



Activities in State Government Related to Youth and Families 2007

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

Revised November 12, 2007

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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COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Legislative Review and Audit Commission	HJR 60 (Nixon, 2006) directs JLARC to evaluate the administration of the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA), including: ▪ Evaluate the costs, quality, and reimbursement of children's residential services; ▪ Examine the interdepartmental regulation of these facilities; ▪ Assess the administration of the CSA by state and local governments; ▪ Evaluate the quality and capacity of services available to and provided for CSA children; and ▪ Determine whether CSA children receive appropriate care, case management, education, and supervision. This study was a recommendation of the Joint Subcommittee Studying Private Youth and Single Family Group Homes pursuant to HJR 685 (Nixon, 2005). Commission's involvement: Tracking	In its first-year study report, <i>House Document 12 (2007)</i>, JLARC concluded that Virginia's regulatory environment does not appear to adequately protect the health and safety of children. Further, CSA children appear to experience mixed outcomes after receiving residential care. The report cited the need to: ▪ Improve licensing standards and enforcement efforts; ▪ Control expenditures for residential services; ▪ Address the gaps in availability of community-based services; ▪ Improve access to reliable information; and ▪ Help local CSA programs with greater State resources for program administration and additional guidance on prioritizing responsibilities. On May 17, 2007, JLARC staff briefed its members on the impact of the interim study report, primarily that a task force was convened by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to review the adequacy of regulations related to children's residential facilities and additional funding was allocated to increase the stipend paid to foster families by 13 percent.
Legislative Services	SJR 96 (Hanger, 2006) establishes a joint subcommittee to study the cost effectiveness of the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) and to collaborate with the Joint Legislative and Audit Review Commission (JLARC) regarding its evaluation of the administration of the Act. The joint subcommittee is directed to: ▪ Evaluate the costs, quality, and reimbursement of children's residential services, ▪ Examine interdepartmental regulations of these facilities, determine whether CSA children receive appropriate care, and ▪ Apprise the joint subcommittee of the status of its study and findings. The study is being conducted over the course of two years. 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 of the study, SJR 96 directs the joint subcommittee and JLARC to continue their respective studies and collaboration in preparation for end-of-year reporting. Commission's involvement: Delegate Fralin is a member.	The joint subcommittee met twice in the first year of study and approved the recommendations published in <i>Senate Document 14</i> (January 2007). In response to a request from Delegate William H. Fralin, Jr., the Attorney General issued an official advisory opinion on whether CSA § 63.2-905 mandates that mental health services be provided to children pursuant to the CSA to prevent parents from having to relinquish custody of those children to receive such services and whether the provision of mental health services is mandated pursuant to the CSA for all children in need of such services. The opinion (December 6, 2006) was that parents of severely mentally ill children should not be forced to give up custody and have them placed in foster care in order to access services and that the practice of child custody relinquishment to obtain mental health services might violate the U.S. Constitution. The joint subcommittee subsequently asked JLARC to examine the extent to which the opinion would impact the size of the caseload and expenditures of CSA. This is discussed in more depth in CUSTODY RELINQUISHMENT AND THE COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES ACT which follows. At its June 19, 2007 meeting, members received briefings on the impact of the study mandated by HJR 60, Children's Residential Services Delivered through the CSA, and on developments affecting CSA programs. On October 9, the joint subcommittee heard a presentation on "Paradigm Shift in CSA", which focused on the trend towards a Systems of Care and Evidence-based Practices approach, and toured Elk Hill youth facility, Richmond. The joint subcommittee's last meeting will be held on November 20 in Richmond. SJR 96 requires that the joint subcommittee and JLARC submit an executive summary of their findings and recommendations to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems prior to the start of the 2008 General Assembly Session.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Legislative Review and Audit Commission	Custody Relinquishment and the Comprehensive Services Act - On December 11, 2006, the Joint Legislative Subcommittee Studying the Comprehensive Services Act (SJR 96, 2006) asked JLARC to examine the extent to which the opinion issued by the Attorney General (December 6, 2006) would impact the size of the caseload and expenditures of CSA. The 2007 General Assembly passed Senate Bill 1332 (Davis), which would provide access to services so that parents do not have to relinquish custody in order to obtain mental health treatment for their child. This bill contains a 2008 reenactment clause. In addition, a budget amendment directed the Office of Comprehensive Services (OCS) to collect additional information and estimate the fiscal impact of SB 1332. Commission's involvement: Tracking	In March 2007, JLARC completed its study and published <i>Report Document 90, Follow-up Report on Custody Relinquishment and the Comprehensive Services Act</i>. Report recommendations focused on the State's Foster Care Prevention Policy as a key contributing factor to custody relinquishment. The report noted that the Office of Comprehensive Services (OCS) should take the lead in ensuring that policies are consistent with State law and issue any needed clarifications to localities. The Governor, in March, subsequently repealed the State Foster Care Prevention Policy. As a result, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources issued corrective actions necessary to ensure compliance. On March 27, 2007, the Commissioners of the Departments of Social Services and Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services, along with the OCS Executive Director, sent notices to all effective parties recognizing that Virginia's current foster care prevention policy is not consistent with the Comprehensive Services Act. The memo also stated that there has been inconsistent local administration in determining eligibility for foster care prevention services. As a result, some families may not receive the services for their children to which they are legally entitled, without relinquishing custody. At its May 15th meeting, the State Executive Council (SEC) received a JLARC staff report summarizing the key components of the Attorney General's opinion and outlining JLARC findings related to the now repealed State Foster Care Prevention Policy. The OCS Director reported on the status of draft guidelines developed over six weeks by a Stakeholders Group convened for this purpose. These draft guidelines were broadly distributed for public comment, although not required by law, prior to formal review by the SEC. On May 17, 2007, in a briefing to its members, JLARC staff indicated that policy changes made to ensure compliance will eliminate the need for parents to relinquish their child's custody or enter into non-custodial agreements for the sole purpose of accessing services. The final estimated impact of the changes in State policy is \$21.2 million, with the State share equaling \$13.4 million. JLARC further predicts that gaps in the availability of community-based services could compound the fiscal impact and undermine the State's ability to serve children in the least restrictive setting, as required by the CSA. SEC approved the final guidelines at its October 2, 2007 meeting, but provided an additional 30 days on public comment period and authorized Secretary Tavenner to make needed changes before finalizing and distributing the guidelines for implementation. The guidelines will be effective as of November 20, 2007. SEC has indicated that the 2008 General Assembly will likely be requested to consider <i>Code</i> revisions.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of Comprehensive Services	The State Executive Council (SEC) oversees the activities of the Office of Comprehensive Services (OCS) and establishes collaborative program policy development, fiscal policy development, and administrative oversight for the provision of child-centered, family-focused and community-based services to eligible emotionally and behaviorally troubled children/youth and their families in the least restrictive, appropriate environment. 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. At its May 15th and October 2nd meetings, Commission staff presented information on the Commission's September 16-18 Systems of Care & Evidence-based Practices Conference, co-sponsored by the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Strategic Consulting Group is working with the OCS, among relevant agencies, on Virginia's child services system. Casey staff presented their initial systemic recommendations at the SEC's October meeting. OCS was one of three agencies directed by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, following the release of the JLARC report on custody relinquishment, to bring State policy into compliance with State and Federal law. Subsequently OCS issued a March 27, 2007 memo directing immediate change. SEC opted to distribute the draft guidelines for implementing the law to all stakeholders for a 60-day comment period. On SEC approved the final guidelines at its October 2, 2007 meeting, but provided an additional 30 days on public comment period and authorized Secretary Tavenner to make needed changes before finalizing and distributing the guidelines for implementation. The guidelines will be effective as of November 20, 2007. SEC has indicated that the 2008 General Assembly will likely be requested to consider <i>Code</i> revisions. The SEC's last 2007 meeting will be held December 18th. Item 279-J of the introduced 2006-2008 State Budget requires the SEC to biennially publish and disseminate to the General Assembly and Community Policy and Management Teams a progress report on comprehensive services for children, youth and families and a plan for the succeeding biennium's services by December 20 in odd-numbered years.
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 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. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Item 279-B-#2d the 2006-2008 State Budget requires the Office of Comprehensive Services 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.

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. In response to a SEC directive, a SLAT task group focusing on the CSA uniform assessment instrument has completed its work and recommended the use of the Child Assessment of Needs and Strengths (CANS) as the CSA uniform assessment instrument. In response, SEC has directed SLAT to establish a workgroup to determine the feasibility of transitioning and implementing CANS, taking into account the costs to state and local governments. In response to JLARC's study, SLAT has examined the issue of a comprehensive information system to replace the Service Fee Directory and to capture key compliance, performance and financial information about residential services provided through CSA. SLAT has developed the CPMT Management Report as a tool for use by localities. On the OCS website, localities now have access to data showing their summary demographic, service and expenditure data on an annual basis, compare themselves to their region and to the state as a whole, and view historical trends. SLAT is participating as partner in the human service system reform spearheaded by the For Keeps Initiative and guided by the Annie E. Casey Strategic Consulting Group. SLAT formed a small subgroup along with the Foster Care Stakeholders Group to develop a draft statement for the SEC on the direction the State is taking in serving children in their homes, schools and community whenever appropriate. A Casey Foundation staff member is leading the session.

CHILD WELFARE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Commission on Youth	The two-year legislative study of the Establishment of an Office of Children's Services Ombudsman examines issues around child-serving systems in the Commonwealth, including: The current welfare system fails to: - Provide a central point of contact for children's services wherein complaints can be filed and investigations can be conducted to ensure the health, safety and welfare of children; and - Offer independent reviews of complaints. There is a need to: - Provide a mechanism for filing complaints external to the child welfare system and child-serving agencies; - Provide a system accountability mechanism and protect the interests of children and families in the child welfare system; - Investigate the acts of State and local administrative agencies adversely affecting children; - Protect children and parents from harmful agency action or inaction; - Recommend appropriate changes to safeguard the rights of children and parents; and - Promote higher standards of competency, efficiency and justice in the administration of child protection and child welfare laws, juvenile justice services and education. The Office should not be a duplication of services. Commission's involvement: Commission Study	Senator John Edwards introduced SB 208 (2006), which proposed the creation of an Office of Children's Services Ombudsman within the legislative branch. After reviewing the bill, the Senate Committee on General Laws and Technology expressed concerns, particularly regarding the administration of child protection and child welfare laws, and sent a letter requesting the Virginia Commission on Youth to study the impact of the bill. The Commission formed an Advisory Group during the 2006 study year to: - Evaluate the need for the establishment of an Office of Children's Services Ombudsman in Virginia; - Identify the appropriate administrative structure of an Office; and - Determine the cost to establish such an Office. In addition, the Commission held two public hearings (Roanoke, Norfolk) and heard public testimony at a third Commission meeting. At its November 2006 meeting, the Commission voted to continue the study in 2007. <i>Report Document 81</i>, an interim study document, was published in January 2007 and is available on both the General Assembly's Legislative Information System's website and the Commission on Youth's website—http://coy.state.va.us. Representatives of affected State agencies met November 7, 2007 to discuss draft recommendations. The Commission will receive staff findings and recommendations at its November 20, 2007 meeting. The Commission's final study report will be published in January 2008.
Social Services	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a block grant created by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The TANF block grant replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, which had provided cash welfare to poor families with children since 1935. Under the TANF structure, the federal government provides a block grant to the states, which use these funds to operate their own programs. States can use TANF dollars in ways designed to meet any of the purposes set out in federal law. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Item 345 of the 2006-2008 State Budget directs the Department of Social Services to report annually on October 1 to the Governor, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees and to the Department of Planning and Budget regarding the size, implementation status, and the nature of projects funded with TANF funds; results of all formal evaluations; and recommendations for continuation, expansion and redesign of the projects. <i>Report Document 220 (2007) Report on the Virginia Independence Program and Other Projects Funded with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant</i> has been published and is available on the General Assembly's Legislative Information System website.

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. There are also various subcommittees that 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. Item 338-M #1&2 of the 2006-2008 State Budget requires DSS to report on the implementation of the PIP to the chairs of the money committees by January 1 of each year. Its first report was published in late December 2006 as <i>Report Document 380</i> (2006). Its report for calendar year 2007 is not due as of this date.
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 340-L of the Enrolled 2007 Budget directs the Department of Social Services to work in coordination with the Virginia Community Action Partnership to review areas of the Commonwealth that are not currently served by a community action agency and make recommendations concerning the appropriate level and location of additional services to be provided through either expanding the service area of existing community action agencies or encouraging the creation of new community action agencies. In addition, the budget language directs the department to examine the potential costs associated with providing service in unserved areas and recommend a timetable for phasing in additional services. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Budget language requires the Department of Social Services to report its findings no later than October 1, 2007 to the Chairmen of the Senate Finance Committee and House Appropriations Committee, the Chairmen of the Senate Education and Health Committee and House Health, Welfare and Institutions Committee, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, and the Department of Planning and Budget. <i>Report on the Statewide Expansion of Community Action Services in Virginia (Report Document 183, 2007)</i> is available on the General Assembly's Legislative Information System's website.
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 2nd 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. Details of the voluntary program to expand access to preschool were announced by the Governor on August 17, 2007.

CHILD WELFARE (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Virginia Department of Social Services	The Alignment Project, started in February 2006 and spearheaded by the Department of Social Services (VDSS), 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 main 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 held six focus groups in six different regions across the Commonwealth. VDSS 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.
Office of the Governor/ Department of 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 and programs. 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. (continued)	The 2006-2008 State Budget appropriated to the Department of Social Services an allocation of \$2.5 million over the biennial to establish Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, with the goal of promoting programs that enhance the health, safety and well-being of Virginia's youth. Item 340-D#1 directs the Foundation to account for the expenditure of these funds by providing the Governor, 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 no later than October 1 of each year for the preceding fiscal year. Item 340-D#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 of private and local government funds received by the Foundation on or before October 1 of each year, beginning 2008. The 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). This report addresses both reporting requirements. On February 21, 2007, Capital One committed \$100,000 to the Foundation. Other corporate partners contributing that amount or more are Ferguson Enterprises, Inc., Virginia Natural Gas, Dominion Resources, and Freddie Mac Foundation. In May 2007, VECF announced the appointment of its first president, who is charged with leading statewide efforts to build resources and supporting community initiatives to increase the school readiness of young children. On June 16, 2007, VECF announced 16 grant awards totaling approximately \$2.4 million to community coalitions throughout Virginia.

CHILD WELFARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of the Governor/ Department of Social Services	Virginia Early Childhood Foundation <i>(continued from previous page)</i> Commission's involvement: Tracking	Through these awards, VECF is funding at least four comprehensive grants for additional communities (building on three initial pilot grants) (\$500,000 each for the two-year grant period), seven planning grants for communities still in the assessment and planning process (one-year grants for \$50,000) and up to three sustaining grants for current grantees (\$100,000 each for two-year grants). The Foundation provides the Smart Beginnings website 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 Hayes Hitzeman Foundation, a Richmond-based non-profit organization to raise funds for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) education and research, has introduced the <i>This Side Up</i> campaign. Started in 2002 by parents whose infant son had died, the Foundation has partnered with Virginia hospitals and now partners with Ukrop's Super Markets, Inc., Ukrop's Dress Express, Pampers, and Smart Beginnings to promote placing babies on their backs for nap or bedtimes. Beginning May 17, 2007, more than 15,000 onesies designed and manufactured by Ukrop's Dress Express will be included in the Governor's New Parent Kits. The onesies, featuring a logo and "This Side Up", are available in English and Spanish. Newborns in Central Virginia are the first to receive the apparel, but the campaign is expanding statewide. Through funding from the VECF, eight Virginia organizations will participate in a two-year program to develop a rating system for the State's early childcare centers and to train professionals in assessment. Local centers evaluated by raters in the first year of the program will receive mentoring in the second year to develop strategies and training to improve their operations. Local communities will be responsible for funding the mentoring and professional development activities that facilities will receive during the program's second year.
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. <i>(continued)</i>	In Fall 2004, the Commission on Youth, as part of its two-year legislative initiative on Strengthening Families, acted on study recommendations to support the statewide Information & Referral System for 2-1-1 and adopted 2-1-1 as a stand-alone initiative for the 2005 study year. On February 10, 2006, 2-1-1 was launched in five of Virginia's six coverage areas: Roanoke, Staunton, Norfolk, Lynchburg, and Richmond. In February 2008, with the addition of coverage in Northern Virginia, 2-1-1 will be available statewide. The 2006 General Assembly, at the recommendation of the Virginia Commission on Youth, appropriated additional funding (\$723,844 General Funds and \$531,791 Nongeneral Funds) to assist with statewide implementation. In November 2006, Virginia Department of Health Professions activated an information line available through 2-1-1 VIRGINIA for patients to locate health professionals for their families.

CHILD WELFARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Virginia Information and Referral System <i>(continued from previous page)</i> Commission's involvement: Commission Initiative	Callers can now determine: ▪ Status of a healthcare provider's license; ▪ Actions taken on an individual's license by any of the 13 health regulatory boards; and ▪ Doctors' office hours and locations, languages spoken, and hospital affiliation. According to 2-1-1 VIRGINIA's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2007, the service provided assistance to 58,857 visitors in that period. The total cost of providing information and referral services to Virginia citizens was reported at \$1,236,515. Statewide marketing is planned and coordinated through the Department of Social Services, whereas regional marketing is done through local offices. Statewide, Governor Kaine has asked Virginians to help raise awareness of 2-1-1 VIRGINIA by carrying the logo and hotlink on their web sites. 2-1-1 services are also being promoted regionally on billboards and, where applicable, through signage on public transportation.
Secretary of Health and Human Resources	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. The Department of Social Services administers both the Virginia Family Violence Prevention Program (VfVPP) and Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) program grants for child abuse and neglect prevention. The VfVPP 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	FTD florist recently joined as a corporate partner. Fundraising activities include selling KidzKard shopping cards, which offer shoppers 20% at approximately 100 Richmond stores during the 10-day shopping period October 26-November 4, 2007. All proceeds go to the organization. Item 278-F of the 2007 Enrolled Budget Bill requires that the Secretary of Health and Human Resources report no later than October 1, 2007 to the Governor, and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees on the review of the strategic plan for Healthy Families Virginia. The mandated report—<i>Report Document 184, Healthy Families in Virginia (2007)</i>—examined the Hampton Healthy Families Partnership and the organization's survey of site capacity and sites appropriate for expansion. As part of the report, the Secretary reviewed the findings of the Hampton Healthy Families Partnership Benchmark Study and recommended strategies that other communities may adopt to further reduce child abuse and neglect. By expanding other Healthy Families programs across the state, it is believed that similar results will be observed. Recommendations include: ▪ Maintain the current level of funding to all Healthy Families sites; ▪ Provide funding to significantly expand the scope of services for at least 4 existing programs; ▪ Prioritize for expansion those programs with a track record or clear ability to realize the "initiative concept" as part of the Healthy Families model and where strong local support exists as evidenced by local funding, private partnerships/funding, and vigorous boards; and ▪ Prioritize for growth those Healthy Families programs located in communities exhibiting significant risk factors.

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	The Task Force met February 22, 2007 for briefings on the new Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parents Association, 2007 General Assembly legislation, and Department of Social Services kinship care activities. Virginia Tech conducted a study to identify new ways to support kin caregivers. Researchers identified grandparents raising grandchildren ages 12 to 18 to complete the one-two hour questionnaire. Participants received a \$20 gift card to Wal-Mart. On June 13, members were briefed on trends identified at the Brookdale Foundation's <i>Relatives as Parents Program</i> Conference on June 1-3 in Denver. At this conference, VDA staff conducted a session in which they discussed their networking with the Virginia Commission on Youth. The 5th annual Kinship Care Conference, sponsored by the Hampton Roads Regional Task Force on Kinship Care, was held on October 20, 2007 in Norfolk. The one-day conference was free to attendees and provided child care for children through age 12. Keynote speaker Tony Brown, PBS commentator and a dean at Howard University, discussed his experiences as a child in a kinship family as part of his presentation.
Social Services	The Kinship Care Task Force – co-chaired by Senator 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: Task Force Member	On February 22, 2007, DSS staff met with the Department for the Aging's Kinship Care Task Force to brief members on activities. Commission on Youth staff provided a legislative update on March 29, 2007. The Task Force cited the following four major accomplishments as of March 2007: ▪ Case management and advocacy; ▪ Definition of "kinship care" in the <i>Code of Virginia</i>; ▪ Legal assistance/Older American funds; and ▪ Training for professionals on kinship care issues. On September 27, Commissioner Conyers notified the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services that Virginia will not continue with the Title IV-E Subsidized Custody Waiver Project due to the low percentage of Virginia children in foster care placed with relatives, coupled with the high cost of implementation.

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

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Virginia Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parents Association is a newly-formed 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). "Kick off" events were held statewide in Fredericksburg, Portsmouth, Lynchburg, Abingdon and Richmond in May and June. FACES collaborated with the National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) to present a Permanency Training Track at the NFPA Annual Education Conference May 24-27, 2007 in Washington. This workshop was designed to assist foster, adoptive, and kinship families, as well as caseworkers and other professionals, in helping youth achieve permanency. FACES also worked with First Lady Anne Holton, who presented a keynote address and hosted an evening reception and Youth Leadership Breakfast for Virginia conference participants. FACES has established a website with the intent of providing a bridge between the social services community and parents/children – facesofvirginia.org or fosteradoptiveparents.org – both of which are accessible to association members. Membership fees begin at \$5 for an individual child. FACES strives to reach the 55,000 kinship care families in Virginia, many of which are "hidden", with little if any agency contact. The Virginia Youth Advisory Council President now serves as a FACES Board member to represent the issues, concerns and needs of Virginia's foster youth across. FACES Board members met jointly with the VA-YAC in July to discuss how FACES and VA-YAC can work together to sponsor regional events for families and youth. FACES offered The First Lady of Virginia's scholarships to the Systems of Care & Evidence-based Practices Conference in Roanoke September 16-18, 2007. These were available to FACES members on a first come, first served basis, based on region. FACES also made print materials available to conferees at their exhibitor's table. The First Lady is participating in a number of events celebrating November as National Adoption Awareness month and specifically November 17 as Awareness Day. On November 2, 2007, she delivered remarks at the Virginia One Church, One Child 22nd Annual Statewide Adoption Conference in Richmond. This event, which is a part of a national recruitment, training and support network funded in part by the Ford Foundation, increases public awareness of the adoption process in churches to encourage adoption of black children in foster care. FACES is sponsoring an Eastern Regional Training Retreat on November 10, 2007 at Norfolk State University.

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

Lead Agency	Description	Status
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 State'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. She traveled across Virginia in March, conducting the For Keeps Listening Tour. At appearances in Chesterfield, Norfolk, Fairfax, Bristol, and Roanoke County, she heard from over 900 foster youth, parents, and child welfare professionals. At each session, attendees shared ideas and common concerns and the First Lady and For Keeps Steering Committee members had opportunities to receive input on ways to improve outcomes for older youth in foster care. On May 15, the First Lady testified before a U.S. House of Representatives Ways & Means Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support hearing on challenges facing the child welfare system. She discussed safety, permanency, and the well-being of foster children and addressed issues identified during her statewide Listening Tour. On May 31, commemorating National Foster Care Month, the First Lady delivered remarks to foster families and children at a celebration in Irvington. On May 31, in celebration of May as National Foster Care Month, First Lady Holton delivered remarks to foster families and children at a Foster Care Month Celebration in Irvington. The Casey Strategic Consulting Group (Annie E. Casey Foundation) accepted an invitation from the First Lady to provide strategic consultation and has begun its work. In June, the Governor and Mayor Doug Wilder of the City of Richmond, announced that the Foundation will provide consulting services, in partnership with For Keeps, to help the City improve its child welfare system. It is hoped that the City's plan can serve as a model for replication statewide. Under the partnership, Casey will work closely with the Office of the First Lady, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the City of Richmond's Social Services, and other local agencies. The team will work with State and city leaders to develop and implement practices that involve families and their supports in placement decisions to more nearly assure permanency. The Office of Comprehensive Services and the state Department of Social Services joined the team over the summer. Recommendations are due in Fall 2007. The First Lady was the keynote speaker at the Systems of Care & Evidence-Based Practices Conference co-sponsored by the Commission on Youth and DMHMRSAS on September 16-18, 2007 in Roanoke. She kicked off the conference with a discussion of issues related to foster care, adoption and permanency, and moderated a panel discussion with Virginia Youth Advisory Council (V-YAC) members on their ideas for improving outcomes for youth transitioning out of foster care.

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

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Virginia Department of Social Services Task Force on Adoptions and Foster Care—VDSS was directed by Item 338-P1 of the 2006-2008 Appropriations Act to continue reviewing current State policies on Adoptions and Foster Care and to recommend mechanisms to expedite the adoption of children from foster care, as well as children not in the State's care. The Appropriations Act directs the Commissioner of VDSS to recruit a national expert on the adoption of children to co-chair the task force, comprised of the Commissioner, the national expert, local department of social services staff, adoptive parents and other interested stakeholders. Among the Identified Issues are: ▪ The 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) made significant changes to child welfare policy by setting timelines and practice guidelines for achieving permanent outcome for children in foster care. ▪ ASFA requires states to terminate parental rights and find an adoptive family if a child has been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months or if a parent has assaulted or killed another child in the family; if a child is determined to have been abandoned, tortured, chronically abused or sexually abused; or if the parental rights to a sibling were terminated involuntarily. As a result of ASFA and a renewed focus on permanency outcomes for foster care children, more children are moving through the adoption process. ▪ VDSS and local departments of social services have made efforts and progress to find adoptive homes for foster care children; however, barriers continue to impede the process and many of these children remain in foster care for years without having a place to call home. Commission's involvement: Oversight	The Task Force was directed to report its findings and policy recommendations to the Commission on Youth and the chairs of the money committees no later than June 30, 2007. The Commission on Youth invited the Department of Social Services to present its findings and policy recommendations at its June 18, 2007 meeting. This presentation can be accessed on the Commission's website at http://coy.state.va.us. The Task Force has met four times in 2006 and 2007, most recently on April 27, at which time it gave final review and approval to its findings and recommendations. Instead of using "one national expert on the adoption of children" to co-chair the Task Force, as stipulated in the Appropriation Act, VDSS opted to utilize several national experts to guide discussion. As part of the study effort, the VDSS policy manuals have been reviewed, with recommendations, by both the NCWRCA and the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning, an organization which currently focuses its efforts on working with states throughout all stages of the Child and Family Services Reviews, including the development and implementation of the States' Program Improvement Plans (PIP). VDSS has completed a statewide survey on best-practices and policy issues related to this issue. The results of this survey were presented to the Task Force on March 30, 2007. Study results are published as <i>House Document 31</i>, (2007). The report can be access on the General Assembly's Legislative Information System website.
Social Services	Foster Care & Adoption: Exploring Kinship Care Options, one-day conference for Eastern Area I Professional Foster Care & Adoption Training Conference, was held Thursday May 10, 2007 at Norfolk State University (NSU). Commission's involvement: Tracking	This conference was sponsored cooperatively by A KinCare Connection—Hampton Roads Regional Taskforce on Kinship Care, the Virginia Department of Social Services, Virginia Institute for Social Services Training Activities (VISSTA), and NSU's Child Welfare Education & Support Program.
Medical Assistance Services	Treatment Foster Care and Residential Psychiatric Services Training is reported annually by the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS). Training is offered semi-annually 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), published in June, details the most recent training year.

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

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of Comprehensive Services	Treatment Foster Care Rate-Setting – Item 279-L of the 2007 Enrolled Budget requires the Office of Comprehensive Services, in cooperation with the Departments of Social Services and Medical Assistance Services, League of Social Services Executives, treatment foster care provider associations, and other State agencies, as appropriate, to examine establishing statewide rates for treatment foster care that conform with federal and State law and to determine the impact on federal, State and local funding. Commission's involvement: Tracking	A committee was formed in response to the mandate. Two subgroups were established by the committee at its June 22, 2007 meeting. The Assessment/Levels of Need Subgroup was charged with developing a statewide rate structure with the following dimensions: ▪ A flexible rate structure emphasizing the ability to meet the child's needs; ▪ Criteria for additional daily supervision (in conjunction with other subgroup); ▪ Residential services excluded; and ▪ Standardized rates in order to draw down IV-E, not to "cut costs". The Definitions Workgroup was to develop common definitions and terms for additional daily supervision. Based in part on subgroup reports to the committee, the committee approved on August 15 the recommendations to be included in the report: After additional discussion, the workgroup came to the consensus that the report should include recommending: • Establishment of a uniform rate structure for additional daily supervision based on the needs of the child. • Development of common definitions for treatment foster care activities that would be "Title IV-E friendly" and allow Virginia to draw down additional IV-E funds, which would help alleviate increased costs to CSA and localities for case management services. • A statement that these recommendations are consistent with the recommendations of the Adoption Subsidy Workgroup. The workgroup also recommends that a statewide rate structure should: • Be fair and consistent; • Not be means tested; • Have data collected electronically and be interfaced with financial reporting systems at the State and local level; and • Include long-range plans that include collection of research variables (i.e., length of stay in TFC and permanency outcomes). The 2007 Enrolled Budget requires the Office of Comprehensive Services to report with recommendations to the Governor and the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees no later than October 1, 2007. <i>Report Document 224</i> (2007) has been published and is available on the General Assembly Legislative Information System website.

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

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	The Department of Social Services, in collaboration with the League of Social Services Executives and the director of the Office of Comprehensive Services, is directed by Item 338-O#1 of the 2006-2008 State Budget to study the Adoptions Subsidy Program. The study is to examine the relationship of the special needs adoption program to the federal Child and Family Services review Performance Improvement Plan requirements, focusing on causes of recent expenditure growth. The Task Force is to make recommendations on changes to moderate expenditure growth, while continuing to meet the needs of the affected children. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The State Budget Item directed the Department to report to the Governor, the money committees, and the Department of Planning and Budget on or before June 1, 2007. This report, <i>Policies and Procedures Related to the Management of the Special Needs Adoption Subsidy Program (House Document 25, 2007)</i>, outlined the following recommendations: ▪ Create a uniform Adoption Assistance Agreement that encourages linkage between the child's need and service payment level; ▪ Increase the use of federal Title IV-E funding for adoption assistance to adoptive parents; ▪ Ensure the accuracy of data in the child welfare information system; ▪ Establish clear and consistent policy and procedures, including definitions, in order to ensure consistency between program and financial reporting; ▪ Establish clear adoption assistance practice guidelines; ▪ Eliminate competing permanency incentives and disincentives; and ▪ Continue support of Virginia's Adoption Assistance Program by the General Assembly.
Social Services	SJR 377 (O'Brien, 2007) requests the Department of Taxation to examine current financial incentives in other states to support adoption. The Commonwealth currently does not offer any tax assistance to promote adoption. Cites prior studies that reveal the pressing need to find homes for children, but conclude that financial costs are a barrier to adoption. Commission's involvement: Tracking	SJR 377 directs the Department of Taxation to complete its meetings by November 30, 2007, and to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. In addition, SJR 377 requires the executive summary and report to be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports by the first day of the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly and that the report be posted on the General Assembly's website. The Department is currently talking with the Department of Social Services (VDSS) and surveying other states on what they are doing to provide tax incentives, adoption subsidies, and education benefits. Following approval of an early draft by Department management, Taxation will provide a draft review to VDSS prior to release of the final document.

CHILD CARE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Social Services	Automation of Day Care Assistance Program – Item 334-J of the 2006-2008 State Budget expresses the General Assembly's intent that the Department of Social Services automate day care assistance programs. 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 to the Governor and the General Assembly by October 15 of each year regarding the status of the day care assistance programs. On October 15, 2006, Commissioner Anthony Conyers, Jr. of the Department of Social Services submitted the required first year report. He stated in the report that steps have been taken toward a comprehensive automated system to support the program; however, the automation to support the child care program has been limited. The Department's 2007 report is shown as "Pending" on the General Assembly's Legislative Automated System website as of 11/7/07.
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 child day center 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. Commission's involvement: Tracking	CDCC generally meets six times per year. Following studies by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission and the Joint Commission on Administrative Rules in 2004, new regulations were approved by CDCC on January 11, 2005. Those regulations include the following: qualifications for program leaders; staff-to-child ratios; general staff training; medication administration training; qualifications for program directors; and activity space. Many of these had a delayed effective date. As required by the <i>Code</i>, CDCC continues to review and adopt day regulations for licensure and operation of child day centers in accordance with the regulations referred to in § 63.2-1734. At its May 10, 2007 meeting, the CDCC approved the final regulatory package to amend 22 VAC 15-30, Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers. Also in May, the CDCC issued a prepared editorial endorsing the Smart Beginnings Initiative and related focus on early childhood development, and recommendations. The editorial cites the 2005 enactment of laws governing licensed child day care centers which were based on recommendations made by CDCC to DSS, specifically staff-to-child ratios for younger children and the proposed change to the square footage per child space requirement. The review process is scheduled to begin again in May 2009, although the Council is considering beginning discussions in March 2009.

CHILD CARE *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
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, which is a member of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, is funded through the Virginia Department of Social Services. The network 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. 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. Several VACCRRN member agencies have recently completed a national training program through Zero to Three entitled "Partnering with Parents: Preventing Neglect and Abuse". VACCRRN published "Who's Watching the Children?" as its 2006 Annual Report. Its 2007 report is pending.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Commission on Health Care	SJR 106 (Davis, 2006) directs the Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC) to conduct a two-year study on the Impact of Barrier Crimes on Social Services and Health Care Entities (employers, prospective employees, consumers, residents, patients and clients). Specifically, JCHC will: ▪ Determine the effectiveness of barrier crime laws in protecting consumers, residents, patients, and clients; ▪ Examine the difficulty experienced by employers in service delivery agencies in finding qualified applicants and employees, as well as the difficulty prospective employees have in finding jobs; ▪ Compare Virginia's barrier crime laws with laws related to criminal convictions and employment elsewhere; and ▪ Gather data on employment discrimination based on an individual's criminal conviction record from State agencies, institutions, boards, bureaus, commissions, councils or any instrumentality of the Commonwealth. Commission's involvement: Tracking	SJR 106 directs JCHC to complete meetings by November 30 of each year and to apprise the Virginia State Crime Commission of its findings each year. JCHC approved the first-year study plan at its April 27, 2006 meeting and received the Staff Interim Report at its November 14, 2006 meeting. The JCHC was briefed on plans for the second-year study at its May 10, 2007 meeting. Four policy options were presented to its members on October 26, 2007. JCHC is soliciting written public comments, which will be summarized and presented to JCHC during its November 8th meeting. Following final deliberation, JCHC will finalize its actions for the 2008 General Assembly.

PUBLIC SAFETY (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Legislative Services	HJR 652 (Welch, 2007) and SJR 327 (Puller, 2007) continues the Joint Subcommittee to Study the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Reentry to Society. The resolutions direct the subcommittee to monitor the work of the Virginia Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy and its pilot programs and to make recommendations that may facilitate the reintegration of prisoners in their communities. The subcommittee is also to evaluate the existing education program for prisoners in Virginia; identify program needs; review prisoner education programs in other states; consider financial aid alternatives to assist inmates in accessing college; examine the relationship between poor educational opportunities, delinquency, unidentified learning disabilities and crime; and determine the number of inmates with learning disabilities and the average reading level of inmates. Commission's Involvement: Tracking	<i>Senate Document 13</i> (2007) was published as the interim report following completion of the first year of study. During the 2007 Interim, the joint subcommittee is limited to four meetings and shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2007. Meetings have been held on June 28, July 31, September 26 and October 30 in Richmond. Among the presentations received by members were briefings by Department of Correctional Education (DCE) staff on academic and vocational programs for adults and juveniles (including college courses and classes in parenting and in citizenship), on special education issues among juveniles and the benefits of college classes and specialized education on recidivism rates, earning potential, and family stability. The resolutions require that the chairman 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 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly.
Secretary of Health and Human Resources	SB 188 (Puller, 2006) directs the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, in consultation with the Secretary of Public Safety, to establish an integrated system for coordinating the planning and delivery of services for children with incarcerated parents among State, local, nonprofit and faith-based organizations in order to provide children with services to continue parental relationships with the incarcerated parent, when appropriate, and encourage healthy relationships in the family and community. This bill was a recommendation of the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Reentry to Society (SJR 273, Puller, 2005). Commission's involvement: Tracking	In 2004, the Commission on Youth sent a letter to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources supporting Virginia's participation in the National Governor's Association Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy. In addition, the Commission on Youth has conducted two studies on children of incarcerated parents: <i>Needs of Children Whose Parents are Incarcerated</i>, (House Document 32, 1992) and <i>Children of Incarcerated Parents</i> (Unnumbered Report Document, 2003). Both can be accessed on the General Assembly's Legislative Information System website or the Commission on Youth website. The Secretariats of Health and Human Resources and Public Safety are currently working to implement this legislation.
Secretary of Public Safety	The 2007-08 Budget Bill directed the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to evaluate the effectiveness of Virginia's offender reentry programs in reducing recidivism. Commission's involvement: Tracking	In this first year of study, DCJS has conducted site visits, surveys and made other contacts with the nine local Offender Re-Entry and Transition Services (ORTS) programs to determine their readiness for evaluation. A report detailing research results shall be provided to the Joint Subcommittee to Study the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Reentry to Society and the Chairmen of Virginia State Crime Commission Chairman, Senate Finance, and House Appropriations Committees by October 1 each year. The first report has been published as <i>Report Document 210</i> (2007). DCJS will continue to gather information on reentry programs administered or operated by the Departments of Correctional Education, Corrections, Juvenile Justice, Social Services and Criminal Justice Services.

PUBLIC SAFETY (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Secretary of Public Safety	Since 2003, Virginia has been one of seven states participating in the Prisoner Re-entry Policy Academy. A part of this multi-faceted strategy is the Virginia Reentry Pilot Projects. Executive Order 22 (2006) directs the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety to lead the Virginia Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy to promote reentry strategies for offenders. Executive Order 22 directs the Academy to: ▪ Provide on-going coordination at the executive level of reentry initiatives across the state; ▪ Explore programs that will aid with the offender reintegration; ▪ Address policies and practices impeding successful reintegration; and ▪ Work collaboratively to implement new policies and procedures. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Under the auspices of the Virginia Department of Social Services, the Academy works with law enforcement, community service providers, the judicial system, the faith community, ex-offenders and ex-offenders' families to identify and minimize reentry barriers. The Academy hosted a conference <i>Coming Home: Building Reentry Capacity through Community Collaboration</i> on April 30-May 1, 2007 in Portsmouth at the Renaissance Hotel and Waterfront Conference Center. Pilot programs have been designed to test Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy recommendations. Five pilot programs (soon to be seven) are working with those incarcerated in Virginia correctional facilities and/or local jails. The feedback will help decision makers develop effective pre- and post-reentry services. Executive Order 22 requires the Virginia Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy to submit a status report of actions taken to improve offender transitional and reentry services to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees no later than November 15 of each year. The 2006 report can be access on the Secretary's website; the 2007 report is pending.
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 drop-out, 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. The Prevention Comes First anti-gang workgroup 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. <u>Opportunities for Youth</u> The Governor's Community Service and Civic Engagement Program targets community-based interventions to youth who are (continued)	The Anti-Gang Workgroup 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. The 2007 Conference, Growing Up Safe: Bullying and Beyond, was held October 29 in Richmond. Sponsors included the GOSAP Collaborative, the Office of the Attorney General and the Eastern & Western Virginia District Offices, Interagency Anti-Gang Workgroup, Virginia Association of Community Service Boards Prevention Council, and the Community Builders Network. Recipients of the 2007 community service mini-grants were announced at the conference. The program's 30-second public service announcements may be viewed on-line at http://www.gosap.virginia.gov. The Executive Order, originally in effect until June 2, 2007, was extended to June 2008.

PUBLIC SAFETY *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
	Prevention Comes First <i>(continued from previous page)</i> at high risk for gang involvement. The Governor's Office for substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP) and the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) award competitive mini-grants to approximately 30 localities to implement this program. Grants are designed to engage at-risk youth in community service activities and establish positive alternatives to gang involvement. <u>Public Awareness and Training</u> ▪ Gang Awareness – The Virginia State Police is training 126 Crime Prevention Specialists and distributing a 30-second public service announcement, in both English and Spanish, with a gang awareness and prevention message directed at youth. ▪ Prevention Comes First Conference, Fall 2007 – One-day annual conference for law enforcement, education, prevention practitioners, Commonwealth's Attorneys and others ▪ Safety Matters in Mentoring – The Virginia Mentoring Partnership, in collaboration with GOSAP, includes a youth violence, gang involvement and substance abuse component in all training opportunities for mentors. ▪ Prevention Through Information Data Collection and Data Use Workshops (PTI-VA) – The DOE and VCU's Center for School-Community Collaboration presents regional, one-day workshops on the collection and use of data related to incidents of discipline, crime and violence in schools to improve the capacity of Virginia schools to collect and use school crime and safety data for prevention planning. <u>Tools for Communities</u> GOSAP's Community Profile Database provides localities with a one-stop, web-based, interactive tool and with objective data to conduct quality needs assessments and planning. Commission's involvement: Tracking	

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
State Crime Commission	HJR 136 (Moran, 2006) directs the State Crime Commission to conduct a two-year study of Virginia's juvenile justice system, focusing on recidivism, disproportionate minority contact with the justice system, improving the quality of and access to legal counsel, accountability in the courts, and diversion. In addition, Title 16.1 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> will be analyzed to determine the adequacy and effectiveness of Virginia's statutes and procedures relating to juvenile delinquency. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The State Crime Commission met June 13, 2006 to review and approve the initial study plan. The plan calls for staff research in 2006 and the convening of a workgroup in 2007 to review the research products and participate in the development of recommendations to the Commission, leading up to legislative recommendations for the 2008 General Assembly Session. <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. The plan calls for a comprehensive analysis of Title 16.1 to determine the adequacy and effectiveness of Virginia's statutes and procedures related to juvenile delinquency. The Commission is also conducting a statewide survey of Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court Judges, focus groups of professionals and stakeholders and other pertinent activities. In 2007, the Commission has met September 11, October 9, and November 13. Commission staff will present study findings and recommendations at its December 13 meeting.
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, most recently September 11-13 in Charlottesville. The Council's next meeting will be held December 5 in Harrisonburg. In the Spring, following authorization from the Governor, the Council released its proposed revisions to the <i>Standards for Interdepartmental Regulation for Children's Residential Facilities</i> (22 VAC 42-11) and the request to repeal the current <i>Standards for Interdepartmental Regulation for Children's Residential Facilities</i> (22 VAC 42-10) for public comment during the period May 28-July 27, 2007. On August 16th, Joint Commission on Health Care Behavioral Health Subcommittee members heard a VCJD presentation on transition services regulations for incarcerated juveniles, effective January 1, 2008.
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, 2007 in Hampton. The "Making a Difference in Juvenile Justice 2007" conference had over 350 participants, including Court Service Unit Directors, juvenile probation officers, law enforcement, social workers, juvenile detention home staff and others. The Virginia Commission on Youth hosted a table at the conference to educate participants on the <i>Collection of Evidence-based Treatment Modalities for Children with Mental Health Needs</i> and to promote its Fall conference.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	HJR 683 (Landes, 2007) and SJR 395 (Hanger, 2007) direct 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. Specifically, 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; and ▪ Recommend funding initiatives needed to provide adequate services to Virginians who need them. Commission's involvement: Tracking	JLARC approved its Study Plan at its May 14, 2007 meeting. The resolutions direct JLARC to complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2007, and 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 next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. The resolutions require that the executive summaries and reports to be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and to be posted on the General Assembly's website. JLARC will receive an interim briefing in December 2007 and a final briefing and report in Spring 2008.
Joint Commission on Health Care	Underage drinking will be considered by the Joint Commission on Health Care as one of several substance abuse topics discussed in presentations to members. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The JCHC Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee approved the 2007 Workplan at its meeting on May 10, including its list of presentation topics. After it became apparent that mental health care issues surrounding the Virginia Tech shootings would require Subcommittee attention in 2007, the original workplan was revised. This topic will be studied in 2008.

MENTAL HEALTH

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Virginia 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> (House Document 9, 2003). 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	Two editions of this publication (2003 and 2005) have been widely disseminated primarily through web-based technology and secondarily through print copies. The <i>Collection</i> has been publicized most recently at the September 18-20 Systems of Care & Evidence-based Treatments Conference in Roanoke. The 3rd Edition is scheduled for release in late 2007. An Advisory Group of practitioners and experts in the field is participating in the planning and approval of the draft document. Commission staff will report on the progress of the <i>Collection</i> at the December 5, 2007 meeting. The Commission on Youth is directed to submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary no later than the first day of the 2008 Session of the General Assembly.

MENTAL HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Virginia 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, Inc., 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 Abuses 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. In May 2007, Commission staff provided a brief update on the upcoming Conference on Systems of Care & Evidence-Based Treatment Modalities. In 2007, the Council is developing a white paper on the role of Child and Family Services in the System of Care.
Virginia Commission on Youth	Systems of Care and Evidence-Based Practices—Tools that Work for Youth and Families Conference was a three-day conference September 16-18, 2007 co-sponsored by the Commission on Youth and the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS). The conference targeted behavioral health professionals, juvenile justice representatives, caregivers, families, and youth and highlighted Systems of Care and ways to utilize evidence-based practices for youth with behavioral health disorders within a System of Care. Both System of Care and evidence-based practices promote individualized services based on the unique strengths and needs of children and their families. Conference topics promoted the healthy development of Virginia's youth, while educating service providers on effective methods to treat mental health disorders, substance abuse, violence, delinquency, school dropout, and related risky behaviors. Commission's involvement: Commission Conference	This conference represents a formal collaboration with DMHMRSAS to incorporate the Commission's initiative with the DMHMRSAS' Systems of Care Conference. The Conference was held at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center on September 16-18, 2007. Approximately 550 participants from the disciplines of child welfare, social services, education, mental health, and juvenile justice attended. Highlights of the conference, including speaker presentations, can be accessed on the Commission on Youth's website at http://coy.state.va.us.
Joint Commission on Health Care	The Workgroup to Improve Discharge Planning for Adult and Juvenile Offenders with Mental Health Needs has a two-fold purpose: finding ways to simplify and expedite Medicaid eligibility determination for juveniles and adults being released from correctional or psychiatric facilities and assisting with medication needs. The Joint Commission on Health Care has requested a presentation on the topic. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The JCHC Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee approved the 2007 Workplan at its May 10 meeting, including a list of presentation topics for its 2007 meetings. At its August 16 meeting, members heard a presentation on transition services for adolescent offenders and, on September 19, a presentation on reentry assistance for offenders with behavioral health care needs, with workgroup findings and recommendations for Subcommittee consideration.

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 – Item 311-E of the 2006-2008 State Budget - is the continuing workgroup 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	The committee scheduled 2007 meetings for January 11, February 8, March 8, April 12, May 18, June 14, August 9, September 13, and October 11, with additional meetings to follow. The committee's report for FY 07 was published as <i>Report Document 127, 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</i> in June 2007. Priorities for 2008-09 are: ▪ Increased service capacity; ▪ Increase in the size of the workforce; ▪ Enhanced workforce capacity; ▪ Provision of information and support to families; ▪ Funding for Part C Early Intervention; ▪ Funding for 3 additional Project LINK programs; ▪ Funding for outpatient substance abuse; ▪ Funding for school-based mental health clinicians in 20 middle schools; and ▪ Funding for the infrastructure in the DMHMRSAS Office of Child and Family Services to support initiatives.
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	SJR 185 (Norment, 2006) directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to study the use and financing of licensed inpatient psychiatric facilities in the Commonwealth. The two-year study is to: ▪ Examine utilization trends, including sources of payment; ▪ Evaluate the Medicaid rate-setting process for psychiatric services, services provided under temporary detention orders and by psychiatrists; ▪ Evaluate the manner in which Community Services Boards (CSBs) contract with licensed psychiatric facilities; ▪ Examine the adequacy of and funding for licensed psychiatric beds, including child and adolescent mental health services; and ▪ Determine any steps that can be taken to maintain appropriate and necessary licensed psychiatric services in Virginia. Commission's involvement: Tracking	<i>Senate Document 11</i>, an abbreviated Executive Summary, was submitted to the 2007 General Assembly; there was no interim report. JLARC's second-year study plan was approved at its May 14, 2007 meeting. Following JLARC's review and approval of the draft at its October 9 meeting, <i>Senate Document 11</i> (2007) was published. Recommendations included directives to DMHMRSAS to provide guidance to CSBs on eligibility requirements, to work with CSBs to develop a data submission system on patients using local inpatient purchase of service (LIPOS), and on State hospital admission and denials, and to issue guidelines outlining the purpose of LIPOS and eligible services. Based on its finding CSB regional partnership roles and responsibilities are not established in the <i>Code</i>, JLARC recommended possible revisions. This report can be accessed on both the JLARC website and the Legislative Information System's website.
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 and related programs are funded by the federal Act and are 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	In Fall 2007, the Office has been recruiting members for the 15-20-member Advisory Council with PAIMI. On September 15, the Advisory Council met in Harrisonburg, with provisions for public comment.

MENTAL HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Commission on Health Care	Workgroup Regarding the Commonwealth's Ability to Serve Children and Adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) follows up on HJR 797 (2007, Shannon, Nutter), which failed to pass but was an initiative of the JCHC's study on autism. The workgroup's objective is to recommend a primary agency for developing, coordinating, and overseeing autism services. This agency would serve as the Commonwealth's "home" for ASD services. The Joint Commission on Health Care has requested a presentation on the topic. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The JCHC Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee approved its 2007 Workplan at its May 10 meeting, including its list of presentation topics for 2007 meetings. Workgroup meetings were held on June 26, July 13, August 20, and October 29. The workgroup represented a wide range of stakeholders from the public and private sector providers, family members and advocacy organizations, and the executive and legislative branches. The JCHC received a presentation on the activities and recommendations of the workgroup at its September 19, 2007 meeting. Written public comments to these recommendations were presented and discussed at the Commission's October 17 meeting. On October 29, the workgroup met in Richmond to present information on options under consideration. The Commission revisits the recommendations in order to look at consensus opinion among advocacy groups, at its November 8 meeting.
Education and Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	HJR 96 (Hamilton, 2006) was a recommendation of the Joint Commission on Health Care's Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee (November 10, 2005). Through HJR 96, the Board and the Department of Education were urged to continue to implement initiatives designed to strengthen teacher qualifications, to include preservice and in-service professional development opportunities relating to the effective treatment of autism spectrum disorders, and to consider the treatment of autism spectrum disorders. Through HJR 96, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services was urged to continue expanding training opportunities that include approaches addressing the needs of children with autism spectrum disorders. Commission's involvement: Committee Member	A committee established by the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services in Fall 2006 has been looking at ways to provide a coordinated response regarding the education and treatment of individuals with autism spectrum disorders continues its work in 2007. The group is comprised of agency personnel, parents, personnel from institutes of higher education, and representatives from autism associations and councils. The group has developed recommendations for services and support as directed by HJR 96, including a recommendation for the establishment of a central agency or 'home' for autism.
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services/Joint Commission on Health Care	As a JCHC initiative, Item 312 #63 was submitted for a budget amendment in the amount of \$50,000 for DMHMRSAS to contract with Virginia Health Information to develop a Reporting System for Acute Psychiatric Beds, to be available in FY 09. The 2007 General Assembly appropriated \$25,000 general fund to DMHMRSAS to develop and operate a real-time reporting system for beds in the public and private sectors. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The JCHC convened a meeting on June 1, 2007 for stakeholders to finalize the general parameters of the reporting system and discuss issues such as who will have access to the system and how to provide training. During the meeting, the workgroup was able to resolve the issue of access and decided it would be best to restrict access to the system, at least initially. Not finalized was the question of who would be responsible for developing the system. On June 12, the workgroup reconvened and heard presentations from Virginia Health Information and Value Options regarding system prototypes. Both organizations have experience in developing such a system. At its September 19 meeting, the JCHC's Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee Committee received a demonstration of a prototype system from Virginia Health Information.

MENTAL HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Commission on Health Care	SJR 25 (Marsh, 2004)/HJR 155 (Baskerville, 2004) directed the Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC) to conduct a two-year study of the mental health needs and treatment of young minority adults in the Commonwealth and to present its findings and recommendations by the 2006 General Assembly Session. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The JCHC approved continuing the study plan at its April 27, 2006 meeting. The JCHC Behavioral Health Subcommittee provides oversight on the study. JCHC concluded that further study was needed and continued this study in 2006 and 2007. JCHC staff presented its study findings and three policy options at the Commission's October 26 meeting. JCHC is soliciting written public comments, which will be summarized and presented to JCHC during its November 8th meeting. Following final deliberation, JCHC will finalize its actions for the 2008 General Assembly.
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	Training and Resources for Effective Adolescent Treatment (Project TREAT) Interagency Adolescent Workgroup goal is to develop and improve coordination of substance abuse and/or co-occurring treatment services for adolescents across Virginia. The workgroup, 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: Workgroup Member	Project TREAT has scheduled its 2007 meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from March 21 through December 12. The workgroup 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 received will assist DMHMRSAS and Project TREAT staff in addressing 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. The workgroup formulated recommendations on substance abuse and youth to the Child and Family Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee for inclusion Committee's final report, published in June 2007. Project TREAT is offering CSBs and facilities that serve adolescents 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.
Supreme Court	The 2007 General Assembly amended the Psychiatric Inpatient Treatment of Minors Act to clarify that retired judges, substitute judges, and special justices are authorized to perform hearings and to receive compensation. To be authorized, they must complete a training program, prescribed by the Supreme Court Executive Secretary, regarding the provisions of the Act. Formerly the Act specifically authorizes only J&DR court judges. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Supreme Court held training for special justices on June 21 in Fredericksburg. Under the terms of the amended Act, these special justices, having received training, will be authorized to conduct commitment hearings for juveniles as of July 1, 2007.
Mental Health	The Virginia Association of Counties'(VACO) annual conference had as its theme "Virginia – Where Local Government Began". The Conference, which will be held at the Homestead on November 11-13, 2007, will address a myriad of issues relevant to county government planning for the organization's 2008 legislative priorities. Commission's involvement: Panelist	Commission on Youth staff will serve on a panel with Delegates Phillip A. Hamilton and John M. O'Bannon, M.D., to discuss child mental health issues, along with other Commission initiatives.

MENTAL HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
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 workgroup 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. On October 19, a Strategic Planning Workshop on Campus Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention, sponsored by the Central Shenandoah Valley Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative, was held at James Madison University in Harrisonburg. Ten campus teams participated in a day-long training on a public health approach to mental health promotion and suicide prevention.
House of Delegates	House of Delegates Health, Welfare and Institutions Committee has held hearings in the summer and fall to consider solutions to problems in Virginia's mental health system exposed after the shooting rampage at Virginia Tech. The Committee's stated purpose is to review State laws governing Emergency Custody Orders, Temporary Detention Orders, Voluntary and Involuntary Commitment and other relevant mental health issues, and to receive input from interested stakeholders as to the voluntary and involuntary commitment process. The committee chair has indicated that the legislative hearings will focus heavily on the role of community services boards, which State law says are responsible for setting up a treatment plan for mentally ill people released into the community for outpatient care. Commission's involvement: Delegate BaCote serves on this committee.	The committee has met four times in 2007 to address Virginia's mental health system. At its June 18 meeting, the committee heard presentations from the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards, and the Inspector General for Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. On July 30, the National Conference of State Legislatures presented on other states' involuntary commitment laws. The committee also received briefings from the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, Residential Psychiatric Treatment Association, and Value Options, Inc. At its September 6 meeting, the Committee heard four presentations on the activities of the Chief Justice's Commission on Mental Health, including one from the task force on Children and Adolescents highlighting the need for greater access to services for children and adolescents and identifying a number of components to improve access to services. On October 9, the Committee heard public comment. It is expected that legislation to reform the mental health system will be introduced in the 2008 General Assembly Session. Specifically, Committee leadership has said that legislators will pursue legislation expressly requiring a representative of a local community services board to attend commitment hearings – either in person or by phone – for its clients.

MENTAL HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
House of Delegates	House of Delegates Courts of Justice Committee is meeting to examine civil commitment issues and existing Virginia laws in response to problems in Virginia's mental health system exposed after the shooting rampage at Virginia Tech. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The committee met September 10, 2007 to hear presentations from the Office of the Attorney General, DMHMRSAS, and attorneys representing the perspectives of a consumer, a special justice, and an advocate.
Supreme Court	A 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. The Commission's research is provided by the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. Included in the issues being address is a study of how to direct individuals with mental illnesses out of the criminal justice system and into the mental health system. 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 forces to develop recommendations for "reform legislation": Access to Services, Children and Adolescents, Commitment, Criminal Justice, and Empowerment and Self-Determination. Of six goals, Goal V speaks specifically to youth: <i>Facilitate access to services for children and adolescents with significant mental health needs</i>. The Task Force on Children and Adolescents, chaired by The Hon. Deborah Paxson, Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court Judge, has identified five goals specific to this Task Force's mission and has created three workgroups: Access to Services and Relinquishment of Custody; Children with Mental Health Needs in the Juvenile Court System; and Involuntary Commitment. Individual task force chairs presented their findings and recommendations to members of the House Health, Welfare and Institutions at their September 16 meeting. Full Commission meetings were held March 15-16 in Charlottesville, June 21-22 in Fredericksburg, in Richmond in October, November 16 in Hampton and November 29-30 in Charlottesville. The Commission will approve its draft final report in November 2007 in order to further legislative change by the 2008 General Assembly. The Commission is scheduled to discuss the Children and Adolescent Task Force recommendations in depth at its November 29-30 meeting.
Office of the Governor	The Governor's Virginia Tech Independent Review Panel – Described by the Governor as intended to improve processes and responses, the Panel was empowered by an Executive Order and convened to study elements of the "entire event" surrounding the April 16 shootings. Issues tentatively identified include Virginia's gun-control laws (including whether students should be allowed to carry firearms on campus), post-traumatic disorders for first responders, and the State's mental health system. The Panel will be aided by TriData Corp., an Arlington-based public safety consulting and research firm, which has been contracted to provide assistance. An initial outlay of \$150,000 has been allocated for the firm's services. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The eight-member panel, chaired by Retired Va. State Police Superintendent Gerald Massengill, includes Aradhana A. Sood. Dr. Sood is head of child and adolescent psychiatry and medical director of the Va. Treatment Center for Children at VCU Medical Center. At the panel's first meeting on May 10, the Panel established its objectives and working parameters. Among the issues identified is the relationship between the court and mental health providers. The panel convened again on May 21 in Blacksburg, June 11 at George Mason University, and July 18 at the University of Virginia. The Governor directed the panel to present preliminary recommendations by the end of summer 2007 to allow time for colleges to act prior to the start of the 2007-08 school year. <i>Mass Shootings at Virginia Tech – Report of the Review Panel</i> – was published on April 16 and can be accessed on-line on the Governor's website.

MENTAL HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
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. Commission staff were featured workshop presenters at its <i>Strong Roots for a Healthy Future</i> annual conference for families on July 27-28, 2007 in Richmond. Medical Home Plus and Parent to Parent of Virginia are entering their third and final year of the grant from the federal Medicaid office. VA INFO is an activity of this grant. A strategic planning meeting was held on November 8, 2007 in Richmond to discuss, through facilitation, the future of the coalition.

EDUCATION

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	State Spending on Standards of Quality (SOQ) Costs (2007 Update) – The <i>Code of Virginia</i> requires that the Department of Education report data on required and actual local expenditures for SOQ and that JLARC report on State expenditures for SOQ. The fourth in a series of annual special reports, the 2007 report will address total State SOQ spending statewide; factors impacting the amount of State spending; and State dollars spend in each school division, total and per pupil. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The FY 2006 Special Report (for FY 2006 spending) was released in December 2006; it is expected that JLARC will release its 2007 Special Report prior to December 31, 2007. The 2007 report will be presented first to JLARC and then to the House Appropriations Committee, Senate Finance Committee, and the House and Senate Education Committees. This and past years' annual reports on SOQ State spending are available on the General Assembly's Legislative Information System website.
Education	Early Childhood Development Pilot Programs – Item 135-A #2f of the 2007 Enrolled Budget appropriated \$2,557,666 to the Department of Education to enter into agreements with school divisions to pilot early childhood development programs. Eligibility is limited to school divisions which: ▪ Have existing partnerships with private and/or non-profit providers as of the 2006-2007 school year; ▪ Use the funding to expand the availability of early childhood education programs for at-risk students not served in those school divisions; and ▪ Evaluate the providers using the Quality Standards checklist recommended by the National Institute for Early Education Research. Commission's involvement: Tracking	Item 135-A #2f of the 2007 Enrolled Budget requires the Department of Education to report with recommendations to the Governor, and the Chairmen of House Committee on Appropriations, House Committee on Education, Senate Committee on Finance and Senate Committee on Health and Education no later than December 1, 2007. In addition, the Department of Education is directed to report the number of school divisions participating, number of students served, and the benchmarks used to evaluate the pilot.

EDUCATION *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Virginia Commission on Youth	The Commission on Youth's Study of Alternative Education Program Options continues in 2007 its second year analysis of existing regional, as well as private or local, alternative education programs available in the Commonwealth to suspended or expelled students. Issues identified include: ▪ A safe and secure school environment is critical to the learning process for students. ▪ Schools are striving to provide appropriate discipline to students, while balancing public safety concerns. ▪ Students are most frequently suspended or expelled due to "one time" bad decisions. These students, particularly those in elementary school, may not have any previous history of disruptive behavior. ▪ Alternative education programs may prevent a student from dropping out or becoming involved with the criminal justice system. ▪ There is an increasing need for a continuum of student support services in schools to help students learn skills that they are not learning at home, including anger management/violence prevention programs and positive behavior intervention. ▪ The cuts in the Safe and Drug-Free Schools funds have had a significant impact on the ability to offer prevention services to students. Commission's involvement: Commission Initiative	In 2007, Commission staff will: ▪ Complete analysis of Alternative Education survey conducted by the Commission in the Fall 2006. ▪ Compile best practices guide on Virginia's Alternative Education Approaches. ▪ Investigate funding opportunities for school-based prevention programs to supplant the Safe and Drug-Free Schools grants. ▪ Investigate feasibility of funding for a second tier of regional alternative education programs. ▪ Review existing State programs that address prevention and discipline for at-risk youth. ▪ Reconvene Advisory Group to assist in study effort and review proposed recommendations. The Advisory Group met June 25, 2007 in Richmond to hear presentations from the Virginia Alternative Education Association, Virginia Student Assistance Programs, the Department of Education's Effective School-wide Discipline program, and Hopewell's Effective School Discipline Project. The Advisory Group meets on November 13 to discuss initial draft findings and recommendations from the second year of the study. Commission staff is presenting its findings and recommendations at its November 20, 2007 meeting. 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 2008 Session of the General Assembly.
Office of the Secretary of Education	Virginia's P-16 Education Council was created by Executive Order 100 (2005) and extended by Executive Order 40 (2006) to integrate reform efforts in education in the Commonwealth. It is intended 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 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. 2007 meetings have been held on March 1, May 17, and October 4. 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.

EDUCATION *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	HJR 729 (Cox, 2007) directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the Virginia Preschool Initiative. HJR 729 directs JLARC to: ▪ Review the statutory authorization for the Virginia Preschool Initiative and funding; ▪ Determine the costs of the program to the State and localities since its inception; ▪ Assess the manner in which the program has been implemented in the several school divisions and the effectiveness of the current program in preparing at-risk four-year-olds for school readiness and success; ▪ Evaluate the continued K-12 academic performance of participants in the current preschool program; ▪ Identify and assess the program's accountability measures to promote effective programs and efficient use of public funds; ▪ Study the concept of the Universal Preschool or Pre-K, including which other states have adopted these programs and their success, if any; ▪ Evaluate the additional costs, if any, of aligning components of the Initiative with the Quality Standards checklist recommended by the National Institute for Early Education Research; ▪ Determine whether research has been conducted concerning the efficacy of preschool programs for children of middle- and upper-income parents and report the findings and recommendations; and ▪ Consider such other related matters as appropriate to meet the objectives of this study. Commission's involvement: Tracking	JLARC approved its Study Plan at its May 14, 2007 meeting. Staff will present draft recommendations at its November 12 meeting. HJR 729 directs JLARC to complete its meetings by November 30, 2007, and the chair 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 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The resolution also requires the executive summary to state whether JLARC 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. HJR 729 requires the executive summary and report to be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and to be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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 Robert Tata serves on the Council.	The Start Strong 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. In December 2006, the Start Strong Council released its <i>Start Strong: Initial Report</i> to Governor Kaine, outlining its early recommendations for expanding access to preschool for four-year-olds in Virginia. Available online on the Secretary of Education's website, the report indicated a need to: ▪ Provide a coordinating infrastructure to address the research-based quality features that result in outcomes and gains for early learners; ▪ Collect and use data and information to guide Start Strong decision-making; ▪ Examine and strengthen existing programs as a foundation from which to build; and ▪ Identify or create governance structure at both the local and State levels. The Start Strong Council approved six general recommendations at its July 18th meeting. The Governor announced details of the Start Strong proposal at the Summit on Early Childhood Education in Richmond on August 16, 2007. He launched a three-day tour of three cities on September 5-7 to publicize his plan. The full council scheduled meetings for 2007: March 21, May 16, July 18, September 19, and October 10. The council issued its final report <i>Access & Quality</i> in August 2007. The report, with its general recommendations, is available on the Virginia Secretary of Education's website. Fiscal details of the phase-in steps will be announced in December as part of the Governor's budget proposal.

EDUCATION *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Legislative Services	HJR 25 (Cosgrove, 2006) establishes a 14-member joint subcommittee to conduct a two-year study of science, math and technology education at the elementary, secondary and undergraduate levels to insure that Virginia continues to be a leader in the science and technology sectors. Interim goals are to: ▪ Increase emphasis and access to science, math, and technology education by students throughout Virginia; and ▪ Increase the number of graduates of science and engineering programs who remain in Virginia. HJR 25 directs the subcommittee to: ▪ Study ways to provide incentives for students to pursue careers in these sectors; ▪ Review the curriculum of Virginia's existing public schools, including Governor's Schools and other specialized public schools devoted to math, science, or technology; ▪ Study accessibility to specialized public schools by students throughout Virginia; ▪ Examine the Standards of Learning for math and science to ensure that students are provided with the fundamentals necessary for successful continuation of science, math, and technology education at the college level; ▪ Review and recommend innovative ways to interest students at all education levels in science, math, and technology; and ▪ Examine the possibility of encouraging partnerships between educators at the Commonwealth's public schools and institutions of higher education, as well as with business and research entities in the science and technology sectors located in the Commonwealth. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The joint subcommittee concluded its first year of study on December 4th, 2006. Although the joint subcommittee made no formal recommendations at the conclusion of the 2006 Interim, it indicated in its 2006 study Executive Summary (<i>House Document 14, Science, Math, and Technology Education at the Elementary, Secondary and Undergraduate Levels</i>) that it has the background necessary to pursue more definitive recommendations during the 2007 Interim. The joint subcommittee, which is limited to four meetings in each year, has held 2007 meetings on April 30 and July 16 in Richmond and on October 25 in Haymarket. Members have heard presentations on distance learning, Virginia Tech Department of Engineering's program, content standards in physics, chemistry and engineering, the work of the Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition, and Virginia's need for qualified engineers and related workforce challenges. HJR 25 directs the joint subcommittee to complete its meetings by November 30 in each study year and to submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations before the start of each General Assembly Session.
Education	The Commission on Civics Education was created in 2005 as an advisory committee in the executive branch. It is comprised to 23 members including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, legislators, executive branch officials and citizens (expires July 1, 2008). 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: Del. Tata chairs the commission.	Commission meetings are held at the call of the chair or whenever the majority of the members request. The Commission has convened in 2007 on February 26, June 11, August 3, 2007 in Richmond. Events include the Virginia Civics Education Summit, held as part of the September 17-21 commemoration of Civics Week in Virginia, and the Mock Constitutional Convention on October 19, 2007. The commission is developing avenues for continuing to promote civics education when the commission's mandate expires. 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 *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Legislative Services	SJR 378 (O'Brien, 2007) establishes a joint subcommittee to study revision of the curriculum for driver training programs. In conducting its study, SJR 378 directs the joint subcommittee to: ▪ Evaluate the curriculum used by school-based and commercial driving schools; ▪ Survey other states to identify innovative approaches to driver training; ▪ Consider the appropriateness of the curriculum for new adult drivers, especially those for whom English is a second language; and ▪ Make recommendations to the General Assembly for revision of such curriculum as appropriate. Technical assistance is provided by the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Education. Commission's involvement: Tracking	SJR 378 limits the joint subcommittee to four meetings for the 2007 interim and to complete its meetings by November 30, 2007. On June 26, 2007, Motor Vehicles' staff briefed members on Virginia's current driver's license requirements and licensing requirements for commercial driving schools operating in the Commonwealth. Other presentations were Department of Education staff's discussion of current driver education curriculum and National Transportation Safety Board's overview of national findings and models. At its September 28 meeting, the subcommittee heard presentations on Maryland's Graduated Licensing System and the Rookie Driver System, as well as on the use of simulators in Virginia schools' driver education. The subcommittee will hold its third and last meeting in late November. The subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2007 and submit its executive summary and the report 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.
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—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.

EDUCATION (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
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	On June 18, 2007 in Richmond, the advisory committee met and the Creating Excellence Awards Ceremony was held to recognize the 2007 winners.
Education	The Statewide Web-based Standards of Learning Technology Initiative has four objectives: ▪ Provide at least one computer for every five students; ▪ Create Internet ready local area network capabilities for every school; ▪ Assure adequate high-speed, high bandwidth capabilities for instructional, remedial and testing needs; and ▪ Establish a statewide web-based SOL test delivery system. The Department works with assistance from the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA). Commission's involvement: Tracking	The total statewide investment in technology infrastructure for the initiative is more than \$406 million. Among other achievements cited is the web-based SOL technology initiative which allows SOL tests to be administered in an online environment. The Appropriations Act requires the Department to report annually to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees on the progress of this initiative. The Department published <i>Report Document 172</i> (2007) as most recent annual report. It can be accessed on the General Assembly's Legislative Information System website.
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 requested 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; and ▪ Identify local initiatives and efforts to retain and retrieve students at risk of dropping out, particularly populations with low high school graduation rates. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Graduation and Dropout Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Education. HJR 130 requests 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. The Department of Education's statistics on graduation and dropout rates can be viewed on its website and also Virginia.gov. 2007 meetings of the Board of Education's Graduation and Dropout Committee have been held on January 27, March 28, September 27 and October 25. At the March meeting, Franklin Schargel, noted speaker and author of books on dropouts and related issues, addressed the Committee. At the Board of Education's March 28 meeting, the Board was briefed on the background of General Assembly actions impacting dropout and graduation rates, including the following: In Fall 2007 the Board of Education adopted the National Governor Association's graduation rate formula, which includes all of Virginia's high school diplomas and acknowledges that certain special education and limited English proficient students may take longer than four years to graduate. When graduation rates are reported in 2008, using this formula, the Board will be able to establish a new and more accurate baseline for accountability purposes.

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. The Department of Education's statistics on graduation and dropout rates can be viewed on its website and also Virginia.gov. 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. Therefore, the On-Time High School Graduation rate will be reported by Virginia for the first time in Fall 2008 for students who entered the ninth grade four years earlier.
Education	The evaluation Public Charter Schools in the Commonwealth examines the three public charter schools in operation in the state during the 2006-07 school year. The 2007 General Assembly passed House Bill 2311 (Lingamfelter) to amend the <i>Code</i> to establish a public charter school fund. The purpose of the fund is to establish a mechanism whereby gifts, grants, bequests or other donations from public or private sources can be paid into the State treasury and credited to fund public charter schools that stimulate the development of alternative public education programs. Commission's involvement: Tracking	All three charter schools are designed to provide alternative and experiential learning opportunities for students who are at-risk. There are differences among these schools, however, including: the histories of the schools, characteristics of the communities served, characteristics of the students enrolled, size of the student bodies, grade levels served, resources available and educational approaches and priorities. Two additional schools will operate in Virginia in the 2007-2008 school year. The Board of Education is presently deliberating criteria for making distributions from the fund. The <i>Code</i> requires annual reporting to the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees by the Department. <i>Report Document 233</i> (2007) details the findings from the evaluation. The report can be accessed on the General Assembly Legislative Information System's website.
Board of Education	In action approved the General Assembly, Item 135 23.d. (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</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.

HEALTH

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Legislative Services	SJR 103 (Lambert, 2006) continues the Joint Subcommittee Studying Lead-Poisoning Prevention for two years to: ▪ Monitor the development of the reference database of statewide health-related data to determine its usefulness in containing health care costs and improving health care outcomes, including among children who may be exposed to lead risks or have elevated blood lead levels; ▪ Seek to enact the two essential lead program elements needed by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to be competitive in the 2006 federal grant process; ▪ Continue to assist State agencies to obtain funding for activities that protect children from lead risks; ▪ Monitor the evolution of the data-sharing partnership established in § 32.1-127.1:04; ▪ Monitor completion of the reference database of statewide health-related data elements required by SB 565 (2004); ▪ Examine issues relating to lead poisoning among immigrant and adopted children; and ▪ Seek to assist VDH and the Department of Housing and Community Development in every appropriate way in maintaining federal funding. Commission's involvement: Tracking	<i>Senate Document 15, Lead-Poisoning Prevention: 2006 Supplemental Report</i> was published, as was <i>Senate Document 7, Lead Poisoning Prevention (2006)</i>. The latter represents a composite of all work from the subcommittee's inception in 1993 through its 2004 deliberations and 2005 legislation. SJR 103 limits the joint subcommittee to two meetings for the 2006 interim and two meetings for the 2007 interim. SJR 103 directs the joint subcommittee to complete meetings by November 30th of each year. The chair of the joint subcommittee 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 next regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee 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.
Medical Assistance Services	The feasibility of a FAMIS Buy-in Program in Virginia is being studied by the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) as a directive in the 2006 Appropriations Act (Item 301-E of the 2006-2008 State Budget). The Act directed DMAS to review and evaluate State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in light of Buy-in Programs operating in other states. Commission's involvement: Tracking	This review, including recommendations regarding the development of a CHIP Buy-in Program in Virginia, was presented to the chairs of the General Assembly money committees and the Joint Commission on Health Care on October 1, 2006. DMAS presented to the JCHC at its November 14, 2006 meeting. The JCHC approved delaying the decision on FAMIS Buy-In Program until after 2007, when the future level of CHIP funding available to Virginia is known.
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	Continuing its work from 2005, ESCAPE developed a Strategic Plan in 2006. The committee met April 5, 2007 in Richmond to review draft products from the first two years of the grant; to develop a workplan to achieve the three priorities in the Strategic Plan; and to hold a stakeholder meeting to introduce the Strategic Plan and share resources developed by ESCAPE. On June 18, the Commission on Youth received a Virginia Department of Health presentation on current ESCAPE initiatives. At its December 12 meeting, the workgroup will plan the 3rd year of the CDC Bullying Prevention Grant and discuss planning and budget.

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. Commission's involvement: Tracking	HB 2299 (Brink, 2007) eliminated the requirement that the Department of Medical Assistance Service report quarterly on FAMIS outreach, policy issues, etc., in addition to those provided annually. At its May 4, 2007 meeting, the committee finalized a draft proposal to DMAS for a Child Health Data Warehouse for Medicaid and FAMIS. Through funding from the Virginia Health Care Foundation and as part of a two-part study, CHIPAC has completed a statewide survey examining the impact of citizenship and identity requirements on enrollment in FAMIS Plus. The study is believed to be the first to assess the effects of rule changes in the federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2006. The survey results indicated reduced care for Medicaid eligible children in Virginia. At its August 3 meeting, the committee discussed the two-phase data warehouse project which will identify who is enrolled and what services are provided. On August 21, a "Rally in Richmond for SCHIP Reauthorization" highlighted the value of SCHIP and FAMIS. Secretary of Health and Human Resources Marilyn Tavenner, Delegate Phillip Hamilton, a family, and Thomas R. Byrd, the president of Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield of Virginia spoke at the event, which was sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in partnership with the Health Care Foundation and DMAS. At its September 20th meeting, CHIPAC heard updates on the Child Health Data Project and the Utilization Subcommittee. CHIPAC's last meeting of 2007 is scheduled for December 6.
Joint Commission on Health Care	Tracking System Adaptations for Preterm and Low-Birth Weight Babies is being studied by the Joint Commission on Health Care in an effort to ascertain the extent to which there is a potential need for follow-up services for and tracking of preterm infants. Study Plan documents note that preterm and low-birth infants, who are at an increased risk of developmental delay, benefit from services provided early in life, when the development of the brain and central nervous system may be influenced. Commission's involvement: Tracking	JCHC convened a workgroup of representatives from public and private entities to address the ability to access services, funding, tracking of low birth weight babies, and increasing awareness of the importance of identifying and addressing developmental delays as early as possible. At its November 14, 2006 meeting, JCHC approved a year-end study recommendation that the chair request that applicable agencies participate in a workgroup which continues to examine existing data and tracking systems. The workgroup provided its report to the JCHC on September 19, 2007. Policy Options addressed the PRAMS follow-up survey, an automated referral system planned to link programs of the Departments of Health and Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS), budget amendments related to DMHMRSAS Part C services, interagency cooperation in tracking a sample of children receiving services, and other initiatives. Public comment on these recommendations were summarized and presented to members at the October 17 meeting. The Commission acted on recommendations at its October 26 meeting.

HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Health/Medical Assistance Services	A State Leadership Workshop to improve Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EDPSDT) is planned for January 7-8, 2008 in Richmond. Through a federal technical assistance grant from the Maternal Child Health Bureau, participants will convene 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: Tracking	News of the workshop is being disseminated throughout Virginia. Registration will open in late Fall.
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 (CDC), Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP). 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	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	The CHAMPION Summary Report published in 2006 reflected citizen input at nine regional meetings in 2005. Staff is currently reviewing private and public programs related to themes in the Summary Report in order to identify programs for implementation at the community level. These are being evaluated on cost effectiveness, ease of implementation, cultural sensitivity, scientifically proven results. 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. At present, Big Stone Gap native Thomas Jones, former Chicago Bears running back, is starring in radio & t.v. spots made by VDH which urge Virginia youth to be more physically active. These spots, which are aimed at both the 3-5 and 10-14 age groups, have aired in the Tidewater region and are being offered to other stations in the state. On September 20, in observance of the first Healthy Students Week, approximately 350 participants from local school divisions and health districts attended the Governor's Healthy Students Summit in Richmond to learn about recent collaborations between public education and public health for the prevention of childhood obesity.

HEALTH *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Legislative Services	HJR 637 (O'Bannon, 2007) establishes a Joint Subcommittee Studying Childhood Obesity in Virginia's Public Schools to ascertain methods of combating childhood obesity in Virginia public schools and examine the relationship between the health and physical education curriculum; public health policies; social, economic, and cultural influences; media messages; and the incidence of overweight and obese students in the public schools. The joint subcommittee shall also examine methods to increase parental involvement and education to ensure proper nutrition of children, and survey other states to determine practices that have been useful in combating childhood obesity. Department of Education staff is providing technical assistance. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The committee held its first meeting on July 11, 2007. Presentations included briefings on the findings of the Senate Education and Health Subcommittee on Childhood Obesity in the 2006 interim, as well as the initiatives of the Departments of Education and Health (CHAMPION). On August 29, presenters included the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Division of Adolescent and School Health, local school divisions, and the American Beverage Association. Also on the agenda was a presentation on current State initiatives to fight childhood obesity by Division of Legislative Services attorneys staffing the study. The committee met on October 22 to receive Legislative Options for review and deliberation. These fell into four categories: Reporting on Wellness Policy Implementation; Data collection/sharing; Physical activity; and Nutrition. Its final meeting will held on November 13 in Richmond. The joint subcommittee 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 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary and the report 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.
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 VTSF annual report, released March 2007, reported - among other positive results - that the number of Virginia public high school students who have ever tried cigarettes has fallen from 62 percent when the VTSF began its tobacco-use prevention work in 2001 to 49 percent. The VTSF is providing for the 2007-08 grant year over \$3.5 million in funding to 75 grant programs throughout the Commonwealth. Grant applications for FY 08 were reviewed April 24, 2007 by its nine Regional Advisory Boards. Funding recommendations were acted on by the VTSF Board of Trustees at its September 11 meeting. The VTSF's annual conference was held September 26-27, 2007 in Newport News.

HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Health	Virginia Early Childhood (VECCS) Comprehensive Systems functions as a statewide strategic planning workgroup 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 workgroup's work concluded with the official planning phase, plan implementation is 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: Workgroup Member	On July 1, 2003, VDH received the initial two-year planning grant, with a budget of \$100 thousand per year. A workgroup 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, the Virginia Department of Health (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, and implementation began that year. VDH held a strategic planning meeting on June 13, 2006. 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.

HUMAN SERVICES

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Secretary of Commerce and Trade	Established in the <i>Code</i> in 2006, effective July 1, 2006, the Urban Policy Task Force is a cabinet-level Task Force directed to address a myriad of issues, including economic development, human services, education, public safety, and transportation. The Task Force is directed to craft a comprehensive urban policy for the Commonwealth which more nearly ensures the health and vitality of local jurisdictions or metropolitan areas. The Secretary of Commerce and Trade chairs the Task Force. Commission's involvement: Tracking	The Task Force is required to report annually to the Governor (by December 1) and to include in each report the performance of each agency in meeting established benchmarks. The Task Force's first report has been published and is available on the. Benchmarks related to children and youth relate primarily to the impact of urban poverty levels on SOL proficiency levels and child health. The report can be accessed on the Secretary's website at http://www.commerce.virginia.gov.

HUMAN SERVICES *(continued)*

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. On April 2, 2007 a stakeholder meeting was held to focus on Planning for Foster Care Prevention Services Funded through the Comprehensive Services Act. Stakeholders offered comments in the categories of Benefits/Opportunities and Major Concerns. Four workgroups were formed: Diagram, Eligibility, Implementation, and Fiscal. VALHSO's Fall conference was held September 10-11 in Virginia Beach. Dr. Allen Daniels from the University of Cincinnati Department of Psychiatry was guest speaker for an interactive discussion on necessary competencies of human services professionals in the next decade, as defined by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).



Virginia Commission on Youth

Phone 804-371-2481 • Fax 804-371-0574 • <http://coy.state.va.us>

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