

Families with Service Needs Advisory Board



Report to the Connecticut General Assembly
February, 2008

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Report to the General Assembly from the Families with Service Needs Advisory Board

Executive Summary

Children from Families with Service Needs (FWSN) are children who are experiencing a crisis that involves risk behaviors such as truancy, running away or being beyond the control of parents. Families often turn to state and community agencies and the court for help. Research has shown that children who do not receive appropriate interventions to address these issues may subsequently become involved in the juvenile justice system as delinquents.

An issues brief prepared by the Vera Institute of Justice states:

*“Faced with a recalcitrant or noncompliant adolescent, judges have few options but to take a child out of the home, even when he or she poses no threat to public safety. This can lead to further negative outcomes: exacerbated family tension, reduced engagement in school, an increased likelihood of deeper involvement in criminal behavior”*¹

FWSN children are those at highest risk for ongoing behavioral health and substance abuse problems and for future involvement with the juvenile and criminal justice system. Investing in early intervention with these children and families is cost effective, especially when compared to the cost of the incarceration and rehabilitation of adults.

The purpose of this report is to carry out the legislative mandate of Public Act 06-188, which established the Families with Service Needs (FWSN) Advisory Board and directed the Advisory Board to (1) monitor the progress made by the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch and the Department of Children and Families in developing services and programming for children and youth from families with service needs and addressing problems that are unique to girls in the juvenile justice population; (2) monitor the progress being made by the Judicial Branch in the implementation of the requirements of Public Act 05-250, *An Act Concerning Children of Families with Service Needs (P.A. 05-250)*; (3) provide advice with respect to implementation upon request of the Judicial Branch or the General Assembly, and (4) make written recommendations to the Judicial Branch and the General Assembly with respect to the accomplishment of implementation of Public Act 05-250, no later than December 31, 2007.

¹ Ina Chiu and Sara Mogulescu, *Changing the Status Quo for Status Offender: New York's Efforts to Support Troubled Teens* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2004), 1.

In state fiscal year 2006-2007, over 4000 children were referred to the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters for what are known as status offenses. These children may be truant, defiant of school rules, beyond control of a parent or runaways from home.

The FWSN Advisory Board and its subcommittees have engaged in a year long planning process. The outcome of this process has been the development of a framework for service delivery that has a shared goal of diverting children from the court process. The approaches that are being implemented and are recommended in the full report center on research based, gender specific, developmentally appropriate, culturally competent and community-based strategies to address truancy, disruptive school behavior, running away and other at risk behaviors exhibited by children in Connecticut.

The full report documents Connecticut's efforts to disrupt the pipeline that moves children experiencing school and family problems into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. It also identifies the remaining gaps that need to be addressed to provide the prevention, intervention and support services children and families will need in the future.

In order to develop the best possible outcomes for children and their families, a three-pronged approach to delivery of services is recommended. The service delivery system in Connecticut must have strategies that:

- Prevent children from entering the court system by encouraging positive, pro-social development, school attendance, family engagement and community-based programming;
- Intervene to divert at risk children from the court system; and
- Provide evidence-based services to children who enter the court system.

There are significant gaps in the service delivery system that currently exists in Connecticut. Many children and their families have no access to prevention, diversion and intervention services. In many instances, children and their families must leave their communities to receive needed services. It is imperative, therefore, that children and their families have timely and seamless access to necessary services.

Services vary from community to community “. . . Connecticut is a ‘resource rich’ state; however, significant gaps in services exist, not only in the types of services available, but also in access to services based on geography or a child’s status with DCF or the court. Wait lists for services present a formidable challenge for many families.”²

² *The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan: Building Toward a Better Future*, A Strategic Planning Process Facilitated by the Child Welfare League of America for the Department of Children and Families-Bureau of Juvenile Services and the Connecticut Judicial Branch-Court Support Services Division in Collaboration with many Public and Private Stakeholders, (Connecticut: 2006), 10

In addition, minor changes to the recently enacted Families with Service Needs statutes must be enacted to provide sufficient procedural safeguards for children, allow for exchange of information without affecting due process considerations and adhere to federal requirements regarding children in DCF placement.

Five core recommendations in this report of the FWSN Advisory Board address the most critical needs in the area of services and legislation. Beyond these core recommendations, additional necessary steps are recommended to effectuate system wide reform that will provide for prevention and early intervention and deliver appropriate services to FWSN children and girls in the juvenile justice system in all parts of the state.

THE FIVE CORE RECOMMENDATIONS:

RECOMMENDATION ONE

PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SIX ADDITIONAL FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS TO MAKE THESE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO EVERY CHILD AND FAMILY IN CONNECTICUT.

The Family Support Center (FSC) is a multi-service “one-stop” community- based program for FWSN-referred children assessed as high risk and in need of intensive services. Public Act 07-4 requires that every juvenile court, after assessment by a probation officer, divert children and families assessed as high risk/needs to a Family Support Center. However, in 2007, the legislature only provided funding for four centers, now located in Hartford, Waterbury, Bridgeport and New Haven. The purpose of the FSC is to determine appropriate services and/or treatment needs for children and families who exhibit behaviors that require an immediate response (high risk/needs) and offer access to appropriate and effective services and interventions.

The Family Support Center provides voluntary services to the child and family. These services include case management, 24-hour crisis counseling, family mediation, educational advocacy; psycho-educational and cognitive behavioral groups, one-on-one therapeutic sessions and respite care for up to two weeks.

CSSD received funds in SFY 2007-2008 to contract with private providers for these services in only four juvenile districts. Thus, only 39 of Connecticut’s 161 cities and towns are currently served by a Family Support Center. They are: Waterbury, Wolcott, Prospect, Naugatuck, Middlebury, Southbury, Oxford, Beacon Falls, Seymour, Ansonia, Derby, Hartford, Windsor, Bloomfield, East Hartford, West Hartford, Glastonbury, New Haven, North Haven, West Haven, East Haven, Hamden, Cheshire, Wallingford,

Bethany, Woodbridge, Orange, Milford, Branford, North Branford, Guilford, Madison, Bridgeport, Monroe, Easton, Shelton, Trumbull, Stratford, and Fairfield.

Funding for six additional FSCs has been requested but not yet granted by the General Assembly. Appropriation of funds for six additional Family Support Centers will allow high risk/needs children and their families in the rest of the state to receive crucial diversionary services in or close to their local community.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

FUND AND ESTABLISH PILOT TRUANCY REDUCTION INITIATIVES.

Currently, there is a small amount of grant money available through the Office of Policy and Management to fund programs that promote school attendance. Some examples of recently funded program initiatives include enrichment activities such as study skills and time management exercises; a virtual alternative learning for students who are not succeeding in the traditional classroom setting as measured by their attendance, state test scores, and academic grades; a new Re-entry Transitional Classroom for students who are absent for 10 consecutive days or more in any one semester; an effort to improve attendance through the purchase of new organizational resources, incentives and behavior plans for students, and parent workshops and professional development of staff. Unfortunately, distribution of these monies does not benefit most cities and towns and does not promote the development of a uniform approach to promoting school attendance. Instead, it only promotes experimental or small scale programs with varying degrees of effectiveness, when and if program outcomes are measured.

The local districts who currently participate in the Connecticut Consortium on School Attendance are few: Ansonia, Killingly, Stonington, Danbury, New Britain, Winchester, Hartford, Norwich and Windham.

The Pilot Truancy Reduction Initiatives specifically recommended in this report will allow the State Department of Education (SDE) to identify and establish truancy prevention initiatives in partnership with three to five local school districts with the highest number of accepted FWSN referrals. Additionally, SDE, if funded, can provide a Dropout and Truancy Prevention Consultant to assist the selected district with technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation of the prevention strategies implemented in the three to five identified school districts.

These initiatives will include district wide and child specific interventions. Funding also is proposed to provide evidence-based truancy reduction programs targeting middle school and ninth grade high school students.

RECOMMENDATION THREE

PROVIDE FUNDS TO ENHANCE YOUTH SERVICE BUREAUS (YSB). AS A PILOT, IN EACH OF FOUR JUDICIAL DISTRICTS, INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF AT LEAST ONE YSB THAT HAS A JUVENILE REVIEW BOARD SO THAT THE YSB CAN INCREASE ITS CASELOAD AND HANDLE REFERRALS OF THOSE YOUTH WHO ARE AT RISK OF HAVING FWSN REFERRALS SUBMITTED TO THE COURT.

The Connecticut General Assembly established and outlined the services provided by Youth Service Bureaus (YSB) in CT. General Statutes §10-19m. The statute directs that municipalities may establish multipurpose youth service bureaus. According to law, the YSBs “shall be the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment and follow-up services.” Examples of services YSBs may provide include individual and group counseling, family therapy, parenting education, vocational placement and counseling, recreational and youth enrichment programs; prevention programs, including youth pregnancy, youth suicide, violence, alcohol and drug prevention and positive youth development. The law further states “Such services shall be designed to meet the needs of youth by the diversion of troubled youth from the justice system as well as by the provision of opportunities for all youth to function as responsible members of their communities”.

Youth Service Bureaus currently serve 132 communities statewide. YSBs receive a small percentage of their funding through the State Department of Education (SDE), with a majority of the funding from municipalities, private and public grants and fundraising donations. Where YSBs exist, the nature of services offered and staffing levels vary widely.

A Juvenile Review Board (JRB) is a group of local professionals, including police, social workers, school officials, juvenile court officials and community members that meet regularly to offer juveniles, usually those accused of a delinquent act, and their families a positive alternative to referral to juvenile court. The JRB offers a community-based alternative to address school, family and minor criminal problems, and provides community-based solutions to deal with these issues. Since the JRB is community organized and community driven, there is an increased likelihood that there will be a quicker response to the child and family’s needs and that the child will avoid the negative implications of the court process.

Currently, there are three different models for JRBs that have evolved around the state. DCF and CSSD are funding some in large urban areas. DCF funds JRBs in New Haven and Bridgeport, CSSD funds JRBs in Hartford and Waterbury. In other towns, they are operated by the local police and in others, the YSB runs them, often in conjunction with local law enforcement.

However, many cities and towns have no access to a JRB. Among those that do, not all of the JRBs accept referrals involving children from families with service needs. In a survey conducted of Youth Service Bureaus, fifty-six stated that they had existing JRBs. Of the fifty-six YSBs with existing JRB programs, 70% handle FWSN cases and 30% do not.³ For example, the Hartford JRB, which serves a major metropolitan area, does not handle FWSN cases. In addition, there are no statewide standards for who should be referred and how the JRBs should function.

A pilot program in each of four Judicial Districts will focus specifically on children at risk of being referred as children from families with service needs. The pilot program will allow each YSB to enhance its JRB by increasing its caseload to accept and handle cases of children at risk of being referred to court as a child from a Family with Service Needs.

The JRB process can help to divert more children from court and provide services for the child and family in their local community through the resources of the Youth Service Bureau. It is anticipated that the State Department of Education will establish desired outcomes, monitoring and evaluation of the YSB pilots to ensure competency and standardization.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

FUND AND USE FLEXIBLE FUNDING TO ALLOW THE COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION TO PURCHASE CHILD SPECIFIC SERVICES FOR COURT REFERRED LOW AND MEDIUM RISK CHILDREN.

Funds are still needed to purchase diversionary services that are not funded under existing contracts for services or not available in a certain community. Examples of these services include mentoring, pro-social and positive youth development programs and the cost of transportation to access a service.

Use of flexible funds would be under the local control of CSSD in each court location. CSSD would be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the use of the funds and the effectiveness of the services purchased. Currently, CSSD has been very successful in utilizing and monitoring the use of flexible funds for delinquents and is achieving desirable outcomes. Expanding the use of this innovative initiative to FWSN cases would provide greater flexibility to the courts in designing appropriate services.

³ Presentation to the FWSN Advisory Board by Francis J. Carino, Supervisory Juvenile Prosecutor, “Youth Service Bureaus & Juvenile Review Boards”, September 2007.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE

MAKE NEEDED CHANGES TO THE FAMILIES WITH SERVICE NEEDS LAW TO ENSURE PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS, ALLOW FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION WITHOUT AFFECTING DUE PROCESS CONSIDERATIONS AND ADHERE TO FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS.

- **Confidentiality**

Currently, Section 46b-124(j) provides that mental health screenings and assessment of delinquent children are to be used solely for planning and treatment purposes and are otherwise confidential. This prevents statements the child may make during such assessment from being used against the child in any court hearing. It is recommended that FWSN children, who will be screened and assessed by probation officers to ascertain appropriate diversionary services, be afforded the same protections as delinquent children.

- **Procedural Safeguards**

- **Child as the subject of the Families with Service Needs;**
- **Permanency Plan Review Hearings;**
- **FWSN Supervision**

In a family with service needs (FWSN) case, the child is the respondent and the court only adjudicates the child as an individual, not the family. The current statute erroneously refers, in several instances, to adjudicating the family rather than the child. Adjudicating the family is illogical in many FWSN matters, as the allegations and grounds pertain to the conduct of the child, not the family, and in some cases, mainly those alleging the child is beyond control, the parent is the complainant. It also is recommended that the word “placement” in Section 46b-148 be substituted for “commitment” in subsection (a) to avoid confusion with an actual commitment to the department of children and families.

Revisions are proposed to Section 46b-149. A new subsection (i) is proposed because it has been the practice to modify and enlarge the conditions of FWSN supervision in the same manner afforded to the court with respect to probation orders in Section 46b-140a. The court should be afforded such flexibility, particularly after an alleged violation has taken place, to ensure appropriate services and sufficient time to measure their effectiveness.

Amendments to subsections (j) and (k) are recommended because extensions and revocations of commitments for both child protection matters (Section 46b-129(k)) and delinquency cases (Section 46b-141(b)) are now done by motion. The addition of language contemplating permanency plans for committed FWSN children and motions to

revoke or extend is recommended for consistency and patterns the permanency planning provisions of the child protection and delinquency statutes cited above. The Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (1997) requires that status offenders, including Connecticut's FWSNs have permanency plan reviews and hearings. The first permanency hearing must be 12 months from the date the child enters care, either from the date temporary custody is granted or commitment ordered to the Department of Children and Families. (See 45 CFR Sec. 1356.21(h)).

➤ **Erasure of Families with Service Needs Records**

It is recommended that the Judicial Branch work to fund and develop technology that would provide for automatic erasure of records pertaining to a FWSN adjudication when the child who is the subject of the record turns eighteen. It is further recommended that the Judicial Branch establish policies and procedures that immediately erase successfully diverted FWSN complaints upon dismissal.

➤ **Child In Violation of FWSN Court Order**

A major reform implemented on October 1, 2007 was the prohibition of the placement, by the court, of an adjudicated FWSN child in detention for a violation of a court order. Previously, a FWSN child violating a court order would be treated as a delinquent. P.A. 07-4 now treats a violation of a court order as an additional FWSN allegation and requires the filing of a new petition alleging such a violation. Such a violation no longer constitutes a delinquent act.

P.A. 07-4 requires the filing of a new petition alleging such a violation and sets forth the options available to the court upon finding the allegations are true. Such a violation no longer constitutes a delinquent act. The child is entitled to an attorney and an evidentiary hearing on the allegations. If no violation is found, the case is dismissed and erased. If a violation is found, the court determines the least restrictive alternative available to meet the child's and the community's needs. The court may order the child to remain in the child's home or in the custody of a relative or any other suitable person. If the court finds that there is no less restrictive alternative appropriate to meet the needs of the child and the community, the court may enter an order that directs or authorizes a peace officer or other appropriate person to place the child in a staff-secure facility⁴ for not more than forty-five days. If the child is placed in a staff secure facility, the court must review the case every 15 days to consider whether continuing the placement is appropriate. At the end of the period of placement in the staff-secure facility, the child must be returned to the community and may be under the supervision of the juvenile probation officer.

A third alternative is that the court may order the child committed to the care and custody of DCF for placement for a period not to exceed eighteen months and further order the child to cooperate with DCF.

⁴ See section on CSSD funded Families with Service Needs (FWSN) Center

The Advisory Board is recommending substantive changes in Section 32(a) of P.A. 07-4, which is not yet codified, as the process for handling violation of a court order as articulated in P.A. 07-4 lacks certain basic due process protections and is inconsistent with other FWSN provisions. The act requires that a new petition be filed alleging the violation of court order. There is no provision for service of process. The standard of proof for a finding that a child has violated a court order should be stated as “clear and convincing evidence,” consistent with the adjudicatory standard of proof for the original petition which is “clear and convincing evidence”.

➤ **FWSN Child at Imminent Risk**

The Advisory Board is recommending substantive changes in Section 32(b) of P.A. 07-4, which is not yet codified, as just as in Section 32(a) as noted above, the process for handling imminent risk petitions articulated in P.A. 07-4 lacks certain basic due process protections and is inconsistent with other FWSN provisions. The service requirement for a new petition should be specified, as well as to whom an order of placement is directed. The filing of an imminent risk petition for a previously adjudicated child who is no longer under orders of supervision or commitment may not be appropriate, as the court’s authority to act and/or jurisdiction to act may be questionable. Section (b) also is inconsistent in referring to a child “at risk of immediate physical harm” and then later referring to a child “at imminent risk of physical harm.”

Clarification that an immediate hearing should be held subsequent to placement in a staff-secure facility appears necessary here; hence, the addition of the reference to subsection (c). Subsection(A) needs the clarification that an adjudicated FWSN child, after being held for up to 45-days, upon return to the community for services, may be required to remain under a probation officer’s supervision or a preexisting order of commitment. Most importantly, the existing subsection (B) for a commitment to DCF merely on the basis of a probable cause finding, without any notice, hearing, or findings by clear and convincing evidence to justify this more restrictive, modified disposition is improper.

(All of the proposed statutory amendments recommended by the Advisory Board are contained in Appendix IX.)

OTHER KEY RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE FWSN POPULATION

A. Recommendations related to FWSN Population

Type of Recommendation	Detail	Primary Agency
1.Prevention	Fund and implement an evidence-based parent education program that targets high risk, runaway, beyond control, truant behavior (e.g. Parent Project). Initially implement in the middle schools in the five cities that have the highest number of FWSN accepted referrals. Allocate sufficient funds to SDE to establish desired outcomes, monitoring and independent evaluation of the parent education program.	SDE
2. Expansion of Services	Expand the number of FWSN Liaisons from 8 to 10 for statewide coverage of all courts and Family Support Centers.	DCF
3. Data Collection and Evaluation	CSSD will work to ensure data collection systems for providers and the evaluation contractor exist and are secure and adhere to all state and federal laws requiring confidentiality.	CSSD
	Efforts should be made to obtain funds and modify the data collection systems of CSSD and DCF to ensure the collection of the following information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Racial and ethnic disparities at all stages of the FWSN system 2. Timeliness and appropriateness of services for all FWSNs 3. Effectiveness of community- 	CSSD & DCF

	<p>based preventive programs</p> <p>4. Flex funding for FWSN population separated from delinquency population</p>	
	<p>DCF, CSSD, and SDE will coordinate plans for research and evaluation of expanded prevention strategies, services and coordination across systems with focus on systems-level outcomes such as drop-out; FWSN recidivism. (See Appendix VII for further information)</p>	<p>DCF, CSSD & SDE</p>
<p>4. Systemic, longitudinal evaluation and planning</p>	<p>Create a Joint Strategic Planning Committee with representatives from CSSD, DCF, SDE, OPM, Child Protection Commission, Division of Public Defender Services, and the Division of Criminal Justice in order to:</p> <p>A. Enhance coordination between agencies in regard to initiatives that involve FWSN and other at risk youth. In particular, the following initiatives under the auspices of four different agencies need coordination:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DCF (community collaboratives, voluntary services, some Juvenile Review Boards, Safe Harbor Respite Home, MST) 2. CSSD (Family Support Centers, CARE Centers, FWSN Centers, MST); 3. SDE (Youth Service Bureaus and Juvenile Review Boards) 4. OPM (Neighborhood Youth Centers, Governor's Urban Violence initiative, Consortium on School 	<p>CSSD, DCF, SDE, OPM, CCPA, Division of Public Defender Services, Division of Criminal Justice</p>

	<p>Attendance)</p> <p>B. Enhance coordination between task forces to avoid duplication:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Juvenile Jurisdiction Policy and Operations Coordinating Council (JJPOCC) 2. FWSN Advisory Board 3. McArthur Foundation Mental Health Network 4. SAMSA Transformation grant 5. Child Poverty and Prevention Council 6. DCF/CSSD Joint Strategic Planning Committee 7. Youth Futures <p>C. Determine gaps in services across agencies, coordinate research and evaluation efforts across systems</p>	
5. Address Training Needs	<p>Fund and implement training initiatives that build system capacity to treat youth holistically and in line with best practices:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application of a strengths-based, relational approach (training and coaching) 2. Trauma specialists trained in every DCF and Probation office; with all staff trained to be trauma sensitive 3. Crisis/risk determination training for probation staff to ensure similar system evaluation of imminent risk 4. Training for police officers 5. Training for schools, community programs. 	SDE, CSSD & DCF

B. Recommendations related to Truancy Prevention/Truancy Intervention

Type of Recommendation	Detail	Primary Agency
A. Change Requirements re: Attendance Policy	SDE has adopted uniform definition of “attendance” but for FWSN purposes, the definition of “excused” and “unexcused” for court referral purposes will be clarified and the statutory basis for a FWSN truancy referral will be reexamined.	SDE
B. Improve Data Collection	No later than 2011-2012, conduct an analysis of the academic penalties that students receive for being truant across districts and evaluate the policies’ effectiveness in reducing truancy.	SDE
	No later than 2010, use Connecticut’s Public School Information System (PSIS), with its unique student identifier, to report annually to the State Board of Education and the Education Committee of the Connecticut Legislature each district’s “excused” and “unexcused” absences per year in ten representative Districts (leading to an annual report in all Districts) and SDE’s progress in increasing school attendance.	SDE
C. Increase Enforcement & Monitoring	Issue an initial report on number of “truants,” “habitual truants,” and the number of meetings held pursuant to CGS § 10-198a(b) by district, school, grade level, race, ethnicity, gender and enrollment type in ten representative Districts to lead to an annual report in all Districts.	SDE

	Identify specific full-time SDE staff whose responsibility is to track and provide technical assistance for truancy initiatives and to work with the Connecticut Consortium on School Attendance to coordinate statewide efforts to increase school attendance.	SDE
	Require Districts that are in the process of being “restructured” pursuant to Public Act 07-3, sec. 32 to include truancy reduction initiatives in their improvement plans that are evidence-based or include “best practices.”	SDE
	SDE’s Secondary School Redesign Draft Plan should include strategies and initiatives for students with a history of poor school attendance, including increased opportunities to access alternative education and vocational education.	SDE
	Implement differential response system for educational neglect referrals.	DCF
	Increase number of FWSN liaisons by two so each court and Family Support Center has coverage.	DCF
	Develop transition program (e.g. STEP) for DCF-committed youth, including truants re-entering school system from respite or other out of home living situation.	DCF
	Collect data and report FWSN referrals and outcomes (including entry into juvenile justice system, grade completion) by category (truant, habitual truant), race, age, town, school, program intervention.	CSSD
	Fund and increase number of educational advocates in order for each court to have one full-time	CSSD

	position with responsibility for both FWSN and juvenile justice youth.	
D. System-wide Prevention Strategies	Raise the age of withdrawal from school from 16 with parents' permission to 18 (no parental permission needed). Exception should be made for students age 16 or over who are enrolled in Job Corps, join the military with parental permission, or are emancipated.	CGA
	Lower the age of mandatory school attendance from seven years of age to six years of age.	CGA
	Amend PA 07-66 so that neither truancy nor tardiness to class is punished by outside suspension.	CGA
	Mandate that schools file reports for educational neglect rather than FWSN for children 9 years of age and under if parent fails to follow school-parent contract and/or child continues to be truant as defined by CGS § 10-198a(a).	CGA
	Require the Department of Labor, SDE, CSSD and DCF to work with the existing Regional Workforce Development Boards to focus on developing workforce activities that provide incentives to formerly truant students who attend school regularly.	DOL, SDE, CSSD & DCF

C. Issues related to the FWSN Population requiring further study or examination by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Type of Recommendation	Detail	Primary Agency
“Raise the Age”	Analyze the differences in risk and need for 16 & 17 year old status offenders and determine what services should be in place to ensure the best possible outcomes for this group. Fund and develop services.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE & JJPOCC
Transition of FWSN triage system from Probation; Transition other FWSN services (Family Support Centers) from CSSD	Determine when probation should transition triage function to Family Support Centers or other private agency; determine which state agency would supervise and evaluate (e.g. DCF, CSSD)	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
	Create an Implementation Plan including an implementation team to oversee transition.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Handling of FWSN cases	Study and consider whether the Attorney General’s office should assume jurisdiction over the FWSN cases rather than the Division of Criminal Justice.	OAG & DCJ
Confidentiality & Data sharing	Address the data or information sharing issues raised in the 2006 report “The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan” as well as formal and informal practices of information sharing in FWSN cases to ensure appropriate confidentiality.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

	Resolve confidentiality issues as they relate to the comprehensive assessment and treatment and programmatic evaluations so as to protect the child's and family's right to informed consent.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Intervention for DCF youth residing in out of home placements.	Determine the actual number of DCF involved children who are subsequently referred to the court who are FWSNs and the number who are arrested. Determine what prevention services and de-escalation techniques might be planned and implemented for DCF involved children to avoid future court involvement for runaway or out of control behavior.	DCF
Funding Options	Explore federal funding reimbursement for FWSN Centers, Respite Centers, Family Support Centers, community-based mental health services (e.g. MST, MDFC) (IV-E eligibility; Medicaid-EPSDT)	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Treatment of FWSN Immoral conduct	Determine how sexual status offenses and delinquency sexual offenses are being handled and clarify the two options.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

D. Recommendations Relating to Girls in the Juvenile Delinquency Population

Type of Recommendation	Detail	Primary Agency
Establish and strengthen services for girls in the juvenile justice system.	Fund and have the State Department of Education issue a Request for Proposal to pilot an alternative therapeutic gender responsive school (i.e. the PACE Center for Girls) in one location for a minimum of 3-5 years and conduct an appropriate evaluation of the school and programming.	SDE
	Include, (or, in the case of CSSD continue to include) gender responsive training as a basic component of training in orientation and update training for all DCF Social Workers and CSSD Probation Officers. Develop specific gender responsive training for those DCF staff that work with children under the age of 12.	CSSD & DCF
	Include in all DCF and CSSD contracts that provide services to adolescents, language that requires the adherence to gender responsive principles.	CSSD & DCF
	Develop and sustain a Community Advisory Committee for the secure girls' facility similar to the one established for the Connecticut Juvenile Training School.	DCF
	Establish funding to engage the services of an expert or experts in	DCF

	gender responsive programming to assist, at each stage of the process, in the development of the girls' secure facility, train staff prior to its opening, and ensure implementation of gender responsive practices in all DCF state run and contracted facilities that serve juvenile justice girls.	
	Develop a plan no later than July 1, 2008 to ensure implementation of gender responsive practices in DCF state run and contracted facilities, and implement such plan no later than January 2010.	DCF
	Adopt and work to ensure implementation of the Program Guidelines for Girls Services in Connecticut, April, 2007 (<i>see Appendix VIII</i>) in state run facilities no later than Jan.2010.	CSSD & DCF

I. Introduction

A. Legislative Mandate

The purpose of this report is to carry out the legislative mandate of Public Act 06-188, which established the Families with Service Needs (FWSN) Advisory Board and directed the Advisory Board to (1) monitor the progress made by the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch (CSSD) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in developing services and programming for children and youth from families with service needs and addressing problems that are unique to girls in the juvenile justice population; (2) monitor the progress being made by the Judicial Branch in the implementation of the requirements of Public Act 05-250, *An Act Concerning Children of Families with Service Needs (P.A. 05-250)*; (3) provide advice with respect to implementation upon request of the Judicial Branch or the General Assembly, and (4) make written recommendations to the Judicial Branch and the General Assembly with respect to the accomplishment of implementation of Public Act 05-250, no later than December 31, 2007. (*See Appendix I for the text of the Public Act*)

The report describes the FWSN Advisory Board's efforts to discharge its responsibilities under the legislative mandate. In this report, the Advisory Board outlines its passionate commitment to building a system that supports and serves children and their families who are at risk of court involvement or are already court involved due to "status offenses" and provides gender-specific services for girls in the juvenile justice system.⁵

The report provides a detailed explanation of the federal and state laws and statutory changes that address children from families with service needs, a clear description of the children who are subject to these laws, lessons learned from national models and research, current processes and services, identified gaps, programs and services in response to Public Act 05-250 implementation, and what additional steps are necessary to accomplish the legislative mandate.

B. The FWSN Advisory Board: Collaborative Process

The FWSN Advisory Board and Subcommittee members represent a multi-disciplinary group from each branch of state government and community organizations. Individuals

⁵ It should be noted that two previous reports called for changes to the FWSN laws. They were "*Plan for a Continuum of Community Based Services for Female Status Offenders and Delinquents in Response to Substitute House Bill No. 5366, Special Act No. 04-05*".. Darlene Dunbar, MSW Commissioner Department of Children and Families, in collaboration with Court Support Services Division, Judicial Branch, Office of the Child Advocate, Department of Social Services, Department of Education, private providers, women's and children's rights advocates and girls in the juvenile justice system in Connecticut DCF Girls' Services Steering Committee, February 2005(2nd edition) and "*The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan: Building Toward a Better Future*", A Strategic Planning Process Facilitated by the Child Welfare League of America for the Department of Children and Families-Bureau of Juvenile Services and the Connecticut Judicial Branch-Court Support Services Division in Collaboration with many Public and Private Stakeholders, (Connecticut: 2006)

and organizations represented include legislators, the judiciary, juvenile justice experts, child advocates, researchers, private providers and educators.

The Board and its subcommittees have engaged in a year long planning process. The outcome of this process has been the development of a framework for service delivery that has a shared goal of diverting children from the court process. The approaches that are being implemented and are recommended in this report center on research based, gender specific, developmentally appropriate, culturally competent and community based strategies to address truancy, disruptive school behavior, running away and other at risk behaviors exhibited by children in Connecticut.

The FWSN Advisory Board was organized to allow participation and collaboration around critical areas identified by the Board members. Four separate subcommittees were formed. The Truancy Subcommittee reviewed practices and programs to address “truancy and truancy prevention.” The “High End Needs” Subcommittee reviewed issues related to children who are court involved, have multiple service needs and are at risk of placement out of their community. A FWSN Statute Drafting Subcommittee was formed to examine current laws and offer proposed statutory language to accomplish the goals set forth by the Legislature when it enacted P.A. 05-250 and P.A. 07-4. The Evaluation Subcommittee was convened to examine “best practice” methods for system and program level quality assurance, process evaluation, and outcome evaluation. (*See Appendix II for a full roster of FWSN Committee and Subcommittee members*)

The FWSN Advisory Board and its subcommittees addressed the immediate tasks of implementation of P.A. 05-250 and P.A. 07-4, which became effective on October 1, 2007.⁶ The Advisory Board received and reviewed recommendations from each of the subcommittees on short term objectives, action strategies for implementing this legislation, and long range planning for children and youth. The Advisory Board heard presentations from the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judicial Branch, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the State Department of Education (SDE).

The members participated in a national satellite broadcast entitled, “*Addressing the Needs of Juvenile Status Offenders and Their Families*,” produced by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) U.S. Department of Justice, the American Bar Association, Commission on Youth at Risk and the Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Vera Institute of

⁶ *Public Act 05-250*, An Act Concerning Children of Families with Service Needs, prohibits a child adjudicated as a child from a family with service needs from being held in juvenile detention and from being adjudicated as a delinquent solely for violating a court’s FWSN order.

Public Act 07-04, An Act Implementing the Provisions of the Budget Concerning General Government, allows a child adjudicated as a FWSN child to be placed under certain orders by the court. If the child violates a court order regulating future behavior and the court finds that the child poses an imminent safety risk to him/herself or others and it is determined there is no other less restrictive alternative, the court may place the child in a staff-secure facility.

Justice⁷ provided expert advice and information concerning “best practices” around the country to the Advisory Board. The Board brought in experts from the Florida Network for Youth and the PACE Center for Girls. Members conducted a site visit to the “Family Keys” Program in Orange County, New York.

C. Overview of Federal and State Law

The federal law that created status offender systems envisioned a way to help parents, schools and communities provide children with treatment, counseling and supervision to remediate their difficult and risky behavior. The law and its subsequent amendments and reauthorization emphasize the use of the least restrictive environment to provide services and to avoid the negative stigma of court involvement.

The laws that govern the status offender system in Connecticut have, in many respects, mirrored the evolving mandates on the federal level. As Congress modified the JJDP Act, Connecticut responded in kind to create and modify its laws to comport with the federal requirements. The need to comply with federal law is especially important to ensure the provision of federal funding. Connecticut’s Office of Policy and Management is the recipient of funds under the JJDP Act, and it in turn provides money and other assistance to state agencies and local communities for provision of preventive and positive youth development services and programs.

The timeline below illustrates the evolution of the FWSN law in Connecticut.

Timeline	Act	Outcome of Passage
1979	P.A. 79-567	The FWSN Program was created. The initial act outlined what constituted a FWSN, who could file a FWSN petition, when a FWSN child could be placed in temporary custody, procedures for handling runaways, and preventing status offenders from being placed in secure facilities.
1980	P.A. 80-401	Changed the effective date of P.A. 79-567 from July 1, 1980 to July 1, 1981.
1981		AAC Families with Service Needs was implemented.
1985	P.A. 85-266	The Act was modified so that violation of a FWSN order could result in a child being placed in a secure facility.
1989	P.A. 89-273	The Act was modified to allow petition to have FWSN records erased.
1990	P.A. 90-240	The Act was modified to allow school superintendents to file FWSN complaints based on truancy.
1991	P.A. 91-303	The Act was modified to require school boards truancy policies to include referring children to community services

⁷ The Vera Institute for Justice is a private, nonprofit organization that works closely with government to improve services people rely on for safety and justice.

		and to added referral to community agencies to actions a court can take following adjudicating a child for a FWSN.
1993	P.A. 93-340	An Act changed the FWSN definition to include a child between 13 and 16 years old having sex with someone over 13 years old and there is no more than two years difference in age.
1998	P.A. 98-183	The Act directed the Judicial Branch to coordinate truancy and FWSN programs and services with other state agencies and established a truancy court demonstration project.
2000	P.A. 00-177	The Act created “Youth in Crisis,” expanding the scope of certain “status offenses” to sixteen and seventeen year old youth.
2005	P.A. 05-250	The Act prohibited the juvenile court from placing a child who has violated a FWSN court order in a secure facility.
2006	P.A. 06-188	The Act established the FWSN Advisory Board and directed it to undertake statutorily prescribed tasks related to the implementation of P.A. 05-250.
2007	P.A. 07-4	<p>The Act changed the processing and treatment of status offenders and extended the existence of the FWSN Advisory Board from December 31, 2007 to July 1, 2008.</p> <p>Additionally, effective January 1, 2010, the Act raises the age of jurisdiction in juvenile matters to include both children and youth under eighteen years of age and eliminates “youth in crisis” making both children and youth subject to the court as children from families with service needs.</p>

D. Related Statutory Changes

In the 2006 legislative session, the General Assembly passed Public Act 06-179, *An Act Concerning the State Investment in Prevention and Child Poverty Reduction and the Merger of the State Prevention and Child Poverty Councils*.

The Act focuses on prevention services to children, youth and families. The Act establishes the Child Poverty and Prevention Council. The Council is charged with development and implementation of a ten year plan to reduce the number of children in Connecticut living in poverty. The Act prescribes the nature and extent of what the plan must contain. The plan must include procedures and priorities for implementing strategies to achieve a fifty percent reduction in child poverty in the state by June 30, 2014.

It is noteworthy that some of the stated priorities to be addressed in the plan relate to educational opportunities, mentoring programs, access to mental health and treatment services, including substance abuse treatment, and are similar in nature to those that must be addressed with respect to the needs of FWSN children.

The Act further targets, under its education goals, success in school, graduation from high school and successful employment as adults. Under the safety goals, it focuses on decreasing the number of children who are unsupervised after school and the incidence of juvenile crime.

The Governor's budget documents include a prevention report which indicates the "State's progress toward meeting the goal that, by the year 2020, at least ten percent of total recommended appropriations of each such budgeted agency be allocated to prevention services."

The implications of this Act have significance for future planning for prevention services for at risk children and their families whose issues relate to being beyond control, runaway or truant.

II. Detailed Population Profile⁸

A. FWSN Population

The Connecticut Judicial Branch receives about 15,000 new juvenile justice cases each year. This number reflects delinquency, youth in crisis and children from families with service needs cases. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2005-2006, just over 3600, or 24% of all cases referred, were for children from Families with Service Needs. Of the 3600 children referred, 46% were girls and 54% were boys.

In SFY 2006-2007, there were 4190 referrals for families with services needs cases. Of the 4190 referrals, 53% of the children referred were boys and 47% were girls.

The primary reasons for referral for boys and girls were truancy, beyond control, defiant of school rules and runaway behavior. In the categories of indecent or immoral conduct and sexual intercourse, there were a low percentage of referrals for both boys and girls. *(A detailed statistical profile of children in the FWSN population may be found in Appendix IV)*

B. Truant Population

Truancy was the reason for the highest percentage of referrals of children for families with services needs. In SFY 2005-2006, 990 boys and 789 girls were referred for truancy. In SFY 2006-2007, truancy was identified as a referral reason for 944 boys and 809 girls.

⁸ Source of state court specific statistical information is a presentation to the FWSN Advisory Committee by the Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division "Families with Service Needs in Connecticut: An Overview of the Population", August 2006.

C. Young FWSN Children

In 2006 there were approximately 280 total FWSN referrals to the court for children under the age of 11. Of the 280 referred, 153 were 11 years old. Oftentimes, these children are referred to the court because community and mental health agencies believed that the court had access to additional services, or school systems believed that the court would be able to intervene and resolve the school-related problems.

Young FWSN children present with a multitude of problems. They often have a history of trauma. They or their parent(s) may have mental health issues. There may be prior or current DCF involvement with the family and there may have been prior child or family involvement with police. Some parents may have past or present substance abuse problems. Parents of these children may turn to the court for help because of behavior problems at home or an incident in which the police were called.

The complexity of analyzing the needs of these children and families has led to increased collaboration between probation, the juvenile prosecutors, the public defenders, DCF and the police to determine the best and safest intervention for these young children.

D. Assessment of FWSN Children's Risk and Needs

1. Initial Risk Screening (IRS)

All children referred to the Court receive an Initial Risk Screening (IRS); children who score within a certain range on the IRS receive further screening.

2. Juvenile Assessment Generic (JAG)

The Juvenile Assessment Generic (JAG) is the instrument used by juvenile probation officers to determine risk, need, and protective factors for juveniles. It is administered in certain cases when the Initial Risk Screen tool indicates a score above a certain level. From the JAG, some vital information is derived when looking at the population of children served by the court. In addition, the assessment helps in understanding the racial/ethnic make up of children assessed.

3. The Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument *Second Version* (MAYSI-2)

The Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument *Second Version* (MAYSI-2) is another assessment tool used by juvenile probation officers to screen children for indicators of behavioral health. The MAYSI-2 is administered to FWSN children by juvenile probation based on criteria established by CSSD.

In 2005, using the MAYSI-2, 1784 children referred for FWSN were assessed. The results of using the MAYSI-2 with FWSN children showed a high instance of

anger/irritability (514 out of 1784 children assessed) and somatic (500 out of 1784 children) complaints on the scale. This data is consistent with research that shows that these children were at high risk of escalating aggressive behavior and psychological distress. *(See Appendix IV for more detailed information about outcomes for each assessment tool.)*

III. Accomplishments and Gaps in Services

A. Current Status Offender Process and Services

P.A. Act 07-4 shifted the emphasis from court involvement to a community-based approach for serving children and families in FWSN cases. There are numerous benefits to diverting these children and their families in these cases from court to community-based services. First and foremost, the family may be served in its own community, where services are more accessible and consistent with the child's needs. Second, the family can avoid the often negative implications of court involvement. Third, the resources are concentrated on prevention efforts rather than delinquent behaviors in a juvenile delinquency context.

The overarching goal of the FWSN Advisory Board and its subcommittees has been to create a system that provides effective services in the community and reduces the likelihood for future court involvement.

B. Prevention and Pre-Court Diversion

When children are identified as at risk by parents, the police or schools, the first best alternative is for the child and family to engage in services within their own community. The obvious benefits are that the community network is often less complicated for families to access, less costly, more familiar with its own community's needs, and prevention/intervention-oriented.

C. Services Currently Available in the Community

Services vary from community to community. "... .Connecticut is a 'resource rich' state; however, significant gaps in services exist, not only in the types of services available, but also in access to services based on geography or a child's and family's status with DCF or the court. Wait lists for services present a formidable challenge for many families."⁹

Examples of five major initiatives that are directly tied to children of families with service needs are described below. However, it should be noted that there is no coordination or overarching agency or structure that coordinates these into a comprehensive prevention plan.

⁹ *The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan: Building Toward a Better Future*, A Strategic Planning Process Facilitated by the Child Welfare League of America for the Department of Children and Families-Bureau of Juvenile Services and the Connecticut Judicial Branch-Court Support Services Division in Collaboration with many Public and Private Stakeholders, (Connecticut: 2006), 10

- ***Juvenile Review Boards (JRB)***

A Juvenile Review Board is a group of local professionals, including police, social workers, school officials, juvenile court officials and community members, that meets regularly to offer juveniles, usually those accused of a delinquent act, and their families a positive alternative to referral to juvenile court. The JRB offers a community-based alternative to address school, family and minor criminal problems, and provides community-based solutions to deal with these issues. Since the JRB is community organized and community driven, there is an increased likelihood that there will be a quicker response to the child and family's needs and that the child will avoid the negative implications of the court process.

Currently, there are three different models for JRBs that have evolved around the state. DCF and CSSD are funding some in large urban areas. DCF funds JRBs in New Haven and Bridgeport, CSSD funds JRBs in Hartford and Waterbury. In other towns they are run by the local police and in others, the YSB runs them often in conjunction with local law enforcement.

However, many cities and towns have no access to JRBs. Among those that do, not all of the JRBs accept referrals involving children from families with service needs. In a survey conducted of Youth Service Bureaus, fifty- six stated that they had existing JRBs. Of the fifty-six YSBs with existing JRB programs, 70% handle FWSN cases and 30% do not.¹⁰ For example, the Hartford JRB, which serves a major metropolitan area, does not handle FWSN cases. In addition, there are no statewide standards for who should be referred and how the JRBs should function

- ***Youth Service Bureaus (YSB)***

The Connecticut General Assembly established and outlined the services provided by Youth Service Bureaus in General Statutes §10-19m. The statute directs that municipalities may establish multipurpose youth service bureaus. According to law, the YSBs “shall be the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment and follow-up services.” Examples of services YSBs may provide include individual and group counseling, family therapy, parenting education, vocational placement and counseling, recreational and youth enrichment programs, prevention programs, including youth pregnancy, youth suicide, violence, alcohol and drug prevention and positive youth development. The law further states “Such services shall be designed to meet the needs of youth by the diversion of troubled youth from the justice system as well as by the provision of opportunities for all youth to function as responsible members of their communities.”

Youth Service Bureaus currently serve 132 communities statewide. YSBs receive a small percentage of their funding through the State Department of Education (SDE), with a

¹⁰ Presentation to the FWSN Advisory Board by Francis J. Carino, Supervisory Juvenile Prosecutor, “Youth Service Bureaus & Juvenile Review Boards”, September 2007.

majority of the funding from municipalities, private and public grants and fundraising donations. Where YSBs exist, the nature of services offered and staffing levels vary widely.

- ***Neighborhood Youth Centers (NYC)***

Neighborhood Youth Centers are one example of the community-based programs funded through the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Juvenile Justice and Youth Development. The funds are available from the JJDP Act grant programs. The NYCs receive funds through a competitive bidding process.

The NYC is designed to increase the range and extent of positive experiences for at-risk youth. It serves youth ages twelve through seventeen who live in seven of Connecticut's largest cities, Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Norwalk, Stamford, and Waterbury. They offer athletic and recreational opportunities, enrichment or tutoring activities, skills training, and other preventive and intervention services for youth and their families.

Much the same as YSBs and JRBs, there are variations in the services provided by Neighborhood Youth Centers. They only exist in the major cities, and so these services are not available in the other communities across Connecticut.

- ***Urban Youth Violence Prevention***

The Governor's Urban Youth Violence Prevention Program is a competitive program for municipalities and nonprofit agencies, the purpose of which is to reduce urban youth violence by providing grants for programs to serve youth ages 12 to 18 years in urban centers. It was created in 2007 by Section 9 of PA 07-4. Funding for this program (\$1,500,000) comes from the state line item in the Office of Policy and Management's budget entitled Urban Youth Violence Prevention and from the U. S. Department of Education to the Office of Policy and Management under the federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, Governor's Portion.

There were seventeen grant recipients of the funds recently announced. The grantees represent a variety of youth development approaches and strategies emphasizing skills, leadership development and parental involvement. Similar to other prevention initiatives, the grants funded only benefit ten cities/towns.

The programs include employment, recreational, athletic and other initiatives for young people.

This year, grants were awarded to four programs in Bridgeport, three programs in Hartford, two programs in New Haven and Norwalk and one program in each the cities/towns of Danbury, Enfield, Manchester, New Britain, New London and Waterbury.

- ***School Attendance Grants/Connecticut Consortium on School Attendance***

The school attendance funding category supports school initiatives aimed at improving school attendance and helping children from Families with Service Needs (FWSN) who

are truant. The focus is to provide children with positive reinforcement that promotes school attendance, rather than emphasizing ways to reduce truancy, that may be fostered by systemic factors, such as suspensions and expulsions.

Funds under this program, disbursed by the Consortium on School Attendance (OPM) are used to support program strategies in one of the following categories and include an evaluation component with a comparison group.

- *Making Attendance a Priority – building awareness and commitment to regular school attendance in school buildings, in homes, and in the broader community;*
- *Establishing Effective Attendance Policies – ensuring that effective attendance policies are in place and enforced consistently across the district and within school buildings;*
- *Implementing Programs – providing best practice prevention and intervention approaches.*

Some examples of recently funded program initiatives include enrichment activities such as study skills and time management exercises; a virtual alternative learning for students who are not succeeding in the traditional classroom setting as measured by their attendance, state test scores, and academic grades; a new Re-entry Transitional Classroom for students who are absent for 10 consecutive days or more in any one semester; the purchase of new organizational resources, incentives and behavior plans for students; parent workshops and professional development of staff.

Unfortunately, distribution of these monies does not benefit every town and does not promote the development of a uniform approach to promoting school attendance. Instead, it promotes experimental or small scale programs with varying degrees of effectiveness.

Other Truancy Diversion Services:

In Connecticut, there are several pilot initiatives currently being used to divert students who are truant. They include:

- ***School-based models*** in the New Haven and New London Public Schools, and the Connecticut Bar Association/Connecticut Bar Foundation Truancy Intervention Project in New Britain;
- ***A law enforcement model*** in Hartford by the Hartford Police Department;
- ***A mental health model*** operated by the Institute of Living, and a
- ***Court model*** Truancy Court Prevention Project operated at a middle and high school in Hartford by the Center for Children's Advocacy, Capitol Region Education Council and the Village for Families and Children.¹¹

¹¹ The Truancy Court Prevention Project has been recognized as "A Model Truancy Prevention Program" by the American Bar Association. See www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/truancypreventionprograms.doc. See also Mary Reimer and Kaki Dimick, "Best Practices in Action: Best Practices and Model Truancy Programs" National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, Clemson University (Clemson, S.C.) 2005. www.dropoutprevention.org

None of these models has been formally evaluated. There is a pending evaluation being performed by the Connecticut Center on Effective Practice on the court model mentioned above. *(See Appendix VI for more detailed information about the Truancy Diversion Programs.)*

CT Behavioral Health Partnership:

The Department of Children and Families and the Department of Social Services have formed the Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership (CT BHP) to plan and implement an integrated public behavioral health service system for children and families. The primary goal of the CT BHP is to provide enhanced access to and coordination of a more complete and effective system of community-based behavioral health services and to improve member outcomes. Secondary goals include better management of state resources and increased federal financial participation in the funding of behavioral health services.

The CT BHP is designed to eliminate the major gaps and barriers that exist in the current children's behavioral health delivery system. As such, both departments are committing resources to develop a full continuum of behavioral health services for children that include evidenced-based programs, non-traditional support services and community-based alternatives to restrictive institutional levels of care. Through collaboration with family members, providers and social support systems, the CT BHP promotes a strengths-based treatment approach that focuses on client success. Particular attention is given to the cultural needs and preferences of the child and family and treatment planning reflect this focus on cultural competency

D. Initial Referral to Court

Any selectman, town manager, police officer or welfare department of any town, city or borough, any probation officer or superintendent of schools, the Commissioner of Children and Families, any child-caring institution or agency approved or licensed by the Commissioner of Children and Families, any youth service bureau, a parent, foster parent of a child or the child's representative or attorney may refer children to the court. Most referrals are made by parents, the police or the superintendent of schools.

Any FWSN complaint relating to truancy, habitual truancy or defiance of school rules may only be referred after the school has exhausted all available options to rectify the problem. CGS § 10-189a requires the following must have occurred before a referral: (1) A meeting was held with the parent of the child who is truant and appropriate school personnel reviewed and evaluated the reasons for the child being truant and such meeting was held not later than ten school days after the child's fourth unexcused absence in a month or the tenth unexcused absence in a month or the tenth unexcused absence in a school year; (2) Coordination of services and referrals for the child were made to community agencies who provide child and family services; (3) The parent was informed each year in writing of the obligations of the parent; (4) Reasonable efforts were made by school personnel whenever the child failed to report to school and no indication was received by the school that the child's parent was aware of the child's absence.

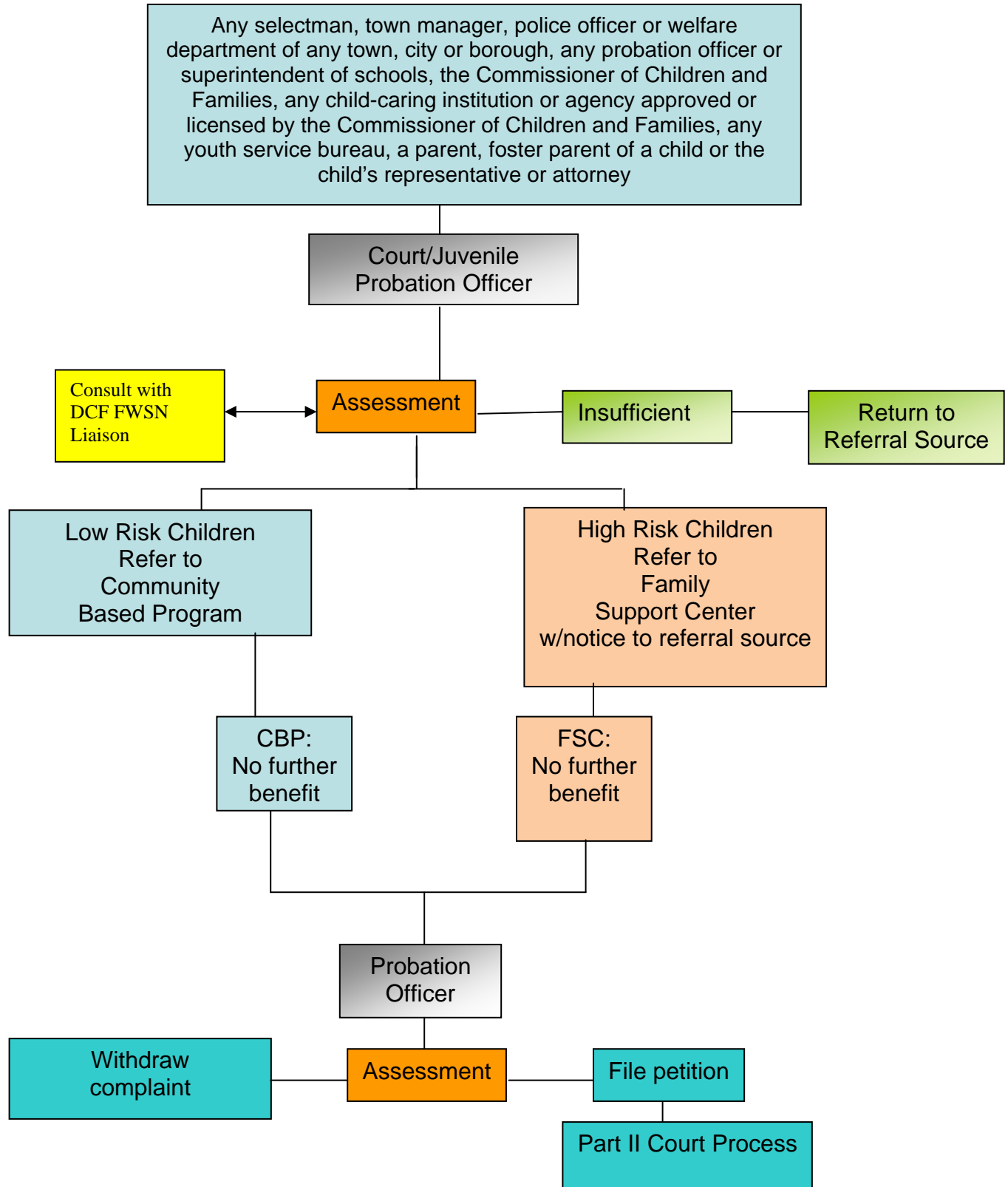
Presently, there is no data collected or analysis performed on the extent to which school systems comply with these requirements.

One of the major changes instituted as of October 1, 2007 is the requirement that in all initial FWSN referrals, the complaints must be screened by a juvenile probation supervisor and, if found sufficient, referred for services prior to any petition being formally filed in court.

A diversionary model has been established, providing screening and assessment in order to determine appropriate services for children and families at the first point of contact with the juvenile probation officer.

The chart below depicts the court diversion process:

CHART I
PART I: FWSN REFERRAL PROCESS



Juvenile probation officers provide the initial screening of complaints when they are received. Any complaint received is reviewed by the juvenile probation officer for sufficiency. If it is found to be insufficient, it will be returned to the referral source. If the complaint is found to be sufficient, the juvenile probation officer meets with the family and conducts an initial screening assessment to determine the child's and family's needs. Based on the results of the assessment, the child and the family are then referred for either community-based services or, if the child and family are determined to be "high risk/needs," they are referred to a newly created Family Support Center (FSC).

DCF and CSSD entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (2004) to memorialize their commitment to a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of FWSN children. One aspect of that collaboration is the creation of the FWSN Liaison position by DCF. The FWSN Liaisons are assigned to a specific juvenile court location(s).¹²

The FWSN Liaison is available as a resource to the juvenile probation officer and the Court. Liaisons are available to assist in assessing the child and family's needs and assist with coordinating referrals to DCF Voluntary and Juvenile Services programs (described below). For children age 11 or younger, or if there is current DCF involvement with the family, the FWSN Liaison is required to review all FWSN complaints.

If there is a need for other DCF services, the FWSN Liaison also plays a key role in facilitating a juvenile probation officer's referrals for DCF services. DCF provides an array of in-home services and out of home care for FWSN children.¹³

There is continuing ongoing collaboration on both the case level and the systemic level among the FWSN Liaison, Juvenile Probation and the Court. Local Implementation Teams have been established in each court location, which include community-based providers.

1. Current Community-Based Services for Court Referred Children

There are a range of options for community-based services for children and their families. The types of services available differ widely and not all types of services are available in all towns and cities.

¹² There are currently eight full time FWSN Liaisons. All 13 court locations have a FWSN Liaison available to assist them, however some Liaisons cover more than one court location, more staff would increase the availability of their time in these courts.

¹³ In 2004, DCF served approximately 500 FWSN children. Of these children, 21% were placed in out of home care. In 2006, the DCF FWSN Liaisons reported that 437 referrals were made to DCF for services to families with one or more children from FWSN. DCF has reported that it recently (October 2007) created a new identifier in its computer system. The new information added to the computer system will allow DCF to identify children and families involved with DCF as a result of a FWSN complaint.

Providers include private for fee (usually paid by a family's private insurance), Youth Service Bureaus, services available through the DCF Community Collaborative/ System of Care,¹⁴ and CSSD and DCF funded in-home services.

Examples of services include:

- *mental health and family counseling and treatment*
- *crisis intervention*
- *substance abuse assessments and treatment*
- *alternative education programs*
- *vocational education*
- *family mediation*
- *support groups for parents*
- *recreation programs*
- *positive youth development*
- *alternative living situations, such as foster homes and respite care*

As of October 1, 2007, if a family is referred to a community-based program or service provider and that program or service determines that the family can no longer benefit from its services, the juvenile probation officer will conduct another assessment. After consultation with the Juvenile Probation Supervisor, the juvenile probation officer may either refer the family to a Family Support Center for additional services or determine whether or not to file a petition with the court.

- **Family Support Center (FSC)**

The Family Support Center is a multi-service “one-stop” for high risk/needs FWSN-referred children assessed as high risk and in need of intensive services. Public Act 07-04 requires that every juvenile district court, after assessment by a probation officer, divert children and families assessed as high risk/needs to a FSC. However, in 2007, the legislature only provided funding for four centers, now located in Hartford, Waterbury, Bridgeport and New Haven. The purpose of the FSC is to assess services and/or treatment needs of children and families who exhibit behaviors that require an immediate response (high risk/needs) and offer access to appropriate and effective services and interventions.

¹⁴ A Community Collaborative or System of Care is a group of children's behavioral health and community service providers, parents and advocates who meet on a regular basis to improve the way behavioral health services are delivered in a local community. A close working relationship between school personnel and the local Community Collaborative greatly enhances efficiency and clarity of the referral process. Each Collaborative operates in a slightly different fashion, but all remain committed to helping children with serious emotional disorders succeed in their homes and/or communities. The Collaboratives consist of a variety of mental health and social service agencies plus parents and community providers who comprise the network that helps develop comprehensive treatment plans for individual children and families.

The Family Support Center provides voluntary services to the child and family. These services include case management, 24-hour crisis counseling, family mediation, educational advocacy; psycho-educational and cognitive behavioral groups, one-on-one therapeutic sessions and respite care for up to two weeks.

CSSD received funds in SFY 2007-2008 to contract with private providers for these services in only four juvenile districts. Thus, only 39 of Connecticut's 161 cities and towns are currently served by a Family Support Center. They are: Waterbury, Wolcott, Prospect, Naugatuck, Middlebury, Southbury, Oxford, Beacon Falls, Seymour, Ansonia, Derby, Hartford, Windsor, Bloomfield, East Hartford, West Hartford, Glastonbury, New Haven, North Haven, West Haven, East Haven, Hamden, Cheshire, Wallingford, Bethany, Woodbridge, Orange, Milford, Branford, North Branford, Guilford, Madison, Bridgeport, Monroe, Easton, Shelton, Trumbull, Stratford, and Fairfield.

Funding for six additional FSCs has been requested but not yet granted by the General Assembly. Appropriation of funds for six additional Family Support Centers will allow high risk/needs children and their families in the rest of the state to receive crucial diversionary services in or close to their local community.

The Family Support Centers that exist are depicted in Chart 2.

CHART 2
Current Family Support Centers

<i>Program Type</i>	<i>Provider/ location</i>	<i>Towns/Cities served</i>
Family Support Center– Waterbury	CT Junior Republic 80 Prospect Street Waterbury, Ct	Waterbury, Wolcott, Prospect, Naugatuck, Middlebury, Southbury, Oxford, Beacon Falls, Seymour, Ansonia, Derby
Family Support Center – Hartford	Wheeler Clinic Hartford, Ct	Hartford, Windsor, Bloomfield, East Hartford, West Hartford, Glastonbury
Family Support Center– New Haven	St. Francis Home for Children 672 Congress Avenue New Haven, CT	New Haven, North Haven, West Haven, East Haven, Hamden, Cheshire, Wallingford, Bethany, Woodbridge, Orange, Milford, Branford, North Branford, Guilford, Madison
Family Support Center – Bridgeport	CT Renaissance Main Street Bridgeport, CT	Bridgeport, Monroe, Easton, Shelton, Trumbull, Stratford, Fairfield

- **Respite Programs**

CSSD has been piloting a respite program specifically designed to divert FWSN girls from detention since July 2003. The program, known as Center for Assessment, Respite and Enrichment (CARE) is a voluntary, two week respite program. This program provides assessment and linkages to home or community-based services. Such a program has existed for almost two years in Waterbury. Statistics show that between SFY 2003 - 2005, there was a 30% decrease in girls' admission to detention and a 40% decrease in girls sent to detention for a prior FWSN referral from the Waterbury juvenile court. As of April 2006, 67% of the girls who went to the CARE program in Waterbury between January 2005 and January 2006 had no further court involvement and 80% did not go to detention.¹⁵ Based on this success, CSSD has expanded the number of CARE programs, doubling the number of beds for girls and adding a program for boys.

Respite Care currently in place is reflected in Chart 3.

CHART 3

<i>Program type</i>	<i>Provider/ location</i>	<i>Beds</i>
CARE Program for Girls	St. Francis Home for Children 651 Prospect Street New Haven, CT	6
CARE Program for Girls	CT Junior Republic 80 Prospect Street Waterbury, Ct	6
CARE Program for Boys	St. Francis Home for Children 672 Congress Avenue New Haven, CT	6

- **Alternative Education Program (STEP)**

The DCF operates an educational reentry program (a program to facilitate the child remaining in or returning to public school) known as "Support Teams for Educational Progress (STEP)" primarily for delinquent children. The program provides:

- Educational Advocacy
- Transitional Education Program
- Substance Abuse Prevention
- Employability Skills Development

In an effort to serve and decrease the court involvement of FWSN children with school-related issues, DCF has reallocated some slots on a case-by-case basis in each of two STEP programs for FWSN boys and girls to address issues related to truancy, educational

¹⁵ Letter from William Carbone, Executive Director, CSSD to Preston Britner, FWSN Advisory Committee Co-Chairperson dated February 6, 2007.

achievement and reentry. The program is available in two major cities, New Haven and Hartford, with an additional program set to open in Bridgeport in early 2008. The cost of the program is approximately \$185 per day, per child.

- **Functional Family Therapy (FFT)**

Functional Family Therapy, an intensive in-home service, was originally used by the DCF regional offices and was recently expanded to be available for children in the delinquent and FWSN populations on a limited case- by-case basis.

FFT provides in home and community-based clinical services to children and their families. The clinical services include assessment and screening, family treatment, consultation and referral to other services. FFT Programs provide access to child and adolescent psychiatric services as well. While FFT is not a 24/7 emergency crisis intervention program, each provider agency has available 24/7 emergency crisis response capacity.

- **Multi-systemic Therapy (MST)**

Multi-systemic Therapy is a family-based treatment model that places considerable attention on factors in the adolescent's and family's social networks that are linked with antisocial behavior. Both DCF and CSSD provide this type of programming through contracts with private providers. MST priorities include removing offenders from deviant peer groups, enhancing school or vocational performance, and developing an indigenous support network for the family to maintain therapeutic gains. MST programs have an extremely strong commitment to removing barriers to service access (see e.g., the home-based model of service delivery). MST services are more intensive than traditional family therapies (e.g., several hours of treatment per week vs. 50 minutes). MST has well-documented long-term outcomes with adolescents presenting serious antisocial behavior and their families. The strongest and most consistent support for the effectiveness of MST comes from controlled studies that focused on violent and chronic juvenile offenders.

- **Brief Family Systemic Therapy (BFST)**

Brief Family Systemic Therapy is a short-term, problem-focused intervention provided by CSSD. The average treatment includes approximately 12–15 sessions and lasts about 3 months. For more severe cases, such as substance-abusing adolescents, the average number of sessions and length of treatment may be doubled. It is important to note, however, that BSFT is not a fixed “package.” Treatment continues until the family achieves changes in key behavioral criteria rather than until it completes a predetermined number of sessions.

- **Intensive In-Home Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services (IICAPS)**

Intensive In-home Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Service is a standardized treatment model, developed at the Yale Child Study Center, for children with serious mental illness

and their families and provided by CSSD and DCF. Among the candidates for CSSD's IICAPS programs are court-involved children with diagnoses that reflect severe emotional or behavioral impairment and for whom more traditional outpatient approaches have not been, or are not likely to be, successful. Also appropriate recipients of IICAPS services are children for whom psychiatric hospitalization is otherwise likely, and those who are discharging from psychiatric or secure confinement and need outpatient psychiatric treatment to successfully return to, and remain in, the community. These children require support as they re-integrate into their communities or await placement in another treatment facility.

The model creates a working partnership between the child, the family and the treatment team, through assessment, facilitating timely access to psychological and psychiatric evaluation, development and implementation of a comprehensive treatment plan, and providing time limited family, individual and couples psychotherapy, and crisis response 24 hours/7 days per week. Services include school consultation, parent guidance and training in behavioral management techniques, clinically informed case management and case coordination, multi-systems collaboration and coordination, and vocational services.

E. FWSN Judicial Process

There are instances when a family is referred to community services or a Family Support Center and the program determines that the family can no longer benefit from its services. When this occurs, the juvenile probation officer may, after consultation with the Juvenile Probation Supervisor, file a petition and begin the court process.

The family is summoned to appear in court. The child, accompanied by a parent or guardian, will initially appear at a plea hearing and admit or deny the allegation that s/he is a child from a family with service needs. If the child agrees to admit the allegations, or if, after a hearing, the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the facts alleged in the FWSN petition are true, the child is adjudicated as a child from a FWSN. If the facts alleged are not proven, the case is dismissed. Prior to adjudication, if appropriate, the court may divert the case for up to six months, with the option for the court to allow an additional three month extension, to allow the family to be referred to community-based services. If the child's and family's issues are satisfactorily resolved, the petition may be dismissed and erased.¹⁶

In certain instances, the court may vest temporary custody of a child in a suitable person or agency, usually DCF, if the court finds that the child may harm him/herself or run away, or the child needs to be held for another jurisdiction under the "Interstate Compact on Juveniles."¹⁷

¹⁶ When a petition is erased, the effect is as if the case never was filed with the court. There is no automatic erasure.

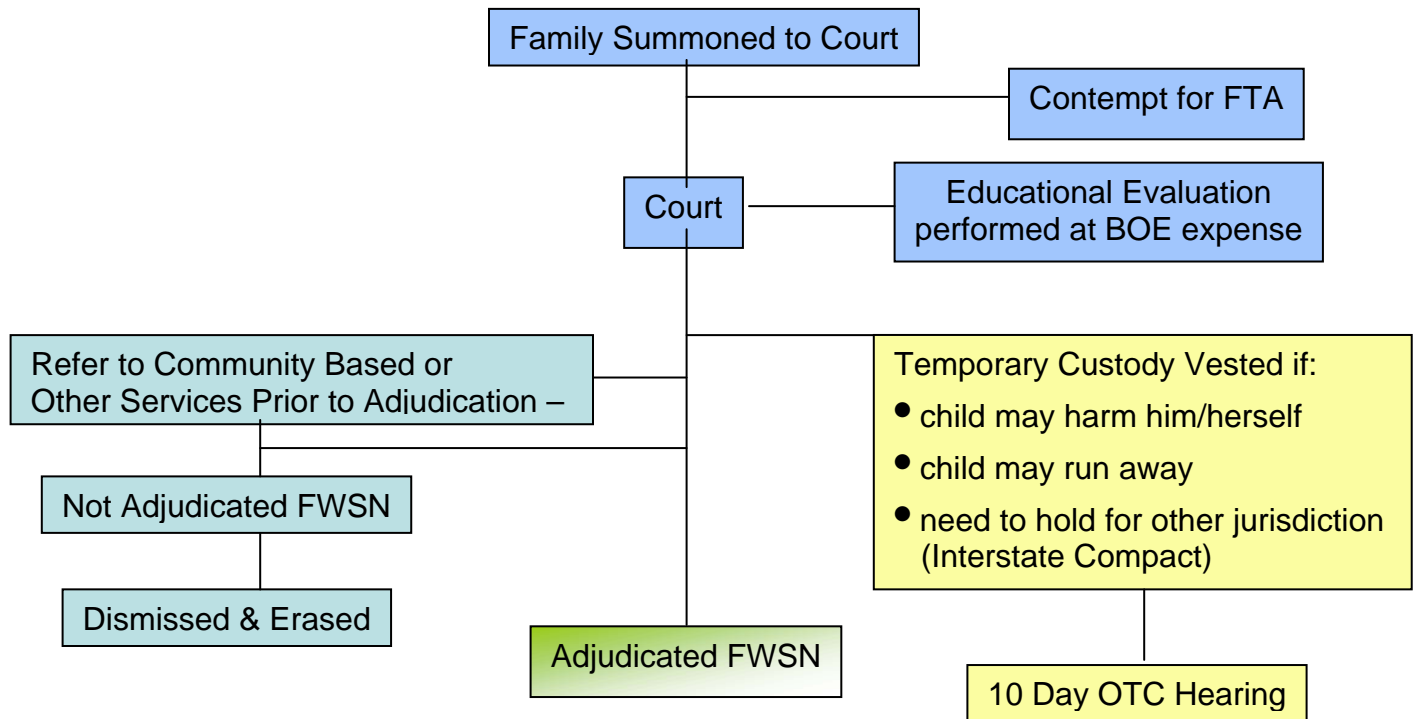
¹⁷ The "Interstate Compact on Juveniles" incorporated by reference into the Connecticut General Statutes (§46b-151h) legally joins all jurisdictions and makes each state responsible for the proper supervision or return of juveniles, delinquents and status offenders who are on probation or parole and who have absconded, escaped or run away from supervision and control and have endangered their own safety and

Once the child is adjudicated as a child from a Family with Service Needs, the court then proceeds to the dispositional phase of the case.

Chart 4 describes the petition process through the point of adjudication.

Chart 4

COURT PROCESS



There are a number of dispositional options available to the court following an adjudication of a child as a child from a Family with Service Needs. These include:

- referring the family for voluntary services
- placing the child under the supervision of a juvenile probation officer,
- referring the child to a pregnancy or STD program, or
- committing the child to DCF for placement in a residential setting but only if such a placement is found to be the least restrictive alternative.

The court may issue written orders, or conditions, that the child must follow which will include a written warning of the consequences of violating the court's orders. These court orders regulate the future conduct of the child and may include attending a

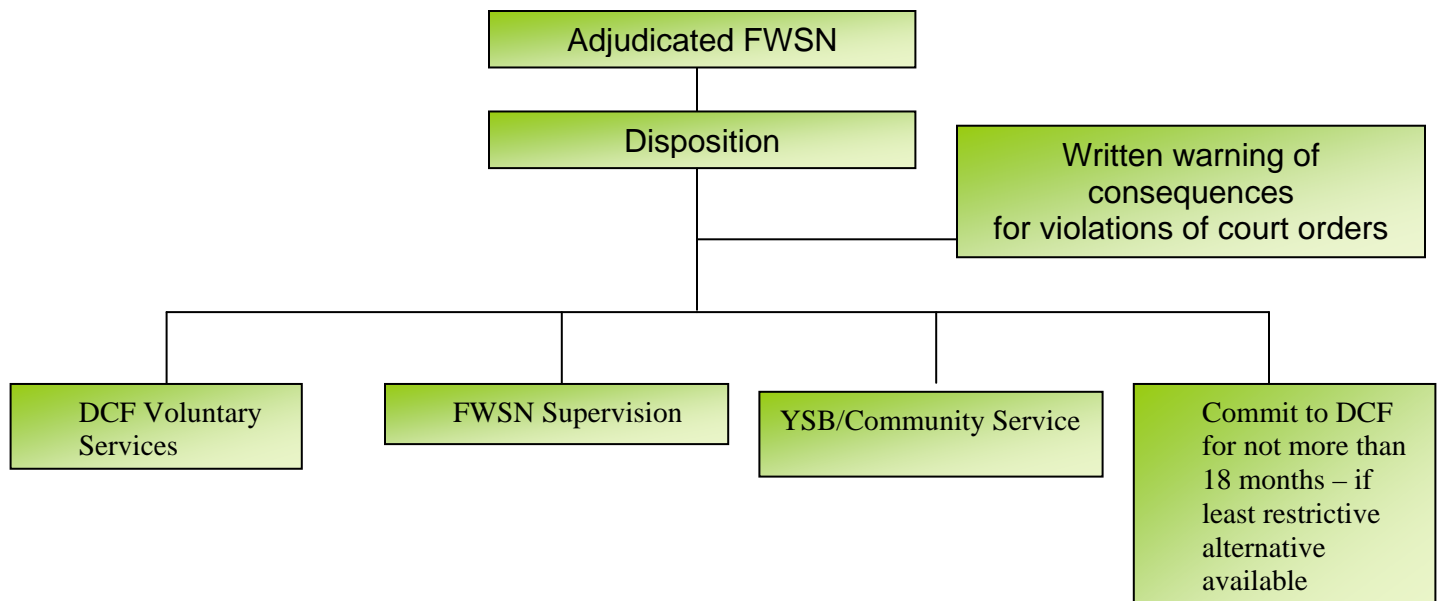
the safety of others. Under the Compact, each state is responsible for the safe return of juveniles who have run away from home and in doing so, have left their state of residence.

community-based service, abiding by a curfew, requiring school attendance, complying with school rules, requiring obedience of the parent’s rules and a variety of other orders which seek to reduce at risk behaviors.

Chart 5 describes the dispositional options available to the judge.

Chart 5

COURT PROCESS DISPOSITIONAL OPTIONS



The dispositional option of commitment to DCF is for a period of time not greater than eighteen months. Under the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act,¹⁸ the court is required to make “reasonable efforts” findings and hold a permanency review hearing twelve months from the date of placement for a child who is committed as a child from a FWSN. “The regulations clarify that delinquents and status offenders placed in Title IV-E eligible placements must meet the same requirements as dependent children.”¹⁹ Current state law is silent on this issue and Connecticut risks loss of federal funds that are reimbursed for the cost of care to the General Fund for failure to comply. The Advisory Board is recommending changes to Section 46b-149 to include the requirement for permanency plan reviews for committed FWSN children to ensure compliance. (*For detailed proposed statutory changes see Appendix IX.*)

¹⁸ The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) incorporates the 1997 amendments to Title IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 620-632, 670-679. The regulations promulgated by the US Department of Health and Human Services related to ASFA govern federal reimbursement for certain Title IV-B out of home placements.

¹⁹ Debra Raterman Baker, Howard Davidson, Heidi Redlich Epstein, Cecilia Fiermonte, Mark Hardin, Veronica Hemrich, Molly Hicks, Eva Klain, Anne Marie Lancour, Mimi Laver, Jennifer Renne *Making Sense of ASFA Regulations: A Roadmap for Effective Implementation*, (Washington, D.C...American Bar Association), 2001, 17.

DCF may petition the court for an extension of the commitment of the child for not more than an additional eighteen months. To extend, the court must find that the extension is in the “best interest” of the child and that no suitable less restrictive alternative is available. Additionally, DCF may seek to discharge a committed child at any time. A parent may seek to revoke the commitment, but not more than once every six months following the date of the commitment.

F. FWSN Post Adjudication Process

1. Violation of a Court Order (VCO)

A major reform implemented on October 1, 2007 was the prohibition of the placement, by the court, of an adjudicated child in detention for a violation of a court order. Previously, a FWSN child violating a court order would be treated as a delinquent. P.A. 07-4 now treats a violation of a court order as an additional FWSN allegation and requires the filing of a new petition alleging such a violation. Such a violation no longer constitutes a delinquent act.

Under P.A. 07-4, section 32(a), if a child from a Family with Service Needs violates a valid order of the court, a juvenile probation officer may file a petition alleging the violation based on receipt of a complaint setting forth the facts alleging the violation or based on the juvenile probation officer’s own motion or knowledge of the violation. The child is entitled to an attorney and an evidentiary hearing on the allegations. If no violation is found, the case is dismissed and erased. If a violation is found, the court determines the least restrictive alternative available to meet the child’s and the community’s needs. The court may order the child to remain in the child’s home or in the custody of a relative or any other suitable person. If the court finds that there is no less restrictive alternative appropriate to meet the needs of the child and the community, the court may enter an order that directs or authorizes a peace officer or other appropriate person to place the child in a staff-secure facility²⁰ for not more than forty-five days. If the child is placed in a staff-secure facility, the court must review the case every 15 days to consider whether continuing the placement is appropriate. At the end of the period of placement in the staff-secure facility, the child must be returned to the community and may be under the supervision of the juvenile probation officer.

A third alternative is that the court may order the child committed to the care and custody of DCF for placement for a period not to exceed eighteen months and further order the child to cooperate with DCF.

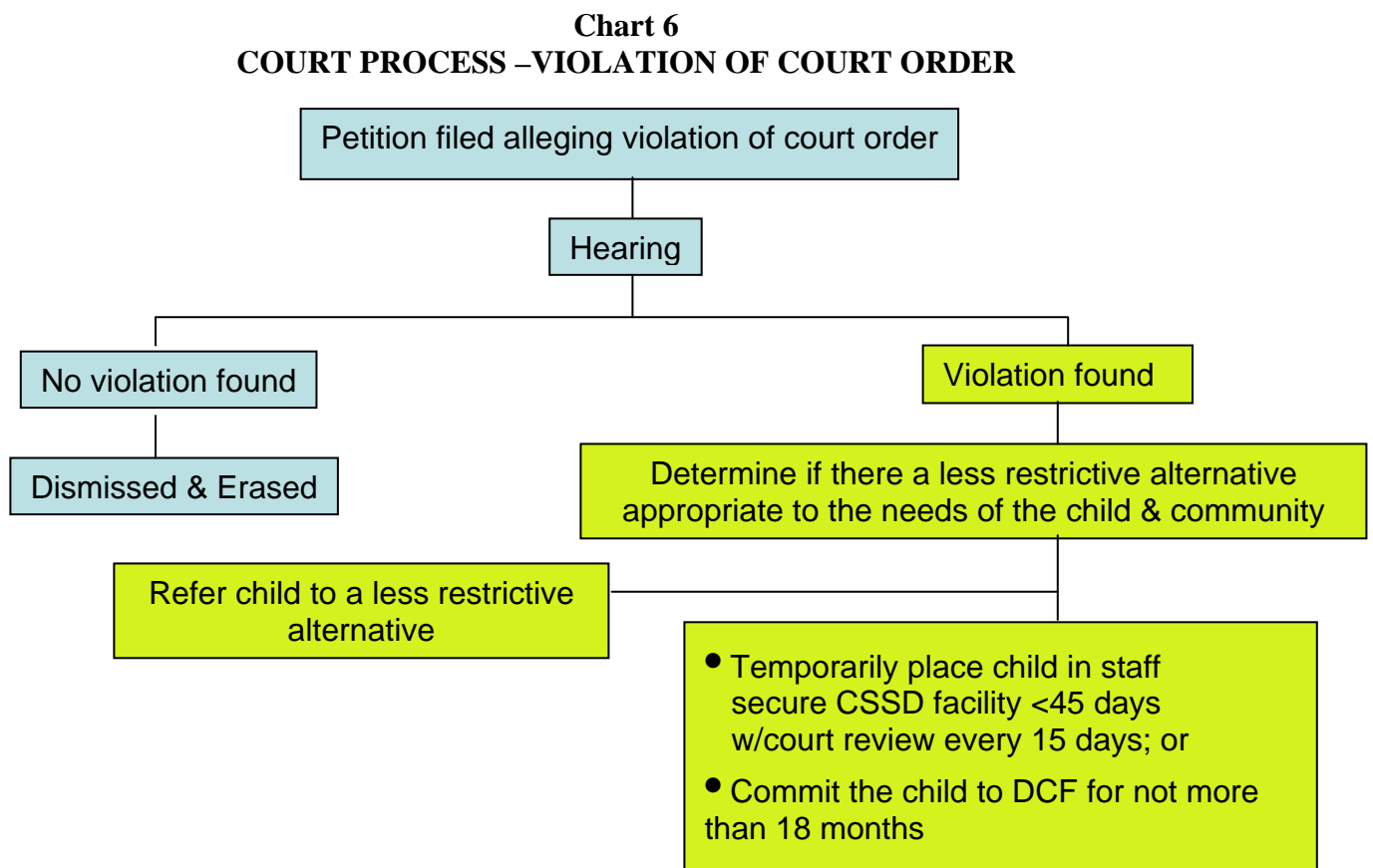
The Advisory Board is recommending substantive changes in Section 32(a) of P.A. 07-4, which are not yet codified, as the process for handling violation of a court order as articulated in P.A. 07-4 lacks certain basic due process protections and is inconsistent with other FWSN provisions. The act requires that a new petition be filed alleging the violation of court order. There is no provision for service of process. The standard of

²⁰ See section on CSSD funded Families with Service Needs Center

proof for a finding that a child has violated a court order should be stated as “clear and convincing evidence”, consistent with the adjudicatory standard of proof for the original petition which is “clear and convincing evidence.”

This subsection of the act is silent as to how the child ordered into protective custody and placed in a CSSD staff-secure facility upon adjudication will be transported. This creates a lack of uniformity and clarity. There also is no provision in this subsection for ensuring that a child who is ordered to remain in the community after the court makes a finding of a violation of a valid court could be subject to a new or existing order of supervision or commitment in order to allow for follow up.

Chart 6 describes the Court Process for Violation of Court Order.



➤ **Current Services for Court Involved Children:**

In addition to the services listed for pre-adjudicated youth, there are two additional services available once a child has become court involved:

- **FWSN Centers**

CSSD is reallocating 12 existing Alternative to Detention beds (ADPs) to serve the FWSN population. ADPs were originally designed to serve the low risk FWSN and delinquent children, who were sent to these staff secure residential programs as a community-based alternative to secure detention.

Currently, through a contract with a private provider, the St. Francis Home, CSSD has established a six bed FWSN Center for girls in New Haven. CSSD and the potential providers have experienced issues related to selection of and zoning approval for a physical location for the boy's FWSN Center by the community. A new bid process was necessary for the boys FWSN Center, as a site could not be secured within the existing Boys ADP contract.

The FWSN Center is designed to provide a gender-specific, cognitive behavioral approach that focuses on the child and family's strengths to encourage skill development and positive change. The focus is on the development of core life and interpersonal skills necessary for success at home, with peers, at school and in the community.

The FWSN Center is designed to offer the following services:

- 24 hour, 7 days per week staffing to provide a safe and secure program;
- On-site schooling with certified teachers;
- On-site licensed mental health clinician and psychiatrist to provide mental health assessment, treatment and transition planning, and psychotropic medication management;
- On-site case managers to assist the child and family, along with the mental health staff, in assessing strengths and needs, developing an individualized care plan; assisting with the transition to after-care services, and providing individual counseling, cognitive-behavioral groups, family mediation, support services and collaboration with service providers;
- Access to medical services;
- Access to an ombudsman;
- On-site recreational services and activities; and
- Opportunities for community service.

Since it is anticipated FWSN Center beds will turn over at least every 45 days, each center can serve approximately 50 children per year.

Chart 7 depicts the current and anticipated FWSN Centers.

**CHART 7
FWSN CENTERS**

<i>Program Type</i>	<i>Provider/ location</i>	<i>Beds</i>
FWSN Center for Girls	St. Francis Home for Children 651 Prospect Street New Haven, CT	6
FWSN Center for Boys	TBD	6

- **Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC)**

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care is among the services available to children who are in FWSN Centers who cannot return to their home. MTFC is a specialized foster care program in which the foster home receives intensive training and is provided an array of support services by a team of professionals. DCF is currently using MTFC for children in juvenile detention in lieu of their placement in a residential facility, and has agreed to offer MTFC services as an option for FWSN children who are in respite CARE or FWSN Centers and cannot return home. Other states have found this type of service to be effective with status offending children.²¹

3. Imminent Risk

P.A. 07-4, Section 32 (b) provides a mechanism for dealing with children who exhibit the most high risk behaviors. If a child adjudicated as a child from a family with service needs is believed to be at risk of immediate physical harm from his/her surroundings or circumstances, a petition alleging the imminent risk of physical harm, accompanied by affidavits, may be filed by the juvenile probation officer. The court, ex parte, (without a hearing), upon finding probable cause to believe the child is at imminent risk, may issue an order directing the placement of the child in the staff-secure CSSD facility, the FWSN Center (See Chart 7). To do so, the court must first make a probable cause finding that the child is at imminent risk as alleged in the petition and as a result, the child's safety is endangered, immediate removal is necessary and no less restrictive alternative is available.

Once admitted to the FWSN Center, a release hearing must be held within twenty-four hours (excluding weekends and holidays.) If the child is not ordered released by the court, the child may be held in the FWSN Center for up to forty-five days with a review

²¹ Source: "Program puts runaways first: Care for girls becomes foster parent's only job" Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (July 24, 2007)

hearing held every fifteen days. At the end of the forty-five days, the child must either be released to the community for services or committed to DCF for up to eighteen months.

Since the opening of the first FWSN Center in October 2007, some police departments and probation officers expressed concern related to the manner in which they will execute a court's placement order due to the lack of the term "take into protective custody" in subsections 31(a) and 31(b) in P.A. 07-4, although such language exists in other areas of the FWSN law which address police intervention with runaways. Police and probation officers are concerned that the law as it is now written can be interpreted to prohibit the use of restraints during transports, even when necessary for the protection of the child or the officer. At this time, the Advisory Board is not recommending any changes in the statutory language surrounding placement orders in FWSN Center. It is presumed the police will act professionally when transporting these youth.

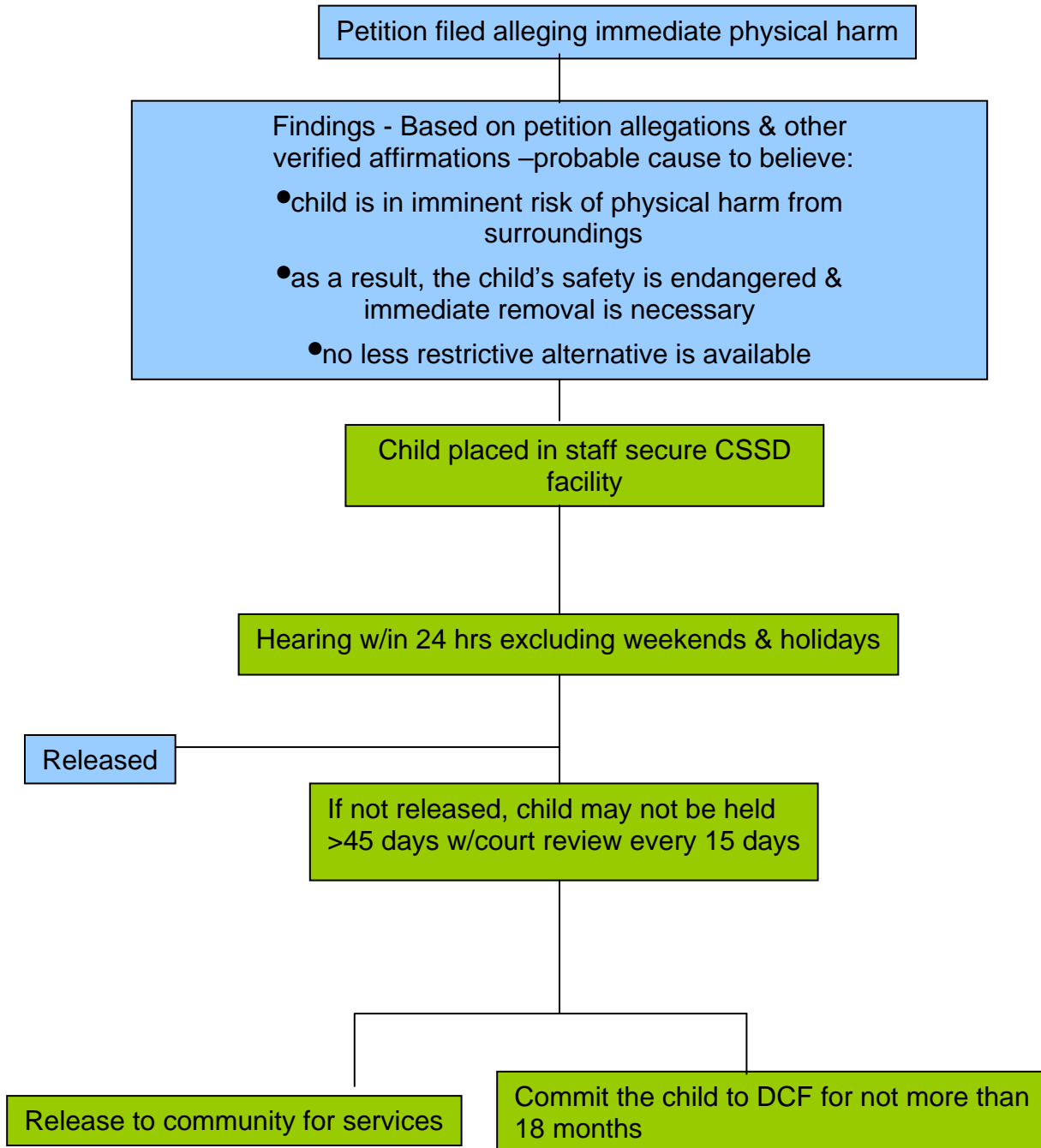
The Advisory Board is recommending changes to other portions of subsection 32(b). This subsection lacks specification as to service of process and appears to allow for a commitment of a child or other disposition without an adjudicatory hearing, based on nothing more than a probable cause finding. Again, no standard of proof, such as clear and convincing evidence, after a hearing, is set forth. There also are no provisions that a child returned to the community may be subject to a new or existing order of supervision or commitment in order to allow for follow up. The absence of language in this subsection addressing orders to a peace officer to place a child in a staff-secure facility when the child is found to be at imminent risk is also problematic.

(The proposed statutory amendments to address the statutory deficiencies in the new FWSN law are set forth in Appendix IX of this report.)

Chart 8 describes the current court process for imminent risk petitions under P.A.07-4, section 32(b):

Chart 8

COURT PROCESS – IMMINENT RISK



IV. Lessons Learned from National Laws, Models and Program

A. General Research

During the year long process, the FWSN Advisory Board sought to learn from the experiences of other states and jurisdictions. The Advisory Board and its subcommittees reviewed laws and other states' models for prevention and intervention with status offenders.

In particular, program reform efforts in New York, Florida, Illinois, San Francisco, California and Maricopa County, Arizona were examined.

The Vera Institute of Justice provided detailed information and presentations about both the reform processes and each jurisdiction's response to the reforms.

B. Reform Efforts in New York

Status offenders in the state of New York are referred to as Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS). In 2001, the New York State Legislature expanded the age of eligibility for PINS to include sixteen and seventeen year olds. Because of concern for the potential increase in the number of PINS referrals into the system, the authorities in New York City responsible for administering and funding the city's PINS programs, the New York City Department of Probation and the Administration of Children's Services (ACS), designed and implemented a system of intake and assessment for PINS cases. The approach, known as the Family Assessment Program (FAP), was designed to identify the needs of the children and families, make timely appropriate services available in the community, reduce the need to refer children to family court, and decrease the number of children placed out of their homes. Along with the FAP, new diversion services and alternatives to placement programs were created. (*For a full description of the FAP program see Appendix V.*)

In 2005, The Vera Institute of Justice in New York conducted an evaluation of the FAP. The study report noted many positive outcomes. The results showed decreases in referrals to probation. "After the introduction of FAP, the number of PINS filings with probation dropped 79 percent. From January 1 through June 30, 2002, the Department of Probation opened a total of 3,345 PINS cases. During the same six-month period in 2004, only 697 PINS intakes were opened"²²

There were also dramatic decreases in the number of PINS referrals made to family court. "After the introduction of FAP, PINS referrals to Family Court have declined by 55 percent. The number of PINS cases referred to family court from January through June 2002 was 1,043. From January to June 2004, only 474 PINS intakes were referred to the court."²³

²² Claire Shubik and Ajay Khashu, "A Study of New York City's Family Assessment Program", The Vera Institute of Justice, (New York 2005) 8

²³ Ibid, 10

Another goal of FAP was to reduce the number of PINS children placed in out of home care both pre and post disposition. “During the first six months of 2002, ACS records show that judges issued 343 remand/placement orders in PINS cases. From January through June 2004, the number of remands/placement orders declined to 272.”²⁴

Members of the FWSN Advisory Board traveled to Orange County, New York to learn more about the programs operating in that jurisdiction. The programs, called “Family Keys” and “Community Connections” are operated by the Southwest Key Program. Southwest Family Key is a private, non-profit agency that receives funds from the Orange County Department of Social Services. (*For a full description of the Family Keys program see Appendix V*)

The Family Keys program, which began in 2003, provides services to families who have filed a PINS petition. The Department of Probation refers a family directly to the Family Keys Program. Family Support Caseworkers from the program meet with the family to assess needs and work with the family to de-escalate crisis and mediate disputes.

Southwest Family Keys Program Report for 2005 states the following, “Because of the services Family Keys offers, 1219, 95% of total youth serviced have been diverted from probation and court involvement.”²⁵

The program was expanded in 2004 to provide services to youth and families involved with the Family Court as a result of a PINs petition having been filed for runaway.

The program report conveys the following outcome data: “Because of the services that the Family Keys Runaway Program offers, 36 youth, 84% of total youth services, have been diverted from probation and out-of-home placement.”²⁶

In 2005, the Southwest Family Keys opened the “Community Connections Program.” The program is designed to provide a structured continuum of care for children as an alternative to out-of-home placement. The program has three distinct components: The “Intensive Youth Services” (IYS), “Evening Support Services” and the “Independent Living Skills Program”. Each of the programs has distinct features.

The “Orange County Community Profile Needs Assessment” conducted by the county in 2006 reported the following:

“As a result of the change in the PINS law and through Vera Institute of Justice’s assistance, Orange County dramatically changed the existing PINS system. Through a collaborative effort involving the Youth Bureau, Probation, Social Services and Mental Health, the new system responds without delay to parental complaints and provides a

²⁴ Ibid, 12

²⁵ *Southwest Key Program, Inc. Program Report, Orange County Family Keys, Community Connections 2005.*(New York, 2005) 6

²⁶ Ibid, 6

continuum of effective strength-based family services. The number of PINS youth placed on probation after Family Court hearing increased from 2003 to 2004 and then decreased from 2004 to 2005. The total number of PINS complaints received and referral to Family Keys completed continued to increase from 2003 through 2005. From 2003 through 2005, more PINS complaints were opened as diversion cases and fewer went immediately to court.”²⁷

The FWSN Advisory Board utilized the community-based, multifaceted service models from the Family Keys and Community Connections Program and additional reform efforts in the State of New York to craft a community based, gender-specific model for diverting children from probation and providing responsive intervention designed to meet the needs of individual children and families in an expedited fashion and to avoid out-of-home placements whenever possible. *(For a full description of additional programs in New York see Appendix V)*

C. Reform Efforts in Florida

Mary “Dee” Richter, Executive Director for the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services (FNYFS) was invited to Connecticut by the FWSN Advisory Board to present information about the system for handling status offenders used in Florida. Ms. Richter first gave an overview of how Florida defines status offenders. She then gave a detailed description of the “Florida Network.” In Florida, there are two designations for status offenders. They are defined as a Family in Need of Services or “FINS” (non-adjudicated) and a Child In Need of Services or “CINS” (adjudicated). *(See <http://www.djj.state.fl.us/Prevention/CINSFINS.html>)*

According to Ms. Richter, between 17,000 and 20,000 children receive services under “FINS” each year and only 5% have petitions for “CINS” filed.

The FWSN Advisory Board also invited a speaker from the Practical Academic Cultural Education (PACE) Center for Girls. The PACE Center is a gender-responsive, school-based program, established in 1985 as an alternative to incarceration or institutionalization of at-risk adolescent girls in Florida. *(See Appendix V for a more detailed description of the PACE Center)*

D. National Truancy Models

The FWSN Advisory Board Truancy Subcommittee examined models for truancy prevention nationally and those currently used in Connecticut. Additionally, the Truancy Subcommittee looked at national research and program assessments.

One such study and examination of “best practice” models was conducted by the US Department of Education, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the

²⁷ “Orange County Community Profile Needs Assessment”, Orange County, New York , October 2006. 60-61.

National Center for School Engagement, and the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. It identified key components for truancy programs.

“ . . . a set of critical components linked to positive outcomes for children and families has been identified:

- Collaboration-Establish a multidisciplinary group to guide and implement truancy programming.
- Family involvement-Target family participation in school attachment, engage families in all truancy prevention and intervention efforts, and address family-based needs to support attendance.
- Comprehensive approach-The reasons for nonattendance are varied, and a community's response should be flexible and broad enough to take into consideration the specific issues experienced by students and families.
- Use of incentives and sanctions-A combination of motivating incentives and accountability-based sanctions works best with youth.
- Operate in a supportive context-To sustain programming, the program environment, including infrastructure and prevailing policies, must be a supportive source of energy and resources.
- Rigorous evaluation and assessment-Test the approach to see if the desired outcomes are produced and make midcourse corrections if necessary. Outcome data will help sustain funding for truancy programming and generate positive political will.”²⁸

Some examples of national programs include: the Families and Schools Together (FAST) in Wisconsin. The FAST model is a two-year school-based program in elementary schools designed to improve family functioning and relationship to school. At risk children and their families participate in eight weekly sessions with other at risk children and their parents, followed by two years of monthly sessions. Project Respect in Colorado uses Community Advocates who work in elementary, middle and high schools to encourage parent participation in school and coordinate family activities designed to improve family communication and functioning. Project PACT operates at two targeted elementary schools in Honolulu, Hawaii. The program uses an early intervention model. If a child misses school, a case manager meets with the student and the family to stress the importance of school attendance and to assess the family's needs for additional services. Project H.O.S.T.S. is a community-based intervention model used in one county in South Carolina. A feature of the program is collaboration between the local mental health agency, the county Department of Juvenile Justice and the local school district. The program serves truants between the ages of 8 and 16. Counselors assess the children to determine the cause of the truancy and failure to attend school. Participating children complete behavioral contracts to encourage them to accept responsibility for their behavior.

²⁸Mary S. Peimer and Kaki Dimock, “*Truancy Prevention in Action: Best Practices and Model Truancy Programs*”(South Carolina, National Dropout and Prevention Center/Network, Clemson University, 2005),4

E. Other programs include:

Mediation Programs where parents are invited to a mediation session after parental notifications fail to improve their children's attendance. A trained mediator (volunteers, employees of the court or nonprofit mediation centers) conducts a mediation, which is attended by the student's parent and teacher. During the mediation session, the participants identify the reasons for truancy and work to reach an agreement on a plan of action. The school is responsible for any follow-up.

School/Community Teams which can consist of a school social worker/counselor, a prosecutor, a police or probation officer, and/or an educational assistant, meet with the parent and child. The team works together to identify root causes for truancy and create a contract for school attendance. Contracts are signed by both the student and parent. Referrals to social service agencies are made when necessary. The team intensely monitors the student's attendance as well as other conditions of the contract.

Truancy Centers where truant students are taken by police officers to central locations staffed by police, Board of Education school safety officers and attendance teachers, and staffers from the District Attorney's Office. When parents pick up a student, they are given a letter advising them of their obligations as parents to ensure their children's regular school attendance. Parents whose children are chronic truants may be asked to attend a meeting with program staffers for information about their duties under the law. Parents are also provided with information about local community service agencies which specialize in assisting families.

Attorney/Mentor Projects that are used when a truancy petition is filed at court. A volunteer attorney is assigned to the case. The attorney represents the child at court on all truancy-related hearings. S/he is also responsible for building a positive relationship with the child. The attorney continues to advocate for the child after court involvement is over.

Parent Education and Involvement Programs where parents learn and practice identification, prevention, and intervention strategies through parent information forums or parent conferences. Parents also attend support groups where they receive emotional and practical support and practice implementing newly acquired skills and techniques.

Case Management where highly trained truancy case managers facilitate in-school case management. Participating schools utilize mental health services, counseling, substance abuse treatment, and tutoring to keep children in school.

Truancy Court which is held at the school where a judge or non-judicial officer, who is acting in either an official or *ex officio* role, presides. When a problem is identified, the Truancy Court, school administrators and guidance counselors do whatever it takes to solve the problem. They arrange for testing, counseling and offer any other services available to the student. In some school districts, schools have hired tutors to help students. The students' guidance counselors or truancy case managers inform the court of a student's weekly progress.

Community Truancy Boards (CTBs) which are operated by school districts with the help of trained community volunteers and provide families with an opportunity to avoid appearing in court on truancy matters. Students, parents, and school representatives each present to the CTB individually; the board confers on its own and presents its recommendations to the parties.

V. FIVE CORE PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE FWSN CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

As a result of the studies and presentations outlined above, the FWSN Advisory Board reached consensus that the five priorities listed below would begin to address some of the major gaps outlined in this report.

✓ ***CORE RECOMMENDATION # 1: PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SIX ADDITIONAL FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS TO MAKE THESE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO EVERY CHILD AND FAMILY IN CONNECTICUT.***

PRIORITY STATUS	RECOMMENDATION CATEGORY	DETAIL DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	
			2008 -2009	2009-2010
#1	INTERVENTION	Fund the remaining six (6) Family Support Centers ²⁹ for high risk FWSNs: these services were included in the original plan submitted to the legislature to implement the legal requirements for FWSN children and families, but were not included in the funding package. This will establish the Family Support Centers statewide and increase the number from 4 to 10.	\$1,086,000	\$2,086,000

²⁹ The law applies statewide but currently funding only allows implementation in 4 sites (Hartford, Bridgeport, New Haven and Waterbury). Funding is needed to fulfill the requirements of Public Act 46b-149 and implement 6 Family Support Centers to serve the remaining 9 courts. This will ensure that all FWSNs, regardless of where they reside, have access to services most likely to address their needs and reduce status offending behavior. Cost of the remaining six FCSs: \$1,086,000 in the first year, annualized to \$2,086,000.

**✓ CORE RECOMMENDATION # 2: FUND AND ESTABLISH
PILOT TRUANCY REDUCTION INITIATIVES**

PRIORITY STATUS	RECOMMENDATION CATEGORY	DETAIL DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	
			2008 - 2009	2009-2010
#2	PREVENTION	<p>The State Department of Education will identify the 3-5 highest feeder school districts for accepted Families with Service Needs referrals for truancy and provide grants to implement a pilot program utilizing the recommendations referenced below.</p> <p>District-Wide Interventions for Grades K-12</p> <p>1. Implement Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) at each school within each of the three to five districts.³⁰ 2. Establish School-based Prevention Teams which shall include building principal or other building administrator, school psychologist or social worker, school nurse, regular education teacher, special education coordinator for the purpose of addressing the needs of truant students.³¹</p> <p>Child Specific Interventions</p> <p>1. Grades K-6 - The School-based Prevention Team (which shall include the parent of the child who is the subject of the meeting) shall institute the following graduated interventions:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. Level 1 - Hold meeting pursuant to CGS § 10-198 a(b) to address improved attendance.</p>	\$250,000	\$250,000

³⁰ www.pbis.org

³¹ These teams may be the same teams that schools have already constituted for other purposes as long as such teams include the persons listed above. Often such teams are referred to as “child study teams” or “student assistance teams.”

		<p>b. Level 2 – Review academic progress of any child who has 5-8 unexcused absences.³²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop interventions for students experiencing academic delay. ii. Meet at least monthly to monitor interventions. <p>c. Level 3 – Supplement the Team with representatives from community based service providers, entities and agencies, for the purpose of making appropriate referrals for students with 8-10 unexcused absences. The Team itself will initiate referrals to services if necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. If the child is under 9, file report for educational neglect with DCF if parent does not follow the contract and the child continues to be truant.³³ ii. Assign case managers/social workers to work briefly but intensely with families who are referred by the School Based Prevention Team to help the family access resources and navigate the educational and social service systems. 		
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³² CGS § 10-76d states that “Provisions shall be made for the prompt referral to a planning and placement team of all children who have been suspended repeatedly or whose behavior, attendance or progress in school is considered unsatisfactory or at a marginal level of acceptance.

³³ Schools may make educational neglect reports pursuant to DCF policies 34-2-7 and 34-12-5.1 and CGS §§ 46b-120(9) (B) and (C).

³⁴ These models could include the Truancy Court Prevention Project (TCPP), see http://www.kidscounsel.org/aboutus_programs_tcpp.htm; “Changing the Judiciary's Relationship with a Community, One Child at a Time,” *ABA Judges' Journal*, Summer 2007. See also a list of other model truancy prevention programs chosen by the ABA Criminal Justice Section and its Juvenile Justice Committee at <http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/truancypreventionprograms.doc>.

³⁵ An example of a program that has shown promising results which relies on close monitoring of academic performance as well as mentoring and case management is Check & Connect. Evaluative data on the program is available at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/WWC_check_Connect_092106.pdf.

		<p>2. Grades 6-8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In addition to the child specific team and interventions noted in Section D above, issue a request for proposal for an evidence-based, (or “best practice”) truancy reduction program targeted for the middle school population.³⁴ b. Designate additional SDE resources to evaluate such models to ensure appropriate outcomes such as grade completion and academic progress. <p>3. Grade 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Issue a request for proposal for an evidence-based truancy reduction program targeted for the ninth grade high school population.³⁵ Such program would include flexible funding for transportation and student incentives. b. Designate additional SDE resources to evaluate such models to ensure appropriate outcomes such as grade completion, academic progress and high school graduation. 		
		Fund SDE to provide technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation of such grants. ³⁶		

³⁶ SDE has submitted to the Office of Policy and management a Mid-Term Budget Technical Adjustment requesting \$250,000 which would provide a \$50,000 grant to each of the three to five of the highest feeder school districts for accepted Families with Service Needs referrals for truancy. Funding for the evaluation component shall be in addition to the requests supra. SDE will explore foundation funding for this evaluation component. (e.g. JEHT Foundation)

		Identify full time SDE staff whose responsibility is to track and provide technical assistance for truancy initiatives and to work with the Consortium on School Attendance to coordinate statewide efforts to increase school attendance. ³⁷	\$ 75,000 (nine months)	\$100,000
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➤ ***CORE RECOMMENDATION #3: PROVIDE FUNDS TO ENHANCE YOUTH SERVICE BUREAUS (YSB). AS A PILOT, IN EACH OF FOUR JUDICIAL DISTRICTS, INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF AT LEAST ONE YSB THAT HAS A JUVENILE REVIEW BOARD SO THAT THE YSB CAN INCREASE ITS CASELOAD AND HANDLE REFERRALS OF THOSE YOUTH WHO ARE AT RISK OF HAVING FWSN REFERRALS SUBMITTED TO THE COURT.***

PRIORITY STATUS	RECOMMENDATION CATEGORY	DETAIL DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	
			2008 -2009	2009-2010
#3	PREVENTION	As a pilot, in each of four Judicial Districts, increase the capacity of at least one YSB that has a Juvenile Review Board so that the YSB can increase its caseload and accept and handle FWSN referrals of those children who are at risk of having	\$252,000 (9 mos)	\$336,000

³⁷ SDE has submitted to the Office of Policy and Management a Mid-Term Technical Adjustment requesting \$100,000 for a lead consultant position dedicated to dropout prevention and truancy.

		<p>FWSN referrals submitted to court.³⁸</p> <p>Allocate sufficient funds to SDE to establish desired outcomes, monitoring and independent evaluation of parent education program YSB pilots mentioned above to ensure competency and standardization.³⁹</p>		
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✓ CORE RECOMMENDATION # 4: FUND AND USE FLEXIBLE FUNDING TO ALLOW THE COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION TO PURCHASE CHILD SPECIFIC SERVICES FOR COURT REFERRED LOW AND MEDIUM RISK CHILDREN.

PRIORITY STATUS	RECOMMENDATION CATEGORY	DETAIL DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	
			2008 -2009	2009-2010
# 4	DIVERSION	Fund and use flexible funds for low and medium risk FWSNs; to be implemented in	\$506, 250	\$675,000

³⁸ This recommendation is based on serving 300 children. The Connecticut Youth Services Association submitted a proposal for 13 sites, based on serving 975 children, but the recommendation here is to initially try four pilots. Their request called for:

1. Staffing, including case managers and mental health clinicians @ \$50,000/site;
2. Training, technical assistance and administration (5%);
3. Data Collection System (KIDTrax) at \$9,000/site.

³⁹ The average grant given to each YSB is approximately \$30,000. The YSBs indicated only 13% of their support comes from SDE. Currently, YSBs are required to report their direct contacts associated with:

1. Types of services provided (including total number of individuals served in each category);
2. Profile of service recipients (including race/ethnicity; family constellation);
3. Source of referrals;
4. Reason for referrals.

In addition, YSBs are asked to address broad issues in meeting their individual goals in specific areas including: management and administration, research and evaluation, resource development, community involvement, youth advocacy, multi-agency collaboration. SDE estimates that it will need \$256,000 for this pilot and an increase from 2% to 4% for administrative and evaluation costs. (approximately \$112,000)

		accordance with the child's individual assessment. ⁴⁰		
		CSSD will be responsible for contracting for and monitoring the implementation of funded services identified.		
		CSSD will continue to contract with an independent evaluator to conduct an evaluation of effectiveness of funded services and make recommendations about continuing the use of the flex funds in this manner. Services that were found to be effective could be continued or expanded, while services that were not effective would be ended. <i>(For a full description of the CSSD's current evaluation contract with the Juvenile Research Institute, Inc. (See Appendix VII))</i>		

⁴⁰ The availability of a set amount of "flexible" funds would allow CSSD in consultation with the Local Implementation Team (LIT) to develop a plan for the service(s) most needed in their communities rather than the state funding a specific service that may not be as urgently needed. CSSD would consult with the LIT to recommend the type(s) of services to be purchased. (e.g. LIT in Hartford or New Haven may recommend a designated number of slots in the STEP program, another LIT may recommend slots in a mentoring program or the need for transportation services.)

✓ CORE RECOMMENDATION # 5: MAKE NEEDED CHANGES TO FAMILY WITH SERVICE NEEDS STATUTES (A full text of proposed language may be found in Appendix IX)

PRIORITY STATUS	RECOMMENDATION CATEGORY	DETAIL DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	
			2008 -2009	2009-2010
# 1	LEGISLATIVE	Confidentiality of Assessments	No cost	No cost
		Child as the Subject of the Families with Service Needs;	No cost	No cost
		Child found to be at “Imminent Risk”;	No cost	No cost
		Permanency Plan Review Hearings.	No cost	No cost
		Child found to be in Violation of a Court Order	No cost	No cost
		Permit modification of FWSN supervision	No cost	No cost
		Erasure of Families with Service Needs Records. ⁴¹	Cost to be determined	Cost to be determined

⁴¹ It is recommended that the Judicial Branch work to fund and develop technology that would provide for automatic erasure of records pertaining to a FWSN adjudication when the child who is subject of the record turns eighteen. It is further recommended that the Judicial Branch establish policies and procedures that immediately erase successfully diverted FWSN complaints upon dismissal.

VI. OTHER KEY RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE FWSN CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

A. Recommendations related to FWSN Population

Type of Recommendation	Detail	Primary Agency
1. Prevention	<p>Fund and implement an evidence-based parent education program that targets high risk, runaway, beyond control, truant behavior (e.g. Parent Project⁴²). Initially implement in the middle schools in the five cities that have the highest number of accepted FWSN referrals.</p> <p>Allocate sufficient funds to SDE to establish desired outcomes, monitoring and independent evaluation of parent education programs.</p>	SDE
2. Expansion of Services	Expand the number of FWSN Liaisons from 8 to 10 for statewide coverage of all courts and family support centers. ⁴³	DCF
3. Data Collection and Evaluation	CSSD will work to ensure data collection systems for providers and the evaluation contractor exist and are secure and adhere to all state and federal laws requiring confidentiality.	CSSD

⁴² Parent Project is a highly regarded risk-focused prevention model specifically designed for parents of strong-willed or out of control children. It is used in 38 states and has been evaluated by the University of Tennessee. It is a 10 -16 week curriculum where parents receive specific step by step plans for intervening in destructive behaviors. Extensions of the project include an optional Teen curriculum and a Parent Project Jr. for children ages 5-10. The Parent Project training requires a sponsoring agency. The cost is \$18,500 plus expenses for two trainers, and a Participant Material Fee (\$100.00) per participant. The maximum number of training participants that can be accommodated at any one time is 60.

⁴³ DCF estimates the cost of adding two full time FWSN liaisons to be \$122,740.

	<p>Efforts should be made to obtain funds and modify the data collection systems of CSSD and DCF to ensure the collection of the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Racial and ethnic disparities at all stages of the FWSN system 2. Timeliness and appropriateness of services for all FWSNs 3. Effectiveness of community-based preventive programs 4. Flex funding for FWSN population separated from delinquency population. 	CSSD & DCF
	<p>DCF, CSSD, and SDE will coordinate plans for research and evaluation of expanded prevention strategies, services and coordination across systems with focus on systems-level outcomes such as drop-out; FWSN recidivism. (See Appendix VII for further information)</p>	DCF, CSSD & SDE
<p>4. Systemic, longitudinal evaluation and planning</p>	<p>Create a Joint Strategic Planning Committee that would be formed with representatives from CSSD, DCF, SDE, OPM, Child Protection Commission, Division of the Public Defender Services, and the Division of Criminal Justice. in order to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance coordination between agencies in regard to initiatives that involve FWSN and other at risk youth. In particular, the following initiatives under the auspices of four different agencies need coordination: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. DCF (community collaboratives, voluntary services, some Juvenile Review Boards, Safe Harbor 	SSD, DCF, SDE, CCPA, Division of the Public Defender Services, Division of Criminal Justice

	<p>Respite Home, MST)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. CSSD (Family Support Centers, CARE Centers, and FWSN Centers, MST); c. SDE (Youth Service Bureaus and Juvenile Review Boards) d. OPM (Neighborhood Youth Centers, Governor's Urban Violence initiative, Consortium on School Attendance) <p>2. Enhance coordination between task forces to avoid duplication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Juvenile Jurisdiction Policy and Oversight Coordinating Council (JJPOCC) b. FWSN Advisory Board c. McArthur Foundation Mental Health Network d. SAMSA Transformation grant e. Child Poverty and Prevention Council f. DCF/CSSD Joint Strategic Planning Committee g. Youth Futures <p>3. Determine gaps in services across agencies, coordinate research and evaluation efforts across systems</p>	
5. Address Training Needs	<p>Fund and implement training initiatives that build system capacity to treat youth holistically and in line with best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application of a strengths-based, relational approach (training and coaching) 2. Trauma specialists trained in every DCF and Probation office; with all staff trained to be trauma sensitive 	SDE, CSSD & DCF

	3. Crisis/risk determination training for probation staff to ensure similar system evaluation of imminent risk. 4. Training for police officers 5. Training for schools, community programs.	
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B. Recommendations related to Truancy Prevention/Truancy Intervention

Type of Recommendation	Detail	Primary Agency
A. Change Requirements re: Attendance Policy	SDE has adopted uniform definition of “attendance” ⁴⁴ but for FWSN purposes, the definition of “excused” and “unexcused” for court referral purposes will be clarified or the statutory basis for a FWSN truancy referral will be reexamined.	SDE
B. Improve Data Collection	No later than 2011-2012, conduct an analysis of the academic penalties that students receive for being truant across districts and evaluate the policies’ effectiveness in reducing truancy.	SDE
	No later than 2010, use Connecticut’s Public School Information System (PSIS), with its unique student identifier, to report annually to the State Board of Education and the Education Committee of the Connecticut Legislature each district’s “excused” and “unexcused” absences per year in ten representative Districts (leading to annual report in all	SDE

⁴⁴The State Board of Education, the Commissioner’s Office, and the Consortium on School Attendance adopted a definition of “attendance. To the extent that this group is not including the definition of “excused” and “unexcused” absences, these entities will collaborate to define these terms for FWSN purposes only.

	Districts) and SDE's progress in increasing school attendance.	
C. Increase Enforcement & Monitoring	Issue an initial report on number of "truants," ⁴⁵ "habitual truants," ⁴⁶ and the number of meetings held pursuant to CGS § 10-198a(b) ⁴⁷ by district, school, grade level, race, ethnicity, gender and enrollment type in ten representative Districts leading to an annual report in all Districts.	SDE
	Identify specific full-time SDE staff whose responsibility is to track and provide technical assistance for truancy initiatives and to work with the Connecticut Consortium on School Attendance ⁴⁸ to coordinate statewide efforts to increase school attendance. ⁴⁹	SDE
	Require Districts that are in the process of being "restructured" pursuant to Public Act 07-3, sec. 32 to include truancy reduction initiatives in their improvement plans that are evidence-based or include "best practices." ⁵⁰	SDE

⁴⁵ "Truant" is defined in CGS § 10-198a(a) as "a child age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school year."

⁴⁶ "Habitual Truant" is defined in CGS § 10-200 as "a child age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and has twenty unexcused absences with in a school year"

⁴⁷ CGS § 10-198a(b) requires that the school hold a meeting with the parent, or other person having control of the child, to review and evaluate the reasons for a child's truancy within 10 days of the child's 4th unexcused absence in a month or the 10th unexcused absence in a school year.

⁴⁸ The Connecticut Consortium on School Attendance is a multi-year, collaborative effort of local school districts and statewide agencies focused on improving school attendance in Connecticut that is organized by the Office of Policy and Management's Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division. As of July 2007, the Consortium included 27 school districts. For more information, go to <http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?a=2974&q=383642>

⁴⁹ SDE has submitted to the Office of Policy and Management a Mid-Term Technical Adjustment requesting \$100,000 for a lead consultant position for dropout prevention and truancy.

⁵⁰ The National School Safety Center has identified best practices in developing truancy reduction programs. They include the following: involve parents/guardians in all truancy prevention activities; ensure students face firm sanctions for truancy; create meaningful incentives for parental responsibility; establish ongoing truancy prevention programs in school; schools should address the unique needs of each child and consider developing initiatives to combat the root causes of truancy. These can be found at: <http://www.schoolengagement.org/TruancyPreventionRegistry/Admin/Resources/Resources/8.pdf>.

	SDE's Secondary School Redesign Draft Plan ⁵¹ should include strategies and initiatives for students with a history of poor school attendance, including increased opportunities to access alternative education ⁵² and vocational education.	SDE
	Implement differential response system ⁵³ for educational neglect referrals.	DCF
	Increase number of FWSN liaisons by two so each court and Family Support Center has coverage.	DCF
	Develop transition program (e.g. STEP ⁵⁴) for DCF-committed youth, including truants re-entering school system from respite or other out of home living situation.	DCF
	Collect data and report FWSN referrals and outcomes (including entry into juvenile justice system, grade completion) by category (truant, habitual truant), race, age, town, school, program intervention.	CSSD

⁵¹ For more information about the "Secondary School Redesign Draft Plan" go to:

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/site/default.asp>

⁵² See e.g. PACE program for girls. PACE (Practical Academic Cultural Education) is a program for girls located in Florida whose purpose is to intervene and prevent school withdrawal, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, substance abuse and welfare dependency. The program accepts referrals from the juvenile justice system, the Department of Children and Families, school personnel, community services agencies, parents, family members, friends and self-referrals. PACE programs provide the following services: academic education, individualized attention, a gender-specific life management curriculum (SPIRITED GIRLS®), therapeutic support services, parental involvement, student volunteer service projects and transition follow-up services.

⁵³ "Differential response, also referred to as "dual track," "multiple track," or "alternative response," is an approach that allows child protective services to respond differently to accepted reports of child abuse and neglect, based on such factors as the type and severity of the alleged maltreatment, number and sources of previous reports, and willingness of the family to participate in services.

⁵⁴ The STEP program is administered by DCF and provides the following to the FWSN population: case management, individual/family social work services, parent advocacy, structured recreation, education advocacy, employment assistance, and access to mental health and substance abuse intervention.

	Fund and increase number of educational advocates in order for each court to have one full-time position with responsibility for both FWSN and juvenile justice youth.	CSSD
D. System-wide Prevention Strategies	Raise the age of withdrawal from school from 16 with parents' permission to 18(no parental permission needed). ⁵⁵ Exception should be made for students age 16 or over who are enrolled in Job Corps, join the military with parental permission, or are emancipated.	CGA
	Lower the age of mandatory school attendance from seven years of age to six years of age. ⁵⁶	CGA
	Amend PA 07-66 ⁵⁷ so that neither truancy nor tardiness to class is punished by outside suspension.	CGA
	Mandate that schools file reports for educational neglect rather than FWSN's for children 9 years of age and under if parent fails to follow school-parent contract and/or child continues to be truant as defined by CGS § 10-198a(a).	CGA
	Require the Department of Labor, SDE, CSSD and DCF to work with the existing Regional Workforce Development Boards to focus on developing workforce activities that provide incentives to formerly	DOL, SDE, CSSD & DCF

⁵⁵ CGS § 10-184 currently allows the parent or person having control of a child sixteen or seventeen years of age to consent to the child's withdrawal from school.

⁵⁶ CGS § 10-184 currently gives the parent or person having control of a child five or six years of age the option of not sending the child to school until the child is seven years of age.

⁵⁷ PA 07-66 currently allows any local or regional board of education to authorize the administration of the schools under its direction to suspend from school privileges any pupil whose conduct on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity is violative of a publicized policy of such board or is seriously disruptive of the educational process or endangers persons or property or whose conduct off school grounds is violative of such policy and is seriously disruptive of the educational process.

	truant students who attend school regularly.	
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VII. ISSUES RELATING TO THE FWSN POPULATION REQUIRING FURTHER STUDY OR EXAMINATION BY THE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

A. Impact of the “Raise the Age” legislation, specifically as it relates to Youth In Crisis

P.A. 07-4 Section 73, drastically changes the landscape of the juvenile justice system in Connecticut. The Act which is often referred to as “Raise the Age” expands the jurisdiction of the juvenile court to include sixteen and seventeen year olds.

The Act eliminates the “Youth in Crisis” designation for sixteen and seventeen year old status offenders. The changes articulated in the Act will be effective January 1, 2010. At that point, status offenders who are sixteen or seventeen years old will be required to be treated as children from families with service needs.

In State Fiscal Year 2006-2007, the Judicial Branch added just fewer than 1500 new “Youth in Crisis” cases to its dockets. These cases will be FWSN matters after January 1, 2010. The influx of cases to the court and the unique needs of sixteen and seventeen year olds are currently under consideration by the Juvenile Jurisdiction Policy and Operations Coordinating Council (the successor to the Juvenile Jurisdiction Planning and Implementation Committee).⁵⁸

While the “Raise the Age” legislation primarily speaks to sixteen and seventeen year olds who are alleged to have committed delinquent acts, those who will be defined as children from Families with Service Needs will require the panoply of services and court interventions now afforded the population under sixteen. Accordingly, the judicial branch, DCF, and community-based public and private providers must increase their level of service provision and further diversify the services offered.

The Juvenile Jurisdiction Planning and Implementation Committee submitted a report to the Connecticut General Assembly in February 2007. The committee endorsed a number of recommendations related to sixteen and seventeen year olds. The report states, “In general, services need to be expanded in order to preserve the existing level of delivery to younger juveniles as well as adapted to different developmental needs of older adolescents.”⁵⁹

⁵⁸ In 2006, the Connecticut General Assembly established the Juvenile Jurisdiction Planning and Implementation Committee and charged it with creating a plan to align the state’s policies with practice incorporating the sixteen and seventeen year olds in the state’s juvenile justice population.

⁵⁹ Source: *Connecticut Juvenile Jurisdiction Planning and Implementation Committee Final Report*, (Connecticut, 2007) 12.

One recommendation has particular relevance to the FWSN population. The committee focused on the lack of education and employment services and opportunities for youth who were truant or had been suspended or expelled or who were in residential placement or had been incarcerated and were returning to their community. The recommendation states, "...the Committee supports the creation of new programs for 16-and 17-year-olds, focused particularly on educational and vocational support."⁶⁰ Services and staff secure facilities that will include the increased population of FWSN children must be addressed in anticipation of the January 1, 2010 implementation of the "Raise the Age" law.

It is estimated that the number of FWSN cases will increase by at least one-third statewide as a result of the raise in the jurisdictional age. Hence, there will be a significant impact on the court and the service delivery system for status offenders that will need to be addressed financially and operationally.

The issues related to anticipated service needs for sixteen and seventeen year old youth are not specifically addressed in this report. There are currently no plans in place for implementing the changes to the families with service needs processes with sixteen and seventeen year old youth. Significant attention must be drawn to this population prior to January 1, 2010. Since many of the individuals and agencies involved in the FWSN initiative are also involved in implementing the "Raise the Age" law, the Advisory Board strongly urges that all involved continue to collaborate to ensure that the progress that has been made in improving the process for meeting the needs of the FWSN population are not undermined by the impending creation of a much larger group of FWSN children and delinquents.

B. Recommendations regarding Issues Requiring Further Study or Examination by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Type of Recommendation	Detail	Primary Agency
Transition of FWSN triage system from Probation; Transition other FWSN services (Family Support Centers) from CSSD.	Determine when probation should transition triage function to Family Support Centers or other private agency; determine which state agency would supervise and evaluate (e.g. DCF, CSSD)	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
	Create an Implementation Plan including an implementation team to oversee transition.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

⁶⁰ Ibid, 13

Handling of FWSN cases.	Study and consider whether the Attorney General's office should assume jurisdiction over the FWSN cases rather than the Division of Criminal Justice.	OAG & DCJ
Confidentiality and Data sharing	Address the data or information sharing issues raised in the 2006 report "The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan" as well as formal and informal practices of information sharing in FWSN cases to ensure appropriate confidentiality.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
	Resolve confidentiality issues as they relate to the comprehensive assessment and treatment and programmatic evaluations so as to protect the child's and family's right to informed consent.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Intervention for DCF youth residing in out of home placements.	Determine the actual number of DCF involved children who are subsequently referred to the court who are FWSNs and the number who are arrested. Determine what prevention services and de-escalation techniques might be planned and implemented for DCF involved children to avoid future court involvement for runaway or out of control behavior.	DCF
Funding Options	Explore federal funding reimbursement for FWSN Centers, Respite Centers, Family Support Centers, community-based mental health services (e.g. MST, MDFC) (IV-E eligibility; Medicaid-EPSDT)	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
Treatment of FWSN Immoral conduct	Determine how sexual status offenses and delinquency sexual offenses are being handled and clarify the two options.	JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

VIII. Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

A. Profile of Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

“Girls are disproportionately charged with status offenses. Their running away ushers them into the delinquency system and may ultimately drive them deeper into the criminal justice system. In 1999, although girls were only 27% of the juveniles arrested overall, they accounted for 59% of juvenile arrests for running away and 54% of juvenile arrest for prostitution. Commentators have long attributed this disproportionality to bias in discretionary decisions by police, probation, prosecutors, judges and agency personnel to handle runaway and other status offending girls through the delinquency system. The legal mechanisms that contribute to this disparate processing include violations of valid court orders, contempt proceedings, probation and parole revocations, misdemeanor charges associated with running away, and charges of escape, absconding and AWOL (Absent Without Official Leave). In addition, changes in police practices may lead to the re-labeling of girls’ family conflicts as violent offenses, with a particularly serious impact on minority girls.”⁶¹

Adolescents with mental health problems are overrepresented in the juvenile justice population. While as many as 20% of non-delinquent adolescents have a mental illness, the prevalence rate among juvenile offenders is between 30-90%, depending on the inclusive criteria used. Moreover, female offenders are 2-3 times more likely to be diagnosed with a mental health disorder than are boys.

In 2004, there were approximately 5300 girls referred to the juvenile court. Of these, approximately 1800 were referred due to Families with Service Needs (FWSN) complaints and approximately 3500 were referred for delinquency charges. The majority of the delinquency petitions, over 3200, was nolleed or dismissed with community services provided. Over 500 girls were detained. During 2004, DCF was directly involved with approximately 130 girls committed as delinquents, approximately 50 committed as FWSN and about 150 under court-ordered FWSN supervision, for a total of approximately 330. Most girls (95%) were between 11 and 16 years old, 59% were African-American or Latina, (an overrepresentation in comparison to the state’s juvenile population), and most had experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse.⁶²

⁶¹ “Justice by Gender: The Lack of Appropriate Prevention, Diversion and Treatment Alternatives for Girls in the Juvenile Justice System” American Bar Association and the National Bar Association, (Washington D.C., 2001). 16-17.

⁶² “Plan for a Continuum of Community Based Services for Female Status Offenders and Delinquents in response to Substitute House Bill No. 5366, Special Act No. 04-05”. Darlene Dunbar, MSW Commissioner Department of Children and Families in collaboration with Court Support Services Division, Judicial Branch, Office of the Child Advocate, Department of Social Services, Department of Education, private providers, women’s and children’s rights advocates and girls in the juvenile justice system in Connecticut DCF Girls’ Services Steering Committee, February 2005(2nd edition). 4

In response to Special Act 04-5, DCF formed a Steering Committee which produced a plan for a continuum of community-based services designed to prevent incarceration of female status offenders and delinquent girls.⁶³ The report found, “Girls who enter the Juvenile Justice System with status offenses have a significant risk of becoming entrenched in the court system as delinquents if they are not diverted with appropriate, gender specific services. Girls with multiple FWSN referrals are the most at risk for future involvement.”⁶⁴

The report also looked carefully at educational programming. It stated that “There is an urgent and compelling need to work with the State Department of Education (SDE) to develop new models for gender-specific educational services for girls”⁶⁵ and to work with SDE to develop a “reentry” policy for girls returning to schools and for SDE to collaborate with local school districts in the implementation of the policy and the development of the policy application.”⁶⁶

In December 2005, Marty Beyer, Ph.D. conducted an in-depth analysis of fourteen girls who were involved in the juvenile justice system and prepared a report for the Department of Children and Families entitled “*A System of Service for Girls in Connecticut*”.

The research and the report outlined both the strengths and challenges in meeting the needs of girls in Connecticut’s juvenile justice system. In the report, Dr. Beyer noted several successes in working with and addressing the needs of girls encountered by the juvenile justice system. Among them, she recognized the value of the state plan developed by DCF and the Steering Committee that required gender-specific services that take into account the unique needs of girls, and a collaborative approach by staff across state and private agencies who are well versed in the system elements necessary to support girls.

Despite these positive attributes she noted, “...there is no system of gender specific, strength-based, trauma-informed, culturally competent, relationship-driven girls’ services in Connecticut.”⁶⁷

In 2005-2006, DCF, CSSD and many public and private system participants engaged in a strategic planning process facilitated by the Child Welfare League of America. The result was an overall strategic plan for Connecticut’s Juvenile Justice System. It was outlined in a report dated August 2006.

The report addressed many concerns and issues related to the juvenile justice system in Connecticut. Once again, the need for gender specific services for girls was identified as a high priority. The report outlined certain action strategies. One key strategy included

⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ “*A System of Services for Girls in Connecticut*”, Marty Beyer, Ph.D., (Connecticut, December 2005). 1

increasing gender-responsive programming for girls: “. . . [I]t is critical that gender-specific services for girls be implemented across the continuum of care, from prevention to aftercare and transitional programming, and that the Connecticut juvenile justice system remains committed to serving girls equitably.”⁶⁸

Draft guidelines for gender-responsive girls programming have been developed jointly by DCF and CSSD, but have not yet been formally adopted by either agency.

“The DCF-CSSD Girls’ Programs Standards and Certification Project is intended to support the development of a system of care for girls involved in Connecticut’s juvenile justice system that is characterized by creative, cutting-edge practice and widespread adherence to best practices in female specific programming and approaches. The project is designed to move the system toward a unified female responsive approach so that girls have access to a cohesive system of care that honors their strengths and effectively meets their needs across service settings.” *(See Appendix VIII for excerpts from draft guidelines)*

B. Recommendations Relating to Girls in the Juvenile Delinquency Population

Type of Recommendation	Detail	Primary Agency
Establish and strengthen services for girls in the juvenile justice system.	Fund and have the State Department of Education issue a Request for Proposal for a Local Educational Agency to pilot an alternative therapeutic gender responsive school (i.e. the PACE Center for Girls) in one location for a minimum of 3-5 years and conduct an appropriate evaluation of the school and programming ⁶⁹	SDE
	Include, (or, in the case of CSSD continue to include), gender responsive training as a basic component of training in orientation and update training	CSSD & DCF

⁶⁸*The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan: Building Toward a Better Future*, A Strategic Planning Process Facilitated by the Child Welfare League of America for the Department of Children and Families-Bureau of Juvenile Services and the Connecticut Judicial Branch-Court Support Services Division in Collaboration with many Public and Private Stakeholders, (Connecticut: 2006). 55.

⁶⁹ See Footnote 52

	for all DCF Social Workers and CSSD Probation Officers. Develop specific gender responsive training for those DCF staff that work with children under the age of 12.	
	Include in all DCF and CSSD contracts that provide services to adolescents, language that requires the adherence to gender responsive principles.	CSSD & DCF
	Develop and sustain a Community Advisory Committee for the secure girls' facility similar to the one established for the Connecticut Juvenile Training School.	DCF
	Establish funding to engage the services of an expert or experts in gender responsive programming to assist, at each stage in the process, in the development of the girls' secure facility, train staff prior to its opening, and ensure implementation of gender responsive practices in all DCF state run and contracted facilities that serve juvenile justice girls.	DCF
	Develop a plan no later than July 1, 2008 to ensure implementation of gender responsive practices in DCF state run and contracted facilities, implement such plan no later than January 2010.	DCF

	<p>Adopt and work to ensure implementation of the Program Guidelines for Girls Services in Connecticut, April, 2007 (<i>see Appendix VIII</i>) in state run facilities no later than January 2010.</p>	<p>CSSD & DCF</p>
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IX. APPENDICES

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Appendix I

Public Act 06-188

AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC HEALTH BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION PROVISIONS.

Sec. 42. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a Families with Service Needs Advisory Board. The board shall consist of the following members: (1) Two representatives of the Department of Children and Families, appointed by the Commissioner of Children and Families, one of whom shall be a representative from the division of said department that provides juvenile justice services and one of whom shall be a representative of said department who is responsible for providing services to girls; (2) the Chief Court Administrator, or the Chief Court Administrator's designee; (3) a judge of the Superior Court assigned to hear juvenile matters, appointed by the Chief Justice; (4) a public defender, assistant public defender or deputy assistant public defender specializing in cases involving families with service needs, appointed by the Chief Public Defender; (5) the Child Advocate, or the Child Advocate's designee; (6) the Chief Child Protection Attorney, or the Chief Child Protection Attorney's designee; (7) the Chief State's Attorney, or the Chief State's Attorney's designee; (8) the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee; (9) the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary and human services, or their designees; (10) one member appointed by the Governor; and (11) two members to serve as chairpersons of the board, one of whom shall be appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives and one of whom shall be appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate. All appointments to the board shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority. The chairpersons of the board shall schedule the first meeting of the board, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(b) The Families With Service Needs Advisory Board shall (1) monitor the progress being made by the Department of Children and Families in developing services and programming for girls from families with service needs and other girls, (2) monitor the progress being made by the Judicial Department in the implementation of the requirements of public act 05-250, (3) provide advice with respect to such implementation upon the request of the Judicial Department or the General Assembly, and (4) not later than December 31, 2007, make written recommendations to the Judicial Department and the General Assembly, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, with respect to the accomplishment of such implementation by the effective date of public act 05-250. The board shall terminate on December 31, 2007.

Approved May 26, 2006.

Appendix II

FAMILIES WITH SERVICE NEEDS ADVISORY BOARD [FWSN-D]

Authority

PA06-188 s.42

Composition

20 Members

No.	Auth.	Specific Qualifications	Appointee
1	SPRO	a member to serve as co-chairperson	<i>Professor Preston A. Britner, Storrs</i>
2	SPKH	a member to serve as co-chairperson	<i>Attorney Martha Stone, Durham</i>
3	OTH	chairperson of Judiciary committee, or his designee	<i>Rep. Gail Hamm East Hampton</i>
4	OTH	chairperson of Judiciary committee, or his designee	<i>A. Rachel Rothman Milford</i>
5	OTH	ranking member of Judiciary committee, or his designee	<i>Sen. John Kissel Enfield</i>
6	OTH	ranking member of Judiciary committee, or his designee	<i>Rep. Arthur O'Neill Southbury</i>
7	OTH	chairperson of Human Services committee, or his designee	<i>Sen. Jonathon Harris West Hartford</i>
8	OTH	chairperson of Human Services committee, or his designee	<i>Elizabeth Brown</i>
9	OTH	ranking member of Human Services committee, or his designee	<i>Sen. John Kissel Enfield</i>
10	OTH	ranking member of Human Services committee, or his designee	<i>Rep. Lile Gibbons Greenwich</i>
11	GOV	Appointment by the Governor	<i>TBA</i>
12	OTH	Chief Court Administrator, or his designee	<i>Hon. Barbara M Quinn Chester</i>

13	OTH	a judge of the Superior Court assigned to hear juvenile matters, appointed by the Chief Justice	<i>Hon. Christine Keller Hartford</i>
14	OTH	a public defender, assistant public defender or deputy assistant public defender specializing in cases involving families with service needs, appointed by the Chief Public Defender	<i>Attorney Christine Rapillo Cheshire</i>
15	OTH	Chief Child Protection Attorney or her designee	<i>Attorney Carolyn Signorelli</i>
16	OTH	Chief State's Attorney, or his designee	<i>Attorney Francis Carino</i>
17	OTH	Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or his designee	<i>Anne Foley</i>
18	OTH	Child Advocate, or her designee	<i>Jeanne Milstein</i>
19	OTH	a representative from the DCF division that provides juvenile justice services, appointed by the Commissioner of DCF	<i>Leo Arnone</i>
20	OTH	a representative from the DCF department responsible for providing services to girls, appointed by the Commissioner of DCF	<i>Tammy Sneed</i>

Qualifications

All appointments shall be made no later than thirty days after the effective date (May 26, 2006). The chairperson shall schedule the first meeting to be held no later than sixty days after the effective date. Not later than December 31, 2007 the board shall make written recommendations to the Judicial Branch and the General Assembly in accordance with CGS 11-4a . The board shall terminate on December 31, 2007.

Terms

None stated, coterminous under CGS 4-1a.

Effective Date:

May 26, 2006

FWSN ADVISORY BOARD - TRUANCY SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Maria Allegro Social Work Supervisor for Families with Service Needs Department of Children and Families	Surry Hardcastle Director, Grace Webb School Institute of Living
Peter Arakas, Esq. General Counsel LEGO Systems, Inc.	Kimberly Joyner Director of Operations State of Connecticut Office of the Probate Court Administrator
Carl Babb Truancy Supervisor New Haven Public Schools	Honorable Christine Keller Chief Administrative Judge for Juvenile Matters Connecticut Judicial Branch
Emily Breon, Esq. Attorney Truancy Court Prevention Project Center for Children's Advocacy	Richard LeGrier, III Weed & Seed Coordinator/Community Relations City of Hartford Police Department
Elizabeth Brown Connecticut Commission on Children	Valerie LaMotte Planning Specialist Office of Policy & Management
Christina Carver Director of Special Services New London School District	Scott Newgass Consultant for School Social Work and Safe & Drug Free Schools Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/School Partnerships
Andrea Comer Member, Hartford Board of Education	Paul Flynter Connecticut State Department of Education
Maureen DeLude Court Support Services Division	Julia O'Leary Deputy Director-Juvenile Services Court Support Services Division
Kim DeSimone Director, Youth Prevention Programs The Village for Families and Children, Inc.	Reese Palmer Associate Director of Juvenile Justice Services Children's Outpatient Services Wheeler Clinic
Paul Flinter State Department of Education	Cynthia Rutledge Director of Adult Education and Programs, Bureau of Juvenile Services Department of Children and Families
Mary Glassman Connecticut Voices for Children	Martha Stone, Esq. Executive Director, Center for Children's Advocacy
Hector Glynn Former Executive Director Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance	Joseph Vavrachak New Britain Public Schools

The FWSN Advisory Committee would like to acknowledge the following individuals who had previously serviced on the Truancy Subcommittee: Honorable Curtissa Cofield; George Dowaliby, former Deputy Commissioner, Connecticut State Department of Education

HIGH END NEEDS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Maureen DeLude , Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division	Christine Rappillo, Esq. , Office of the Chief Public Defender
Representative Gail Hamm East Hampton	Randy Roorbach , Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division
Susan O'Brien , Department of Children and Families	Kimberly Sokoloff , Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division
Honorable Barbara M. Quinn , Chief Court Administrator Connecticut Judicial Branch	Martha Stone, Esq. Co-Chairperson, FWSN Advisory Board Executive Director, Center for Children's Advocacy

The FWSN Advisory Committee would like to acknowledge the following individuals who had previously serviced on the High End Needs Subcommittee: Honorable William Lavery, Donald DeVore, Department of Children and Families

EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Maria Allegro Department of Children and Families	Maxine McIntyre
John Chapman Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division	Jeanne Milstein, Child Advocate
Cynthia Clancy, Esq. Office of the Chief Public Defender	Christine Rappillo, Esq. , Office of the Chief Public Defender
Gail Demarco , Department of Children and Families	A. Rachel Rothman, Esq. Member, FWSN Advisory Board
Barbara Fair	Carolyn Signorelli, Esq. Chief Child Protection Attorney Commission on Child Protection
Brian Hill , Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division	

The FWSN Advisory Committee would like to acknowledge the following individuals who had previously served on the Evaluation Subcommittee: Susan Hamilton, Commissioner Department of Children and Families and Martha McLeod, President of Three Rivers Community College.

LEGISLATIVE DRAFTING SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Francis Carino, Esq. Office of the Chief States' Attorney	Honorable Barbara M. Quinn, Chief Court Administrator Connecticut Judicial Branch
Debra Fuller, Esq., Director Judicial Branch, External Affairs	Christine Rapillo, Esq. Office of the Chief Public Defender
Honorable Christine Keller Chief Administrative Judge for Juvenile Matters Connecticut Judicial Branch	Martha Stone, Esq. Co-Chairperson, FWSN Advisory Board Executive Director, Center for Children's Advocacy

Appendix III

Summary of Federal and State Law

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act was passed by Congress in 1974. Since its passage, the Act has changed the way states and communities deal with children who commit status offenses. The original goals of the Act which created the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) were twofold: to help state and local governments to prevent and control juvenile delinquency and to improve the juvenile justice system. The Act emphasized protection of children in the juvenile justice system from inappropriate placements that could cause harm due to exposure to adult inmates and the need for community-based treatment. States that received funding under the Act were required to comply with its provisions. As a result, there were significant fiscal implications for states that failed to fulfill the requirements of the federal law.

The 1974 JJDP Act addressed the deinstitutionalization of status offenders. Status offenses⁷⁰ similar to those defined under Connecticut's law are defined as:

- Incorrigible, ungovernable – Being beyond the control of parents, guardians or custodians;
- Running away – Leaving the custody and home of parents guardians without permission or good cause and failing to return within a reasonable length of time;
- Truancy – Violation of a compulsory school attendance law;

The JJDP Act required that within three years of the passage of the Act, states must not place status offenders in juvenile detention or correctional facilities. Instead, as in the past, they had to be placed in “shelter” facilities. In 1977, Congress amended the JJDP Act to remove the requirement that status offenders be placed only in shelter facilities, allowing state and local governments more discretion in placing these children.

In 1980, the JJDP Act was again amended. It required that all status offenders be removed from “secure” detention and correctional facilities. Such offenders cannot be detained in adult jails or lockups and they may only be detained or confined in secure juvenile facilities *if they violate a valid court order*.

Congress reauthorized the JJDP Act in 2002. The reauthorization reaffirms the deinstitutionalization of status offenders. The 2002 JJDP Act states:

“Juveniles who are charged with or have committed an offense that would not be criminal if committed by an adult *shall not be placed in secure detention or secure correctional facilities.*”

⁷⁰ Definition of Status Offenses from OJJDP's Statistical Briefing Book (see <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/glossary.html>)

States continue to struggle with the challenges of the JJDP Act. They are often faced with lack of programs and services for children and their families. The frustrations associated with this lack of resources led many states to use the authority of the courts to provide supervision over these children.

“Despite these achievements, much work remains to be done. Many states have not developed sufficient services to meet the needs of status offenders and their families and still use secure detention to hold status offenders. Several states regularly detain youth for violating “valid court orders (VCO), meaning that status offenders can be securely detained in they are in contempt of court.”

“Addressing the Needs of Juvenile Status Offenders and Their Families” Participant Guide to the Live National Satellite Broadcast produced by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) US Department of Justice, the American Bar Association, Commission on Youth at Risk and the Family and Youth Services Bureau, US Department of Health and Human Services.

States, including Connecticut, while adhering to the letter of the law in not locking up status offenders in detention facilities in the first instance, often placed status offenders in their locked facilities as “violators” of court orders. This has led to an emerging national movement to re-examine the way status offenders are being treated.

Status Offenders became known as children from families with service needs or “FWSNs” in 1979. Children (under the age of 16) who commit non-criminal status offenses such as running away, beyond control or truancy are handled differently in the courts from the cases of children who commit delinquent acts, which are criminal in nature. Both children charged with status offenses and children charged with delinquent act have their cases heard in the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters.

Children and youth who are charged with status offenses cannot be held in a locked cell or room at a police station and they cannot be placed in a juvenile detention center either while the case is pending or after an adjudication.

Prior to October 1, 2007 certain post-adjudication options were available to the court in FWSN cases that could ultimately lead to the child being treated as a delinquent offender. For example, the court, after adjudication but prior to disposition, could place the child under interim orders. Once a pre-dispositional study had been completed by probation and a disposition of FWSN supervision had been ordered, the court entered final orders. Violations of the court’s interim or final orders were considered “delinquent” acts. The prosecutor or probation officer had discretion to file a delinquency petition charging the delinquency offense of “violation of a court order.” The case was handled as a delinquency case and had all the consequences and sanctions available in delinquency cases, including pretrial placement of the child in detention and commitment to DCF as a delinquent for up to 18 months, including possible placement in a secure, locked facility, such as the Connecticut Juvenile Training School for boys.

Current law (§ 46b-120(8)), defines a FWSN child as “A child under the age of sixteen...who:

- Has without just cause runaway from the parental home or other properly authorized and lawful place of abode,
- Is beyond the control of the child's parent, parents, guardian or other custodian,
- Has engaged in indecent or immoral conduct,
- Is a truant or habitually truant or who, while in school, has been continuously and overtly defiant of school rules and regulations, or
- Is thirteen years of age or older and has engaged in sexual intercourse with another person and such person is thirteen years of age or older and not more than two years older or younger than such child."

A significant change in the law occurred in 2000. P.A. 00-177 created a category of "status offenders" for sixteen and seventeen year old youth. A youth age sixteen or seventeen may be found to be a "youth in crisis" who:

- Has without just cause run away from the parental home or other properly authorized and lawful place of abode;
- Is beyond the control of parents, guardian or other custodian, or
- Has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten unexcused absences in any school year.

If a youth is adjudicated as a "youth in crisis" the Court has the following dispositional options:

- Direct the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to suspend motor vehicle operator's license of the youth in crisis for a period of time, as directed by the court, not to exceed one year;
- Require work or specific community service;
- Mandate that the youth in crisis attend an educational program in the local community approved by the Court;
- Require mental health services;
- Refer the youth in crisis to a youth service bureau, provided one exists in the local community; and
- Review the option of emancipation, pursuant to section 46b-150, of the youth in crisis.

A "youth in crisis" found to be in violation of any court order is not considered to be a delinquent and may not be punished by the court by incarceration in any state-operated detention facility or correctional facility.

Public Act 07-4, Sec.73 will expand the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters jurisdiction over sixteen and seventeen year olds. Effective January 1, 2010, the age for charging children and youth with delinquency or status offenses will include any child or youth under the age of eighteen. The category of "youth in crisis" will be eliminated. Therefore, all children and youth, as defined by the Act, will be capable of being alleged to be children from families with service needs.

Appendix IV

Detailed Population Demographics

- **Gender Specific Analysis of FWSN Population**

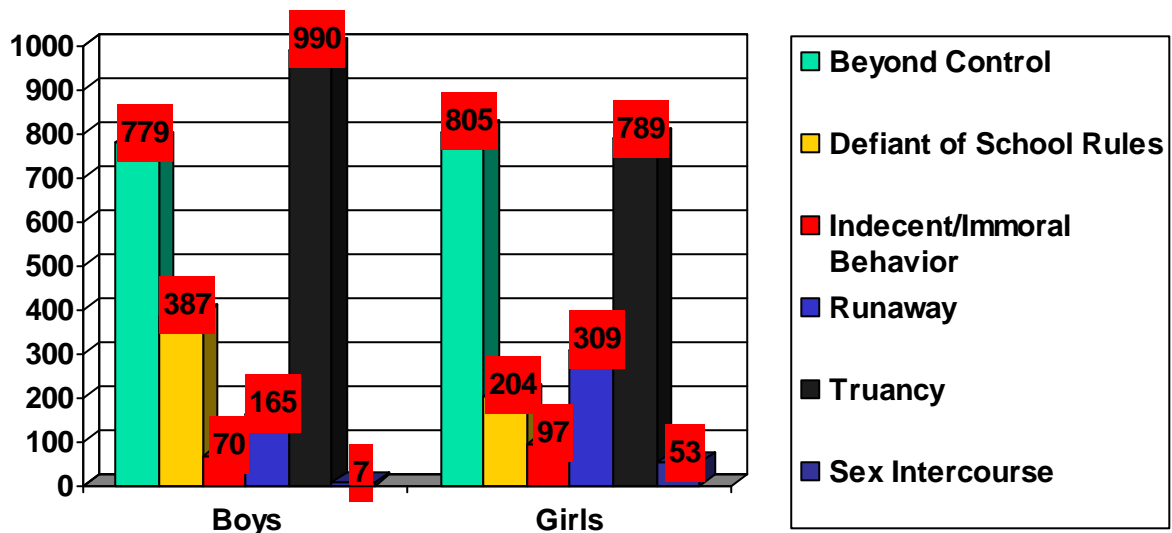
The reasons for referral of children for families with service needs varied slightly by gender. In SFY 2005-2006, for boys, 51% of the referrals were for truancy, 40% for being “beyond control”, and 20% for being defiant of school rules and 8% for running away; for girls, the 47% of the referrals were for being “beyond control”, 47% were for truancy and 18% for running away. In the categories of indecent or immoral conduct and sexual intercourse, there was a low percentage of referrals for both boys and girls.

It is noteworthy that girls had a significantly higher rate of referral for running away than boys: 18% for girls verses 8% for boys. Studies have found that children who leave their homes often do so because of intense family conflict or even physical, sexual or psychological abuse. Children may leave to protect themselves or because they are no longer wanted in the home.

The diagram below reflects the breakdown of the reasons for referrals in more detail:

Diagram 1

**FWSN Referral by Gender and Referral Reason
SFY 2005-2006**



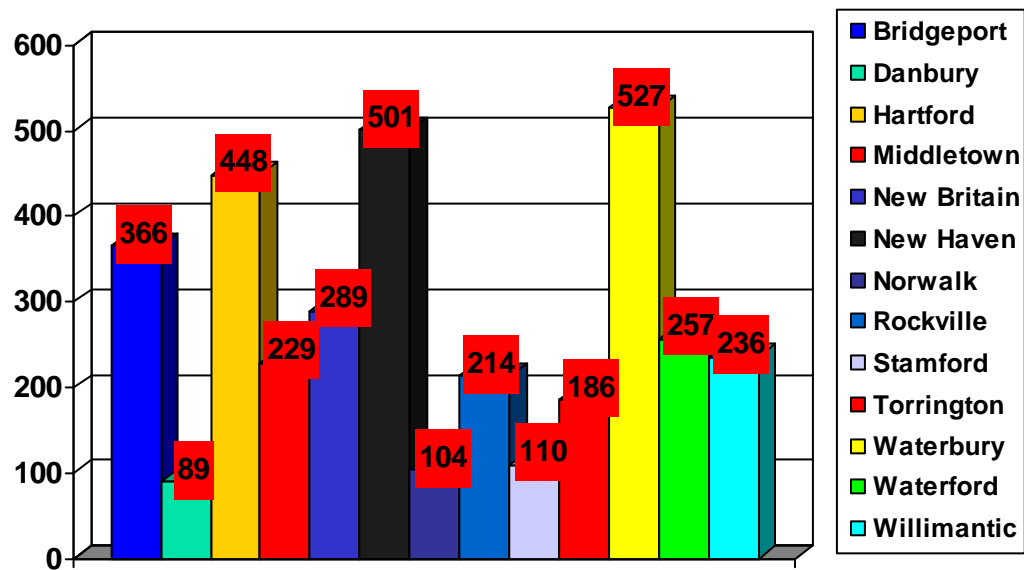
- **Children Referred by Court Location**

Over half of all the FWSN referrals were received by the New Haven, Waterbury, Bridgeport and Hartford Juvenile Matters court districts. The remainder was fairly evenly divided among the remaining districts, with the exception of Danbury with 89 referrals, Norwalk with 104 referrals and Stamford with 110 referrals.

Diagram 2 gives a breakdown of the referrals by district.

Diagram 2

**FWSN Referrals by Receiving Court Location
SFY 2005-2006**



- **Handling Decision By Court Location**

Prior to October 1, 2007, cases referred to the court as FWSNs were reviewed by a Juvenile Probation Supervisor, who confirmed that the court had jurisdiction and that the court was the proper venue for the case. The Supervisor then determined if the case was to be handled judicially, i.e. a petition prepared and filed with the court or non-judicially by probation using referrals to services.

Chart 1 shows a detailed analysis of “handling” decisions by court location.

Chart 1

**Handling Decision by Court Location
SFY 2005**

Court Location	Judicial	Non-Judicial
Bridgeport	178	203
Danbury	34	30
Hartford	279	21
Middletown	108	125
New Britain	123	291
New Haven	385	130
Norwalk	43	41
Rockville	97	83
Stamford	34	106
Torrington	104	99
Waterbury	432	142
Waterford	102	172
Willimantic	120	113
TOTAL:	2039	1556

- **FWSN Dispositions**

There were several options for disposing of FWSN cases. Of the FWSN cases disposed in SFY 2005, 59% were on Judicial FWSN Supervision, 37% were handled non-judicially, referred for services and had their cases dismissed and 4% were placed on Non-Judicial FWSN supervision.

More recent data reveals the number of FWSN cases added and disposed.⁷¹ In SFY 2006-2007 the number of new FWSN cases added was 4, 391.⁷² Of the cases added, 2110 were handled judicially, 1713 were handled non-judicially. A small portion, 568 cases, were either not accepted or dismissed at intake.

- **Detailed Assessment Data**

In SFY 2005, 1860 FWSN referred children were assessed with the JAG. Of the 1038 boys assessed, 215 were African American, 218 were Hispanic and 366 were Caucasian. Of the 822 girls assessed, 145 were African American, 187 were Hispanic and 279 were

⁷¹ Data in the prior sections of the report refers to the number of children referred to the court. The SFY 2006-2007 data refers to cases. A child may have more than one case referred or pending.

⁷² Each unique child may have one or more cases.

Caucasian. A more detailed view of the race of children referred and assessed by juvenile probation appears below.

Table 1

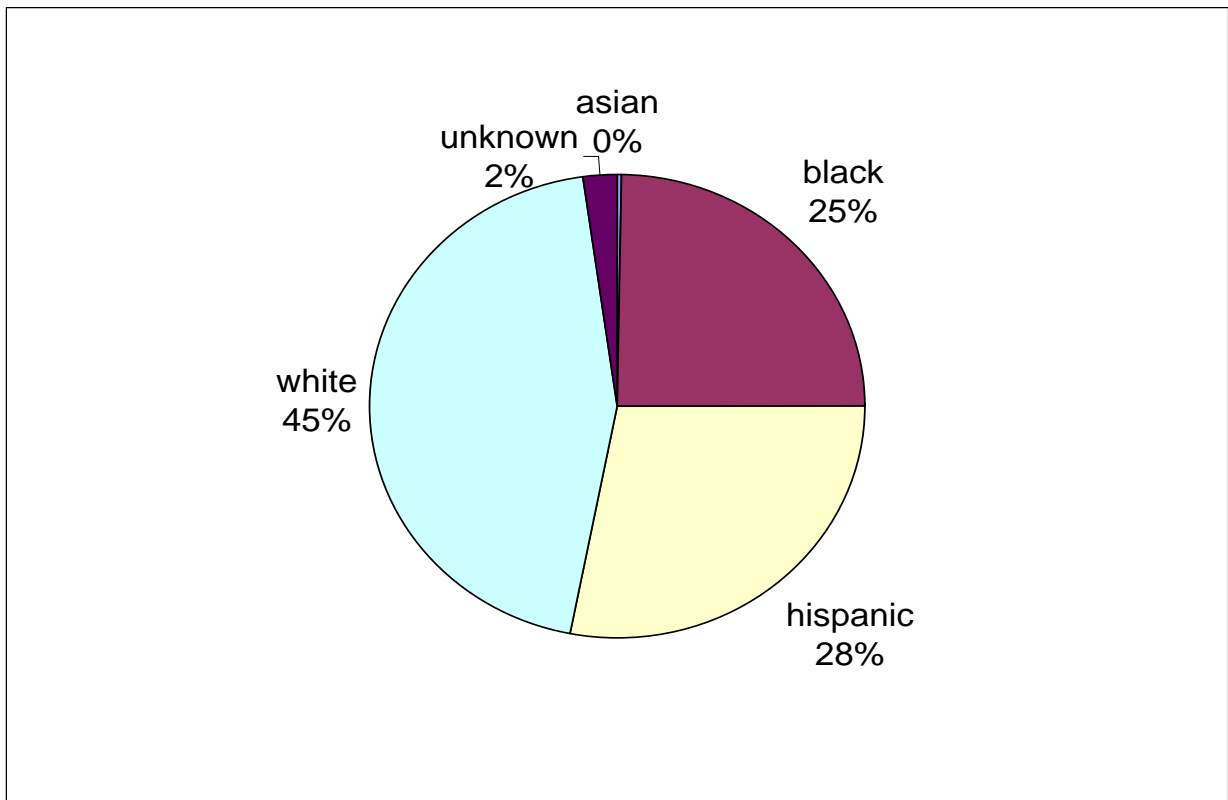
RACE OF CHILDREN REFERRED AND ASSESSED USING THE JAG ASSESSMENT TOOL

Gender	African American	Hispanic	Caucasian
Boys	215	218	366
Girls	145	187	279
Total	360	405	645

Diagram 3 shows percentages by Race/Ethnicity.

DIAGRAM 3

**Race/Ethnicity of All
Assessed FWSN Juveniles**

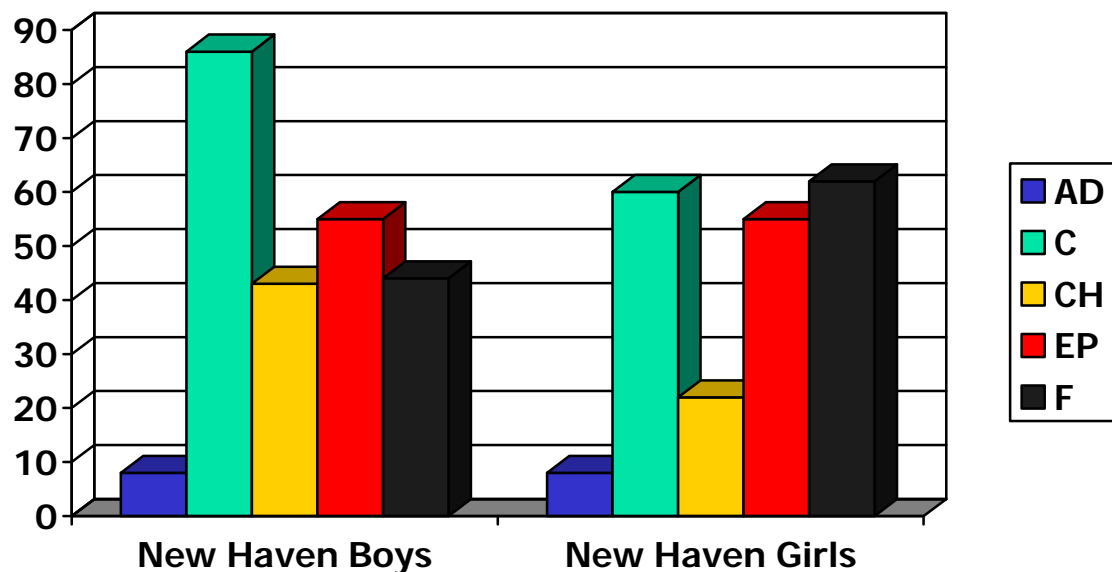


Most of the assessed children scored in the medium to high risk range for the five risk factors. For boys, 42% were medium and 38% were high. For girls, 42% were medium and 39% were high.

The JAG results show that risk factors vary by gender. In one example, a cross sectional analysis of risk factors of assessed children in the New Haven court showed that the boys exhibited the highest risk factor associated with “peer/stake-in-conformity” and girls exhibited the highest risk factor associated with “distress in family.”

Diagram 4

Gender Differences for Assessed Children referred to New Haven Juvenile Matters*



AD= Substance Abuse/Alcohol and Drugs; C=Peer/Stake in Conformity; CH=Criminal History; EP = Personal Values; F=Distress in Family

The Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument *Second Version* (MAYSI-2) is another assessment tool used by juvenile probation officers to screen children for indicators of behavioral health. The MAYSI-2 is administered to FWSN children by juvenile probation based on criteria established by CSSD.

Table 2 examines the risk/needs in more detail based on the measurement components at any level.

Table 2
MASYI-2 ASSESSMENT RESULTS
SFY 2005

Measurement Component	Number of Children
Alcohol/Drugs	83
Anger	514
Depression	372
Somatic	500
Suicide	185
Thought Disturbance	135

Appendix V

Highlights of Other Programs

- **The Family Assessment Program in New York**

“In 2001, the New York State Legislature expanded PINS eligibility requirements to include 16- and 17-year-olds. Soon after, New York City’s Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) and the Department of Probation, fearing an influx of between 3,800 and 5,300 new PINS cases, initiated an overhaul of the system’s intake procedures. The centerpiece of this overhaul was the introduction of the Family Assessment Program (FAP), launched in December 2002. FAP aims to connect families in crisis with appropriate services in a timely manner, thus reducing unnecessary PINS intakes and out-of-home placement.

Parents seeking PINS assistance for their child bring him or her into the FAP offices and meet with a family assessment specialist. This specialist interviews the family and then refers them to appropriate services. In most cases, families are referred to a nonprofit social service provider known as the Designated Assessment Service (DAS), which offers a more comprehensive assessment and targeted service referrals. If parents insist on filing a petition after the initial interview (or if the child is a runaway), the specialist will inform them about the procedures for doing so.

In 2005, Vera completed a preliminary assessment of FAP and its impact on the PINS process. This investigation found that the city was reaping significant benefits from the new program. Less than three years after FAP was introduced, probation intakes, petitions to family court, and out-of-home placements for PINS youth had all been reduced significantly.” (Choudry, R., “The Family Assessment Program: Trajectories and Effects” December 2007, Executive Summary, iii).

Vera recently conducted a second study, which “suggests that FAP is indeed helping the families it serves. Many of the young people...received prompt referrals to service providers, one-fifth making a service appointment on the same day as their referral. Many showed signs of improved mental health (including reduced rates of substance abuse and suicidal ideation), more cohesive family relations, and decreased stress due to “fights with a boss, teachers, co-workers, or classmates” in the three to four months following the FAP intervention.”(Id, iv)

- **The Family Keys and Community Connections Program in Orange County New York**

The Family Keys program which began in 2003, provides services to families who have filed a PINS petition. The Department of Probation refers a family directly to the Family Keys Program. Family Support Caseworkers from the program meet with the family to assess needs and work with the family to de-escalate crisis and mediate disputes. There is an intensive intervention in the first two to three week time period following the

referral. Following that period a short term implementation plan is developed with the family. The two components of the plan include: 1. accessing community services and support, and 2. accessing support available through family, friends and community networks. Southwest Family Keys Program Report for 2005 states the following, “Because of the services Family Keys offers, 1219, 95% of total youth serviced have been diverted for probation and court involvement.”⁷³

The program was expanded in 2004 to provide services to youth and families involved with the Family Court as a result of a PINs petition having been filed for runaway. The program works with the family during the pendency of the cases to provide services and support, the Family Support Caseworker is available to attend court hearings and once a child is found or returns home they continue to work with the family to follow through with the plan made by the Family Court. If a child is placed out of his or her home for short term evaluation, the Family Support Caseworker works with the placement agency to assist with family involvement and discharge planning. The program report conveys the following outcome data: “Because of the services that the Family Keys Runaway Program offers, 36 youth, 84% of total youth services, have been diverted from probation and out-of-home placement.”⁷⁴

In 2005, the Southwest Family Keys opened the “Community Connections Program”. The program is designed to provide a structured continuum of care for children as an alternative to out-of-home placement. The program has three distinct components: The “Intensive Youth Services” (IYS), “Evening Support Services” and the “Independent Living Skills Program”. Each of the programs has distinct features.

- **Reform Efforts in Florida**

To address the service needs of the “FINS” and “CINS” status offenders, Florida developed a state administered, community-based array of services. Under the model, the State Department of Juvenile Justice awards and administers contracts. The contracts are managed by a State Network Office. The State Network Office provides contract monitoring, programming resources, training, data collection and analysis and public information material. Twenty-five community-based, non-profit agencies operate twenty-seven (two are county government operated) shelters and three stand alone non-residential counseling centers.

These programs provide services on a 24 hour/7 day per week basis for crisis intervention, triage and assessment, for “FINS” children. The shelters provide voluntary temporary respite care, for “CINS” children the shelters provide court-ordered staff secure temporary care. There are non-residential services provided to families as well as case management and referral to other services, such as mental health and substance abuse assessments and treatment, if needed.

⁷³ Source: *Southwest Key Program, Inc. Program Report, Orange County Family Keys, Community Connections 2005*. (New York, 2005) 6

⁷⁴ Ibid, 6

The programs also provide prevention and targeted outreach services to children and their families and the community that include public health education.

- **Girls Programming**

One example of such a program that targets girls is the Practical, Academic, Cultural, Education (PACE) Program. The purpose of the program is to intervene and prevent school withdrawal, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, substance abuse and welfare dependency. The program accepts referrals from the juvenile justice system, the state Department of Children and Families, school personnel, community services agencies, parents, family members, friends and self-referrals. PACE programs provide the following service: academic education, individualized attention, gender-specific life management curriculum, therapeutic support services, parental involvement, student volunteer service projects and transition follow-up services.

Appendix VI

Current Truancy Initiatives in Connecticut

Court Models

TeamChild Project Truancy Court Prevention Project	Emily Breon, Attorney Center for Children's Advocacy
Waterbury Probate Court Probate Court	Judge Thomas Brunnock

School-Based Models

New Britain Consolidated School District School District	Joseph Vaverchak Truancy Director, New Britain Consolidated
New Haven Public Schools	Carl Babb, Truancy Supervisor New Haven Public Schools
New London Public Schools	Christina Carver Director of Special Services New London Public Schools
CBA/CBF Truancy Intervention Project	Melissa Stachelek, Coordinator
Connecticut Consortium on School Attendance	Valerie LaMotte Planning Specialist Office of Policy & Management
STEP Program	Cynthia Rutledge Director of Adult Education and Programs Bureau of Juvenile Services Department of Children and Families

Law Enforcement Model

Hartford Police Dept. School	Chief Daryl Roberts Truancy Program City of Hartford Police Dept.
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Mental Health Model

School Refusal Program	Surrey Hardcastle Director, Grace Webb School Institute of Living
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Appendix VII

Evaluation of FWSN system and services

There will be a process and outcome evaluation of FWSN services. Through the Request for Proposal process, the Juvenile Research Center, Inc. (JRC) of Florida was selected to conduct the evaluation and provide a report on findings and outcomes.

The process evaluation of the FWSN services will describe the services provided, the population served and review the FWSN referral process. During the evaluation, the number of appropriate referrals will be documented. Program utilization and quality assurance information will be gathered.

The outcome evaluation will include development of measures of success such as recidivism, school attendance and behavior, family functioning, pro-social factors and improved community connections.

Appendix VIII

Excerpts from the “Program Guidelines for Girls Services in Connecticut”

Program Guidelines for Girls’ Services in Connecticut

**Part of the DCF-CSSD Girls’ Programs Standards and Certification Project*

April 2007

Compiled and edited by:

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Division

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Alyssa Benedict, MPH, CORE Associates, LLC

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I. Introduction

The DCF-CSSD Girls' Programs Standards and Certification Project is intended to support the development of a system of care for girls involved in Connecticut's juvenile justice system that is characterized by creative, cutting-edge practice and widespread adherence to best practices in female specific programming and approaches. The project is designed to move the system toward a unified female responsive approach so that girls have access to a cohesive system of care that honors their strengths and effectively meets their needs across service settings.

This first phase of system improvement focuses on the development of *Program Guidelines for Girls' Services* across the Juvenile Justice System. On September 18 & 19, 2005, CSSD, DCF and CORE Associates facilitated a retreat on gender-specific services for girls. The purpose of the retreat was to discuss the shared CSSD-DCF framework and philosophy of gender-specific programming and work with providers of 24-hour care facilities to draft guidelines of care for gender-specific programs for girls.

During the retreat, gender-specific practices were discussed in relation to the following eight program components⁷⁵: 1) Philosophy/Conceptual Framework, 2) Facility, 3) Management and Staffing, 4) Program Culture, 5) Behavior Motivation, 6) Programming and Services, 7) Treatment/Service Planning and Review, and 8) Total Quality Improvement (TQI). Each of these Program Components is defined in Section II of this document. Participants agreed on the following definition of Gender Specific Services for Girls:

“Gender-specific programs intentionally allow research and knowledge on female socialization, female psychological development, female strengths, female risk factors for system involvement, females' pathways through systems, female responses to traditional interventions and females' unique program/service needs to affect and guide ALL aspects of the program's design, processes, and services.”

At minimum, this means that each program component integrates, where possible, an understanding of the following practice areas at both a conceptual and practice level:

- Physical and psychological/emotional safety
- A relational-cultural approach
- A strengths-based approach
- A trauma-informed approach
- A holistic approach
- A culturally competent approach”

Guided by this framework, retreat participants developed a number of program guidelines that represent the minimum practices and approaches that must exist in order to be

⁷⁵ CORE GSPA-II, CORE Associates, LLC 2004

considered “gender-specific” or “female responsive”. These recommended “female responsive” guidelines are listed in Section III.

Purpose and Suggested Use of This Document

The process by which these guidelines were developed was intentionally designed to model an inclusive, strength-based process. These guidelines were not developed “behind closed doors” but rather in a collaborative, provider-driven manner. In this sense, the guidelines are truly provider-owned and guided in every way by the existing expertise and eager questioning of the provider community.

These guidelines should be considered basic service delivery practices for girls’ service providers. They are not designed to be clinically specific. They are best understood as the initial phase of unifying female responsive practices across the Judicial and DCF Juvenile Justice System. Later phases of development will be designed with intentional specificity.

The guidelines are designed to:

1. Educate providers and system personnel while also initiating important enhancements for girls at the program and system levels.
2. Balance an ideal vision of programs and services for girls that is grounded in research and best practices while acknowledging the current parameters of our systems.
3. Coexist with system-level principles and policies that will support program-level enhancements, not to resemble policies, protocols or training content.

Appendix IX

SUGGESTED STATUTORY CHANGES

Section 46b-148 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

- (a) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter: (1) No child [whose family] who has been adjudicated as a child from a family with service needs in accordance with section 46b-149 may be processed or held in a juvenile detention center as a delinquent child, or be convicted as delinquent, solely for the violation of a valid order which regulates future conduct of the child that was issued by the court following such an adjudication; and (2) no such child who is found to be in violation of any such order may be punished for such violation by [commitment] placement in any juvenile detention center.
- (b) In entering any order that directs or authorizes placement or commitment of a child [whose family] who has been adjudicated as a child from a family with service needs in accordance with section 46b-149, the court shall make a determination that there is no less restrictive alternative appropriate to the needs of such child and the community.

COMMENT: In a family with service needs (FWSN) case, the child is the respondent and the court only adjudicates the child as an individual, not the family. Adjudicating the family is illogical in many FWSN matters, as the allegations and grounds pertain to the conduct of the child, not the family, and in some cases, mainly those alleging the child is beyond control, the parent is the complainant. The word "placement" is substituted for commitment in subsection (a) to avoid confusion with an actual commitment to the department of children and families

Section 46b-149 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof

- (a) Any selectman, town manager, police officer or welfare department of any town, city or borough, any probation officer or superintendent of schools, the Commissioner of Children and Families, any child-caring institution or agency approved or licensed by the Commissioner of Children and Families, any youth service bureau, a parent or foster parent of a child, or a child or the child's representative or attorney, who believes that the acts or omissions of a child are such that the child's family is a family with service needs, may file a written complaint setting forth those facts with the clerk of the Superior Court which has venue over the matter.
- (b) The court shall refer a complaint filed under subsection (a) of this section to a probation officer, who shall promptly determine whether it appears that the alleged facts, if true, would be sufficient to meet the definition of a family with service needs, provided a complaint alleging that a child is a truant or habitual truant shall not be determined to be insufficient to meet the definition of a family with service needs solely because it was

filed during the months of April, May or June. If such probation officer so determines, the probation officer shall, after an initial assessment, promptly refer the child and the child's family to a suitable community-based program or other service provider, or to a family support center as provided in section 31 of this act, for voluntary services. If the child and the child's family are referred to a community-based program or other service provider and the person in charge of such program or provider determines that the child and the child's family can no longer benefit from its services, such person shall inform the probation officer, who shall, after an appropriate assessment, either refer the child and the child's family to a family support center for additional services or determine whether or not to file a petition with the court under subsection (c) of this section. If the child and the child's family are referred to a family support center and the person in charge of the family support center determines that the child and the child's family can no longer benefit from its services, such person shall inform the probation officer, who may file a petition with the court in the manner prescribed in subsection (c) of this section. The probation officer shall inform the complainant in writing of the probation officer's action under this subsection. If it appears that the allegations are not true, or that the child's family does not meet the definition of a family with service needs, the probation officer shall inform the complainant in writing of such finding.

(c) A petition alleging that a child is from [family constitutes] a family with service needs shall be verified and filed with the Superior Court which has venue over the matter. The petition shall set forth plainly: (1) The facts which bring the child within the jurisdiction of the court; (2) the name, date of birth, sex and residence of the child; (3) the name and residence of the child's parent or parents, guardian or other person having control of the child; and (4) a prayer for appropriate action by the court in conformity with the provisions of this section.

(d) When a petition is filed under subsection (c) of this section, the court may issue a summons to the child and the child's parents, guardian or other person having control of the child to appear in court at a specified time and place. The summons shall be signed by a judge or by the clerk or assistant clerk of the court, and a copy of the petition shall be attached to it. Whenever it appears to the judge that orders addressed to an adult, as set forth in section 46b-121, are necessary for the welfare of such child, a similar summons shall be issued and served upon such adult if he or she is not already in court. Service of summons shall be made in accordance with section 46b-128. The court may punish for contempt, as provided in section 46b-121, any parent, guardian or other person so summoned who fails to appear in court at the time and place so specified. If a petition is filed under subsection (c) of this section alleging that a [family] child is from a family with service needs because a child is a truant or habitual truant, the court may not dismiss such petition solely because it was filed during the months of April, May or June.

(e) When a petition is filed under subsection (c) of this section alleging that a [family constitutes] child is from a family with service needs because [it includes a] such child [who] has been habitually truant, the court shall order that the local or regional board of education for the town in which the child resides, or the private school in the case of a child enrolled in a private school, shall cause an educational evaluation of such child to be performed if no such evaluation has been performed within the preceding year. Any

costs incurred for the performance of such evaluation shall be borne by such local or regional board of education or such private school.

(f) If it appears from the allegations of a petition or other sworn affirmations that there is: (1) A strong probability that the child may do something that is injurious to himself prior to court disposition; (2) a strong probability that the child will run away prior to the hearing; or (3) a need to hold the child for another jurisdiction, a judge may vest temporary custody of such child in some suitable person or agency. No non-delinquent juvenile runaway from another state may be held in a state-operated detention home in accordance with the provisions of sections 46b-151 to 46b-151g, inclusive, Interstate Compact on Juveniles. A hearing on temporary custody shall be held not later than ten days after the date on which a judge signs an order of temporary custody. Following such hearing, the judge may order that the child's temporary custody continue to be vested in some suitable person or agency. Any expenses of temporary custody shall be paid in the same manner as provided in subsection (b) of section 46b-129.

(g) If a petition is filed under subsection (c) of this section and it appears that the interests of the child or the family may be best served, prior to adjudication, by a referral to community-based or other services, the judge may permit the matter to be continued for a reasonable period of time not to exceed six months, which time period may be extended by an additional three months for cause. If it appears at the conclusion of the continuance that the matter has been satisfactorily resolved, the judge may dismiss the petition.

(h) If the court finds, based on clear and convincing evidence, that [the family of] a child is a child from a family with service needs, the court may, in addition to issuing any orders under section 46b-121: (1) Refer the child to the Department of Children and Families for any voluntary services provided by said department or, if the family is a family with service needs solely as a result of a finding that a child is a truant or habitual truant, to the authorities of the local or regional school district or private school for services provided by such school district or such school, which services may include summer school, or to community agencies providing child and family services; (2) order the child to remain in the child's own home or in the custody of a relative or any other suitable person (A) subject to the supervision of a probation officer, or (B) in the case of a family which is a family with service needs solely as a result of a finding that a child is a truant or habitual truant, subject to the supervision of a probation officer and the authorities of the local or regional school district or private school; (3) if the [family is] child is from a family with service needs as a result of the child engaging in sexual intercourse with another person and such other person is thirteen years of age or older and not more than two years older or younger than such child, (A) refer the child to a youth service bureau or other appropriate service agency for participation in a program such as a teen pregnancy program or a sexually transmitted disease program, and (B) require such child to perform community service such as service in a hospital, an AIDS prevention program or an obstetrical and gynecological program; or (4) upon a finding that there is no less restrictive alternative, commit the child to the care and custody of the Commissioner of Children and Families for an indefinite period not to exceed eighteen months. The child shall be entitled to representation by counsel and an evidentiary hearing. If the court issues any order which regulates future conduct of the child, parent

or guardian, the child, parent or guardian, shall receive adequate and fair warning of the consequences of violation of the order at the time it is issued, and such warning shall be provided to the child, parent or guardian, to his or her attorney and to his or her legal guardian in writing and shall be reflected in the court record and proceedings.

(i) At any time during the period of supervision, after hearing and for good cause shown, the court may modify or enlarge the conditions, whether originally imposed by the court under this section or otherwise, as deemed appropriate by the court. The court shall cause a copy of any such orders to be delivered to the child and to such child's parent or guardian and probation officer.

(j)(1) The Commissioner of Children and Families may [petition the court] file a motion for an extension of a commitment under this section on the grounds that an extension would be in the best interest of the child. The court shall give notice to the child and the child's parent or guardian at least fourteen days prior to the hearing upon such [petition] motion. The court may, after hearing and upon finding that such extension is in the best interest of the child and that there is no suitable less restrictive alternative, continue the commitment for an additional indefinite period of not more than eighteen months. (2) The Commissioner of Children and Families may at any time [petition the court] file a motion to discharge a child committed under this section, and any child committed to the commissioner under this section, or the parent or guardian of such child, may at any time but not more often than once every six months [petition the court which committed the child] file a motion to revoke such commitment. The court shall notify the child, the child's parent or guardian and the commissioner of any [petition] motion filed under this subsection, and of the time when a hearing on such [petition] motion will be held. Any order of the court made under this subsection shall be deemed a final order for purposes of appeal, except that no bond shall be required and no costs shall be taxed on such appeal. (3) Not later than twelve months after a child is committed to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families in accordance with subdivision (4) of subsection (h) of this section or Section 32 of Public Act 07-4, the court shall hold a permanency hearing in accordance with subsection (k) of this section. After the initial permanency hearing, subsequent permanency hearings shall be held not less frequently than every twelve months while the child remains committed to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families.

(k) At least sixty days prior to each permanency hearing required pursuant to subsection (j) of this section, the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families shall file a permanency plan with the court. At each permanency hearing, the court shall review and approve a permanency plan that is in the best interests of the child and takes into consideration the child's need for permanency. Such permanency plan may include the goal of: (1) Revocation of commitment and placement of the child with the parent or guardian, (2) transfer of guardianship, (3) permanent placement with a relative, (4) adoption, or (5) such other planned permanent living arrangement ordered by the court, provided the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families has documented a compelling reason why it would not be in the best interest of the child for the permanency plan to include the goals in subdivisions (1) through (4), inclusive, of this subsection. Such other planned permanent living arrangement may include, but not be

limited to, placement of the child in an independent living program. At any such permanency hearing, the court shall also determine whether the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families has made reasonable efforts to achieve the permanency plan.

COMMENT:

New subsection (i) is proposed because it has been the practice to modify and enlarge the conditions of FWSN supervision in the same manner afforded to the court with respect to probation orders. See Sec. 46b-140a. The court should be afforded such flexibility, particularly after an alleged violation has taken place, to ensure appropriate services and sufficient time to measure their effectiveness.

Amendments to subsections (j) and (k) are recommended because extensions and revocations of commitments for both child protection matters (Section 46b-129(k)) and delinquency (Section 46b-141(b)) cases are now done by motion. The addition of language contemplating permanency plans for committed FWSN children and motions to revoke or extend is recommended for consistency and patterns the permanency planning provisions of the child protection and delinquency statutes cited above. The Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (1997) requires that status offenders, including Connecticut's FWSNs have permanency plan reviews and hearings. The first permanency hearing must be 12 months from the date the child enters care, either from the date temporary custody is granted or commitment ordered to the Department of Children and Families. (See 45 CFR Sec. 1356.21(h)).

Sec. 31. (Effective October 1, 2007) (a) For the purposes of this section, "family support center" means a community-based service center for children and families against whom a complaint has been filed with the Superior Court under section 46b-149 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that provides multiple services, or access to such services, for the purpose of preventing such children and families from having further involvement with the court as families with service needs.

(b) The Court Support Services Division shall contract with one or more private providers, or with one or more youth service bureaus, or both, to develop a network of family support centers. Each family support center shall provide, or ensure access to, appropriate services that shall include, but not be limited to, screening and assessment, crisis intervention, family mediation, educational evaluations and advocacy, mental health treatment and services, including gender specific trauma treatment and services, resiliency skills building, access to positive social activities, short-term respite care and access to services available to children in the juvenile justice system. The Court Support Services Division shall conduct an independent evaluation of each family support center to measure the quality of the services delivered and the outcomes for the children and families served by such center.

Section 32 of P.A. 07-4 (Effective October 1, 2007) is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof: (a) When a child who [whose family] has been adjudicated [as] a child from a family with service needs in accordance with section 46b-149 of the

general statutes, as amended by this act, violates any valid order which regulates future conduct of the child made by the court following such an adjudication, a probation officer, on receipt of a complaint setting forth facts alleging such a violation, or on the probation officer's own motion on the basis of his or her knowledge of such a violation, may file a petition with the court alleging that the child has violated a valid court order and setting forth the facts claimed to constitute such a violation. Service shall be made in accordance with subsection (d) of this section. The child shall be entitled to representation by counsel and an evidentiary hearing on the allegations contained in the petition. Upon a finding by the court, based on clear and convincing evidence, that the child has violated a valid court order, the court may (1) order the child to remain in such child's home or in the custody of a relative or any other suitable person, subject to the supervision of a probation officer or an existing commitment to the Commissioner of Children and Families; (2) upon a finding that there is no less restrictive alternative appropriate to the needs of the child and the community, enter an order that directs or authorizes a peace officer or other appropriate person to place the child in a staff-secure facility under the auspices of the Court Support Services Division for a period not to exceed forty-five days, with court review every fifteen days to consider whether continued placement is appropriate, at the end of which period the child shall be returned to the community and may be subject to the supervision of a probation officer, or (3) order that the child be committed to the care and custody of the Commissioner of Children and Families for a period not to exceed eighteen months and that the child cooperate in such care and custody.

Comment to Section 32(a): A new petition requires proper service. The standard of proof for a finding that a child has violated a court order should be stated and be consistent with the adjudicatory standard of proof set forth in Sec. 46b-149(h). It also should be clear that a child who is ordered to remain in the community after a finding of violation of a valid court order remains subject to existing orders of supervision or commitment.

(b) When a child [whose family] who has been adjudicated as a child from a family with service needs in accordance with section 46b-149 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, is under an order of supervision or an order of commitment to the Commissioner of Children and Families and believed to be [at risk of immediate] in imminent risk of physical harm from the child's surroundings or other circumstances, a probation officer, on receipt of a complaint setting forth facts alleging such risk, or on the probation officer's own motion on the basis of his or her knowledge of such risk, may file a petition with the court alleging that the child is [at risk of immediate] in imminent risk of physical harm and setting forth the facts claimed to constitute such risk. Service should be in accordance with subsection (d) of this section. If it appears from the specific allegations of the petition and other verified affirmations of fact accompanying the petition, or subsequent thereto, that there is probable cause to believe that (1) the child is in imminent risk of physical harm from the child's surroundings, (2) as a result of such condition, the child's safety is endangered and immediate removal from such surroundings is necessary to ensure the child's safety, and (3) there is no less restrictive alternative available, the court shall enter an order [directing the placement of] that directs or authorizes a peace officer or other appropriate person to place the child in a staff-secure facility under the auspices of the Court Support Services Division for a period not to exceed forty-five

days, subject to subsection (c) of this section, with court review every fifteen days to consider whether continued placement is appropriate, at the end of which period, the child shall either be (A) returned to the community for appropriate services subject to the supervision of a probation officer or an existing commitment to the Commissioner of Children and Families; or (B) committed to the Department of Children and Families for a period not to exceed eighteen months if a hearing has been held and the court has found, based on clear and convincing evidence, that (1) the child is in imminent risk of physical harm from the child's surroundings, (2) as a result of such condition, the child's safety is endangered and removal from such surroundings is necessary to ensure the child's safety, and (3) there is no less restrictive alternative available. Any such child shall be entitled to the same procedural protections as are afforded to a delinquent child.

Comment to Section 32(b): Service requirement for new petition should be specified, as well as to whom an order of placement is directed, consistent with Section 32(a). The filing of an imminent risk petition for a previously adjudicated child who is no longer under orders of supervision or commitment may not be appropriate, as the court's authority to act and/or jurisdiction to act may be questionable. Section (b) also is inconsistent in referring to a child "at risk of immediate physical harm" and then to a child "at imminent risk of physical harm."

Clarification that an immediate hearing should be held subsequent to placement in a staff-secure facility appears necessary here; hence, the addition of the reference to subsection (c). Subsection(A) needs the clarification that an adjudicated FWSN child, after being held for up to 45-days, upon return to the community for services, may be required to remain under a probation officer's supervision or a preexisting order of commitment. Most importantly, the existing subsection (B), unconstitutionally provides for a commitment to DCF merely on the basis of a probable cause finding, without any notice, hearing or factual findings by clear and convincing evidence to justify this more restrictive, modified disposition.

(c) No child shall be held prior to a hearing on a petition under this section for more than twenty-four hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. For the purposes of this section, "staff-secure facility" means a residential facility (1) that does not include construction features designed to physically restrict the movements and activities of juvenile residents who are placed therein, (2) that may establish reasonable rules restricting entrance to and egress from the facility, and (3) in which the movements and activities of individual juvenile residents may, for treatment purposes, be restricted or subject to control through the use of intensive staff supervision.

X. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ADP - Alternative to Detention Program: A Court Support Services Division contracted residential alternative to detention for pre-dispositional juveniles who would otherwise be confined to a detention center.

CARE – Center for Assessment Respite and Enrichment: A Court Support Services Division contracted short-term, residential, staff secure assessment, respite and enrichment services for pre-dispositional girls referred to the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters because of a FWSM complaint, and who voluntarily opt to cooperate with this program as a means of avoiding entrenchment in the juvenile justice system.

DCF – Department of Children and Families

CSSD – The Court Support Services Division was established within the Judicial Branch in February 1999, in order to respond to the changing needs of judges, attorneys, litigants, defendants and communities, while providing on-going public safety.

FSC - The Family Support Center is a CSSD-funded program which provides voluntary services to the family. The services include case management, 24-hour crisis counseling, family mediation, educational advocacy; psycho-educational and cognitive behavioral groups, one-on-one therapeutic sessions and an offer of a period of respite care for up to two weeks.

FFT – Functional Family Therapy – FFT is an empirically grounded, well-documented and highly successful family based therapeutic intervention for at-risk and juvenile justice involved youth.

FWSN – Family with Service Needs – A family which includes a child who a) runs away without just cause, b) is beyond the control of his/her parents or guardian, c) has engaged in indecent or immoral conduct, d) is truant or habitually truant or continuously and overtly defiant of school rules and regulations, or e) is 13 years of age or older and has engaged in sexual intercourse with another person and such other person is 13 years of age or older and not more than 2 years older or younger than such child.

FWSN CENTER – The FWSN Centers are CSSD funded to serve the FWSN population by providing staff secure programs for adjudicated FWSN violators and FWSN children found to be in imminent risk of physical harm. The FWSN Centers provide a gender-specific, cognitive behavioral approach that focuses on the child's and family's strengths to encourage skill development and positive change. The focus is on the development of core life and interpersonal skills necessary for success at home, with peers, at school and in the community.

IICAPS – Intensive In-Home Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services – IICAPS is a therapeutic model created to meet the comprehensive needs of children with severe psychiatric disorders. Children appropriate for IICAPS intervention may be returning

home from psychiatric hospitalization, at-risk for institutionalization or hospitalization, or unable to benefit from traditional outpatient treatment. The program makes use of a consistent treatment team to provide comprehensive assessment, case management, individual and family treatment and crisis intervention.

IRS – Initial Risk Screening – An abbreviated risk assessment instrument used by Juvenile Probation Officers in all non-judicial and first time offender judicial cases to identify low-risk juveniles for special handling.

JAG – Juvenile Assessment Generic – A formalized assessment instrument used by Juvenile Probation Officers that identifies and addresses a juveniles “criminogenic needs,” measures “protective factors” and arrives at an overall score that assesses the juvenile’s likelihood of recidivating.

JPO – Juvenile Probation Officer – A Judicial Branch employee whose duties include administering various risk assessment instruments preparing studies for the court and supervising juveniles under the court’s jurisdiction.

MDFT – Multi Dimensional Family Therapy – MDFT is an intensive outpatient family-based treatment system for adolescent substance abuse and related problems. It focuses on changing current problem behaviors and the thoughts that perpetuate them. However, MDFT also addresses the past recollections and how the past impacts the current negative emotions and problem behaviors.

MST – Multi Systemic Therapy – An evidence-based, intensive, home and family-centered program for chronically violent or substance-abusing post-dispositional children classified at a very high and high risk of recidivating. This service utilizes cognitive behavior therapy and is contracted by both DCF and CSSD.

YIC – Youth in Crisis – a person sixteen to seventeen years of age who, has without just cause run away from the parental home or other properly authorized and lawful place of abode, is beyond the control of parents, guardian or other custodian, or has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten unexcused absences in any school year. It is anticipated that this classification will be eliminated and these youth will become FWSN children in 2010 when the age of juvenile court jurisdiction is increased to 18.