



OREGON
Alliance
of Children's Programs

13 May 2013

SENATE HEALTH CARE & HUMAN
SERVICES COMMITTEE

SUPPORT HB 3244 – 2

Dear Chair Monnes-Anderson, Vice-chair
Kruse and Committee members:

I am Janet Arenz, Executive Director of the Oregon Alliance of Children's Programs. We are a statewide non-profit, supporting good budgets and good policies for children and families, so that we can make children Oregon's greatest asset.

We do this by representing \$205 million in small businesses, delivering services and programs for over 100,000 children. We have a payroll of \$152 million for 5,500 employees and raise \$35 million in philanthropic resources each year.

Member programs span child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health, addiction, developmental disabilities, prevention.

We also represent the lion's share of runaway and homeless providers in Oregon.

- These youth, just as youth in foster care, need help transitioning from the trauma of being abandoned, in unsafe families, on the street, and trying to get back to school and in a more stable situation.
- These youth have the same needs as youth in foster care:
 - Safety
 - Well-being
 - Permanency
 - Self-sufficiency
- Oregon recognizes this, and when the Oregon Commission on Children & Families was closing, Oregon's Runaway & Homeless Youth system moved into the Child Welfare division in the Department of Human Services.
- HB 3244 makes the DHS/Child Welfare system consistent for both foster youth and for homeless youth, by planning for services up to age 21 years.

707 13th Street SE
Suite 290
Salem, Oregon 97301
Phone: (503) 399-9076
Fax: (503) 362-0149
www.oregonalliance.org

- This is also consistent with the Federal Children’s Bureau, Families and Youth Services Bureau, which serves homeless youth up to age 22 years.
- Note that there is NO FISCAL IMPACT on this bill, as it amends a statute that requires planning for a system that currently goes to age 18 years, up to age 21 years.

HB 3244 passed unanimously out of committee, and also passed unanimously out of the House. We hope you will support the bill and recommend a “Do Pass.”

Thank you!

OREGON’S RUNAWAY & HOMELESS SYSTEM

- Runaway and homeless providers across Oregon serve 20,509 youth each year. Their programs ensure safety, provide permanent connections to adults, support youth well-being and develop self-sufficiency.
- Services represent a full array of prevention and intervention programs, including keeping adolescents and youth safe; working on family reunification; connecting youth to education and needed services; and providing transitional living support to move into responsible adulthood.

Outcomes achieved by programs for runaway and homeless youth reduce the costs of other systems:

- After a rigorous review of a Portland-based RHY program, it was established that for **every \$1 spent helping youth get off the street, \$7.45 was saved in other public costs**, particularly those related to public safety.
- The **Youth Correctional** system serves **1825 youth** a year at a cost of **\$151 million**.
- The **Child Welfare** system in Oregon serves **13,100 children and youth** in out-of-home care and responds to 71,900 reports of child abuse a year at a cost of **\$208 million**.
- The Oregon Department of Education reported in November 2011 that there were 20,500 homeless youth attending school in Oregon, of whom **3,500 were unaccompanied minors**.

RUNAWAY & HOMELESS YOUTH SERVED ANNUALLY IN OUR PROGRAMS:

20,509 - Total (non-duplicated youth)

Street Outreach - 41,300

Outreach – 3,702

Housing – 128

Shelter – 1,154

Transitional Living – 300

Drop-in Center – 10,902

KEY SYSTEM OUTCOMES:

(these are the same outcomes in Oregon's child welfare, foster care system)

Safety:

- 57,000 youth contacts
- 5,400 youth engaged in service
- 1,196 youth sheltered
- **89% of sheltered youth had safe exists (1064)**

Well Being:

- 115 youth served in Transitional Living services
- **81% received counseling** on key areas of household dynamics, sexual orientation/gender and abuse and neglect
- **48% received services** to address physical and mental health, alcohol and drug abuse, or physical and mental disability.

Permanent Connections:

- **46% of youth reconciled with family**

Self Sufficiency from the Transitional Living services:

- 21% of youth exited with stable housing
- **32% of youth were attending school** regularly, graduated, or obtained GED at exit. WE CAN BEST ADVANCE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES BY PROVIDING STABILITY FOR YOUTH (housing, case management, permanent connections with family and other adults).
- 15% of youth achieved seasonal employment or employment full or part time or were in jobs programs at exit.
- **93% of youth** received life skills training.

