

Wheels of Change Newsletter

*Chronicling change & challenge in
Wyoming's Juvenile Justice System*

Judge Gary Hartman, Retired, ghartm@state.wy.us

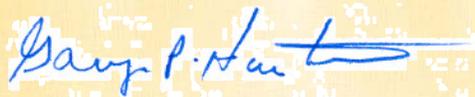
Legislators have left town. Spring is in the air. And work is just getting started on many things involving Wyoming's Juvenile Justice System.

Sheriffs soon will begin work on a uniform risk assessment for children, to be done as they are taken into custody. At the same time, new legislation also requires sheriffs to develop and implement uniform standards for juvenile detention facilities. It's work that will help keep youth and communities safe. Of course, that's the theme, always, of this newsletter.

Read about those efforts and learn about CHIPRA grants, placement rates and how your county still can get involved with CJSB funding.

As always, the information reported here cannot be taken as an endorsement by Gov. Freudenthal. If you like what you read here, or have ideas for topics, please drop me a note.

Sincerely,



Judge Gary Hartman, Retired

In this issue, you'll learn more about

- Blueprint Revision
- Legislative Update
- CHIPRA Grant
- MDT Templates: In Progress
- WDE Team Works for At-risk Youth
- CJSB Contracts Awarded
- Counties Move Ahead
- DFS Says Placements Down
- Noteworthy



*If you'd like to respond to one of these articles or contribute your own writing,
please e-mail ghartm@state.wy.us*

Blueprint Revision

It's an effort to keep up with changes in the behavioral health field

Wyoming has launched a multi-agency project to update its control plan titled, "Reclaiming Wyoming: A Comprehensive Blueprint for the Prevention, Early Intervention and Treatment of Substance Abuse."

The revision of the Blueprint is an effort to keep up with changes in behavioral health and provide a vision for how those elements can be used. The revised Blueprint serves a roadmap to provide consumers, providers, legislators, policy makers and stakeholders with a shared vision of Wyoming's substance abuse and mental health system. For more information or to participate in the project, go to www.wyo-blueprint2010.com.

~Eydie Trautwein
Department of Health

Legislative Update

Changes will require risk assessments, implementation of detention standards

On March 4, Governor Freudenthal signed into law HEA 0005 (HB12) and SEA 0009 (SF9). HEA 0005, required sheriffs to develop a uniform risk assessment to determine placement of a child taken into custody before that child's court appearance. SEA 0009, required sheriffs to develop and implement uniform standards for juvenile detention facilities.

SF12, a bill which would authorize municipalities to allow a circuit court to hear municipal violations passed the Senate but failed in the House.

Wyoming Gets CHIPRA Grant

The federal grant improves health care quality and delivery systems for children

Wyoming has been awarded a federal grant to help improve health care quality and delivery systems for children with serious behavioral health disorders whom have already enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Wyoming will use the federal grant to implement and evaluate provider performance measures. The state also will use health information technologies such as pediatric electronic health records. A key planned strategy is the use of a care management entity to monitor and administer mental health services provided to eligible Wyoming children.

The new grant is funded by the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA). The Wyoming Department of Health (Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division and EqualityCare) worked together with the departments of Corrections, Family Services, Workforce Services and the Governor's Office to prepare the application.

For more information about the grant, contact Eydie Trautwein, Interagency Coordinator with Wyoming Department of Health, 777-6493.
~Eydie Trautwein
Department of Health

MDT Templates: In Progress

Who gets to vote remains a discussion point

The Rules Committee continues to revamp a template for the Mutlti-disciplinary Team Report as well as a referral template to help DFS caseworkers and MDT facilitators. Templates should provide some uniformity and reduce the amount of writing required on the reports.

Who gets a vote is still under discussion.

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Disappointed, WDE Plans

Department believes Wyo. Schools need to improve services to at-risk youth

The Wyoming Department of Education was disappointed by the failure of legislation to improve services to at-risk students in our districts.

WDE has proposed specific intervention and services for students in elementary grades. The proposal would also have required learning plans for students identified as at-risk. WDE had also advocated the requirement for transition plans for students in court placed and other institutional settings.

We continue to believe Wyoming schools need to improve services to students at-risk of failure in school. WDE has established an at-risk program team to continue work in this area.

Other areas of legislative focus may provide additional opportunities for improved services. For example, a recent review of early reading programs will lead to additional emphasis on early reading and intervention efforts.

~Tim Lockwood
Department of Education

CJSB Contracts Awarded

There's still time for other counties to apply

Contracts awarding grants for the development of Community Juvenile Services Boards (CJSBs) have gone out to Sheridan, Campbell, Teton and Crook counties.

These contracts are for a 27-month period (April through June 2012). Any county which did not previously apply can send a letter of intent to apply and request funding for the biennium which starts on July 1.

For further information contact Jeff Herb at (307) 777-3336. Herb is a program analyst for the Department of Family Services' Juvenile Services Division.

Counties Move Ahead

2 counties on track with detention

Natrona County is moving forward with plans for the new 24-bed juvenile detention facility to be built in Casper.

County officials and the architect are meeting with potential bidders to pre-qualify for the bidding, which could be completed by the middle of May. They anticipate contracts being signed and construction commencing by the middle of June.

Sheridan County had two applicants for the staff secure facility, Normative Services Inc. and Volunteers of America. VOA was picked to construct and operate the staff secure facility in Sheridan.

DFS Says Placements Down

Fewer children, youth in placement

Currently, Wyoming has 1,139 children in out-of-home placement. Seven hundred and fifty-nine of them are being served by DFS' Protective Services Division, while 380 are being served by Juvenile Services.

The protective services numbers are down from a high of 833 in July 2009 while the number from juvenile services is also down from a high of 422 in April 2009.

Noteworthy

The State Advisory Council on Juvenile Justice will hold a public meeting in Gillette on April 28 and 29.

There will be a forum on Community Juvenile Service Boards and a tour of Gillette's new juvenile detention facility.

Local legislators and judges will participate in a luncheon Wednesday April 28.

For more information, call Lauri Lamm, 777-5536. Lamm is a program analyst for the DFS' Juvenile Services Division.

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