Senate Families Committee Hearing

Department of Human Services
Update on Michigan's Child Welfare Improvement Plan

Kathryne O'Grady, Director, Children Services Administration
Terri Gilbert, Director, Child Welfare Improvement Bureau
February 3, 2009

①

Children in Foster Care

- 17,496 children are under the supervision of Michigan DHS as of December 22, 2008.
- The number of children under DHS care and supervision has been trending down from a peak of 19,214 as of December 22, 2003.
- The children are almost evenly split between males and females.
- Among current living arrangements, 37% of current children in care are placed with relatives, 11% are being supervised in their own homes and 35% are placed in foster homes.

Children in Foster Care

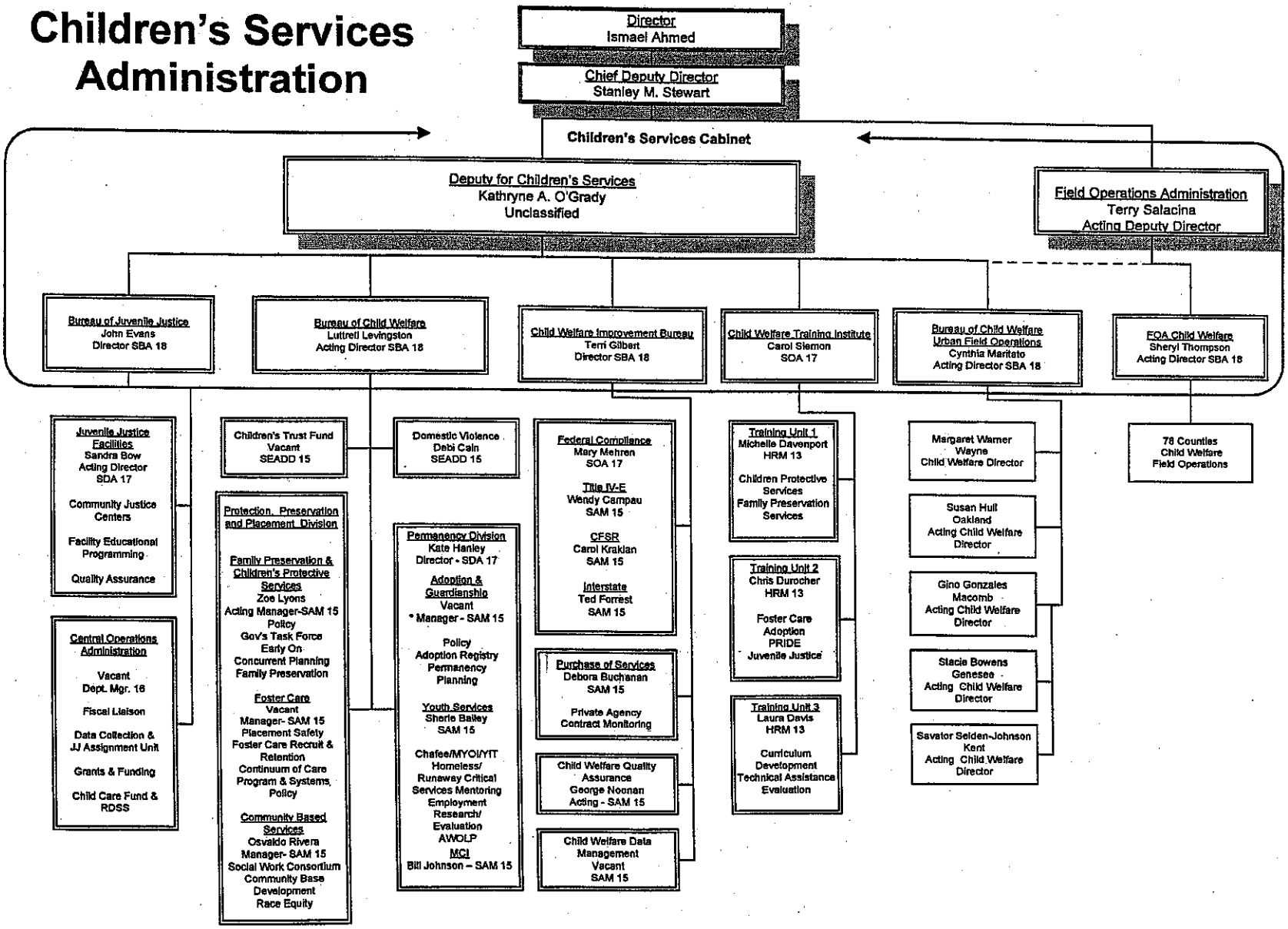
- Some caveats about data:
  - Main sources for data reporting
    - State of Michigan Data Warehouse.
    - SWSS (SACWIS) Database.
  - Data is pulled as "point in time" : the populations of the cohort are fluid and change daily.
  - Data reporting is only as good as the data entry.
  - Regular reviews of the data improves data quality.

Data Improvement

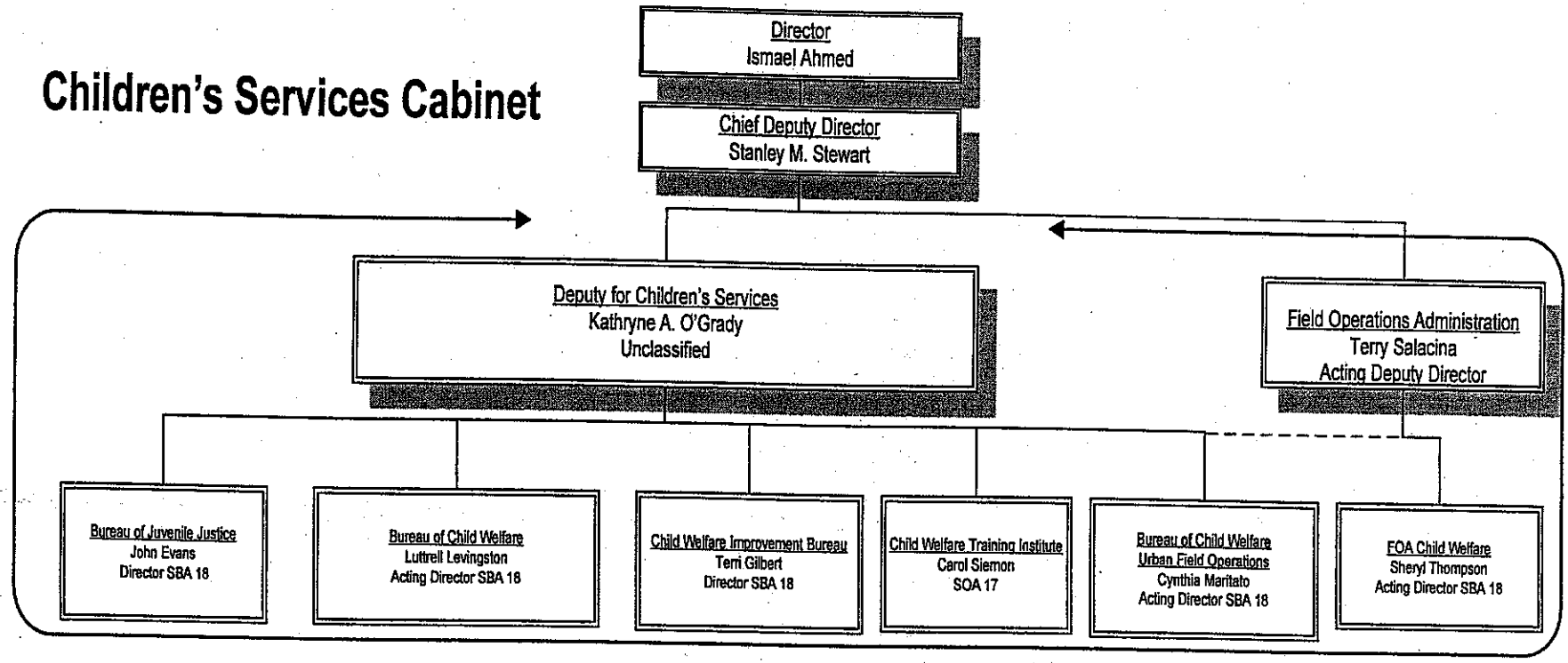
- Development of regular reports sent to Children's Services staff in the central office and in each County.
- Use of regular data reporting for quality assurance activities.
- Central review of official data reports through the data management unit.
  - Ensures consistent report parameters.

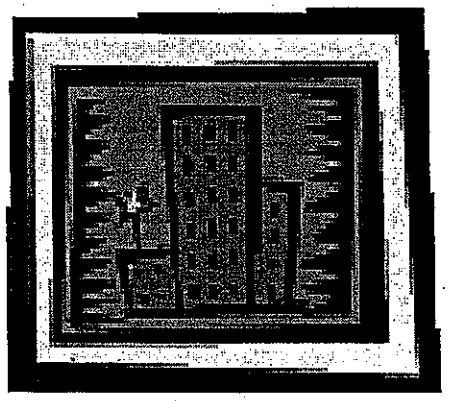
Organizational Structure

Children's Services Administration



Children's Services Cabinet





New Offices & Bureaus

Children Services Administration (CSA)
Child Welfare Improvement Bureau (CWIB)
Child Welfare Training Institute (CWTI)
Child Welfare Urban Field Operations (UFO)

New Units

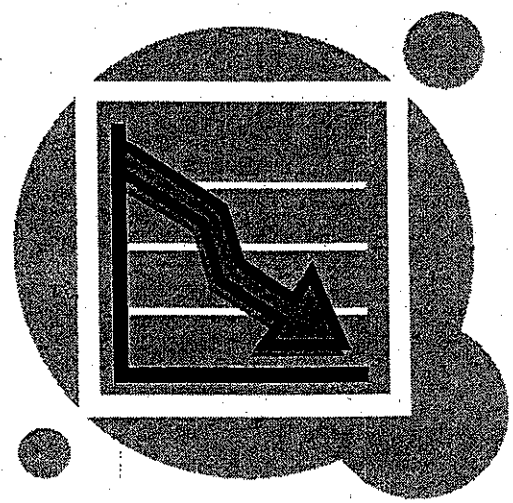
Adoption & Permanency
Federal Compliance
Data Management
Quality Assurance
Training & Curriculum Development

Designated Counties

Genesee
Kent
Macomb
Oakland
Wayne

November 2008

Caseloads



Percentage of Direct Foster Care Workloads Meeting Target Ratios

DHS Case Load Compliance	Private Agency Caseload Compliance (as of October, 2008)
87% of caseloads 30:1 or less	96.5% of caseloads 30:1 or less
69% of caseloads 25:1 or less	88% of caseloads 25:1 or less

Based on November 2008 Caseload Count Data

Adjusting to Caseload Standards

- Working to reduce CPS & Adoption caseloads while maintaining FC ratios. Conducting regular caseload counts with weighted ratios at the total FY 09 caseload ratios
- Hiring additional staff.
- Quadrupled capacity for pre-service training.
- Opportunity for in-service training.
- 13,000 hours approved for overtime

Relative Caregiver Licensing

Process

- March 2008: Initiative began to license relative caregivers. DHS and private CPAs shared responsibility for licensing relative homes.
- DHS allocated 80 title IV-E funding specialists. The position description for the job designates 50% of the time be spent on relative licensing.
- FY 2008 and 2009 budget provided funding for 1,086 homes to be licensed by private CPAs.

Initiative Results

A review of the data collected showed that approximately half of the relative caregivers contacted refused licensure.

Lessons learned from the initiative were used to move forward with licensing new relative placements and the backlog cohort.

- Barriers to Licensing:
  - ✓ Need flexibility for foster parent training.
  - ✓ 90-day timeframe is too short.
  - ✓ Delay in processing paperwork to issue license.
  - ✓ Additional resources needed for physical exams.
- Best practices:
  - ✓ DHS and private agencies developing real partnerships.
  - ✓ Conducting in-home orientation or personal PRIDE training sessions to meet the needs of relatives.

Keep in mind…

- Consent decree does not preclude a child from being placed with an unlicensed relative.
- Intent is to provide as many financial resources and services to the family
- Child may be placed with an unlicensed relative if:
  - Home assessment and safety check are appropriate.
  - Placement with the relative is in the child's best interest.
  - Benefits of licensure are explained.
  - Relative signs a waiver refusing licensure.
  - Counts against 10% exception.

Family Incentive Grant FY 08 & 09

- Legislature appropriated $375,000.00 to facilitate initial licensure of a home or licensure renewal for an existing foster family home.
- In FY 08 (April to September) expenditures equaled $58,473.11
- To date, expenditures for FY 09 equal $44,768.81
- Expenditures can be grouped into 5 categories: Windows, Beds, Septic/Well, General Repairs and Smoke Alarms/Carbon Dioxide detectors.

Our Children Achieving Permanency

(Referenced as "Backlog Cohort" in settlement agreement.)

Permanency Backlog Cohort

Children awaiting reunification or available for adoption over 1 year.

Baseline cohort data, as of 9/30/08:

Temporary Court Wards (TCW): 5178
Terminated Parental Rights (TPR): 4396

Permanency Backlog Teams

- Foster Care Permanency Teams are being formed to address permanency backlog cohorts.
- Teams consist of lead foster care worker (permanency planning backlog specialist,) permanency planning assistants and permanency supervisor.
- Additionally, there are 104 limited-term Permanency Planning Assistants currently allocated to the designated counties. These workers will function as secondary case workers and will assist the permanency team with non direct case service responsibilities, such as document retrieval, transportation and case reviews.

Progress toward permanency as of 12/31/08

- **Cases closed:**
  - TCW Cohort: 1065 (21%)
  - TPR Cohort: 560 (13%)
  - Urban Counties
    - TCW: 3501
    - TPR: 2707

Our Children Achieving Permanency

- Next Steps
  - Big 14 counties: Backlog work plans submitted October 30, 2008.
  - Remaining counties: Backlog work plans submitted January 9, 2009.
  - Status updates for counties due monthly.
  - "Gap Analysis Tracking Report" will be sent monthly and updates are due the 15th of the following month.

Special Reviews

- Special reviews will be conducted on the cases of children in high risk categories in order to assess and determine what must be done to meet the needs of these children. Special reviews will be conducted on all of the high risk categories and will be repeated every 90 days upon approval of the review plan.

Special Reviews for High Risk Cases

- Review teams are recommended by the QA Manager and convened under the authority of the Deputy Director for Children Services Administration.
- Review teams are multidisciplinary and made up of DHS, private agency, local agency and state partners (SCAO, FCRB, etc.).
- Teams consist of members with skills and experience to conduct the specific reviews.
- Initial reviews will focus on the allegations of CAN in residential or foster care settings.

Special Review Teams

- First reviews commenced the week of January 26th with a complete file review of 34 children who have been the subject of three or more reports of abuse/neglect in foster care or residential settings and who remain in that setting.
- Draft case reading tool was piloted at this first review.
  - Review protocols from Illinois, Georgia and Indiana have been reviewed.
  - Just in time training will be provided for reviewers.

Special Review Teams

- Summary reports will be prepared for the Director and the Children's Cabinet and include findings, recommendations and corrective action plans.
- CQI plans will be developed and implemented based on review of outcomes and approval from Children's Cabinet.

Special Review: High Risk Cohorts

1. Children who have been the subject of an allegation of CAN in foster care or residential care settings between June 2007 and September 2008.
2. Children who have been the subject of 3 or more allegations of CAN in foster care settings.
3. Children in foster care with 3 or more placements within 12 months.
4. Children in residential care settings for 1 or more years.
5. Children in foster care in unrelated caregiver placements.