



Virginia's child-serving agencies are improving the way we help at-risk children and their families to achieve:

- Success in life;
- Safety for children and communities;
- Life in the community;
- Family based placements; and
- Life-long family connections.



Virginia Children's Services Practice Model

We have developed a common philosophy and set of values that has helped to shift practice to achieve better outcomes for youth and families.

We believe:

All children and communities deserve to be safe.

In family, child, and youth-driven practice.

Children do best when raised in families.

All children and youth need and deserve a permanent family.

In partnering with others to support child and family success in a system that is family-focused, child-centered, and community-based.

How we do our work is as important as the work we do.



Key Outcomes to Date December 2007 - Present

- A 48% drop in the number of children in group based care.
- A 22% drop in the number of children in foster care.
- An increase in discharges to permanency from an annual average of 62% to 70%. Last month was 82%
- A 58% increase in spending for community based care while overall annual expenditures decreased by 4% (\$36M).

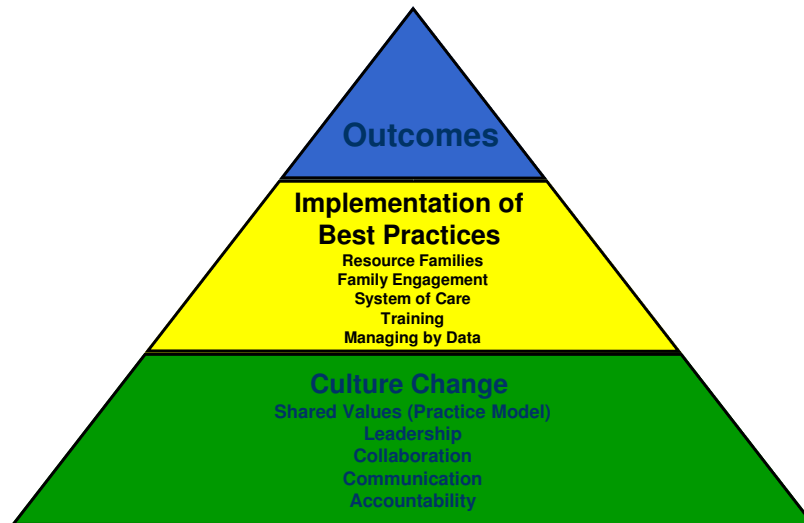


Next Steps: Moving from Child Welfare to All Children's Services

- Of those youth in Virginia who have mental health needs, only 1 in 5 receives appropriate treatment.
- 65% of children involved in the Juvenile Justice system require mental health treatment and many of these are in the correctional system in the first place simply as a result of their mental health issues.
- More than one-half of children discharged from Virginia Juvenile Justice facilities are re-arrested within a year of discharge.
- Less than 5% of children in foster care are being cared for by immediate family members (well below the national average of 25%).
- Approximately 30% of youth in foster care age out without a connection to a permanent family. We remain last in the country.



Transformation Strategy for Change



What If?

We placed a priority on prevention and early-intervention services to help keep children and families together, avoid more costly and restrictive out-of-home placements, and reduce the burden on families.

We developed a full array of community based private and public mental health and substance abuse services for children and families regardless of referral or funding source.

We streamlined service delivery, state policy, and regulation across child serving departments at the state and local levels.

We increased the uniformity of the child serving system statewide so that families throughout Virginia, regardless of the jurisdiction in which they live, can access appropriate services.

We trained our current and future workforce to treat and support children and families with evidence-based, best practice services.

We developed child specific and systemic data measures across the child serving departments of state government that will have the capacity to track, monitor, and report on child and family outcomes and desired system changes.

We fully implemented the practice and policy changes across the child serving departments of state local government as recommended by the Transformation.

What is holding us back?

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