DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILIES

Making a Difference for Children, Families and Communities

A Progress Report

Keeping Families Together and Preventing Placements

- 1,175 more families (41%) receive services in cases where the children are living in the home
    - Sept. 2008 --- 4,010
    - Jan. 2002 --- 2,835
- 1,064 fewer children (16.7%) are in out of home care as the result of abuse or neglect compared to 2004 and 1,724 fewer children (24.6%) compared to 2000
    - Sept. 2008 ---5,277
    - Jan. 2004 --- 6,341
    - Jan. 2000 --- 7,001
- Approximately $44 million in contracted services was expended in SFY08 to help keep families intact (excludes DCF personal services).

Better Interventions Bring Lower Levels of Repeat Victimization

- A critical indicator of the quality of services is the measure of children suffering repeat maltreatment (abuse or neglect).
    - The percentage of children who are victims of repeat maltreatment has fallen from 9.4 percent in the 3rd quarter of 2004 to 5.9 percent in the 2nd quarter of 2008.
    - The Department met the Exit Plan goal in the last five quarters and kept repeat maltreatment below 6 percent in the last three quarters.

More Family Care

- Children entering care are more likely to be placed in a family setting (foster care, relative care or special study home). Children placed with a family increased by 15 percentage points since 2002.
    - CY2002 -- 57 percent of children placed in a family setting
    - CY2007 -- 72 percent of children placed in a family setting -- the highest on record

Timely Permanence and More Permanent Homes

- Over the eight quarters ending April 2008, the three measures of timely permanency (adoption, subsidized guardianship, and reunification) have met the goal in 20 of the 24 possible occasions.
- Compared to the 1st quarter of 2004, the percentage of children adopted within 24 months has more than tripled for each of the last eight quarters.
    - 2004 1st Quarter -- 10.7 percent
    - 2006 4th Quarter through 2008 1st Quarter -- 33 percent to 41.5 percent

- During state fiscal years 1997 to 2005, an average of 615 permanent homes (both adoptions and subsidized guardianships) were found annually for children in foster care -- more than four times the number in 1996. In FY2008, 634 adoptions were finalized and 234 subsidized guardianships granted for a total of 868 new permanent homes.

A More Fluid System For Meeting Behavioral Health Needs In The Least Restrictive Treatment Setting

- There are 340 fewer children (38.2%) in a residential program:
    - 889 in April 2004 compared to 549 in September 2008.
- There are 160 fewer children (32.6%) in an out of state residential program:
    - 491 in Sept. 2004 compared to 331 in September 2008. Of those out of state, 74% are in New England.
- Community based behavioral health funding totaled $69 million in SFY08 or more than double the amount spent in SFY02 ($32M).
- Therapeutic Group Homes: Since 2005, DCF has established 54 therapeutic group homes for children with behavioral health treatment needs. Approximately 273 children receive intensive clinical services in the community as a result of this initiative.
- Intensive in-home clinical services and family support services are available to approximately 2,300 children and their families. Current in-home services, which were virtually non-existent prior to 2004, include:
    - Multi-Systemic Therapy
    - Multidimensional Family Therapy
    - Intensive In-home Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services
    - Family Support Teams
    - Intensive Community Family Support Services
    - Functional Family Therapy; and
    - Family Based Recovery and Building Stronger Families (See above under Keeping Families Together)

Reasonable Caseloads Support More Intensive Work With Families

- DCF social worker caseloads are range from 15 to 20 cases, which is in line with CWLA national standards. Prior to the Consent Decree, according to anecdotal information, workers typically had caseloads of 40 to 60 cases.

More Individualized Services For Families

- Resources for flexible, timely and individualized assistance have increased more than 400 percent since SFY04 when DCF's flexible fund expenditure was approximately $5 million. In SFY08, DCF provided approximately $27 million in various forms of individualized assistance, which is helping to keep families together, reduce the number of children entering care and provide stability and permanency for children.