

STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES STRATEGIC PLANNING



**PRE-READING MATERIAL FOR
SEPTEMBER 19, 2019**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Leadership, in its truest sense, is less about having ‘authority over’ and more about shaping the path, modeling the way and empowering others to succeed in a shared purpose. The mission of CSA outlines this shared purpose:

The mission of the Children Services Act (CSA) is to create a collaborative system of services and funding that is child-centered, family-focused and community-based when addressing the strengths and needs of troubled and at-risk youth and their families in the Commonwealth.

The State Executive Council (SEC), State and Local Advisory Team (SLAT) and the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) are first and foremost, leadership bodies. Each has a distinct role and purpose from supervisory to advisory to educational. We ask that you review these roles to ensure a clear understanding of the intentional design of these bodies. They are key to successful alignment for our children service systems throughout Virginia. They are collaborative in nature and represent a host of important stakeholders with a vested interest in the mission of CSA.

As you continue with the pre-reading, you will review major systems changes and transformations with significant impact on the mission of CSA.

- The passage of the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 (FFPSA) represents a historic shift in the approach to child welfare system. VDSS’ efforts have given Virginia national attention for their collaborative leadership approach to implementing the act.
- Department of Juvenile Justice has been transforming its approach to juvenile justice. They offer us sparks of inspiration as well as a roadmap of: *reduce, reform, replace and sustain*.
- You will note in the readings we’ve offered a straightforward definition of Evidence Based Practices (EBP) to clear up any misconceptions about what this means. The hexagon tool is borrowed from implementation science and is an important framework for successfully carrying out implementation of EBPs.
- The readings on behavioral health redesign, including STEP-VA, provide a comprehensive review of evidence-based practices (EBPs), the current services and gaps in Medicaid-covered behavioral health services in better behavioral health care for all Virginians.
- The special education report provides information about the noteworthy rising trend of autism occurrence and what that means for our system.

As with any major systems change, there are challenges in implementation. It is important to note these challenges. In your leadership role, it is critical to spot where opportunities exist for collaboration to maximize the impact and momentum for these important initiatives.

ROLE OF SEC, SLAT, OCS

State Executive Council (SEC)

Statutory Authority: The SEC is established in the Code (§2.2-2648) as a supervisory council with defined membership, including appointments and representatives of the legislative branch, the judicial branch, the executive branch (through agency heads appointed by the Governor), elected and professional local government officials, private providers, parent and service recipient representatives. The Secretary of Health and Human Resources serves as the chair.

Powers and Duties:

1. Policy development for and oversight of the system of children's services in the Commonwealth
 - Interagency programmatic and fiscal policies and regulations for both the Children's Services Act and those of participating agencies and state boards, including guidelines for intensive care coordination, support for early intervention programs including those under the control of member agencies.
 - Advise the Governor and Cabinet Secretaries on proposed policy and operational changes to facilitate interagency service development and implementation, communication and cooperation.
2. Standardized and quantitative oversight activities of local CSA program activities including: the uniform assessment of children receiving services, data collection and management reporting, including performance measures, documentation requirements for local CSA programs, and guidelines for utilization management.
 - Submission of a biennial state progress report and plan for services for the succeeding biennium.
3. Oversight and support of the Office of Children's Services.
4. Various administrative tasks (appointment of members of the SLAT; denial of funding and dispute resolution regarding CSA local audit findings, providing for public participation in policy making activities, approve local requests to establish multi-disciplinary teams).

Issues for Consideration

1. What is the scope of the SEC's mission and how is it carried out?
 - Activities and functions of the CSA, OCS and local CSA programs. Exercised through policy development for the CSA, providing direction to the activities of the Office of Children's Services, support for legislative and budgetary initiatives to support and enhance CSA outcomes.
 - Activities of the state agencies represented on the SEC. Exercised through consensus building, shared influence and decision making, and collective impact that is then carried back to the individual agencies by their SEC representatives.
 - Activities of local governments, private providers, and other stakeholders. Exercised through consensus building and collaboration.

State and Local Advisory Team (SLAT)

The State and Local Advisory Team is established in the Code (§2.2-5201) to better serve the needs of troubled and at-risk youths and their families by advising the State Executive Council (SEC), by managing cooperative efforts at the state level, and providing support to community efforts. The team is appointed by and responsible to the SEC.

The SLAT may:

1. Advise the SEC on state interagency program policies that promote and support cooperation and collaboration in the provision of services to troubled and at-risk youth and their families at the state and local levels;
2. Advise the SEC on state interagency fiscal policies that promote and support cooperation and collaboration in the provision of services to troubled and at-risk youth and their families at the state and local levels;
3. Advise state agencies and localities on training and technical assistance necessary for the provision of efficient and effective services that are responsive to the strengths and needs of troubled and at-risk youth and their families;

4. Advise the SEC on the effects of proposed policies, regulations, and guidelines.

Office of Children's Services (OCS)

Statutory Authority: The OCS is established in the Code (§2.2-2649) as the administrative entity of the State Executive Council for Children's Services (SEC) and functions as an agency in the executive branch of government within the Secretariat of Health and Human Resources. The director of OCS is hired by and subject, by Code, to the direction and supervision of the SEC and in operation to the chair of the SEC, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources. In addition to the Code, the annual Appropriation Act provides directives to the OCS for various duties, projects and reporting.

OCS' Mission Statement is: "Empowering Communities to Serve Youth."

OCS' Vision is: "A collaborative, child-centered, family-focused, community-based system of care that effectively meets the needs of youth and their families in the Commonwealth."

OCS' Values are:

- Systems of care
- Family focused
- Continuum of care
- Integrated services across agencies
- Collaboration
- Fiscal accountability

Responsibilities: In accordance with the Code and in service of our Mission, Vision, and Values, OCS operates in the following broad domains of activity:

1. Policy development/recommendations for the fiscal and programmatic activities of the Children's Services Act (CSA).
2. Training and technical assistance to localities including best practices for local operation and management of the CSA program.
3. Collaboration with state agencies, local governments, private providers, family organizations and others in

support of an effective system of care.

4. Data collection and reporting including performance measures for the CSA.
5. Fiscal management including providing prompt, accurate reimbursement to localities and ensuring financial integrity and accountability for both state and local expenditures.
6. Oversight and monitoring of local CSA program activities for purposes of assuring compliance with relevant federal and state law and regulations and to facilitate program improvement.
7. Development and maintenance of effective information technology systems to provide efficient and accurate operations of the CSA program.
8. All other duties of an executive branch agency.

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT

1. [Family First Virginia: Overview of the Family First Prevention Services Act](#)
2. [Virginia Department of Social Services: An Overview of the Family First Prevention Act \(PowerPoint\)](#)
3. [Virginia Department of Social Services: An Overview of the Family First Prevention Act \(Audio\)](#)
4. [Family First Virginia: Qualified Residential Treatment Program \(Q RTP\)](#)

DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE TRANSFORMATION

DJJ strives to improve and meet the changing demands of juvenile justice through responsible resource management, performance accountability, and sound intervention strategies. In order to fulfill this mission, DJJ is currently in the process of transforming its approach to juvenile justice. The goals of the transformation are as follows: reduce, reform, replace, and sustain.

Reduce: Safely reduce the use of state-operated juvenile correctional centers (JCCs) by reforming probation practices, utilizing data and research to modify length of stay (LOS) policies, and developing successful alternative placements to JCCs.

I. In order to safely reduce the use of JCCs, DJJ has made an effort to ensure that all court service units (CSUs) use evidence-based practices from intake through parole, keeping juveniles in the community and avoiding placement in secure confinement whenever possible. As such, the Division of Community Programs revised the diversion procedure and scheduled intake-specific trainings and regional meetings to improve intake screenings and diversion decisions. DJJ also trained staff at state-operated CSUs in both Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS), an evidence-based structured format to provide counseling and skill-building to court-involved juveniles, and the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI), the risk assessment that informs service planning and LOS recommendations for committed juveniles. To further ensure juveniles receive the appropriate level of supervision, DJJ crafted new procedures and engaged in more training to effectively guide the use and application of the Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI). DJJ, in partnership with judges, commonwealth's attorneys, defense attorneys, and agency leaders, developed and piloted a standardized disposition matrix (SDM) to guide court recommendations by probation staff at disposition. Statewide rollout of the tool will occur during the fall of 2019. Over time, this tool will help to ensure youth receive the most appropriate disposition to curb any future court involvement.

To further reduce the use of JCCs and ensure secure confinement is used only for as long as is appropriate, the Board of Juvenile Justice revised the LOS Guidelines for Indeterminately Committed Juveniles (LOS Guidelines) on October 15, 2015. Under the former guidelines, 12-18 months was the most commonly assigned LOS for indeterminate direct care admissions. Under the current guidelines, 6-9 months is the most commonly assigned LOS. Additionally, DJJ has worked to provide alternative direct care placements to the JCC, including community placement programs (CPPs) and detention reentry programs in locally operated juvenile detention centers (JDCs). There are currently nine JDCs with CPPs and 13 JDCs with detention reentry programs.

Reform: Expand, improve, and strengthen the services and supports provided to juveniles in custody both during their commitment and upon their return to the community.

II. In order to reform treatment and rehabilitation practices in the JCCs, DJJ began implementing the Community Treatment Model (CTM) in May 2015. The main tenets of the model include conducting highly structured, meaningful, therapeutic activities; maintaining consistent staffing in each housing unit; and keeping juveniles in

the same unit throughout their stays. CTM uses a blend of positive peer culture and the group process to address concerns and accomplishments within the unit. In doing so, staff develop treatment-oriented relationships with the juveniles and act as advocates. CTM was fully implemented in early 2017.

Additionally, the Division of Education has worked to strengthen content delivery, increase student achievement, and expand opportunities for post-secondary juveniles. As such, the master schedule for the 2017-2018 school year (SY) was revised to reflect the Division of Education's Personalized Learning Model and to align with CTM. Students now stay together for content courses and move for elective courses based on their diploma needs. In February 2018, Tier 1 of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) was implemented across the education setting. PBIS identifies proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create a positive classroom and school environment. The Division of Education established partnerships with the nine CPPs to support post-secondary programming for direct care juveniles in their placements.

Research has shown that greater family engagement leads to more positive results in treatment and upon release. Therefore, DJJ developed partnerships to provide video visitation and free transportation to the families of committed juveniles. In addition, the JCC visitation procedure was amended to allow the visitation of "natural supports," which include extended family members, persons serving as mentors, and representatives from community organizations. Additionally, DJJ updated the visitation procedure to prohibit the loss of visitation as a disciplinary sanction.

In 2015, Virginia was one of only three states to receive a major federal grant totaling over \$700,000 to create a model reentry system. This system integrates and accelerates reentry planning, devotes more resources for increased training, and further connects families to their children and reentry planning. In addition, DJJ has five reentry advocates who coordinate the reentry process for committed juveniles and their families. The reentry advocates serve as a link between the JCC and CSUs, with a focus on education and career readiness. Reentry advocates are assigned by region to work with parole officers and parolees to coordinate services and create a seamless transition back to the community. Prior to release, reentry advocates connect committed juveniles with community-based resources and assist juveniles with obtaining state-issued photo identification and completing Medicaid pre-applications.

Replace: Provide juveniles across Virginia with opportunities for rehabilitation in the least restrictive setting by replacing large, old JCCs with a statewide continuum of evidence-based services, alternative placements, and new smaller therapeutic correctional settings.

III. DJJ is working to replace large, outdated JCCs with new facilities that are safer, closer to affected populations, smaller in scale, and designed for rehabilitative treatment and education. Beaumont JCC was closed to juveniles on June 2, 2017. Funded in part through DJJ's authority to reinvest savings realized from the closure, DJJ awarded contracts to two regional service coordinators (RSCs), AMikids (AMI) and Evidence-Based Associates (EBA), to develop a statewide continuum of evidence-based services and additional alternatives to placement in secure facilities.

DJJ is also making a conscientious effort to focus on staff development. The agency increased staffing to support practice improvement coaches who train and guide staff on the use of evidence-based tools and practices, including YASI and EPICS. DJJ also created a new community division training team with a focus on specialized trainings for CSU and residential treatment staff. To further support professional growth, DJJ developed a series

of leadership courses for managers to ensure that they have the skills needed to lead our transformation efforts; some leadership course work is also available to aspiring supervisors.

Sustain: Maintain safe, healthy, inclusive work places; continuing to recruit, retain, and develop a team of highly skilled and motivated staff; and aligning our procedures, policies, and resources to support the team in meeting the goals of transformation.

IV. With these initiatives in progress, DJJ is now focusing on sustaining the positive effects of these reforms, recognizing the need to focus on both the positive development of the juveniles in the system and the positive development and sustainability of the staff who serve them. DJJ is committed to maintaining safe, healthy, inclusive work places; continuing to recruit, retain, and develop a team of highly skilled and motivated staff; and aligning procedures, policies, and resources to support the team in meeting the goals of transformation. By adapting to current best practices and changing to meet the needs of juveniles and their families, DJJ continues to make a difference in the lives of citizens and communities across the Commonwealth.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH REDESIGN (INCLUDING STEP-VA)

1. [Virginia Behavioral Health Redesign: A Proposed Medicaid Continuum of Behavioral Health Services](#)
2. [Behavioral Health Continuum Graphics](#)
3. [Virginia Medicaid Continuum Behavioral Health Services](#)

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

1. [Family First Virginia: What are Evidence-Based Programs?](#)
2. [How are programs and services rated in the Prevention Services Clearinghouse?](#)
3. [The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse: Understanding Evidence-Based Practices](#)
4. [The Hexagon: An Exploration Tool](#)

SPECIALIZED EDUCATION

1. [Autism: What do we know and what does it mean?](#)