

**REPORT OF THE
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**STUDY OF BARRIERS
TO ADOPTION**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 35

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
1999**



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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Clarence H. Carter
Commissioner

January 18, 1999

TO: The Honorable James S. Gilmore

and

The General Assembly

The report contained herein is pursuant to the House Joint Resolution 264 as approved by the 1998 General Assembly.

As required by House Joint Resolution 264, the Virginia Department of Social Services studied the laws and policies that may impede adoption of children with particular attention given to impediments to the adoption of older children and the adequacy of financial assistance for adoption. The results of this study can be found in the attached report.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clarence H. Carter".

Clarence H. Carter
Commissioner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This study of barriers to the adoption of children in Virginia responds to House Joint Resolution 264.
- This study also responds to the request of Delegate Robert G. Marshall, sponsor of House Joint Resolution 264, to include a third issue for study.
- Currently, about 22% (1,706) of the children in foster care have the goal of adoption. With increased emphasis on adoption and the special needs of children in foster care, adoption subsidy cases are growing about 10% annually. Adoptive families need supportive services because the adopted child's special needs and emotional problems can cause family breakdown resulting in the child re-entering the foster care system.
- Recent changes that strengthen and improve the foster care and adoption programs have created significant workload demands on local social workers. Specifically:
 - The Court Improvement Project, which requires faster action and greater accountability with courts, intensifies work and increases staff time in court.
 - Federal and state adoption requirements, designed to move children through the system into adoptive homes more rapidly, call for increased efforts to secure adoptive placements for those children in foster care by removing legal impediments to the adoption process.
- A consultant group of twenty-one experts in the field of adoption and pregnancy counseling issues was established. This group met for two days and was charged with the task of identifying barriers and making recommendations for the elimination of the barriers for each of the study objectives.
- This study was charged with addressing three issues relating to the adoption of children in Virginia:
 - **ISSUE ONE:** The need to help children in foster care achieve the goal of adoption more quickly so that they are not further traumatized by not having a permanent attachment to a family, and
 - **ISSUE TWO:** The need to ensure that children with special needs receive the financial assistance they need in order to obtain a stable, permanent home through adoption.
 - **ISSUE THREE:** The need to educate unwed, pregnant women and their families to get them to view adoption as a viable option in their choices of dealing with pregnancy resolution.
- Each of these three issues was assessed from several perspectives: societal, psychological, legal, and public policy.

- As a result of this study, a **fourth issue** was identified:
 - The need to thoroughly assess the present structure of adoption service provision in the State to determine whether there is a more effective and efficient way to provide adoption services to children and families.
- The major barriers and recommendations are included as a part of the narrative of this study.
- The major recommendations for the elimination of barriers for **Issue One** include:
 - Implementing the recommendations of the legislative study on Foster Care and Adoption Staffing Needs (The 1998 Appropriation Act, Item 400G) to increase staffing in local agencies by adding 172 additional local social workers and 20 supervisors in foster care and adoption;
 - Educating local departments of social services and Community Policy, and Management Teams (CPMT's) about the criticality of using CSA funds to purchase adoption services for children in foster care; and
- The major recommendations for the elimination of barriers for **Issue Two** include:
 - Allocating additional funds for contracting with private child placing agencies to provide adoption services for children and their families.
 - Continuing to support families adopting children with special needs through adequate funding for the adoption assistance program.
- The major recommendations for the elimination of barriers for **Issue Three** include:
 - Developing a module on adoption to be included in Family Life Education curriculum provided in public schools in Virginia;
 - Conducting a public awareness campaign to educate the general public and other professionals about adoption; and
 - Working with organizations such as CareNet, which is a crisis pregnancy counseling center, to develop educational courses on adoption to be included in their counseling sessions with unwed, pregnant women.
- Implementation of the recommendations for the first three issues will involve additional public education efforts, additional funding and additional staff.
- Findings from this study indicate a need to establish a joint legislative committee to study the feasibility of restructuring adoption services in Virginia.

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INTRODUCTION

Study Request

- ❑ House Joint Resolution 264 requests a study of the laws and policies that may impede adoption of children with particular attention given to:
 - impediments to the adoption of older children; and
 - the adequacy of financial assistance for adoption.
- ❑ In addition to the above issues, the patron of the bill asked that the study include an assessment of barriers to unwed, pregnant women choosing adoption as a viable option in their choices of dealing with the pregnancy.

Study Objectives

- ❑ To examine the barriers to adoption of older children, children with special medical needs, sibling groups, and minority children.
- ❑ To examine whether financial assistance is adequate to help children in foster care who have special needs achieve the goal of adoption.
- ❑ To examine how to educate unwed, pregnant women and their families to get them to view adoption as a viable option in their choices of dealing with the pregnancy.

Study Approach

- ❑ A consultant group of twenty-one experts in the field of adoption and pregnancy counseling was established. This consultant group was composed of adoption workers from local departments of social services and private child-placing agencies, attorneys who specialize in the area of adoption, a director from a nationwide pregnancy counseling center, the executive director of Virginia's One Church One Child Program (which is an organization that specializes in the recruitment of families for African-American children), and representatives from the Supreme Court of Virginia, the Virginia Institute for the Developmentally Disabled, and the Virginia Department of Health.
- ❑ The consultant group met for a two-day retreat and was tasked with identifying barriers for each of the study objectives and recommendations for elimination of the barriers. Each of the three study objectives was assessed from four perspectives: 1) societal issues, 2) psychological issues, 3) legal issues, and 4) policy issues.

- ❑ Delegate Robert G. Marshall, patron of House Joint Resolution 264, attended the first day of the retreat and presented the challenge to the consultant group.
- ❑ Consultations were held with the Virginia Department of Education to explore the feasibility of adding modules on the issues of this study to existing family life curriculum.
- ❑ Research was conducted on each of the three issues using the resources of the Virginia State Library, the Virginia Commonwealth University Library, and the Internet. The purpose of the research was to collect qualitative data related to the study objectives.
- ❑ Other current articles and studies on each of the three issues were reviewed, including studies conducted as a part of Virginia's Court Improvement Project and the legislative study on foster care and adoption staffing needs of local departments of social services (The 1998 Appropriations Act, Item 400G).
- ❑ Several other states were contacted to obtain information on recent studies that have been conducted and efforts being made to eliminate identified barriers. Georgia and Oklahoma have recently conducted studies of adoption services and both have recently changed, as a result of these studies, from a locally administered system to a state administered system of adoption services.

Background

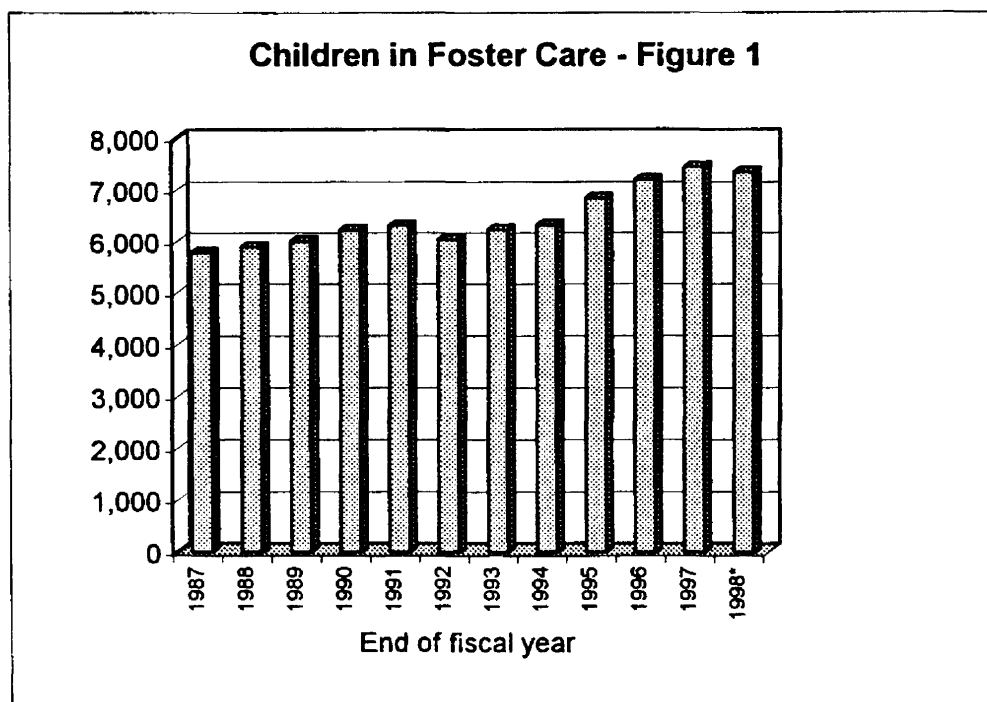
The *Code of Virginia* (§63.1-25, 63.1-55, 63.1-56, and Chapters 11 and 11.1) addresses responsibilities of the state board of social services and the 122 local departments of social services related to adoptions.

- ❑ By *Code*, adoption services are to be provided to children in the custody of local departments of social services and children placed for adoption directly by the birth parents.
- ❑ By *Code*, subsidy payments are to be made to the adoptive parents and other persons on behalf of a child in the custody of the local board of social services if it is determined the child is a child with special needs and the adoptive parents are capable of providing the permanent family relationships needed by the child in all respects except financial.
- ❑ By *Code*, the state board of social services has responsibility for promulgating rules and regulations necessary to carry out child welfare programs.

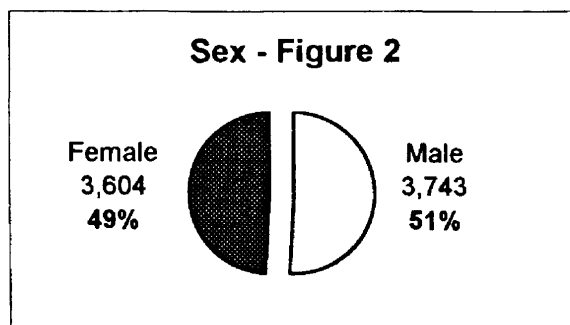
THE CHILDREN

Children in Foster Care

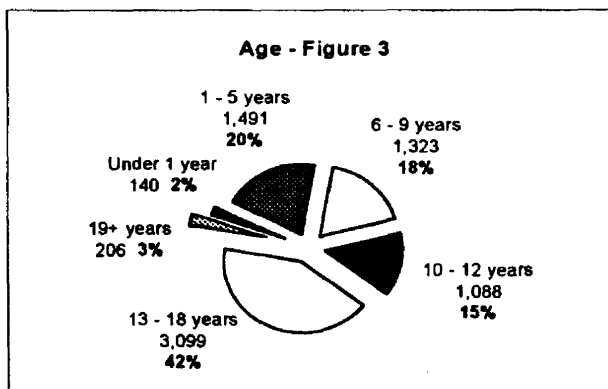
- According to the Virginia Client Information System (VACIS), as of December 31, 1997, 7,347 children were in foster care. Over the last ten years, the number in care has been increasing, as shown in Figure 1, after a decline over the previous decade.



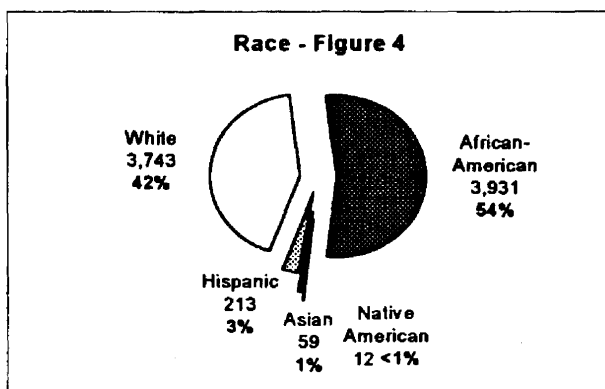
- Of the 7,347 children, slightly more are males.



- Almost half of the children in care are teenagers.

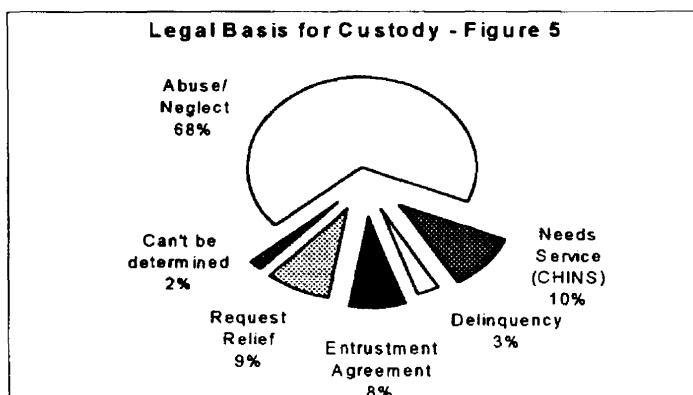


- Over half are African-American and about 40% are white.



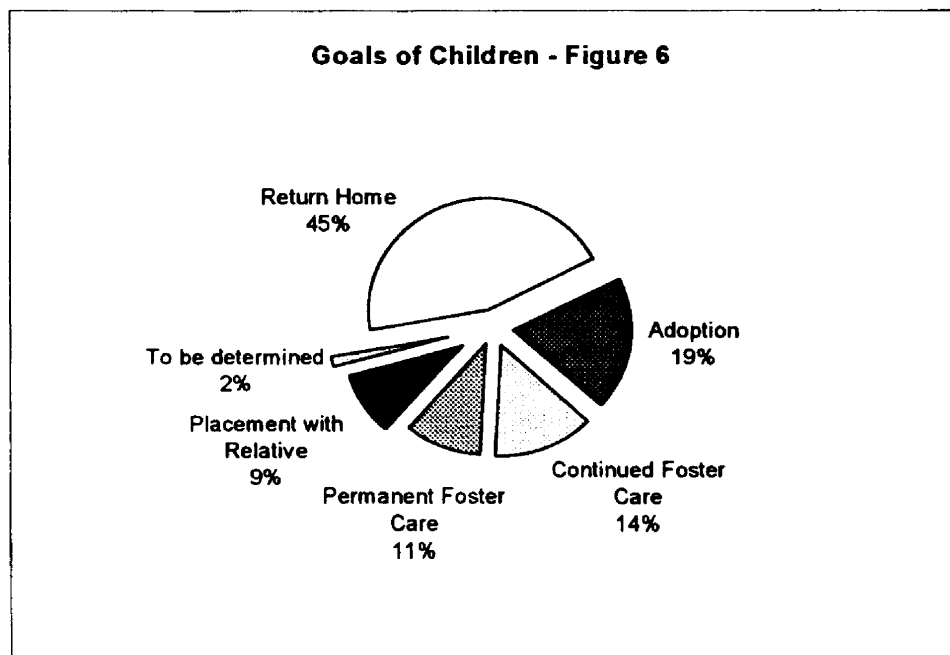
Reasons for Entering Care

- Children enter care primarily because of abuse or neglect, although other reasons for coming into foster care include children in need of services, parents requesting relief of custody, and entrustment agreements.



Goals of Children in Care

- ❑ Once in foster care, the social worker, in conjunction with the court, family, and other involved individuals, establish a goal for permanency for the child. The foremost goal considered is return to their home/family. When that is not feasible, other alternatives are considered, including placement with relatives or adoption. Older children may have a goal of independent living. Other goals include permanent or continued foster care.
- ❑ Social work staff in larger local agencies may specialize in the area of adoption, overseeing those children for whom *all* parental rights have been transferred and a permanent adoptive placement is needed. Independent living may be another area of specialization for staff.



THE ISSUES

ISSUE 1

HOW DO WE HELP CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE ACHIEVE THE GOAL OF ADOPTION MORE QUICKLY SO THAT THEY ARE NOT FURTHER TRAUMATIZED BY NOT HAVING A PERMANENT FAMILY?

BACKGROUND

- ❑ Social workers report that children coming into foster care now have more severe handicapping conditions and behavioral problems than in past years, resulting in more critical situations demanding greater attention and services.
- ❑ Additional federal and state requirements in foster care and adoptions have resulted in increased time per case of social workers. Some of the more significant changes include the following:
 - **Court Improvement Project**, which requires faster action with courts, intensifying staff work and increasing staff time in court.
 - **Federal Adoption Requirements** designed to move children through the system more rapidly, call for increased efforts to secure adoptive placements in a more timely manner for children in foster care with the goal of adoption. Other federal mandates imposed on the State prohibit the denial or delay of an adoptive placement based on race, color, or national origin or on the geographical location of the adoptive family.
- ❑ The recent legislative study on Foster Care and Adoption Staffing Needs (The 1998 Appropriation Act, Item 400G) found that, as of June 30, 1998, 731 local department of social service workers carried at least one foster care and adoption case. The average caseload was 19.5 per full time employee social worker. This included:
 - 7,756 foster care children, 1,585 other families at risk of foster care placement, and 372 families seeking stepparent or parental placement adoption services.

For children in foster care, this figure counts only the child as a case. It does not count the mother and father of the child or other family members to whom the agency must also provide services. Considering that there are 7,756 children in foster care, counting both a mother and a father for each child, this adds an additional 15,512 individuals that must be provided services.

- These same workers are also responsible for 3,213 adoption subsidy cases, 4,880 foster homes, and 456 adoptive home approvals, although these numbers have not been factored into the average caseload.
 - In addition, 38 supervisors reported carrying some of the cases factored into the average but their time has not been factored in.
- Due to requirements of the recently enacted federal Adoption and Safe Families Act, children who have been in foster care for 15 out of the most recent 22 months must have a petition filed to transfer *all* parental rights unless there is a compelling reason not to petition. This means that by November 1999, it is estimated that there will be 1,944 additional children who will need adoptive homes. Prior to the passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, the number of children needing adoptive homes at any one time was around 500.
- Virginia has made a commitment to participate in a national initiative to double the number of children adopted by the year 2002. As a result, the Department of Social Services has made funding available to local departments of social services to develop creative ways to achieve adoption for children in their custody in an expedited manner. Requirements for local agencies to draw down this money include collaboration with other public agencies and the development of partnerships with private child placing agencies.
- The Department of Social Services has contracted with private child placing agencies to provide support to local departments of social services since the mid 1980's. Currently, the Department funds seven contracts with private and public agencies for the provision of adoption services and one contract with Virginia's One Church One Child Program which recruits prospective adoptive families for African-American children.
- The Department of Social Services is in the process of computerizing the Adoption Resource Exchange of Virginia so that pictures and narratives of children waiting for adoption can be featured on the Internet, as well as in the photo-listing which is published monthly by the Department.
- As a result of the Court Improvement Project, sponsored by the Supreme Court of Virginia, legislation was passed by the 1998 session of the General Assembly which requires that a report be submitted by local departments of social services to the juvenile court within six months following transfer of *all* parental rights and every six months thereafter until finalization of the adoption. In response to this legislative mandate, the Department of Social Services developed a format entitled "The Adoption Progress Report". The Report specifies for the court the efforts made by the local agency to achieve the goal of adoption for children during the preceding six months and the efforts that will be made, if necessary, during the upcoming six months.

BARRIERS

The barriers that have been identified below are considered by the Department of Social Services to be the major barriers to achieving adoption for children in the foster care system more expeditiously.

- The majority of workers providing adoption services are carrying cases other than adoption. Consequently, adoption is given less priority than the more crisis-oriented programs such as child protective services and foster care.
- Some local departments of social services are not providing adoption services for children and families in their locality. They are not preparing children for adoption, recruiting adoptive families for the children in their care, or conducting adoptive home studies for families that have expressed an interest in adopting special needs children.
- Most of the children in foster care who need adoption services are children with special needs and the majority of workers who are providing adoption services are not adequately trained to provide adoption services for special needs children.
- Adequate efforts are not being made by local departments of social services to recruit prospective adoption families that reflect the population of waiting children.
- Community Services Act (CSA) funding is not being fully utilized to purchase adoption services for children in foster care in some localities.
- Staffing in the adoption program at the central office of the Department of Social Services is insufficient to provide the leadership needed by local agencies to achieve adoption for waiting children in a timely manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ Implement recommendations of the legislative study on Foster Care and Adoption Staffing Needs (The 1998 Appropriation Act, Item 400G).
 - This study demonstrated the need for 172 additional local social workers and 20 supervisors in foster care and adoption.
 - Without adequate staff, children placed in the care of local departments of social services are at risk of remaining in government custody too long and not receiving the services essential to achieving adoption.
 - With adequate staff, local departments of social services would be able to reduce caseloads per worker and be able to better meet new requirements of federal

and state laws, move children out of the system more rapidly, and better service children and families.

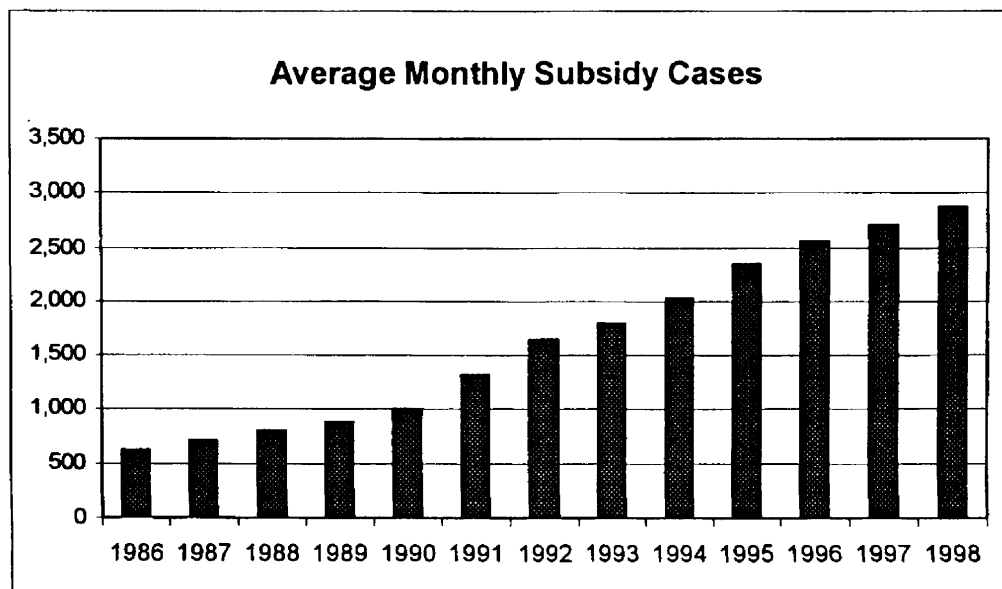
- ◆ Educate local departments of social services and Community Policy, Management Teams (CPMT's) about the criticality of using CSA funds to purchase adoption services.
- ◆ Allocate additional positions in adoptions at the State level to provide greater guidance, technical assistance, and oversight to local departments of social services. The Department has recognized the need for additional adoption staff at the State level and is allocating positions to eliminate this barrier.

ISSUE 2

HOW DO WE INSURE THAT CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS RECEIVE THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THEY NEED TO OBTAIN A STABLE, PERMANENT ADOPTIVE HOME?

BACKGROUND

- ❑ There has been a paradigm shift in adoption. In the past, adoption was governed by principles now considered false. For example, at one time it was believed that once finalized adoption plays no part in the lives of those involved. Professionals in the field of child welfare now recognize adoption as a life long experience and understand the criticality of providing services before, during, and after finalization of the adoption.
- ❑ To ensure adoption services after finalization, the department of social services has administered the Adoption Assistance Program since 1974. Adoption Assistance is a means of providing a money payment and/or services to adoptive parents on behalf of a child with special needs. The purpose of adoption assistance is to facilitate the adoption of children who are considered hard to place because they have special needs and few families are available. Without adoption assistance, these children are likely to remain in long-term foster care.
- ❑ Children who have been adopted from the foster care system are eligible for adoption assistance, if they have special needs. In December 1997, 2,918 adopted children received adoption assistance. As shown in the following table, the number of children receiving adoption assistance has grown significantly in the last ten years.



- ❑ Adoption assistance can include a regular monthly payment and/or coverage for medical and other special services.
- ❑ Although all families receiving adoption assistance may not require significant assistance from social work staff, staff do become significantly involved with families beyond the finalization of the when an adoption is at risk of disruption. Some families require intensive adoptive family preservation services and some children are requiring costly residential treatment services. When an adoption disrupts, the child returns to the foster care system.
- ❑ Due to successful family preservation efforts, the children entering foster care who will eventually require adoption services are those with more severe problems than ever before.
- ❑ The federal government, as well as child welfare professionals, recognizes the criticality of providing services to families adopting children with special needs after the adoption has been finalized. As a result, Subpart 2 of the Family Stability and Support section of the Adoption and Safe Families Act mandates that 20% of the funding allocated for family preservation be used for adoptive family preservation services. Consequently, the Department of Social Services will be allocating approximately \$700,000 to local departments of social services, private child placing agencies and community organizations through a Request For Proposals (RFP) process for the provision of adoption services to children and their adoptive families.

BARRIERS

The barriers that have been identified below are considered by the Department of Social Services to be the major barriers to ensuring that children with special needs receive the financial assistance they need to obtain a stable, permanent adoptive home.

- *122 different local departments of social services currently administer adoption assistance agreements. As a result, children across the state are not receiving consistent services.*
- The mission of the adoption assistance program should be to provide children and families with the services needed to maintain the adoption while at the same time ensuring accountability for the expenditure of public funds. However, since only a few workers responsible for negotiating adoption assistance agreements specialize in this area, many workers currently negotiating adoption assistance agreements are not skilled in the art of negotiation and are not knowledgeable of the policies and procedures governing adoption assistance.
- Funding for the adoption assistance program is not stable. Funds are allocated on a two-year budget cycle and, until this past year, the adoption assistance program has been historically under-funded. Families who may be interested in adopting children

with special needs, especially the child's foster parents, are not willing to assume the financial burden associated with the special needs of the child without greater assurances of assistance from the state. It is not unusual for an adoptive family's health insurance to be maxed out, leaving the child without insurance. Some families have even experienced bankruptcy because of the cost for medical care of their adopted child.

- As determined by the Department's recent study on Foster care and Adoption Staffing Needs (The 1998 Appropriation Act, Item 400G), additional resources are needed to provide adoption services to children in foster care. In addition to increased staff in local departments of social services, greater utilization of the private sector to assist local agencies with the provision of adoption services is needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ Allocate additional funds for contracting with private child-placing agencies to provide adoption services for children and their families after the adoption has been finalized.
- ◆ Continue support of families adopting children with special needs through adequate funding for the adoption assistance program.

ISSUE 3

HOW DO WE EDUCATE UNWED, PREGNANT WOMEN TO GET THEM TO VIEW ADOPTION AS A VIABLE OPTION IN THEIR CHOICES OF DEALING WITH THE PREGNANCY?

BACKGROUND

- ❑ Adolescent pregnancy, childbearing, and child rearing are issues of major concern due to their pervasive health, economic, and social consequences.²
- ❑ About one million American adolescents under the age of 20 become pregnant each year. Of those teens who become pregnant, about 40% have an abortion, 13% miscarry, and close to half give birth.³
- ❑ In recent years, few adolescents have chosen to resolve an unplanned pregnancy by placing the child for adoption. In the United States, the percentage of those who resolve an unplanned pregnancy through adoption has declined from 14% in the early 1970's to less than 3%.⁴
- ❑ Adoption is seen, as the most "evil" of three options (abortion, motherhood, and adoption), as it is perceived as a kind of double death. First, the death of self, as the woman would have to accept motherhood by carrying the baby to term. The second death is the death of the child "through abandonment".⁵
- ❑ A 1991 study cited by The National Council For Adoption Factsheet showed that programs that included discussion of adoption with clients, compared to programs that did not, were seven times more likely to have teens make an adoption plan.⁶
- ❑ In Virginia in 1996, 5,331 teenagers induced terminations of their pregnancies. One hundred seventy-seven of these teenagers were younger than 15 years of age; while 1,923 were between the ages of 15-17. Total induced terminations of pregnancy were 25,752. Of these, 14,591 were by white women while 9,646 were by African American women.
- ❑ Pregnancy counseling center staff advise that adolescents would be open to communication, information, and education on adoption.⁷

BARRIERS

The following have been identified by the Department of Social Services to be the major barriers to choosing adoption over abortion:

- The need for early education of youth on issues related to teen pregnancy resolution, which include adoption as a viable option, is not generally recognized.
- Representatives on the consultant group from crisis pregnancy counseling centers advise that their centers are not providing information on adoption to women during their counseling sessions. They also advise that, in their experience, hospital social workers are not mentioning adoption as a viable option to unwed mothers who have just given birth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section provides broad recommendations for the elimination of barriers.

- ◆ Develop a module on adoption to be included in Family Life Education curriculum provided in public schools in Virginia.
- ◆ Conduct a public awareness campaign to educate the general public, family members of unwed, pregnant women, and other professionals about adoption.
 - Work with a professional advertising or marketing agency to develop advertisements for the broadcast and print media.
 - Develop brochures for placement in strategic locations including drug stores, community meeting places, and religious institutions.
- ◆ Protocol for counseling women in crisis pregnancies should include presentation of the adoption choice and its benefits. This protocol should be used by all crisis pregnancy counselors regardless of their place of employment, i.e., crisis pregnancy centers, public health facilities, hospitals, and clinics. Inherent in this recommendation is the expectation that such counselors would be properly trained and adequately informed about the adoption option. This recommendation could be accomplished by working with CareNet to develop an educational course for their voluntary counselors.

ISSUE 4

In the course of identifying barriers to the adoption of children for this report, it became apparent that there is an additional issue that should be addressed. This issue is:

HOW CAN ADOPTION SERVICES IN THE COMMONWEALTH BE PROVIDED IN A MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANNER?

BACKGROUND

- ◆ Adoption services in the Commonwealth have traditionally been provided through local departments of social services.
- ◆ Since there are 122 local departments of social services in the Commonwealth, adoption services are not applied consistently across the state. For example, one locality may purchase recruitment services from a private agency using CSA funds while an agency in another locality may not be able to use CSA funds for purchasing adoption services. Another example relates to the provision of adoption assistance to achieve the goal of adoption for a child with special needs.
- ◆ Some agencies embrace the concept that adoption assistance helps achieve adoption for children that would otherwise grow up in the foster care system, while other agencies continue to question why adoptive families need to be subsidized.
- ◆ To be successful in achieving adoption for the kinds of children needing adoptive homes, agencies must utilize a wide variety of skills and knowledge, not only through the service of their own staff, but also through collaborative efforts with other professionals and agencies. Yet, staff turnover among the 122 agencies contributes to the problem of having inadequately prepared staff providing adoption services to children and families.
- ◆ Local agency staff perceive children in the custody of their agency as “their children” and turf issues often prevent agencies from working collaboratively with other community agencies, private child-placing agencies, agencies in other localities, and out of state agencies to achieve adoption for “their children”. The result is that children are being retained in foster care for longer periods of time than necessary. With the new requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, another result if this perception cannot be overcome, is the potential loss of federal funding in the adoption program.
- ◆ Several other states have addressed these problems by changing adoption services from locally administered programs to state administered programs. This provides the state with enhanced ability to ensure that policies are enforced and that workers

providing direct services are adequately trained and skilled. It also ensures that workers are specialized in adoption and do not carry other caseloads.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ Establish a joint subcommittee to study the benefits of restructuring adoption services in the state.

APPENDIX

1998 SESSION

981967324

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 264

Offered January 26, 1998

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study adoption laws and policies that may impede the adoption of younger children.

Patrons—Marshall, O'Brien, Sherwood and Weatherholtz

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, it is generally recognized that there are more couples wishing to adopt than there are children available for adoption; and

WHEREAS, it is less frequently recognized that the longest waiting lists are for the adoption of healthy infants; and

WHEREAS, older children, children with special medical needs, and children for which parental rights are in question are harder to place; and

WHEREAS, not only are older children more difficult to place, children who are transferred from unsuitable parents to a succession of foster homes may not receive the stability and consistent nurturing desirable for healthy emotional growth, making subsequent adoption more difficult; and

WHEREAS, certain laws, policies, and costs may further impede adoption, particularly for harder to place children; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study state laws and policies that may impede the adoption of children. The joint subcommittee shall consist of nine members as follows: five members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and four members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

The study shall give particular attention to: (i) impediments to the adoption of older children, children with special medical needs, sibling groups, and minority children; and (ii) the adequacy of financial assistance for adoption, particularly for children with special medical or emotional needs. The study shall also take notice of the findings of any study completed by the Supreme Court on the termination of parental rights.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$5,400.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the, upon request.

The joint subcommittee shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1999 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for processing legislative documents.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

981967324

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Official Use By Clerks			
Passed By		Passed By The Senate	
The House of Delegates			
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Clerk of the House of Delegates		Clerk of the Senate	

FOOTNOTES

1. Figures on children in foster care in this study are based on December 31, 1997 data as the department is in the process of converting cases from its old information system, VACIS, to a new system, OASIS, and all cases are not in the new system correctly. Thus current data are not reliable.
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