

Regular Meeting 09/12/02

**TO: Juvenile Welfare Board Members**

**FROM: James E. Mills, Executive Director**  
**Debra A. Prewitt, Special Assistant**



**Proposed 2002 - 2003 Legislative Priorities**  
**2002 Post Legislative Update**

Attached please find the Proposed 2003 Legislative Priorities. Please review and submit any additional issues or suggestions to Mr. Mills.

Also attached you will find a Legislative Update summarizing my activities since July, 2002. The majority of the time has been spent following federal legislation and budget activity. On a local level, I have made eight site visits to programs in Pinellas County. Others are scheduled through the remainder of the year.

Staff Resource Person: Frances Reese-Small

**Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County  
2002 - 2003 Proposed Legislative Priorities**

Issue/Priority	Brief Explanation
<b>1. Revenue Maximization</b> <b>a) Legislation filed by Children's Services Councils statewide</b>	Certifies local dollars as non-federal match and draws down federal dollars in a dollar-for-dollar match for human service programs.
<b>b) Support federal programs that leverage local dollars these include:</b> Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), Foster Care Title IV-E, Medicaid, Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	These programs are currently being debated in Congress. Some programs are in jeopardy of being cut or receiving status quo funding. In addition, some eligibility guidelines are being reduced, thus limiting the use and availability by states.
<b>c) Reward programs with actual or high potential national success including:</b> Full-Services Schools, Healthy Families/Start, Tobacco-Free Kids, School Preparedness, Guardian Ad Litem, and Unified Family Court	These programs have demonstrated positive outcomes in terms of efficiency and effective use of public dollars. Others are pilot projects in process that may deserve consideration as evaluations become available.
<b>d) Resist Cost-shifting to Local Government.</b> Examples of programs include: Children/Families In Need of Services (CINS/FINS), Detention Centers, Juvenile Assessment Centers, Medicaid Hospital/Nursing Home Stays	In an effort to deal with budget shortfall, the Legislature has shifted the financial responsibility of these and other programs to the counties and cities. This has resulted in programs being eliminated or reduced without adequate alternative resources for families and children or increased local expenditures.
<b>2) Legislative Review and Oversight</b> Eliminate ineffective, low, or non-performing programs Continue to recover Medicaid fraud and upgrade punitive sanctions  Audit license plate trust funds to ensure appropriate use of funds	Work with OPPAGA to determine programs that are not performing . During the 2002 Session it was estimated that \$2 billion dollars might have been lost to Medicaid fraud. Assure use and local distribution of license plate revenue as required by law.
<b>3) Legislation</b> a) Juvenile Welfare Board Codification  b) Monitor Department of Children and Families Legislative Initiatives	This is required by F.S. 189.429 in order to create a single act that includes previous years amendments. No substantive changes are anticipated. Given the many issues involved, JWB will need to be aware of the local impact of legislation.

<p><b>3) Legislation (Continued)</b></p> <p>c) School Readiness</p> <p>d) Teen Court</p> <p>e) Adoption – Paternal Notification</p> <p>f) Mental Health – Youth detention</p>	<p>Issues involving Agency for Workforce Innovation’s rule making authority as well as the continued inclusion of before and after school care.</p> <p>Allow for flexible use of funding by local court circuit for Juvenile Drug Court and Truancy Court.</p> <p>Given the current legal questions surrounding the public notification of potential fathers, a change in law to allow for a father’s registry that is confidential appears to be a solution. More than 30 states offer this option.</p> <p>Youth that are determined to be mentally incompetent to proceed in court trials, due to mental illness, are in jail for extended periods awaiting a treatment bed. Consider inclusion of language in F.S. 985.223, Incompetency in juvenile delinquency cases, similar to that found in the F.S. 916.107, Rights of forensic clients (adults), that requires mandatory placement in an appropriate facility within 15 days. Simultaneously, review the access and procedural barriers in the current system that delay admission and release of juveniles.</p>
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**Juvenile Welfare Board  
Legislative Update  
September 12, 2002  
Submitted by: Debra A. Prewitt, MPA**

## **2002 Post Session Activities**

### **JWB Site Visits**

During the summer months, nine site visits in a variety of programs areas were completed. Other site visits are scheduled throughout the remainder of 2002. Attached is a site visit log indicating the agency/program, contact person, public policy area, and the applicable legislative concern (i.e. legislation or budget). Viewing the programs first hand will enhance communications with the Legislative Delegation regarding the significance of these programs children and families in Pinellas County.

### **Candidate Connection Update Children's Campaign**

Assisted Coordinated Child Care (CCC) in scheduling candidates for the statewide Children's Campaign initiative. To date, fourteen candidates have participated in the non-partisan, one-hour round-table policy discussion groups throughout Pinellas County. Providers in a variety of policy areas including early child development, domestic violence, education, homelessness, mental health, school readiness, TANF and CCDF, etc. submit a one-page overview of their policy area and the issues that affect the provision of services. Each candidate has an opportunity to make opening remarks and then each policy expert provides a five-minute highlight on their particular area. The candidate can ask questions of each policy expert.

Upon leaving the meeting, the candidate is given an information packet and business cards from each presenter. They are encouraged to contact them to ask further questions or get clarification on other issues that might arise throughout the campaign.

Summer vacations and other events made it difficult for all candidates to participate in the scheduled round-table events. Since the first primary is complete, other dates may be selected in an effort to gain maximum participation by all candidates.

### **Children's Campaign Teens Take On Politics (TTOP)**

TTOP is a debate program in which a panel of high school students question and challenge candidates on children and family issues. Teens research topics important to their generation and formulate poignant questions. The debates are popular with the voting public and media and draw a range of local sponsors and supporters. They successfully focus attention on children and children's issues.

The JWB Youth Community Council has agreed to coordinate this event for Pinellas County. I will be working with Dorothy Whitlock to offer technical assistance in the planning and implementation of this event.

### **Revenue Maximization**

Working with CSC's and others around the state on drafting legislation and one page policy papers in the areas of Foster Care Title IV-E, Medicaid Rates for School Based Health, Medicaid Claiming, and TANF and CCDF

### **JWB Codification**

Working with Terry Smiljanich to prepare for the codification process as required by F.S. 189.429. Rep. Frank Farkas has agreed to sponsor the local bill legislation in the House. After the JWB Board approves the draft bill, the House Committee on Local Government and Veterans Affairs will analyze the bill and approve it for final bill drafting. The bill must then be heard and voted on by the Pinellas Legislative Delegation before being heard in House or Senate committees.

### **Federal Issues**

Time is the greatest issue at the present moment. Congress just returned from their summer break. This leaves less than thirty days to finish bills that are currently on the agenda before they return to their respective districts for the November election.

At present two issues are critical for children and families: 1) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); and 2) Child Care Development Fund (CCDF). These issues have passed the House and are now in the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pension Committee. The delay prior to the August break was the lengthy debate on the prescription drug bill.

It is increasingly probable that TANF will not be re-authorized before October 1, 2002. This will cause the current TANF legislation to be extended for one year. It is likely that Congress will begin debating the issue in January 2003 and may be voting just prior or during the Florida Legislative Session. This may add to the budget concerns of the state, as lawmakers will not know exactly how much TANF dollars they will receive or how they can be utilized.

**2002 Site Visits – Special Assistant -**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Public Policy</b>	<b>Legislation/Budget Correlation</b>
July 16, 2002	PEMHS	Tom Wedekind	Mental Health	Fund Shift (PRTS/SIPP)
July 24, 2002	Healthy Start	Debra Bara	Child Welfare/Prevention	Possible cuts
July 30, 2002	Responsible Fatherhood	Mathew Munion	TANF/Child Support	Fund shift/cuts
August 6, 2002	Healthy Families	Sue Caddell	Child Welfare/Prevention	
August 26, 2002	Happy Workers Children's Center	Dr. Virginia B. Irving	Before/After School Child Care	Fund shift/cuts Priority shift to 4 year olds
August 26, 2002	YWCA Child Care Center in St. Peter's Cathedral	Denise Moore	Before/After School Child Care	Fund shift/cuts Priority shift to 4 year olds
August 27, 2002	PRP Learning Center	Gwynne Ingram	Before/After School Child Care	Fund shift/cuts, Priority shift to 4 year olds
August 27, 2002	YMCA Frontier	Cindy Houston	Before/After School Child Care	Fund shift/cuts Priority shift to 4 year olds