

DHS in Motion

The Year's Highlights 2000-2001

Welcome to **DHS in Motion** The Year's Highlights: 2000-2001! This annual summary is designed to inform our many partners and constituents of DHS' progress as we continue on our strategic path to reforming, improving, and enhancing our department's operations.



Alba Martinez

In keeping with the department's new emphasis on openness and accessibility, we have developed this annual summary as another means of effectively communicating to our diverse audiences the changes, challenges, and successes that are reshaping and redefining the Philadelphia Department of Human Services for the 21st century.

This new vision for positive change at the Department of Human Services is based on four key priorities and operating principles:

- Accountability to our children and families, taxpayers and lawmakers for the quality and efficiency of our services;
 - Accessibility to our services and resources;
 - Integration of our work and services with other key systems who serve children and families; and
 - Prevention of abuse, neglect and delinquency of children and youth.
- These operating principles will guide our strategies as we advance into a new outcomes-oriented era in child welfare.

DHS, as many other child welfare systems across the country, is grappling with the need to implement new and higher practice standards to serve an increasingly complex population of children and families. Our agency has delineated a strategic plan – our Blueprint for Excellence – that is both our roadmap and practical workplan. This plan creates, changes, and enhances internal structures to a) accomplish an overall improvement in outcomes for children and families that come into our system and b) systematically measure the quality and effectiveness of our internal practice and of all DHS-funded services.

In related articles you will read about specific practices and initiatives that form the foundation of the DHS improvement agenda and about children and families positively affected by programs and services funded by our agency. Highlights from our annual report are also illustrated for you. I hope you find this new communication vehicle to be informative and engaging. I welcome your feedback and your partnership as we strive to significantly improve the lives of Philadelphia's children and families.

WINDS OF CHANGE:

A New Era of Accountability at DHS



As the Philadelphia Department of Human Services continues its transformation into a more client-focused, responsive, and outcomes-oriented child welfare agency, it is important to share not only the agency's new vision, but also the roots from which the new vision has grown.

The root of every piece of our work is our mission:

- To protect children from abuse, neglect, and delinquency; ensure their safety and permanency in nurturing home environments; and strengthen and preserve families by enhancing community-based prevention services.
- To provide services, in partnership with community organizations, to strengthen the overall well being of Philadelphia children, youth, and families using a customer focused approach that is responsive to evolving community needs.
- To develop and implement policies and programs to continuously improve, measure, and achieve positive outcomes for children; manage public resources efficiently; communicate with customers and the general public; and integrate systems in order to effectively deliver services to children and families.

To effectively implement and communicate our plans for positive change, the department recently delineated, after more than a year of critical self-analysis, our Blueprint for Excellence. This is a detailed plan that aligns our major organizational efforts and resources, including our budget, to achieve stronger outcomes for children and families.

The following are specific efforts already underway that illustrate the agency's proactive agenda to significantly improve both practice and outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Court Practice Reform

As part of the department's ongoing work on improving permanency for children, DHS has been actively collaborating with Family Court in its Court Improvement Project.

Front-loaded Services Project

This project, launched in July 2001, transfers one of the features of Model Court to the other dependency courtrooms. It is a result of intense collaboration between DHS, the Behavioral Health Services (BHS) system, Family Court, members of the City Solicitor's office, members of the child advocate and parent advocate bars, and other participants in

Model Court. All new adjudicatory hearings, an average of eight per day, now include a pre-hearing conference. The pre-hearing conference includes all parties, their attorneys, the Department social worker, private provider social workers, BHS assessors, a facilitator, and anyone else who the parties may believe to be appropriate. The purpose is to explore allegations, resolution, intervention, and to incorporate the potential to assess the child/family involved. The BHS assessor makes recommendations for evaluations. Some assessments are conducted at court right after the hearing or BHS is able to make appointments for parents or children while they are still at court. There is an opportunity to draft a Family Service Plan after the adjudicatory hearing, based on the recommendations that come out of the pre-hearing conference instead of waiting for a later date to complete the Family Service Plan.

Subsidized Permanent Legal Custodianship

For children in foster care placement, the implementation of the Subsidized Permanent Legal Custodianship (SPLC) will offer an additional option in achieving safety, permanence, and well-being in a timely manner. Kinship care placements account for a significant number of children in DHS care, as kin are most likely to take sibling groups and children with behavioral and emotional problems. Continued parental involvement and close family ties sometimes dissuade kinship caregivers from wanting to adopt the children in their care. However, SPLC will provide permanency to those children whose safety and well-being needs are met in their current foster/kinship care homes, and for whom the goal of return home or adoption cannot be achieved in the best interest of the child. Successful implementation of this program is expected to yield a higher number of children obtaining permanency over the next five year.

Development and Enhancement of Prevention Services

The Department of Human Services is placing a much greater emphasis on prevention services and is therefore dedicating a significant amount of energy and resources on the development of the Division of Community-Based Prevention Services (DCBPS). This Division brings together prevention programs that were previously in the Children and Youth and Juvenile Justice divisions into one administrative unit in order to better coordinate service

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The Child Welfare Advisory Board (CWAB) advocates for the well being and protection of Philadelphia's children and their families by supporting the provision of quality services by DHS. CWAB members make recommendations on DHS policy matters and provide support, guidance and assistance with outreach activities in an effort to educate the community about the mission and goals of the Department.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the current members of the board for their service and continued support. This sustained commitment has proven to be instrumental in our ability to preserve and protect Philadelphia's children and families.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

**CHILD WELFARE
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS**

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Juvenile Justice Advocate

Ruth Birchett, *Founder,*
*Heritage Community Economic
Development Corporation,*
SCOP Advisory Board President

Laura Boyce, *Community Impact Officer,*
United Way of Southeastern Pa.

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Department of Health

Elizabeth Fleming, Ph.D.,
School District of Philadelphia,
Office of the Superintendent

Sherman Gotierez, *President,*
Towey Playground Athletic Association

Carl Greene, *Executive Director,*
Philadelphia Housing Authority

Rev. James Hall, Jr.
Community Advocate
Triumph Baptist Church

Gladys Harvell,
Community Advocate
Parent Action Network (PAN)

Margot Horwitz,
Community Advocate
Public Relations Professional

Mary Julious,
Community Advocate

Tae-Ock Kauh, Ph.D.,
Community Advocate

Curtis A. Leonard, Ph.D., Dean,
Temple University
School of Social Administration

Dean Ruth Mayden,
Bryn Mawr College, School of Social Work

Sara Ortiz, *President,*
National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights

Victor Richard, *Commissioner,*
Department of Recreation

Bettie Roundtree,
Community Advocate

Donald Schwarz, M.D.,
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Richard Gelles, Ph.D, Dean
University of Pennsylvania,
School of Social Work

Rae Scott-Jones,
Community Advocate

Don Jose Stovall, *Director,*
Department of Public Welfare
County Board of Assistance

The Honorable Esther R. Sylvester,
Administrative Judge,
Family Court Division

The Honorable Marian B. Tasco,
City Council

Blueprint For Excellence: A Roadmap to Reform

The DHS "Blueprint For Excellence" is the department's reform plan, pointing the way to the systems change that will result in better outcomes for Philadelphia's children and families.

Substantial changes are already under way to better align our organizational resources to address the challenging needs of the communities we serve. Following are just a few programmatic highlights of the "Blueprint For Excellence."

Initiative:

Develop an infrastructure to enhance community participation in the protection of children.

As part of this initiative, DHS held 17 monthly Community Forums in the years 2000-01. They proved to be a very effective and productive mechanism through which community members, providers, and other stakeholders were able to share their ideas, concerns, and/or questions. These town meetings were critical in informing the development of the DHS Blueprint or reform plan. For example, an issue that was brought up regularly at our community meetings was what the attendees categorized as a lack of information on existing community-based resources for parents. In particular, they referred to the idea of having a compilation or listing of agencies/organizations that provide services to parents, especially in the area of Parenting Education and Support. DHS took on the task of surveying service providers in order to compile the information into a parenting resource guide. The first edition of this guide was published this Fall and is now available to the public. To get a free copy of this guide, please call the DHS Communications Office at 215 - 683 - 4DHS.

Another consistent theme that came up at these meetings was the difficulty our constituents have experienced when trying to contact the Department by telephone. Unless the DHS party's extension (or any other extension for that matter) was known, it was very difficult and frustrating for our constituents to attempt contact. DHS took this voiced concern very seriously and, again, took action. A new centralized, main number was established - (215) 683-4DHS. Our friendly Customer Service Agents transfer the calls to the appropriate DHS department or staff, and also provide general information to the public.

Initiative:

Strengthen and expand staff recruitment, retention, and training and development opportunities.

In our continued effort to improve and enhance the quality of our services, DHS launched a campaign in Spring 2000 and 2001 to recruit and hire Social Workers and Youth Detention Counselors. Under the theme *"Make a Difference in the Life of a Child"*, the combined radio and community print media campaign yielded approximately 3,000 calls into the DHS Jobs Hotline during Spring 2001 (calls came in for all positions, not only for the ones we were targeting). In addition to radio, this year DHS incorporated other recruitment means into its campaign such as participating in career fairs, visiting colleges/universities in the Philadelphia area, and posting on "job-search" and university Internet sites. Overall, the staff recruitment campaign was very successful, producing 134 new hires to fill the vacancies in a timely fashion. The table below shows a breakdown.

Classification	Number Hired
Social Worker I	40
Social Worker II	11
Social Worker Trainee	69
Youth Detention Counselor Trainee	14

Note: For a copy of the Executive Summary of the Blueprint for Excellence (Spring 2001) please contact the DHS Communications Office at (215) 683-4DHS.

A Home and Heart for Many

In an effort to minimize the disruption in children's lives when they need to be placed outside of their home, DHS and its partner agencies try very hard to keep siblings together in foster and adoptive homes. Sometimes, especially when it is a large sibling group, it is difficult to find a family that will take in five or six children. This story from Bethanna, a contracted-service provider with DHS, illustrates the special commitment and love of a couple that decided to enlarge their family very quickly.

Bethanna's primary objective is to offer children the opportunity to live as a permanent member of a loving family. Recently, the staff at Bethanna was able to meet this goal six times over.

When Ben and Lisa Bartolome married in August 1997, they had plans for their future. They were going to spend the next few years traveling and enjoying themselves before settling down to start a family. Newlyweds in their early twenties, they lived in a modest one-bedroom apartment and saved their money for future trips.

These plans soon began to change when Ben and his two sisters learned that their six half-siblings were entering foster care. Ben and his sisters

each decided to help, and began exploring the possibility of becoming foster parents. Ben and Lisa entered the Kinship Foster Care approval process and put their immediate plans on hold.

As they went through the process, Bethanna discussed the possibility of shifting the focus from foster parenting to adoption. Ben and Lisa continued on the course to become kinship foster parents, and decided that they could provide the best home for these children.

When parental rights were finally terminated, Ben and Lisa became pre-adoptive parents. The money saved for traveling soon went to a home that could accommodate this new family of eight.

Ben and Lisa adopted William, Lanie, Amanda, Kristen, Nicholas and Ashley on July 20, 2001. "The children have been so strong with the hurdles they have been

through in life. We are proud to be their parents, and so happy to have their love in our home," said Lisa. "We are grateful for the constant support of Bethanna's social workers and foster parents. Four years of training and advice- and words of love and encouragement - gave us strength to make our family complete."



In 1990, the Philadelphia Department of Human Services placed Cassandra Danzy's children in foster care because of her continued drug abuse. Five years later drug related violence broke out in Cassandra's home and she was shot six times, leaving her partially paralyzed and blind in one eye. But it was

through this partial blindness that Cassandra was finally able to see.

During her recovery from the gunshot wounds, DHS began working with Cassandra and her new found focus in an effort to help her overcome her addictions, and to hopefully be reunited with her children. By surrounding Cassandra with a strong system of support, she gradually began to make progress. DHS contacted a shelter where Cassandra could live in a "drug free" environment. She enrolled in Narcotics Anonymous and DHS ensured that she attended all of her counseling appointments, including those of her children. This counseling proved to be a crucial aspect of her recovery when, during her rehabilitation, her oldest daughter passed away.

"I think that this was the most difficult part of Cassandra's recovery," said Cynthia Cohen, DHS Social Worker. "She may not have made it through had it not been for her elaborate system of support." Cassandra found the strength to carry on, and was soon eligible for

DHS' Shelter Plus program. Shelter Plus assists people in renting homes by providing financial and counseling support and assistance in developing peer support networks. "The Shelter Plus program was the final piece of the puzzle for Cassandra," said Cynthia. "She was finally in her own home with her own children."

Reunited with her five children and drug-free for six years, Cassandra now acts as a role model to others going through similar challenges. She is an Executive Committee member of the Board of Education's Policy Council, and facilitates parent groups for individuals involved with DHS. Cassandra has also received the "Beating the Odds" and Parent of the Year awards from the Board of Education. "I owe it all to the Shelter Plus program, Narcotics Anonymous, and the structure that I had," said Cassandra. "Prior to coming into this program, I tried to quit drugs but was unsuccessful. I stayed clean for maybe 6 or 8 months but that was the longest and the desires would come right back. They helped me to discover who I was, and most importantly, what was important in life."

DHS 2000-01 Fiscal Year Annual Report Highlights

Child Protective Services (CPS) Assessments

Reports of Physical, Sexual, and/or Emotional Abuse

Year	# Reports	# Indicated	%
1997	5,036	1,672	33.2%
1998	4,884	1,538	31.5%
1999	4,416	1,206	27.3%
2000	4,423	1,172	26.5%
2001	4,694	1,369	29.2%

General Protective Services (GPS) Assessments

Reports of Physical, Medical, and/or Other Neglect

Year	# Reports	# Indicated	%
1997	8,816	2,961	33.6%
1998	7,679	2,504	32.6%
1999	7,093	2,253	31.8%
2000	9,418	3,052	32.4%
2001	10,032	3,271	32.6%

Out of Home Placements by Type

(Period: 6/30/01)

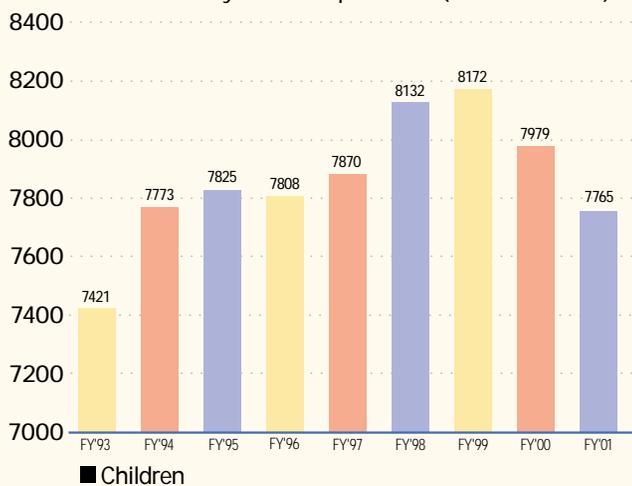
	Agency	CYD	JJS
Kinship Care	1829 20.4%	1829 23.5%	- -
Foster Care	3670 41.0%	3630 46.6%	40 3.4%
Group Home/Other	1039 11.6%	834 10.7%	205 17.4%
Institution	2423 27.0%	1493 19.2%	930 79.2%
Total	8961 100%	7786 100%	1175 100%

Out of Home Placements by Gender

	Agency	CYD	JJS
Male	5082 56.7%	4071 52.3%	1011 86.0%
Female	3679 43.3%	3630 47.7%	164 14.0%
Total	8761 100%	7701 100%	1175 100%

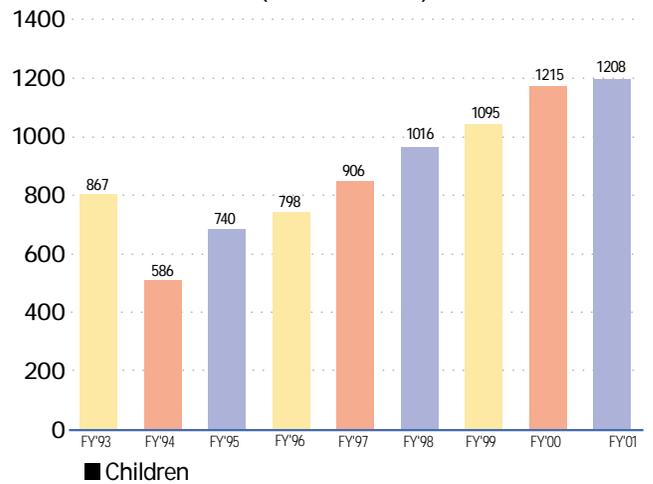
Dependent Placements

Out of Home Placements for Children and Youth in the Custody of the Department (Period: 6/30/01)



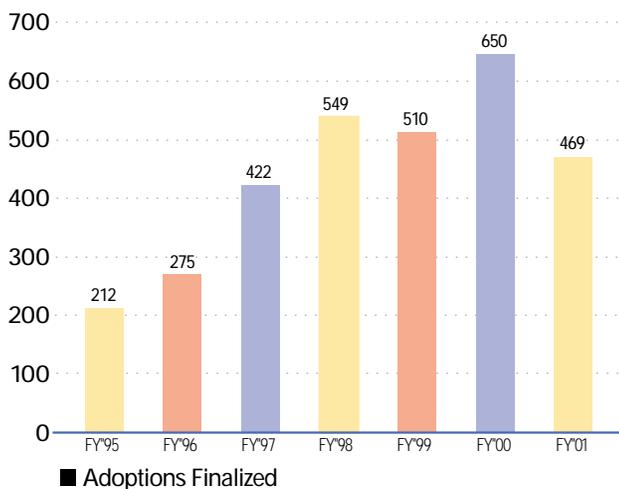
Delinquent Placements

Out of Home Placements for Adjudicated Delinquent Youth (Period: 6/30/01)



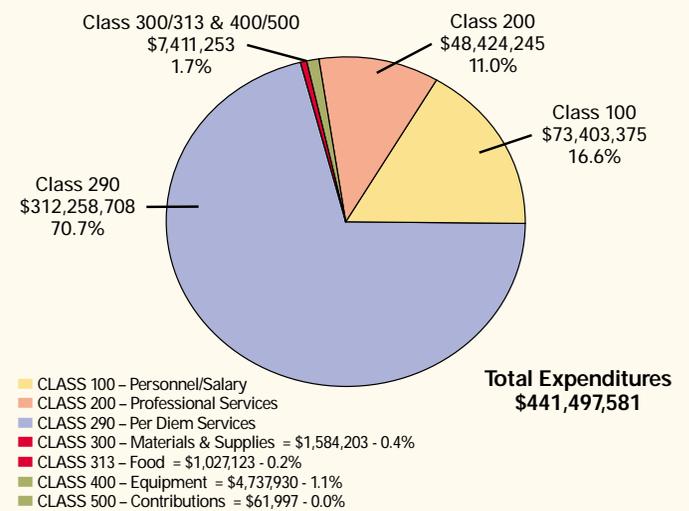
Adoptions Finalized

By Fiscal Year



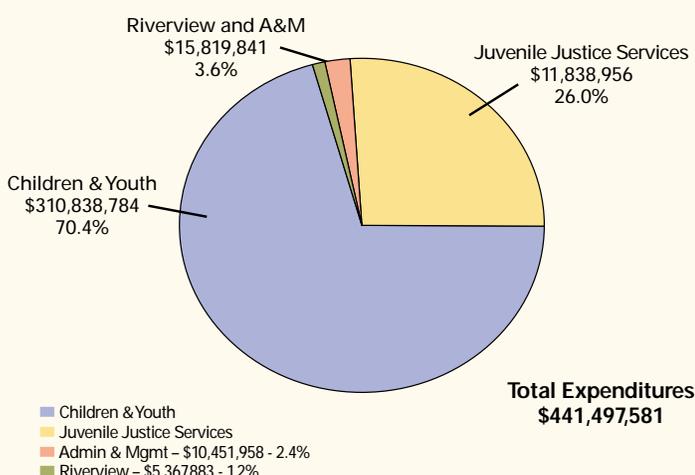
Expenditures by Class

Fiscal Year 2001



Expenditures by Division

Fiscal Year 2001



DHS Executive Structure

Alba Martinez, Commissioner

- Wanda Mial
Chief Deputy Commissioner, Program & Planning
- Anne Marie Ambrose
Deputy Commissioner, Juvenile Justice Services
- Russell Cardamone, Deputy Commissioner,
Administration and Management
- David Fair, Director,
Community-Based Prevention Services
- John McGee, Director of Operations,
Children & Youth
- Cheryl Ransom, Deputy Commissioner,
Contract Administration and Program Evaluation
- Liza Rodriguez, Communications Director
- Stella Tsai
Solicitor's Office, Chair Administrative Law

Communications & Public Awareness Initiatives

As part of the Department's increased focus on prevention and accessibility, the DHS Communications Office, in collaboration with the other DHS Divisions, is engaged in the planning and implementation of a number of internal communications, public education, awareness, and outreach and recruitment strategies.

DHS Internal and External Websites

- DHS Central, the recently launched internal website for DHS, is an online, multi-purpose toolbox for DHS staff with the goals of streamlining and expediting access to vital child welfare, juvenile justice, and agency-wide information and of simplifying some basic departmental functions.



- The second phase of the DHS technology revolution will be the launch of an Internet site. Its interactive capabilities will allow partners and the public to search for information on community-based resources and to provide feedback about services, programs, initiatives and other matters related to the well being of children and families in our city.

Staff Recruitment and Retention

- Recruiting and retaining top employees has long been a challenge for the Department. Efforts to fully staff DHS with highly qualified people are well underway to address these issues via an intensive staff recruitment campaign. The campaign includes radio and newspapers advertisements, a 24 hour "Jobs Hotline," informational packets, an e-mail address, priority processing of applications by Central Personnel, flyers, and community/institutional outreach. This strategy is resulting in significant improvements in the timely filling of vacancies. For information on applying for a DHS position, please call 215-683-4DHS and ask for the "Jobs Hotline".

Recruitment of Adoptive Parents

- DHS is currently collaborating with the National Adoption Center, the Statewide Adoption Network (S.W.A.N.), the Faith-based Partnership for Adoption, provider agencies, advocates, and other adoption stakeholders in the creation of a communications campaign and strategy designed to recruit adoptive parents for Philadelphia's children. The public outreach campaign will employ an array of media and recruitment strategies to inform the general public of the need for more adoptive parents, significantly increase

The Holidays Are Upon Us.



All He Wants Is A Family.

This is the time of year when people give thanks and gather their family near. Right now, there are 200 Philadelphia children who have no family to call their own. If you have love, patience and commitment, pick up the phone and change a life.

1-800-TO-ADOPT
Ask for the "PhillyKids Connection"

Sponsored by the Philadelphia Department of Human Services



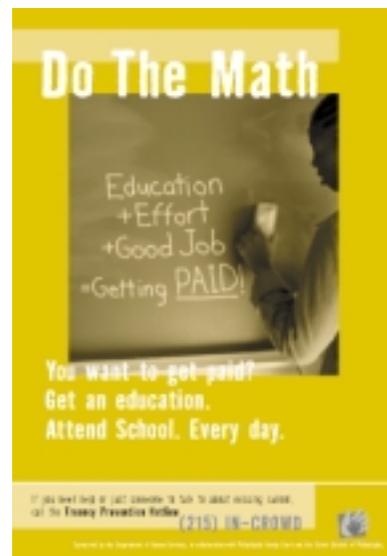
the pool of potential adoptive families, and ultimately impact the number of children adopted in Philadelphia. For more information on adopting Philadelphia's children in waiting, please call the "PhillyKids Connection" at 1-800-TO-ADOPT.

Parenting Collaborative

- In keeping with its emphasis on prevention, DHS is developing a comprehensive parenting education initiative that will include a major communications component. *Helping Hands*, the first city-wide parenting resource directory was published Fall 2001 in collaboration with Philadelphia Citizens for Youth and Philadelphia Safe and Sound. An Updated Edition will be published this spring with 47 new DHS-funded programs. Plans are being developed for a Summer/Fall 2002 launch of a parenting public awareness campaign. The advertising will direct people to call the (215) PARENTS line, where they will be assisted with information and referrals to appropriate programs and resources. To order a free copy of *Helping Hands*, please call 215-PARENTS or 215-683-4DHS.

Truancy Prevention - 215 IN CROWD

- Last spring, DHS launched a public awareness and outreach initiative to help raise awareness about the truancy crisis in Philadelphia and connect youth and adults to truancy prevention resources in their communities. A series of posters, featuring messages of support and carrying the hot line phone number (215) IN-CROWD, were created and mounted in venues where children tend to congregate when not in school, such as fast food establishments, malls, corner stores, video arcades and the like. This initiative was re-launched this winter and some major corporations – such as ACME supermarkets and Hudson Bank – have signed on to display the posters. DHS also co-sponsored this year's Powerhouse concert as part of a collaboration with Power 99 to reach youth with a "stay in school" message.



Customer Service

- The DHS Customer Service Initiative seeks to improve the Department's responsiveness to our clients, providers, partners, and public in general by opening up new avenues of communication, providing a mechanism for the timely resolution of complaints, and building community-resource information and referral capacity for the Department. An easy-to-remember central phone number – (215) 683-4DHS – has been created and is being advertised and promoted within the many communities DHS serves.

WINDS OF CHANGE:

A NEW ERA OF ACCOUNTABILITY AT DHS *(continued from page 1)*

delivery and the development of new prevention strategies. Some of the major programmatic initiatives in this new division include:

- **The establishment of a system of voluntary services for families who, after investigation, are not found to require SCOH or other intensive DHS services** - An internal referral network between DHS Intake and DCBPS will link eligible families to a variety of voluntary, community-based services.
- **The reform of the Family Center Network** - The purpose of the reform is to re-direct these centers so that there is a greater emphasis on direct services to families considered to have a high potential of involvement with the child welfare or juvenile justice systems.
- **The expansion of services to youth referred to the Family Court's network of Regional Truancy Courts** - Expanded services will include: better and more coordinated linkages to behavioral and physical health services, earlier intervention through the School Attendance Improvement Project, and a public awareness campaign attached to a truancy prevention referral service.
- **The establishment of a Parenting Education and Support Collaborative** - This collaborative involves a broad spectrum of parenting education and support services coordinated by DCBPS in collaboration with public and private partner agencies. After conducting a meta-analysis of research on parenting education approaches and models, and developing basic standards and outcome measures for parenting education programs, DCBPS implemented a Request for Proposal process to enhance the capacity of existing community institutions used by families (health clinics, child care programs, block associations, church groups, etc.) to provide intensive parenting education to families already seeking services, as well as to expand the number of parenting support groups targeted to specific populations of parents and caregivers. Forty Seven new parenting programs began in February of this year.
- **The expansion of After-School Programs** - New funding will help DCBPS create at least 2,000 new after-school program slots for Philadelphia school children, and will help solidify the efforts to provide quality after-school programming.
- **The implementation of the Nurse-Family Partnership** - This inter-agency initiative targets 400 women who are pregnant with their first child in neighborhoods with very high rates of reports of abuse and neglect. The project, using a nationally-recognized and well-researched model that has shown reductions in abuse and neglect in the short term and delinquency in the long run, provides nurse home visitation to new mothers during pregnancy and for the first two years after birth. Services provided through this program include direct linkage to health and human services, medical screenings, counseling, transportation, and parenting skills education.

Taking a Leadership Role in Developing Resources for Delinquent Girls: GIRL TALK II CONFERENCE

As part of the Department's priority to develop high quality resources and services for children and youth that enter the dependent or delinquent system, DHS took the initiative in December 2000 of bringing together city and regional professionals to learn about the challenges of addressing the needs of young women in the juvenile justice system and to share best practice models. This conference - *Girl Talk* - was a catalyst in the development of the first two gender-specific programs in Philadelphia to treat and rehabilitate delinquent girls: the Brown Schools and Congreso de Latinos Unidos.

Given the success of the first conference and its impact on public awareness about the issue and the concrete implementation of local strategies, *Girl Talk II: Choices, Challenges, and Changes*, took place December 1-4, 2001 in Philadelphia at the Convention Center. As a follow-up to *Girl Talk*, where the issues were first presented, *Girl Talk II* tackled the complexities of meeting the specific needs of girls in the system and provided information on customized strategies and models that can be used by professionals, parents and girls involved in the juvenile justice system. Recognized experts and practitioners in the field presented on themes and topics that impact the provision of services to females and reduce their further involvement in the system.

Moving Toward a Performance-based Contracting and Evaluation System

In its continuing efforts to advance to a more performance and outcomes-based system, DHS recently centralized its program evaluation for Children and Youth, Juvenile Justice, and Community-Based Prevention Services under its new Division of Contracts Administration and Program Evaluation (CAPE).

This strategic shift standardizes the articulation of outcomes by our programmatic divisions, streamlines and centralizes program monitoring and evaluation, and incorporates performance standards in the language of all contracts with providers.

CAPE will implement two major reform initiatives, including new Foster Care Standards and Performance-based Contracting, which will provide incentives for contracted agencies to achieve permanency for children.

With 82% of the Department of Human Services' budget allocated to purchased services, the contracting and performance evaluation processes are critical to the accomplishment of DHS' core mission to ensure the safety, permanency, and well being of children and families in Philadelphia.

CAPE's main functions are to: a) translate the Department's goals and objectives into service provision contracts, b) centralize the process of evaluating what works and which providers have consistently achieved optimal performance, c) assure that all contracts contain performance standards that monitor achievement, and d) assist DHS in making well-informed decisions about services funded by the Department.

This restructuring aims to hold DHS and its contract service providers to a higher standard and ensure that the children and families of Philadelphia are receiving the highest possible level of service.