

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Clark County ("County") Board of County Commissioners ("Board") views its citizens, and particularly its children, as its greatest resource and most valued asset; and

WHEREAS, the Board is committed to providing those County services which will best promote the welfare of children in the County; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to improve such services, the County has implemented the Safe Futures program and the Board has increased funding for new positions needed in the Department of Family Services ("DFS"); and

WHEREAS, DFS, in conjunction with County management, has identified the next phase of changes needed to improve services provided by the County to children; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to demonstrate its commitment to children in the County by publicly embracing the next phase of changes as goals of its own.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CLARK, IN THE STATE OF NEVADA:

That the Board adopts the following Statement of Commitment as County goals:

Clark County Statement of Commitment

Clark County commits its good faith efforts toward achievement of the following goals:

A. Improvements to Avoid Unnecessary Removals

1. The complete retraining of all DFS investigative casework, supervisory and management staff in a new safety and risk protocol by September 30, 2007, and the complete training for all other DFS casework and supervisory staff by December 31, 2007.
2. The elimination of police removals of children from the home without CPS investigator involvement by June 30, 2007.
3. The printing and availability for distribution of brochures informing parents of their rights by May 1, 2007.
4. The availability of Special Public Defenders to serve indigent families with children under the age of 6 by February 1, 2007.

5. The implementation of a team decision-making protocol, which includes parents or other caregivers, prior to removal of any child under the age of 6 or where there is imminent danger to the child that requires immediate removal, within 48 hours of removal, by September 30, 2007.

B. Elimination of the Use of Congregate Care Facilities, Including Child Haven, and Planned Short-Term Placements for Children Under 6

1. Children Under Age 3
 - a. That no child under the age of 3 be placed in Child Haven or any other congregate care facility after December 31, 2007, except that, in limited situations, children with higher levels of medical acuity, or children in sibling groups of three or more may be placed in those facilities when the conditions outlined in section 4 or 5 below have been met.
 - b. That no child under the age of 3, regardless of medical condition or number of siblings, remains in Child Haven or any other congregate care facility, longer than 10 days after December 31, 2007.
2. Children Under Age 6
 - a. That no child under the age of 6 is placed in Child Haven or any other congregate care facility after December 31, 2008, except that, in limited situations, children with higher levels of medical acuity, or children in sibling groups of three or more may be placed in those facilities when the conditions outlined in section 4 or 5 below are met.
 - b. That no child under the age of 6, regardless of medical condition or number of siblings, remains in Child Haven, or any other congregate care facility, longer than 10 days after December 31, 2008.
3. That no child under the age of 6 be placed in Child Haven or any other congregate care facility after June 30, 2009, regardless of medical condition or number of siblings.
4. That no child be placed in congregate care after the date set forth in subparagraphs (B)(2)(a) and (B)(2)(b) above for ending such placements based on his or her medical needs, unless the following conditions are met:
 - a. The admitting case worker and the child's attending pediatrician certify that the child's medical needs can met be in the facility;
 - b. The admitting case worker certifies that there is no homelike setting, including the child's own home, available that is or can be made capable of meeting the child's needs; and

- c. These conclusions are reviewed at the hearings described in section 6 below and the placement is approved by the judicial officer.
5. That no child be placed in congregate care after the date set forth in subparagraphs (B)(2)(a) and (B)(2)(b) above for ending such placements, because he or she is a member of a sibling group of three or more, unless the following conditions are met:
 - a. The admitting case worker and the facility administrator certify that the child and his or her siblings will be placed in the same unit or in units where they will have substantial regular daily contact with each other during non-school waking hours;
 - b. The admitting case worker certifies that there is no homelike setting available, including the child's own home, that is or can be made capable of caring for the sibling group together or in such a way that they will have substantial regular daily contact during waking non-school hours; and
 - c. These conclusions are reviewed at the hearings described in section 6 below and the placement is approved by the judicial officer.
6. That Hearing Masters immediately review the status of each child in Child Haven under the age of 6 at the Protective Custody Hearing (held within 72 hours) and at the Plea Hearing (held within 10 days) and require an exit plan for the child and that, subsequent to the Plea Hearing, DFS review the status weekly of every child who is under the age of 6 and in Child Haven.

C. Appropriate Services

1. That a comprehensive service array assessment be completed by September 30, 2007. That County funds be requested to contract for additional family preservation services; homemaker services; parent aids; substance abuse assessment and treatment services; and mental health assessments, with approved funding to be available by July 1, 2007. Service contracts to be in place by September 30, 2007, with full services operational by December 31, 2007. The County acknowledges the importance of this effort and will make good faith efforts to provide funding for these services.
2. That developmentally appropriate visitation be available for all children 2 and under by March 31, 2008, and for all children 6 and under by December 31, 2008.

D. Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Support

1. That a plan for recruitment, support and retention of foster parents be created by September 30, 2006 and fully implemented by June 30, 2007.

2. That four additional Foster Parent Liaisons be hired and trained by June 30, 2007.
3. That DFS support the development of a functioning local foster parent association by June 30, 2007 and association supported family support groups by October 1, 2007.
4. That training for resource parents, including foster parents and kin, on working with biological families and maintaining relationships with the child after reunification, be researched, training resources identified and training completed by December 31, 2007.
5. That DFS research curricula regarding the need for permanent relationships, including open adoption; the use of therapeutic attachment models; other research-based techniques for foster parents (and birth parents after reunification); and the special developmental needs of infants and young children, particularly those who have experienced trauma. That a plan for training be completed by April 30, 2007 and that training be completed by December 31, 2007.
6. That DFS develop and implement a protocol for immediately identifying and approving relatives no later than April 1, 2007.
7. That no more than one child under the age of 2 (except siblings) be placed in a foster home by March 31, 2008.

E. Staff Training

1. That staff, including protective services investigators, be educated on the reasonable efforts requirement and on the array of available services by June 30, 2007. This training will be supplemented as additional services become available.
2. That training be researched and implemented on "Partnerships in Parenting" to reinforce a foundation for the inclusion of foster parents and relatives in case decision making by September 30, 2007.
3. That training on working with biological families and maintaining relationships with the child after reunification be researched, training resources identified, and staff training completed by December 31, 2007.
4. That initial and on-going training for case workers in infant and toddler development and monitoring of infant well being be provided by September 30, 2007.

F. Accountability

1. That a quality assurance system be developed and implemented by October 1, 2007, ensuring that all new policies developed pursuant to this Statement of Commitment are implemented.
2. That an ombuds program for issues relating to children under the age of 6 be established by September 30, 2007, responsive to parents, relatives, professionals, advocates for children, and providers, with authority to investigate and seek resolution to problems and with the responsibility to prepare regular reports.

PASSED, ADOPTED and APPROVED this 20th day of March, 2007.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA



RORY REID, Chairman

ATTESTED:



SHIRLEY PARRAGUIRRE
County Clerk

