

Memorandum

To: ECCEC members

From: Nikki Anderson

Date: January 25, 2012

Re: Crisis Intervention Agency Presentations to CSC

At the December meeting of the Community Services Committee we heard feedback from crisis intervention agencies regarding the trends and emerging issues that they are seeing. After listening to their presentations, I felt that there were several themes that should be shared with the ECCEC to help in guiding the goal/priority setting process. Although all of the testimony was valuable, for the purposes of this memo I am focusing on the comments from the three agencies that receive funding through the ECCEC – The Center for Families (Respite Center), Rainbow Project, and Canopy Center. The concerns that were raised are as follows:

- Agencies are seeing unprecedented levels of homelessness and deeper poverty than they have ever seen. Children are living in increasingly dangerous situations.
- There is a lack of childcare for homeless parents who are trying to find work or secure housing.
- County funding and other resources are shrinking.
- Heroin use and mental health issues are major problems for many parents seeking services from these agencies (often serving as barriers to service).
- Childcare is needed when parents are in court for legal matters. Agencies are even seeing child abuse occur IN the courthouses.
- There continue to be large increases in the number of Spanish speaking clients.
- Agencies have been forced to cut staff hours (e.g. Parent Stress Line is now open 4 hours less per day).
- Parents are unable to meet their most basic subsistence needs, so parenting issues are often overlooked.
- The tough economic times are forcing many victims (and their young children) to return to abusive households.
- Food costs are sharply increasing and thus creating additional burdens on agency budgets.

cc: Community Services Committee members
Bill Clingan
Monica Host