virginians on these issues through public forums. The Regional Forum will be held in September. The statewide Future Forum will follow in November, with state and national leaders scheduled to lead discussions. The goal is to develop an agenda for advancing educational attainment in all regions of Virginia. On March 3, 2008, Governor Kaine announced that Virginia again received the top score in the Government Performance Project's (GPP) "Grading the States 2008" report, the nation's only comprehensive, independent analysis of how well each state performs in serving the public. In the first such rating in three years, Virginia achieved an overall grade of A- for performance. The Governor acknowledged the contribution of the General Assembly and JLARC for their commitment to keeping Virginia one of the best managed states in the nation. The Government Performance Project's report, including Virginia's report card, can be accessed on-line. The Governor also mentioned Virginia Performs' website, which gives citizens unprecedented access to information about state services and outcomes. This website was launched on January 3, 2007. Council members and staff speak regularly on Virginia Performs at regional, state and national events, including the National Governors Association, and the Chiefs of Staff meeting in February 2008. The Council is scheduling a full-day retreat and ending its 2008 calendar with meetings in November and December. The Code requires the Council to the Governor and the General Assembly an annual executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Council no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of Comprehensive Services	The State Executive Council's (SEC) purpose is to assure collaborative programmatic policy development, fiscal policy development and administrative oversight for the efficient and effective provision of child centered, family focused and community based services to eligible emotionally and behaviorally troubled children and their families in the least restrictive, appropriate environment. Further, the SEC assures the Governor, and Cabinet Secretaries are well informed in matters related to these areas. Legislative members are Delegate Phillip A. Hamilton and Senator John A. Edwards. Commission's involvement: Tracking	SEC meetings are scheduled by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources. Pursuant to § 2.1-746 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i>, the SEC is required to meet at least quarterly. Its first 2008 meeting was held May 12 in Richmond. The meeting focused on organizing the SEC's work for the year and in providing guidance on the definitions of "community" and "residential care" for mandated match rate changes. The SEC 2008 Work Plan, which includes items mandated in legislation or in budget language, was approved. (These are described in the sections which follow.) The plan includes one initiative of the Secretary's Office: to identify strategies for using CSA funds flexibly while controlling costs, including using CSA funds to start up services. At its May 12, 2008 meeting, the SEC agenda included: ▪ Council on Reform (CORE); ▪ Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS); ▪ Overview to Required CSA Systems Changes; ▪ Proposed CSA Service Categories & Definitions; ▪ Public Comment; and ▪ Approval of the SEC Workplan. The June 12, 2008 meeting agenda included: ▪ Overview and trends in juvenile justice system; ▪ Number of youth involved in other systems; ▪ Council on Reform (CORE); ▪ Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS); ▪ Public Comment; and ▪ Revised Interagency Foster Care Guidelines. Other 2008 meetings are scheduled for July 15, September 26, October 31, November 21, and December 19.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of Comprehensive Services	The State and Local Advisory Team (SLAT) is established to better serve the needs of troubled and at-risk youths and their families by advising the State Executive Council (SEC), managing cooperative efforts at the State level and providing support to community efforts. The team shall be appointed by and be responsible to the Council. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The SLAT, which generally meets the first Thursday of each month, receives presentations on varied state and local activities for children's services. At its first 2008 meeting on January 3, SLAT Chair Charlotte McNulty updated members on the Commission on Mental Health Reform. CSA Executive Director, Kim McGaughey, provided an update on the Council on Reform (CORE) and an overview of the children's services reform in the Governor's proposed budget. The March 6 meeting focused on legislative updates from the General Assembly Session. Members were updated on recent CORE activities. On April 3, the agenda focused on the progress of implementing a new mental health assessment tool for CSA. The May 1 meeting included an update on CSA system changes, a report on the progress of CANS implementation (Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths), and a briefing on the ruling from the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals related to naming private provider placement in school IEPs. On June 5, members continued their discussions and planning for the new SEC mandates. Work Groups are being established to address several items on the SEC work plan: 1) examining special education private day placements and improving coordination among schools with the CSA system and 2) CSA best practices, training and technical assistance that has been on the CSA workplan in past years. Additional meetings have been scheduled for August 7 and September 9.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Secretary of Health and Human Resources	Item 283-C-3 of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill directs the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to establish a Work Group to address a Financial Incentive System and Local CSA Match Rates. Specifically, the budget language mandates: a) The financial incentive system shall use the methodology in place on July 1, 2007, for calculating the base rate for each locality. b) Beginning July 1, 2008, the local match rate for community based services for each locality shall be reduced by 50 percent. c) Localities shall review their caseloads for those individuals who can be served appropriately by community-based services and transition those cases to the community for services. Beginning January 1, 2009, the local match rate for residential services for each locality shall be increased by 15 percent above the fiscal year 2007 base rate after a locality has incurred a total of \$100,000 in residential care expenditures for the period of January 1, 2009, through June 30, 2009. Beginning July 1, 2009, the local match rate for residential services for each locality shall be 25 percent above the fiscal year 2007 base rate after a locality has incurred a total of \$200,000 in residential care expenditures. The Work Group will include representatives from the Virginia Association of Counties, the Virginia Municipal League, the Virginia League of Social Services Executives, the Virginia Association of Community Service Boards, the Virginia Coalition of Private Providers, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, the Department of Education, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court. Commission's involvement: Tracking	At the May 12 SEC meeting, Kim McGaughey presented an overview of the required system changes to the CSA financial systems. After the presentation, the SEC received public comment on the proposed service categories. Concerns were expressed that: the proposed changes would hinder creative wraparound services in a system of care approach; the increase cost to localities; eight days was an insufficient amount of time for public comment; and specialized and therapeutic foster care should be treated as community-based settings. On May 16, 2008, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources disseminated a memorandum "Final Service Categories and Proposed Data Set Definitions for the CSA." The service categories, match rates and general purpose/wording of the definitions approved by the SEC at its May 12 meeting were attached. The meeting calendar for the Work Group will be developed when the Work Group convenes. On June 24, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources will present to the Commission on Youth on CSA System Changes. Beginning November 1, 2008, and each year thereafter, the SEC shall provide an update to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees on the outcomes of this initiative.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of Comprehensive Services	Special Education Children Receiving CSA Services Item 283-C-3 of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill directs the Secretary's Work Group to recommend initiatives to improve communication, cooperation in the development of individualized plans and family service plans for special education children receiving CSA services. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The State Executive Council (SEC) is establishing a Work Group to: 1) Examine reasons for increased supply, utilization and expenditures in special education private day placements and recommend changes to improve educational outcomes and control rate of growth in CSA expenditures; ▪ Review data on supply, utilization, expenditures and outcomes in special education private day services through CSA; ▪ Identify issues, barriers, limitations for serving children in the public schools or reasons for increased use of special education private day placements: ▪ Availability of services in the public schools ▪ Limitations on staff in serving children ▪ Impact of No Child Left Behind ▪ Zero tolerance policies ▪ Philosophy ▪ Inadvertent fiscal incentives; ▪ Identify best practices, effective strategies, creative partnerships and funding opportunities for serving children in schools or returning children to public school as soon as appropriate; ▪ Recommend appropriate use of special education private day placements; ▪ Recommend best practices, effective strategies and fiscal incentives/opportunities and ▪ Identify the pros and cons of adjusting the match rate for potential consideration during the 2009 General Assembly Session. 2) Identify strategies for improving communication and coordination between local schools and CSA systems in the development of individualized education programs (IEPs) and individualized family services plans (IFSPs) for children in special education receiving services through CSA. ▪ Delineate legal requirements for IEP teams and FAPTs, including new ruling in 4th circuit court on specifying placements in IEPs. ▪ Define roles, responsibilities and decision making process of IEP teams and FAPTs ▪ Identify role of parents/families in IEP and FAPT process ▪ Define purpose of IEP and IFSPs ▪ Identify benefits and value in better coordinating two processes ▪ Identify best practices for coordinating efforts, including strategies for resolving issues when the two systems reach different conclusions. ▪ Recommend effective strategies for disseminating best practices to local schools and CSA systems. The Work Group has two reporting deadline for presenting its findings and recommendations to the SEC: 1) special education private day placements on September 26th and 2) improving communication and coordination between local schools and CSA systems on October 31st.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Secretary of Health and Human Resources	Enhancing Communication with the Juvenile Justice System Item 283-C-3 of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill directs the Secretary's Work Group to examine future actions to improve communication and coordination among CSA and the juvenile justice system (court service units, J&DR judges, and DJJ) on the plans of care for "Children in Need of Services" as defined under the interagency guidelines on foster care services and for children at risk for residential placement through a court order by a J&DR judge. In fulfilling its charge, Work Group is expected to: • Clarify eligibility criteria in the interagency foster care guidelines; • Develop document providing best practices for the CSA systems to use with judges, attorneys, guardians ad litem, parents; and • Draft guidance on resolving issues when disparity between what judge orders and what funds or services are available. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Work Group will include parents, Court Service Unit staff, CSA coordinators, private providers, judges, attorneys, guardians ad litem, the Executive Office of the Supreme Court, CASA workers, CSB, and Department of Social Services staff at the state and local levels. The Work Group's charge is to: • Clarify implementation of the new Interagency Foster Care Guidelines on Children in Need of Services (CHINS) related to juvenile justice youth: ○ Clarify which youth from the juvenile justice system are eligible (e.g. delinquents/felons); ○ Identify training issues; and ○ Identify strategies for training CSA systems, court services units, attorneys and guardians ad litem. • Identify best practices and effective strategies for: ○ Enhancing communication between judges and the CSA system; ○ Engaging judges in CSA, while respecting their respective roles; ○ Clarifying roles of CSA system and judges, particularly the role of judges in ordering services and strategies when youth are not eligible for funding or when funds are not available; and ○ Educating the court system on eligibility, CSA processes, and what the child serving agencies can fund to clarify expectations. The meeting calendar for the Work Group will be developed when the Work Group convenes.
Office of Comprehensive Services	Item 283-M of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill requires the State Executive Council to analyze the impact of the Final Interagency Guidelines on Foster Care Services for specific Children in Need of Services (CHINS) funded through the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA), effective December 3, 2007, to assess the fiscal impact on the state and localities of serving these additional children through CSA. Commission's involvement: Tracking	As part of the analysis, the State Executive Council (SEC) shall report on the number of additional children served through the guidelines, the types of services provided to children served, how the children were referred for services under the guidelines and whether these children would have received services through CSA prior to the adoption of these new guidelines. The Chair of the SEC shall report this information to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees by December 1, 2008.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of Comprehensive Services	Technical Assistance to Localities Item 283-B-6 of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill provides \$50,000 for each year for a combination of regional and statewide meetings for technical assistance to local community policy and management teams, family assessment and planning teams, and local fiscal agents. Commission's involvement: Tracking	CSA is in the process of planning for the regional and statewide training.
Office of Comprehensive Services	Utilization of Residential Facilities for Treatment of Children – Pursuant to § 2.2-5200 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i>, Community Policy and Management Teams (CPMTs) are required to ensure that services and funding are consistent with the policies of preserving families and providing appropriate services in the least restrictive environment, while protecting the welfare of children and maintaining public safety. Each locality must submit to the Office of Comprehensive Services (OCS) information on utilization of residential facilities for treatment of children and length of stay in such facilities. This mandate evolved from the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) study on utilization of children's residential facilities, which led to establishment of a Task Force convened by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to review the adequacy of regulations related to children's residential facilities and a change in funding to increase the stipend paid to foster families by 13 percent. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Item 283-B-2d of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill requires the OCS to report to the Governor and Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees on utilization rates and average length of stays statewide and, for each locality, by December 15th of each year. The Work Group on local CSA match rates will include representatives from the Virginia Association of Counties, the Virginia Municipal League, the Virginia League of Social Services Executives, the Virginia Association of Community Service Boards, the Virginia Coalition of Private Providers, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, the Department of Education, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court. The meeting calendar for the Work Group will be developed when the members of the Work Group convene.
Office of Comprehensive Services	Evidence-based Practices for Community-based Care Item 283-C-3d of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill directs the State Executive Council (SEC) to monitor the implementation of the incentives and disincentives included in Item 3, provide technical assistance and recommend evidence-based best practices to assist localities in transitioning individuals into community-based care. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Beginning November 1, 2008 and each year thereafter, the SEC shall provide an update to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees on the outcomes of this initiative.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of Comprehensive Services	SB 479 (Hanger, 2008) requires the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) Director to identify, disseminate and provide annual training for Comprehensive Services Act staff and other interested parties on evidence-based and best practices related to the CSA program. This legislation is one of three actions by the 2008 General Assembly which directly impacts the State Executive Council's Charge on CSA Best Practices, Training & Technical Assistance. The <i>Code of Virginia</i> mandates that: 1) The director of the Office of Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families shall provide for training and technical assistance to localities in the provision of efficient and effective services that are responsive to the strengths and needs of troubled and at-risk youths and their families. (§2.2-2649); and 2) The state and local advisory team (SLAT) may advise state agencies and localities on training and technical assistance necessary for the provision of efficient and effective services that are responsive to the strengths and needs of troubled and at-risk youths and their families; (§2.2-5202) The Desired Outcomes are: ▪ Improved outcomes for youth and families; ▪ Increased proportion of children served in homes, schools and in communities; ▪ Increased engagement of families as partners; and ▪ Increased effectiveness and efficiency of Community Policy and Management Teams (CPMTs); Family Assessment and Planning Teams (FAPTs) and CSA Coordinators. Commission's involvement: Tracking	At its May 12, 2008 meeting, the State Executive Council approved, as part of its SEC Work Plan for 2008, the charge for the CSA Best Practices, Training & Technical Assistance Work Group: 1) Collaborate with the Council on Reform (CORE) on its training and best practices Work Group. 2) Use work done by SLAT and OCS. 3) Identify effective and best practice models for CSA. • Identify the roles, functions and best practices of CPMTs, FAPTs and CSA Coordinators, taking into account different community sizes/resources. • Identify effective roles and strategies of county administrators. 4) Design statewide system for training, technical assistance and the dissemination of evidence-based and best practices in implementing CSA as a system of care, assisting localities transition youth into community based care, and effectively serving youth and their families in their homes, schools and communities when appropriate. Maintain a consistent knowledge base, build skills, spark innovation, and manage major systems transformation. a) Identify competencies needed for CPMT and FAPT members and CSA Coordinators, including: ▪ Increased capacity of CPMTs to engage families as partners, assess community strengths and needs, manage strategically by tracking outcomes and using data, identify community assets and service gaps, expand community services and pool resources across sectors. ▪ Increased capacity of FAPTs to engage families as partners, comprehensively assess strengths and needs of youth and their families, implement creative wrap around services for youth and families, develop creative funding and resource strategies to implement individualized plans of care for youth and families. b) Describe components and make recommendations for a statewide training system, including: ▪ Critical training content areas and training methods (e.g., interactive and engaging; coaching and mentoring; leadership development); ▪ Ways to work with existing vehicles in the child serving agencies and statewide associations to provide training, technical assistance and disseminate best practices; ▪ Mechanisms for developing and implementing a training curriculum; and ▪ Cost estimates for implementation and strategies for funding. One of the group's work products will be a training implementation plan. Meeting schedule for the Work Group will be determined when Work Group members are named.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of Comprehensive Services	SB 483 (Hanger, 2008) was a 2007 recommendation of the SJR 75 Joint Committee and the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) CSA study. The Code now requires the State Executive Council to oversee the development and implementation of uniform data collection measures, using a secure electronic client-specific database for CSA-funded services. The legislative change also authorizes state child serving agencies to share outcome data, which strengthening confidentiality provisions. Revisions require three new data elements: provider identification numbers, the reasons children ended each service, and the reasons youth left CSA. The Code now authorizes state child-serving agencies to share outcome data, while strengthening confidentiality provisions. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The State Executive Council (SEC) met on May 12 in Richmond to organize the SEC's work for the year, including planning for implementation of these changes. Kim McGaughey, CSA Executive Director, briefed the Council on all required CSA Systems Changes. The changes initiated by SB 483 will be included in a large-scale revision to the overall CSA data set. CSA has had a Data Set Work Group and Users Work Group in place for a number of years to insure that the CSA data set captures only critical data needed for state and local decisions makers to effectively manage the CSA program, to track outcomes, and to assess provider and CSA performance. Changes to the CSA data set also address JLARC's recommendation to require localities to report facility licensing numbers as a provider identification number.
Office of Comprehensive Services	SB 487 (Hanger, 2008)/HB 503 (Hamilton, 2008) require the State Executive Council to oversee the development and implementation of mandatory uniform guidelines for intensive care coordination for children who are at risk of entering, or place in, residential care through the CSA program. Revisions to the <i>Code of Virginia</i> require Family Assessment and Planning Teams (FAPTs) to develop, and Community Policy and Management Teams (CPMTs) to review, residential care plans that include goals for residential care treatment, a provision for monitoring and review of plans, evaluation of progress toward identified goals, and a plan for returning the youth to his home or community at the earliest appropriate time. Commission's involvement: Tracking	When the State Executive Council (SEC) met on May 12 to organize the SEC's work for the year, the Council included planning for implementation of these changes in provisions for residential care planning and implementation.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Legislative Services	SJR 75 (Hanger, 2008) continues for a third year the Joint Subcommittee studying the administration of the Comprehensive Services Program for At-Risk Youth and Families (CSA) and making recommendations for improvement of program services and strategies for cost containment. The Joint Subcommittee was originally established in 2006 by SJR 96 (Hanger). In the first year, the Joint Subcommittee reviewed the administration of the CSA by state and local governments, including projections of caseloads, service needs and costs, quality of services provided, and made recommendations for improvement of program services and strategies for cost containment. In the second year, SJR 96 directed the Joint Subcommittee and JLARC to continue their respective studies and collaborate in preparation for end-of-year reporting. Commission's involvement: Delegate Fralin serves as a Joint Subcommittee member.	SJR 96 (2006) established the Joint Subcommittee to study the cost effectiveness of the Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families program and to collaborate with JLARC regarding its evaluation of the administration of the CSA. Its first year findings and approved recommendations were published in <i>Senate Document 14</i> (2007). In 2007, the Joint Subcommittee met four times. The executive summary of findings and recommendations was published as <i>Senate Document 10</i> (2008). Technical assistance continues to be provided by JLARC, the Office of Comprehensive Services, and the Departments of Social Services, Education, Juvenile Justice, and Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. The resolution requires that the Joint Subcommittee complete its meetings by November 30, 2008, and submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

CHILD WELFARE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Medical Assistance Services	Training to Comprehensive Services Act Teams Item 306-P of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill directs the Department of Medical Assistance Services, in cooperation with the State Executive Council, to provide semi-annual training to local Comprehensive Services Act teams on the procedures for use of Medicaid for residential treatment and treatment foster care services, including, but not limited to, procedures for determining eligibility, billing, reimbursement, and related reporting requirements. The Department is to provide information on the proper utilization of inpatient and outpatient mental health services as covered by the Medicaid State Plan. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The 2007-2008 Budget Bill required a report on the Department's training program; however, the new Budget Bill does not require a report.

CHILD WELFARE (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	The Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) is responsible for assessing child and family service needs and improvements. Committee membership includes advocacy groups, private providers, local and state public agencies and foster/adoptive parents. Various subcommittees address child protection, permanency and training. Commission's involvement: Committee Member	CWAC meetings are generally held monthly. CWAC assisted the Department of Social Services with the development of Virginia's Program Improvement Plan (PIP) for the federal Child and Family Services Review, which went into effect February 1, 2005. DSS reports quarterly to the federal government on the progress of PIP implementation.
Social Services	Virginia Community Action Partnership (VACAP) is the statewide membership association for Virginia's thirty non-profit private and public community action agencies which work to fight poverty and build self-sufficiency for strong families and communities. Item 344-A-3 of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill directs VACAP to support the Virginia Earned Income Tax Coalition and provide grants to local organizations to provide outreach, education and tax preparation services to citizens who may be eligible for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Budget language requires the Department of Social Services to report its findings no later than December 1 of each year to the Governor and the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees and the Chairman of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.
Office of the Governor	The Governor's Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives was established to coordinate executive branch efforts of early childhood programs and strengthen public and private programs. The Working Group, chaired by the Secretary of Education, brings together high-level staff from cabinet offices and State agencies in the areas of Education, Health and Human Resources, Economic Development, Finance and Policy. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Working Group meets on the second Thursday of every other month to provide oversight to the coordination of the Alignment Project's three components: Smart Beginnings, Start Strong, and PK-3 Education.
Social Services	The Alignment Project, started in February 2006 and spearheaded by the Department of Social Services (DSS), now involves a team of professionals from many agencies under four secretariats, other agencies, and organizations from throughout Virginia. It functions under the oversight of the Governor's Working Group on Early Childhood initiatives, which is discussed in a preceding section. The Alignment Project is the umbrella for the Governor's three primary early childhood initiatives: Smart Beginnings, Start Strong, and PK-3 Education. These are discussed in the sections which follow. Commission's involvement: Tracking	To gather broad feedback on the project, DSS convened six focus groups in different regions across the Commonwealth in 2007. DSS published <i>The Milestones of Child Development, A Guide to Young Children's Learning and Development from Birth to Kindergarten</i> in Fall 2007 through support from the federal Child Care Development Fund. An electronic version is available at http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/index.html. The document reflects the involvement of 30 independent reviewers.

CHILD WELFARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of the Governor/ Social Services	Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) is a public-private partnership with a mission to provide collaborative leadership to foster Smart Beginnings for all young children in Virginia. As a nonprofit organization, the VECF provides grants, training and technical assistance to local communities to build their capacity to provide early childhood services. The Foundation was recommended by the Early Learning Council Task Force, which was charged with recommending strategies to improve Virginia's ability to provide early learning experiences to children from birth to age five. In making the recommendation, the Council cited the need for a state-level 501(c)(3) entity to lead an aggressive agenda to build the State's infrastructure for an effective early childhood system. In response, the Foundation was created in December 2005. VECF relies on the shared leadership of local councils to provide strategic planning, effective integration of programs and services, decision-making and accountability for local delivery, implementation and outcomes. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The VECF 2007 Annual Report, released September 29, is posted on the Smart Beginnings website, as well on the General Assembly Legislative Information System website as <i>Report Document 223</i> (2007). The 2008-2010 Budget Bill appropriated to the Department of Social Services an allocation of \$1.5 million over the biennium to support Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, with the goal of promoting programs that enhance the health, safety and well-being of Virginia's youth. Item 344-E-1 directs the Foundation to account for the expenditure of these funds by providing the Governor, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees with a certified audit and full report on initiatives and results not later than October 1 of each year for the preceding fiscal year ending June 30. Also, on or before October 1 of each year, Item 344-E-2 requires VECF to submit to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees a report on the actual amount, by fiscal year, of private and local government funds received by the Foundation. The Foundation provides the Smart Beginnings website - http://www.smartbeginnings.org - as a resource for parents, educators and others interested in early childhood learning.
Virginia Early Childhood Foundation	Smart Beginnings – one of three components to The Alignment Project – is a statewide collaboration with the broad goal of sharing information and efforts to direct new and improved resources to families with children from birth to age five. The initiative highlights the health, social and emotional, and cognitive needs of very young children, and urges partners in every community to plan and partner strategically for a strong early childhood system to meet these needs successfully. It focuses on parent education, including new parent information about early childhood development, and consumer education information for parents regarding selecting and accessing quality child care and preschool programs. Another key component of this initiative is public education messages about the correlation between high quality, early childhood education and a competitive workforce and ultimately a vital economy for the Commonwealth. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The 2008 General Assembly approved \$22 million for the Virginia Preschool Initiative. Planning is underway for a coordinated system of training and education available to pre-school providers. Smart Beginnings has in place an extensive long-range plan which is designed to provide practical guidelines, including prioritized goals, measurable objectives and strategies, outcomes to measure progress, and clear accountability and community of results. Numerous state agencies and organizations participated in planning and are impacted by the plan. Virginia's early childhood initiative goal is to engage all sectors and sustain state and local collaborative entities to secure public and private investments; develop and expand programs; and provide effective coordination, oversight and accountability for systemic services to young children. These objectives address 1) accountability through developing program standards and measurement mechanisms and 2) identification of early childhood professional development needs and promotion of investments in workforce development solutions to support the early childhood system, including preschool teachers and child care providers, pediatricians, allied health workers, home visitors, child mental health providers, pediatric dentists and others. Other 2008 goals are indicated in this document in sections describing the relevant programs.

CHILD WELFARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Education/Social Services	A new Office of Early Childhood Development is a newly-created entity in the executive branch. The office will report to the Departments of Education and Social Services. The Office will work to expand access to and coordinate Virginia's system of early childhood development programs – birth to age five – to provide a continuum of services and education to Virginia's neediest children and their families. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Creation of the office was announced by the Governor on April 13, 2008. Kathy Glazer, who has worked with the Governor's education initiatives, has been named Executive Director. The Office currently has working offices in both Education and Social Services.
Social Services	The Virginia Information and Referral (I&R) System has existed for almost a quarter of a century. Section 63.2-222 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> established a statewide I&R system, which is designed to: ▪ Collect and maintain accurate and complete resource data on a statewide basis; ▪ Link citizens needing human services with appropriate community resources to satisfy those needs; ▪ Assist in planning for human services delivery at the local, regional and state levels; and ▪ Provide information to assist decision-makers in allocating financial and other resources to respond to State and local human service priorities. The 2008-2010 Budget Bill appropriated to the Department of Social Services \$723,844 from the general fund and \$531,791 from the federal trust fund in each fiscal year to support statewide implementation. Item 344-M-2 and M-3 of the Budget Bill directs the Department of Social Services to: ▪ Request that all state and local child-serving agencies be included in the Virginia Statewide I&R System, as well as any agency or entity that receives state general fund dollars and provides services to families and youth. The Secretaries of Health and Human Resources, Education, and Public Safety shall assist in this effort by requesting all affected agencies within their Secretariats to submit information to the statewide I&R System and ensure that such information is accurate and updated annually. Agencies shall also notify the Virginia I&R System of any changes in services that may occur throughout the year. ▪ Communicate with Virginia child-serving agencies about the availability of the statewide I&R System. This information shall also be communicated via the DSS' broadcast system on their agency-wide Intranet so that all local and regional offices can be better informed about the Statewide I&R System. Information on the Statewide I&R System shall also be included within the Department's electronic mailings to all local and regional offices at least biannually. Commission's involvement: Commission Initiative	In Fall 2004, the Commission on Youth, as part of its two-year legislative initiative on Strengthening Families, approved a study recommendation supporting the statewide Information & Referral System for 2-1-1. The Commission subsequently adopted 2-1-1 as a stand-alone initiative for the 2005 study year. On February 11, 2008, Northern Virginia was added to the 2-1-1 network, making 2-1-1 available statewide. Effective July 1, 2008, 2-1-1 will offer services statewide, 24 hours, 7 days a week. Five of 2-1-1 Virginia centers have already received certification. Certification for the Lynchburg and Northern Virginia centers is pending. Certification is achieved through AIRS, the international Alliance of Information and Referral Systems. Virginia's AIRS is a statewide association of organizations, agencies and individuals committed to ensuring that all Virginians have access to quality health and human services information – and is an affiliate of the international AIRS organization. VAIRS has set certification testing dates and training in Virginia for 2008: June 6 in Falls Church and June 11, Lynchburg. To assist citizens experiencing financial stressors, 2-1-1 is offering callers emergency assistance for food and housing, or credit counseling services in the callers' area. A recent addition to the 2-1-1 service is the link to the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a free consulting service designed to increase the employability of people with disabilities by: 1) providing individualized worksite accommodations solutions, 2) providing technical assistance regarding the ADA and other disability related legislation, and 3) educating callers about self-employment options. This service is funded and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.

CHILD WELFARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Consolidation of Local DSSs Item 338-F of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill directs the Commissioner of Social Services to work with localities operating a single jurisdiction local department of social services with 2007 provisional population estimates of 20,000 or less to examine and identify efficiencies or general fund cost savings as a result of consolidating those programs and/or administrative operations. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Budget language requires the Commissioner to report on the potential savings accrued by this action to the Governor and the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees by December 1, 2008.
Social Services	Foster Care Training Item 337 directs the Department of Social Services, in collaboration with the Office of Comprehensive Services, to provide training to local staff serving on Family Assessment and Planning Teams (FAPTs) and Community Policy and Management Teams (CPMTs). Training shall address federal and state requirements pertaining to the provision of the foster care services funded under § 2.2-5211 of the Code of Virginia. Training, which shall also include written guidance on which services remain the financial responsibility of the local departments, shall be provided on a regional basis at least annually. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Budget language requires the Commissioner to report on the potential savings accrued by this action to the Governor and the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees by December 1, 2008.
Social Services/ Correctional Education	Prisoner Re-entry Programs Item 338-H directs the Department of Social Services, in conjunction with the Department of Correctional Education, to identify and apply for federal, private and faith-based grants for pre-release parenting programs for non-custodial incarcerated parent offenders committed to the Department of Corrections. The budget language requires DSS to identify certain grant programs including, but not limited to the following grant programs: Promoting Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriages, State Child Access and Visitation Block Grant, Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative Collaboration, Special Improvement Projects, §1115 Social Security Demonstration Grants, and any new grant programs authorized under the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant program. Commission's involvement: Tracking	In 2007, the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Re-entry to Society (SJR 327, Puller) also reviewed proposals to facilitate the successful reintegration of prisoners to their communities. The scope of Virginia's programs is presented in DSS' quarterly Virginia Child Protection Newsletter (VCPN). The scholarly periodical, which provides service providers and educators with detailed descriptions of Virginia programs, current research, and national trends, is published by DSS and James Madison University's Department of Psychology. It is available in both print and Internet versions (http://psychweb.cisat.jmu.edu/graysojhl). VCPN's Winter 2007 issue promoted the Commission on Youth's 2002 Final Report of the Study of Children of Incarcerated Parents. Two of the DSS supported programs spotlighted in this issue were: ▪ Virginia Fatherhood Initiative, which is co-sponsored by the Faith-Based & Community Initiative Office of Community Partnerships. The program's primary is its brochure "Parenting Behind Bars: Tips for Fathers in Prisons", which is distributed to all fathers in prison throughout the state's correctional system. ▪ Moms, Inc./Dads, Inc. won a 2006 Governor's Statewide Star for Innovation. Developed by a former incarcerated parent, now holding a M.S. Degree in Psychology from VCU who wrote the curriculum while still incarcerated, the parenting program ends with a graduation and certificate, which local DSSs are accepting as credit towards the service plan for visitation and custody.

CHILD WELFARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Prison Re-Entry Academy has assisted Virginia in developing better prisoner re-entry policies. Virginia was one of seven states selected in 2003 by the National Governor's Association as a pilot program. There are four re-entry barriers included in the curriculum: employment and education; financial obligations/housing/and financial and community resources; health/mental health and substance abuse; and family and community reintegration. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Two projects begun in October 2007 are in their first year of operation. These pilot programs are Albemarle/Charlottesville and eight localities in southwest Virginia that are forming a regional effort. These two join the five localities, which started their pilots early in 2007.
Health	Funded in part by the Department of Health, Linkages: Building Strong Connections is operated by the Colonial Services Board in Williamsburg to provide support for male and female incarcerated parents, their children and the caregivers. Inmates attend a weekly group to learn effective parenting skills. A monthly Family Night provides an opportunity for children to interact with their parent in a supervised, child-friendly environment. A key component is learning ways to maintain long-distance communication. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Current funding for Linkages represents a public-private sector partnership.
University of Virginia	Curry School of Education has a series of ongoing primary initiatives for Women Coping in Prison Projects, including research and publication. These include: Parenting on the Inside is a curriculum that uses multi-modal teaching materials to help inmate mothers forge and maintain healthy connections with children. Developed and implemented by Curry, the Fluvanna Correctional Center program focuses in part on the unique demands of parenting while in a correctional setting. Parenting in Prison: Understanding and Treating the Needs of Incarcerated Mothers studies the stresses of being an incarcerated mother in an effort to improve the affective mother-child bond during incarceration. The study also examines the adjustment patterns of incarcerated mothers vs. non-mothers. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Studies have received support from the National Institute of Justice, Girl Scouts of America and the University of Virginia. In association with the Skyline Council of Girl Scouts of America and women in Fluvanna Correctional Institute. University of Virginia has recently completed a series of parenting training modules and is currently evaluating the benefits of the new program inside the Fluvanna population.
Criminal Justice Services	Virginia CARES is a non-profit statewide organization administered by the Department of Criminal Justice Services and funded by General Fund money, a portion of the federal CSB block grants, and federal earmark funds. It provides pre- and post-release services to offenders and ex-offenders in Virginia. Chartered in 1979, the organization originally operated under a local community action agency in Roanoke; its central office continues to reside there. Virginia CARES maintains statistics on, among other issues, participants who complete and implement life plans that change their futures and are establishing responsible relationships with their families and children. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Virginia CARES is exploring the possibility of offering the program to incarcerated youth as part of its program expansion.

CHILD WELFARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Prevent Child Abuse Virginia is a statewide, private nonprofit organization leading a coalition of community partners across the Commonwealth. It coordinates Healthy Families Virginia, a statewide system of support and information for all new families about parenting and community resources. It makes home visiting services available to families who need personal guidance. Other direct service programs include Hugs and Kisses and Nurturing Programs. In addition, Prevent Child Abuse Virginia provides Awareness Activities, such as Child Abuse Prevention Month promotions and a "Together for Children" newsletter, as well as educational opportunities and advocacy. Prevent Child Abuse Virginia's outreach extends into Virginia's adult correctional facilities to reach incarcerated parents of minor children. Mothers Inside Loving Kids (MILK), in operation since the 1980s, transferred to Fluvanna Correctional Facility for Women when it opened in 1998. The program is a series of day-long mother/child visits develops skills in mothers who have completed required parenting classes. There are currently approximately 40 incarcerated mothers who were first identified by staff and ultimately approved after interviews with the Board of Directors. The Department of Social Services administers both the Virginia Family Violence Prevention Program (VFPVPP) and Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) program grants for child abuse and neglect prevention. The VFPVPP Program was established in 1982 for purposes stated in the <i>Code of Virginia</i>, 63.2-1502.3: "<i>To assist in developing programs aimed at discovering and preventing the many factors causing child abuse and neglect.</i>" Commission's involvement: Tracking	Item 344-D of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill provides \$1,332,959 in the first year and \$3,472,779 the second year from the general fund and \$4,139,820 the first year and \$2 million the second year from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant to support Health Families Virginia. The Department of Social Services is directed to allocate funds from this item to the statewide office of Prevent Child Abuse Virginia for providing the coordination, technical support, quality assurance, training and evaluation of the Healthy Families Virginia program. The Healthy Families Virginia's five-year summary of evaluation results was presented to the organization's Legislative Advisory Board in January 2008. The evaluation was completed under contract by the College of William and Mary and Huntington Associates. The evaluation aggregated data from over 3500 families served by the organization's 38 sites from FY 2003 to FY 2007. Prevent Child Abuse Virginia is developing a formula for determining the amount of funds necessary for the four selected sites to begin expansion. Prevent Child Abuse Virginia and DSS are developing an application process that will allow sites interested in expanding their Healthy Families programs to apply for increased funding and to establish a selection process to evaluate which sites will receive expansion funds authorized by the General Assembly.

CHILD WELFARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Secretary of Health and Human Resources	The Council on Reform (CORE) was established based on Virginia's Services reform efforts initiated by First Lady Anne Holton and her <i>For Keeps Initiative</i> and was a recommendation from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The CORE is made of the 13 localities, DJJ, DOE, CSBs and CSA. CORE is to work with the 13 localities to develop shared vision for children's services and best practices at state and local levels. After they have the program in the 13 localities (Phase I) it will be taken statewide (Phase II). Raymond R. Ratke was appointed by the Governor to be Special Advisor on Children's Services under the Secretariat of Health and Human Resources. He will oversee this effort which seeks to improve outcomes for children and families across multiple agencies. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The CORE Work Group had its first meeting in December 2007 and has since established a monthly meeting schedule. CORE has established Work Groups to address child welfare best practices, competency based training, cleaning up key data elements in OASIS, identifying performance measure, working with a national expert on family recruitment and retention, and working with a private Work Group that also has a national private provider expert. The Council has met March 5, April 15, and June 4. Upcoming 2008 meetings are scheduled for July 23, September 3, and October 15. An Executive Planning Committee of the CORE also meets monthly. In May 2008, the Casey Strategic Consulting Group sponsored a trip for 16 people from Virginia to travel to Maine to learn about its reform effort in child welfare and in reducing and transforming residential services. In the summer, Casey will sponsor a trip to Ohio for a small group to learn about its competency-based training system. At its June 10 meeting, CORE members received an update on the Maine trip. On June 24, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources will present to the Commission on Youth on CORE activities.
Virginia Commonwealth University	Virginia, through VCU, has joined 24 states and the District of Columbia to conduct or plan to conduct Family Impact Seminars. These are a non-partisan, research-based seminar series designed to highlight the implications that public issues, policies or programs have for families. Implemented initially in Wisconsin in 1993, state-level seminars have proven to be an effective venue to help academically generated research findings become more accessible to and more meaningful for legislators, legislative staff, Governor's office staff, legislative service agency staff and agency representatives.. Based on the Family Impact Seminar model, VCU faculty and a bi-partisan team of members of the General Assembly will develop a partnership to: ▪ Identify the most compelling and timely family related state-level problems; and ▪ Sponsor topic-specific annual seminars that address these problems with solution-oriented research. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Commission on Youth staff has met with VCU to discuss areas of common interest and compare timelines for planning.

CHILD WELFARE (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of the Governor/ Governor's Commission for Community and National Service/ Virginia Corps/ Office on Volunteerism and Community Service	Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Public Service recognize the significant contributions of Virginia citizens to the life and welfare of the Commonwealth and its people. Awards are presented to organizations, businesses, families, and individuals whose volunteer and community service efforts focus on building and strengthening the Commonwealth of Virginia. Awards are given in the following 14 categories: Business; Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Recovery; Faith-based Organization; Family; Government; National Service, Individual; National Service, Program; Nonprofit Group; Senior Volunteer; Volunteer age 19-64; Youth Organization; and Volunteer Adult. Commission's involvement: Tracking	2008 award recipients working on behalf of the welfare of children are: ▪ People Offering Resources Together (PORT), Emergency Homeless Winter Shelter Program, Newport News (Faith-Based Organization Award) - The program provides shelter for men, women and children through 100 churches in the community, and helps the homeless gain permanent housing, identification, job skills training, and health care. ▪ Dr. Hilda M. Woodby, Richmond (Volunteer Award) - spearheaded the funding and opening of Family Advocacy Clinics, Inc., where she provides low-cost psychotherapy services to members of families experiencing family violence. Awards were given at the 2008 Virginia Conference on Volunteerism and Community Service, April 23-25 in Virginia Beach.

KINSHIP CARE, FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Aging	The Kinship Care Initiative is a statewide Task Force and information network which focuses on inter-generational activities, as well as communication issues among the kinship care community. Sponsored by the Brookdale Foundation's Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP), the Initiative offers support groups and information for relatives serving as parents. It also works closely with other state agencies and private organizations to meet the service needs of kinship care families. One of these groups, the Virginia Cooperative Extension, has developed a curriculum and lecture series entitled <i>Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Rights and Responsibilities</i>. The Department for the Aging (VDA) has published <i>Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren: A Resource Guide</i> to direct kinship care families to available services. Commission's involvement: Task Force Member	On January 29, 2008 the Task Force reviewed legislation introduced in the 2008 General Assembly Session which affected grandparents and to discuss the Virginia Department of Social Services' Prisoner Re-Entry Program as it relates to grandparents caring for children of incarcerated adult children. The Task Force is currently collaborating with the Virginia Association of Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Families and identifying ways to increase state funding for children's programs that benefit kinship care families. The Task Force met on April 24 to set goals for 2008. At its June 11 meeting, the Task Force examined putting kinship care information on the VDA website and the types of information to be included. The Task Force is publicizing George Mason University College of Health and Human Services' on grandparent-headed households. GMU will be conducting interviews with ten grandmothers who are primary care providers for their granddaughters (12 years and older). Interviews are being conducted in homes and participants will receive a gift card for an area store. Also, the Task Force has released news that HBO is looking for stories for its upcoming HBO Family Special. This one-hour program, which describes itself as a celebration, will feature portraits of different kinds of families, including kinship care families. The Task Force meets next on July 11, 2008 to discuss current benefits for children, the kinship care navigator site, the October 2008 kinship care conference and education program for 2009.

KINSHIP CARE, FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	The Kinship Care Task Force – co-chaired by Senator Yvonne Miller and Commissioner Anthony Conyers, Jr. – continues its work addressing the needs of grand-parents and others caring for minor children in their families, as well as the needs of the those children. The Task Force, which meets quarterly, was created to examine the feasibility of establishing a Kinship Care program in Virginia. Commission's involvement: Senator Miller co-chairs the Task Force; Commission staff serves as a Task Force Member.	The 2008 General Assembly passed SB 251 (Miller, Y.), which provides that the 24-month period of ineligibility shall not apply to a child who is removed from his parents' home as a result of a child protective services report or complaint as defined in regulations promulgated by the Board and placed with a relative. The bill, which has been signed into law by the Governor, allows a child who is in a 24-month period of TANF ineligibility to regain eligibility (TANF Child-Only). Further, the legislation promotes the safety of the child in the home of relatives. The legislation supports the First Lady's "For Keeps" initiative as an opportunity to keep a child in familiar surroundings. Commissioner Conyers' Memo #010 sent to local DSS directors on May 16, 2008 explained TANF changes and the changes in the Child Care Subsidy Program for non-foster care kinship arrangements. His memo encourages directors to set Caretaker families as a priority. DSS has developed two brochures have been developed to provide additional information about kinship care. <i>A Guide to Exploring the Kinship Care Options</i> and <i>Virginia's Legal Options For a Relative When a Child Cannot Live With His Parents</i>.
Social Services	For Keeps was created to identify and develop ways to find and strengthen permanent families for older children in foster care, or who might be at risk of coming into foster care. For Keeps is founded on the belief that everyone deserves and needs permanent family connections to be successful. For Keeps is a partnership between the Commonwealth's human services agencies, the Freddie Mac Foundation, and other private organizations. Commission's involvement: Tracking	First Lady Anne Holton launched her foster care initiative, For Keeps, on January 16, 2007 at the Executive Mansion. On May 31, 2008, Governor Tim Kaine formally signed a series of bills intended to reform Virginia's foster care system. The signing ceremony was held in Roanoke at Family Service of Roanoke Valley. Both the Governor and the First Lady lauded the bills for targeting largely older youth in foster care and being "child-centered, family-focused and community-based." In his remarks, the Governor commended Delegate William Fralin, bill patron of several of the bills related to older foster children, as well as the 2008 legislation to establish a Children's Ombudsman Office (HB 1131, Fralin and Brink/SB 315, Edwards). The latter was a recommendation from the Commission on Youth's 2006 & 2007 study of that issue.

KINSHIP CARE, FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Virginia Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parents Association is a not-for-profit association funded by the Virginia Department of Social Services. Now known as FACES (Family Advocacy, Collaboration, Empowerment, and Support) of Virginia Families, the organization seeks to establish a grassroots effort for kinship parents, foster and adoptive parents in Virginia. FACES supports recruitment and retention of foster, kinship and adoptive parents and provides information to the State about what families need in terms of support and training. FACES also advocates for the needs of youth and families. Commission's involvement: Tracking	On May 4, 2007, First Lady Anne Holton and DSS announced the formation of a new Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parent Association (FACES of Virginia's Families). On January 30, 2008, the Governor and First Lady hosted FACES members at a reception at the Governor's Mansion in conjunction with the organization's Legislative Advocacy Day. On April 18-20, FACES hosted <i>Bright Tomorrows Begin Today</i>, its first annual conference in Charlottesville. Nearly 200 participants, including youth, enjoyed keynotes from well-known speakers in the field. A foster care youth conference was held concurrently, with the theme "The Power to Be." FACES promoted the May 7 Washington, D.C. event, GrandRally. The rally, sponsored by AARP, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund, and national kinship organizations, the event provided caregivers an opportunity to educate members of Congress and their staffs about the supports and services needed. In conjunction with promotions for May as National Foster Care Month, the Department of Social Services is asking families, couples and individuals to consider foster parenting FACES has launched a website with the intent of providing a bridge between the social services community and parents/children — www.facesofvirginia.org or www.fosteradoptiveparents.org — both of which are accessible to association members. FACES has established the staff position of Vice President of Kinship Care to further advocacy for grandparents and children under their care. In addition, a representative from the Virginia Youth Advisory Council President serves as a FACES Board member to represent the issues, concerns and needs of Virginia's foster youth across Virginia.
Medical Assistance Services	Treatment Foster Care and Residential Psychiatric Services Training — Item 306-) of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill requires the Department of Medical Assistance Services, in cooperation with the State Executive Council, to offer semi-annual training to local Comprehensive Services Act teams on the procedures for use of Medicaid for residential treatment and treatment foster care services, including but not limited to procedures for determining eligibility, billing, reimbursement, and reporting requirements. Commission's involvement: Tracking	<i>Report Document 119</i> (2007) details the most recent training activities of DMAS.

KINSHIP CARE, FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of the Governor/ Governor's Commission for Community and National Service/ Virginia Corps/ Office on Volunteerism and Community Service	Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Public Service recognize the significant contributions of Virginia citizens to the life and welfare of the Commonwealth and its people. Awards are presented to organizations, businesses, families, and individuals whose volunteer and community service efforts focus on building and strengthening the Commonwealth of Virginia. Awards are given in the following 14 categories: Business; Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Recovery; Faith-based Organization; Family; Government; National Service, Individual; National Service, Program; Nonprofit Group; Senior Volunteer; Volunteer age 19-64; Youth Organization; and Volunteer Adult. Commission involvement: Tracking	Petersburg Foster Grandparents, Inc. of Petersburg has received the 2008 Governor's Award for Volunteerism in the Public Service National Service, Program Award category. The Petersburg program – in operation for 35 years - mentors children in public schools, including alternative schools, child care facilities, juvenile detention centers, institutions for mentally challenged, and homeless shelters. In the past year, program participants provided nearly 95,000 hours of service. There are 109 seniors participating in the program throughout Southside Virginia – each serving 1,044 hours annually. The program is located at Crater District Area Agency on Aging. Awards were given at the 2008 Virginia Conference on Volunteerism and Community Service, April 23-25 in Virginia Beach.

CHILD CARE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Automation of Day Care Assistance Program – Item 338-L-1 of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill expresses the General Assembly's intent that the Department of Social Services automate day care assistance programs. Under this budget, the program will receive \$750,000 each year to create the automated management and payment system. The child care subsidy program has grown significantly over the past decade. Expenditures have increased from approximately \$9 million in FY1989 to \$176 million in FY 2006. In FY 2006, child care assistance was provided to over 61,000 children. The child care program is one of the largest assistance programs administered by the Department of Social Services. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Budget language requires the Department of Social Services to report on the system's progress to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and the Senate Finance Committees, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and the Department of Planning and Budget by July 1 of each year. Budget language further requires the Department of Social Services to report to the Governor and the General Assembly by October 15 of each year regarding the status of such automation, system adequacy and needed action. The Department's most recent annual report was published in Fall 2007 by the General Assembly's Legislative Automated System website as <i>Report Document 277</i>.
Social Services	The Virginia Child Care Resource & Referral Network (VACCRRN) is a statewide network of 14-locally based child care resource and referral agencies which assist parents in finding child care that meets their family's particular needs. Parents can educate themselves with information and data on a variety of child care issues, such as public policy, cost of care, and range of quality at the local, State, and national levels. The network is a member of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies is funded through the Virginia Department of Social Services. Commission's involvement: Tracking	VACCRRN has become the home of T.E.A.C.H.® (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps), an educational scholarship program for center-based and family child care providers. It was established in 1989 to promote and support quality child care resources throughout Virginia and to coordinate the efforts of more than a dozen agencies. Several VACCRRN member agencies have recently completed a national training program through Zero to Three entitled "Partnering with Parents: Preventing Neglect and Abuse."

CHILD CARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	The Child Day Care Council (CDCC) is authorized by the <i>Code of Virginia</i> to adopt regulatory standards for licensure and operation of child day care centers in Virginia. Also, in collaboration with the Virginia Recreation and Park Society and the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, CDCC is charged with promulgating regulations for therapeutic recreation programs. The regulations are to be developed in consultation with representatives of the affected entities and are not to require the adoption of a specific teaching approach or doctrine. The CDCC, which operates under the supervision of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, is comprised of a minimum of 28 members appointed by the Governor and representing a variety of interests from around the state. The Council is guided by its 2006-2011 Strategic Plan. Commission's involvement: Tracking	CDCC generally meets six times per year. The review process is scheduled to begin again in May 2009, although the Council is considering beginning discussions in March 2009. The Council has met once in 2008. At its May 8 meeting, presentations included updates on the QRIS, the Child Care Development block grant breakdown, the Department of Social Services' RFP for an Infant and Toddler Specialist System, licensing programs, regulations, and public participation guidelines. It was announced that the winner of the National Association of Child Care Professionals' National Child Care Center of the Year was River Road Baptist Church in western Henrico County. By necessity, a number of the Council's agenda items will be carried over to its next meeting on September 11, 2008.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Secretary of Public Safety	Established by Executive Order 15 (2006), Prevention Comes First expands on the original KIDSafe program to promote, throughout the executive branch, the positive development of Virginia's youth, by addressing the risk and protective factors that lead to youth gang recruitment and activity, substance abuse, delinquency, violence, school dropout, and related adolescent problem behaviors. It coordinates the prevention activities of law enforcement, educators, State and local prevention professionals, and families throughout the Commonwealth. Its initiatives are organized under the direction of the Secretary of Public Safety. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Executive Order, originally in effect until June 2, 2007, was extended to June 2008. June 21, 2008 was designated for the ASK (Asking Saves Kids) Campaign, which suggested that parents ask their child's friends parent(s) if there is a gun before sending their child over to play.
University of Virginia	The University of Virginia's Curry School of Education's Virginia Youth Violence Project addresses the range of youth violence prevention and school safety issues and provides training and support to schools educators through the Commonwealth. Bullying is included in the project's scope, as more traditional public safety issues. Commission's involvement: Tracking	On March 25, 2008, the University released the results of its Virginia High School Safety Study as the first statewide effort to assess student attitudes toward and perceptions of their school environments. The survey reflects responses from approximately 296 public high schools and approximately 7,400 on-line survey responses from 9th grade students and 2,500 9th grade teachers. A synopsis of the study findings can be accessed at http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu.

PUBLIC SAFETY *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Secretary of Public Safety	Virginia's Interagency Anti-Gang Work Group is a subgroup Prevention Comes First. The Prevention Comes First Anti-Gang Work Group consists of 24 designees from 17 executive branch agencies. Its mission is to cultivate strong collaboration; prioritize, coordinate, and leverage prevention resources; encourage and facilitate wider use of proven prevention programs and strategies; provide training and tools to assist state and local prevention professionals, service providers, and the faith community in assessing needs, targeting resources, and planning services for youth and families; disseminating information on gangs to citizens of the Commonwealth. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Anti-Gang Work Group includes representatives from Education, Corrections, Criminal Justice Services, Health, Juvenile Justice, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, Social Services, State Police, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council and GOSAP, Virginia Association of Commonwealth's Attorneys, Richmond Behavioral Authority, Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, Virginia Sheriffs' Association and VCU's Center for School-Community Collaboration.
Secretary of Public Safety	The Parent Guide to Personal Safety for Youth is a product of Prevention Comes First efforts. Due to the popularity of the KidSafe Virginia parent guides, the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP) recently revised and combined the parent guides. The purpose of the <i>Parent Guide to Personal Safety for Youth</i> is to educate parents on some of the safety threats our children face and assist parents in communicating with their children about personal safety. The topics covered in this guide include: fire safety, internet safety, driving safety, bullying, gangs, inhalant abuse prevention and underage drinking. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Beginning December 15, 2007, parent guides were made available at fire and rescue stations throughout the Commonwealth and at local DMV offices. The parent guides may also be downloaded at GOSAP's webpage at http://www.gosap.virginia.gov/preventioncomesfirst.htm.
Secretary of Public Safety	The Community Profile Database, created by the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP), with its GOSAP Collaborative, is a one-stop, web-based, interactive tool that provides easy access to a variety of community-level data and prevention resources. It can assist state and local prevention professionals, service providers, and the faith community in assessing needs, targeting resources, and planning services for youth and families to combat gang activity. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Community Profile Database is recognized with a national "Best of the Web" award for innovation. The database provides: ▪ community planners with consistent, easily accessible data to help them assess local needs; ▪ both public and private organizations with uniform, comparable data to use in developing grant applications; ▪ objective data for use in benchmarking and monitoring progress toward achieving targeted outcomes; ▪ community risk factors for gang activity (by age group, race/ethnic group, gender, city or county, zip code, where available); ▪ resources for addressing gang problems: - evidence-based programs serving Virginia's youth and families; - links to best practices for addressing gang problems; - links to network with other people involved in gang prevention and early intervention activities; and - training opportunities to instruct individuals how to use the database. Each activity is evaluated to monitor outcomes and improve effectiveness.

PUBLIC SAFETY *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Virginia State Police	The General Assembly, through Item 397-E of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill, appropriated \$1.5 million for the Crimes Against Children Task Force. The Task Force's units are based in Fairfax and Bedford Counties and are charged with assisting police locate Internet predators. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Operation Blue Ridge Thunder through the Bedford County Virginia Sheriff's Office is comprised of a cooperative group of law enforcement agencies on the international, federal, regional, state and local levels. The Mission of Operation Blue Ridge Thunder is to safeguard children from Internet crime by weaving a seamless web of protection around them. The unit's commander and investigators have made over 100 presentations to administrators, teachers, parents, community groups and law enforcement professionals on the state, national and international levels. The VA State Police Task Force is known as the Northern Virginia Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (NOVA ICAC) and is responsible for the most northern counties in Virginia and Washington, D.C.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
State Crime Commission	HJR 113 (Moran, 2008), HJR 136 (Moran, 2006) directs the State Crime Commission to continue for a third year its study of Virginia's juvenile justice system. The resolution directs the 2008 study to focus on: ▪ review of the severity of offenses committed by juveniles in the Commonwealth; ▪ evaluation of the effects on the learning environment and educational process, particularly for other students, when juvenile offenders are returned to the public school classroom; ▪ identification and examination of more effective methods of rehabilitating juveniles, particularly juveniles who commit serious offenses; and ▪ development of recommendations for changes to provide a more effective juvenile justice system. Commission's involvement: Tracking	<i>House Document 7</i> (2006) was published to report first year study findings. At its May 22, 2007 meeting, the Commission approved its second-year study plan, which calls for a Final Report to the Governor and the 2008 General Assembly, which was published as <i>House Document 10</i> (2008). The plan called for a comprehensive analysis of Title 16.1 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> to determine the adequacy and effectiveness of Virginia's statutes and procedures related to juvenile delinquency and to conduct a statewide survey of Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court Judges, focus groups of professionals and stakeholders and other pertinent activities. The Commission approved its third year study plan on April 23, 2008.

JUVENILE JUSTICE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
State and Local Juvenile Justice Agencies	Virginia Council on Juvenile Detention (VCJD) assists the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) in developing standards, certification and evaluation related to detention programs and facilities. VCJD provides information and input to DJJ to aid in the formulation of detention policies and suggests improvements and/or modifications. VCJD also facilitates the collection and dissemination of information related to juvenile detention. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Council meets quarterly. Its first meeting in 2008 was held on March 4-6 in Roanoke. The Council held its second quarter meeting on June 3-5 in Virginia Beach.
Criminal Justice Services	The Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice is responsible for reviewing the operation of the juvenile justice system, for recommending needs and priorities for the development and improvement of the juvenile justice system and for advising the Governor on matters related to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Virginia Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and the Juvenile Services Section, Department of Criminal Justice Services, co-sponsored the annual Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Conference on June 19-20, 2008 in Hampton. The 2008 theme was "Making a Difference in Juvenile Justice." Luncheon speaker was the recipient of the Virginia Spirit of Youth Award sponsored by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice. This award recognizes and celebrates a young adult who has made great strides following involvement in the juvenile justice system. Donations for a small educational scholarship to the award recipient are being sought.

MENTAL HEALTH

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Commission on Youth	SJR 358 (2003) directed the Commission on Youth to update biennially its publication, the <i>Collection of Evidence-based Treatment Modalities for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs</i> (<i>House Document 9, 2003</i>). The purpose of the <i>Collection</i> is to identify effective treatment modalities and practices for children, including juvenile offenders, with mental health treatment needs. Moreover, utilization of evidence-based practices in the field of children's mental health may offer the Commonwealth cost savings. Commission's involvement: Commission Study	<i>House Document 21, 2008</i> has been released in both print and Internet versions. Three editions of this publication (2003, 2005 and 2008) have now been widely disseminated primarily through web-based technology and secondarily through print copies. An Advisory Group of practitioners and experts in the field participated in the planning of documents. The Advisory Group met on April 1, 2008 and will continue meeting to discuss the next biennial update. Commission staff provided an update on the progress of the <i>Collection</i> at the April 23, 2008 Commission on Youth meeting. In May 2008, the Commission provided reference copies of the <i>Collection</i> for cataloguing by public libraries throughout the state. In addition, the Commission sent a letter to all public Virginia colleges and universities, making the <i>Collection</i> available to their libraries.

MENTAL HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	HJR 105 (Valentine, 2008) Directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study over the course of two years Virginia's autism spectrum disorder services in order to: ▪ identify and evaluate best practices in the provision of services for the diagnosis, treatment, and management of autism; ▪ methods of providing services to persons with autism; ways to disseminate information regarding best practices; and ▪ provide autism education and training for law enforcement and judicial personnel. In conducting its study, JLARC shall: ▪ assess current availability and delivery of autism services in the Commonwealth; ▪ identify best practices in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of Autism Spectrum Disorders; ▪ evaluate the need and means to disseminate information collected during assessments to relevant service areas including education, law enforcement, rehabilitation, mental health, and emergency services; ▪ assess service delivery in other states; ▪ identify current autism educational and training opportunities available to or provided to law-enforcement and judicial personnel, including law-enforcement officers, public safety personnel, first responders, judges, magistrates, attorneys for the Commonwealth, public defenders, and other personnel involved in the legal system; ▪ identify best practices and areas for improvement in autism education and training for law-enforcement and judicial personnel, and other models for providing autism education for law-enforcement and judicial personnel; and ▪ recommend ways to improve the delivery of autism services in the Commonwealth, including methods of providing the range of autism educational and training opportunities to law-enforcement and judicial personnel. Commission's involvement: Tracking	JLARC approved its study plan at its May 12, 2008 meeting. The study plan specifies that research and analysis will take place Summer 2008-Winter 2009. JLARC will receive its final briefing and report in June 2009. As of this date, there is no interim briefing scheduled. JLARC shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2008, and for the second year by November 30, 2009, and the Director shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive summary shall state whether the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document.
Health/Mental Health	Virginia's Plan for Smart Beginnings addresses a range of priorities for 2008. These priorities include identifying a lead agency for children with autism and autism spectrum disorders and identification of targeted training for professionals. The Plan also identifies two back-to-back conference events related to child health, including autism spectrum disorder, which are planned for July, 2008 in Newport News. Commission's involvement: Tracking	On July 11, the Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Chapter of the American Association of Pediatrics (AAP), and Medical Home Plus, Inc. will jointly sponsor a Virginia Vaccines for Children. Virginia's Plan also references the keynote address being delivered at the June 12th third annual conference <i>Strong Roots for a Healthy Future</i>. The address - Children with Autism - was delivered by John Harrington, M.D., Division Chief for General Pediatrics at the Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters.

MENTAL HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Commission on Health Care	SJR 42 (Marsh, 2008) was not acted on by the 2008 General Assembly, but is included in the Joint Commission on Health Care's 2008 list of studies and initiatives. The resolution requests that JCHC continue its 2006-07 study of the mental health needs and treatment of young minority adults in the Commonwealth. Continuing the study was a JCHC recommendation. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The JCHC approved continuing the study at its May 28, 2008 meeting. Its Behavioral Health Subcommittee will provide oversight on the study. The Work Plan for the study will be presented at JCHC meeting in late July. That plan will outline the scope of the study and the study timeline.
Office for Protection and Advocacy	The Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy has an Advisory Council for the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Program (PAIMI). This Council is funded by the federal funds and is intended to promote the provision of legal and advocacy services for adults and children with mental illness who live in a hospital or other facility providing care and treatment for their illness. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The PAIMI Advisory Council is comprised of 15-20 members, broadly representative of the diverse culture and geography of Virginia. Council membership includes individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services and family members, attorneys, mental health professionals, individuals knowledgeable about mental illness, and providers of mental health services. At least 60 percent of the membership is composed of individuals who have received or are receiving mental health services or who are family members of such individuals. The Council also includes at least one member who is the parent of a minor child with mental illness.
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	Best Practices for Housing for Persons with Disabilities Item 314-Z of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill directs the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS), in conjunction with the Virginia Housing Development Authority, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards, The Arc of Virginia and the Virginia Network of Private Providers, with input from other statewide advocacy organizations, shall report on investment models and best-practices for the development of affordable and accessible community-based housing for persons with intellectual and related developmental disabilities. The report shall include: ▪ how other states have provided financial incentives for the acquisition, renovation or construction of community housing; ▪ specific funding options that will increase the availability of community housing, leverage state dollars, and promote individualized, person-centered housing for people with intellectual and related developmental disabilities; ▪ recommendations on the number of housing units, the location and type of units as well as an allocation methodology to ensure equitable statewide distribution; and ▪ a discussion of access to transportation and use of informal and formal support networks that are critical components of the success of housing models for this population. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Budget language directs the Department to submit its report to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees by October 1, 2009.

MENTAL HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Supreme Court	The Commission on Mental Health Law Reform was formed as an initiative of the Virginia Supreme Court to develop an omnibus mental health reform package to present to the 2008 General Assembly. Following passage of the Mental Health Omnibus Bill by the 2008 General Assembly, the Commission continues its work to address issues. The Commission's research is provided by the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. The Supreme Court has expressed the intent of showing that costs of commitment can be reduced if gaps in service are filled. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Commission named five task groups to develop recommendations for "reform legislation." Charlotte McNulty continues to chair the Child and Adolescent Task Group. In 2008 the task group will identify relevant youth issues not addressed in 2008 General Assembly actions. Consideration will be given to making recommendations for legislative action in the 2009 Session.
Association of Community Services Boards	Virginia Child and Family Services Council, which is one of six councils of the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards, addresses issues pertaining to service delivery to children and their families. It also provides a forum for information sharing and networking among the respective Task Force members. The Council collaborates with the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services and other relevant state agencies to assure consistent policies, protocols, procedures and data collection methods in service delivery and reporting. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Council meets quarterly on the first Friday of the month. At its June 6, 2008 meeting, the Council discussed the provision of acute inpatient psychiatric services to youth, the match rate changes, and on-going training activities. Its next meeting is scheduled for September 5.
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	Training and Resources for Effective Adolescent Treatment (Project TREAT) Interagency Adolescent Work Group is a three-year initiative funded through SAMHSA and managed through the Office of Child and Family Services of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. Funds were allocated to 15 states and the District of Columbia to increase capacity to meet the complex and multi-faceted needs of youth with a substance use or co-occurring disorder and to provide services that are accessible, culturally competent, comprehensive, and community based. Project TREAT's goal is to develop and improve coordination of substance abuse and/or co-occurring treatment services for adolescents across Virginia. The Work Group, determined to be a critical component of a three-year federally-funded project of the DMHMRSAS, will be tasked with linking relevant agencies and organizations to assess the status of service delivery and to develop strategies to enhance these services. Commission's involvement: Work Group Member	The Work Group launched an on-line survey of youth services in the Community Service Boards (CSBs) to determine what substance abuse or co-occurring treatment services are available for adolescents and how these services are rendered. Information will assist DMHMRSAS and Project TREAT staff to address the needs of the CSB workforce and their service delivery capabilities. The same survey is being sent to private providers in order to assess the services available in the private sector. Project TREAT is offering CSBs and facilities serving adolescents with technical assistance and training in evidence-based practice for substance abuse or co-occurring disorders. This are provided through a grant application process in a succession of request periods. Project TREAT also offers a series of free trainings sponsored by DMHMRSAS, the Mid-Atlantic ATTC and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Training was held February 21-22, 2008 in Charlottesville. Meetings have been held on May 14 and June 11. The Work Group's next meeting is scheduled for July 9. An outside evaluation of Project TREAT is in its final stages.

MENTAL HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	The Child and Family Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee for Children's Services (CFBHPP) – Item 315-E of the 2008-2010 Budget Bill - is the continuing Work Group designated to develop a comprehensive plan for children's services across disabilities. The Committee is to develop an integrated policy and plan, including the necessary legislation and budget amendments, to provide and improve access by children, including juvenile offenders to mental health, substance abuse, and mental retardation services. Commission's involvement: Committee Member	Budget language requires the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services to report to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees by June 30 each year. The Committee has met on March 13 April 10, May 8 and June 12, 2008 to discuss the direction of 315-E Committee and to compile the annual report. At its March, April and May meetings, the Committee has received information and discussed 2008 changes in mental health regulations and budgets. It was noted that, in April in Charlottesville, the Virginia Psychological Association Spring Convention looked at mental health in the school system. At the May meeting, Committee members exchanged most current information on the long-range future of the Committee, including: that DMHMRSAS is now supporting the Committee because it is mandated; and the need to focus on issues that the CORE group is working on, with concentration on issues of bringing children into the community. The final draft of the mandated report <i>An Integrated Policy and Plan to Provide and Improve Access to Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services for Children, Adolescents and Their Families (Budget Item 313-E, 2007 Appropriations Act) July 1, 2007- June 30, 2008</i> was reviewed by the Committee at its June 12, 2008 meeting. The Committee also received a presentation on the Student Assistance Program and member updates on mental health issues. The report is required to be submitted to the Governor and the chairs of the money committees in June.
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	Virginia Integrated Network of Family Organizations (VA INFO) is a coalition led by a Steering Committee of Family Voices of Virginia, Parent to Parent of Virginia, the Arc of Virginia's Family Involvement Project, Virginia Federation of Families (formerly Parents and Children Coping Together [PACCT]) and the Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC) Its primary purpose is to ensure that families of children and young adults with special needs obtain the optimal and most current knowledge, supports, and services. The non-profit coalition is funded by the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services and the federal Center on Medicare and Medicaid Services Block Grant funds. Commission's involvement: Committee Member	The VA INFO coalition meets bi-monthly. Medical Home Plus, Inc., and numerous other community and statewide organizations are sponsoring the third annual "Strong Roots for a Healthy Future" conference on July 11-12 in Newport News. The purpose of this conference is to bring together family members of children with special health care needs both physical and mental) and professionals (medical, educational, mental health, and other service providers) to learn about community resources and how to better work together as partners.

HEALTH

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Health	The Healthy Virginian 2010 Initiative was begun in 2004 as a joint venture of the Office of the State Health Commission, the Office of Health Policy Planning, and specific state agencies. Strategies, action steps and desired outcomes were developed, with responsibility assigned to the Department of Health to coordinate the effort and provide expertise to monitor these health status objectives, policies and practices. The Council on Virginia's Future has identified objectives first identified by the Initiative. One of the objectives set by the Council is to reduce the infant mortality rate to no more than seven deaths per 1,000 live births. Virginia is accomplishing this objective by eliminating disparities among racial and ethnic groups with infant mortality rates above the national average. Public health agencies are continuing to monitor infant mortality trends for all racial and ethnic groups, and are focusing on modifying the behaviors, lifestyles and conditions that affect birth outcomes, such as smoking, substance abuse, poor nutrition, lack of prenatal care, medical problems and chronic illness.	The Council reports on Virginia's progress in meeting its goals on the Virginia Performs website at http://vaperforms.virginia.gov. Infant Mortality has been identified as one Health & Family issue requiring attention. The 2008 KIDS COUNT Data Book, released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, identified infant mortality as one of Virginia's toughest challenges. The report, which used statistics collected 2000-2005, showed that Virginia slipped from ranking 31st in the country last year on that indicator to 35th. The Department of Health (VDH) has indicated that 2006 statistics show improvement. The VDH and other state entities addressing health issues administer programs aimed at improving perinatal outcomes for Virginia's families: ▪ The Regional Perinatal Councils is a collaborative network of providers of perinatal services with the goal of providing risk appropriate care for pregnant women. The network conducts regional needs assessments including the ongoing efforts of the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) programs, develop strategic plans to address needs annually, and provide health education/training at no or low cost to perinatal professionals. ▪ The State Child Fatality Review Team reviews the circumstances of child death and develops recommendations to prevent similar deaths and to improve the report and investigation of these fatalities. ▪ All maternal deaths that occur within one year of termination of pregnancy are identified and reviewed by the Maternal Mortality Review Team; ▪ The Resource Mothers Program is a community-based effort where community home visitors mentor pregnant teenagers through the prenatal period until the infant's first birthday; ▪ The Virginia Health Start Initiative/Loving Steps Program is a community-driven program to reduce infant mortality and low birth weight by involving community leaders, health care providers and parents; ▪ The Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Referral Program provides information and counseling for families that have experienced an infant death including SIDS within one year of birth; ▪ The Comprehensive Sickle Cell Services Program provides supplemental funding to four centers to diagnose, educate, and case manage children identified through the Newborn Screening Program; ▪ the Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia, a program of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services; ▪ The VCU/MCV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NiCu) has the capacity to care for 40 premature infants and newborns; and ▪ UVA's 45-bed Newborn Intensive Care Unit. The public is informed via on-line dissemination of <i>Healthy Virginians 2010</i>, which is updated annually. The web address for program descriptions and announcements is http://www.healthylvirginians.virginia.gov.

HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Secretary of Health and Human Resources	Created by Governor Kaine in August 2006 by <i>Executive Order</i> 31, the 32-member Health Reform Commission has identified best practices to improve access, quality, safety and affordability in health care. The Commission identified four Workgroups with members from both within and outside the Commission: Improving the Healthcare Workforce; Access to Care; Quality, Consumer Awareness (Transparency) & Prevention; and Long-term Care and Consumer Choices. Targeted topics studied by the Transparency, Quality and Prevention Subcommittee included decreasing infant mortality, obesity and smoking. The Secretary chaired the 32-member Commission which was comprised of members of the General Assembly, the Governor's Cabinet, consumer and patient advocates, health care leaders, and citizens. Commission's involvement: Senator Houck served on the Commission.	The Commission is charged with working closely with the General Assembly's Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC) and the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC), and work to foster cooperation between the Executive and Legislative branches on healthcare issues. Its final report <i>Roadmap for Virginia's Health Reform</i> was published in September 2007, following public meetings to receive citizen input. The report can be accessed on-line at http://www.hhr.virginia.gov/Initiatives/HealthReform/MeetingMats/FullCouncil/Health_Reform_Comm_Final_Report.pdf. Recommendations related to children are being addressed by the Council on Virginia's Future and have been addressed by incorporated into Virginia's Plan for Smart Beginnings.
Health	Bright Futures Virginia was developed in 2000 as a broad Department of Health initiative to address child and adolescent health. Convened as a public-private Advisory Board, Bright Futures was implemented as the state standard for child and adolescent comprehensive health care in 2001. It was subsequently identified by Healthy Virginians 2010 as a strategy for achieving 18 of 54 state objectives. Since that time, Bright Futures has: ▪ Established a website to serve as an online communication vehicle for VDH Bright Futures Advisory Committee and "home-base" for all Bright Futures Virginia activities; ▪ Provided training to health care providers, nutritionists, dentists, home visitors, and school nurses 2001-2005; and ▪ Launched a module web course "Promoting Child and Adolescent Health: Bright Futures and EPSDT at http://www.vcu-cme.org/bf. Bright Futures' goals are to: • Foster partnerships between families, health professionals, and communities; • Promote desired social, developmental, and health outcomes of infants, children, and adolescents; • Increase family knowledge, skills, and participation in health-promoting and prevention activities; and • Enhance health professionals' knowledge, skills, and practice of developmentally appropriate health care in the context of family and community. Commission's involvement: Tracking	In 2008 VDH has launched web-based training for "Bright Futures and EPSDT." This web course provides an overview of Bright Futures Guidelines, explains Virginia's EPSDT program services and how Bright Futures can be implemented as part of the EPSDT program services to promote child and adolescent health. The course is intended for health care professionals working with children, adolescents and their families, including physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, nutritionists, dentists and mental health providers.

HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Health	Virginia Early Childhood (VECCS) Comprehensive Systems functions as a statewide strategic planning Work Group with the purpose of supporting state maternal and child health agencies and their partner organizations in collaborative efforts to strengthen early childhood system of services for young children and their families. Although the planning Work Group's work concluded with the official planning phase, plan implementation will occur between 2006-2009. This public/private partnership is part of a five year initiative launched by the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) to support states' efforts to build comprehensive early childhood systems. Commission's involvement: Tracking	On July 1, 2003, VDH received the initial two-year planning grant, with a budget of \$100,000 per year. A Work Group defined five focus areas in the initiative: ▪ Access to medical homes; ▪ Mental health and social-emotional development; ▪ Early care and education services; ▪ Parent education; and ▪ Family support services. On September 25-26, 2006 in Reston, VDH participated along with other state coordinators in a national meeting with the theme of <i>Implementing Comprehensive Systems for Early Childhood</i>. The meeting was organized around the themes of governance, early childhood consultation, financing, and strengthening families. The resulting plan was published by VDH in 2006, with implementation beginning that year. VECCS has successfully completed the process of writing the grant for the two-year implementation phase, which has an annual budget of approximately \$150,000. The project has seen growth in all five component areas since its inception; however, parent education and data and evaluation have become the primary focuses for the final year of implementation. The funding period for this phase continues through August 31, 2008.
Health/Medical Assistance Services	A State Leadership Workshop to improve Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) took place January 7-8, 2008 in Richmond. Through a federal technical assistance grant from the Maternal Child Health Bureau, participants convened for open discussions about EPSDT in Virginia and other states and to identify best practices that will improve the state's services. Commission's involvement: Participant	The Department of Medical Assistance Services offers extensive on-line reference materials on its website http://www.dmas.virginia.gov/ch-home.htm#EPSDT.
Health	Section 32.1-46F of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> requires the Board of Health to review vaccines included in the Recommended Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedules developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians. It also addresses the minimum vaccine requirements for school and day care attendance. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Since the Board's August 2006 review, meningococcal vaccine for 11 and 12 year old children has been added to the recommendations. Adoption of the recommendation did not require legislative action. Currently no state has a middle school mandate for this vaccine, but the Commissioner has indicated that adding the vaccine as a school requirement would be, in his opinion, good public health practice. Consideration is being given to recommending in 2008 a mandate in Virginia middle schools.

HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Health	The Virginia Department of Health's (VDH) Commonwealth's Healthy Approach and Mobilization Plan for Inactivity, Obesity and Nutrition (CHAMPION) continues to work towards a comprehensive statewide plan to reduce obesity in Virginia through nutrition and exercise. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Following VDH Family Health Services Review, the working document will be presented to a new State Committee being appointed by the Governor. The completed comprehensive statewide plan is tentatively scheduled to be released by September 30, 2008, although VDH indicates its timeline is, by design, flexible.
Health	The Interagency Suicide Prevention Coordinating Committee is comprised of representatives from the Departments of Health, Education, Mental Health, Aging, Corrections Education, Office of Chief Medical Examiner, CSBs, private and public agencies with an interest in suicide prevention, as well as the Commission on Youth. Its purpose is to advise the Department of Health on its suicide prevention activities. Commission's involvement: Committee Member	Suicide prevention efforts in Virginia are a collaborative effort headed by the Department of Health (VDH), but involving participants from many disciplines. The VDH program was a recommendation of the Commission on Youth Suicide Prevention Plan, <i>House Document 29</i> (2001). In addition to the committee's quarterly meetings, VDH has established a Work Group of local service providers: the Virginia Network for Suicide Prevention Coalitions. This group supports both new and existing suicide prevention efforts at the community level. Network members met in January to identify ways to increase the number of coalitions in the state that can support local suicide prevention, training and education efforts and sustain them when grant monies are no longer available.
Health	The Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation (VTSF) has established Regional Advisory Boards to provide a local connection between VTSF and communities throughout the state. Nine boards oversee the review process to select grantees that will receive funding to implement youth tobacco use prevention programs. Commission's involvement: Regional Advisory Board Member	The Foundation recently conducted a survey requesting feedback for training ideas. As a result, VTSF will offer 21 workshops in 2008. These trainings are open to anyone in the prevention field. Trainings will be conducted on adolescent development, dealing with difficult students, designing effective programs for youth, managing behaviors in youth programs, measuring program outcomes, strategic planning, sustainability and community assessment and planning. These trainings will be offered in Roanoke and in Richmond for a fee of \$25. May regional training workshops in Roanoke and Richmond focused on <i>Spice Up Your Prevention Program</i> and <i>Measuring Youth Program Outcomes</i>.
Health	ESCAPE: Enhancing State Capacity to Address Child and Adolescent Health through Violence Prevention is federally funded through CDC to address violence toward or among youth, including suicide, child maltreatment, dating violence, sexual violence, bullying, and violence in the school and community. ESCAPE's planning and implementation phases focus on shared risk and protective factors. Commission's involvement: Committee Member	ESCAPE is in its 3rd year of funding and in the implementation phase of the grant.

HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Medical Assistance Services	The Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Advisory Committee, which was established by the 2005 General Assembly, works to improve outreach and enrollment of FAMIS and to provide input on policies, operations, utilization of services and the health outcomes of children in FAMIS and FAMIS Plus (the state Medicaid program). Commission's involvement: Tracking	As of April 4, 2008, 88,901 children were enrolled into the FAMIS program, with an additional 351,554 children enrolled into the state Medicaid program. Virginia's Plan for Smart Beginnings has as Goal Four: Health, "All families of children birth to age five will have access to a full range of physical, behavioral, and dental health prevention and treatment services, as well as appropriate nutrition, to ensure their children are health and well-nourished." Under Objective 4A, the priority set for 2007 – Expand participation in Medicaid and FAMIS – has been continued as a 2008 priority.
Office of the Governor/ Governor's Commission for Community and National Service/ Virginia Corps/ Office on Volunteerism and Community Service	Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Public Service recognize the significant contributions of Virginia citizens to the life and welfare of the Commonwealth and its people. Awards are presented to organizations, businesses, families, and individuals whose volunteer and community service efforts focus on building and strengthening the Commonwealth of Virginia. Awards are given in the following 14 categories: Business; Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Recovery; Faith-based Organization; Family; Government; National Service, Individual; National Service, Program; Nonprofit Group; Senior Volunteer; Volunteer age 19-64; Youth Organization; and Volunteer Adult. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The 2008 award recipient whose work benefits child health is University of Virginia Health System, Community Outreach, Charlottesville (Government Award) - UVA Health system volunteers provide medical care to underserved people in the remote, rural mountain regions of Southwest Virginia. Awards were given at the 2008 Virginia Conference on Volunteerism and Community Service, April 23-25 in Virginia Beach.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Legislative Services	SJR 77 (Hanger) creates a Joint Subcommittee to study strategies and models for substance abuse prevention and treatment that reduce the costly service demands created by substance abuse. The Joint Subcommittee shall: ▪ identify and characterize the nature of substance abuse in the Commonwealth; ▪ identify current state policies and programs targeting substance abuse prevention and treatment; ▪ examine the cost of such policies and programs; ▪ identify and examine policies and prevention programs from other leading states; and ▪ benchmark Virginia's programs and policies against those of the leading states. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Joint Subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2008 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$6,200 without approval. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required. The Joint Subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2008, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The Joint Subcommittee's 2008 meeting calendar has not been finalized.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	HJR 683 (Landes, 2007) and SJR 395 (Hanger, 2007) directed JLARC to address the costs, financial and intangible, of substance abuse in the Commonwealth. HJR 683 focuses on the offender population; SJR 395 addresses all Virginians, including youth. In addition, the study effort addresses societal problems affecting children and families, including family separation, child abuse and domestic violence. Through the 2007 and 2008 resolutions, JLARC is directed to: ▪ study the impact of substance abuse on State and local budgets; ▪ determine savings that could be achieved through enhanced substance abuse services; ▪ recommend funding initiatives needed to provide adequate services to Virginians who need them; and ▪ further examine strategies for reducing costs. Commission's involvement: Tracking	JLARC received its interim study briefing at its December 10, 2007 meeting and is scheduled to review its 2008 study plans at its May 2008 meeting. The resolutions direct JLARC to complete its meetings for the second year by November 30, 2008, and to submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2009 General Assembly Session. At its June 9, 2008 meeting JLARC received its final briefing and 132-page study report. The audit identified gaps in service, funding and accountability in the system designed to fight substance abuse. There were numerous adverse consequences on Virginia families, including social well-being, which effects child abuse & neglect, breakdown of family, and inability to care for family, which has fiscal impact on child protective services, foster care, benefit programs. Substance abuse, which often begins during adolescence, cost Juvenile Justice \$2 million in FY 2006 to treat. Prevention efforts aimed at curbing substance use and abuse among youth are coordinated by the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP) and are largely administered by CSBs and school divisions. Funding for FY 2006 prevention programs was \$21.5 million and declining (80% federal, 20% local, 0% state. Because the effectiveness of prevention programs is not known, the audit recommends that the General Assembly consider requiring all school divisions to participate in related youth surveys and supplementing funding so that more comprehensive surveying can be done and the results used for local and regional analyses.
Social Services	The scope of Virginia's programs is presented in DSS' quarterly Virginia Child Protection Newsletter (VCPN). The scholarly periodical, which provides service providers and educators with detailed descriptions of Virginia programs, current research, and national trends, is published by DSS Child Protective Services Unit and James Madison University's Department of Psychology. It is available in both print and Internet versions (http://psychweb.cisat.jmu.edu/graysojhl). Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Spring 2008 issue highlights Preventing Underage Drinking and Substance Abuse, with a spotlight on Roanoke County's Prevention Council, a partnership established in March 2001 to promote healthy development of Roanoke County's youth. Collaborative efforts focus on the school system, Virginia Tech and Radford University, area pediatricians, parents and court staff.

HUMAN SERVICES

Lead Agency	Description	Status
State and Local Agencies Representatives	Virginia Association for Local Human Services Officials (VALHSO) is comprised of State and local government officials. Full membership is limited to the single most senior official in a locality who has broad responsibilities for multiple agencies delivering human services. Most members have direct oversight or liaison responsibilities for health, mental health and social services with considerably broader responsibilities. VALHSO advises State agency heads or members of the General Assembly on these various topics. Commission's involvement: Tracking	VALHSO generally meets quarterly; however, additional meetings are added as needed for specific areas of interest.

EDUCATION

Lead Agency	Description	Status
House Appropriations Committee/ Senate Finance Committee	Joint Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education Funding, which was authorized first in the 2006 Acts of the Assembly (Item I-H-2), continues its work as directed in the 2008-10 Budget Bill. The intent of Budget Bill authorization has been to provide on-going direction and oversight of Standards of Quality (SOQ) funding cost policies and to make recommendations to their respective committees. The Joint Subcommittee shall: ▪ study re-benchmarking cost trends and drivers; ▪ review existing SOQ, incentive, categorical, and school facilities funding streams within Direct Aid to Public Education, as well as the Literary Fund, and identify options for efficiencies and cost savings and for greater funding flexibility, especially to better prepare the state and localities for future economic downturns; ▪ consider alternatives to across-the-board compensation supplements to better target state funds; ▪ review funding streams for students at-risk of academic failure and assess whether such programs should be incorporated into the SOQ; and ▪ examine special education funding issues. Commission's involvement: Delegate Tata represents the House Appropriations Committee; Senator Houck represents the Senate Finance Committee on this Joint Subcommittee.	Technical assistance is provided by school divisions, the Department of Education, and the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC). The Joint Subcommittee met twice in 2007. Presentations focused on the history and constitutional basis of SOQs (JLARC), current SOQ funding cost policies (House Appropriations/Senate Finance), an analysis of re-benchmarking cost trends and drives (Department of Education) and program reviews of Direct Aid and the School Efficiency Reviews. The Joint Subcommittee's preliminary report was published as <i>Report Document 179</i> (2007). JLARC approved the 2008 study plan at its May 12, 2008 meeting. Data analysis will be conducted by staff in October-November, with reporting to JLARC in November 2008. The written report will be submitted to standing and money committees in December 2008.

EDUCATION (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Commission on Youth	The Commission on Youth's Study of Alternative Education Program Options continues in 2008 its third year analysis of existing regional, as well as private or local, alternative education programs available in the Commonwealth to suspended or expelled students. Issues include: • Alternative education programs provide many disciplined students an opportunity to continue their education and may prevent a student from dropping out, becoming involved with the criminal justice system or receiving additional disciplinary actions. • Not all students learn in the same educational structure. • There is an increasing need for a continuum of student support services in schools to help students learn skills which may circumvent disciplinary referrals. • Unless the student qualifies for special education or is in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice, the student forfeits their right to an education when expelled. Parents must assure attendance unless they have access to a regional or local alternative education school or program. Regional and local programs frequently have waiting lists for students who need alternative education placements. • There is a link between disciplinary referrals and dropping out of school. Suspended or expelled students who do not receive educational services fall behind and become disengaged from school. This puts them at greater risk for dropping out. • School divisions struggle with the challenges of keeping disengaged students on their rolls in order to provide them with instruction so they may receive diplomas. The provision of educational services to disciplined youth impacts all child-serving agencies such as child-welfare, children's mental health and juvenile justice. Representatives from all child-serving agencies must collaborate to locate and fund appropriate services to at-risk and disciplined youth so as to reduce the possibility that the student will drop out of school. • There is no consistent and established definition of an alternative program/school and what components must be present. There is great diversity among the local alternative education programs in program components, such as program hours and the ability to earn verified credits. The term "alternative education" covers all educational activities that fall outside the traditional K-12 school system, including vocational programs, special programs for gifted children and charter schools. Commission's involvement: Commission Initiative	<i>The Guide to Local Alternative Education Options for Suspended and Expelled Students in the Commonwealth</i> has been published as <i>Report Document 144</i> (2008). The <i>Guide</i> was compiled, published and disseminated following a second year study recommendation. It lists, by locality, the locally-created and administered alternative education schools/programs in Virginia and is being offered to educators, health and human services workers, juvenile justice officials, caregivers and others. Copies of the <i>Guide</i> have been provided as a reference document to each of the Commonwealth's school divisions. In 2008, Commission staff will: ▪ Reconvene Advisory Group to assist in study effort and review proposed recommendations. ▪ Continue to investigate school-based prevention programs and any funding opportunities. ▪ Investigate funding for a second tier of regional alternative education programs to serve students who are not succeeding in the regular school setting and who are at risk of dropping out. ▪ Investigate private educational and other alternative educational options for students who have not been attending school for a designated period of time and/or who are not succeeding in the public school setting. ▪ Investigate dual-enrollment as an option for providing transitional or educational services to students who are at risk for school failure or who are currently not attending school. ▪ Investigate waiving the compulsory education requirements for students who have fulfilled the pre-GED requirements, but are not otherwise eligible to test for the GED, including those provisions outlined in House Bill 355 (Cole) which was introduced during the 2008 General Assembly Session. ▪ Investigate the Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP) guidelines to determine whether it could be expanded to serve high school students who have not been attending school for a designated period of time and/or who are not succeeding in the public school setting. ▪ Investigate the need and feasibility of establishing Special Middle Schools for over age middle school students. The Commission on Youth is directed to submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2009 Session of the General Assembly.

EDUCATION (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Commission on Youth	During the 2008 General Assembly Session, members of the House Education Committee reviewed HB 1263 (Hall, 2008), which addressed Tuancy and School Dropout Rates in the Commonwealth. The bill's intent was to require local school boards to implement school dropout prevention programs and services which emphasize truancy prevention. The bill also proposed to amend the Code to address compliance with the compulsory school attendance law to strengthen the authority of local school boards. The Committee determined that further study of these issues would be appropriate and forwarded a letter from Delegate Hall requesting the Commission on Youth, in conjunction with the Department of Education, to study the provisions set forth in the bill. In order to accomplish this request, the Commission on Youth will need to: • review state laws and policies relating to the enforcement of compulsory school attendance, truancy and dropout prevention for consistency and clarity; • review current initiatives overseen by the Board of Education and the Department of Education addressing truancy, attendance and dropout prevention; • evaluate local school division policies regarding enforcement of school attendance and assess the need for conformity, including consistency within school divisions, regarding enforcement of statutory attendance policies; • evaluate the new certification data which will be submitted by local school divisions in the Fall of 2008 which demonstrate compliance with compulsory school attendance laws; • review existing local practices that are in place which address truancy and dropout prevention in each school division; • assess factors related to the causes of academic underachievement, chronic truancy and school dropout and determine whether such students should also be considered "children in need of services" for compulsory school attendance purposes; • consider the need and efficacy of defining "truancy" and "chronic truancy" in the <i>Code of Virginia</i>; • attempt to ascertain the impact of suspensions, expulsions and other disciplinary actions on school dropout rates and, to the extent possible, ascertain whether disciplined students receive educational, social and community services during their suspension or expulsion from school; and • recommend to the General Assembly such changes to state law and public policies and such other initiatives appropriate and necessary to implement a comprehensive approach to chronic truancy and dropout prevention. Commission's involvement: Commission Study	The Commission on Youth approved a study plan for the first year of the two-year study at its April 23, 2008 meeting. The Commission is currently conducting a series of roundtable discussions throughout the state in order to hear a youth perspective on the topic. Roundtables have taken place in Danville, Hampton, Manassas and Norfolk. Upcoming roundtables are being scheduled for Roanoke, Richmond and Petersburg youth. As specified in the study plan, the Commission will convene a Work Group comprised of representatives from impacted groups: Secretary of Education, Board of Education, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education, Virginia Education Association, Association of School Superintendents, Virginia PTA , School Boards Association, Department of Juvenile Justice, Association of Elementary School Principals, Association of Secondary School Principals, Virginia Counselors Association, Association of Chiefs of Police, Educators/Guidance Counselors, Virginia School Safety Center, Court Service Unit Representatives, School Attendance Officers, Alternative Education Representatives, School Resource Officers, Sheriff's Association, and the Office of the Supreme Court. The Work Group's meeting calendar will be determined after Work Group members are identified. The Commission on Youth will receive a presentation on recent study activity at its June 24, 2008 meeting. Commission staff will present its interim report of findings and recommendations to the Commission by November 30, 2008. The Commission on Youth is directed to submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2009 Session of the General Assembly.

EDUCATION *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Board of Education	HB 19 (Fralin, 2006) requires the Board of Education to collect, analyze and report high school graduation and dropout data using a formula prescribed by the Board of Education. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Board of Education published <i>House Document 81, The High School Graduation Rate Formula</i> (2006) in accordance with its mandate. The Board's Committee on Graduation and Dropouts studied seven widely-discussed graduation rate formulas and evaluated each. At the Committee's recommendation, the Board of Education approved adoption of the National Governors Association On-Time Graduation Rate formula. In Fall 2008, the records of first-time freshmen (first group of students as testing identifiers) in 2004-2005 can be linked to their records four years later to determine their graduation or completion status. On-Time High School Graduation rate for students who entered the ninth grade four years earlier will be reported by Virginia for the first time in October 2008.
Education	HJR 130 (Hall, 2006) encourages the Department of Education (DOE) to monitor and collect data and information on the State's high school dropout and graduation rates. DOE is required to: ▪ Determine the relevancy of the current process and procedures for defining, counting and reporting school dropout statistics and consider the need for revisions in such process and procedures and compliance by school divisions; ▪ Compile data concerning the number of students who dropped out of school before the seventh grade and the reasons why, and the number of students who graduate annually, for school years 2002-2005; ▪ Ascertain whether, by whom, and the manner in which students who are at-risk of dropping out are counseled to remain in school; ▪ Identify local initiatives and efforts to retain and retrieve students at risk of dropping out, particularly populations with low high school graduation rates; and ▪ Apprise policymakers fully regarding the Commonwealth's dropout and high school graduation rates, and of any statutory, fiscal, or regulatory changes that may be necessary to avoid an increase in the school dropout rate. Commission's involvement: Member	The Graduation and Dropout Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Education. HJR 130 requires DOE to apprise policymakers fully regarding Virginia's dropout and high school graduation rates, and of any statutory, fiscal or regulatory changes that may be necessary to avoid an increase in the school dropout rate. DOE's statistics on graduation and dropout rates can be viewed on its website. Data will be released at the Dropout Prevention Summit in Richmond on October 28, 2008. The summit theme is Learning, Working and Living: Keeping Promises to our Youth. The event is part of a collaboration between DOE and America's Promise Alliance, which is a multi-sector collaborative dedicated to the well-being of children and youth. Leading up to the Summit will be regional meetings throughout Virginia on the topic.

EDUCATION *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Education	The Virginia Board of Education is the nine-member governing and policy-making body for the Virginia system of public elementary and secondary education. Its work touches all facets of education from accountability and evaluation to curriculum and teacher education. The Board's members are appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. Members are appointed to serve a term of four years. No member shall be appointed to more than two consecutive four-year terms. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Board of Education meets monthly. The Board's annual planning session was held on May 21-22, 2008. Topics centered on the priorities in the Board's 2007-2012 Comprehensive Plan. The plan identifies critical areas of concern, including: setting challenging learning standards for schools and students, finding new and effective ways to help struggling schools and divisions, emphasizing the benefits of early learning programs, improving reading and literacy at every grade and for every subgroup of students, ensuring safe and healthy learning environments, ensuring that our teachers and administrators are highly qualified, and keeping young people in school until they graduate The Board met on June 19 and is scheduled to meet next on July 17. Additional 2008 meetings will be held September 25, October 23 and November 20.
Education	Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia, effective March 27, 2002, are required to be revised to comply with changes outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA '04), and its federal implementing regulations. The revised regulations go into effect in 2008. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The process began October 25, 2006, under the direction of the Board of Education. By Spring 2008, the proposed regulations had received Executive Branch approval from the Governor, Secretary of Education, Attorney General, and the Department of Planning and Budget. In a March 21, 2008 memorandum to members of State Board of Education, Governor Kaine indicated that, while he had approved the advancement of the regulation to the next stage, he reserved "the right to take action under the Administrative Process Act during the final adoption period" and expressed "some concerns that I have -- concerns that parents across the Commonwealth have shared." The proposed revisions were published in The Virginia Register of Regulations on April 28, 2008. Publication will initiate the 60-day public comment period. During that time period, DOE will accept written public comments and hear public comment at nine public hearings scheduled throughout Virginia. The public comment period ends June 30, 2008. Depending on the nature of the comments, the proposed revisions could undergo revision. If not petitioned, however, the regulations take effect at the end of the 30-day Final Adoption Period.

EDUCATION *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Education	In action approved the General Assembly, Item 135-23d (2007), the newly-funded Teacher Incentives in Hard-to-Staff Schools initiative is a program designed to improve student achievement in “hard-to-staff” schools by attracting and retaining licensed, highly qualified, and experienced teachers through an incentive-based program. Teachers who are eligible to receive the hiring and retention incentives must meet criteria established by the Department and applicable regulations in the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Commission’s involvement: Tracking	The program was begun in Fall 2004 in Caroline County and Franklin City. Beginning in 2005-06, the program was expanded to Brunswick and Greenville Counties and Petersburg City. (Brunswick and Greenville no longer participate.) Besides offering hiring incentives, the program offers training to the entire school staff, along with a stipend for participating. Schools may also receive a per-student allocation to improve the school environment. The <i>Code of Virginia</i> requires annual reporting to the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees by the Department. <i>Report Document 155</i> (2007) details the findings from this pilot year. The report can be accessed on the General Assembly Legislative Information System’s website.
Office of the Secretary of Education	Virginia’s P-16 Education Council was created by <i>Executive Order</i> 100 (2005) and extended by Executive Order 40 (2006) to integrate reform efforts in education in the Commonwealth. Its intent is to offer a variety of perspectives on education and to make recommendations on enhancing a seamless transition for students through the Virginia education system. A primary responsibility is to advise and react to initiatives within Virginia’s grant from the National Governors Association (NGA) to develop effective models to “redesign” high schools and specifically to improve the transition of ninth graders from middle school. It is intended that the Council will allow for a comprehensive, rather than piecemeal, approach to problem-solving. The Council serves in an advisory capacity to the Governor, the Secretary, and State education agencies, and other key education policymakers. Commission’s involvement: Delegate Tata serves on the Council.	The Council, which is chaired by the Secretary of Education, generally meets every two months. Meeting topics have included early childhood development and pre-kindergarten education, the Department’s workforce development conference and projects, career and technical education, the federal Partnership for the 21st Century Skills, the National Governors Associations Honor States grant, alignment of high school graduation and college entrance requirements, and the Commonwealth Scholars Program.
Office of the Secretary of Education	A School Readiness Task Force has been convened by the Governor to focus on developing an effective system for assessing and evaluating the school readiness of Virginia’s children. Task Force members include the Superintendent of Public Instruction, local city councils, school divisions and early childhood development offices, the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) office and Virginia’s universities and community colleges, the Early Childhood Foundation and the Council on Virginia’s Future. Commission’s involvement: Tracking	The Task Force has proposed four recommendations to promote statewide data collection efforts to better inform educational policies and classroom practices. The first recommendation - to develop a standard definition of school readiness - has been achieved. At its April 24 meeting, the Board of Education officially adopted the definition of “school readiness” which will guide planning and evaluation.

EDUCATION (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of the Secretary of Education	Start Strong is an initiative to develop expanded access to pre-kindergarten for Virginia's four-year-olds. The 17-member Start Strong Council created by Executive Order 7 (January 2006) is charged with developing a public-private partnership to provide services in public schools and community settings, including the establishment of local Start Strong councils that bring together key child-serving agencies and organizations in each region or locality. The Council is also responsible for advising the Governor, the Secretary of Education, and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources on the development of infrastructure for the Strong Start programs and for making decisions necessary to implement the program. Council members include legislators, representatives from the public school system, private providers of early childhood education programs, elected local government officials, community business leaders and parents. Staff support is provided by the Office of the Governor, the Governor's cabinet secretaries, the Department of Education, and other agencies as appropriate. Commission's involvement: Delegate Tata serves on the Council.	The Council, by mandate, meets at least quarterly to oversee the development of infrastructure for the Start Strong programs and to make decisions necessary to implement the program. There are six Task Forces which develop recommendations in the areas of Standards, Professional Development, Governance, Finance, Public Engagement, and Evaluation. Start Strong pilot sites, which serve at-risk children, incorporate strategies such as partnership with private, faith-based, home-based and military providers. Sites serve Head Start and Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) students in the same classrooms, utilizing diverse funding streams, including parent tuition, and using the quality ratings system. Pilot sites for the 2007-08 academic year are: Albemarle County, Alexandria, Alleghany County, Bath County, Chesapeake, Fairfax, Hampton, Highland County, Richmond County, and Virginia Beach are each participating. In April 2008, seven regional forums were held across the Commonwealth to provide information on the Governor's pre-K proposal, legislative and budget action, and best practice strategies for community planning and service delivery. Led by the Executive Director of the Governor's Working Group and hosted in partnership with United Way's Success By 6, the forums highlighted the latest information on the VPI initiative and state-level policy and program activities and provide opportunities for regions to share information and best practices with each other A resource guide for public and private early childhood leaders was developed in conjunction with these regional forums. <i>Solving the Preschool Puzzle</i> offers detailed information about collaborative, innovative approaches to deliver early childhood services, and provides samples of Memoranda of Understanding to demonstrate how programs have partnered and braided funding streams and contact information for individuals across the state that are already employing these best practices in their programs. Best practice models covered include the Pre-K pilots, School Readiness Councils, Single Point of Entry, Braiding Funds and Blending Programs, the Quality Rating and Improvement System; and Transition Practices.
Education	Project HOPE is Virginia's program for the education of Homeless Children and Youth. The College of William and Mary administers the program for the Department of Education. Funding is authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act (P.O. 107-110). Commission's involvement: Tracking	The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth's annual conference will be held October 31-November 3, 2008 in Washington, D.C. The conference theme is "Making it Crystal Clear: A Commitment to Educating All Our Children and Youth." Project HOPE is offering travel mini-grants to Virginia school divisions to attend the professional development event. The program is monitoring the impact of mortgage foreclosure, increases in food prices and other economic issues on homeless children and youth.

EDUCATION *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Education	The Commission on Civics Education was created in 2005 as an advisory committee in the executive branch. It is comprised of 23 members including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, legislators, executive branch officials and citizens. Legislation was introduced during the 2008 General Assembly Session to extend the sunset provision of the Commission to July 1, 2010 – HB 777 (Tata) and SB 306 (Reynolds). The three primary purposes of the advisory commission are to: ▪ Further the education of students on the importance of citizen involvement in a representative democracy; ▪ Promote the study of State and local government among the citizens; and ▪ Enhance communication and collaboration among organizations that conduct civic education programs. Commission's involvement: Delegate Tata chairs the Commission.	Commission meetings are held at the call of the chair or whenever the majority of the members request. The Commission will meet in Summer 2008. The Commission is in the process of planning its second annual <i>Virginia Civics Education Summit</i>. The event, which is state-funded, will be held in the Capitol on September 19, 2008. The chair of the Commission on Civics Education is directed to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an annual executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Commission no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly.
Education	A Civics Responsibility Campaign is promoting voter registration for high school students who will be 18 years old before the November 4 election. High schools throughout Virginia are eligible to participate in the statewide project, which is sponsored by the Virginia Student Councils Association (VSCA), in cooperation with the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals (VASSP) and Virginia State Board of Elections. The statewide CRC is to provide all high school students who will be 18-years-old or older before the November 4 election with information about voter registration and the opportunity to become a registered voter in Virginia. Commission's involvement: Tracking	In further support of civics education, the Department of Education Superintendent, in an April 28, 2008 Memo, encouraged all Virginia high schools to participate. The official promotional Spring campaign was May 12-23. Schools will be recognized for their participation in the campaign. In addition, the Virginia State Board of Elections sent to Virginia high schools about opportunities for students who are registered voters to apply to serve as a voter official at the election polls on November 4. Those selected will be paid a stipend of \$100 for the day.
Education	The Virginia Advisory Committee for Career and Technical Education represents a standing committee of educators and representatives of the private sector. In partnership with the Virginia Department of Education, the Committee recognizes annually the outstanding work of one business and industry partnership and one award for an advisory council/committee for each of the eight Superintendent's Regions. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Meetings for 2008 are scheduled for January 16, April 3, and June 16. In January, Governor Kaine announced grants to establish the state's first Governor's Career and Technical Academies. These will provide instruction in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and are being developed as partnerships among school divisions, employers, business organizations and colleges and universities. Each partnership will receive a \$20,000 planning grant, followed by a \$100,000 implementation award upon program approval by the Board of Education and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). The six programs funded are in Halifax County, Newport News, Arlington County, Suffolk, Russell County, and Stafford County.

EDUCATION *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Education	Know How Virginia is an initiative of the Virginia Career Education Foundation in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Community College System, State Council of Higher Education, and the Virginia Employment Commission. It presents a long-term public awareness campaign designed to: ▪ Inform students and their parents, teachers, and counselors of rewarding career opportunities, particularly in high-demand and emerging fields; ▪ Promote quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) in middle and high schools to support career exploration and preparation; and ▪ Ensure a larger pool of qualified, motivated applicants for Virginia businesses and industries. The campaign has two components: ▪ An Umbrella Campaign that provides basic information on careers, career exploration, and the benefits of Career and Technical Education (CTE); ▪ Career-specific Campaigns underwritten by private-sector partners seeking to cultivate greater pools of qualified candidates for specific types of jobs. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The partnership's website—www.knowhowvirginia.org—provides an overview of the program's activities. In addition, the website gives information about one-time events and ongoing programs available in each region or throughout the state. Information is given on career fairs, student organization events, and numerous other career building opportunities. SB 326 (Wagner, 2008) requires the Board of Education to develop a plan for increasing the number of students receiving industry certification and state licensure as part of their career and technical education.
Criminal Justice Services	The Virginia Center for School Safety (VCSS) of the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) is a resource and training center for information and research about national and statewide school safety efforts and reflects Virginia's commitment to providing safe and productive learning environments. Through the VCSS, schools and communities have access to proactive trainings, topical resources, public-private partnerships, data collection and evaluation. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The VCSS is holding its 2008 Virginia School and Campus Safety Training Forum on August 5-6 in Hampton. Its agenda includes teen leadership, bullying, teenage drinking and driving, special education, dropout prevention. The Department is partnering with Departments of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Education, State Police, Emergency Management, Health, and the Office of the Attorney General and the Association of Campus Law Enforcement. The 2008 Forum will expand to include practitioners on college and university campuses. DCJS anticipates 700 school and campus safety practitioners to attend.
Education	The 12-member Student Advisory Committee to the Board of Education represents and serves the students of Virginia by acting as a liaison between students and the board, understanding and voicing the concerns and issues facing students, giving a fresh perspective to the board members, and providing a collective voice to provide feasible solutions. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Committee meets three times a year with two meetings coinciding with regularly scheduled board meetings. The Committee includes high school students from each of the Department of Education's eight administrative regions and four middle school students selected at-large. The 2007-08 Committee met in December, February and concluded its meeting calendar on April 23. Committee members presented at the Board of Education's April 24 meeting.

To access reports submitted to the Governor and to the General Assembly, visit the Legislative Information System's website at <http://legis.state.va.us>. Click "Studies and Commissions" in the menu bar on the left. Then click "Reports to the General Assembly."



Activities in State Government Related to Youth and Families

is an annual publication of the Virginia Commission on Youth which is updated throughout the study year. The Commission extends its appreciation to staff members in the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches who lend their invaluable assistance in providing information on an on-going basis.

Commission staff welcomes comments at any time and invites submission of material for its
2008 Activities in State Government Related to Youth and Families.

Virginia Commission on Youth

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