



Board of Directors Meeting

January 14, 2010

Child Welfare Advocacy Report

Item V.A.

Recommended Action:	N/A
Issue:	Child Welfare System Report
Program:	Child Welfare Advocacy
Budget Impact:	N/A
Strategic Plan Goal:	Child Maltreatment

Sallie House Discussion Follow-Up

A meeting was convened on November 19, 2009 to further discuss community needs and viable options for the future use of The Salvation Army (TSA) Sallie House. Representatives from the Salvation Army (staff and board members), Eckerd Community Alternatives (ECA), Department of Children & Families (DCF), Personal Enrichment through Mental Health Services (PEMHS), Sheriff's Office Child Protective Investigations (CPI), and the Juvenile Welfare Board attended the meeting. The two possible concepts that are continuing to be explored include short and long term possible solutions:

- Long-term- A House Parent Model for children 0-5 years old
- Short-term- An Assessment Center

The Salvation Army indicated that they are still exploring the House Parent Model for children 0-5 years old but see this as a possible long-term option due to the required renovations needed at the facility.

The Salvation Army Sallie House in collaboration with Personal Enrichment through Mental Health Services (PEMHS), Inc. submitted a Draft Enhanced Shelter and Assessment Pilot Proposal to the group for review and feedback. The Enhanced Shelter and Assessment concept as proposed, would enable The Salvation Army and PEMHS to focus on the child's assessment and care needs allowing for CPI and the case management agencies to focus on the investigation, court work and permanency planning. An array of assessment services would be provided/coordinated by the two agencies early on in the removal process to facilitate the identification of the most appropriate placement for the child and timely reunification with the family. Services identified in the proposal include:

- **Emergency Shelter (24/7)** -Sallie House would receive children 1-13 years old and PEMHS youth ages 12-17
- **Assessment** – The agencies would quickly initiate the assessment process to include the Comprehensive Behavioral Assessment and the Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT), and coordination of dental exams. In addition, Sallie House staff have the capacity to complete the "Ages and Stages" developmental screening for young children.

- **Visitation**-Several types of visitation accommodations will be available to provide support to the children and families for foster parent, biological, and sibling visitation.
- **Maintenance of School Placement**- The agencies could assist in maintaining the school placement by transporting the child to their school the first several days following removal.
- **Permanency Planning Components**-This component is more specific to The Salvation Army.
 - **Reunification Services**-With case management approval they could utilize an internal referral process to have in-home staff work with the biological parents to assist with the completion of the case plan tasks.
 - **Reunification with Siblings and Adoption Preparation**-Is currently available for children residing in the Salvation Army's Children's Village.
 - **Independent Living Services**-A four unit apartment complex (at reduced cost) with case management services is available for youth who "age out" of foster care while placed at the Children's Village. Youth would be required to work or go to school full-time in order to maintain the housing arrangement.

Next Steps:

1. The Salvation Army will continue to complete due diligence in exploring the issues and possible solutions related to the House Parent model concept.
2. ECA is reviewing the Draft Enhanced Shelter and Assessment Pilot Proposal and will provide feedback to The Salvation Army and PEMHS.
3. Once ECA has completed their review and provided feedback, a meeting will be scheduled with ECA, PEMHS, TSA and CPI.