

## Vice Chairperson Cheryl Grills, Ph.D.

### Discussion Re: Emergency Shelters

#### The issues:

1. Overcrowding at the County's Welcome Center;
2. Lack of sufficient number of foster homes;
3. Difficulty addressing the complex needs of traumatized youth; and
  - a. These have been well documented, including in a recent report by the L.A. County Commission on Children and Families.[1] The report indicates that 85 percent of children at the Welcome Center need mental health services and supports.[2] It calls for expanded use of emergency shelters that can provide trauma-informed care and an immediate recruitment of additional emergency shelter beds
4. Reimbursement for emergency shelter care provided by DCFS fails to support the cost of providing the trauma-informed supervision and care to ensure the safety and well-being of children most in need. For example, some emergency shelter providers report that 20-30 percent of the children they serve come directly from psychiatric hospitals.

Recommend a sub-committee to work with the CCF to explore most cost-effective way to ensure emergency shelter care providers are able to adequately serve children most at need and incentivize the provision of new beds. These facilities include our group homes – e.g., Maryvale as one example.

#### Need to look at things like:

- Staffing ratios
- Provision of psychiatric assessment, evaluation and follow-up to children with a known history of psychiatric problems, including hospitalizations and those taking psychotropic medication
- Use of trauma-informed care treatment models and requisite training in trauma-informed care for facility staff
- Rate structure modifications for RCL 12s
- Review L.A. County's Group Home-Emergency Shelter Care Statement of Work and Title 22 for community care facilities staffing ratio standards
- Commission agrees to sub-committee.
  - **Committee members: Grills, Zhen, and Keren Goldberg.** Other commissioners invited to consider joining later.