

## **2003 LEGISLATIVE STUDY MANDATES AND INITIATIVES**

### **SJR 358 – Dissemination of the Collection of Effective Treatment Modalities for Children and Adolescents**

In an effort to make empirically-based information concerning effective treatment modalities and practices for children available, the Commission on Youth will coordinate and disseminate such information to parents, caregivers, educators, service providers and others interested parties through the Internet.

### **Childhood Obesity**

Obesity is a large-scale social problem that reaches all elements of American society. In order to combat the problem effectively, it must be addressed in numerous settings, with homes, schools, communities, and public advertising being some of the most important. The Commission on Youth will identify the causes and consequences of childhood obesity; determine the prevalence of childhood obesity at the state and national levels; identify present, past, and future initiatives designed to address the problem of childhood obesity in Virginia; and identify other suggested methods for combating the problem of childhood obesity.

### **Foster Care in Virginia**

Commission on Youth will monitor the progress and work of the Department of Social Services' Child and Family Services Review; participate on the Statewide Stakeholders Committee; and analyze foster care payment rates in the Commonwealth.

### **Treatment Options for Offenders with Mental Illness or Substance Abuse Disorders**

This study continues the work of SJR 97 (2002). Commission on Youth will work with the Joint Commission on Health Care to provide leadership and direction for the interagency work group; to oversee the implementation of previous recommendations; and to conduct further research regarding diversion programs for persons with mental illness and substance abuse disorders that redirect such persons into appropriate mental health and substance abuse treatment programs and away from the criminal justice system.

### **Strengthening Families**

In an effort to strengthen families and support marriage, the Commission on Youth will assess and identify elements that strengthen families; analyze measures other states are taking, as well as various federal initiatives to strengthen families; and determine strategies to strengthen family service systems.