



# Activities in State Government Related to Youth and Families 2007

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES • CHILD WELFARE • 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 June 18, 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
Legislative Services	<p><b>SJR 96 (Hanger, 2006)</b> 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 study is being conducted in two phases. In the first phase of the study, the 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.</p> <p>The joint subcommittee is directed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the costs, quality, and reimbursement of children's residential services,</li> <li>▪ Examine interdepartmental regulations of these facilities, determine whether CSA children receive appropriate care, and</li> <li>▪ Apprise the joint subcommittee of the status of its study and findings.</li> </ul> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Delegate Fralin is a member.</p>	<p>The joint subcommittee met two times in the first year of the study.</p> <p>In response to a request from Delegate William H. Fralin, 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 who are in need of such services.</p> <p>The Attorney General's 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 in order to obtain mental health services might violate the U.S. Constitution.</p> <p>The subcommittee subsequently asked JLARC to examine the extent to which the Attorney General's opinion would impact the size of the caseload and expenditures of CSA.</p> <p>Its first meeting in 2007 has been scheduled for June 19.</p> <p>The resolution requires that the joint subcommittee and JLARC complete their respective meetings by November 30, 2007 and to 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.</p>
Joint Legislative Review and Audit Commission	<p><b>HJR 60 (Nixon, 2006)</b> directs JLARC to evaluate the administration of the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA). In conducting this two-year study, the Commission shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the costs, quality, and reimbursement of children's residential services;</li> <li>▪ Examine the interdepartmental regulation of these facilities;</li> <li>▪ Assess the administration of the CSA by state and local governments;</li> <li>▪ Evaluate the quality and capacity of services available to and provided for CSA children; and</li> <li>▪ Determine whether CSA children receive appropriate care, case management, education, and supervision.</li> </ul> <p>This study is a recommendation of the Joint Subcommittee Studying Private Youth and Single Family Group Homes in the Commonwealth pursuant to HJR 685 (Nixon, 2005).</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>In its final report, <i>Children's Residential Services Delivered through Comprehensive Services Act (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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve licensing standards and enforcement efforts;</li> <li>▪ Control expenditures for residential services;</li> <li>▪ Address the gaps in availability of community-based services;</li> <li>▪ Improve access to reliable information; and</li> <li>▪ Help local CSA programs with greater state resources for program administration and additional guidance on prioritizing responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p>On May 17, 2007, JLARC staff briefed its members on the impact of the study report: specifically, a task force convened by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in January 2007 reviewed the adequacy of regulations related to children's residential facilities. In addition, funding was allocated to increase the stipend paid to foster families by 13 percent.</p>

**COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES** *(continued)*

Lead Agency	Description	Status
<p>Joint Legislative Review and Audit Commission</p>	<p><b>Custody Relinquishment and the Comprehensive Services Act</b> - 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In addition, a budget amendment directed the Office of Comprehensive Services (OCS) to collect additional information and estimate the fiscal impact of SB 1332.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>In March 2007, JLARC released <i>Follow-Up Report: Custody Relinquishment and Comprehensive Services Act</i>. Report recommendations focused on the state's State Foster Care Prevention Policy as a key contributing factor. The report also cited 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 with the current law.</p> <p>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 on 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.</p> <p>At its May 15 meeting, the State Executive Council 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 (repealed by the Governor in March 2007). 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 are being broadly distributed for public comment, although not required by law, prior to formal review by the SEC. SEC will be asked to approve the final guidelines at its August 8 meeting, to be effective August 15. SEC indicated that the 2008 General Assembly will likely be requested to consider <i>Code</i> revisions.</p> <p>In its May 17, 2007 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.</p>
<p>Office of Comprehensive Services</p>	<p>The <b>State and Local Advisory Team (SLAT)</b> is established to better serve the needs of troubled and at-risk youths and their families by advising the 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The SLAT, which generally meets the first Thursday of each month, receives many presentations regarding state and local activities for children's services. 2007 meetings scheduled to date are January 4, March 1, April 5, May 3 (cancelled) and June 7.</p>

**COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Office of Comprehensive Services	<p>The <b>State Executive Council (SEC)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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. Meetings for 2007 are scheduled for May 15 (rescheduled from April), August 8, October 2, and December 11.</p> <p>At the May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, Commission staff presented information on the Commission's Systems of Care &amp; Evidence-based Practices Conference which is co-sponsored by the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services.</p> <p>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.</p>
Office of Comprehensive Services	<p><b>Utilization of Residential Facilities for Treatment of Children –</b> 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 information on utilization of residential facilities for treatment of children and length of stay in such facilities.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.</p>

**CHILD WELFARE**

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p>The <b>Kinship Care Task Force</b> – 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Task Force Member</p>	<p>The Task Force has 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.</p> <p>In December 2006, VDSS suspended work to implement Title IV-E Waiver for Subsidized Permanent Custody (children in foster care placed with a relative), pending further information about other state guardianship programs with state-only funding.</p> <p>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's first meeting of the year.</p>

**CHILD WELFARE** *(continued)*

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Aging	<p>The <b>Kinship Care Initiative Statewide Task Force and Information Network</b> focuses on inter-generational activities, as well as communication issues among the kinship care community.</p> <p><b>Commission’s involvement:</b> Task Force Member</p>	<p>The Task Force met February 22, 2007 to hear presentations on the new Virginia Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parents Association, 2007 General Assembly kinship legislation, and Department of Social Services activities related to kinship care.</p> <p>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. Further information on the survey results is available by calling 866-220-4103.</p> <p>At its June 13 meeting, members were briefed on trends identified at the Brookdale Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) Conference June 1-3 in Denver, where networking with the Commission on Youth and the Department for the Aging was discussed in a session with VDA staff.</p>
Commission on Youth	<p>The two-year legislative study of the <b>Establishment of an Office of Children’s Services Ombudsman</b> examines issues around child-serving systems in the Commonwealth, including:</p> <p>The current welfare system fails to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 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</li> <li>▪ offer independent reviews of complaints.</li> </ul> <p>There is a need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ provide a mechanism for filing complaints external to the child welfare system and child-serving agencies;</li> <li>▪ provide a system accountability mechanism and protect the interests of children and families in the child welfare system;</li> <li>▪ investigate the acts of state and local administrative agencies adversely affecting children;</li> <li>▪ protect children and parents from harmful agency action or inaction;</li> <li>▪ recommend appropriate changes to safeguard the rights of children and parents; and</li> <li>▪ promote higher standards of competency, efficiency and justice in the administration of child protection and child welfare laws, juvenile justice services and education.</li> </ul> <p>The Office should not be a duplication of services.</p> <p><b>Commission’s involvement:</b> Study Mandate</p>	<p>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 Commission on Youth to study the impact of the bill.</p> <p>The Commission formed an Advisory Group during the 2006 study year to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the need for the establishment of an Office of Children’s Services Ombudsman in Virginia;</li> <li>▪ Identify the appropriate administrative structure of an Office; and</li> <li>▪ Determine the cost to establish such an Office.</li> </ul> <p>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.</p> <p>Commission staff will conclude its study by November 30, 2007 and publish study results in January 2008.</p>

**CHILD WELFARE** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p><b>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)</b> 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p>
Office of the Governor	<p>The <b>Governor's Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives</b> was established to coordinate executive branch efforts on 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Working Group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every other month to provide oversight to the coordination of Smart Beginnings, Start Strong, and the PK-3 Education.</p>
Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources	<p><b>Smart Beginnings</b> is a statewide collaboration with the broad goal of sharing information and efforts to directing 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 a public education component which delivers messages regarding the correlation between high quality, early childhood education and a competitive workforce and ultimately a vital economy for the Commonwealth.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>A website hosted by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation - <a href="http://www.SmartBeginnings.org">www.SmartBeginnings.org</a> - was launched to provide information to parents and others about the learning potential of preschoolers.</p> <p>In 2006, more than 50 activities were held across Virginia between Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day, highlighting the important role and responsibility of parents as their child's first teacher. In Summer 2006, the Governor hosted an <b>Early Childhood Summit</b>, a series of conferences promoting the benefits of early childhood education to business and community leaders, elected officials, and other stakeholders.</p> <p>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 died that year, the Foundation has partnered with hospitals in Virginia 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.</p> <p>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.</p>

**CHILD WELFARE** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Office of the Governor/ Department of Social Services	<p><b>Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF)</b> is a statewide nonprofit public-private partnership that blends resources to maximize efficiency and effectiveness toward its vision that every child in Virginia will enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed in school and in life. Its mission is to drive a coordinated, comprehensive system of state and local, public and private resources to strengthen the ability of all Virginia families to provide a smart beginning for children from birth to age five.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In October 2006, VECF held a Board retreat and strategic planning session.</p> <p>On February 21, 2007, Capital One committed \$100 thousand to the Foundation.</p> <p>In grants awarded in Spring 2007, 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 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).</p> <p>In May 2007, VECF announced the appointment of its first president. His primary responsibility is to lead statewide efforts to build resources and support community initiatives to increase the school readiness of young children.</p>
Social Services	<p>The <b>Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC)</b> 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 pertain to child protection, permanency and training.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Committee Member</p>	<p>CWAC meetings are generally held monthly.</p> <p>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 implementing the PIP.</p> <p>Item 338-M #1&amp;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.</p>

**CHILD WELFARE** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p>The <b>Virginia Information and Referral (I&amp;R) System</b> has existed for almost a quarter of a century. Section 63.2-222 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> established a statewide I&amp;R system which is designed to collect and maintain accurate and complete resource data on a statewide basis. The I&amp;R system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collects and maintains accurate and complete resource data on a statewide basis;</li> <li>▪ Links citizens needing human services with appropriate community resources to satisfy those needs;</li> <li>▪ Assists in planning for human services delivery at the local, regional and state levels; and</li> <li>▪ Provides information to assist decision-makers in allocating financial and other resources to respond to state and local human service priorities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Commission Initiative</p>	<p>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 &amp; Referral System for 2-1-1 and adopted 2-1-1 as a stand-alone initiative for the 2005 study year.</p> <p>On February 10, 2006, 2-1-1 was launched in five of Virginia's six coverage areas: Roanoke, Staunton, Norfolk, Lynchburg, and Richmond. The 2006 General Assembly, at the recommendation of the Commission on Youth, appropriated additional funding (\$723,844 General Funds and \$531,791 Nongeneral Funds) to assist with statewide implementation.</p> <p>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. Callers can now determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Status of a healthcare provider's license;</li> <li>▪ Actions taken on an individual's license by any of the 13 health regulatory boards; and</li> <li>▪ Doctors' office hours and locations, languages spoken, hospital affiliation.</li> </ul>
Social Services	<p><b>Virginia Community Action Partnership (VACAP)</b> is the statewide membership association for Virginia's thirty non-profit private and public community action agencies that work to fight poverty and build self-sufficiency, for strong families and communities.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p>

**CHILD WELFARE** *(continued)*

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources	<p><b>Prevent Child Abuse Virginia</b> is a statewide, private, nonprofit organization leading a coalition of community partners across the Commonwealth. It coordinates <b>Healthy Families Virginia</b>, 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 “Together for Children” newsletter. The organization also provides educational opportunities and advocacy.</p> <p>The review shall examine Prevent Child Abuse Virginia's survey of site capacity and sites appropriate for expansion. As part of the report, the Secretary shall review the findings of the Hampton Healthy Families Partnership Benchmark Study and recommend strategies that other communities may adopt to further reduce child abuse and neglect.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>FTD (florist company) has recently joined Prevent Child Abuse Virginia as a corporate partner.</p> <p>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 Code of Virginia, 63.2-1502.3: <i>To assist in developing programs aimed at discovering and preventing the many factors causing child abuse and neglect.</i></p> <p>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.</p>

**ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE**

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p><b>Foster Care &amp; Adoption: Exploring Kinship Care Options</b>, one-day conference for Eastern Area I Professional Foster Care &amp; Adoption Training Conference, was held Thursday May 10, 2007 at Norfolk State University (NSU).</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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 – Child Welfare Education &amp; Support Program.</p>
Social Services	<p><b>SJR 377 (O'Brien, 2007)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Department is currently surveying other states. No meetings have been scheduled as yet.</p>

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

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p><b>Virginia Department of Social Services Task Force on Adoptions and Foster Care</b>—VDSS was directed by Item 338-P1 of the 2006-2008 Appropriations Act to continue reviewing the Commonwealth’s current 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.</p> <p>Among the Identified Issues are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ The 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 has been determined to be an abandoned, tortured, chronically abused or sexual abused; or if the parental rights to a sibling had been 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.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ As a result, many of these children remain in foster care for years without having a place to call home.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission’s involvement:</b> Oversight</p>	<p>The Task Force is 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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..</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Commission on Youth invited the Department of Social Services to present its findings and policy recommendations at its June 18, 2007 meeting.</p>

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

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p>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 <b>Adoptions Subsidy Program</b>. 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>As directed by the State Budget Item, the Department was directed 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create a uniform Adoption Assistance Agreement that encourages linkage between the child's need and service payment level.</li> <li>▪ Increase the use of federal Title IV-E funding for adoption assistance to adoptive parents.</li> <li>▪ Ensure the accuracy of data in the child welfare information system.</li> <li>▪ Establish clear and consistent policy and procedures, including definitions, in order to ensure consistency between program and financial reporting.</li> <li>▪ Establish clear adoption assistance practice guidelines.</li> <li>▪ Eliminate competing permanency incentives and disincentives.</li> <li>▪ Continue support of Virginia's Adoption Assistance Program by the General Assembly.</li> </ul>
Social Services	<p>First Lady Anne Holton launched her foster care initiative <b>For Keeps</b> on January 16, 2007 at the Executive Mansion. 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.</p> <p>The "For Keeps" program is a partnership between the state's human services agencies, the Freddie Mac Foundation, and other private organizations.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The First Lady traveled across Virginia during the month of March conducting the For Keeps Listening Tour. At appearances in Chesterfield, Norfolk, Fairfax, Bristol, and Roanoke County, she heard from over 900 foster youth, foster parents, and child welfare professionals. Each session provided opportunities for attendees to share ideas and common concerns, and they offered the First Lady and members of the For Keeps Steering Committee critical information about ways to improve outcomes for older youth in foster care.</p> <p>On May 15, the First Lady testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Ways &amp; Means Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support at a hearing on challenges facing the child welfare system. She discussed the challenges affecting the safety, permanency, and well-being of foster children and addressed some of the issues she has seen on her recent Listening Tour.</p> <p>On May 31, in celebration of May as National Foster Care Month, First Lady Holton will deliver remarks to foster families and children at a Foster Care Month Celebration in Irvington.</p> <p>The First Lady will be guest presenter at the Evidence-Based Treatment Modalities and Systems of Care Conference co-sponsored by the Commission on Youth and DMHMRSAS on September 16-18, 2007 in Roanoke. She will kick off the conference with a discussion of issues related to foster care, adoption and permanency, and present later as part of a panel discussion of the topic.</p>

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

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p>On May 4, 2006, Virginia First Lady Anne Holton announced the newly-formed <b>Virginia Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parents Association</b>, now known as <b>FACES of Virginia Families</b>. This not-for-profit association, funded by the Virginia Department of Social Services, seeks to establish a grassroots effort for kinship parents, foster and adoptive parents in Virginia. The Association supports recruitment and retention of foster, kinship and adoptive parents, provides training and support, and provides information to the state about what families need in terms of support and training. <i>FACES</i> also advocates for the needs of youth and families.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>FACES of Virginia Families 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 track was designed to assist foster, adoptive, and kinship families, as well as caseworkers and other professionals, help youth achieve permanency. <i>FACES</i> 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.</p>
Office of Comprehensive Services	<p><b>Statewide Rates for Treatment Foster Care</b> – 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p>

**CHILD CARE**

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p><b>Automation of Day Care Assistance Program</b> – 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>On October 15, 2006, Commissioner Anthony Conyers, Jr. of the Department of Social Services submitted the report as required. 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.</p>

**CHILD CARE** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Social Services	<p>The <b>Child Day-Care Council (CDCC)</b> is authorized by the <i>Code of Virginia</i> to adopt regulatory standards for licensure and operation of child day care centers in Virginia. CDCC is comprised of a minimum of 28 members, appointed by the Governor and representing a variety of interests from around the state.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>Following studies by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission and the Joint Commission on Administrative Rules in 2004, new regulations were approved by CDDC 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.</p> <p>CDCC held a planning retreat on May 11, 2006. 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.</p> <p>The Council met March 8, 2007 and again most recently on May 10. The agendas and minutes are posted to the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall website.</p>

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Joint Commission on Health Care	<p><b>SJR 106 (Davis, 2006)</b> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determine the effectiveness of barrier crime laws in protecting consumers, residents, patients, and clients;</li> <li>▪ 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;</li> <li>▪ Compare Virginia's barrier crime laws with laws related to criminal convictions and employment elsewhere; and</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>JCHC approved the first-year study plan at its April 27, 2006 meeting. JCHC received the Staff Interim Report at its November 14, 2006 meeting.</p> <p>The JCHC was briefed on plans for the second-year study at its May 10, 2007 meeting. Findings and options will be presented to its members in Spring 2007.</p>

**PUBLIC SAFETY** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Legislative Services	<p><b>HJR 652 (Welch, 2007) and SJR 327 (Puller, 2007)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's Involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The joint subcommittee is limited to four meetings during the 2007 Interim and shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2007. Its first 2007 meeting is scheduled for June 28 in Richmond.</p> <p>In addition, 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.</p>
Office of the Secretary of Public Safety	<p>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 <b>Virginia Reentry Pilot Projects</b>. Executive Order 22 (2006) directs the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety to lead the <b>Virginia Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy</b> to promote reentry strategies for offenders. Executive Order 22 directs the Academy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide on-going coordination at the executive level of reentry initiatives across the state;</li> <li>▪ Explore programs that will aid with the offender reintegration;</li> <li>▪ Address policies and practices impeding successful reintegration; and</li> <li>▪ Work collaboratively to implement new policies and procedures.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Secretary of Health and Human Resources	<p><b>SB 188 (Puller, 2006)</b> 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.</p> <p>This bill was a recommendation of the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Reentry to Society (SJR 273, Puller, 2005).</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>The Secretariats of Health and Human Resources and Public Safety are currently working to implement this legislation.</p>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE

Lead Agency	Description	Status
State Crime Commission	<p><b>HJR 136 (Moran, 2006)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 statewide survey of Juvenile &amp; Domestic Relations Court Judges, focus groups of professionals and stakeholders and other pertinent activities.</p> <p>Upcoming Commission meetings are September 11, October 9, November 13, and December 13.</p>
State and Local Juvenile Justice Agencies	<p><b>Virginia Council on Juvenile Detention (VCJD)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Council meets quarterly, most recently on June 7 in Virginia Beach.</p>
Department of Criminal Justice Services	<p>The <b>Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Virginia Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and the Juvenile Services Section, Department of Criminal Justice Services announce this year's annual Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Conference for June 19-20, 2007 in Hampton. The Committee projects that the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Conference conference, "Making a Difference in Juvenile Justice 2007", will have over 350 participants, including Court Service Unit Directors, juvenile probation officers, law enforcement, social workers, juvenile detention home staff and others.</p> <p>The Virginia Commission on Youth will host 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.</p>

**JUVENILE JUSTICE** *(continued)*

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention	<p>The <b>Virginia Interagency Anti-Gang Workgroup</b> was established in June 2006 to promote collaboration among relevant state agencies involved in gang reduction and prevention. The Workgroup is headed by the Secretary of Public Safety, in cooperation with the Secretaries of Education and Health &amp; Human Resources.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Workgroup will report annually (by October 30), through the Secretary of Public Safety, regarding the Commonwealth's progress and achievements statewide in the area of gang prevention.</p> <p>The initiative also provides a community profile database and an interactive web-based tool designed to assist state and local prevention planners, service providers, and the faith community in combating gang activity.</p> <p>The Executive Order is in effect until June 2, 2007, unless amended.</p>

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	<p><b>HJR 683 (Landes, 2007)</b> and <b>SJR 395 (Hanger, 2007)</b> 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.</p> <p>Specifically, JLARC is directed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study the impact of substance abuse on State and local budgets;</li> <li>▪ Determine savings that could be achieved through enhanced substance abuse services;</li> <li>▪ Recommend funding initiatives needed to provide adequate services to Virginians who need them.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>JLARC approved its Study Plan at its May 14, 2007 meeting.</p> <p>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. Each executive summary is 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. 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.</p> <p>JLARC will receive an interim briefing in December 2007 and a final briefing and report in Spring 2008.</p>
Joint Commission on Health Care	<p><b>Underage drinking</b> will be considered by the Joint Commission on Health Care as one of several substance abuse topics discussed in presentations to members.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The JCHC Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee approved the 2007 Workplan at its meeting on May 10, including its list of presentation topics.</p>

## MENTAL HEALTH

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Virginia Association of Community Services Boards	<p><b>Virginia Child and Family Services Council</b> (through the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards) addresses issues pertaining to service delivery to children and their families. It also provides a forum for information sharing and networking among the respective task force members. The Task Force 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Task Force meets quarterly, on the first Friday of the month. It met most recently on March 2, 2007; when Commission staff provided a brief update on the upcoming Conference on Systems of Care and Evidence-Based Treatment Modalities.</p> <p>In 2007, the Task Force is developing a white paper on the role of Child and Family Services in the System of Care.</p>
Virginia Commission on Youth	<p><b>Systems of Care and Evidence-Based Practices—Tools that Work for Youth and Families</b>—is 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, which targets behavioral health professionals, juvenile justice representatives, caregivers, families, and youth, highlights 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.</p> <p>Conference topics will promote 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Commission Mandate</p>	<p>Since its initial study of the topic in 2002 (SJR 99), the Commission on Youth has promoted evidence-based treatments children and adolescents' mental health needs.</p> <p>The Commission on Youth mandated this conference as part of its 2006 Study Plan. The event represents a formal collaboration with DMHMRSAS to incorporate the Commission's initiative with the Department's Systems of Care Conference.</p> <p>A Conference Planning, comprised of representatives from state and local child-serving agencies, private providers, organizations and others, was established in 2006 and continues its work in 2007, with subcommittees assigned to develop specific conference plans.</p> <p>The Conference is being held at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center in partnership with Virginia Tech.</p> <p>Information about the conference is available at the Commission on Youth's website at <a href="http://coy.state.va.us">http://coy.state.va.us</a>.</p>
Virginia Commission on Youth	<p>SJR 358 (2003) directed the Commission on Youth to update biennially its publication, the <b>Collection of Evidence-based Treatment Modalities for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs</b> (House Document 9, 2002). 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, symptoms, and disorders. Moreover, utilization of evidence-based practices in the field of children's mental health may offer the Commonwealth cost savings.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Commission Mandate</p>	<p>Two editions of this publication (2002 and 2005) have been widely disseminated primarily through web-based technology and secondarily through print copies. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition is scheduled for release in late 2007.</p> <p>An Advisory Group of practitioners and experts in the field is participating in the planning and approval of the draft document.</p> <p>Commission staff will report on the progress of the <i>Collection</i> at the November 20, 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.</p>

**MENTAL HEALTH** *(continued)*

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	<p>The <b>Child and Family Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee for Children's Services</b> – 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Committee Member</p>	<p>The committee scheduled 2007 meetings for January 11, February 8, March 8, April 12, and May 18.</p> <p>The report from the committee is due to the money committees by June 30 each year.</p>
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	<p><b>SJR 185 (Norment, 2006)</b> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examine utilization trends, including sources of payment;</li> <li>▪ Evaluate the Medicaid rate-setting process for psychiatric services, services provided under temporary detention orders and by psychiatrists;</li> <li>▪ Evaluate the manner in which Community Services Boards contract with licensed psychiatric facilities;</li> <li>▪ Examine the adequacy of and funding for licensed psychiatric beds, including child and adolescent mental health services; and</li> <li>▪ Determine any steps that can be taken to maintain appropriate and necessary licensed psychiatric services in Virginia.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p><i>Senate Document 11</i>, a very abbreviated Executive Summary, was submitted to the 2007 General Assembly; there was no interim report.</p> <p>JLARC's second-year study plan was approved at its May 14, 2007 meeting. The plan calls for JLARC to be briefed by staff on study findings and recommendations at its October meeting.</p> <p>SJR 185 directs 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 Session of the General Assembly.</p>
Joint Commission on Health Care	<p><b>Workgroup Regarding the Commonwealth's Ability to Serve Children and Adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The JCHC Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee approved its 2007 Workplan at its May 10 meeting, including its list of presentation topics for 2007 meetings.</p>

**MENTAL HEALTH** *(continued)*

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Joint Commission on Health Care	<p><b>SJR 25 (Marsh, 2004)/HJR 155 (Baskerville, 2004)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The JCHC approved continuing the study plan at its April 27, 2006 meeting. The JCHC Behavioral Health Subcommittee provides oversight on the study.</p> <p>JCHC concluded that further study was needed and continued this study in 2006 and 2007.</p>
Education and Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	<p><b>HJR 96 (Hamilton, 2006)</b> was a recommendation of the Joint Commission on Health Care's Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee (November 10, 2005).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Through HJR 96, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services was urged to continue to expand training opportunities that include approaches specifically addressing the needs of children with autism spectrum disorders.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Committee Member</p>	<p>A committee established by the Department of Education and the Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services in Fall 2006 is charged with providing 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.</p> <p>The group 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.</p> <p>The Committee met April 30 in Virginia Beach, with additional meetings to follow in 2007.</p>
Joint Commission on Health Care	<p>The <b>Workgroup to Improve Discharge Planning for Adult and Juvenile Offenders with Mental Health Needs</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p>
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services/Joint Commission on Health Care	<p>As a JCHC initiative, Item 312 #63 was submitted for a budget amendment in the amount of \$50,000 for DMHMRSAS to contract with VHI to develop a <b>Reporting System for Acute Psychiatric Beds</b>, 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

**MENTAL HEALTH** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	<p><b>Training and Resources for Effective Adolescent Treatment (Project TREAT) Interagency Adolescent Workgroup</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Workgroup Member</p>	<p>Project TREAT has scheduled its 2007 meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from March 21 through December 12.</p> <p>This group sends its recommendations on substance abuse and youth to the Child and Family Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee (CFBHPP) (330-F) to be included in the Committee's final report, due in June 2007.</p> <p>The workgroup is conducting a survey of youth services in the Community Service Boards (CSB) 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.</p> <p>Project TREAT is providing technical assistance to several assistance to several CSBs in evidence-based practice for services for adolescents with substance abuse or co-occurring disorders. Project TREAT has also contracted free training for CSB and facility supervisors and managers of youth substance use and co-occurring services.</p>
Supreme Court	<p>The 2007 General Assembly amended the <b>Psychiatric Inpatient Treatment of Minors Act</b> 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&amp;DR court judges.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Supreme Court holds 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.</p>
Health	<p>The <b>Interagency Suicide Prevention Coordinating Committee</b> is comprised of representatives from the Departments of Health, Education, Mental Health, Aging, Corrections Education, Office of Chief Medical Examiner, Local 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Committee Member</p>	<p>Suicide prevention efforts in Virginia are a collaborative effort headed by the Department of Health (VDH), but involving participants from many disciplines. The Department's program was a recommendation of the Commission on Youth Suicide Prevention Plan, <i>House Document 29</i> (2001).</p> <p>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. It has scheduled an October 2007 statewide conference in Virginia Beach to lend technical and programmatic support to new and emerging providers.</p>

**MENTAL HEALTH** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
House of Delegates	<p><b>Virginia House of Delegates Health, Welfare and Institutions Committee</b> will hold hearings this summer to consider solutions to problems in Virginia's mental health system exposed after the shooting rampage at Virginia Tech.</p> <p>The committee will review state funding of mental health services and the laws governing privacy, emergency custody orders and involuntary and voluntary commitments. The committee also plans to hear from private providers of mental health services and solicit suggestions from the public. 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.</p> <p>The Committee is expected to leave specific questions about the case of the shooter to the eight-member Virginia Tech Independent Review Panel.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The committee holds its first meeting in Richmond on June 18, 2007.</p> <p>It is expected that legislation to reform the mental health system will be introduced in the 2008 General Assembly Session.</p>
Supreme Court	<p>A <b>Commission on Mental Health Law Reform</b> has been 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Commission has named five task forces that will develop recommendations for "reform legislation": Access to Services, Children and Adolescents, Commitment, Criminal Justice, and Empowerment and Self-Determination.</p> <p>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 &amp; 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. The Task Force met on March 2 to hear their findings to date. Its next meeting is in Hampton, where it will hear from the Hampton community on how that locale has been successful in dealing with issues involving juveniles affected by mental illness.</p> <p>2007 full Commission meetings are March 15-16 in Charlottesville, June 21-22 in Fredericksburg, and October in Richmond. (Date to be set.) There is also consideration of an August meeting.</p> <p>The Commission will complete its study and final report in October 2007 in order to further legislative change by the 2008 General Assembly.</p>

**MENTAL HEALTH** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Office of the Governor	<p><b>Governor's Virginia Tech Independent Review Panel</b> – Described by the Governor as intended to improve processes and responses, the Panel has been 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 aid. An initial outlay of \$150 thousand has been allocated for the firm.</p> <p><b>Commission’s involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The eight-member panel, chaired by Retired Va. State Police Superintendent Gerald Massengill, includes Aradhana A. “Bela” Sood. Dr. Sood is head of child and adolescent psychiatry and medical director of the Va. Treatment Center for Children at VCU Medical Center, and has been an active participant in development of the Commission’s <i>Collection</i>.</p> <p>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’s second meeting was May 22 in Blacksburg.</p> <p>The review is said to have been hampered by state and federal privacy laws that prevent Virginia Tech and providers of mental health services from releasing Cho's medical and academic records. The review panel chair has indicated that the committee might have to seek a court order to get the information.</p> <p>The Governor has 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.</p>
Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services	<p><b>Virginia Integrated Network of Family Organizations (VA INFO)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission’s involvement:</b> Committee Member</p>	<p>The VA INFO coalition meets bi-monthly.</p> <p>Commission staff will be a featured workshop presenter at its <i>Strong Roots for a Healthy Future</i> annual conference for families on July 27-28, 2007 in Richmond.</p>

## EDUCATION

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Education	<p><b>Early Childhood Development Pilot Programs</b> – Item 135-A #2f of the 2007 Enrolled Budget appropriated \$2,557,666 to the Department of Education to enter into agreements during the 2007-2008 school year with school divisions to pilot early childhood development programs. Eligibility is limited to school divisions which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have existing partnerships with private and/or non-profit providers as of the 2006-2007 school year;</li> <li>▪ Use the funding to expand the availability of early childhood education programs for at-risk students not served in those school divisions; and</li> <li>▪ Evaluate the providers using the Quality Standards checklist recommended by the National Institute for Early Education Research.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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; and the final findings of these evaluations submitted within ninety days after the completion of the school year.</p>
Virginia Commission on Youth	<p>The Commission on Youth's <b>Study of Alternative Education Program Options</b> 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.</p> <p>Issues identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A safe and secure school environment is critical to the learning process for students.</li> <li>▪ Schools are striving to provide appropriate discipline to students, while balancing public safety concerns.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ Alternative education programs may prevent a student from dropping out or becoming involved with the criminal justice system.</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ The cuts in the Safe and Drug-Free Schools funds have had a significant impact on the ability to offer prevention services to students.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Commission Initiative</p>	<p>In 2007, Commission staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete analysis of Alternative Education survey conducted by the Commission in the Fall 2006.</li> <li>▪ Compile best practices guide on Virginia's Alternative Education Approaches.</li> <li>▪ Investigate funding opportunities for school-based prevention programs to supplant the Safe and Drug-Free Schools grants.</li> <li>▪ Investigate feasibility of funding for a second tier of regional alternative education programs.</li> <li>▪ Review existing state programs that address prevention and discipline for at-risk youth.</li> <li>▪ Reconvene Advisory Group to assist in study effort and review proposed recommendations.</li> </ul> <p>The Advisory Group will meet on June 25 in Richmond.</p> <p>Commission staff will present 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.</p>

**EDUCATION** *(continued)*

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	<p><b>HJR 729 (Cox, 2007)</b> directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the Virginia Preschool Initiative. HJR 729 directs JLARC to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review the statutory authorization for the Virginia Preschool Initiative and funding;</li> <li>▪ Determine the costs of the program to the state and localities since its inception;</li> <li>▪ 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;</li> <li>▪ Evaluate the continued K-12 academic performance of participants in the current preschool program;</li> <li>▪ Identify and assess the program's accountability measures to promote effective programs and efficient use of public funds;</li> <li>▪ Study the concept of the Universal Preschool or Pre-K, including which other states have adopted these programs and their success, if any;</li> <li>▪ 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;</li> <li>▪ 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</li> <li>▪ Consider such other related matters as appropriate to meet the objectives of this study.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>JLARC approved its Study Plan at its May 14, 2007 meeting.</p> <p>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.</p>
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	<p><b>State Spending on Standards of Quality (SOQ) Costs (2007 Update)</b> – 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p>

## EDUCATION (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Office of the Secretary of Education	<p><b>Virginia's P-16 Education Council</b> was created by Executive Order 100 (2005) 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	The council meets every two months. Most recently it convened on May 3, 2007. Upcoming meetings are August 2 and October 4.
Office of the Secretary of Education	<p><b>Start Strong</b> is an initiative to develop expanded access to pre-kindergarten for Virginia's four-year-olds.</p> <p>The 17-member <b>Start Strong Council</b> 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Staff support is provided by the Office of the Governor, the Governor's cabinet secretaries, the Department of Education, and other agencies as appropriate.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The <b>Start Strong Council</b>, 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. Virginia Commission on Youth member Delegate Robert Tata currently serves on the Council.</p> <p>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. The report indicated a need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide a coordinating infrastructure to address the research-based quality features that result in outcomes and gains for early learners;</li> <li>▪ Collect and use data and information to guide Start Strong decision-making;</li> <li>▪ Examine and strengthen existing programs as a foundation from which to build; and</li> <li>▪ Identify or create governance structure at both the local and state levels.</li> </ul> <p>The council will issue its final report in July 2007.</p> <p>There are five meetings of the full council scheduled for 2007: March 21, May 16, July 18, September 19, and October 10.</p>

**EDUCATION** *(continued)*

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Legislative Services	<p><b>HJR 25 (Cosgrove, 2006)</b> 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.</p> <p>Interim goals are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase emphasis and access to science, math, and technology education by students throughout Virginia; and</li> <li>▪ Increase the number of graduates of science and engineering programs who remain in Virginia.</li> </ul> <p>HJR 25 directs the subcommittee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study ways to provide incentives for students to pursue careers in these sectors;</li> <li>▪ Review the curriculum of Virginia’s existing public schools, including Governor’s Schools and other specialized public schools devoted to math, science, or technology;</li> <li>▪ Study accessibility to specialized public schools by students throughout Virginia’</li> <li>▪ 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;</li> <li>▪ Review and recommend innovative ways to interest students at all education levels in science, math, and technology; and</li> <li>▪ 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.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission’s involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The joint subcommittee, which is limited to four meetings in each year, met April 30, 2006 and meets again on June 20 to approve a workplan for the final three meetings in 2007.</p> <p>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.</p>

**EDUCATION** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Legislative Services	<p><b>SJR 378 (O'Brien, 2007)</b> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the curriculum used by school-based and commercial driving schools;</li> <li>▪ Survey other states to identify innovative approaches to driver training;</li> <li>▪ Consider the appropriateness of the curriculum for new adult drivers, especially those for whom English is a second language; and</li> <li>▪ Make recommendations to the General Assembly for revision of such curriculum as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>SJR 378 limits the joint subcommittee to four meetings for the 2007 interim and to complete its meetings by November 30, 2007. The chairman is to submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of the joint subcommittee's findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. In addition, the resolution requires the executive summary to 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. SJR 378 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.</p>
Education	<p>The <b>Commission on Civics Education</b> 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).</p> <p>The three primary purposes of the advisory commission are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Further the education of students on the importance of citizen involvement in a representative democracy;</li> <li>▪ Promote the study of state and local government among the citizens; and</li> <li>▪ Enhance communication and collaboration among organizations that conduct civic education programs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>Commission meetings are held at the call of the chair or whenever the majority of the members request. The Commission met June 11, 2007 in Richmond.</p> <p>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.</p>
Board of Education	<p><b>HB 19 (Fralin, 2006)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Board of Education published <i>House Document 81, The High School Graduation Rate Formula</i> (2006).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

**EDUCATION** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Education	<p><b>HJR 130 (Hall, 2006)</b> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 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;</li> <li>▪ 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;</li> <li>▪ Ascertain whether, by whom, and the manner in which students who are at-risk of dropping out are counseled to remain in school; and</li> <li>▪ Identify local initiatives and efforts to retain and retrieve students at risk of dropping out, particularly populations with low high school graduation rates.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>2007 meetings of the Board of Education's Graduation and Dropout Committee have been held on January 27 and March 28, with others to be announced. At the March meeting, Franklin Schargel, noted speaker and author of books on dropouts and related issues, addressed the Committee.</p> <p>It was reported at the Board of Education's February 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.</p>
Education	<p><b>Know How Virginia</b> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ inform students and their parents, teachers, and counselors of rewarding career opportunities, particularly in high-demand and emerging fields;</li> <li>▪ promote quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) in middle and high schools to support career exploration and preparation; and</li> <li>▪ ensure a larger pool of qualified, motivated applicants for Virginia businesses and industries.</li> </ul> <p>The campaign has two components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ an Umbrella Campaign that provides basic information on careers, career exploration, and the benefits of Career and Technical Education (CTE);</li> <li>▪ Career-specific Campaigns underwritten by private-sector partners seeking to cultivate greater pools of qualified candidates for specific types of jobs</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The partnership's website—<a href="http://knowhowvirginia.org">knowhowvirginia.org</a>—provides an overview of the program's activities.</p>

**EDUCATION** *(continued)*

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Education	<p>The <b>Virginia Advisory Committee for Career and Technical Education</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The advisory committee meets next on June 18 in Richmond. Also on June 18, the Creating Excellence Awards Ceremony is being held at noon at the Sheraton Richmond West Hotel to recognize the 2007 winners.</p>

**HEALTH**

Legislative Services	<p><b>SJR 103 (Lambert, 2006)</b> continues the Joint Subcommittee Studying Lead-Poisoning Prevention for two years to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 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;</li> <li>▪ 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;</li> <li>▪ Continue to assist state agencies to obtain funding for activities that protect children from lead risks;</li> <li>▪ Monitor the evolution of the data-sharing partnership established in § 32.1-127.1:04;</li> <li>▪ Monitor completion of the reference database of statewide health-related data elements required by SB 565 (2004);</li> <li>▪ Examine issues relating to lead poisoning among immigrant and adopted children; and</li> <li>▪ Seek to assist VDH and the Department of Housing and Community Development in every appropriate way in maintaining federal funding.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p><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.</p> <p>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 30 in each year.</p> <p>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.</p>
Health	<p><b>ESCAPE: Enhancing State Capacity to Address Child and Adolescent Health through Violence Prevention</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Committee Member</p>	<p>Continuing its work from 2005, ESCAPE developed a Strategic Plan in 2006.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>On June 18, the Commission on Youth will receive a Virginia Department of Health presentation on current ESCAPE initiatives.</p>

## HEALTH (continued)

Lead Agency	Description	Status
Medical Assistance Services	<p>The <b>Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Advisory Committee</b> was established by the 2005 General Assembly. It 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The CHIP Advisory Committee (CHIPAC), which meets quarterly, spent much of its first year structuring the committee and educating its members on FAMIS and FAMIS Plus. Three subcommittees have since been formed: Retention; Utilization and Access. The committee met most recently on June 7, 2007 in Richmond.</p> <p>At its May 4, 2007 meeting, the committee finalized a draft proposal to DMAS for a Child Health Data Warehouse for Medicaid and FAMIS. This will be formally presented to DMAS following informal discussion with Department leadership.</p> <p>Through funding from the Virginia Healthcare Foundation and as part of a two-part study, the committee has just completed a statewide survey examining the impact of citizenship and identity requirements on enrollment in FAMIS Plus. The survey results will be published in an exclusive article of the <i>Washington Post</i>.</p>
Medical Assistance Services	<p>The feasibility of a <b>FAMIS Buy-in Program</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>DMAS presented to the JCHC at its November 14 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.</p>
Joint Commission on Health Care	<p><b>Tracking System Adaptations for Preterm and Low-Birth Weight Babies</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 will report to the JCHC by October 1, 2007.</p>

**HEALTH (continued)**

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Health	<p>The Virginia Department of Health's (VDH) Commonwealth's Healthy Approach and Mobilization Plan for Inactivity, Obesity and Nutrition (<b>CHAMPION</b>) continues to work towards a comprehensive statewide plan to reduce obesity in Virginia through nutrition and exercise.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Following VDH Family Health Services Review, the working document will be presented to a new State Committee appointed by the Governor. This committee is expected to be convened in August/September 2007.</p> <p>The completed comprehensive statewide plan is tentatively scheduled to be released in Spring 2008.</p> <p>At present, Big Stone Gap native Thomas Jones, former Chicago Bears running back, is starring in radio &amp; 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.</p>
Legislative Services	<p><b>HJR 637 (O'Bannon, 2007)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2007, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The 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. 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.</p>
Health	<p>The <b>Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation (VTSF)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Regional Advisory Board Member</p>	<p>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% when the VTSF began its tobacco-use prevention work in 2001 to 49%.</p> <p>The VTSF is providing for the 2007-08 grant year over \$3.5 million in funding to 75 grant programs throughout the Commonwealth.</p> <p>Grant applications for FY 08 were reviewed April 24, 2007 by its nine Regional Advisory Boards. Funding recommendations will be acted on by the VTSF Board of Trustees at its September 11 meeting.</p>

**HEALTH** (continued)

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Health	<p><b>Virginia Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems</b> 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. Its work concluded with the official planning phase, although plan implementation is 2006-2009.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Workgroup Member</p>	<p>The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) received the initial planning grant on July 1, 2003 for a two-year period with a budget of \$100 thousand per year. The implementation phase will span about three years, with a budget of approximately \$150 thousand per year. There are five focus areas addressed in the initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical homes;</li> <li>▪ Mental health and social-emotional development;</li> <li>▪ Early care and education services;</li> <li>▪ Parent education; and</li> <li>▪ Family support services.</li> </ul> <p>Implementation of the VDH plan began in 2006. VDH held a strategic planning meeting on June 13, 2006.</p>

**HUMAN SERVICES**

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Office of the Governor	<p>Established in the <i>Code</i> in 2006, effective July 1, 2006, the <b>Urban Policy Task Force</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>The Task Force will report annually to the Governor (by December 1) and include in each report the performance of each agency in meeting established benchmarks.</p>
State and Local Agencies Representatives	<p><b>Virginia Association for Local Human Services Officials (VALHSO)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Commission's involvement:</b> Tracking</p>	<p>VALHSO generally meets quarterly; however, additional meetings are added as needed for specific areas of interest.</p>

**Virginia Commission on Youth**

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