



Coalition of Advocates for Equal Access for Girls 2011 Legislative Advocacy Priorities

Primary Priorities

- 1) **Issue:** Girls are delinquent for many of the same reasons as boys, but they differ in their risk factors and response to reformation. Therefore, to increase positive outcomes and public safety OYA provides young women with approaches in close custody designed for their unique needs. **A large reduction in close custody beds would seriously impact the number of young women in the facility and transition program.** This means less young women would be in the highest level of security and structure they need, thus resulting in poorer, more costly outcomes for many of them.

Oregon Youth Authority (reduction of close custody capacity from 14% to 47%: 125 to 475 beds cut.)

- The Coalition *opposes more than a 14% (125 bed) reduction in close custody beds* because of the impact it will have on the young women in the Oak Creek facility and transition program.
- The Coalition *strongly supports* the Governor's OYA "Balanced Budget" that states *"The budget includes funds for gender-specific programs that provide special attention to the unique needs of young women in the system."* This will enable OYA to continue gender-responsive programming, staffing and training to meet the needs of young women in Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility and the Young Women's Transition Program.
- *Also supports the new 103 community beds with some designed specifically for young women.*

Outcomes: OYA's active commitment, as well as the adequate funding to the time and focus that the *process* of integrating a gender-responsive approach takes will ensure that young women have access to a facility, a transition program and community programs designed specifically for them. This increases the likelihood of young women not recidivating or entering adult corrections and instead becoming contributing, positive citizens. ***This is good for public safety!***

- 2) **Issue: Runaway and Homeless Youth Initiative, Juvenile Crime Prevention and Youth Investment,** the State budgeted prevention services for teens (teens not already in Child Welfare or Juvenile Justice) previously monitored through the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF) was absorbed into the funds that will be transferred to the Early Learning Council when the newly designed agency for early childhood is created. The concern is that the decision to move these funds (even as a "placeholder") from the OCCF to the Early Learning Council was done without adequate thought, clarification or understanding of what this means to prevention services to teens. The probable split up and fragmenting of the funding for the programs for these underserved and invisible youth (**at least 50% of whom are girls**) puts the needs and services of this population at high risk of getting lost as a focus at the State level.

To ensure this State focus is not lost we propose that a small, but thoughtful, organized, representative planning process occur parallel with the early childhood plan to ensure the funds have a State level coordinated teen prevention services focus. **This planning may also come under the Governor's Oregon Education Investment Fund offering a model that focuses on outcomes for teens at-risk but not currently in Child Welfare or Juvenile Justice committing those current resources to a sustained strategy of a "teens ready for adulthood" investment with**

measurable results to achieve long term educational and economic objectives for Oregon. If we don't actively commit to State level coordinated services for these teens before adulthood, many of Oregon's youth will end up living on the streets, committing crimes, getting involved in sex slavery, and again become a lost group of our kids!

Oregon's Prevention Services for Teens At-Risk

- The Coalition *proposes* a State level *Teens Ready for Adulthood "Council"* to focus on community prevention services ensuring that teens enter adulthood ready to get the education or skills needed for gainful employment, enter adulthood with the supports and relationships necessary to be ready to succeed, and leave adolescence ready for adulthood.
- *Supports Runaway and Homeless Youth Initiative funding* going to an entity that can establish, coordinate and maintain capacity building for support services.
- *Supports Juvenile Crime Prevention funding* going to an entity that will maintain a competitive bidding process for community-based juvenile crime prevention programs that are gender and culturally responsive.
- *Ensure that the Title XX Level 7/non-delinquent funds* be given to an entity that will continue programs for the *Youth Investment* defined population of 13-18 year old acting out, non-delinquent youth, with 50% of the funding going to girls.

Outcomes: A State focus on and coordinated plan for runaway and homeless youth, juveniles at risk of entering the juvenile justice system, and acting out, non-delinquent teens will provide each county with direction, leadership and hopefully result in future increased funding to ensure more of these teens are entering adulthood ready to succeed. *This is effective and responsible public policy!*

- 3) **Issue:** Child Welfare needs the continuation in their budget of both flexible funds to enhance support services for children and youth and the **increase in screening and caseworker staff** in order to help ensure that children have access to some of the extra supports they need and that children, particularly teenagers, receive consistent screening for vulnerability at the child abuse hotline and that staff have smaller caseloads in child protective services to keep all children safe.

Department of Human Services (DHS)/ Child Welfare (CAF Division):

- The Coalition *supports the continuation of "system of care" flex funds, increased staffing levels for Child Welfare screening & case workers and services to parents struggling with addiction (not on the cut list), and the addition/enhancement of expanded access to community domestic violence programs and the community-based culturally specific "differential response".*

Outcomes: Flexible "system of care" funding, along with adequate and responsive staff to meet the needs and issues of all age groups of abused and neglected children, youth and their families enhances successful outcomes and keeps kids safe. *This is a smart investment of limited resources!*

For more information contact Pam Patton, President: pam.patton@morrisonkids.org or 503.784.9479

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522 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 900, Portland, OR 97204 * Tel. 503.297-2217 Ext. 23

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Secondary Priorities (*Bills that affect girls with other organizations taking the lead*)

- **Support SB 243 and HB 3471:** Requires state institutions of higher education, community college or Oregon Health and Science University to waive tuition and fees for current or former foster child under the age of 25 years (including youth aging out of foster care, as well as those who are adopted after the age of 16). (*Lead: Oregon Foster Youth Connection*)
- **Support HB 2707 Justice for Youth Campaign:** Safe Kids, Safer Communities Campaign. This campaign is specifically focused on the reform of Oregon's policies and practices so as to significantly reduce the number of youth sent to adult criminal court and to ensure that young offenders are appropriately adjudicated in ways that enhance community safety, youth accountability, and rehabilitation. (*Lead: Partnership for Safety and Justice*)
- **Support HB 2714 Sex Trafficking:** Separates the crime of prostitution into two offenses, prostitution and patronizing a prostitute. It imposes a high penalty on those who patronize an underage prostitute regardless of whether the buyer knows the youth is under 18. (*Lead: Sponsored by Rep. Tomei*)
- **Support SB 425-430 Sex Trafficking:**
 - **SB 425:** Modifies compelling prostitution, making it easier to convict persons who traffic in children by eliminating the ignorance of age defense. (*Lead: Order of the President of the Senate at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Judiciary; Oregon Women's Health and Wellness Alliance*)
 - **SB 426:** Requires Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to administer grant program designed to reduce commission of certain crimes committed against minors. Requires Department of Human Services to develop treatment program for minors victimized by certain crimes. Appropriates moneys for programs.
 - **SB 427:** Requires court to impose fine in specified amount (\$20,000) on certain persons convicted of prostitution. Authorizes lesser amount if person is unable to pay. Requires court to publish name and photograph of person in newspaper or by Internet posting if person willfully fails to pay fine or complete community service.
 - **SB 428:** Authorizes placement of child in facility that provides care and services to victims of sexual exploitation if child engages in certain prostitution-related activities and if peace officer or other person taking child into protective custody has reason to believe that, if released, child is likely to continue to engage in prostitution-related activities.
 - **SB 429:** Authorizes detention of minor accused of certain prostitution-related conduct for up to three judicial days under certain circumstances. (*Question whether locking up girls is likely to work or just reinforces they are being punished?*)
 - **SB 430:** Includes compelling prostitution as prohibited conduct/crime for purposes of civil forfeiture.

(over)

- **Support SB 557 Sexual Assault Response Teams:** Requires district attorney of each county to organize sexual assault response team. Requires each team to adopt protocols addressing sexual assault response. Requires certain health care facilities to adopt policies for treatment of acute sexual assault patients. Requires certain health care facilities that perform forensic medical examinations of sexual assault patients to adopt guidelines developed by Sexual Assault Task Force and to employ or contract with sexual assault forensic examiner trained to satisfy certification requirements of Oregon SAE/SANE Certification Commission. *(Lead: Sponsored by Senator Edwards, Representative Hoyle; Senators Bonamici, Devlin, Dingfelder, Monnes Anderson, Prozanski, Rosenbaum, Representatives Bailey, Barker, Berger, Brewer, Doherty, Gelser, Greenlick, Kotek, Matthews, Read, J Smith, Tomei).* No fiscal impact.

- **Support HB 2438 Healthy Kid Relationship Act:** Directs school district board to adopt policy related to teen dating violence. Directs Department of Justice to use moneys in Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund to provide state and local services related to teen dating violence and to conduct study related to teen dating violence. Allows Director of Human Services to make grants for prevention, identification and treatment related to teen dating violence. Directs Director of Human Services to conduct survey of teens related to teen dating violence. Requires collection of fee at time of filing of petition for marital annulment, dissolution or separation to be paid into Teen Dating Violence Prevention Account and Teen Dating Violence Services Account. Establishes Teen Dating Violence Prevention Account and Teen Dating Violence Services Account. Continuously appropriates moneys in accounts to fund teen dating violence services. *(Lead: Rep. Bailey)*

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