

Department of
Community Services

A.B. Smith
Director



Children and Family Services
Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization
Special Programs
Aging, Health and Disability Services
Juvenile Services
Parks and Recreation
Libraries
Video Services
Tourism, Arts and Events
Workforce Development

October 12, 2010

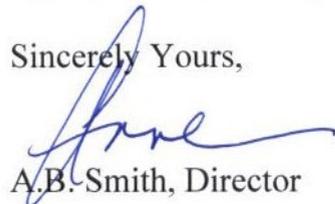
The Honorable Janet D. Howell, Chair
Public Safety Subcommittee of Senate Finance Committee
Virginia General Assembly
Post Office Box 396
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Dear Senator Howell:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the upcoming meeting of the Public Safety Subcommittee of Senate Finance. I am particularly appreciative of this opportunity to discuss local governments' concerns regarding Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA) programs and funding. I have enclosed materials that describe the organizational structure and the nature of programs which are delivered through a partnership between state and local governments and a regional collaboration that is four decades old. Although I am using a model that focuses primarily on York County, this is a matter of statewide concern. Highly successful programs exist throughout the Commonwealth. And as you will see from examples in the position paper, extraordinary reductions in state funding have had a crushing impact throughout the Commonwealth.

Again, thank you for your concern, your leadership and your advocacy on this important issue.

Sincerely Yours,



A.B. Smith, Director

Enclosures:

- Position Paper
- Organizational Structure
- Program Summary

Juvenile Justice Funding Concerns
Senate Finance Committee
Public Safety Subcommittee Meeting
October 20, 2010

A.B. Smith, York County
October 12, 2010

This is a brief history of recent and prior legislative action on funding for juvenile justice programs and description of the impact of those reductions. It primarily focuses on York County as an example, however, this is state-wide funding and the impact has been felt in localities throughout the Commonwealth.

Background

The Juvenile Services Division of York County Community Services delivers a wide range of juvenile justice programs for the localities within the region. All employees are classified York County employees, but personnel and operating costs are collectively funded through grants and state and local governments. In this regional effort the local government partners are the member localities of the Colonial Group Home Commission – York, James City and Gloucester Counties and the City of Williamsburg, along with Mathews and Poquoson under a separate arrangement. Other localities buy services as available on a per-diem basis. In other words, York County is the service provider and the state and other localities pay York to make the programs available to them.

This effective and successful regional collaboration and state/local partnership has been in place since the early 1970s. It is a very cost-effective way to eliminate duplication while assuring the availability of appropriate services for troubled young people in each locality. Further, the relationship with the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has been an extremely positive and highly collaborative partnership. I have enclosed systems charts and a summary of programs and services. The goals for all such programs are:

- to prevent juvenile offenders from further penetrating the justice system
- to maintain youth in community based programs rather than in state corrections centers
- to facilitate re-entry and prevent recidivism
- and most importantly, to help troubled young people return to a more productive life and better future

Our state funding began with a block grant in the early 1970s. With the enactment of the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA) in 1995, it was converted to a formula-based revenue stream with funding in various amounts made available to all Virginia localities. The 2002 session of the General Assembly reduced VJCCCA funding state-wide by 51% for FY03. The history of state funding cuts since FY03 is:

- 51% cut in 2002 (for FY03)
- 2.50% in FY08
- 4.17% in FY09
- 5% in FY10
- 19% in budget adopted in 2010 for FY11

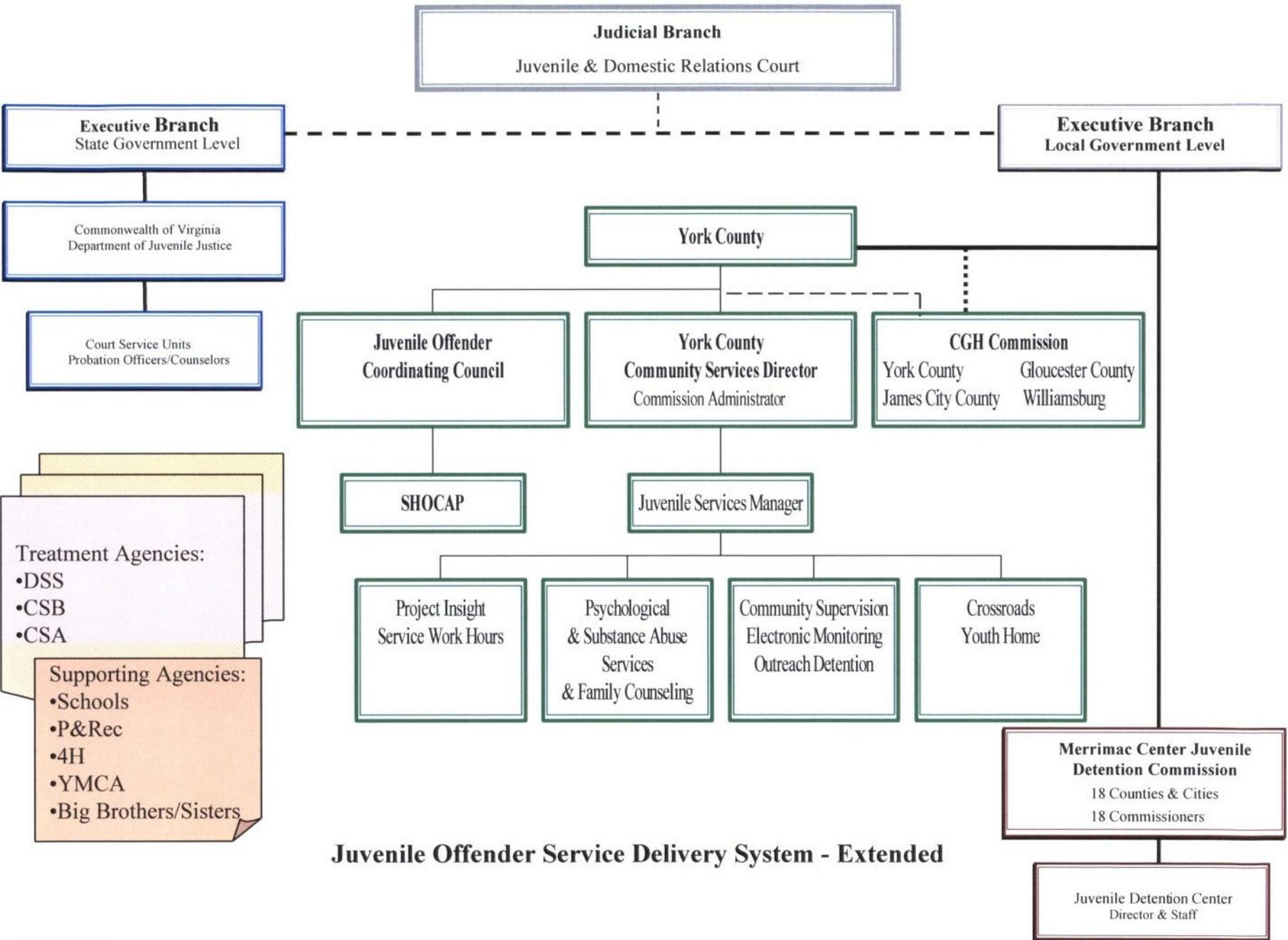
In April, the Governor's reconvened amendments proposed reinstating funding for the Virginia Commonwealth Challenge Program located in Virginia Beach. To secure the necessary funding the Governor proposed and the General Assembly approved additional cuts to VJCCCA funding -\$600,000 for the first year of the biennium and \$1,335,213 in the second year. This is in addition to the 19% reduction approved in the regular session of the General Assembly.

The funds we received annually during this period have been reduced from \$748,715 to \$261,748 for July 1 and will again drop to \$243,091 for FY12. During the same period state-wide funding dropped from \$29,506,010 to \$9,579,926.

Impact

- Over the last few years we have reduced positions by attrition and drastically curtailed operating expenses. York cannot, nor can the other localities in the region, assume the burden of state funding reductions. We have secured all such grants as possible and continue to aggressively pursue additional revenues. We have eliminated positions, consolidated programs and curtailed expenses. In our own regional collaboration we are using reserves to fund operations. Unless we can successfully secure other revenues, at this time it appears likely that over the next two years we will need to close programs.
- Tidewater Youth Services Commission (formerly Tidewater Regional Group Home Commission) similarly serves the localities of lower Hampton Roads. Since FY03 they have closed 5 of 8 residential programs and almost all of their community based early intervention/diversion programs. Sixty-five positions were eliminated.
- Henrico County engaged in massive program re-alignment after the FY03 reductions and no longer directly operates programs.
- In 1996, Chesterfield County received \$2.24 million in VJCCCA funds which funded 17 programs and served more than 2,000 youths. FY11 funding for Chesterfield County's VJCCCA programs is \$702,750 for four programs. Because of continuing reductions, Chesterfield County closed its group home July 1st.
- And these scenarios are occurring all over Virginia.

Re-entry: Amongst the Governor's initiatives and very appropriate concerns is the matter of re-entry to the community for both adults and juveniles after incarceration. The VJCCCA funding reductions jeopardize the very programs that prevent and divert, but when incarceration occurs, help juveniles successfully transition to re-entry.



Juvenile Offender Service Delivery System - Extended

Juvenile Services Division

York County Community Services

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES SUMMARY

During the 1970's, concern for youthful offenders and a desire to support the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court of the Ninth Judicial District caused local jurisdictions to collectively fund a variety of juvenile justice programs. York County is both a member and the managing jurisdiction of the regional Colonial Group Home Commission. Other members of the Colonial Group Home Commission include York, Gloucester, and James City Counties, and the City of Williamsburg. From the onset the Commonwealth has been an active fiscal partner in these activities. Staff of the Juvenile Services Division of York County Community Services, deliver the following programs:

CROSSROADS COMMUNITY YOUTH HOME:

Crossroads is a group home that offers a structured, homelike environment for teenage boys, age 14-17, who are having adjustment problems at home, in school, or in the community. The boys reside in a therapeutic setting for a short period of time while remaining close to home, parents, and friends. The goal is to return each young man to his natural home whenever possible. While at Crossroads, each resident receives an individualized treatment program geared toward developing self-control and appropriate behavior. The program is designed to meet each young man's social, emotional, physical, educational, vocational, and recreational needs. For many young people, community youth homes have proven to be a successful alternative to commitment to state care and traditional probationary methods.

PROJECT INSIGHT:

Project Insight is the umbrella name for various programs provided to teens involved with the juvenile justice system in lieu of other traditional sanctions. Programs include: Community Service Work Hours; Young Offender Program (YOP); Alcohol Diversion Program; Offense Specific Educational Videos; Fire Safety; Group Assignment Program (GAP) and Anger Management groups. Program components include, but are not limited to: work hours, written assignments, research papers, educational videos, and a six-week course that addresses anger management issues.

COMMUNITY SUPERVISION:

The Community Supervision Program provides intensive home-based supervision, family counseling, and other case management services as an alternative to detention for juveniles that are out of control in the community, but are not a threat to public safety. Counselors work with the juvenile offender and their entire family in the household setting.

OUTREACH DETENTION - ELECTRONIC MONITORING:

Outreach Detention and Electronic Monitoring are alternatives to placement in a secure detention facility. Outreach Detention is a program that provides intensive supervision to adolescents awaiting adjudication and/or disposition by the Juvenile Court. The Electronic Monitoring Program is essentially an appendage to the Outreach Program. This adds an electronic house arrest feature. The goals of the program are to assure the availability of the offender for court and to prevent further delinquency pending disposition of charges currently before the court. This is accomplished through the provision of direct and indirect supervision. In so far as it relates to keeping the child trouble free and available to the court, each counselor provides for the youth's needs in areas such as counseling and guidance, physical and mental health, recreation and education. This is done either through personal contact by the counselor or through referrals to appropriate agencies.

Grant Funded Programs:

There are currently two extremely valuable grant funded programs:

◆ PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

The Psychological & Substance Abuse Services (PSAS) program is funded in part by a grant from the Williamsburg Community Health Foundation. PSAS provides prevention, early intervention and substance abuse educational services to youth, age 11-18, and their families. As a way of identifying youth in the early stages of substance misuse, the program provides substance assessment and evaluation services. The program also provides multi-family substance abuse education groups, which focus on reducing risk factors through building family resiliency. All program participants require drug screen monitoring. Individual and Family counseling services are offered to all families in the program who require follow up treatment beyond group services. The program's ultimate goal is to help establish a drug free community.

◆ FAMILY COUNSELING SERVICES

The Family Counseling Services (FCS) program is a short-term prevention and early intervention counseling program that builds resiliency in at-risk youth by strengthening family relationships through effective communication, problem solving and parenting skill training. FCS is funded in part by the following two grants:

- A Title II, Young Juvenile Offender, grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, providing family counseling services to petitioned youth, age 11-13.
- A grant from the Williamsburg Community Health Foundation to work collaboratively with PSAS as a short-term prevention and intervention program and/or aftercare service. FCS provides individual and/or family counseling services to at-risk youth, age 11-18, referred by PSAS.