

# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

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Daryl Selman, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Aloha House

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii

Assistive Technology Resource Ctrs. of HI

Bay Clinic, Inc.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Honolulu

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

Blueprint for Change

Bobby Benson Center

Catholic Charities Hawaii

Central Oahu Youth Services Assn.

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Missing Child Center of HI

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Behavioral Health

Hawaii Student Television

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition

Hina Mauka Teen Care

Hui Malama Learning Center

Kahi Mohala Behavioral Health

Kama'aina Kids, Inc.

KEY (Kualoa-Heeia Ecumenical Youth)  
Project

Kids Behavioral Health

Kids Hurt Too

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Kula No Na Poe Hawaii

Lanai Community Health Center

Life Foundation

Marimed Foundation

The Maui Farm, Inc.

Maui Youth and Family Services

Palama Settlement

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

Planned Parenthood of Hawaii

Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center  
- Kona Unit

REAL

Salvation Army Family Intervention Svcs.

Salvation Army Family Treatment Svcs.

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

The Children's Alliance of Hawaii

Waikiki Health Center

Women Helping Women

YouthVision

YWCA of Kauai

October 2011

To: The Honorable Neil Abercrombie  
And members of his staff

## **KEY ISSUES AND OPPORUTNITIES IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH SERVICES**

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, is delighted to work with Governor Abercrombie and his administration to identify and address critical issues in the health and human services.

The information presented below is based upon the following:

- Two conference call meetings held on September 27<sup>th</sup> and October 4<sup>th</sup>;
- E-mail contributions by members between September 23 – October 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Ongoing feedback on problems/issues by HYSN members throughout 2011.

### **Improvements are needed to state contracting and payment systems.**

- Contracts are not awarded on a timely basis that ensures continuity of services and retention of key staff. Non-profit contractors report that it can take five months or more between submission of a proposal for services and issuance of a contract and sometimes the new contract is not received before the old one has expired. This results in disruption of services to clients and layoffs of highly experienced staff.
- State payments are not made on a timely basis. Non-profits reported delays of from several months to more than a year after services were rendered. In some cases, the amounts involved totaled \$100,000 or more in arrears. Contractors have been forced to take out lines of credit in order to meet payroll and make interest payments on those loans, using funds that could have provided services to youth and families.

**Recommendation:** Institute an electronic payment system similar to the one that the federal government uses. In that system, the contractor requests payment through a web site; funds are deposited through an electronic transfer directly into the recipient’s bank account, normally within 48 hours. This results in:

- Eliminating cash flow issues;
- Reducing insurance costs, since there is less risk of theft or abuse of funds if a physical check is not issued;
- Reduced costs for the State of Hawaii through savings on printer supplies, paper, and postage.

**Hawaii must preserve essential prevention programs for youth, even in difficult economic times.**

Prevention programs are often the first programs targeted for budget cuts or elimination because the benefits are long term and cost savings are not immediate. Cutting prevention programs is short-sighted. The chart below shows some of the benefits of funding prevention programs and the consequences when prevention efforts do not take place.

<b>Issue/Need/ Program</b>	<b>Facts</b>	<b>Consequences if Hawaii reduces or eliminates funding for prevention programs</b>
Homelessness/ Affordable rental housing	Hawaii has the highest average cost of rental housing in the U.S. and the smallest percentage of residents who are able to afford to purchase a home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawaii has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate of homelessness per capita in the U.S.</li> <li>• 40% of Hawaii families are no more than 2 paychecks away from homelessness.</li> <li>• HYSN and partners encounter more than 700 unduplicated runaway and homeless youth annually, ages 12-21. These youth are living on their own, without parental support or guidance. They are at high risk of physical and sexual violence, inadequate nutrition, lack of medical care, and inability to attend school.</li> </ul>
Healthy Start Program	Participants enroll because they are at high risk of or have previous history of child abuse and neglect.	98% of participants have no child abuse or neglect complaints after enrollment, demonstrate appropriate parenting practices, and are less likely to engage in drug abuse or crime.
Teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection preventions	99% of parents state that it is important to provide sex education to their children, but many parents lack the confidence and skills to discuss sexual issues with their children.  Hawaii does not require public schools to provide sex education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawaii ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in the rate of teen pregnancy and 12<sup>th</sup> in chlamydia infections.</li> <li>• Teen childbearing costs Hawaii taxpayers \$37 million per year, 2/3 in state and local costs.</li> </ul>

<p>After-school Programs</p>	<p>Hawaii has the highest percentage of families where all adult household members are employed, thus creating a need for after school programs.</p> <p>Children in after-school programs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 46% less likely to abuse drugs</li><li>• Less likely to engage in vandalism, graffiti, or violent acts</li><li>• Youth are 60% less likely to drop out of school</li></ul> <p>Working parents who know that their children are safe are more productive and more likely to move to better jobs.</p> <p>For every dollar spent on after school programs, communities save \$8.90 - \$12.90.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increases in substance abuse and juvenile crime</li><li>• Declines in school performance</li><li>• Higher school dropout rates</li><li>• Parents worried about safety of children left alone after school</li></ul>
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**For more information on these and other youth issues, please contact:**

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