

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

August 28, 2012

Enhancing Mental Health Services and Preventing Crossover into Probation of Transition Age Foster Youth

In Los Angeles County, a significant number of youth between the ages of 12 and 18 who are in the foster care system are in danger of "crossing over" to the probation system. Approximately 100 youth currently under DCFS jurisdiction get arrested each month. According to the 2011 Conrad N. Hilton Report (the Report), "these Crossover youth experience the most negative personal outcomes and the highest level of public service costs." (www.hiltonfoundation.org/foster-care-and-juvenile-justice). The Report further states that "...82% of Crossover youth receive public welfare benefits (General Relief, CalWorks, Food stamps or Medi Cal) during their first four years of adulthood." The report also states that since 2002, in the initial four years following exit from their respective County systems, the average per-person public service utilization costs across all domains for the crossover group (\$35,171), was more than double that of youth in the Juvenile Probation (JP) (\$15,985) and Child Welfare (CW) (\$12,532). It is, therefore, in the interest of Los Angeles County to protect

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the welfare of vulnerable youth by prevention and early intervention. Such measures will, in addition, save substantial costs of social services presently being provided to the crossover population. According to a memorandum updating a report submitted by the Probation Department to the Board of Supervisors in August, 2010, the County is now paying \$307 per day or \$110,000 per year for the Camp beds and the halls cost is now \$466 per day or \$167,700 per year. This is about a 10% increase from 2010.

In an effort to prevent "Crossovers," the Delinquency Prevention Pilot Project (DPPP) was developed by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), in partnership and with the support of Casey Family Programs and the Children's Research Center. The DPPI Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) uses an assessment tool created by the partnership to identify youth in foster care who are at a high risk of crossing over to the delinquency system. The assessment tool is currently being tested in four offices (Compton, Glendora, Palmdale, and South County) as part of the pilot project. Thus far a report by DCFS identifying delinquency prevention youth by risk level shows that, between 20.6% and 36.3 % of the youth assessed each month in the four offices were assessed at High risk of crossing over. Four Psychiatric Social Workers (PSWs) are needed as part of the Multi-Disciplinary Teams to provide intensive services to those youth who are assessed at high risk of crossing over to delinquency.

In addition, in January of 2012, the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court at Los

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Angeles County Superior Court ordered the countywide expansion of the 241.1 Crossover Youth Pilot Project (CYPP). This pilot also uses Multi-disciplinary Teams, but it occurs in the Delinquency courts. Some but not all of the courts are covered. Eleven additional PSW's are needed to insure coverage of every court with the Multi-disciplinary Teams.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DIRECT THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO WORK WITH THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH TO:

1. Develop a *proposal* to request MHSA funds to provide the 4 Psychiatric Social Workers (PSWs) needed to begin immediately in the four pilot offices as part of the Delinquency Prevention Pilot Project Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT). This proposal should include in future MHSA Fund planning process an allocation for the funding of an additional 5 PSWs for the expansion of this prevention program once an evaluation of the project has been conducted warranting expansion.
2. Develop an assessment tool to determine the efficacy and outcome of the Delinquency Prevention Pilot Project in order to evaluate the DCFS project after 12 months (the court Project is already being evaluated).
3. Identify MHSA funding for an additional 11 PSWs to begin immediately in the MDTs for the Countywide expansion of the 24.1 Crossover Youth

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Project as ordered by the Presiding Judge. This will allow placement of a PSW in every delinquency courtroom.

4. Determine whether Los Angeles County PSWs should be transferred to these positions or whether current mental health providers in the community can be identified who have expertise working with at-risk youth in foster care between the ages of 11 and 18, and whether their current contracts can be amended to include this work. In addition provide a time frame for implementation of all 15 PSWs to begin working as part of the MDTs the two pilot programs.
5. Identify a *process* to streamline the proposed funding of the DCFS Delinquency Prevention Pilot Project using Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds into the existing stakeholders' process and to report back to the Board of Supervisors (Board) in writing within 5 working days. This should be done concurrently with paragraph 1 above.

The Chief Executive Officer and the Director of the Department of Mental Health should report back to the Board of Supervisors prior to submitting the FY2012/13 MHSA Annual update to the Board of Supervisors. The CEO should in addition, identify additional sources of funding, if any, which may be available to support these projects.

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