



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE
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Estelle B. Richman
Secretary

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Dear DPW Stakeholder:

I am pleased to provide you with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009-2010 Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP) and the FY 2009-2010 Children, Youth and Families' Needs Based Plan and Budget guidelines. We are sending these two documents together because while they differ in detail and scope, their goals and objectives are closely interrelated.

Each year since 2004, counties have prepared Integrated Children's Services Plan that articulates a statement of each county's overall vision for serving children and youth. While there are multiple ways to integrate services, counties across the commonwealth are making significant progress towards creating integrated systems to better support children and families that includes:

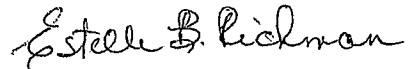
- a continuum of care at every level of system involvement that provides for the healthy development, safety and well being of the child;
- a mechanism for all children entering the system to receive a comprehensive review of the child's needs;
- a service plan, based on the comprehensive review, that assesses resources from all appropriate sources to meet the needs of the child and family; and
- a prevention strategy for children that encourages healthy development and stability.

Recognizing that one planning process does not reflect the uniqueness of where counties are in the process of integration, this year's process again allows counties to elect to be either a "Tier One Accelerated County" or a "Tier Two Continued Program County." Tier One counties are eligible to apply for incentive funds as part of the planning process.

The Children, Youth and Families' Needs Based Plan and Budget guidelines contain the instructions for completing the budgeting process for child welfare and juvenile justice programs. Act 30 dictates a specific planning process for child welfare/juvenile justice needs based planning. This process (as well as parallel efforts in behavioral health, mental retardation, early intervention, and other related child-center areas) should be reviewed as a means to the end as expressed in the Integrated Children's Services Plan. Integrated planning would fall short if all of the systems that serve children are not sharing in one large planning effort.

The Department of Public Welfare is eager to assist counties in their local efforts to develop a plan for integrated children's services that fits the unique local needs of each county and to continue to improve the Needs Based Plan and Budget Process. I remain personally committed to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Estelle B. Richman".

Estelle B. Richman