

**MINUTES OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE  
(Senate Bill 3, 2009 Session)  
February 9, 2010**

The second meeting of the Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice (Senate Bill 3, 2009 Session) was held at 9:00 a.m. on February 9, 2010, at the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Room 4412, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Room 3137, Carson City, Nevada.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie, Chair  
Senator Valerie Wiener, Vice Chair  
Senator Barbara Cegavske  
Senator Allison Copenig  
Assemblyman John Hambrick  
Assemblywoman April Mastroluca

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

Rex Goodman, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division  
Donna Thomas, Secretary, Fiscal Analysis Division

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:**

Nicholas C. Anthony, Senior Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel  
Sara L. Partida, Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel

**EXHIBITS:**

- [Exhibit A:](#) Meeting Packet and Agenda
- [Exhibit B:](#) Attendance Record
- [Exhibit C:](#) Presentation on the Financial Assistance for Former Foster Youth (FAFFY) Program, STEP UP, Administered by Child Focus
- [Exhibit D:](#) Spreadsheet on the Number of Children Transitioning Out of Foster Care, Amber Howell, Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services
- [Exhibit E:](#) Statistics for 2009 – Child Prostitution Cases – Lieutenant Karen Hughes, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- [Exhibit F:](#) Spreadsheet on Child Death Reviews – Amber Howell, Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services
- [Exhibit G:](#) Changes to Nevada Law or Policy in Implementing Fostering Connections, Office of the District Attorney, Clark County
- [Exhibit H:](#) Center for Law and Social Policy – Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (H.R. 6893) Summary

- [Exhibit I:](#) Nevada Juvenile Justice Commission Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) Efforts – Larry Carter, Assistant Director, Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services
- [Exhibit J:](#) Getting Ready for Kids and the Flu, State Legislatures, October/November 2009
- [Exhibit K:](#) Written testimony provided by Sam King, President, League of Woman Voters of Nevada
- [Exhibit L:](#) Community We Will, The Campaign for What's Possible for Children, Families and Southern Nevada

## **I. ROLL CALL**

Chairwoman Leslie called the meeting of the Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice to order at 9:05 a.m. The secretary called roll; all members were present.

## **II. OPENING REMARKS – Assemblywoman Shelia Leslie**

Chairwoman Leslie welcomed the committee members present in Las Vegas and noted the meeting was the second of four meetings of the Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice. She welcomed legal staff from the Legislative Counsel Bureau present in Carson City. Chairwoman Leslie said the agenda for the meeting was long and covered many different child welfare and juvenile justice issues. She reminded the presenters that handouts should be provided to staff in advance of the meeting so they could be included in the meeting packet. She stated that committee members liked to review the material before arriving at the meeting and having it in advance allowed the committee to engage in a better dialogue with the presenters. Chairwoman Leslie commented that interim committee meetings were less formal than meetings held during a legislative session. She welcomed public comment after each presentation, especially since the agenda covered many diverse child welfare and juvenile justice issues.

## **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 1, 2009, MEETING**

Chairwoman Leslie asked for a motion to approve the minutes of December 1, 2009.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 1, 2009, MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE.

ASSEMBLYMAN HAMBRICK SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### **IV. PRESENTATION ON THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH (FAFFY) PROGRAM, STEP UP, ADMINISTERED BY THE CHILD FOCUS ORGANIZATION**

Chairwoman Smith asked the presenters to state their name, title and affiliation when speaking. In addition, anyone testifying must turn their microphone on to speak and off to listen to avoid an echo and feedback in the sound system.

Ellen Lloyd, Director, Child Focus, introduced Dr. Stephanie Holland, Clinical Psychologist and founder of Child Focus, and Daria Mason-Davidson, Program Manager, STEP UP. Ms. Lloyd noted that the representatives from Child Focus would provide a presentation on the facts, realities, and unique circumstances that foster youth faced in the child welfare system. She thanked Chairwoman Leslie for the opportunity to provide testimony and looked forward to comments and questions from the committee after their presentation.

Dr. Stephanie Holland, Clinical Psychologist and founder of Child Focus referred to the handout, Presentation on the Financial Assistance for Former Foster Youth (FAFFY) Program, STEP UP, Administered by Child Focus, ([Exhibit C](#)). Dr. Holland testified that after working as a child psychologist for many years she was compelled to start a nonprofit organization to create opportunities for youth removed from their parents' care so they could become productive and functioning citizens of the community. Child Focus was created in 1999 to provide vital support services and resources to foster youth in southern Nevada. Child Focus had no custodial responsibilities and the services follow foster youth regardless of their residential placement in a continuum of care model. Dr. Holland noted that the intent of Child Focus was to meet children early in the system and stay connected with the youth throughout young adulthood. The key emphasis of Child Focus was to provide programming for youth separated from their siblings in foster care, improve the academic success for foster youth, and administer self-sufficiency programming for youth aging out of foster care.

Dr. Holland stated that 75 percent of youth in foster care were separated from their siblings; 70 percent of foster youth do not graduate from high school; nearly half of the homeless youth in southern Nevada have been in foster care; foster youth were twice as likely to become pregnant; and over 40 percent of the incarcerated population in the state has spent time in foster care.

Dr. Holland said that the community had a responsibility to provide choices and opportunities for foster youth, and she believed youth would take advantage of the opportunities if given the right resources. Unfortunately, Dr. Holland said that during the critical time of 15 to 17 years of age, when most adolescents were preparing for adulthood, youth in foster care have insufficient staff and resources to meet their developmental and emotional needs. Caseworkers were unable to fill the gaps due to heavy caseloads, and many youth choose emancipation and were anxious to leave the system not recognizing they would lose vital services once they exit care.

Continuing with her presentation, Dr. Holland indicated that most foster youth were not prepared for independent living when they reach the age of 18. In addition, many foster

youth have not graduated from high school, lack proficiency in basic math and reading, and do not have a drivers license because they lack the knowledge on how to obtain one. The majority of foster youth do not have checking accounts since banks require caseworkers to be liable as legal guardians; many youth had babies and were trying to raise families on their own, either their children or siblings; and some youth turn to illegal activities such as drug dealing and prostitution to support themselves.

Dr. Holland explained that youth who want to attend college have a difficult time navigating the complexities of the college application process with limited guidance and support. Foster youth not continuing their education have a difficult time obtaining a job with few skills, no diploma, no transportation, and limited job hunting knowledge. In addition, many foster youth have emotional obstacles that require mental health support, but few possess the insurance coverage needed in order to receive treatment.

Ellen Lloyd, Director, Child Focus began her presentation by stating that the STEP UP program provided funding to youth ages 18 to 21 years of age as they transition out of foster care. STEP UP was created by Assembly Bill 94 (Chapter 603, Statutes of Nevada, 2001) and the bill authorized county recorders to charge and collect certain fees, which funded FAFFY. The FAFFY dollars were distributed to Clark County Department of Family Services, who subcontracts to Child Focus for the actual provision of services. The FAFFY budget was used to help youth aging out of foster care with housing assistance, job training, life skills programming, education assistance, healthy living and mental health services, and medical services. The funding was awarded in three-year cycles, with the current cycle ending June 30, 2010. When FAFFY was created in 2001, it was administered by the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth. In 2005, Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth ceased administering STEP UP and youth were left without services. On November 1, 2005, the Department of Family Services (DFS) awarded the STEP UP contract to Child Focus and they currently remain the subcontracted agency.

Continuing, Ms. Lloyd stated that the FAFFY budget has declined from 2005 to 2010. She noted that in the early years the FAFFY budget was over \$1.0 million; however, during the time that Child Focus administered the contract the funding declined from \$980,000 to \$792,000. Ms. Lloyd stated that 90 percent of FAFFY funds must be spent on programming and services for the youth as required in statute. Child Focus receives 10 percent of the funds to cover administrative costs, and since it is insufficient to cover all the operating costs, Child Focus contributes approximately \$25,000 a year from their own fund raising efforts to make up the difference.

Ms. Lloyd stated youth were allotted a stipend of \$1,000 when they joined the STEP UP program, which covered general self-sufficiency expenses for the three years in the program. She explained if the stipend was paid to youth on a monthly basis, the \$1,000 was worth approximately \$28 a month. The expenses covered by the stipend require a formal request from the youth and receipts to show that the money was spent as agreed. In addition, youth in STEP UP that graduate from high school, either while in STEP UP or prior to joining, receive a stipend of \$1,000 to continue their education. Unfortunately, 70 percent of the youth do not graduate from high school, therefore, only a small portion of youth receive this particular stipend. Often youth that receive the

stipend purchase their first computer. STEP UP youth that work or go to school 20 hours per week, or a combination of the two, were eligible for rental assistance up to \$800 per month, which was paid directly to the landlord. Youth had a move-in allowance of \$1,000, which mainly covered security and utility deposits, and remaining money could be used for supplies for living. STEP UP also provided some emergency funding to youth; however, youth had to attend life skill courses to improve budgeting and spending habits if Child Focus had to provide emergency funding for more than two consecutive months.

Ms. Lloyd pointed out that there were two important benefits of STEP UP that were non-monetary; partnerships with community businesses; and volunteers and interested adults that provide life skills programming. She explained that the life skills programming was not a repeat of what youth were offered while in care at 15 to 17 years of age, and was a more practical program and timely use of information as youth become young adults. For example, youth were provided financial information on how to manage a checking account, what was credit and how to get credit and manage it appropriately. Youth learned how to obtain a drivers license, the legal requirements around leases, and how to avoid a scam and fraud, in addition to basic health care and when an annual exam was needed, because often youth do not receive that experience or training in foster care. Ms. Lloyd stated that life skills programming offered a wonderful partnership with the community and there were a variety of instructors volunteering their time, which offered a smart and healthy partnership. Ms. Lloyd indicated that the other non-monetary benefit of STEP UP was case management services. She noted that Daria Mason-Davidson, Program Manager, STEP UP, along with a case manager at Child Focus, provided individualized attention to STEP UP youth. Examples of assistance included; helping youth apply for jobs; obtain high school diplomas; find housing; referral to vocational resources; accessing Medicaid; and searching for doctors. In addition, STEP UP assists youth who become parents by purchasing essential items for the baby provided the youth have taken parenting classes. Unfortunately, Ms. Lloyd noted there were youth in STEP UP that needed referrals to substance abuse facilities, in addition to financial assistance of up to 50 percent of the cost of treatment.

Ms. Lloyd stated that STEP UP enrollment grew steadily in 2009 as the economy worsened in Clark County. As of January 2010, there were 155 former foster youth in STEP UP. In addition, 98 youth over the age of 18 were still in the foster care system and under the legal guardianship of DFS; and 55 of those youth were on independent living (IL) contracts with DFS. She noted that the STEP UP and the IL contract target the same youth; however, the key difference was STEP UP youth had to emancipate and exit foster care and youth on an IL contract were still within the foster care system. Foster care youth were eligible for scholarships, medical care, and financial assistance while in care that they were not eligible for when they exit foster care. Ms. Lloyd stated that there were circumstances when case workers, DFS, and other adults in the Child and Family Team recommend youth stay in the foster care system when they approach 18 years of age to take advantage of services they would not receive once they age out. Of the 155 youth in STEP UP in January 2010, approximately 40 percent met the work or school requirements to receive rental assistance; 20 percent were parents; and

9 percent were expecting a baby. Ms. Lloyd stated that 70 percent of youth interfaced with Child Focus for services during the month.

Ms. Lloyd stated that the process for aging out of foster care begins at age 15 and DFS has an Independent Living (IL) program to help youth age out of foster care beginning at age 15. Ms. Lloyd explained that the IL program is a very logical standardized process with assessments to see where youth were emotionally and psychologically, as well as assess their life preparedness skills to see what was needed to help them achieve independence at 18 years of age. Child and Family Team meetings were held on a regular basis to prepare youth 15 to 18 years of age to become independent adults. However, for a variety of reasons foster youth were reaching the age of 18 unprepared for life on their own. Often youth were behind academically in school and never graduate, lack skills to hold jobs that could pay a living wage, and too many become homeless or turn to illegal activities as a means of supporting themselves. Ms. Lloyd noted that DFS faced many economic challenges and it was virtually impossible to give the one-on-one attention youth needed in the critical years of 15 to 17 years of age, before they age out of foster care and become independent adults.

Ms. Lloyd stated that STEP UP was a choice for youth and not a mandate. When a teen was close to 18 years of age, a Child Focus case manager participated in the Pre-Exit Conference with the youth. The STEP UP case manager explained the benefits of the STEP UP program and provided documentation about its benefits, referral information for educational assistance, and medical information. If youth chose to join STEP UP, the case manager conducted a formal intake meeting with the youth, which included a personalized plan to help them transition to independent living by age 21. The case manager met with the youth on a quarterly basis for the first year, and biannually the subsequent years.

Dr. Holland stated that statistics indicate that 50 percent of youth aging out of foster care lack health insurance and these were the most vulnerable young adults in the most critical time of their life. Youth often had a long history of medical and dental neglect, many were having children of their own and in need of prenatal care, and a large percentage of youth were struggling with drug or alcohol abuse. Foster youth were provided with Fee For Service (FFS) Medicaid coverage when they enter the system and retain coverage only 30 days beyond exiting foster care. Unlike HMO Medicaid, FFS Medicaid provides comprehensive care and vital psychosocial rehabilitative services, which the HMO Medicaid did not provide. A majority of youth were unaware they must elect to continue Medicaid coverage through a confusing Medicaid application process. Dr. Holland noted that youth were presented the application for Medicaid at the Pre-Exit Conference and told to set up a separate appointment with the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) to complete the application process. This process was unnecessary and burdensome for youth with no transportation and little familiarity with health insurance, and often youth mistakenly sign-up for Medicaid HMO, rather than the FFS Medicaid that offered full coverage. As a result, few STEP UP youth have the insurance coverage needed as independent adults. Currently, of the 155 STEP UP youth; 17 had the FFS Medicaid comprehensive coverage; 44 had Medicaid HMO; 17 had insurance through the military or employers; and 77 (50 percent) had no insurance coverage of any kind.

Dr. Holland emphasized that Child Focus needed help to change the law so youth that transition out of foster care maintain their FFS Medicaid through the transitional period of 18 to 21 years of age.

Dr. Holland stated that the good news was that the child welfare community, nonprofit agencies and local businesses were filling the gaps to help DFS with limited resources. She said that life skills training were critical for youth to become successful and independent adults. Child Focus worked in collaboration with the child welfare community, as well as local agencies to reduce unnecessary duplication of services and to educate businesses about the basic living needs of these vulnerable youth. Businesses and donors were responding to these urgent requests and dedicating a portion of their philanthropy dollars to youth exiting foster care. Dr. Holland noted that national foundations, such as Casey Family Programs, have brought resources to southern Nevada to help Child Focus understand the fully loaded cost of the problems in the foster care system and engage the community in devising solutions.

Concluding her presentation, Dr. Holland stressed that similar to any vulnerable population, transitioning youth out of foster care happens one teen at a time. Nonprofits, local businesses and the community have stepped up and acknowledged their responsibility to help foster youth successfully age out of a complicated system.

Dr. Holland stressed that help was needed in three key areas:

- Preserve FAFY funding at its current level, so Child Focus could continue to do their part with other agencies and fundraising to provide the needed services for youth.
- Help youth retain FFS Medicaid automatically, eliminating the application process at 18 years of age.
- Consider rewriting the regulations to make life skill classes a requirement for monetary assistance, because simply helping out financially would not improve the odds for success, but enable youth to be dependent on the system and not on themselves.

Dr. Holland thanked the committee for their attention and concern on behalf of these vulnerable youth; she would be happy to answer any questions or address any concerns of the committee.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked the representatives from Child Focus for their presentations. She added that Child Focus was a great service to the state.

Senator Copenig disclosed that she was a board member of Child Focus. She thought the presentation from the representatives from Child Focus was beneficial and enlightening. Senator Copenig was concerned about the confusing Medicaid enrollment process and asked if there was a logical reason why youth had to reapply for Medicaid, or was that the way the process was previously done.

Dr. Holland replied that there was no logical reason why youth were not able to fill out the application at the Pre-Exit Conference or not automatically given FFS Medicaid coverage through the transitional period until 21 years of age.

Assemblyman Hambrick asked if Child Focus had the authority or capability to channel youth to non-traditional high schools, such as charter schools, which allowed the best chance of success for the youth.

Daria Mason-Davidson, Program Manager, STEP UP, replied that youth could be challenged to attend schools that were better suited for them; however, logistics played a huge part because of the location of the schools. In addition, some of the youth had children to take care of and needed to be close to them. She noted that youth were provided bus passes, so there was an opportunity if they needed to go across town to school; however, most youth choose to attend a local school.

Chairwoman Leslie referred to the FAFFY funding history on page 5, [Exhibit C](#). She remembered when the bill passed and was aware it took a long time to find a program like Child Focus willing to contract for services. Chairwoman Leslie was grateful for Child Focus and asked the representatives from Child Focus if they had a sense of why the funding decreased over the years. Ms. Lloyd replied that the FAFFY contract was renewed every three years. Depending on circumstances at the time of renewal, and the need to distribute the money to other FAFFY related services, DFS allotted a certain amount of money for STEP UP, and Child Focus worked with that budget. Ms. Lloyd believed the decline in the FAFFY funding was a result of conflicting needs.

Diane Comeaux, Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), stated that although she has not looked at the FAFFY funding recently she could address the significant drop in the history of the funding. She noted that DCFS built a large reserve in that budget account when the bill passed and had difficulty spending the money. As a result, there was a period of time where DCFS had a large reserve and what was coming in every year was what they were trying to spend down resulting in the higher numbers for 2006, which leveled out in 2010. She noted that the funding was generated from a fee paid when a document was filed with the Records Office. Ms. Comeaux believed the fee was tied to real estate and was unsure how stable that source would be in the future.

Chairwoman Leslie stated that she has not seen this program appear on the proposed list of budget cuts and the statute would have to be changed to access the funding. Ms. Comeaux added that the reserve balance has declined, so the funding was just what comes in yearly, and that amount was what DCFS was spending or getting out to youth on an annual basis.

Chairwoman Leslie noted that the STEP UP program served Clark County, and the Children's Cabinet, through Washoe County Social Services served Washoe County. She asked what program served the rural counties. Ms. Comeaux replied that the Family Resource Centers served the rural counties.



Chairwoman Leslie asked Ms. Comeaux if the counties reported on a regular basis. Ms. Comeaux said that the counties reported regularly and she would provide the current reports to the committee. Chairwoman Leslie asked if services for youth were consistent across the state. Ms. Comeaux replied that it appeared services were relatively consistent in the types of needs the counties had. She believed children in the rural counties were receiving full access to services with the exception of case management.

Chairwoman Leslie asked what it would take to change the Medicaid coverage for youth aging out of foster care. She asked if there were federal laws that interfered with the Medicaid state plan. Ms. Comeaux said it was her understanding that youth were categorically Medicaid eligible when they came into custody of the child welfare agencies; therefore, it was not an application process. The child welfare agencies input specific information into the Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth (UNITY) system, which was transmitted to the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS), before Medicaid was issued. Once the children were no longer in the child welfare agencies care or custody, they no longer qualify under that manner, so the application process was necessary in accordance with the federal requirements. However, Ms. Comeaux said DCFS and DWSS could collaborate to ensure the application process was easier and seamless to help eliminate the confusion for youth exiting care.

Chairwoman Leslie said that youth should be informed of the difference between Medicaid HMO and Fee For Service (FFS) Medicaid, which offered full coverage. Ms. Comeaux believed that youth had to choose FFS Medicaid so they were not automatically enrolled into managed care, and youth either got Medicaid HMO or FFS Medicaid or they had to opt out, which needed to be explained better.

Chairwoman Leslie explained that the Legislature funded the electronic application and it was her understanding that community groups like Child Focus could help youth with the application process. She would follow-up with representatives from Medicaid for clarification on the application process for youth aging out of the foster care system.

## **V. PRESENTATION ON THE TRANSITION OF YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE**

Amber Howell, Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), stated that currently Nevada provides services to foster youth up to age 21. Per statute, youth must be offered Independent Living (IL) Services by age 16. Statewide, there were approximately 891 youth aged 16 to 21 years of age in foster care. Ms. Howell said the actual IL services provided varied depending on the child welfare agency, but in general services provide assistance with daily life skills, education, housing, and employment. Upon leaving care, older youth were eligible for education and training vouchers and support from FAFFY funds. Since the age of majority in Nevada was 18, Ms. Howell said there were few youth who remain in foster care until age 21. Youth 18 years of age and older who were developmentally delayed and required intense ongoing case management were referred to adult mental health services for transitional planning services, and youth received a

full array of case planning services and social security disability payments. Ms. Howell explained that youth could not receive Title IV-E funds to cover housing if they remained in care. Nevada provides a wide variety of services to older youth aged 18 to 21, including case management, counseling and referrals, substance abuse, room and board, post-secondary educational assessment, and financial assistance. For the reporting period from August 2009 to December 2009, Ms. Howell said there were a total of 71 youth who exited foster care; 63 aged out; and 8 left foster care through emancipation, marriage, or other. Ms. Howell stated that specific to the child welfare agencies, 100 youth in Clark County; 11 youth in the Rural Region; and 25 youth in Washoe County were voluntarily receiving IL services.

Continuing, Ms. Howell said that the state underwent its second Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in September 2009 and 62 cases were reviewed statewide based on a number of items. One of the areas that the CFSR looked at was IL services and how those services were provided to youth. Ms. Howell noted that one of the findings of the CSFR was that IL services were not provided consistently and youth were not aware of what services were available and how to access services. The Department of Child and Family Services recently met with the child welfare agencies to work on its second Program Improvement Plan (PIP) and how to address the IL services throughout the state. Ms. Howell said that three specific strategies were addressed in the PIP; review IL initiatives in other states, including the involvement of external stakeholders and service providers; identify initiatives or strategies that Nevada could implement statewide to enhance the provision of IL services; and develop strategies and/or local memorandums of understanding (MOU) to achieve the identified strategies. Ms. Howell said those were the strategies identified to date based on the PIP activities that had to be finalized by March 1, 2010.

In addition, Ms. Howell said the state was currently looking at a National Youth in Transition Database, which was in relation to the Chafee Grant IL funds. She stated the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) required that Nevada establish a national database to track IL youth. The National Youth in Transition Database was a project created to address this specific need and all states were required to report on 58 different elements for a select group of IL youth at various timeframes. The outcomes tracked in the database include the number of youth who are pregnant, parenting, attending or completing high school or trade school, attending college, employed, unemployed, homeless or incarcerated. Ms. Howell noted that failure to comply with the reporting requirements would result in a reduction of Chafee Grant funds for the state; therefore, some of the primary areas of focus were creating a database within the UNITY system to identify and engage youth, with initial ongoing data gathering to track IL youth in more detail. In order to be successful, youth engagement was a key component in the success of the project, along with input and feedback from the three state child welfare agencies. Ms. Howell indicated that a statewide workgroup has been developed to carry out the activities, create policy, engage the youth in the process, clarify roles and establish data entry responsibilities to be included in policy to ensure reporting was consistent statewide. Ms. Howell confirmed that the child welfare agencies have met with UNITY representatives to upload data, the workgroups have ended, and the process was on target to meet the October 2010 completion date.

Ms. Howell said that the state received \$100,000 from Casey Family Programs to look at the IL practices throughout the state. She noted that the contract was specifically awarded to Face to Face Technologies, Inc. to review all policies in existence, conduct three on-sight work groups, and analyze any specific areas the state wanted to address. Ms. Howell explained that the idea of the review was to standardize IL services with the three child welfare agencies, and specific techniques include quarterly statewide meetings, development of an IL brochure, creation of posters, etc., that would provide better access to information. She noted that one thing identified during the PIP discussions was the possible changes that needed to be made to statute in order to assist IL youth. An area of concern was that FAFFY funds were only available to youth that have aged out of the foster care, which was difficult since the funds were typically used for housing. Ms. Howell believed it would be more beneficial if FAFFY funds were available to IL youth prior to the age of 18 to assist with job training and vocational skills and adequately prepare youth for adulthood, which was something DCFS intended to look at during the 2011 Session.

Concluding, Ms. Howell noted a lot of activities were identified around IL services and the areas to focus on to standardize services, how to reach youth so they were aware of the services available and how to access the services, which would be included in the PIP, starting in July or August 2010.

Chairwoman Leslie was confused whether the problem was the lack of money to serve the youth or was it the outreach issue because youth were not aware of the services available. Ms. Howell replied that it was a little bit of both; DCFS needed to do a better job within the policies and agencies to get the information out to youth and help them carry out the activities. In addition, there was limited funding to support those services; however, what DCFS could control was the things that needed to be changed to policy and practice.

Chairwoman Leslie stated that the FAFFY funding was set aside for a specific purpose, and she was unsure the answer was raiding that fund.

Kevin Schiller, Director, Washoe County Social Services, stated that the IL youth were the most challenging population in terms of service needs and improvement. He noted the IL service plan was in the PIP, and clearly the child welfare agencies needed to strive to improve in the area. He believed a key component was reaching youth earlier, around 15 years of age, because it was too late to reach youth at the point of aging out of care with the current system. Mr. Schiller said that Washoe County had a partnership with the Children's Cabinet on a model initiative to transition youth at a younger age, which was indicated in the PIP. Mr. Schiller noted another issue was that most youth in the system were traumatized by the system, so in the case management world, the child welfare agencies were often seen as the cause of their long stay in foster care. He stated that the contractual relationship with the Children's Cabinet has proven to be beneficial because it separated the system to a degree and created more of the mentorship program. Mr. Schiller indicated that the state of Iowa had a program that essentially funded a contracted agency within the community that supported mentoring, similar to the partnership with the Children's Cabinet. In light of future budgetary

constraints, one of the areas that the child welfare agencies were focusing on in terms of strategies with the older youth was whether the child welfare agencies could depend on a contractual relationship utilizing those funds to improve outcomes. From a caseload perspective, Mr. Schiller found that if they start earlier to reach the most difficult youth and separate the child welfare case manager from the contractor's case manager there were better outcomes because they separate from the system to a degree. Mr. Schiller noted there was always going to be financial constraints, but there were funds available and it was just how to use the funds earlier in a new model.

Chairwoman Leslie asked if this was something that could be matched with federal funds or was it purely state money. Mr. Schiller replied that youth would be able to access federal money to match as youth were close to aging out of foster care; however, there was dedicated funding once the youth were out of care and enter a voluntary agreement, which was why there was a separate funding source. Mr. Schiller believed that federal funds could be used to reach youth at a younger age and they were moving in that direction in the PIP.

Pat Hedgecoth, Manager, Rural Region, added that the child welfare agencies had a relatively new relationship with the Family Resource Centers, which she thought would be a positive relationship for youth because there was an agency in the community to obtain additional services, like parenting classes.

Chairwoman Leslie added that differential response results have been very good.

Senator Wiener asked how the child welfare agencies tracked youth after they exit IL care. In addition, how many youth were in voluntary agreements and were youth being informed of the options available when they exit IL care.

Ms. Howell replied that tracking youth was one of the stipulations in the Nevada Youth in Transition Database.

Mr. Schiller added there were 25 youth, post 18 years of age in voluntary agreements. He noted that Washoe County had transition plan meetings for youth approaching the age of 18; however, that transition plan was not very effective, so the focus was to reach youth at 15 to 15 1/2 years of age and provide mentoring to prepare them for independent living. He noted that it was not enough for youth to take a class or to talk to them about balancing a checkbook. Most people had a mentor at some point in their life – someone they looked up to and who guided them, which was the component the child welfare agencies were trying to look at with the transition plans. One of the components of the PIP and the review was how to look for those connections for youth on an ongoing basis – teacher, coach, relative, or even the parent that the child was removed from being a part of the child's life at a later age. Mr. Schiller expressed that the child welfare agencies were not good at looking for those connections throughout the life of the case, and as youth approach the age of majority, the child welfare agencies initially looked for the relative connections because that was what they did upon initial removal. However, the child welfare agencies lose site of that and were on a one-track plan and it was a combination of those two things that would help make a seamless transition.

Thomas Morton, Director, Department of Family Services, Clark County, commented that all of the things that Ms. Howell mentioned were occurring in Clark County. He noted that approximately three years ago Casey Family Programs helped Clark County with a process called Business Process Integration and one of the areas they focused on was independent living (IL). He noted that there were a number of things that resulted from that which were positive – the Foster and Adoptive Youth Groups, which were active and meeting in the state. Another project supported by Casey Family Programs was Project We Foundation, Inc., a brainchild of Las Vegas business leader and star basketball player, Jeff Penix. The Project We Foundation is a private organization dedicated to improving the lives of young people through participation in development programs focused on sports, music, grooming and fashion. Mr. Penix became involved in the fashion industry and along with Casey Family Programs, put together a project called Operation Head 2 Toe, which introduced youth to possible careers in the fashion industry and sports, not playing sports, but activities like making clothing or shoes used for sports. Mr. Morton said that one youth that went through the innovative program was admitted to a design institute in Las Vegas.

Mr. Morton commented that youth transitioning to adulthood were not a homogeneous group; unfortunately, existing legislation considered these youth to be a somewhat successful and homogenous. Mr. Morton's concern was what the child welfare agencies know about youth exiting care and what happens to them afterward then the trajectory that leads up to the point of youth needing independent living – why youth did not return home, why youth were not adopted, and most youth have had some period of time in the higher level of care system. Mr. Morton recently attended a meeting of urban child welfare leaders to see how other jurisdictions transitioned youth aged 18 in the children's mental health system exiting care to independent living and he found there were protocols and approaches for transitioning these youth into adult mental health services. Although, Clark County did not have a plan for youth that struggled significantly with mental health issues, he was concerned even if there was a plan that there was nothing to transition youth into anyway because of the budget cuts. In addition, Mr. Morton noted that another issue was youth with a Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) diagnosis or designation. He indicated that a recent report showed that only 152 youth were identified with SED diagnosis due to the way things were coded in the UNITY system. However, he was aware there were more youth with a SED diagnosis because there were 300 youth in treatment foster care, which required an Access One diagnosis. Of the 152 youth identified with SED, 58 percent were African-American. Mr. Morton could think of possible explanations for the disproportionate representation of African-American youth in foster care, but he could not think of any rational explanation as to why African-American youth were disproportionately diagnosed with SED than Latino or Caucasian youth. Another disturbing aspect was when he looked at youth with 10 or more placement moves, those youth were overwhelmingly African-American. He stated that 1 youth that came into care in 2006 had 53 placement moves, which involved 10 higher level of care placements and runaways, because runaways were coded in the system as a placement. Mr. Morton thought there were significant concerns within the IL population about children who have mental health issues and the need to look at the trajectory that

lead up to the point of turning 15 years of age, what that experience and birth family in the system, etc., means for the a transition plan. This was a good reason why just learning to balance a checkbook and ride the bus was not the end all, be all, for a number of the youth.

Chairwoman Leslie said that Mr. Morton brought up a good issue regarding youth with mental health issues. She worked in the adult mental health court in Reno and recalled that a child showed up to court on his 18th birthday without the help needed to transition from foster care and got into trouble the same day and was now in the adult system instead of a detention center. Chairwoman Leslie was interested in creative ideas and suggestions from the child welfare agencies on what needed to be done for that segment of youth, not necessarily raiding one fund to pay for it, but how a protocol could be implemented, because there was a gap between child welfare and the adult mental health system and youth were getting lost as a result of that transitional planning.

## **VI. PRESENTATION OF DOMESTIC SEX TRAFFICKING OF MINORS**

Karen Hughes, Lieutenant, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, stated that she was responsible for the Vice Unit, which investigated matters involving pandering of youth.

Lieutenant Hughes stated that the Vice Unit was specially trained with years of experience working with youth in high risk situations that forced them into a lifestyle of prostitution. She referred the committee to the handout, Statistics for 2009, Child Prostitution Cases, ([Exhibit E](#)). She explained the top page of the handout showed the 2009 statistics for prostitution offenses in the state. Lieutenant Hughes explained that in 2009 her team was successful in rescuing 155 youth involved in a lifestyle of prostitution. Since 1994, 1,859 youth were rescued from prostitution; many have returned to the lifestyle; aged out of the juvenile justice system; and become adult prostitutes who then recruit children into the lifestyle. Lieutenant Hughes noted that prostitution was a huge issue for the community, specifically Las Vegas, because of the unique landscape, which was different from other cities across America.

Lieutenant Hughes explained that there were enforcement teams in the Vice Unit that reached out to different venues where prostitution was prolific. Primarily, the enforcement team rescued juveniles in the community being forced into a life of prostitution by pimps. Often, youth solicited an undercover officer and unfortunately from that point the youth were incarcerated, although they are treated as victims. However, the incarceration affords the investigative team the opportunity to establish a relationship with the youth to help understand the conditions that forced them into making poor choices, which often were a result of a dysfunctional background involving sexual or physical abuse, chronic mental health issues, suicidal issues and a host of things contributing to their vulnerability and the choices made. Youth were preyed upon by the worst offenders in the community – men that go after young woman and exploit them into a life of prostitution. She stated statistics showed that a majority of the prostitution offenses involved young women; only two boys were identified in prostitution offenses in 2009, which was consistent through the years. Lieutenant Hughes explained that it was very difficult for the police department to turn that behavior around

and the resources provided through the juvenile justice system and Department of Family Services were instrumental in providing the resources and opportunities for youth to become healthy individuals. Lieutenant Hughes stated that youth age out of care at 18 years of age with the host of problems to carry with them. Lieutenant Hughes stressed that youth can become productive adults given the right resources to make that happen.

Lieutenant Hughes stated that two-thirds of youth with prostitution offenses in her jurisdiction in 2009 came from Nevada. She noted that there was a small influx of youth from other cities and states across the country, because the prostitution lifestyle involves a circuit where the pimps bring prostitutes and adults that work with them into different cities, but most youth involved in prostitution come from Las Vegas and other cities of Nevada. In addition, a disproportionate number of children were minorities; 52 of the 155 youth involved in prostitution offenses in 2009 were white females; the rest were African-American, Hispanic and Asian, with the largest proportion being African-American. She noted that those numbers and statistics have not changed over the years. Often, youth with prostitution offenses were segregated within the juvenile justice system because once incarcerated, they recruit other youth into the lifestyle of prostitution, which was the manipulation that was a prolific part of the lifestyle. Lieutenant Hughes stated the majority of the youth were between 15 and 17 years of age; however, there were youth involved in prostitution as young as 11.

Assemblyman Hambrick commented that he would rather use the word "buyer" than "john" and thought it would helpful to meet with Lieutenant Hughes and members of the committee to see how current legislation could be tweaked, because personally, he would like to go after the buyer. He noted that steps have been taken to go after the pimps under certain trafficking conditions, but they needed to deal with the day-to-day pimps that may not fall under trafficking and concentrate more on the buyer. Assemblyman Hambrick said that a prominent local defense attorney told him that the biggest fear of the customers was publicity; they did not fear jail or the financial burden, but publicity around an arrest. He stressed that the scourge had to be addressed and eradicated in the state.

Lieutenant Hughes commented that her department's first interaction with child prostitutes often were when they worked in an undercover capacity where obviously the buyer or john was a police detective, unless they happen upon an interaction of a buyer who solicits a young prostitute, which was a rare circumstance. Lieutenant Hughes was glad to hear that people were talking about the issues of child prostitution.

Chairwoman Leslie believed that Assemblyman Hambrick was talking about deterring people from soliciting youth. She said Lieutenant Hughes did a good job of outlining the problems; however, she asked if she had specific recommendations or solutions such as statutory changes or resource needs. Lieutenant Hughes replied she was aware that the police departments, as well as other agencies in Clark County and the state, were dealing with budget restraints and the economic backlash. Clark County and other agencies in the state needed to look for comprehensive ways to provide services to youth to get them well, because these youth were dysfunctional and different from other delinquent youth she has dealt with in her 25 years as a police officer. These youth had

a host of problems and people needed to come together with solutions about how to get those youth out of that lifestyle. She could provide investigators to put pimps behind bars and take every penny that they had, which was the focus over the last 2 years, but more attention was needed to help get youth get out of the lifestyle otherwise they would hook up with another pimp and the cycle continued. Lieutenant Hughes said she would put some thought into solutions and provide the committee with feedback and recommendations.

Senator Wiener stated that the handout, Statistics for 2009, Child Prostitution Cases, [Exhibit E](#), showed youth prostitution offenses that law enforcement knew about due to undercover efforts. She wondered if there was a sense about how large child prostitution really was in the state. Lieutenant Hughes replied that she did not have a sense of how large child prostitution was in the state and did not think there was an organization across America that knew the actual number of children involved in prostitution. Many of the children do not prostitute just to survive; they prostitute because they were recruited into that lifestyle by a pimp and the resources in law enforcement were not broad enough to see the whole picture. Lieutenant Hughes did not promote numbers being put behind child prostitution, because she was aware there was a hidden population of child prostitutes in the state and the only numbers they had were through undercover efforts or unless a child admitted to being a child prostitute. Lieutenant Hughes acknowledged that Las Vegas was a destination for youth prostitution.

Senator Wiener said that over the last few years the focus was putting pimps behind bars and taking all their resources. She wondered if those resources cycled into assistance programs for the youth victimized. Lieutenant Hughes said it was her understanding there were 11 seizure cases in 2009 and none of those cases involved pimps that were pandering children, just pimps that were pandering women, so those assets according to state law went to Clark County School District. She noted the assets seized were sold at auction and those resources were fed back into Clark County, and went to the school district. She indicated that to date, the police department did not have a child pandering case where the assets of the pimp were seized and used for resources to help the youth.

Assemblywoman Mastroluca noted that the handout showed there was a large jump in the number of juvenile prostitute victims between calendar year 2003 and 2004, and wondered the specific reason for the jump. Lieutenant Hughes replied that the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department became a part of the Innocence Lost National Initiative through the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and in conjunction with the Department of Justice. She said the police department partnered with the FBI and resources were given to the child welfare agencies for further investigation when youth were identified through enforcement efforts at 3:00 a.m. and the detective was off at that time. The child welfare agencies were able to talk to youth during that period of time, so she imagined that jump was around the time the national initiative started and extra resources were given to the agencies.



Assemblywoman Mastroluca asked Lieutenant Hughes if raising the age of consent in Nevada would make a difference. Lieutenant Hughes replied that raising the age of consent would not help. She explained that law enforcement did some work on changing the pandering laws during the last legislative session and the language still needed to be changed because the state's pandering statutes for children were not strong enough. Often, there were convictions that were outside the scope of a pandering charge, like kidnapping, sexual assaults, which required stronger penalties. She hoped that the law enforcement agencies would explore the issues with the Clark County District Attorney's Office and other people with an interest in the issue so that the penalties for pandering could be increased, specifically forced pandering.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Lieutenant Hughes for her presentation and stated that no one wanted youth to be exploited. She encouraged her to bring legislation back to the committee and communicate with the Public Defenders on the issue. She said that the citizens in the state should be aware if the state's pandering statutes were not adequate.

Chairwoman Leslie told Lieutenant Hughes that she would be happy to include her on a future agenda.

## **VII. PRESENTATION OF CHILD DEATH REVIEWS**

Amber Howell, Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, stated that Nevada had state and local teams that review child deaths. Child Death Reviews (CDR) in Nevada had two overarching goals – public awareness and prevention, and quality assurance and improvement, and there were three levels of oversight for the CDR activities to help achieve these goals. There were three regional CDR teams in each child welfare agency, in addition to the Administrative Committee and Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children. Ms. Howell noted that the Administrative Committee and Executive Committee educate their members about related prevention activities and public education work that could be implemented statewide to reduce duplication of efforts and ensure that the leading causes of death in children were addressed. The Executive Committee was specifically composed of representatives from the local CDR teams and made decisions about funding initiatives to prevent child maltreatment and death, which could be based on recommendations from the Administrative Team and annual child death data analysis. Typically, the local child welfare team reviewed child deaths and there were a certain number of recommendations that filtered to the Administrative Committee. The Administrative Committee discusses recommendations, such as writing letters to power companies or specific furniture companies to warn of the dangers that could lead to a death. Ms. Howell said that the Administrative Committee was also involved in activities related to public awareness and campaigns that were filtered to the Executive Committee, which was charged with dealing with those issues.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Ms. Howell if she had a hard copy that discussed the different committees and their responsibilities. She was familiar with the process because she sponsored the bill; however, she thought the other committee members were completely lost with the different teams and responsibilities. She asked Ms. Howell to

go over the different teams and their responsibilities in very clear language. Ms. Howell said she could provide a hard copy of the Child Death Report to the committee.

Ms. Howell explained that there were three teams at the local level – Clark County, Washoe County, and the Rural Counties, which were composed of law enforcement within the community, social workers, coroner's office and similar professionals. When a death occurred in the state, the team reviews the death to determine systemic challenges, lack of collaboration, or anything they feel was missed when the child was alive, and those recommendations were filtered to the Administrative Committee. The Administrative Committee was composed of child welfare agency directors, health department and other multi-disciplinary professionals at that level. The Administrative Committee reviewed the quarterly recommendations to see what areas to address; the areas that have to do with campaigning, public awareness and similar initiatives were filtered to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee was made up of representatives from the local teams and addressed the recommendations from the Administrative Committee.

Chairwoman Leslie said one of the criticisms of the child death review teams was that the structure was confusing and nothing happened in the prevention part. In Clark County, there were deaths as a result of children drowning, yet people have not seen a prevention campaign to address the specific reason for those deaths. Chairwoman Leslie asked if possible revisions to the law were necessary or was the current structure adequate. Ms. Howell replied that the child welfare agencies had suggestions and ideas to make the structure cleaner with less duplication of efforts.

Continuing with her presentation, Ms. Howell said that some of the activities that the Executive Committee specifically focused on during 2009 were the funding for the Fight Abuse Campaign, which focused on reducing child deaths from abuse. The campaign was initiated in April during Child Abuse Awareness month, in collaboration with the Nevada Children's Trust Fund and the Washoe County Health Department. The campaign was a multi-media effort that included radio, television, website and mobile advertising exposure. Another activity of the Fight Abuse Campaign was two live radio advertisements and two 30-minute radio interviews, one in Reno and one in Yerington with a DCFS child welfare district manager.

Another activity of the Fight Abuse Campaign was the funding for the development of the Can Prevent website, which was a critical public awareness tool that would result in ongoing collaboration with both the Executive Committee and the Administrative Committee. Information and resources on a variety of specific child death prevention topics would be included on the website to address all leading causes of child deaths. Ms. Howell noted that there was a significant spike in drowning of children resulting in a statewide mass mailing to state-licensed childcare providers, and specifically those in Clark County, providing water safety water tips and information on proper enclosures of water areas. In addition, there was an ongoing public awareness initiative that included bilingual brochures to educate parents of newborn infants and young children about safe sleeping environments. She noted that 60,000 brochures were distributed in 2009 and brochures continue to be produced and disseminated across the state. As part of the 2009 public awareness campaign, Can Prevent also sponsored a child abuse and

neglect prevention video competition and amateur professional videographers were encouraged to develop a 60-second public awareness message with a \$1,000 reward granted to the winning entry.

Chairwoman Leslie asked if the information and statistics were in a report format. Ms. Howell replied that she would provide the report to the committee.

Ms. Howell referred to the spreadsheet – Statistics on Child Deaths that occurred within 2009 compared to 2008, ([Exhibit F](#)). She explained the letters on the chart: D – drowning; CS – co-sleeping; SB – shaken baby; and GS – gun shots. Statewide in 2009, there was an increase over 2008 of 1 child death as a result of drowning; increase of 3 deaths from co-sleeping; increase of 4 deaths from shaken baby incidents; and there were 2 additional gun shot deaths in 2009. Ms. Howell stated that the other charts on the handout contained the same information, but it was displayed in a different format. She explained that the committees looked at the leading causes of child deaths within the year and compares the public awareness activities they want to be involved in based on the causes of death. Ms. Howell indicated that in 2010, the child welfare agencies goal was to provide public awareness activities prior to summer to get a head start on child drowning and water safety tips.

Chairwoman Leslie asked if the bar graphs displayed on the spreadsheet showed the near fatalities of children. She said that one chart showed 74 deaths in 2009 compared to 50 deaths in 2008, which was a large increase. Ms. Howell replied that the bar graphs displayed the near deaths for all child fatalities, not just the special causes of death. Ms. Howell explained that the bar graph on page 3 was a comparison between all fatalities compared to 2009; the other charts in the spreadsheet were specific to the types of child deaths. Ms. Howell added that the increase in child deaths displayed in the charts for 2009 were accidental deaths or other types of fatalities.

Chairwoman Leslie said she was having a hard time assimilating the information on the charts and the format used to display the data was not working. Ms. Howell explained that the charts on the spreadsheet displayed the types of child deaths differently and showed the overall 50 fatalities for 2008 and 74 fatalities for 2009.

Chairwoman Leslie commented that it was interesting to see the data displayed by month on the charts and the upward trend of deaths by drowning in 2009.

Assemblyman Hambrick asked if it was possible to break down the number of child deaths at residential homes versus childcare facilities. He thought that information would help to strengthen the rules and regulations on commercial childcare facilities in other areas during the next interim.

Senator Cegavske was amazed that tragedies like child drowning and co-sleeping still occurred in the state. She was aware that pediatricians provided guidance and brochures on infant and child safety to new mothers and wondered if there was something social services could do to help mothers that did not take their children to a pediatrician or lacked interaction with people or social workers. She was excited about

Dr. Florence Jameson's effort in spearheading a free clinic called the Volunteers in Medicine of Southern Nevada, which would offer free healthcare to those who need it.

Ms. Howell replied that currently mothers that deliver a child in the hospital get a packet of information to take home, which included a bilingual brochure on co-sleeping. In addition, a nurse discussed the information with the mothers upon discharge; she was only aware of one hospital that did not disseminate the brochures. Ms. Howell stated that she could provide the brochure to committee members.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Ms. Howell if the report was posted on the DCFS website. Ms. Howell replied the report was on the DCFS website and she could send the most recent copy of the report to Chairwoman Leslie.

Chairwoman Leslie said she received feedback from the community on child deaths in the state and was interested in hearing from the child welfare agencies on how to improve the system.

Thomas Morton, Director, Department of Family Services (DFS), Clark County, thought that the chair of the Child Death Review Committee, Dr. Eisen, would be the best person to address the concerns of Assemblywoman Leslie. Mr. Morton said that Clark County elected to review all child deaths in 2009, as opposed to selected cases. Previously, the county only reviewed child deaths referred by the chair of the Child Death Review Committee. Mr. Morton said the team had two purposes, 1) prevention and identifying factors associated with deaths that could have lead to a prevention strategy and provide those recommendations to the Administrative Team, and 2) reviewing all deaths with a child abuse or neglect history in the family. He stated that the Child Death Review Committee was created because of the perception that child abuse and neglect deaths were under-discovered due to an inadequate review of the deaths and the circumstances surrounding the death. He said there were 12 suicides in 2008 and 4 suicides in 2009 in Clark County, and he could argue that the drop in those deaths was due to the success of the massive prevention campaign in Clark County. However, the numbers were small and spurious from year to year; although, he hoped the low numbers would hold up for the sake of children in the community.

Mr. Morton explained that a house in Clark County could have a pool without a barrier if it was built previous to a certain date, therefore, a pool did not have to be enclosed if the house was purchased prior to that date. He has seen child deaths where a door of a house was left open with an unfenced pool and a child slips into the Jacuzzi or pool, so there were arguably things that were preventable. However, the number was small compared to the number of times children wandered in and out of a backdoor without drowning. On the other hand, parents had to be continually warned about the dangers of children around pools that were not fenced. Mr. Morton stated there were other deaths that were obviously preventable and tragic, for example, there were a number of instances of children who died after climbing on a cabinet that held a television, the cabinet fell and the child was crushed from the weight of the television. Mr. Morton said there were thousands of safety hazards from the accidental death perspective; however, he thought the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Committee was mainly

focused on child abuse and neglect deaths, because in 2009 there were 17 deaths in Clark County with a substantiated allegation of abuse or neglect. He indicated there may be even more child deaths than reported from abuse and neglect because he was unsure if all pending investigations were closed. He added that these deaths were up from 13 deaths confirmed child abuse and neglect deaths in 2009.

Chairwoman Leslie asked where the child abuse and neglect deaths were reflected on the charts in the spreadsheet ([Exhibit F](#)). Mr. Morton replied that those deaths were not displayed on the charts.

Chairwoman Leslie asked why the child abuse and neglect deaths were not reflected in the charts on the spreadsheet. Ms. Howell replied that the chart reflected the leading causes of child deaths, so some of the deaths reflected in the spreadsheet could be a result of abuse or neglect. Chairwoman Leslie said she was interested in the causes of child deaths, because it seemed like Nevada had a high rate in deaths of children. She asked Ms. Howell if she could provide a breakdown of the causes of child deaths to the committee.

Mr. Morton added that he has not seen an increase in child fatalities as a result of the current economic environment in the state and country. He noted there were a variety of child deaths; of the 17 deaths; 4 children died from drowning; 5 deaths involved various forms of blunt force trauma; and 3 children died from the mother's boyfriend, which was a high-risk profile, but not one where he would declare that all children living with an unmarried partner or a spouse were at risk of dying. A few deaths were a result of medical neglect or from children that found a gun and discharged the gun causing death. Mr. Morton commented that the 8 deaths in Clark County in 2009 where a child or sibling had a prior history with Child Protective Services (CPS); 9 deaths involved no prior history with CPS, and it was difficult to pattern the deaths when there was number like 12 or 17 deaths, because the cells ended up being so small. It was really hard to determine the deaths within the cell when moving from 4 to 6 deaths, it was a 50 percent increases, but also an increase of just 2.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Mr. Morton if he tracked the near fatalities for Clark County. Mr. Morton replied that Clark County reported near fatalities to the state, which was reported on the state website in a disclosure format. He did not track the near fatalities in the same way he tracked child deaths, because he needed to know what was happening with the death cases. Medical personnel had to say that a child was in critical or serious condition in order to declare a near fatality, which was an observable standard. It was hard to say whether the child was near death, because it depends on how it was construed; however, that was how the statute was written.

Chairwoman Leslie stated that Mr. Morton said there were 17 child deaths as a result of abuse and neglect in 2009 and asked how many deaths occurred in the preceding years. Mr. Morton replied there were 13 substantiated child abuse and neglect deaths in 2008; however, he did not have a number for the years prior to 2008. Obviously, there was an upward trend that could be a result of better reporting, investigation, or an increase in the phenomenon and with the small numbers it was hard to disentangle the real explanation.

Chairwoman Leslie stated that every child death traumatized the community. She stated that the purpose of the Child Death Review Committee was to find ways to prevent child deaths, even if there was only one death.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Mr. Morton and the representatives from the child welfare agencies if they had any recommendations to improve the process. Mr. Morton replied that shortly after he arrived in Clark County he saw a report that showed an overlap between the Executive Committee and the Administrative Committee and he was uncertain whether a three-level process was needed. In addition, he believed that all teams should review all types of child deaths if the main purpose was prevention. He indicated that the 2010 Clark County report provides data on child deaths. Mr. Morton believed when getting into the area of accessibility of healthcare, particularly prenatal healthcare, there were children that died from the interplay of drug use by the mother, although often they could not medically say that the mother's drug use caused the death of the child. Mr. Morton said another area to focus on was mothers that used drugs while pregnant. There was evidence that a woman who used drugs while pregnant was more likely to stop using drugs for the rest of the term of pregnancy if she had prenatal healthcare.

Kevin Schiller, Director, Washoe County Social Services, concurred that there was some overlap between the Administrative Committee and the Executive Committee; however, he believed the intent of the review process was to conduct a microscopic review of each case. He noted that Chairwoman Leslie talked about the public perception and the reality was one death was too many, which was a crisis in child welfare and what drives the child welfare agencies in terms of prevention. Mr. Schiller said when reviewing child deaths there were two primary areas, 1) the child welfare agencies were looking at that case from an agency perspective – if there was a history or involvement in terms of how they investigated in prior years or prior referrals, and 2) how to approach the preventative measures. Mr. Schiller said a significant trend seen in Washoe County was children dying from suffocation. He noted that the public health department partners with Washoe County significantly, and Washoe County was looking at purchasing cribs and sleep sacks, which was one way of preventing suffocation deaths. He said the child welfare agencies needed to look at how to fund and get public awareness and advertising campaigns out to the community grassroots organizations. Mr. Schiller noted that social workers were trained and were a good resource, in addition to health department officials visiting first time moms, high-risk children and children in the Senior Corner program, those types of programs with grassroots efforts. Mr. Schiller said that he has been a part of the process since its inception, and the reality was that it was a lot of work and time spent specific to what they were trying to decipher and look at. He noted this drives the child welfare agencies in terms of prevention. He stated that nationally he has seen an increase in the number of investigations, which was directly correlated to the policy shift. Mr. Schiller stated that the child welfare agencies were currently looking at every death. Previously, he said there were no substantiations of child deaths, and in the current year (2009) there were four substantiated deaths, so it ebbs and flows, but he would argue that the process, in terms of the documentation the child welfare agencies had to provide to the Legislative Counsel Bureau, and the internal review, from a staff worker level all the way

up to management level, it was a very heightened awareness. So as a case occurs and he looked at the trends and issues, the child welfare agencies were constantly revisiting what needed to be changed in their practice. Mr. Schiller said the increase in deaths was not substantial enough for him to believe it was related to the current economic environment.

Mr. Schiller stated that another component that went beyond just funding was prevention campaigns such as theater and bus advertisements. In addition, the child welfare agencies needed to look at the things that could be done without funding, for example, Washoe County teamed with a methadone clinic because another component seen was children getting access to methadone and overdosing. Mr. Schiller said he would argue the team's most advantageous process has been bringing together the trends and then trying to figure out as a community how to approach the issues. Obviously, the publicity around a child death was seen as a negative view, but the alternative to that was the death created awareness. He reiterated that he believed the suffocation component was the most glaring issue seen in Washoe County, and obviously there was a difference between southern Nevada and northern Nevada in terms of how they see issues because the percentage of pools in Washoe County was less. In addition, Mr. Schiller said he tracked all the statistics related to the fatalities and the near fatalities, which he could provide to the committee.

Chairwoman Leslie asked how much money was generated for prevention through the assessment. Ms. Howell replied that one dollar per death certificate went to prevention activities; however, it did not generate a lot of money. Chairwoman Leslie asked if the Executive Committee was spending the money generated from the death certificates for prevention activities. Ms. Howell said the Executive Committee was charged with the budget and all activities surrounding the budget, and the money was spent on prevention activities.

Pat Hedgecoth, Manager, Rural Region, DCFS, added that the Rural Region had six active teams in operation that reviewed every death in the rural areas. She noted that child welfare agencies were still dealing with child deaths as a result of vehicle accidents and shaken baby syndrome, which needed continued attention. Ms. Hedgecoth stated that local community agencies, such as Family Resource Centers (FRC), could distribute information on a continual basis, although those agencies were also dealing with budget constraints.

Assemblyman Hambrick asked the representatives from the child welfare agencies if the trends in child deaths migrated across the state, for example, if there was a shaken baby death in a rural county was a second or third death seen in another county. Ms. Howell replied that there were local team members on the Executive Committee as well, and they looked at the trends across the state, which was the uniqueness of the teams. She believed that was the purpose of having local members on the Executive Committee so they could have those types of discussions to determine public awareness campaigns or initiatives.

Assemblyman Hambrick said that he would like to see the trends happening across the state because the committee, either during the interim or session, could assist in the

area of policies and if a trend was seen in one city, the issue could be addressed before another incident occurred.

Mr. Morton replied that Clark County has done something unique and currently had two Child Death Review Teams per statute. One was the traditional Child Death Review Team, but as part of Clark County's work following the Blue Ribbon Panel, a Child Fatality Taskforce (Taskforce) was put together. Initially, the main objective of the Taskforce was to implement a protocol for joint investigation of child abuse and neglect fatalities with law enforcement, the District Attorney's Office, Child Protective Services, and the Coroner's Office. The county created and empanelled a Child Death Review Team to look at the county's joint investigative activities, which he believed would be helpful in the future. Rather than just looking at the cause and manner of death and what could have been done to prevent the death, the county was looking at cases that were brought forward and how the four agencies collaborated during the investigation of the death.

Mr. Morton believed the other jurisdictions put together similar kinds of protocols. He thought it was a good development and the result and the work of the Child Fatality Task Force, separate from the Child Death Review Team, has been beneficial to the community and he would recommend it for consideration in other jurisdictions across the state.

Mr. Schiller added that Washoe County had the Child Protection Enforcement Team (CPET), which was the same as the Child Fatality Taskforce Team in Clark County, and law enforcement jurisdictions were involved, along with a forensic pediatrician, and there were internal discussions on how the different jurisdictions were collaborating with law enforcement and other entities involved.

Chairwoman Leslie called for a brief recess at 11:03 a.m. The meeting was reconvened at 11:17 p.m.

#### **VIII. PRESENTATION ON THE FOSTERING CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS AND INCREASING ADOPTIONS ACT OF 2008**

Chairwoman Leslie stated that the next agenda item was brought to the committee's attention by Mr. Morton at the last meeting. She directed the committee to Tab VIII of the meeting packet, [Exhibit A](#), National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators; How States are Implementing the Fostering Connections Act. In addition, Mr. Morton provided a handout to committee from the Office of the District Attorney, Clark County, Changes to Nevada, Law or Policy in Implementing Fostering Connections.

Mr. Morton referenced the handout, Center for Law and Social Policy, Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (H.R.6893) Summary, [\(Exhibit H\)](#). Mr. Morton said the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (Act) was passed in 2008 and signed into law by President George W. Bush in October 2008. Many advocates at the national level consider the Act to be the most important and significant piece of federal child welfare



legislation since the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), which was passed in 1996. He explained that the Fostering Connections Act was in no way as far reaching as ASFA, but did contain some important provisions, which did not require legislative action and could be implemented through policy. Mr. Morton noted that the Act would require state agencies to exercise due diligence to identify and provide notice to all adult grandparents and other adult relatives of a child within 30 days after the child was removed from their home, which extended to the fifth degree of consanguinity and put a significant amount of pressure on a diligent search and finding relatives. The Act was unclear for the requirements of relatives not residing in the United States, which was an issue in southern Nevada. Mr. Morton recently met with the Mexican Consul to discuss how to identify relatives in Mexico for children who may be a legal citizen of the state, but the parents were undocumented. Another issue was the provision in the Act for kinship guardian assistance payments for children living in foster care with relatives. Mr. Morton stated that looking at the experience in California, particularly in Los Angeles County, and in Illinois in the late 1990s and early 2000; both jurisdictions achieved huge reductions in the number of children in foster care due to the benefits of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program (Kin-GAP) in California and subsidized relative guardianship in Illinois, which they were able to enact through a Title IV-E waiver to allow the state to move a number of children to permanency through relative guardianships. He noted that the savings in those states were more or less predicated on the fact that if a child remained in care and custody of the child welfare agency, they would continue to pay maintenance payments in addition to the administrative cost for maintaining the placement, such as going to court every six months. Once the wardship was terminated with the state, obviously the guardianship would continue to have the subsidized guardianship payments, but not the additional administrative costs. Mr. Morton said it was his impression that it would require legislative changes to NRS 432B or NRS 159, or require a new statute similar to NRS 127, which was where the adoption assistance language was contained. Mr. Morton stated it would require appropriation, study and analysis, and at this point, DCFS has not conducted a fiscal impact analysis of the cost benefits of moving to Kin-GAP, but in essence what this does create, under Title IV-E, was federal financial participation.

Chairwoman Leslie commented that this issue has been brought to her attention from judges in Washoe County, so she aware of the statewide interest in Kin-GAP for children living in foster care with relatives. She noted the issue would be included on the next agenda in order to delve into the details of what was needed and the cost to the state. Chairwoman Leslie was aware that Mr. Morton met in a statewide forum and asked if he could ensure the issue was discussed at the next forum meeting.

Continuing, Mr. Morton said another provision within the Act was that the child must be eligible for federal foster care maintenance payments while in the home of the relative, and the home of the relative must be licensed otherwise the placement was ineligible for Title IV-E as a result of the Deficit Reduction Act. In addition, children must reside with the relatives for at least six consecutive months in foster care to be eligible for kinship guardianship assistance payments, which was consistent with the existing statutory language because there was a six month residency requirement.

Mr. Morton explained there was a provision in the Act regarding licensing standards for relatives (Sec.104) and the Act clarifies that states may waive non-safety licensing standards on a case-by-case basis in order to eliminate barriers to placing children safely with relatives. A Nevada statute and administrative code already permits this and was actually broader than the requirements of the Act. This language was placed into federal statute because of previous court rulings requiring that the standards for relatives and non-relatives are the same. Essentially the requirements to be waived did not include criminal history, but things like space, sleeping requirements, and other things that most families would attend to differently because it was an interfamilial placement.

Mr. Morton said there were several provisions within the Act for increasing adoptive families for children and one of the most significant provisions was the de-linking of a child's eligibility for federal adoption assistance payments from the outdated Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) income requirements, which increased the number of children with special needs that can be adopted with federal support. In addition, children who were eligible for SSI based solely on the medical and disability requirements would automatically be considered children with special needs for purposes of qualifying for adoption assistance at the higher rate. The Act required that savings resulting from the new Title IV-E eligibility rules must be invested in services, including post-adoption services, provided under Part B and E of Title IV-E, and in essence the state could not supplant General Fund and there had to be a reinvestment of savings. The expansion of children eligible for federal adoption assistance payments would be phased in over 9 years, and the provisions also prioritized for the earliest entitlement children who have been in care 60 consecutive months and their siblings eligible first.

In addition, Mr. Morton stated the Act expanded the Adoption Incentives Program, which was not a state feature, and were funds provided for states for exceeding goals in the adoption of children. Another provision of the Act was making older children who exit foster care more eligible for additional supports. The Act clarifies that children 16 and older adopted from foster care, or who exit foster care to live with a relative guardian, were eligible for independent living services. Under the previous law, children adopted from foster care after age 16 were already eligible for education and training vouchers, so this provision expanded their qualification for independent living services and funds available through Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). Mr. Morton stated there was also a provision around outreach of the adoption tax credit, which meant foster parents and relatives were informed of the availability of the adoption tax credit. He noted that Nevada policy already included a provision for doing that therefore there was really no change.

Continuing, Mr. Morton noted there was a provision in the Act for placing siblings together and helping promote permanent family connections for children by requiring states to make reasonable efforts to place siblings in the same foster home, kinship guardianship, or adoptive placement, unless doing so would be contrary to the safety or well-being of the child. He indicated there was already a statutory preference in Nevada law for that.

Another provision was the Family Connections Grants, which authorizes a new grant program in Subpart 1 of Title IV-B for activities designed to connect children in foster care with family. He noted that Washoe County applied for a Family Connections Grant and did not win the lottery, but these grants were available so jurisdictions could have kinship connector programs and other kinds of kinship support programs.

Moving to improving outcomes for older youth in foster care, Mr. Morton stated there was a provision for continuing federal support for children in foster care after age 18 (Sec. 201). The provision allows states, as their option, to provide care and support to youth in foster care until the age of 19, 20, or 21, provided the youth is either, 1) completing high school or an equivalency program, 2) enrolled in post-secondary or vocational school, 3) participating in a program or activity designed to promote, or remove barriers to employment, 4) employed for at least 80 hours per month, or 5) incapable of doing any of these activities due to a medical condition, which would potentially extend services to children up to the age of 21. Mr. Morton said the perception of the District Attorney was that this provision could be implemented by an amendment to eligibility policy, although there may be some need to change the definition of a foster family home. If there were children beyond the age of 18 who have exited foster care to an independent living arrangement, they may be living in an independent living care setting, not a foster home, but this policy required further examination. Mr. Morton stated there was another provision for helping older youth successfully transition from foster care to independence that required child welfare agencies to help youth make this transition to adulthood by requiring, during the 90-day period immediately before a youth exits from care at 18, 19, 20, or 21, that the child's caseworker and other representatives as appropriate help the child develop a personal transition plan. He noted that Clark County began doing this at age 15, so in theory far before the 90-day period. Another provision of the Act extends federal training to more staff, which was a benefit because typically Title IV-E funds have only been available for training staff of the child welfare agency. This provision allowed claiming federal financial participation for training for staff and private agencies that serve children in the custody of the child welfare agency and included court personnel, attorneys, guardians and court-appointed special advocates. Title IV-E training dollars could also be used to train prospective relative guardians in addition to foster and adoptive parents and funding for this new training is phased in over five years. Mr. Morton believed over the period of five years it will move from the current 50 percent administrative matching rate up to approximately 70 percent.

Mr. Morton explained another provision was extending Title IV-E eligibility to Indian tribes for direct access to federal foster care and adoption assistance funds (Sec. 301).

Mr. Morton noted that two additional requirements were developing health oversight and coordination plans (Sec. 205) and promoting education stability (Sec. 204), which were currently existent in DCFS statewide policy. He noted that although there were requirements that these were included in the case plan, the actual case plan format in UNITY does not include a section for this, and part of the discussion around the PIP centered on an objective to develop a well-being plan for all children entering foster care that would specifically identify and address their health education and mental health needs as a way of ensuring that those needs get at least a referral for service

depending on the availability and tracked throughout the duration of the child's extent of care. Mr. Morton explained that because there was only one school district in Clark County, the county had a unique situation in terms of children changing school districts because there was only one school district with placements, and there was evidence that every change of schools increased the likelihood that the child would not complete their education.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Mr. Morton for his presentation. In addition, she thanked Lisa Logsdon, Deputy District Attorney, Clark County, for her work in preparing the memo.

Chairwoman Leslie believed the only issue she thought needed more discussion and possibly a statutory change was the kinship guardian assistance payments for children living in foster care with relatives. She thought this was a priority for the committee and possible legislation could be developed around the issue. Mr. Morton replied that the kinship payment was a major issue identified that would potentially require legislative action, both due to changes in the guardianship laws, and the need for fiscal appropriation. He noted there were two other provisions within the Act that would have a potential fiscal impact if implemented.

Amber Howell commented that both agencies were in agreement that the only provision of the Act that required legislative changes was the kinship guardianship assistance payments; all other areas of the Act were already addressed within statute, policies or were revised, which was done since the implementation of the Act.

Mr. Morton added that there was an additional provision that could possibly have a fiscal impact, which was making older children eligible for additional support when they exit care; however, not enough analyses has been done to determine the fiscal impact.

Chairwoman Leslie stated that the kinship guardianship assistance payments and the fiscal impact and implications to the state would be addressed at a future committee meeting.

Ms. Howell added that currently the kinship guardianship assistance payments were optional for states. She believed the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA) research was combined with information from every state on which states were choosing the optional programs. However, there were no fiscal ramifications for not adopting it, and at this point it was a good idea if the state implemented it.

## **IX. PRESENTATION OF THE STATEWIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF JUVENILE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE (JDAI) REFORMS**

Larry Carter, Assistant Director, Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services, and member of the Nevada State Juvenile Justice Commission. He introduced, Pauline Salla, the current Juvenile Justice Programs Chief, which was previously his position. Mr. Carter explained that he would focus and highlight what he believed was a great initiative for Clark County, Washoe County, and other counties in the state of

Nevada. He noted the initiative was not implemented statewide; however, all counties were implementing different components of the initiative.

Mr. Carter stated that the purpose of the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) is to demonstrate that jurisdictions could safely reduce reliance on secure detention. He noted the objectives included:

- Eliminate the inappropriate use of a secure detention. Often children were placed in secure detention for minor offenses, such as status offenders or youth charged with things that an adult would post a \$50 bail bond and be on their way home. Often youth spent an inordinate amount of time in a detention facility as juveniles.
- Minimize rearrest and failure to appear rates pending adjudication.
- Ensure proper appropriate conditions of confinement in secure facilities. Mr. Carter believed the most significant influence that JDAI had in Clark County has been on improving the conditions of confinement. He could provide information on the efforts made to change the culture of a detention facility of that environment.
- Redirect public finances to sustain successful reforms, which meant through the reduction in costs of detaining youth, because often detainment and institutionalization of youth was the most costly to the state. Therefore, if the rates and levels of detention confinement could be reduced, the funding could be redistributed. He noted that prior to JDAI, Clark County was operating a 235-bed detention center and averaging 261 youth a day. During the 2009 calendar year, Clark County was up from 2008, but still at 194 youth a day. He added that in July 2006, Clark County was able to close Zenoff Hall, which enabled the county to bring staffing ratios in the rest of the facility up to a best practice and national standard, without the additional cost of approximately \$3.0 million to raise the ratio of staff to youth.
- Reduce racial and ethnic disparities.

Continuing, Mr. Carter said the eight core strategies of JDAI included:

- Collaboration with multiple entities including District Attorneys, Public Defenders, courts, and other service entities within the community and juvenile justice system.
- Use of accurate data.
- Objective admissions criteria and instruments. He noted that the risk assessment criteria has been tested over the last five or six years and continues to stand the test.
- New or enhanced non-secure alternative to detention, which could include home management systems, electronic monitoring, and evening reporting centers. Mr. Carter noted that youth could be monitored on home management systems for approximately \$20 a day compared to \$245 a day in detention.
- Expedite case processing reforms. Mr. Carter stated that the most significant way to reduce detention population was shortening the length of stay. If there were 4,000 youth a year coming into a facility and the length of stay could be shortened from 20 days to 18 days, 8,000 bed days could be saved a year, which was a significant impact.
- Special processing of detention cases.
- Reducing racial disparities.
- Improving conditions of confinement.

Providing some background, Mr. Carter noted that in 2002 to 2003, Nevada was experiencing sustained population growth and there was overcrowding in local facilities. In 2003, Nevada was the fourth highest state in the nation for the rate of daily detentions. In 2006, data indicates the state has fallen to eighth highest state for rate of detentions. In 1993, Nevada was second to the District of Columbia in detention rates and continued to move down, which was a significant savings to local entities. Mr. Carter noted that populations prior to implementation of JDAI in Washoe and Clark County were at capacity level in state facilities. As a result of efforts and with assistance of the 2009 Legislature, Juvenile Justice Services were able to reduce the amount of funding required by reducing capacities at the three state facilities. He said there was a little bubble early in the year because of the high significance in Clark County of firearm offenses; however, since then the state was able to absorb the youth placed in facilities and has been able to keep the rates down, which would play a significant issue in the state budget over the next couple of years.

Mr. Cater explained that Clark County (Las Vegas) composes approximately 72 percent of Nevada's population, and Washoe County (Reno) composes of 18 percent of Nevada population, so the JDAI in those counties already comprised 90 percent of the state population.

Mr. Carter noted that in early 2003, when he was working for the state, he engaged Clark County to begin the JDAI process, and at that time he and Kirby Burgess went to Santa Fe, New Mexico, to look at Albuquerque and the processes the state used. He noted that Clark County utilized Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG) funds as a way to spur the JDAI. By late 2003, Nevada engaged Clark County and Washoe County to attend the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Conference in San Francisco and teams were engaged from each county, which included a juvenile justice director, key juvenile justice staff, county management, judiciary, Public Defenders, district attorneys and select community members. When the teams returned from the conference, Washoe County and Clark County continued to move forward and became pilot sites for the Anne E. Casey Foundation and JDAI. The state utilized grant funding support, and general Juvenile Justice Commission direction to help move JDAI forward in these efforts.

Pauline Salla, Juvenile Justice Programs Chief, DCFS, said she would briefly discuss the current involvement of the Nevada Juvenile Justice Commission (Commission) three-year plan priorities. She stated with the Nevada Association of Juvenile Justice Administrators were surveyed in January of 2009, and the Commission held an annual three-year plan retreat in February 2009 to identify the priorities for the next three years for the juvenile justice system. The priority areas identified were; alternatives to detention, mental health, aftercare/reentry and disproportionate minority contact. Ms. Salla noted that programs funded by the Commission utilized evidence-based programming. She noted that 75 percent of formula grant funds support alternatives to detention; 90 percent of JABG funds support alternatives to detention; and 80 percent of state Community Partnership Block Grants funds support alternatives to detention and focus mainly on providing co-occurring services to the youth.

Continuing, Ms. Salla said some of the current JDAI programs through the Community Corrections Partnership Block Grant were:

- Juvenile assessment team, which provides mental health and substance abuse assessment and referral.
- Intensive supervision.
- Evening reporting centers, which was a great alternative to detention and based in the community where they collaborate or partner with services in the community.
- Youth Commitment Alternatives Program.
- Prevention and Diversion Program, which provided transportation in White Pine County and Lincoln County for youth to get substance abuse and psychological assessments and ongoing counseling when needed.
- Resiliency Development.
- Continuum of Care.
- Girls Circle and Boys Council – gender specific programming. A portion of the JABG was used to provide training and certification for staff throughout the state of Nevada in Girls Circle and Boys Council, so the rural areas, in addition to Washoe County and Clark County were implementing the program.
- Motivational enhancement therapy.
- Truancy program.
- Family preservation, which utilized cognitive behavioral and motivational enhancement therapy.
- High-risk youth accountability program.
- Position actions.
- Evening reporting centers.
- Transition services for Hispanic youth.
- American Indian life skills development.
- Substance abuse treatment and prevention.

Ms. Salla stated that some of the programming that supports alternatives to detention through the JABG were:

- Detention review and release.
- Juvenile drug courts.
- Substance abuse assessment and referrals.
- Supervised release programs.
- Evening reporting centers.

Ms. Salla noted that Title V federal funding is used to focus on prevention for youth. The JDAI Hispanic youth transition specialist helped youth transitioning from detention into the community with education services and other services needed. In addition, there was a family preservation program, evening reporting center that has been developed and implemented in Humboldt County, and “New Inspirations/Empower” program that Clark County Department of Juvenile Services implemented.

Concluding, Ms. Salla summarized the statewide JDAI implementation and said that Clark County and Washoe County are currently JDAI sites with the Anne E. Casey Foundation. Rural jurisdictions have embraced the tenants of JDAI and implemented

community-based programs that are alternatives to detention, and the average daily population in rural detention centers has drastically decreased.

Mr. Carter stated that although all counties were not actively participating in JDAI, virtually every county started implementing some components of JDAI. He recently spoke with John Simms, Chief of Probation, Juvenile Probation Department, Carson City, who said the Juvenile Probation Department, averaged 19 to 20 youth per day in detention for the last 20 years; however, since the implementation of JDAI, 4 youth were in detention, and 2 of the youth were from Lyon County. Currently, Michael Pomi, former director, Juvenile Justice Services, Washoe County, has completed a grant application with Anne E. Casey Foundation to explore the possibility of moving forward for statewide implementation and a team of people would be going to New Jersey to explore the different avenues and to see what Nevada might be able to gain from that state. Mr. Carter stated that in 2003, Clark County had 261 youth a day in detention, with some days having over 300 youth. Currently, Clark County was operating out of a 192-bed facility, and in calendar year 2008, the average number of youth was down to 184, with a one-month low of 158 youth in August 2008, numbers not seen since 1996 and 1997. Mr. Carter emphasized that when they were talking about reducing numbers, they were not necessarily significantly reducing the number of youth coming into detention; it was how they were processing youth, speeding up the process and moving youth faster to keep the detention populations down. Between FY 2003 and FY 2009, the state went from approximately 3,900 to 4,000 youth detainments to 3,700 detainments, so the number of youth detained only decreased by approximately 300. However, because the lengths of stay decreased from approximately 23 days to 18 days, it provided a better facility and they were able to operate with better conditions of confinement and programming more suitable to the youth served. Youth admissions in FY 2003 were 4,327 and decreased to 3,813 in FY 2008 and lengths of stays were down from 21.8 in FY 2003 to 19.1 in FY 2008, particularly among the girls. Failure to appear rate in the courts prior to implementation of JDAI went from 6.11 percent in FY 2003 to 5.48 percent in FY 2008. Failure to appear rate with alternatives to detention since the implementation of JDAI has decreased and the re-offense rate and referral rate of pre-adjudicated youth has decreased.

Moving to the Washoe County data, Mr. Carter said the same results were seen with reduced admissions, daily population, average length of stay and reduced pre-adjudication and re-offense rates among youth.

Senator Cegavske asked if the actual number of youth could be provided instead of percentages. Mr. Carter replied that he could provide the actual number of youth. He added that the Clark County Juvenile Justice Services website contained data reports for the last five years and true numbers were provided on the website.

Mr. Carter directed the committee to page 9, [Exhibit I](#), which displayed the Clark County detention population composition. He noted the changes in the composition do not mean there were more youth in detention; the composition just changed as a result of releasing youth, which was significant. He said that looking at the violation of probation (VOP) youth displayed on the chart showed that in 2003 and 2004, VOP youth were



ten percent of the detention population. Currently, there were only three percent VOP youth in detention, because youth were released on different alternatives and the juvenile justice system were servicing youth differently. Mr. Carter noted that the judicial orders (JO) and status offender's percentages also decreased. He said that the percentages for youth with possession and use of firearms offenses increased, but it did not mean there was an increase in those offenses, it just meant that a higher proportion of detention population were comprised of those types of youth, which were the youth that should be detention, not youth that were truant, runaways, minor consuming alcohol, curfews and other minor offenses. Mr. Carter stated the same types of things were seen in the chart for Washoe County for status offenders prior to implementation of the JDAI; 26 percent of youth in detention were status offenders and currently there were only 1 percent, showing significant changes.

Ms. Salla noted that the Juvenile Justice Commission, driven by JDAI has accomplished:

- Lower detention population.
- Lower length of stay.
- Release of youth who do not pose public or personal threat.
- Lower recidivism.
- Lower failure to appear rate.
- Lower re-arrest rate for pre-adjudicated youth.
- Lower rate of referral for youth.
- Lower levels of commitment to state correctional care.
- Improved conditions of confinement.
- Reduced reliance on restraint in facilities.
- Safer facilities.
- Faster court processing.
- Improved utilization of resources.
- Reallocation of resources.
- Data driven decision making.
- JDAI supports public safety.
- JDAI supports delinquency prevention.
- JDAI has supported doing the right thing for the youth.

Ms. Salla noted the Juvenile Justice Commission continued to:

- Provide presentation of JDAI information.
- Support detention alternatives for the counties, for funding and utilization of evidence-based programming.
- Inclusion in three-year plan as a priority area.
- Commission has membership from JDAI sites.
- Supports recommendation regarding JDAI in report to the Governor.
- Supports recommendation regarding disproportionate minority confinement in report to the Governor.
- Commission and Nevada Association of Juvenile Justice Administrator's continue to collaborate with JDAI.
- Moving toward Commission directed statewide initiative.

Concluding the presentation on statewide implementation of JDAI reforms, Mr. Carter stated that JDAI was not just a focus on detention, but also a juvenile justice system and reform focus and about changing systemic cultures and organizational behavior to deal with youth in a more effective way.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked the presenters and congratulated them on the great work that has been done on the JDAI initiatives in Nevada. She asked Mr. Carter if he thought there was a need for the JDAI statutory framework in Nevada law. She believed a couple other states have used legislative mandates to enhance and institutionalize the JDAI initiatives.

Mr. Carter recalled that in 2004 when he first came to work for Clark County and the state first started implementing JDAI, there were staff members saying that JDAI was the “flavor of the week” and it would go away; however, the JDAI has continued and moved forward. He believed if the JDAI framework was put into legislation, it had to be done in a way that was enabling and encourages these efforts, and to stay away from specifically saying it was a juvenile detention alternative initiative. He believed it should be adapted to the state because the tenets were there for good service and good conditions of confinement.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Mr. Carter if he could address the legislative mandates with the JDAI committee.

Carey Stewart, Director, Washoe County Juvenile Services, commented that the state of New Mexico used legislative mandates to enhance and institutionalize JDAI; however, he could not quote the statutes enacted in the state that have a JDAI flavor. Mr. Stewart said the state had a great opportunity and a statewide initiative to look at some of the core concepts of the JDAI that could be incorporated into Nevada statute. He said that one of the cornerstones of JDAI was data collection, and he was aware the Juvenile Justice Commission required Juvenile Justice Services to report in order to continue to receive the funding. He believed the two could be blended to help institutionalize this on a statewide basis, so the agencies in the juvenile justice system were talking about the same things when they talked about the average length of stay, breaking out gender, and all the key significant points. He reiterated that New Mexico had legislative mandates to enhance JDAI and Nevada could look to that state for direction on how it was enacted.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Mr. Stewart for his input and said she would have staff look at New Mexico and other states that have enacted legislation for the JDAI. She asked if outlining in statute the specific types of assessments for youth coming into detention, such as assessing mental health and substance abuse would be helpful. She believed the state process for assessment of youth needed to be formalized.

Mr. Carter replied that good risk assessment instruments would provide appropriate guidelines for youth entering detention and would prevent things like youth being incarcerated just because someone thought it might be a good thing for them. As mentioned earlier in the meeting, Mr. Carter noted that girls in detention facilities for prostitution recruit other girls into prostitution, so there were specific youth that commit

offenses that Juvenile Justice Services would like to keep out of facilities, because it was not necessarily good for them. Mr. Carter reiterated that risk assessment instruments were good in addition to moving forward with evidence-based practices.

Mr. Stewart added that the initial starting point was the risk assessment instrument and anytime an objective instrument was used to screen youth coming into detention or being released from detention would be the focal point that builds into the other services provided.

Chairwoman Leslie stated another concern was how the budget cuts would fit into the JDAI framework, which would be discussed at the upcoming February 10, 2010, Interim Finance Committee meeting. She was aware there was a cut to the Community Corrections Partnership Block Grant (CCPBG). In addition, there was a bigger concern of the possible closure of Summit View Youth Correctional Center (SVYCC) and moving youth from a secure youth prison to the Caliente Youth Center and Nevada Youth Training Center in Elko. Chairwoman Leslie was struggling with the closure of SVYCC, not just from a monetary point of view, but the ability to hire and train appropriate people in the rural areas to staff those centers. Also, the closure of SVYCC seemed the opposite of what the juvenile justice system was doing with JDAI.

Mr. Stewart replied that the juvenile justice system was concerned about the closure of SVYCC. The CCPBG funding allowed the alternative programs that keep youth out of state institutions, for example, in 2004 there were 93 youth commitments to state institutions, and through JDAI and continual utilization of the CCPBG funds, only 45 youth were committed to state institutions in 2009. The current purpose for the CCPBG funding in Washoe County in regard to JDAI was disproportionate minority confinement and contact. He indicated that the Intensive Supervision program addresses Latino males, specifically as they enter the system, not only to provide intensive supervision within the community to make them successful, but also from a service delivery standpoint. Mr. Stewart emphasized that cuts to CCPBG would eventually lead to more youth commitments to state institutions, and when talking about reductions in bed space, it would back up detention facilities. For the conditions of confinement, Mr. Stewart explained that the longer youth were in juvenile detention, it was in essence “dead time” and behavioral incidents increase; youth get despondent and aggression becomes a problem, so currently there was a great component to not only assess youth entering the system, but to move youth to appropriate placements. Mr. Stewart reiterated that any cuts to CCPBG would have an adverse effect of how the juvenile justice system worked with the youth in the community. In addition, at some point the juvenile justice system in Nevada needed to look at what happened to youth that were committed. He believed the framework was in place for utilizing JDAI, and the more money put into community-based alternatives, the ultimate goal from a statewide perspective was to decrease the state’s youth in institutional beds and have youth in the community with supervision to help them become successful.

Chairwoman Leslie agreed with Mr. Stewart; however, there was always going to be a need for a secure placement like SVYCC for youth that pose a risk for public safety. She had concerns moving higher risk youth from a secure placement into the rural areas.

Mr. Stewart agreed that the closure of SVYCC was a concern. He noted that the juvenile justice system in Washoe County sent only six youth to SVYCC and the remaining youth went to Caliente Youth Center and the Nevada Youth Training Center in Elko. In regard to the most appropriate placement for youth, if SVYCC closed, the lower risk youth placed in the other institutions for continuum of care would be placed with the high-risk youth, which was a major concern.

Scott Shick, Juvenile Services, Douglas County, concurred with Mr. Stewart. He said that any reductions in the CCPBG would impact the rural counties and their systems. Each county had a different design for the use of the funding and was using the funding very effectively for community-based and alternative programming. Mr. Shick believed that the Nevada Association of Juvenile Justice Administrators and juvenile justice systems have supported a nice tier of services, such as SVYCC, Nevada Youth Training Center, China Springs and Rite of Passage, and were using those services effectively. He noted that some youth need to be committed to SVYCC because of the offenses committed. Youth may have a chance to get out of the center, but had to earn their way out and needed a secure setting to accomplish that, which was a concern if SVYCC closed. Mr. Shick supported the state in any way possible, but he anticipated a possible detention impact as a result of the closure of SVYCC.

Chairwoman Leslie was glad to get the comments on record; she hoped the presenters would be present at the upcoming Interim Finance Committee meeting when the issue was discussed.

Assemblyman Hambrick disclosed that he was the chairman of the Juvenile Justice Commission. He hoped that the fear of the closure of SVYCC was unfounded because of the professionalism and dedication of the individuals currently involved. He noted that the Commission was discussing the issue with the District Attorney's workgroup and trying to bring everybody to the table on the issue. He noted that "one size does not fit all" in JDAI, but they were certainly trying to ensure that the various justice administrators understood the principle and would adjust for their needs, but he did not think the issue would be going away. He added that the funding issue and closing of SVYCC was a concern to many people in the state and the Juvenile Justice Commission would be looking at the issue at a future meeting and it would be discussed with the Chief Justice. Assemblyman Hambrick said this item and the philosophy of the JDAI had to be addressed and the professionals dealing with the incarceration of youth and the Commission would address the issue.

Senator Wiener asked about the Juvenile Justice Commission-driven JDAI accomplishments of lower recidivism. Looking at the successes of Clark County and Washoe County, there was no data on the charts for re-arrests and recidivism and she was curious what the data was based on. Mr. Carter replied that data in Clark County showed that currently over 90 percent of the youth that were placed on juvenile probation status satisfactorily complete those statuses without a placement in a state facility. In addition, there were other breakdowns of data on re-arrests and the data goes to different levels because a re-arrest did not necessarily mean failure, and if a youth committed a robbery at one point and then had a re-offense of a curfew violation,

that youth may still be moving in the right direction and doing good things even though it was considered a re-arrest. Since the implementation of the JDAI, Mr. Carter said the re-arrest rate was going down, although he has seen some bubbles. He indicated that 2007 had the highest referral rate for youth, but the juvenile justice systems continued to see great success through probation and aftercare, which was partially funded through state legislative funds, or Spring Mountain Youth Camp aftercare, and 90 percent of those youth successfully complete their aftercare without a re-commitment. Mr. Carter said there was a re-offense rate in the data depending on how long youth have been out of commitment. The re-offense rate was 40 to 50 percent for youth out of commitment for almost a year; however, the re-offenses were at a low enough nature that they did not create a situation where youth had to be committed to a state facility. Mr. Carter emphasized that a re-offense could be a traffic offense, curfew violation, or a minor consuming alcohol versus a hard-core delinquent act.

Senator Wiener stated that there were reasons the juvenile justice system historically had to detain youth; however, she wondered if the numbers were significant in terms of the re-arrests that would prompt a detention. Mr. Carter did not have the exact numbers but there were reductions in re-arrests. The alternatives to detention programs were seeing in excess of a 90 percent success rate for youth that stay out of detention, show up on their court date, and complete their court responsibilities without being re-arrested prior to the date. Mr. Carter stated there was a much higher percentage of youth that were doing well versus just being released without supervision. Mr. Carter explained that there was always the likelihood of a youth re-offending versus being in detention; however, they were just trying to keep the youth that need to be in detention. Youth that commit a more serious offense, such as a crime against a person or a serious crime against property, should be in detention and youth that have committed victimless or status offense crimes should not be in detention.

Senator Wiener asked if the money that would be spent on youth in detainment was being shifted into aftercare programs because of the reduced populations. Mr. Carter replied that the first part of the savings was the ability to bring up the staffing ratios at the detention centers to meet best practices. Clark County was able to close some units and redistribute staff rather than hiring staff because of the reduction in detention populations, which saved approximately \$3.0 million a year in operational costs since 2006. Mr. Carter noted that most of the alternatives to detention were funded by the Juvenile Justice Commission Grant funds, so it was not money that could be redirected; it was money that the Commission helped provide for community service programs, which were very successful. Mr. Carter noted the counties were facing the same extreme and dire circumstances like the state. With the current economic climate in the state and nation, Nevada had significant issues and tough decisions to make, and when decreases were made to resources, it also affected the counties resulting in reduced services. Mr. Carter stated that he has not seen any increases in federal juvenile justice funding since 2002, and there was nothing on the horizon that he could see for additional juvenile justice funding, therefore, they had to be clever with the funds. He noted that the Workforce Investment Act funds were significant and important to Clark County Juvenile Justice and Spring Mountain Youth Camp.

Ms. Salla added that recidivism was one of the mandatory performance measures that the subgrantees had to report on through their federal funding.

Senator Cegavske stated that she recently received a call from an attorney regarding concerns with youth and the attorney representation. She was concerned with the process for youth taken into custody and wondered if the current process was working. She questioned plea bargaining because she did not think youth understood the consequences of plea bargaining.

Chairwoman Leslie commented that issue could be addressed at a future meeting. She was aware that there were youth that did not have an attorney to represent them in court.

#### **X. PRESENTATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADAM WALSH CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY ACT OF 2006**

Scott Shick, Nevada Association of Juvenile Justice Administrators (NAJJA), referred to page 63, of the meeting packet, [Exhibit A](#), which contained the presentation, Adam Walsh Act (AWA), Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (S.O.R.N.A.) Compliance in Nevada. Mr. Shick introduced Carey Stewart, Director, Washoe County Juvenile Services; and Robert Stuyvesant, a sex offender expert in the northern region and Clinician. Mr. Shick stated that the S.O.R.N.A. was instituted in 2006; Title 1 of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (AWA), and the purpose was to protect the public from sex offenders and offenders against children in response to attacks by violent predators. He added that the NAJJA supported the position in respect to the intention of the AWA and the horrendous offenses that was a catalyst for its concern and legislation. Mr. Shick noted the adoption of S.O.R.N.A established the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART) as part of the Justice Programs of the U.S. Department of Justice. All jurisdictions were granted a one-year extension to July 27, 2010, and they were working with the Attorney General's Office and workgroup to find middle ground in compliance with the AWA.

Continuing, Mr. Shick explained that the AWA Child Protection and Safety Act was enacted in 2006 by Congress to protect children from sexual violence. The AWA requires that states participate in a national sex offender registry and comprehensive offense based on minimal standards for registration and community notification. The AWA requires lifetime registration of children for certain offenses on a national public registry, compliance linked to federal block grant funding streams, and limited testimony and legislative review at the federal level. Mr. Schick noted that Assembly Bill 579 was unanimously enacted by the Nevada Legislature in 2007 in compliance with the AWA. Mr. Shick stated that a conscientious effort was made to meet deadlines for AWA compliance and testimony was reasonable, but not conclusive and compliance driven by the good intentions of the legislation and federal funding streams.

Moving to page 68, Mr. Shick said the current position of the NAJJA was:

- New provisions enacted by A.B. 579 (2007) rendered null and void by federal district court order.
- Statutory provisions pertaining to sex offenders that existed before the enactment of A.B. 579 remain in effect (NRS, Chapter 62F), (NRS 179D).
- Current statute (NRS 62F) and procedures for community notification of juvenile sex offenders (NRS 179D) are comprehensive, preserve community safety, and meet standards for JDAI and disproportionate minority confinement (DMC) concerns on a state level.
- Approximately 50 percent of the children/youth adjudicated for sexual offenses have been victimized.
- Offender risk assessment, juvenile community notification, and sex offender monitoring is more consistent with evidence-based practice that can demonstrate real public safety outcomes.
- Certification law addresses high-risk dangerous juvenile offenders.

Carey Stewart, Director, Washoe County Juvenile Services, stated that risk was assessed for juvenile sex offenders under the current statute through a tier assessment, developed by Leonard Pugh, former Director, Washoe County Juvenile Services, and Robert Stuyvesant, Clinician, Washoe County Juvenile Services. As far as the JDAI standards in trying to address DMC concerns, he noted that the tier assessment was an objective instrument and when they used objective instruments they were on track to assess risk. Regarding the continuum of care for youth, Mr. Stewart said that one thing that happened working under the current legislation was that Juvenile Justice Services had to change their whole system of care in 1997 when the current statutes were enacted. The result was not only implementing the objective tier assessment instrument, but also a partnership with the treatment and therapeutic community for a comprehensive continuum of care that not only worked with youth in regard to their counseling issues, but also in regard to assessing community risk. Mr. Stewart stated that over the years that partnership has grown and solidified, so the juvenile justice system was looking at community protection, community notification and the therapeutic components. In addition, the juvenile justice system received funding from the state for juvenile sex offender treatment, which has enhanced that partnership. He indicated that in the last five years, 85 percent of the youth placed on supervision for a sex offense have successfully completed their terms of supervision, which included supervision in the community and being involved in community-based programming. Mr. Stewart anticipated that number would increase in the upcoming months because of the nature of these offenses, and some of the statutory requirements for supervision, such as three years following an adjudication of minimum standards that youth had to be on supervision, the 85 percent average was going to increase because some of the youth were still involved with the therapeutic providers in the community. In addition, during the same timeframe only approximately two percent of the youth have committed another sex offense in the last five years after being placed on probation.

Robert Stuyvesant, Clinician, a contractor working with Washoe County Juvenile Services, indicated he has been in the field of responding to youth that have been charged with a range of sexual crimes for the past 30 years, and over that time period he was in a great position to see the community's response to this very serious social

and public health problem as it evolved. From a clinical perspective, Mr. Stuyvesant believed the juvenile justice systems have done an incredible service to the community, as well as the youth who were responsible for these crimes, because they have developed a very systematic and highly organized response to the behavior problem. He wondered about the efficacy of the new laws for guiding the juvenile justice system to manage youth charged with sex crimes and if there will be any improvement to what the system already provides. He noted that probably 98 percent of youth in the Washoe County juvenile justice system were under some form of supervision and receiving clinical services in response to the problem that brought them into the system.

Continuing, Mr. Stuyvesant said that the majority of youth that enter the system were about 14 to 15 years old. When he thought of a young person at that age or thought of his life at 14 or 15 years old, he tried to imagine being held accountable for a specific behavior that he was not proud of, or maybe ashamed about, and youth were now going to be held accountable for their behavior at 14 or 15 years of age well into their adult life. He believed the most important thing in terms of holding youth accountable, was that it was important the juvenile justice system took into perspective the developmental differences between adults and juveniles – they think differently, feel differently and behave differently and what youth thought about and did at age 14 or 15 were different at adulthood, and yet they were talking about a potential lifetime accountability process for some of the behaviors. Mr. Stuyvesant stated that the majority of youth treated were 14 to 15 years old, have limited social skills, and were under-socialized and challenged in terms of peer connections, and they were in situations which created opportunities for them to act out on a range of different feelings that they have not managed well up to that point in their life. Mr. Stuyvesant said the treatment provided goes a long way toward promoting a higher sense of accountability with outcomes. He noted that recidivism rates range between 2 to 9 percent across the country, which varied on the offender type, but the majority of youth seen were 14 to 15 years of age, under socialized, and involved in situational and opportunistic offense behaviors, as opposed to what most lay people consider as predatory, which was not the youth the juvenile justice system primarily see in treatment. He said there were exceptions – some youth were antisocial and some of the laws were important because they hold some youth accountable for a longer period in their lives, which was justified, but that did not fit the majority of youth.

Continuing, Mr. Stuyvesant explained that he was currently dealing with several 16 and 17 year old males that attended social gatherings with other peers and participated in alcohol and drugs and connected with underage females. In many situations the females have been deceptive about their age and told the boys they were 15 or 16 years old when they were only 13 or 14 years of age, and for whatever reasons the females end up pursuing prosecution. Under these guidelines, youth in that kind of situation could potentially be subject to registering as a convicted sex offender for 25 years and be subject to community notification. Youth involved in interfamilial situations with such an offense that warranted community notification and registration also subjected their family to this kind of public scrutiny, which made things very challenging for many of the families he worked with. Mr. Stuyvesant stated that most of the youth he dealt with were coming from single-parent families. In addition, approximately half of the population in the group home where he worked were Hispanic,



so they were dealing with cultural challenges, lack of knowledge about consent, awareness, and most of the youth were not aware that the legal age of consent in sexual relations in Nevada was 16, which was also a problem.

Chairwoman Leslie said it was her understanding that the law that was passed by the Legislature was now null and void. She asked Mr. Stuyvesant if he thought the current statutory framework was sufficient, or did he see a need for change. Mr. Stuyvesant replied that he did not see any reason for a change in legislation.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Mr. Shick if he thought the committee should pursue any additional legislative attempts to come into compliance with the AWA. Mr. Shick responded that the NAJJA tried to compromise, collaborate and be middle ground, and if there was a way to meet compliance with the AWA that would not impact juveniles, NAJJA would be on board; however, he did not think that could be accomplished with the rigid requirements. He noted he was working with the Attorney General's work group and there was due diligence with respect to meeting middle ground to achieve compliance with AWA, but he did not understand how it could happen. He noted the NAJJA supported that collaboration, and if middle ground cannot be reached, maybe the existing statute should be reviewed and improvements could be made with a bill draft request for high-end concerns. He added that the certification laws address predatory violent sex offenders in a juvenile level and were built in place in the current systems.

Continuing, Mr. Shick stated the concerns of NAJJA regarding the AWA was registration requirements were based solely on the crime of adjudication and not an actuarial risk assessment score. The charge was not indicative of the level of danger for youth, judicial discretion was removed by the nature of AWA, and there were no provisions to remove notification requirements after a juvenile improved, which the current system allowed for. In addition, it targeted children and families and brands them in their neighborhood and they had to potentially move away or be ostracized by the nature of having a sex offender living in their house. Mr. Shick added that representatives from juvenile justice and mental health services were not present during the legislative process, which they took ownership for. Mr. Shick noted there were retroactive requirements involved, and the NAJJA believed the AWA undermines JDAI and DMC principles that the juvenile justice was working hard to sustain within the framework of the departments.

Mr. Shick stated that NAJJA recommended draft legislation to meet AWA requirements without compromising the core of existing statutes and strongly supports the continued work of the Advisory Committee to achieve compliance with AWA without significant compromise to existing effective practices in the Nevada juvenile justice system.

Concluding, Mr. Shick said he provided some supporting documents from both sides of issue, which included the Practitioners' Guide to the Adam Walsh Act, page 75; Legislative Counsel Bureau letter to Assemblyman Ocegura and Assemblyman Horne regarding the U.S. District Court injunction enjoining the enforcement of A.B. 579, page 83; Nevada Attorney General letter regarding the unconstitutionality of the AWA, page 87; and Registering Harm – A Briefing Book on the Adam Walsh Act, page 91.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Mr. Shick for his presentation and for submitting the meeting material, which she found very helpful especially looking at the cost to Nevada in terms of implementing the AWA and the possible ten percent penalties under the Byrne Grant.

Mr. Shick clarified it was a ten percent reduction to the Byrne Grant across the board to the state, which was about \$185,000 and they tied it right into that. The state also would not be eligible for Sex Offender Management Assistance (SOMA) money if not in compliance, which was not here yet, but would otherwise be available to juvenile justice. In addition, there was the potential increase on supervision of these cases, and he believed it would pass down through the local level, not necessarily a state parole level, but more local jurisdictional management of the tiers identified in the Adam Walsh legislation.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Mr. Shick if he thought the Attorney General's working group was going to have a new bill for the Legislature that would be found constitutional. Mr. Shick stated that Keith Munro, Attorney General's Office, was heading the workgroup, which he was participating in on behalf of the NAJJA, and there was due diligence to work through the foundation of the AWA. He believed the workgroup may come up with legislation regardless whether the juvenile justice system was on board.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Mr. Shick, Mr. Stuyvesant, and Mr. Stewart for their presentations. She believed it was important for the committee to understand the concerns in the juvenile justice area.

## **XI. PRESENTATION CONCERNING THE CARE OF CHILDREN DURING DISASTERS**

Chairwoman Leslie stated that because of her particular interest in children in disasters and ensuring that Nevada's laws were current in that area, Senator Harry Reid appointed her to the National Commission on Children and Disasters. She noted that she was one of the ten commission members and the only state legislator on the commission. She noted that serving on the committee has been an enlightening and interesting experience and she believed the state needed to review its statutes to ensure the state was adequately prepared for a disaster.

Doug Riffenburgh, State Manager, Policy and Advocacy, CA NV WA, Save the Children, US Programs, directed the committee to page 107 of the meeting packet, [Exhibit A](#), which contained a list of states currently adhering to the standards he would be discussing in his testimony, along with a sample of Alabama Bill (HB 720). In addition, he provided a separate handout titled Getting Ready for Kids and the Flu, ([Exhibit J](#)).

Mr. Riffenburgh stated that it was a privilege to testify at the meeting in favor of action that would improve child safety in emergency preparedness in Nevada. Save the Children and its partners are committed to supporting the passage of legislation or making changes through the administrative rule process that ensures children were

protected during domestic emergencies. Three years after Hurricane Katrina, which focused national attention on the need for disaster preparedness, a report commissioned by Save the Children revealed that 46 states, and the District of Columbia, had yet to establish minimum standards in several critical areas to ensure that childcare facilities were adequately prepared in case of a domestic emergency. The report was based on a national document review of emergency preparedness standards for state licensing of family daycare, homes and childcare facilities. It demonstrated that while public awareness of domestic emergencies had increased, action necessary to protect children still remained to be taken. Most states have some basic requirements for licensed childcare providers, such as fire alarm and similar procedures, but it took Hurricane Katrina to show in graphic detail the holes in the system. In particular, most states fail to require daycare centers to establish safe offsite evacuation locations and procedures for getting children to this location, along with a plan for reuniting them with their parents. He stated that although a hurricane was not going to hit Nevada, natural and manmade crisis situations, such as industrial accidents and bioterrorism were situations requiring these safety measures in all states. He noted it was not a matter of if there would be a need in Nevada, but when a disaster would happen. The basic steps proposed were based on common sense and were being adopted in other states, either through legislation or administrative rule.

Mr. Riffenburgh said that daycare locations should be required to develop a written emergency preparedness plan for situations requiring evacuation, which includes, 1) designating a relocation site and evacuation route, 2) developing a means of notifying parents about the evacuation and relocation, 3) requiring that children with special needs were considered during emergencies so that no child was jeopardized due to lack of planning, and 4) requesting consideration to expand existing K-12 school standards beyond planning around violent crisis to include multi-hazards. The emergency preparedness plan value was predicated on the ability of staff to properly implement the plan. A key component of the changes proposed was a requirement that staff become trained and familiar with the emergency plans. Through this, childcare staff would be much better prepared to know what to do to protect children in the case of a domestic emergency.

Mr. Riffenburgh stated that Save the Children has worked with partners at all levels to develop emergency preparedness training for childcare facilities. He noted that Dr. Debbi Guilfoyle, Director, Crosstown Learning Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma, recalled good planning was put into action as a result of the Save the Children community preparedness initiative when an explosion occurred at the Airgas plant just a few blocks from her childcare facility. Dr. Guilfoyle acted immediately to protect the children and credits her successful response to a thought out plan previously developed. In her words, Dr. Guilfoyle stated, "We knew how to contact the parents, and the procedures to ensure our children's safety all because of the preparedness planning, training and practice." Mr. Riffenburgh stressed that the time for change was now with the increasing number of children served by out-of-home care. Over 11 million children in the United States under the age of five were now in some type of childcare arrangement while their parents worked. Mr. Riffenburgh said that everyone had to do their part; policy makers, parents and childcare providers must share the responsibility of keeping

children safe. He added that these common sense steps were not controversial and should be implemented as soon as possible.

Concluding, Mr. Riffenburgh said the state of Nevada was already implementing the first of the provisions – evacuation and relocation, so it was just a matter of finishing the job and expanding the provisions to include parent reunification and address the special needs of children.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Mr. Riffenburgh for his presentation. She asked if the chart on page 109 only addressed childcare centers. Mr. Riffenburgh replied that the first three columns on the page addressed childcare centers; the fourth column looked at expanding the crisis prevention legislation in place in most states around major violent situations to include a multi-hazard disaster planning.

Chairwoman Leslie stated the chart showed that Nevada had a requirement for evacuation and relocation for childcare centers; however, the state did not have reunification plans for children separated from their parents or address the special needs of children in childcare. Mr. Riffenburgh said that the Chair was correct and NAC 432A contained the provisions.

Chairwoman Leslie said the committee would look at the provisions and the K-12 disaster planning statute. Mr. Riffenburgh concurred that the statute should be revisited. He noted that the study and information for the chart was conducted by the consulting firm of Brown, Buckely, and Tucker, and if a multi-hazard type of situation was not cited in the columns, it was included as a no on the chart.

Senator Wiener stated that she chaired the Commission on School Safety and Juvenile Violence and one of the major issues was the requirement of school districts to have a specific plan for emergencies and disasters. She recalled that even though school violence was the major issue that prompted that commission, the intent was there to cover all critical emergency situations.

Chairwoman Leslie commented that often there were written emergency plans, but what lacked was the coordination with the local emergency management representatives to help carry out the plans.

Senator Cegavske asked if childcare centers were involved in the discussions and had input in drafting the language for the bill, because she believed they could provide a lot of insight. She noted that often stipulations, rules and regulations were put on entities without including the entities that were directly affected. She asked if a written evacuation plan had to be renewed every year even if there were no changes in the building. Mr. Riffenburgh was unsure if childcare centers were included in the discussions because he was not involved at the state level. He believed that reviewing the plans annually was a good idea; however, he assumed the plan would remain the same if nothing had changed and it was ultimately up to each state to implement the specific provisions of the plan.

Chairwoman Leslie commented that she thought that question might be better directed to the state and county childcare licensing agencies.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Mr. Riffenburgh if the plan he provided from the state of Alabama was model legislation that Nevada should adopt. Mr. Riffenburgh replied that Alabama had model legislation; however, their plan went beyond what Nevada needed. He said there were seven states that have adopted all four of the measures, which were the first seven states listed on the chart he provided.

Chairwoman Leslie said she was aware of a federal requirement that every child welfare agency had to have some component of what Mr. Riffenburgh was suggesting for children in childcare and K-12 schools. However, there was not a similar federal requirement for juvenile justice and believed the state had the responsibility to ensure there was an effective disaster plan mechanism for youth in the state's care. Mr. Riffenburgh replied that Save the Children organization would like to see an effective disaster plan across the board for all organizations.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Kevin Schiller, Director, Washoe County Social Services, if he thought the child welfare agencies were adequately prepared for an emergency.

Mr. Schiller replied that there were two components to the issue, which included a fairly structured and well-driven emergency management team at the county level. Washoe County had an emergency management plan, which was coordinated with law enforcement and included foster parents by jurisdiction and area code, so a reaction could be created if needed. In addition, Washoe County had to submit an emergency disaster plan to the state, which was a federal requirement. Mr. Schiller added that he used Clark County's plan as the guideline for the Washoe County emergency plan, which was submitted approximately two months ago. Mr. Schiller said that Washoe County was constantly looking for ways to improve how the county reacted to disasters and what could be done differently.

Chairwoman Leslie said that Washoe County Social Services was also responsible for childcare licensing in Washoe County. She asked Mr. Schiller how he would improve the emergency plan if there was a state mandate.

Alice Ledesma, Program Coordinator, Licensing Division, Washoe County, stated that the regulations for Washoe County contained very specific regulations regarding disaster planning, which were contained in NRS 432A; however, parent notification and caring for children with special needs were not specifically addressed in statute and could be added to current regulations.

Chairwoman Leslie recalled when the H1N1 Swine Flu scare in Washoe County first came out and people immediately left the meeting she was attending to go to their child's daycare center because of the fear of the flu. She believed that behavior was common during a disaster because the first thing a parent thought about during a disaster was the safety of their child and having a reunification plan during any type of a disaster was very important. Ms. Ledesma added that the regulations included a list of offsite shelters and how to reconvene; however, what was left out was how to get a hold

of parents or addressing children with special needs, either physical disabilities or a mental handicap, which she believed was just an oversight.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Ms. Ledesma if she thought the childcare disaster plans were adequately coordinated with local emergency management so they were aware of the different reunification shelters. Ms. Ledesma stated that Washoe County had developed their plan with their emergency management team and it was fairly well-coordinated. She noted that school districts were in the primary plan and childcare centers were in the secondary plan, which included a map of all the reunification centers. She believed the county had a fairly well-developed plan of sheltering youth along with a reunification plan. Ms. Ledesma explained that generally parents would go to their child's school first if a disaster occurred during school hours, therefore, the emergency management team would go to schools first and then call childcare centers to account for all children. Chairwoman Leslie asked if homecare providers were included in the disaster plan. Ms. Ledesma replied that every homecare provider was required to have a reunification and disaster plan.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Ms. Ledesma for her presentation. She asked if Clark County's regulations were the same as the rural counties. Ms. Ledesma said the regulations were all developed out of NRS 432A, and all counties had to meet the general requirement of the standards; although the standards could be somewhat different.

Larry Carter, Juvenile Justice Services, Clark County, stated that Clark County had an evacuation and contingency plan for disasters and the county worked with emergency management services. He noted that Clark County was currently in the process of rewriting its plans. Mr. Carter recalled that Clark County had to evacuate 100 boys from Spring Mountain Youth Camp because of a nearby forest fire. He said the county was fortunate they had a plan, which was written three months prior to the fire, and they were able to utilize and help facilitate the move of the boys to an alternative placement. He noted that any movement made had to be done in a secure manner, particularly when dealing with youth from a lockdown facility, and the youth had to be moved to an area where the county could maintain security. In addition, they had to look at additional avenues of conditioned released, such as youth that could be released under home management, electronic monitoring, or other things that could be done to start reducing population to a more manageable size. He noted that Clark County had a memorandum of understanding with Nellis Air Force Base and Clark County Parks and Fairgrounds in Moapa, and there were several contingencies depending on the emergency, the extent of the emergency, and how long they had to be away from their facility.

Chairwoman Leslie said there was a brief report on Hurricane Katrina on how the state of Louisiana moved children from jails and youth prisons during the disaster. Mr. Carter replied that he was thankful that the Juvenile Justice Services had an evacuation plan and the Spring Mountain Youth Camp evacuation was the first for the Juvenile Justice Services. In addition, Juvenile Justice Services was able to staff the camp differently after seeing the mistakes that were made and things that looked like

good policy and practice took too much time and were too onerous resulting in changes to the disaster plan.

Carey Stewart, Director, Washoe County Juvenile Services, stated that Washoe County Juvenile Services had an evacuation plan for Wittenberg Hall at the Jan Evans Juvenile Justice Center and the McGee Center in Reno, Nevada. In addition, Washoe County worked with the Sheriff's office and school districts to not only coordinate the evacuation of youth in care, but also to have places to take youth. Several years ago there were earthquake clusters in Reno and it seemed like the county was more aware of the earthquakes; however, as the earthquakes subsided and since the state was not in a flood plain, he believed the county probably needed to revisit the disaster and emergency plans.

Chairwoman Leslie noted that people were more aware of emergency evacuation plans in the midst or just after a disaster; however, the plan is often forgotten as time goes on and other priorities happen. She was interested in putting some type of reminder in statute to ensure that the Juvenile Justice Services were aware of the plan as time passes and changes could be made if needed to the plan, because personnel can change in the juvenile justice system and the plan was no good once the people who knew about the plan were gone.

Scott Shick, Nevada Association of Juvenile Justice Administrators, stated that the rural counties had disaster plans based on particular protocols in the communities and the relationships with the Sheriff's department and FEMA requirements that sustain the health, safety and welfare of youth in a disaster and the removal of them in the event of a disaster. He noted that China Springs and Aurora Pines in Douglas County had a detailed plan based on the fire danger and lightening risks in the foothills near the facility. Mr. Shick believed that there should be a mandate that the disaster and evacuation plans be reviewed every few years with the departments involved in the plan.

Chairwoman Leslie said she would provide the report on Hurricane Katrina to Mr. Shick since he was the current president of the NAJJA. Mr. Shick clarified that the current president of NAJJA was Tom Metscher, from Esmeralda/Nye County.

Fernando Serrano, Deputy Administrator, DCFS Juvenile Services, confirmed that the three state juvenile correctional facilities had disaster evacuation plans in place. He recalled when he was the Chief Probation Officer in Humboldt, Lander, and Pershing Counties, the detention center at the time was located at the abandoned air force base near Winnemucca Mountain and there was a lightening strike resulting in a fire and he was thankful those counties had an evacuation plan in place. He asked Chairwoman Leslie for a copy of the Hurricane Katrina report and believed it would be an ideal project for the NAJJA to pursue.

Mr. Riffenburgh concluded by saying the Save the Children organization would be happy to assist Nevada in implementing the policy and procedures of a disaster plan. He acknowledged that Nevada had an evacuation and relocation plan in place. He

added that obviously there were psychosocial issues for children separated from their parents for long periods of time, which was seen with Hurricane Katrina.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Mr. Riffenburgh for traveling to Nevada for his insightful presentation.

John Groom, President, Stafford Act Consultants, said he recently met Chairwoman Leslie at the National Convention on Children and Disasters in Washington D.C. He stated that one thing discussed at the commission workshop was not to forget the mental health of the children and ensuring that the data between the various agencies that were trying to help the children, was transferred smoothly, and that needed access to the data to help unify children was made available to the stakeholders that needed that information. He noted that his company started a program that would help the state find financial resources to pay for the training and the resources necessary to get the daycare centers and schools up to speed, as well as providing a mental health counseling component to the disaster recovery for children. He noted when children suffer trauma it typically was unnoticed in emergency management planning and he wanted to ensure a strong plan was implemented and integrated into the state's emergency management plan that was specifically focused on the needs of children in the aftermath of a disaster.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Mr. Groom for his presentation and asked if he had any material on his presentation to provide to the committee members. Mr. Groom replied that he would provide information on the Stafford Act Consultants to the committee.

Sam King, President, League of Women Voters of Nevada (League), stated that the League conducted a study on emergency responders in 2008, and the study found that the emergency responders in Clark County and the rural counties were commendable. She previously worked for the Clark County School District and one of her responsibilities was to devise a relocation plan, not just a fire drill or an emergency on-site location plan, but a plan to relocate children to various sites other than a regular school-based location. She noted that the school district had a central office emergency and a school district plan, and the plan was approximately 300 pages with contingencies for picking up students. Ms. King said that one of recommendations the League made was to relocate people to empty buildings in the surrounding areas as part of the disaster plan, not just one central location for all the elementary, middle, and high school students and not converging all those students and parents in one place.

Moving to another topic, Ms. King referred the committee to her handout regarding student truancy in Nevada schools, ([Exhibit K](#)). She noted there were 60,000 truant students reported at this time in Clark County; truancy was a huge concern, a gateway crime, and a major crime of all juvenile crimes. Ms. King noted that the League of Women Voters formed the Truancy Steering Committee to address student truancy, review policy, procedures, existing laws and practices, and once the collaborative efforts were formalized, a natural progression would suggest lobbying for legislative support. She believed that maybe the state did not want to formalize or change statute; however, they might want to look at the current statute and refine how it was implemented, with collaboration between agencies, law enforcement, school districts



and the juvenile justice system in how they deal with student truancy. Ms. King noted that with the current budget situation in the state, the different entities needed to collaborate so they were using the resources as best as possible and not repeating efforts and keeping the youth out of school because everyone was aware that education was important for the success of youth.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Ms. King for her testimony. She recalled a truancy project that was very successful when she was the Executive Director of the Children's Cabinet. She understood what Ms. King said and thought that school attendance review boards and how they fit in with juvenile justice, mental health concerns, and child welfare would be a great agenda item for the committee if the time allowed.

Jason Wasden, Clark County resident, commented that one of the things discussed at the meeting was the fund that was created for 25 individuals to help them integrate into society. He asked the committee if they thought about collaboration with the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), because he believed the more education attained the fewer problems youth had with violations with the law. He believed that University of Nevada, Las Vegas and Reno, community colleges, and the NSHE could collaborate to help students with housing and support groups. Recently, Mr. Wasden attended a Board of Regents meeting and a nonprofit agency testified on how they were trying to help homeless youth enter the education system and he believed that there could be better collaboration among the nonprofit, university and county agencies.

In addition, Mr. Wasden said the teenage prostitution issue was very disturbing to him. He agreed with Mr. Hambrick's statement that the perpetrators needed to be publicized and thought that possibly the young women involved in prostitution could lead authorities to the repeat offenders.

Mr. Shick supported Mr. Wasden's comments on education and the concerns about the budget cuts for education, which impact the disenfranchised populations within the school systems and juvenile justice youth that were struggling. Many students were not receiving their core education or high school diploma, which had a direct impact on their future.

## **XII. DISCUSSION OF FUTURE MEETING DATES AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND TOPICS**

Chairwoman Leslie commented that several topics for future meetings were brought up at the meeting and she would be sure to include those items on the next agenda. In addition, she thought the latest Legislative Auditor's Review of Governmental and Private Facilities for Children would be available for the next meeting.

Chairwoman Leslie asked the committee members if there were other topics they wanted to have addressed at a future meeting.

Senator Copening noted that at the last meeting she mentioned a community initiative called the Community We Will. She directed the committee to the handout entitled,

Community We Will, The Campaign for What's Possible for Children, Families and Southern Nevada, ([Exhibit L](#)). She noted that the Community We Will campaign brought together stakeholders in the community involved in child welfare issues, along with DFS, which was supported by Casey Family Programs. She stated that the Community We Will initiative began about two years ago, and currently there was a business case ready to present in March 2010, which focused on the return on investment for strengthening families, including a community action plan for achieving their goals, as well as seeking resources from the community to sustain capacity building for child welfare systems and programs in southern Nevada.

Chairwoman Leslie thanked Senator Copening and said Community We Will campaign would be included on the next meeting agenda.

Assemblywoman Mastroluca stated that the issue of "sexting" came to mind after listening to the comments regarding juvenile sex offenders. In many states, juveniles that participated in sexting were marked as sex offenders for life. She indicated there has been a lot of discussion in different states about sexting laws for children versus adults and wondered if that issue could be addressed at a future meeting.

Senator Cegavske asked if the committee was able to look into the Fostering in Faith program administered by the United Methodist Social Ministries of Las Vegas. Rex Goodman, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, stated that the Fostering in Faith program was on the list of potential topics for a future meeting.

Chairwoman Leslie said that staff was looking at the second week of April for the next committee meeting. Mr. Goodman explained that there were two more meetings for the committee and he hoped to schedule a meeting in early April; however, the first few days of April coincide with Clark County's spring break. He noted that April 4 was the Easter holiday, which may cause a conflict for committee members. Mr. Goodman stated the week of April 12 was another option and the only conflict that week was the Audit Subcommittee meeting scheduled for April 13. He thought that Monday, April 12, or Wednesday, April 14, would be good days to schedule the meeting.

Chairwoman Leslie stated that staff would contact committee members to confirm a meeting date to ensure all the members were able to attend and give as much notice to the regular listeners and attendees as possible.

### **XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ernie Adler, representing Rite of Passage schools, stated that Rite of Passage was affiliated with the Betty K. Marler Youth Services Center, Denver, Colorado, which was a juvenile treatment program for girls. He noted that the youth center received several national awards and thought the committee would be interested in a presentation from the staff regarding their new innovative juvenile treatment center for girls located in the Denver area.

Chairwoman Leslie asked Mr. Adler to give Mr. Goodman a description of the program to see if the presentation could be scheduled for a future meeting.

#### **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairwoman Leslie thanked the committee members and representatives for their testimony and input at the meeting. She reiterated that staff would be contacting the committee members to schedule the April meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna Thomas, Committee Secretary

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie, Chairwoman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Copies of exhibits mentioned in these minutes are on file in the Fiscal Analysis Division at the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. The division may be contacted at (775) 684-6821.**