

**REPORT ON CHILDREN'S SOCIAL
SERVICES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY-
VOLUME II**

JUNE 1988

REPORT ON CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES
IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

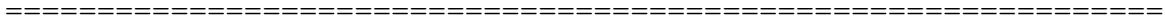
JUNE, 1988

Volume II

Task Force Working Papers

REPORT ON CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES
IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

June, 1988



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A. BASIS FOR STUDY

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
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PRESENTING ISSUES AND PROBLEMS:

- citizen commission(s)
- scope, overlap, duplication
- role and methods
- composition and staffing
- management reaction
- effectiveness

- scope and effectiveness of current coordination efforts
- bilateral negotiation
- committees
- CAO direction

- players requiring coordination
- County agencies
- County and other governments' agencies
- public and private service providers
- citizen and governmental advisory bodies

- areas requiring coordination
- policy, incl. legislative advocacy
 - social work I law enforcement perspective
- resource allocation
 - AB1733/2994
 - mental health
 - health care, etc.
- operations
 - emergency intervention
 - multi-service intake and case management
 - investigation, information sharing
 - court reports and procedures
 - cross-referral between delinquency and dependency
 - Mental Health priorities, etc.
- information systems
- publicity

B. SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

On September 24, 1987, we received a letter from the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors pointing out that the Board, when it created the Children's Services Department and the Children's Services Commission, did not take into account the existence and the activities of several other groups that had been working in the field. In the letter, the Chairman specifically mentioned ICAN, the Planning Council, and the Children's Budget Implementation Committee. The chairman pointed out that the result has been "duplication, fragmentation, and confusion", and asked us to recommend steps that the Board can take to "best coordinate their activities."

The duplication, fragmentation and confusion among various committees and groups merely reflects fragmentation in other spheres, namely:

fragmentation and division in society, political, economic and social;

fragmentation in the production of governmental services by the county, in the form of its departmental organization;

differentiation in the needs of various populations of children and their environments;

dissension and disagreement in the professional fields which have evolved as a means for society to produce work addressing the problems of the poor and disenfranchised.

Societal Issues

Within the next fifteen to twenty years, futurists and other authorities believe that a number of ills will have major impact on our society because of actions or inaction now.

Illiterate Work Force. Disfunction in the schools is producing a population of youth who cannot function productively in the economy, because they lack fundamental skills of thinking, learning, reading, and arithmetic.

Older Work Force. The population of the United States is gradually aging, due to low birth replacement rates and high survival rates.

Ethnic / Cultural Change. Virtually all population growth in Los Angeles and other urban regions is among minority groups - either from immigration, or from higher fertility rates.

Imbalanced Social Security. The younger workforce, which is shrinking in size, will become increasingly burdened with the needs of the older population - whether through increasing reliance on the social security system, or increasing reliance on younger care providers.

Abusive Environments. Increasing stress on the young will increase the possibility of intergenerational domestic violence - of young to elders and of adults to children.

New and Re-Forming Family / Social Structures. The traditional American concept of family (nuclear family) has been replaced by a wide variety of different network forms of family

relationships. The form depends on ethnic and economic groups, on location, on age, on religion, and on a host of other variables. Single parent families, however, will increase, and the need for corporate and governmental support for child care will increase.

The significance of these trends, then is this as the Children's Services Department is formed, and programs planned, over the next five years, the structure of society is changing as it relates to the needs of children and the need for governmental intervention in their lives.

Many of the improvements in services to children that are being created by the efforts of the department and the commission will not be in full effect for five or more years. Therefore, careful planning is required to ensure that these changes are not obsolete before they are implemented.

Authorities in the various relevant fields of interest have been struggling with issues of children's rights and welfare for many years.

It is a fundamental thesis of our work on duplication and fragmentation that much of it is a result of confusion over these issues - professional issues as well as governmental and ideological issues. The next page contains a list of the major issues we have found to be debated in the literature and among those we interviewed in the course of our study.

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
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UNDERLYING ISSUES AND PROBLEMS:

- responsibilities of government, especially County
- goals: protection, care, well-being, self-sufficiency
- populations: children, elders, poor, everybody
- methods: provision, regulation, incentives, persuasion

- County's role as employer, not as government
- e.g., in day care for employees' children

- relationship of protection to societal trends
- drugs, adolescent sex, AIDS, working parents, etc.
- cultural diversity

- strategies
- research basis
- statutory funding streams and task assignments
- targeted problems
 - abuse: physical, sexual, emotional
 - other: latchkey, dropout, untrained, runaway, etc.
- definition of the client: individual, family, court
- work with individual, family, community
- removal of child I of adult I neither
- caretaker capabilities and compensation
- prevention
 - targets: "at risk", general public
 - definition of "at risk"
 - level of effort
 - approaches: day care, in-home help, awareness, community environment, etc.
- roles of professions
 - case management, treatment
 - interdisciplinary approaches
 - education and training
- generalist vs. specialist workers
- paperwork, automation
- contracting, independent vrending, vouchers
- standards of care

- court system
- necessity for court review
- extent of discretion
- separate delinquency, dependency, family courts

- role of unions and professional associations
 - re duties, qualifications, caseloads, compensation

CAUSES OF RISK FOR CHILDREN

The following are contributing causes to child abuse and neglect, juvenile delinquency, juvenile status offenses, and other types of child problems. The County has a responsibility or interest in responding to many of these contributing causes because they contribute to children's problems and because they are social or individual problems in themselves.

Each contributing cause is subject to the attention of more than one County department, and each department attempts to deal with more than one of them. Individual service providers and agencies of other levels of government and of the private sector are usually also involved.

PARENT'S

- poverty
- unemployment
- criminal activity
- use of alcohol or drugs
- emotional disturbance or instability
- mental illness
- mental retardation
- developmental disability
- lack of fluency in the English language
- physical injury, illness or poor health
- physical disability or handicap
- absence, voluntary or involuntary
- lack of help from other parent, relatives or friends
- practice of excessively strict discipline
- laxity or inconsistency in discipline
- lack of interest in or affection toward child

COMMUNITY'S

- unavailability of at-home or nearby employment
- shortage of jobs for which parent qualifies
- lack of neighborly help or mutual supervision of children
- unavailability or excessive cost of child care
- lack of recreational facilities and programs
- poor quality of public schools
- unavailability or excessive cost of private schools
- low level of law enforcement presence
- prevalence of crime, delinquency, and status offenses
- high level of gang activity

CHILD POPULATIONS
DEFINED BY PROBLEM

The following are problems which a child may have. Each problem may contribute to others, and they are not mutually exclusive, i.e., a child may belong to several "populations".

Each population is subject to the attention of more than one County department, and each department attempts to deal with more than one problem. Individual service providers and agencies of other levels of government and of the private sector are usually also involved.

Many of these populations are also the subject of one or more County commissions and committees.

- users of alcohol or drugs
- emotionally disturbed or unstable
- mentally ill
- mentally retarded
- developmentally disabled
- physically injured, ill or in poor health
- physically disabled or handicapped
- rebellious against adult direction
- truant or dropout
- runaway
- delinquent or criminal
- victim of an abusing or neglecting parent
- victim of others, adult or juvenile

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

KEY PROBLEMS AREAS

1. Child abuse and neglect are associated with other problems such as poverty , unemployment, single parenthood, social isolation, mental and emotional illness, alcohol and drug use juvenile crime and status offenses, domestic violence, and elder abuse. Families and individuals have multiple problems. Many of these problems have to become more prevalent in the recent past and may continue to increase in the future.
2. Agencies which address these problems a variety of functions in prevention, intervention, treatment, and/or punishment. Legal responsibilities, skills and resources which could contribute to off effectiveness are distributed among city, county, school, State and private agencies according to some mix of the following: affected population, problem, function, locale, funding source, political influence. The distribution is largely determined by the State or Federal Government.
3. There is no public consensus, and no comprehensive or consistently applied policy au the extent of the County's - or of government's responsibilities for social problems and no strategic plan for them.
4. The Board of Supervisors directs county agencies and others funded by the County. No local authority is responsible to direct all of the populations, problems and functions mentioned above.
5. The Board organized ICAN of departmental executive, to provide a means by which local government agencies can coordinate in regard to child abuse and neglect. However, most coordination appears to be bilateral and conduct outside of ICAN.
6. The Board organized the Commission for Children's Services of citizens to review County services to children. However, the Commission's focus to date appears to be primarily on the administration of the Department of Children's Services.

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

KEY RECOMMENDATION ISSUES

1. Which of the many activities affecting children should be coordinated
 - with which of the County activities?
 - with which activities of other government?
 - with which activities of the private sector?
2. Should any of these also be coordinated with activities which are not directed by children?
3. What should be coordinated:
 - policies?
 - priorities?
 - resource allocation?
 - operations?
4. In each case, which coordination model should be applied:
 - consolidation of programs into the same department?
 - purchase by one department from another of services for itself or its clients, with the authority to purchase elsewhere?
 - multilateral coordination of independently funded departments higher authority and/or through a joint committee?
 - bilateral coordination of independently funded departments with/without involvement of a higher authority?
5. Where consolidation is applicable, should the EEC recommend what departmental entities should result? If so, what are they?
6. Where joint committee(s) is/are applicable, should the EEC recommend their number, respective responsibilities, membership, chairmanship, and staffing? If so, what are they?
7. What should be role of citizen commissions? Should the EEC recommend the number respective responsibilities, membership, chairmanship, and staffing of citizen commissions which deal with the activities to be coordinated?
8. Should the EEC recommend a strategy to get from the present structure to the desired result? If so, what should the strategy be?

C. SOCIAL WORK THEORY AND PRACTICE

THEORY AND PRACTICE IN SOCIAL SERVICE PROVISION

Besides what services are provided and the myriad of economic, social, political and institutional reasons behind their selection, there are certain common issues that the literature, professionals, and academics agree on. They are the need for adequate funding and effective delivery of services. What is adequate funding is beyond the scope of this preliminary discussion. Instead, the remaining discussion in this section will be devoted to examining what was found out about concerns influencing the effective delivery of services to children.

Los Angeles County has at least six major departments and a host of other departments which have some affiliated responsibilities for the delivery of services for children. Amongst the major departments are DPSS, DMH, DHS, DCSCS.

However, the County does not appear to have an integrative policy or even a consistent set of assumptions (other than the basic ones concerning the role of government) which could serve as the basic foundation for effective service integration and delivery. This is because there are so many different departments involved and there is no effective umbrella coordinating entity that has jurisdiction and authority over all services related to children. Services are perceived as fragmented. Duplication and inefficiency are perceived as ingrained in the system.

A common response amongst people interviewed, who have had direct experiences with child-related services in Los Angeles County, was that the role of the Los Angeles County Government should be to assist in providing a strong, rational, and coherent structure to service for children and families. Reasons for the lack of a coherent system differed. Responses ranged from suggesting that there was a lack of strong leadership at the top level of County Government to reconceptualizing the focus away from children into a broader perspective which focused attention at the family level.

The issue of integration is not unique to Los Angeles County Government. The recent California State "Little Hoover" study identified 35 different state programs, 10 different state agencies and 3 different state university Systems involved with services and training related to child care, runaway/homeless youth and abused and neglected children. Other governments at all levels have identified this concern. One high ranking government official interviewed described the situation as one which was systematically dysfunctional throughout the entire country. However, some successful efforts to address the problem include those being used by the States of Maine, Nebraska, and Washington. Mann County California has also devoted a lot of effort to investigating the reasons that their county was having these same problems and suggesting ways to coordinate efforts to eliminate them.

State of Maine

The State of Maine, under the previous and current gubernatorial administrations, has institutionalized an Interdepartmental Council for the last nine years. This is a formal interdepartmental coordination mechanism established "for the purposes of coordinating selected policy, planning and programming for Maine's at-risk and/or dependent children, families and individuals." (Interdepartment Coordination Policy Statement, Nov.1, 1987) The Interdepartmental Council is comprised of the Commissioners of Maine's Departments of Human Services, Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Educational and Cultural Services and Corrections. Other Commissioners join the Council on an ad-hoc basis for appropriate issue areas. The Chair rotates on an annual basis. The Commissioners are responsible for policy development and final agency actions.

A Deputy/Associate Commissioners Operations Group parallels the Interdepartmental Council. The Chair rotates on an annual basis and corresponds directly to the Chair of the Interdepartment Council. This group has responsibility for recommending action to the Interdepartmental Council and oversight of the policy committees. An Executive Director position is assigned to this group and reports directly to its chairperson.

The Executive Director is responsible for;

facilitation of the overall execution and quality of

interdepartmental communication and assignments;
staff support for the Interdepartmental Council and the Deputy/Associate Commissioners Operating Group;
development of interagency operation procedures;
consultation and advising Policy Committees;
coordination of interdepartmental legislative response;
provision of information and education to outside state and national agencies; and
direction of special projects, as assigned by the Deputy/Associate Commissioners Operations Group.
(State of Maine Interdepartmental Coordination Organization Structure Memo, Nov.1, 1987.)

Policy Committees were established by the Interdepartmental Council to carry out the interdepartmental mandate in specific policy areas in accordance with interdepartmental operating procedures. The Policy Committees report directly to the Deputy/Associate Commissioners Operations Groups. Policy Committee Chairpersons report directly to the chairperson of the Deputy/Associate Commissioners Operations Group. They are comprised of assigned interdepartmental representatives and may establish subcommittees as needed. Some of the current Policy Committees are:

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Planning Committee;
Children's Policy Committee;
Adult Policy Committee;
Health Policy Committee.

Currently the Chairperson of the Interdepartmental Council is the Commissioner of the Department of Human Services. In practice the chairperson has been from this department most of

the time. The funding for the Council comes from the participating departments. The staff are housed in one of the departments, usually the Department of Human Services. However, their funding may come from another participating department. The staff does not perceive their role as advocates but rather as facilitators. The current Executive Director indicated that other New England states have requested the Council to conduct model meetings in their states to see how this successful mechanism works.

Recently one of Maine's Commissioners on their Council has taken a position in Oregon. He has begun the necessary steps to create a similar coordinating council in that state because of his positive experiences with Maine's Interdepartmental Council. This mechanism appears to be an effective tool for addressing the integration and coordination issues in the delivery to children and their families. It is also important to note that the focus of Maine's Interdepartmental Council is not just on children but on all related areas including adult policy.

State of Nebraska

During the 1987 Nebraska legislative session a bill (L.B. 637) was passed which focused on the creation of an interdepartmental planning approach for children and families which would provide "the judicial, executive and legislative leadership an opportunity to reach a consensus concerning the quality of life

and the role of state government with regard to Nebraska's children and families." ("Nebraska's intergovernmental and Community Planning Process For Families and Children," July 1, 1987) Although the separation of powers outlined in Nebraska's Constitution precluded a joint decisionmaking structure, the Nebraska Legislature found it essential that a planning process be established that provided for joint review of recommendations concerning overall direction of service improvement. Furthermore, they believed that the task should have a strong community input component.

Nebraska's Governor's Office has taken "the lead to make certain that an adaptive planning process unfold[s] which provides for (1) executive level review, (2) systemic coordination within and among all three branches. and (3) issue-specific working groups from which specific recommendations are developed." ("Nebraska's Intergovernmental and Community Planning Process For Families and Children," July 1, 1987)

A Project Director was hired who was an expert in child welfare and juvenile justice. This person was viewed as having a strong sense of credibility by the three branches of government and the community. Foundation and grant support was sought for this and other support staff positions. The Executive Branch agencies were to provide the other necessary support. The Project Director reports to the Director of the Policy Research Office in the Governor's Office.

Project goals were developed by representatives from all branches of government using the initiating legislation as a guide. The following goals were established by July, 1987. They are not refined and it is expected that they will be further developed through the polyphasic planning process:

1. The State of Nebraska will assess, document, and monitor the impact of all policy decisions, services and programs affecting children and families.
2. When a child or family requires assistance, the State of Nebraska will:
 - a. Provide assistance in the least restrictive, least intrusive and most family and community centered method.
 - b. Assure the provision of community based services which strengthen communities and families and promote healthy development of children.
 - c. Assure the fullest participation of the community in the design and provision of a family-centered continuum of care which advances compliance with permanency planning statutes.
 - d. Assure that individual case planning will integrate all services to children and families.
3. The State of Nebraska will provide coordinated planning, budgeting and delivery of services which will strengthen the capacity of communities to care for children and families.

The planning process and structure are based on a number of assumptions:

1. That certain principles of systematic change guide a process more than the specific content.
2. Systematic change occurs best with people who have the responsibility to carry out the tasks.

The planning process has been designed with a set of principles in mind. These include:

1. Mid-management and field staff will be integrated into the process as early as possible.
2. The natural results of the project for all persons involved will be education and training. The project was intended to design and operationalize a system in such a way as to change the way the services were provided.
3. The planning process should result in a better view of how actual services are delivered at the client-worker level.
4. The planning process presumes that state employees are more than competent and can work in harmony. When the expectations are present, when resources are present, and when the environment is conducive to attaining excellence, pride in one's work and caring for the client emerge.
5. The planning process is designed to integrate the community representation to the fullest extent possible. The presumption is that all services are delivered in the community and the local community support is critical.
6. The systemic operational goals of the planning process are very simple: help families to keep children in their homes; help communities provide the services so that more children can stay home; help state government identify and operationalize the means to make this happen.
7. The process is designed so that at each planning phase, measurable objectives in incremental fashion are provided by each branch of government and the community.
8. The planning process is designed to correct the belief system which supports the institutional approach to children.
9. The planning process is designed to trust employees.
10. The planning process is designed to enable research and evaluation to occur.

The planning process involves three levels:

Level One: Intergovernmental Planning Team made up of representatives from the legislative, executive, judicial, and community.

Level Two: Coordination Team made up of legislative, executive, court administrator designees and statewide community leaders.

Level Three: Working Groups, issue specific, made up of subcommittees from Level Two.

The Project Director's role is to facilitate and sustain the planning process and finalize the recommendations from the Coordinating Level (Level Two) to the Intergovernmental Planning Team (Level One).

The State of Nebraska has been involved with the development of this Project for the last six months. It is still too early to tell what the results of their efforts to provide service integration through this structured planning process will be. The participatory emphasis on the community in this process attempts to ensure that the community will take ownership for the final implementation of the design of the social service delivery system. Funding alternatives from the community are also strongly encouraged as one means of making sure that the community takes responsibility for its contributions.

State of Washington The State of Washington has not attempted a major structural coordination effort similar to Nebraska's or Maine's. Instead

it has begun on a much smaller level. In April of this year the Washington State Legislature passed the Children's Pilot Project.

"The purpose of this act is to prevent child abuse and neglect and to promote the delivery of cost effective child and family services through the establishment of the pilot project in order to guide the state in establishing a comprehensive system of children and family services state-wide by 1990." (Chapter 503, Laws of 1987, Washington State)

The goals of the pilot project are:

- a) To demonstrate delivery of a continuum of services for children and families that will maximize problem prevention, early problem intervention and resolution and family independence while maintaining the physical safety and emotion well-being of the child;
- b) To demonstrate the use of outcome measures to determine the cost-effectiveness of service components and the system as a whole;
- c) To demonstrate that services can be designed to be appropriate, accessible, and sensitive to the needs of all populations within the community, including minority cultures and ethnic groups;
- d) To eliminate fiscal and process barriers where possible in order to increase efficiency in providing services;
- e) To encourage conceptual development of a continuum of service model to meet the needs of children and families and to maximize and coordinate available federal, state, and local resources;
- f) To involve local communities, schools, private entities. and other state agencies, including the division of mental health of the department of social and health services, in the future assessment and planning of services in an open and formal way; and
- g) To enhance the provision of quality services through a system of workload management.

Washington State's Department of Social Services is

responsible for implementing the pilot project outlined in the legislation. This department is the largest state department. It was developed in the early 1970's as the centralized umbrella department for almost all of the social service related programs. Within the last five years numerous divisions have been separated and made independent departments. In light of this current decentralization effort, there has been an effort to create an independent department to deal exclusively with children's issues. The pilot project is seen as one effort to prevent this, to integrate the various resources that the department currently has, and to support community level efforts to design the service delivery mechanism most fitting for that community. Money (\$2.4 million) was attached for the development of these pilot projects. The three locations for pilots included an urban section of the Seattle area, a relatively small rural community and the second largest city in Washington. Alternative management models were encouraged at these different sites. The communities were required to develop implementation plans and to submit these to the department.

In order to provide services in a continuum the legislation directed that the community based implementation plans:

- a) plan so that clients entered the system at the least intrusive and most cost-effective level of service appropriate to the clients needs;
- b) assess client service needs frequently to assure that services continue at the least intrusive level appropriate; and

c) develop written assessment guidelines and consistently apply these throughout the duration of the project.

Another focus of the legislation was the development of an information management system for monitoring both baseline and outcome data. By directing the department to set up such a system it was hoped that it would collect and analyze much needed program and client information in new and reliable ways. The department is required to report back to the legislature on the pilot's results.

This Washington State pilot project has only reached its community planning phase at this time. The plans are being reviewed by the Department of Social Services, and implementation is expected within the next few months. A State-wide Coordinator with strong community experience was hired and is facilitating the process. She has expressed confidence that this effort will produce much needed improvements in the service delivery system for children and their families.

Marin County California

Marin County invested in long range planning for its social services in 1987. This was necessary because limitations on local taxing authority and declining state and federal revenues were seen as jeopardizing critical public health, mental health - and social services. Appeals to private sources, especially the Mann County Foundation, were made to offset revenue

short-falls. It was determined that a joint effort between the public and philanthropic sectors was needed to identify the best use of declining financial support.

The County of Marin spearheaded the planning process and formed a task force of members representing the various sectors. "The purpose of the Task Force was to share experience and knowledge, combine that experience with careful analysis and imagination and identify the most effective way to organize, restructure, or modify the public and private network so that all available funds from public and private sources are tapped and are used efficiently and effectively to address the most critical needs of the people....The major work of the Task Force was to examine the system, identify fresh approaches, and recommend changes that will address short range and long range situations with solutions that are less costly and programmatically sound." ("Draft of the Health and Human Services Task Force Report," Dept. of Health and Human Services, County of Marin, July 16, 1987)

A series of recommendations were made by the Task Force which focused on the public sector, the non-profit sector, and the Marin County Foundation. Much effort was devoted to what the "true" mission of the public sector was. The services were analyzed from two perspectives: 1) that of adults and older - adults, and 2) that of children and families. The Task Force concluded that the public sector's main responsibility was to

provide protective services to both groups. Responsibilities varied between those for adults and older adults and those for children and families. Scenarios were developed for the "ideal" public sector services for both of these groups.

Services for adults and older adults included:

- A. information and referral, but contracting this out to a private provider;
- B. gatekeeping where a community based outreach network is supported for early detection and intervention for citizens at risk;
- C. a 24-hour emergency response system contracted out to a private provider and linked up with the information and referral system;
- D. the establishment of a unified adult and aging division within the Department of Health and Human Services which emphasizes co-locating and integrating of services with the private sector and focuses on assessment of the client.

Public sector services to children and families would be provided under a new collaborative model with the non-profit and profit sectors. A Children's Division within Mann County's Health and Human Services Department would be created. A single entry system would be developed with community based centers co-locating the public and private providers. This co-locating is thought to provide the natural collaboration needed to eliminate duplication, reduce interagency conflicts, increase greater agreement on treatment planning, and result in more effective delivery of services. Interdisciplinary and comprehensive Children's Assessment Teams would be available at the community

centers. It is believed that this integrated approach would reduce overall caseloads and "provide the level of intervention and monitoring needed to resolve more family dysfunction prior to the crisis point where out-of-home care or institutionalization becomes the only alternative." (Task Force Report) Various specific recommendations for each sector were made around the system priority geared to client centered services. A list of characteristics which make up a "Good System" was developed. Collaborative ongoing public and private planning was also suggested.

Proposed Theoretical Grounding for Integration of Services

The previous service delivery integration models which emphasize the need for community involvement are rooted in an ecological paradigm which takes into consideration the child, family and environment. At the root of this paradigm is the relationship between persons and environment. Kurt Lewin simplified the concept with the equation $B=f(P,E)$: behavior is a function of both the persons and the environment. (Kurt Lewin, A Dynamic Theory of Personality as cited in James Whittaker's article "The Ecological Paradigm in Child, Youth and Family Services: Implications for Policy and Practice.") Urie Bronfenbrenner has expanded on this concept in characterizing human development as "the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate

settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger context in which the settings are imbedded." (Urie Bronfenbrenner, The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design as cited in James Whittaker's article).

Bronfenbrenner describes his ecology of human development in the context of an environment which is a set of nested concentric structures. These are made up of different systems (micro, meso, exo and macro). These various systems comprise the "world" of human beings. An individual moves between these various systems and is influence by and influences each of them in turn.

A service delivery system based on an ecological paradigm "focuses on environmentally oriented assessments that are designed to inform treatment methods that help the individual client from the `outside,' that is, by placing major attention on the creation and maintenance of challenging, supportive and responsive environments, both proximate and distal." (James Whittaker's article) The previously described state and county models which focus on the community as the primary provider use this theoretical orientation. They attempt to take into consideration the environmental context of the clients.

Additional research on successful service delivery has substantiated the need for environmental considerations. One researcher, Carol Meyer has pointed out that "there is a strong

relationship between individual physical-social-psychological health and social supports and between social isolation and the breakdown in these areas of function." (Carol Meyer, "Social Support and Social Workers: Collaboration or Conflict," as cited in James Whittaker) Social isolation has been reported as a frequent correlate of families involved in neglect and abuse (miscellaneous references by James Whittaker) Researchers Schumaker and Brownell suggest that "social support has a direct, indirect, or interactive effect on physical and mental health". (Sally Shumaker and Arlene Brownell, "Towards a Theory of Social Support: Closing Conceptual Gaps," as cited in Whittaker) Many people conclude that it is important to provide a specific service such as parent education for child abuse only as long as there is community support to back up the educational intervention.

In summary, there is theoretical and research evidence that services need to be community based. Basing the services in the communities builds on the accepted ecological paradigm. The service delivery systems that focus on communities will maximize their effectiveness because of this consideration.

D. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Los Angeles County is only one of some 1600 governmental units operating in the Los Angeles Region (the "60 mile Circle"). Children, like other residents and visitors to the region, consume some of the services of all of the governments. Therefore, the term, "services to children" needs refinement.

County government has two major roles. It governs, and it provides services. Governance is the province of the elected officials of the County. Governance assumes that the public welfare depends on an exercise of the sovereign powers to regulate and control the activities and behavior of people in the region. Regarding children, we have laws requiring them to attend schools, establishing minimum age for the operation of vehicles, establishing minimum age for the voting franchise, establishing curfews, and limiting not only their use of substances like alcohol, but also their presence in businesses where it is served. We also have laws designed to protect children from the various forms of depravity some practice in our society, including pornography, substance abuse, prostitution, and other forms of abuse or neglect. Such functions are provided by government and generate activities which use the resources of government, but they are not services to children. The County Board of Supervisors and other local elected officials generate laws affecting children, in the same sense as the State does.

The provision of services, which may be produced by another unit of government or a private firm, is often not the exclusive domain of the elected County officials. They are accountable for many services to some other level of government, such as the State, which may require the County to provide a service, may or may not decide major policies affecting service provision, and may or may not fund it. Regarding children, virtually all services are available for consumption. Children, and such organizations of children as the Scouts and the various sports associations, use public facilities extensively in their programs. Some services, on the other hand, are designed and funded specifically for children. Schools, for example. The Children's Museum of the City of Los Angeles. Moreover, some professions (in and out of government) specialize in services to children. Pediatricians, for example, or Child Psychologists, or Child Development Specialists.

The organization and funding of service provision varies widely. Some services are provided by multiple jurisdictions. For example, about 35 separate police departments operate in Los Angeles County. Other services are limited to a single jurisdiction. In Los Angeles County, only the County government provides

health services. Similarly, Borne services provided by government are produced by someone else. For example, many mental health services provided by the County are contracted to private clinics. Other services provided by government are funded or partially funded by someone else. For example, nearly half the costs of health care are State funded; the entire cost of certain transfer payments in the welfare system are funded by the State or Federal government (the grants to recipients of AFDC).

In this fragmented system, accountability is a serious issue. If the State government mandates a service and only partially funds it, who is accountable if the service is deficient? The State may claim that the funding is adequate, while the local government is inefficient. The local agency may claim that the State funding is inadequate for the demands and requirements of the service.

Coordination is a serious issue. When multiple agencies provide the same service (eg police), or a single government regulates an area-wide function (eg Superior Court), the impact of the fragmented political system can be adverse in the absence of careful coordination or orchestration of the policies of each. Regarding children, this may be a particularly serious question.

The actions of government affect children in numerous ways, from every level and service of each agency. The zoning practices in a city may affect children who need County protection from abuse: they may prohibit the operation of a facility in a residential neighborhood, for example. Police practices may vary depending on the community: some departments may have a strict policy of arresting and booking children for using alcohol, while others may prefer to contact parents or guardians.

The issue of who decides is particularly critical when the government touches children in an exercise of its police power. For example, the County Probation Department supervises children who have been found guilty of a crime and ordered to probation by the court. This is a function of governance - the child is more the object of an exercise of the power of the state than a consumer of some service of the County government. Nevertheless, the Probation Department still provides services to the children with whom it is charged. It houses them, feeds them, counsels them, trains them, and provides for their welfare while they are in its care. The Superintendent of Schools provides schooling to them while they reside in Probation facilities. Thus, some services causing children to consume governmental resources are for children, others are not specifically or exclusively for them, but rather are to them; still others are not

provided exclusively for children, but rather are used by them as a matter of free choice.

Government also must recognize that the child cannot be separated from the human context in which he or she lives. That is, the child has family, relatives, or guardians, lives in a community, and interacts as a person with a number of other people. Removing the child from that human context, or modifying the human context in some way is a grave act of government that affects not just the child, but also the other people - parents, guardians, teachers, service providers, friends - with whom the child interacts.

The central issue in untangling the complexity is who decides? Who determines the policy regarding children? Who decides what services will be provided, and how? Who decides how the services will be produced? Funded? Who decides what the policy will be governing quality? Aside what is provided in the laws of the state and those of the United States, in the case of most governance and service provision decisions, multiple decision-makers will decide on what is to affect children, and what the intended effects must be.

Certain governmental services affecting children are assigned by law to the County levels of government, or are produced by County government as a matter of agreement among the

various jurisdictions in the region. When child abuse is reported and confirmed, the County is obliged to protect the child from further harm and the sources of harm. The County is obliged, through funding of the court system, to provide for adjudication of the situation and a determination of what is best for the child. Depending on the court findings and decision, the county may be obliged to house the child, to find and finance supportive and developmental services, and so forth. For children who are accused of crimes, the law obliges the county to provide certain other services.

Regardless of the provisions of state law, virtually all County departments, in all areas, provide services which are relevant, not just to the effects of government on children, but also to the system of child abuse and neglect. All of the county departments with open facilities offer programs which can be used by children and their families as forms of child care or respite care, for example. Such services may be for children, but they are not exclusive; anyone can use them. Moreover, all county departments designed to provide such functional services as health care may have major impact on the population of children. but are not exclusively for children.

Regardless of the provisions of state law, the intention and the effect of governance or service delivery may be to correct a pathology, or to prevent it. This is by no means a separation of mutually exclusive qualities. Many actions can have both preventive and therapeutic effects. Most government officials who accept responsibility for correcting or treating a problem initiate efforts to prevent its occurrence, because in so doing they create long-range opportunities to reduce the demands on their resources. Nevertheless, in most cases, it is possible to judge a the attributes of a service delivery system as primarily preventive or treatment.

With the current departmental structure of county government, the structure of its service system consists of three primary elements:

service departments. The Children's Services Department provides primary protective services for children; Probation provides supervision and detention; Public Social Services provides financial support to children and their families.

support departments. The CAO/Facilities Management Services Department provides space for county programs and maintains that space; the Auditor-Controller provides accounting services and payrolls; the CAO/Personnel Department supports recruitment and selection of employees. These directly affect children because they control the conditions under which children live as dependents or wards of the County.

policy departments. The CAO provides resource allocation functions and services through recommendation of service and support department budgets; the Auditor-Controller specifies the accounting practices to be used by departments; County

Counsel interprets the law for the Board of Supervisors. These affect children less directly than they affect the operations and behavior of the departments providing services. Commissions and other groups contribute to the work of the Board of Supervisors in deliberating on the policies recommended by these departments or by service departments.

Summary

Governmental activity affecting children includes both governance and service provision. Service provision is distinct from service production and service finance. Jurisdictional fragmentation of production and finance creates major issues of accountability and coordination, both interagency within a unit of government, and interjurisdictional. Some governmental functions affecting or used by children are not specifically for the children, and the resources used are not exclusively for them. In terms of intention or effect, services may be primarily preventive or primarily corrective. In the case of service provision assigned by law to the County units of government, the structure for delivering the service includes the organization providing it and managing it, organizations supporting the provider logistically, and organizations deciding or mediating policy affecting the provider. The next section contains a list of the County service departments whose activities affect children or are for them, the services they provide, and the degree to which they meet the various conditions described in this section.

E. COUNTY GOVERNMENT

COUNTY RESPONSIBILITIES TO CHILDREN

Introduction

Services to children have changed significantly in the past hundred years. Initially, extended families and long-term neighbors provided day, respite and foster care for children, and social control of the behavior of parents. Standards were different - physical discipline was accepted, even when severe, and sexual molestation was denied. Government provided a "poor house" for indigents. Rarely did it have to find an adoptive or foster family for a minor.

As the old social supports crumbled, government assumed a larger portion of the burden. It provided financial aid to widows and orphans, although non-profit agencies and religious groups usually operated the orphanages. The welfare departments which aided broken families, or the probation departments which detained juvenile delinquents, established units to remove abused and molested children from their homes and place them elsewhere. As the reports of abused and neglected children increased, government operated shelters and paid foster parents. Private non-profit or profit making agencies increased in number or grew in size, constructing institutions to meet the demand to house children who had been removed from their homes. The number of children in foster care increased steadily. In response to concerns that social workers were placing children unnecessarily, the Federal government in 1973 made its financial participation dependent on court order of the placement. The

court caseload grew astronomically. To reduce the demand and the expense, the State of California in 1978 legislated SB14, which required termination of either agency supervision or parental rights within a maximum of 24 months. Caseload has continued to increase.

Child protection agencies in the 1970's conducted campaigns to increase public awareness. Child abuse reports increased significantly. The number of children in foster care grew, but the increase in the number of working women made recruitment and retention of foster homes more difficult. Professionals recognized that intervention was not enough; growth in caseload was potentially enormous, and the ability to meet it was uncertain. Meanwhile, researchers identified a wide variety of social problems, from family breakup to drug abuse, which contributed to the high incidence of child abuse and neglect. Prevention of child abuse became a new field for professional endeavor and citizen involvement. Advocates again began to lobby for expansion of government's resources and role in providing services to children and families. The public and professional consensus on this role is in transition.

Members of the public bureaucracies, and associations of citizens and professionals, are not in agreement on the components of the government's role nor on priorities. Some of the conflicts which have surfaced are the result of these fundamental differences in perspective. Although they have not necessarily been clearly recognized, they do influence behavior and judgments on specific issues. They also inhibit rational and

constructive communication because the realization, however vague and ill-defined, that beliefs differ creates mistrust. As long as the underlying issues are not openly debated and rationally discussed, the danger is that the County and other levels of government will drift in directions which they do not recognize and from which they may have to recover, perhaps with political and economic pain, when unplanned results are experienced. We have identified a number of those issues which are relevant to the county's commitments in providing services to children, and we describe them in this section.

The key issues which we have identified are:

- appropriate role of government, in terms of problems which government is responsible to resolve and appropriate means;
- relationship of child abuse and governmental protective roles to social trends, technological developments, and public health agendas;
- relative emphasis on the interests of the child as an individual and on the family unit, including the parents;
- effectiveness of different protective strategies;
- role of the court system in protecting children;
- generalist vs. specialist workers, the roles of different professions. professional identity and the need for interdisciplinary approaches and program coordination;
- the role of professional unions and associations, and the tradeoffs between caseload and compensation.

Appropriate role of government.

Should government be responsible for the total well-being of children or simply for their protection from harm by others, including their parents? What is the government's responsibility for runaways, dropouts, and latchkey minors? And should government protect all runaways, including those who don't want protection? If so, by what means, when they cannot be forcibly detained for any length of time? To what extent does prevention of abuse and neglect move into the realm of providing overall well-being? What ill or lack of service in society is there that does not contribute to child abuse and neglect in some way? If governmental responsibility embraces a child's well-being as well as protection, is government setting a precedent that it is responsible for an adult's as well as a child's well-being? How much well-being: total personal development - intellectual, moral, physical, emotional, sexual, artistic, cultural, etc., etc.? In other words, what are the boundaries of the government's responsibilities? What means are proper to its exercise? Should government provide all of the material and social services to ensure the well-being of those who do not or cannot adequately meet a certain standard on their own? If not provide it, should government enforce it or merely encourage it? Should government eliminate disapproved alternative behavioral choices by applying disincentives (such as criminalizing them) or by incentives alone? What is financially feasible for government to undertake? Is government the "everything" of last

resort? Will the County, by intervening to support an activity (e.g., child care), ensure that the activity will always depend on the County for some of its funding? Is a specific government department responsible for advocacy with public and private organizations on behalf of children? If not, is anyone in government?

Relationship of child abuse and governmental protective roles to social trends, technological developments, and public health agendas.

Relative emphasis on the interests of the child as an individual and on the family unit, including the parents.

Existing legislation emphasizes family reunification in preference to long-term or permanent separation of the minor from the family. Its application in specific cases is dependent on the values and perceptions of the social worker and of the judicial officer. Is the legislative emphasis appropriately applied? To the extent that it permits discretion at the local level, should policy tilt toward supporting parental authority and control or toward protecting the individual minor? What are the trade-offs between society's interest in strong families and

its interest in child protection? What should their resolution be? How should the parent's civil liability for the damages caused by a child's behavior affect the government's policy in regulating the parent's ability to control the child, and vice-versa? Historically, minors have been considered to possess fewer legal rights than adults. How should this be factored into the balance of parental and child rights? To what extent should a child's right to protection from harm by his parents differ from his right to protection from harm by others?

Effectiveness of different child protective strategies.

Would a redirection of resources from supervision to prevention be cost-effective in reducing the child protection caseload? To what level of prevention - society-wide, targeted to high-risk groups, targeted to those who have requested help in times of stress, targeted to those who have abused in the past? Or should the amounts currently spent on prevention be redirected to intervention and treatment? Under which circumstances is it more cost-effective to provide supervision and in-home services to the family than to remove a child from an abusing or neglectful home? Is it feasible to redirect current resources from placement supervision to in-home services? Should the abusing adult be removed rather than the child? Should policy prefer to place a child in a foster family home with counseling provided by the worker or other professionals, in a small group home which presumably combines the family home atmosphere with professional treatment, or in an institution with a highly therapeutic program? Should the helping professions focus on

individual counseling, on forming and guiding mutual support groups, on improving the support mechanisms within client communities, or on a combination of these strategies? If the latter, what are the criteria and the priorities? Are meaningful work and human relations important factors in mental health and socially acceptable behavior? If so, what can the County do about them?

Role of the court system in protecting children.

Should local discretion be exercised by the executive or judicial branch? How much discretion should management delegate to its workers? Should the judicial branch review all social work decisions or just those which are disputed by parents or minors? Should the review be limited to specific statutory requirements and procedural safeguards, or should it include the judge's assessment of the best course of action for the child and family? What is the appropriate judicial posture when the statutory time limit has been reached yet the worker has failed to arrange the treatment which the abusing parent supposedly needs to permit return of the minor?

Generalist vs. specialist workers, the roles of different professions, professional identity and the need for interdisciplinary approaches and program coordination.

Should different workers perform different functions in managing a case, e.g., intervention, investigation, family reunification, non-adoptive permanent placement and adoptive permanent placement? Or should the client interact with the same worker from beginning to end? Social workers are trained to assess and counsel, they spend their time not only making

assessments but also writing reports and arranging for care or treatment by others. Should they be treatment workers or case managers? Should the child receive counseling and therapy from the same person who manages his/her case? If so, should the assignment of case management govern the assignment of treatment responsibility, or vice-versa? What were the effects of separating eligibility and social services, and what are the implications for current practice? Should social workers, police officers, and prosecutors' investigators all be investigating the same case? Should alcohol and drug-abusing parents receive therapy from mental health workers or for medical programs? Are there clear distinctions between the roles of the different professions? If each has a special contribution to make to a total effect, how can their program designs and actual practice be coordinated? How can efforts to improve neighborhoods and strengthen communities be targeted to help the individuals and families most in need? To what extent and how should government mobilize volunteer and community self-help resources to supplement or substitute for hired professionals?

The role of professional unions and associations, and the trade-offs between caseload and compensation.

Professional unions have at various times lobbied or negotiated for changes in work rules, especially in caseloads, as well - as for increases in compensation for their members. Most social service programs have capped appropriations, however, so there is a trade-off between increase in compensation and decrease in caseload. Should the County negotiate with unions on caseloads

as well as on compensation? Should workers be brought into the planning and problem solving processes? Should they be included in Board advisory or interdepartmental coordination committees? If so, should it be through management-created committees, through their unions, or through professional associations?

In order to deal rationally with any of the above issues and avoid repeating the mistakes of other times and places, it is necessary to determine how other jurisdictions and societies have dealt with the same questions, and what the results have been.

These are the kinds of major policy issues which Board advisory groups should tackle.

COUNTY AGENCIES' ROLES

Services Available to and Used by Children, Non-Mandatory, Locally Funded, Non-Protective, Non-Exclusive, Preventive

The Public Library, Museum of Art, Museum of Natural History, Music and Performing Arts Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation, and Department of Beaches and Harbors provide cultural, educational, or recreational opportunities which children use, more or less on the basis of their free choice or that of their parents or guardians. To the extent that employees interact with or at least observe children, child abuse and neglect by family members may be suspected and reported, and the children may be safe from assault by non-family adults or older children. Similarly, criminal or delinquent behavior can be observed and reported for intervention by law enforcement officials.

Some County parks have a specific after school care program for children of elementary age and operate day camps during school breaks. Many parents send their children to such places in lieu of child care facilities. In addition to providing collections of resources for children to use, the Public Library promotes awareness of and offers literature on child abuse and neglect. The Library also offers special programs in reading designed for school age and preschool children. It is therefore a resource for latchkey children and for respite care for parents.

In addition to their facilities and exhibits, the Museums operate educational programs for children, including in some cases preschool children, in basic science and the arts.

In addition to subsidizing educational performances for children, the Music and Performing Arts Commission subsidizes youth orchestras and youth programs.

Directly For Children, Non-Mandatory, Mixed Funding, Protective, Non-Exclusive, Preventive

The Department of Community and Senior Citizens Services operates community service centers which children use for group (e.g., Scout) meetings and other activities. These centers were established in the early 1970's, when policy makers at several levels of government recognized the need to coordinate services in order to achieve impact. Although

the Board of Supervisors created the centers, and various County, State and Federal agencies out stationed intake workers in them, the agencies retained separate Systems and office locations. The attempt at a one-stop service system failed. The centers now provide a place for various public and community organizations to operate, but intake and services are not unified.

The Farm Advisor (the agricultural extension of U.C.L.A.), which is logistically supported by this department, guides the 4-H Clubs. The service centers and 4-H clubs serve child abuse prevention and detection purposes similar to the cultural facilities - observation and reporting as well as child care and respite care.

In addition, the department contracts with city government or private agencies to provide a wide variety of supportive services to individuals and families and to enrich the social environment of low-income communities. The services, usually funded by the State or Federal governments, include job training, employment assistance, housing assistance, emergency food and shelter, and truancy counseling. These programs contribute to the reduction of those conditions which lead to child abuse and neglect or to juvenile delinquency.

The department administers a domestic violence program which provides shelter, counselling, arrangements for schooling, and liaison with law enforcement for children and parents who are victims of abuse or neglect. The department also operates programs for homeless people, including homeless families with children.

The department administers the Job Training and Partnership Act funds for the county and a number of cities in partnership with the County. Some of the funds are used for technical skill training and placement for children who are wards of the county, particularly those supervised by Probation. Others are used for adults who may be at risk of becoming abusive because of their economic situations.

Similarly, the Community Development Commission administers grants and loans for physical development, social services, and financial assistance to attract businesses, create jobs, rehabilitate or construct housing (e.g., a shelter for homeless women with children), train the unemployed and generate other improvements in low-income communities.

Directly For Children, Mandatory, Mixed Funding, Protective,
Exclusive¹, Corrective

The Department of Children's Services receives reports of suspected child abuse and neglect from public and private agencies and from individuals. The department cross-reports to the Sheriff or city police department. The department decides whether to remove the child from his or her home. It requests Superior Court concurrence with a removal. It obtains medical or psychological care for the child as need-ed. It investigates the situation and may recommend ongoing court supervision. If the latter is recommended and is approved by the court, the department provides counseling to the children and parents or refers them to other service providers such as the Department of Mental Health, community agencies, or individual professionals. It places the child outside the home if warranted and if approved by the court. Within 24 months it must review the case and recommend that the court terminate either departmental supervision or parental rights. If the latter, the department arranges adoption or legal guardianship when possible.

The department recruits, evaluates and pays the homes in which it places children, including adoptive homes; it administers the State's licensing program for foster family homes. It operates MacLaren Children's Center, a shelter for children who cannot be placed elsewhere and for children awaiting placement. It determines the eligibility of placed children for Federal and State contributions to their foster care costs and medical expenses. The department also investigates allegations of child abuse or neglect by paid caretakers such as foster parents and institutions. If the allegations are substantiated, the department removes placed children, stops further referrals, and may initiate action to revoke a facility's license.

The Office of Education(County Superintendent of Schools) provides public school districts and private schools throughout the County with information and training.

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These services are not strictly exclusive, since the work is intended to affect the families, including adults.

on the recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect. It also operates on-site schools at major child care institutions such as the County's shelter for abused children (MacLaren Children's Center of the Department of Children's Services), in large privately operated group homes in which that department places some of the victimized children, and in Probation facilities. In these settings its employees may report suspected child abuse by institutional staff.

Local School District employees are obliged by law to report any cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children's Services and the local police department. The Districts must establish regulations providing for such reporting and for appropriate training for their staffs.

Affecting Children, Mandatory, Mixed Funding, Non-Protective, Non-Exclusive, Corrective

Most individuals and agencies report suspected child abuse and neglect to local Police Departments. The law requires dual response, so the police are required to notify the Department of Children's Services. The police are generally the first to contact the child in a new case of abuse or neglect. In unincorporated areas and contract cities, the Sheriff receives such reports and is usually on the scene before the Department of Children's Services. The Sheriff decides whether to arrest the accused on the spot, investigates the case as needed, and recommends for or against prosecution. If the crime is a misdemeanor, the Sheriff recommends prosecution to the City Attorney in those cities with a prosecuting attorney; otherwise recommends it to the District Attorney. Police officers must testify in court if the city or county decides to prosecute.

Police agencies also work with children who are not necessarily victims of abuse or neglect at the time of police contact, but who are good candidates. They contact any child who is vagrant or runaway, violating a curfew, in poor physical or mental condition, suspected of using drugs or alcohol, suspected of a crime, or the victim of a crime. Research has shown that the population of children in these groups overlaps significantly with the population of children who are victims of abuse and neglect. Moreover, significant sectors of the population of adult criminals were the victims of abuse or neglect as children. Therefore, it is likely that the long range consequence of abuse and neglect which is not effectively corrected is increased demands on the criminal justice system. Finally, since the population of some young people is mobile, they may come in contact

with a number of different police organizations at different times.

Police agencies and the Sheriff, and their employees organize and run a variety of programs for children and youth, designed to provide healthful activities for them, to educate them about the law and law enforcement, and to provide a resource for the community. Although such programs are primarily oriented to delinquency prevention, they also assist in prevention and detection of child abuse and neglect.

Police agencies and the Sheriff finance and operate a variety of programs for children in the schools and at a community level. They may use their broadcast channels in cable systems for children-directed programs, for parent education, and for programs directed at abuse and neglect. They work in the classrooms to provide education on drug abuse and instruction on methods to avoid it. These kinds of programs are preventive in their intent, since by reducing drug dependence, for example, they also reduce the rate of drug dependent births and the rate of drug-related abuse cases.

The Forester and Fire Warden provides paramedic services within unincorporated areas and within cities which belong to the Consolidated Fire District. Firemen and paramedics report injuries and suspected arson which appear to be caused by child abuse and neglect or by a child's behavior. paramedics may be the first witnesses to the harm done to a child by abuse or neglect, and may remove the child to a safe medical facility.

The department also sponsors junior firefighter training and experience for youth, which may prevent or detect abuse and neglect.

The Probation Department monitors adults who are convicted of felony or misdemeanor child abuse or neglect and are placed on probation by the Superior or Municipal Court. It also visits their children. The department has specially trained units with below-average caseloads for this purpose. The department also monitors juvenile delinquents who are on probation. Many of them have previously experienced child abuse or neglect and thus are at risk of becoming abusing parents themselves. Some are placed in department-operated juvenile halls and camps, others in foster family homes, group homes and institutions. The Probation Department recruits its own foster homes, which the Department of Children's Services licenses. The two departments use many of the same group homes and institutions, including those which contain a mental health component and are partially funded by the Department of Mental

Health. One of Probation's juvenile halls features a strong mental health component, staffed by the Department of Mental Health.

Directly for Children, Mandatory, Mixed Funding, Non-Protective, Non-Exclusive, Corrective

The Department of Health Services, through its hospitals and medical clinics, provides inpatient and outpatient medical care, including emergency care, to large numbers of individuals and families, primarily those whose low incomes and insurance, if any, are inadequate to pay for the needed care. Although the law obliges all medical practitioners to report cases of suspected abuse and neglect, the reality is that most of the reports by medical personnel of suspected child abuse and neglect originate with this department's staff. The department provides private medical professionals with information and training on the recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect. It also provides on-site medical care to juveniles in the MacLaren Children's Center and in the Probation Department's juvenile halls and camps. The Department professionals decide on the need for, level, and type of care which will be required by children in the care of the Children's Services and Probation Departments. The standards for such decisions are adopted and promulgated by medical professionals. In addition, through contract agencies, it provides medical and psychological treatment to abusers of drugs and alcohol; such abuse is often related to child abuse or neglect.

The Department of Health Services performs a number of community functions which are significant for all children. It enforces laws designed to protect children in the schools from communicable diseases. It operates disease prevention programs for diseases which victimize children more than others. It operates prenatal care programs designed to prevent or reduce the impact of poor nutritional practices, poor hygiene, and drug usage on fetal and infant development - presently one of the primary sources of children who are harmed by their parents. It manages programs to support the issues surrounding teenage pregnancy and may assist in the births resulting from such pregnancy. It makes ethical decisions affecting the survival probability for children who are born with disabling or life-threatening conditions, and for children who are the victims of accidents, disease, and abuse. It examines children who are suspected victims of abuse for the nature of the abuse, and provides court testimony where necessary. It establishes standards for the actions of public and private hospitals receiving emergencies in which children are involved.

The Department of Mental Health provides assessment and treatment, including counseling and medication, to adults and children who suffer from emotional or mental illness, including children who are dependents or wards of the County. Services are delivered by departmental staff and by contractors. Suspected child abuse and neglect are reported. If a person needs commitment to a mental hospital or conservatorship, the department seeks the necessary court order and makes the hospital placement or provides the conservatorship (through its Public Guardian function, which was recently consolidated with this department). The Department of Mental Health provides on-site mental health assessments and treatment for children admitted to the MacLaren Children's Center. It staffs an intensive mental health treatment program for juvenile delinquents at the Probation Department's Dorothy F. Kirby Center. The Department also provides consultation and training to other agencies which deal with abused and neglected children.

Affecting Children. Mandatory, Mixed Funding, Non-Protective, Non-Exclusive, Non-Corrective

The Department of Public Social Services comes in contact with many families when determining and reviewing eligibility for financial assistance and when responding to reports of elder abuse. It reports suspected child abuse and neglect. About half of the child protective service cases opened by the Department of Children's Services are among families who receive public assistance, although many are reported by agencies other than the Department of Public Social Services. In some cases, abuse impacts multiple generations. i.e., children as well as seniors. A few disabled children receive In Home Supportive Services (i.e., care by an attendant) which DPSS evaluates, authorizes and arranges. The department also funds INFOLINE, the area's primary central telephone information bank concerning social services and other resources of all kinds.

The Department provides social services, including in-home supportive services for the disabled or elderly, protective services for adults, such employment services as sheltered workshops for those on relief, refugee instruction in English as a second language and how to look for work, and the GAIN vocational training and counseling program for AFDC recipients. The department purchases direct services to children in the form of day care for parents in the GAIN program.

The Chief Medical Examiner - Coroner investigates cases of death resulting from suspected abuse or neglect, and reports the results of his investigation to the District Attorney.

The District Attorney prosecutes a felony child abuse or neglect case, if he decides it is prosecutable. In lieu of prosecution, he may warn the accused against further such behavior and demand corrective counseling.

The District Attorney also sponsors youth programs which are primarily oriented to delinquency prevention but may assist in prevention and detection of child abuse and neglect.

The District Attorney manages the Child Support Collection System to enforce court orders requiring parents to provide child support payments to the parent with custody, and has the power to prosecute those who do not pay. Part of the payments recovered in this way are used to reduce the cost of welfare payments to the parent with custody. This program has an effect on child abuse and neglect; abuse and neglect is more prevalent in situations where the parent suffers from financial hardship.

The District Attorney prosecutes defendants whose cases are referred to Mental Health Court (Dept. 95). Such cases may affect children.

The Treasurer - Tax Collector is the Court Trustee for funds recovered by the District Attorney's prosecution of child support payments. The trustee holds and invests funds while action to dispose of them is pending.

The Public Defender may represent an indigent defendant in a misdemeanor or felony criminal prosecution, including juvenile delinquents and adults charged with child abuse or neglect. The Public Defender also defends indigents in Mental Health Court.

The County Counsel represents the Department of Children's Services in Superior Court hearings of its recommendations when they are before Dependency Court.

The Superior Court manages three departments with significant direct effects on children - the Dependency Section of Juvenile Court, the Delinquency Section of the Juvenile Court, and the Family Court. Two other departments affect children indirectly, by adjudicating the cases of those accused of the harm to them.

The Dependency Section of the Juvenile Court rules upon recommendations by the Department of Children's Services to initiate court supervision, to place a child, to continue court supervision, and to terminate either court supervision or parental rights. In lieu of placing a child, the court occasionally orders the perpetrator to stay out of the

family home. The Child Advocates Office of the Juvenile Court provides volunteer guardians ad litem to represent the child's views during proceedings in Dependency Court.

The Delinquency Section of Juvenile Court decides on the disposition of cases where a child is accused of a crime, based on the recommendations of public officials who have been in contact with the child, including Probation officials. In some instances, the court may refer the case to the Dependency Court.

The Family Court rules upon the Department of Children's Services' recommendations to approve adoptions. This Court also adjudicates custody disputes in case of divorce or other custody suits. In custody cases involving child abuse, the Family Court may refer the case to Dependency Court for custody decisions.

The Criminal Court conducts trials of felony prosecutions for child abuse and neglect. The Mental Health Court determines whether any persons, including child abuse perpetrators and victims, shall be committed to mental institutions or subjected to conservatorship.

The Municipal Courts conduct trials of misdemeanor prosecutions for child abuse and neglect within their respective districts. The Municipal Courts also adjudicate most traffic cases of juveniles.

Support Departments

Facilities Management (directed by the CAO)

Personnel (consolidated with the CAO)

Auditor-Controller

Policy Departments

Per CAO policy, the Department of Children's Services must use the Department of Mental Health to serve perpetrators and victims of child abuse and neglect who need mental health services. The two departments jointly recruit and fund group homes and institutions for abused and neglected children who need intensive therapy and supervision.

F. STRUCTURAL ISSUES AND ALTERNATIVES

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

EXISTING BOARD-RELATED COMMITTEES

The groups which are important are these:

Adoptions Commission
Children's Budget Implementation Committee
Commission for Children's Services (CSC)
Children's Roundtable
Children's Services Planning Council
Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee
Delinquency and Crime Commission
Domestic Violence Council
Emergency Medical Care Commission
Board of Education
Hospital Commission
Inter-agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN)
Justice System Advisory Group
Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Planning Council
Local Suppression of Drug Abuse in Schools Committee
Mental Health Advisory Board
Obscenity and Pornography Commission
Public Health Commission
Task Force to Promote Self Esteem and Personal and Social
Responsibility
Welfare Advisory Commission
Commission for Women
Commission for Youth

The Board has referred children's issues of various kinds to all of these at one time or another over the past year. Some even have specific mandates that have to do with children and services to children; others have more general mandates, but have influenced county policy significantly regarding children. For example, CCJCC, not ICAN or the Children's Services Commission, assisted the Board last year in establishing a county position on legislation regarding protection of children in preschool and day care facilities. Similarly, the Board requested the Director of Health Services, District Attorney and Emergency Medical Services Commission to make recommendations for the care and treatment of child victims of sexual assault.

ALTERNATIVES

Given the social trends and the underlying social and professional issues, we should address alternatives on a number of different levels:

- alternative methods of obtaining citizen input
- alternative methods of coordinating department work
- alternative methods of structuring the county system

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ALTERNATIVES FOR OBTAINING CITIZEN INPUT

SCOPE OF COMMISSION

- one commission for all casework & community services
- one commission each for adult I children's services
- one commission each for casework I community services
- one commission for each department

- one commission for each recipient constituency
- one commission for each professional constituency

- one commission for each social problem
 - child abuse and neglect
 - elder abuse
 - juvenile delinquency
 - unemployment, etc.

- one commission for each service program
 - child protective services
 - adoption services
 - adult protective services (elder abuse)
 - domestic violence (spousal abuse)
 - conservatorship, etc.

MANDATE AND AUTHORITY OF COMMISSION

- recommend to Board, department(s)
- recommend on policy, organization, operation, staffing
- oversee, monitor, evaluate
- require testimony, documents, data, special reports

COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION

- current I former service recipients
- potential service recipients (members of constituency)
- private service providers to the County's clientele
- other professionals, e.g., teachers, researchers
- other interested citizens
- County managers I professionals
- representatives of other governments

STAFFING OF COMMISSION

- secretarial and clerical support
- staff assistant
- analyst: generic I from a relevant profession

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ALTERNATIVES FOR ORGANIZATION AND COORDINATION

CONSILIDATION

- all social services
 - casework and community
 - adult and child
 - with or without Mental Health and Probation

- all casework services I all community services
 - adult and child
 - with or without Mental Health and Probation

- all children's services I all adult services
 - casework and community
 - with or without Mental Health and Probation

- mission
 - protection, child and adult
 - correction, child and adult
 - welfare, child and adult

- hybrids / subsets of the above

PURCHASE WITH CHOICE

- case management department purchases services
 - for clients
 - residential care
 - health care
 - mental health
 - drug and alcohol abuse
 - schooling
 - for the agency
 - legal representation
 - facilities and general

COORDINATION

- County executive
- agency structure
- lead department

- coordinating committee (standing I ad hoc)
 - agencies: County, all governments, private
 - citizens: professionals, non-professionals

- bilateral negotiation

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SAMPLE #1

Consolidate all social casework and community services:

- Department of Children's Services
- Adult Protective Svcs. & In-Home Supportive Svcs. (DPSS)
- Probation Department
- Department of Mental Health
- alcohol and drug abuse programs (Health Services)
- Department of Community and Senior Citizens Services

Restructure ICAN:

- director of consolidated department is permanent chair
- small executive committee
- chair, Sheriff, Superintendent of Schools
- mandate to coordinate operations

Restructure Commission for Children's Services:

- combine with Commission for Youth
- require one professional appointee per Supervisor
- mandate to recommend Countywide children's policy
- not oversight
- hire professional researcher in sociology/social work

Restructure Adoptions Commission:

- advise on all programs of Department of Children's Services
- increase size and diversity of membership
- include private providers

Retain other existing commissions

Fund the consolidated department to purchase from the most cost-effective providers

- for clients
 - health care
- for the agency
 - legal representation
 - facilities, data processing and general services

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SAMPLE #2

No reorganization

Restructure ICAN:

- CAO is permanent chair
- executive committee of key officials
 - chair, Children's Services, Mental Health, Sheriff,
Superintendent of Schools
- mandate to coordinate operations

Restructure Commission for Children's Services:

- advice & oversight re Department of Children's Services only
- include private providers and other professionals

Restructure Commission for Youth:

- mandate to recommend Countywide children's policy
- increase membership to include professionals
- provide professional research staff

Fund each department to purchase from the most cost-effective providers

- for the clients whose cases it manages
 - any services clients now obtain from other departments
- for the agency
 - legal representation
 - facilities, data processing and general services

STRUCTURAL ALTERNATIVES

CHILDREN'S SERVICES February 29, 1988

I. Departmental Structure

A. (Functional)

Create a new department of protective services I social services by integrating DCS, DCSSS, DMH, Adult protective Service programs from DPSS, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services from DHS.

B. (Programmatic)

Move all child I family directed services to DCS: the Children's Services divisions of DMH9 the California Children's programs from DHS, juvenile detention programs from Probation, etc.

C. (intermediate steps with goals of A. or B. above)

D. (status quo)

II. Interdepartmental Relationship

A. (program management)

Give the DCS the funding and authority to decide from which sources (internal or external) to purchase services for the children for whom it is the parenter. This assumes change of budgeting to provide for full cost recovery policies in interdepartmental transactions.

B. (performance contracting)

Use formal interdepartmental agreements to improve accountability for performance, delivery, and costs, with the DCS as the customer for services of the DHS, DMH, and DOE.

C. (status quo)

III. Coordination

A. (internal County committee I protection)

Form a new committee, designating the Director of DCS as the chairman, with DHS, DOE, and DMH as members, with the function of coordinating joint activities for DCS clients. Maybe even DPSS for

link to GAIN, and Parks, Libraries, etc for policy links to unserved populations.

B. (systems committee)

Strengthen the ICAN policy formulation, planning, and coordination functions for all children, countywide.

IV. Committees and Councils

A. (status quo)

Children's Services Commission stays mostly departmental; ICAN stays system-wide. with its primary concentration on information sharing.

B. (county-wide policy formulation)

Children's Services Commission broadens role to advising Board of Supervisors on policy for all children (as executed by all departments and programs); ICAN focuses on the implementation of new initiatives and policies adopted by the Board.

C. (county-wide public I private partnership)

Create a new group (possibly based on the Planning Council)) of private I corporate and county officials, city officials, and school officials to create consensus in the area of children's I family policy.

D. (unification of inter-agency councils)

Create a single inter-agency council to link all of the standing ones - DVC, ICAN, CCJCC, DCC, etc

E. (unification of citizens' advisory commissions)

Merge all of the citizens' commissions affecting or advising on children I family policy into a single body with that function.

V. Committees - General

1. Briefings of new commissioners and annual briefings of entire commission.
2. Review of need for a proposed new commission.
3. Periodic reports on commission costs and accomplishments

STRUCTURAL ALTERNATIVES

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

February 29, 1988

I. Service Delivery Structure

Fragmentation, duplication and overlap in the service delivery structure for children's and other social services are not merely characteristic of governmental service organization. They are inherent in the populations served, with respect to service delivery, and in the political system with respect to advisory boards, lobbies, and interagency coordination. Thus, one issue is to find ways to permit as much diversity as possible while maximizing efficiency of operation. One good analogy might be the contrast between bureaucratic efficiency, which tends toward monopoly by reducing duplication wherever it is found, and market efficiency, which tends toward multiple competing providers and increased duplication, leaving efficiency up to the effects of competition. Various alternatives are reasonable, considering our earlier (1983 1 1987) recommendations.

A. (Functional)

Create a new department of protective services / social services by integrating DCS, DCSCS, DMH, Adult Protective Service programs from DPSS, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services from DHS.

Comment. This would consolidate the following departments and functions into a Social Welfare Agency: Children's (Protective) Services (DCS), Adult (Protective) Services (from DPSS), Community and Senior Citizens Services, Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services (from Department of Health Services). This would re-integrate the services along professional and functional lines, but would eliminate the presumed political efficacy of the current fragmentation. In our 1983 recommendations, we referred to this kind of approach as a "re-alignment strategy". The first step would be a Board decision requiring the various department heads to form a group assigned the responsibility to create a new department I agency. The staff for that group (organizational development specialists) could be the CAO or could be a contractor such as I. Adizes, E. Jaques, or P. Hitchcock.

B. (Programmatic)

Move all child I family directed services to Department of Children's Services: the Children's Services divisions of the Department of Mental Health, the California Children's programs from Department of Health Services, juvenile detention programs from Probation, the court schools from Department of Education, etc.

Comment. This would be consistent with what we called a "constituency" strategy in 1983, and would be a logical follow up to the action of creating DCS in the first

place. This would be action based on the assumption that the County should have a single department which deals with / is in charge of / services for all children, when the child who receives the service can be isolated from the context. (That is, it would not apply to Parks and Recreation, for example, or to police, or to the pediatric wards in county hospitals.) This would unify the structure for services to children and the associated constituencies; the cost would be fragmentation of the service delivery systems. In particular, the present integration of a mental health system, for example, would be fragmented by moving children's mental health to the Children's Services Department.

On the other hand, fragmenting the service delivery system can be productive from the political perspective. Once a separate department is in operation, it is linked to a constituency that thereby has direct and ready access to elected decision makers. That is why it is done. It is not efficient, and it is effective only in the sense that it increases political efficacy for that constituency. Those interested in senior citizens had a separate department for years, and accomplished much with it. Those interested in children now believe it is their turn - and they want to do the same things.

If fragmentation is the issue, it is a consequence of the political system and characteristics of the service population. Correcting it organizationally would require (what contemporary social theorists have found) a unification of the service populations in ways that would accommodate various political perspectives on what is needed. There is no such thing as a non-fragmented, non-duplicative structure which is focused on children's services as though they can be divorced from the other populations and conditions which have led to social disintegration. Buying the political agenda - that is, that a separate structure is needed to ensure access and efficacy - will only lead eventually to more fragmentation, as the seniors, the ethnic minorities, and other sub-populations decide to create their own thing.

In fact, a structure organized purely around constituencies could be optimally efficient in the market sense. The departments of the county would be organized around specific populations - age groups, gender, ethnicity, etc. Each department would be a case manager for that group (i.e., a program manager). All services - medical, psychological, financial, social, detention, etc. (probably excepting police patrol) - would be contracted out by the case managers. This model would maximize

fragmentation and maximize market efficiency. It has never been done, so the potential social effects are a bit difficult to predict. But it could be done, and it would be theoretically efficient.

C. (Intermediate steps with goals of A. or B. above)

Take a few intermediate steps, with A. or B. above as the ultimate plan.

Comment. In the case of A., for example, the "Adult Protective Services" functions could be taken out of DPSS and either a) made a separate department, or b) consolidated with the Public Guardian functions of the Department of Mental Health.

It is possible to sketch this in terms of a phased plan, with levels as follows:

Level 1: Protection: DCS, Adult Protection from DPSS, Public Guardian from Mental Health

Level 2: Social Casework: above plus In Home Social Services from DPSS, and [Probation ??]

Level 3: All social work: above plus Department of Community and Senior Citizens Services

Level 4: All social work plus therapy: above plus Department of Mental Health, and alcohol and drug programs from Health Services

D. (Status quo)

II. Interdepartmental Relationship

A. (Program management)

Give the DCS the funding and authority to decide from which sources (internal or external) to purchase services for the children for whom it is the parenter. This assumes change of budgeting to provide for full cost recovery policies in interdepartmental transactions.

Comment. Leave the structure as is, but give the Children's Services Department the funding and authority to decide from which sources (i.e., internal or external) it will purchase services. This would assume that the full and fully burdened costs of all services supplied by one department to another are transferred in the budgets. and that alternative sources are available by contract or other means. We have consistently recommended this for particular internal services, but not explicitly for all services. The budget processes and bureaucratic policies I assumptions are not properly set up to do this, but could be revised, given the GAO's (i.e., Dixon's) intention to cooperate with the potential that the alternative resources may be private, as well as alternative public, providers.

B. (performance contracting)

Use formal interdepartmental agreements to improve accountability for performance, delivery, and costs, with the DCS as the customer for services of the DHS. DMH, and DOE.

Comment. Formal interdepartmental agreements have been used successfully in several California Counties and in a few other states. The idea is that the suppliers of services to children who are in the charge of the county recognize the Children's Services Department as the responsible agent for those children (i.e., the "parenter"), and agree in writing to specifications and terms and conditions (excluding funding) for supplying those services.

The expectation is that this kind of inter-departmental agreement would work, since everyone would have agreed in advance on the terms. The reality is that they usually don't work. Without transfer of money or another incentive, each department's primary motivation is to reduce pressure on its budget (so it can stay within its own budget). Consequently, the agreements don't last long. Since the departments are in no hierarchy at all, there is no way to enforce the agreements. In the present case, the occasion of the disagreement over the services of the Mental Health Department was precisely that the Director of Children's Services expressed a degree of uncertainty over whether or not the Department of Mental Health had kept to the agreement that various groups believed they had; and the Director

of Mental Health expressed a degree of uncertainty over the actual contents of the agreement. The key to making a system like this work would be to create incentives for each of the parties to make it work. For example, the "pay for performance" plan could be modified so that goals and objectives explicit in the interdepartmental agreements would be incorporated in the performance agreement affecting the department heads' compensation.

C. (Status quo)

The point is the same one we stressed in the 1983 work. The Board will have to decide on the overall principal of organization it wants. Item I.B. above requires the development and maturation of a program management system in county government. There is no history of such a system and no experience with it; the only place where anything resembling it is practiced is in the Road Department. Item I.A. above requires that the Board declare an explicit intention to consolidate, regardless of any "opportunity" window. Neither of these explicit strategies has been adopted. Items II.A. and II. B. above would do nothing about fragmentation, but would at least create a stronger impression, symbolic, that the Director of Children's Services is in charge of the bureaucratic policy for services affecting children.

Thus, regardless of the alternative chosen, the basic requirement will be that the Board direct the CAO to accomplish these steps and adopt these strategies, with a time limit. The reason this generally does not work is that the bureaucracy assumes that it won't stick - i.e., that the Board doesn't really mean it, or will forget about it. That is why the easiest strategy is the "opportunity" strategy. It is passive - one waits for opportunities, and as time goes on, the Board's interest and commitment wanes. Even now. for example, the cost accounting systems are not in place. Interdepartmental charges are still based on marginal cost pricing rather than full cost recovery or average unit cost. DCS has an interdepartmental agreement with Mental Health: the agreement, and the issue of whether or not its terms are being met, is one of the central points of contention at present; but DCS has no alternative but DMH as a provider of mental health services. The County Department Heads may believe that they have worked it out, but others do not.

III. Coordination

A. (Internal County committee / protection)

Form a new committee, designating the Director of DCS as the chairman, with DHS, DOE, and DMH as members, with the function of coordinating joint activities for DCS

clients. Maybe even DPSS for link to GAIN, and Parks, Libraries, etc. for policy links to unserved populations.

Comment. This hardly seems reasonable as a means of reducing "duplication, fragmentation, and confusion."

B. (Systems committee)

Strengthen the ICAN¹ planning, program development, and coordination functions for all children, countywide.

Comment. This is the only reason to justify having such departments as Parks and Recreation and the Public Library as members of ICAN. However, this kind of committee almost never functions in a genuine coordination role for long. The activity reverts to program development and joint projects. In addition, this is apparently opposed by the current chairman of ICAN (although supported by earlier letters of his), and would be opposed by the Children's Services Commission in the guess of most.

IV. Committees and Councils

A. (Status quo)

Children's Services Commission stays mostly departmental; ICAN stays system-wide, with its primary concentration on information sharing and training.

Comment. This kind of system provides for citizen participation linked to a department and its programs.

¹ Throughout the term ICAN refers to the committee of elected and appointed officials known by that name and designated in the County Code by that name. In particular, when reference is made to the staff of ICAN, the term used is "the staff of ICAN."

It can work reasonably well; most departments have at least one committee or commission which acts as a source of citizen input, advocacy, and some evaluation. The only problem with it is that eventually the commission becomes or appears to become a captive of the department. Most of the energy goes into advocacy for departmental interests, rather than into policy formulation by the Board of Supervisors.

The inter-agency council, when performing properly, can produce significant initiatives for new interdepartmental programs. This has been the success of the council which is currently most effective (i.e., CCJCC). It has developed integrated information systems, plans for new technology, training programs, and other criminal justice initiatives. Early on, when they are first created, these councils tend to have a large participation by the principals. Later, as the new programs get moving, the principals begin sending subordinates more and more frequently. This is now starting to happen in CCJCC. The subordinates dream up new and good ideas, but the credibility of the principals' participation is no longer behind them. If the second-tier participation stays strong enough, the group can continue to set meaningful agendas and influence priorities. This is apparently

what is happening with the Domestic Violence Council, for example. If the participation is too weak, then eventually the group becomes an information sharing network, which is what has happened with ICAN.

This is not necessarily a problem, provided only that the functions and operations are limited to that - i.e., information sharing, training, and so forth. Some coordination may even occasionally creep in. On the other hand, it must be controlled and disciplined. The proposal, to put the chairmanship in the hands of the Children's Services Department, will not be acceptable to the current chairman or anyone else in the system. In fact, the ICAN members in general would resist any attempt to reduce ICAN's level of self-governance. On such questions, the following alternatives would make sense and possibly create a vehicle for later correction:

move the funding for ICAN out of Children's Services and into a) the department of the chairman, or b) a centralized appropriation funded as a pool from assessments of all participating agencies,

encourage the elected officials on ICAN and the other representatives to elect as chairman one of the educators - i.e., the County Superintendent of Schools, or the Superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Regarding the ongoing animosity between the individuals involved, it can be ignored. In fact, a whole theory of management says it should be ignored. There is little point in trying to deal with conflict by choosing sides; it will merely surface somewhere else anyway.

B. (Countywide policy formulation)

Children's Services Commission broadens role to advising Board of Supervisors on policy for all children (as executed by all departments and programs); ICAN focuses on the (planning of] implementation of new initiatives and policies adopted by the Board. ICAN is not an implementing agency in its own right, but it is a council which was formed explicitly for the purpose of developing methods of interdepartmental coordination when several departments are involved in the same kind of program.

This is a genuine separation of function. One function is to assist the Board of Supervisors in formulating County policy as it affects children; a second function is to implement the policy when adopted by the Board. Implementation is the responsibility of public officials - not of a council of public officials. However, in some instances policy can be implemented only by multiple departments. In such cases, a council composed of the constituent members of ICAN would be a reasonable way to plan, given the current county structure. Any inter-agency group with this function would be composed of the same member agencies.

The composition of ICAN is also close to what is necessary for coordinated implementation planning. However, the staff of ICAN is not adequate for the kinds of complex planning that would be needed. The staff would have to be augmented with different management, moved out of MacLaren Hall, and relocated organizationally (and financially) in a central staff department. That could be in the department of the CAO, subordinate to the staff of CCJCC, or in the Department of Community and Senior Citizens' Affairs, subordinate to the staff of the Domestic Violence Council. It could be in the Department of the Board of Supervisors. Since it is the ordinance responsibility of the CAO to "coordinate all departments. services, institutions or districts..." (2.08.060) and to "assist the board of supervisors in coordinating the functions and operations of the several such departments. services, institutions or departments [sic]..." (2.08.050). it seems legitimate to consider locating the staff function in the CAO. The incumbent staff, with a high level of competence in legislative work, public relations, and primary prevention programs, would fit in well in this arena.

The argument, that ICAN is composed of officials of other jurisdictions, is irrelevant here. So are CCJCC and the Domestic Violence Council.

The composition of the commission is proper for performing its role. It would be reasonable, but probably not necessary, to clarify the ordinance, particularly in the area of "review".

C. (County-wide public / private partnership)

Create a new group (possibly based on the Planning Council) of private I corporate and county officials, city officials, and school officials to create consensus in the area of children's I family policy.

Comment. This model has been employed successfully in Mann County and in other states. Inclusion of private institutions and professionals in the planning process maximizes cooperation between the public and private sectors, strengthens appeals of private service providers for foundation and corporate donations, and ensures political consensus as well as managerial cooperation.

This model differs from ICAN in that private participation is significant, and from the Children's Services Commission in that the private representatives are professionals and decision-makers rather than concerned citizens. Such a group would supplant a public-only inter-agency council such as ICAN but not a citizen's advisory panel such as the Commission.

D. (Unification of inter-agency councils)

Create a single inter-agency council to link all of the standing ones - Domestic Violence Council, ICAN, CCJCC, Delinquency and Crime Commission, etc.

Comment. This would effectively make a council which focuses on a particular subject area a sub-committee of the linking council. Executives who are responsible for program implementation would serve on the subordinate councils. under the direction of the elected officials and department heads who would comprise the policy group. For public relations purposes, the various councils would retain their names, and the elected officials and department heads might participate personally on ceremonial occasions or in key decisions.

E. (Unification of citizens' advisory commissions)

Merge all of the citizen's commissions affecting or advising on children's / family policy into a single body with that function.

Comment. This would provide the Board of Supervisors with a single official source of citizen policy recommendations, in which competing views could have been negotiated to the extent possible before presentation to the Board. A clear focus on policy, and a requirement to address the full range of service needs, would minimize the likelihood of the commission being an advocate for a

particular bureaucratic interest or involving itself too much in the management of policy implementation.

V. Committees - General

The Board of Supervisors should take a few steps to make the system of committees and commissions work better. These steps should be taken regardless of any other action, and should apply to all situations in which the Board intends to work with a committee, commission, board, inter-departmental council, inter-agency council, or other group. They are:

1. Briefings of commissioners. Instruct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare and deliver briefings on the overall structure and operation of county government. The briefing would be provided to each commissioner when appointed, as a matter of initiation. A second, more global briefing on the structure, operations, and current state of the County would be made available to all commissioners as a group twice a year. An alternative source for such a briefing would be the staff of the E & E Commission. The briefings would be intended to ensure that commissioners a) understand the terrain, b) comprehend the major issues the Board is confronting, and c) understand their missions within an appropriate framework.
2. Review of need. Reintroduce and implement the procedure, recommended by E & E in 1975 and adopted by the Board of Supervisors, requiring the CAO a) to review the roles and functions of any new committee or commission in terms of whether or not its intended functions could be performed by an existing group, and b) to recommend the detailed functions, composition, and method of operation of the new commission.
3. Periodic reports. Implement the recommendations of the 1986-87 Grand Jury regarding reporting requirements for the costs and the accomplishments of committees and commissions: a) report costs separately, and b) require a periodic report on activity and accomplishments.

G. COMMISSION SYSTEM

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF COMMISSION SYSTEM: DEFINITIONS

Introduction

In the most general sense, a commission or committee is any group organized to participate in the work of government or to influence governmental actions, comprised of people who are not elected for the governmental purpose in which the group participates. Given the complexity of today's society, people sense that voting for elected officials is not by itself sufficient to ensure that governmental actions can represent a common understanding of needs and issues. Commissions and committees provide a vehicle in which citizens can participate directly in the activities of government. Service on them is a form of voluntarism. All levels of government organize commissions and committees in a variety of different forms. In addition, it has been frequent practice in recent decades to remove particularly critical areas of operation from the direct control of the governing body of any jurisdiction. Consequently, such joint powers agencies and regional operating agencies as the Air Quality Management District, the Coastal Commission, and the Southern California Rapid Transit District have proliferated.

Alternative Forms

Commissions and committees can be formed on the initiative of a group of citizens, or on the initiative of the governing body of a jurisdiction. The composition and the structure of such groups vary widely. We recognize six general classifications:

Broadly based educational groups, organized on a voluntary membership basis (League of Women Voters, Common Cause, Heritage Foundation)

Citizens commissions appointed by the governing body (Police Commission, Economy and Efficiency Commission, Children's Services Commission)

Task forces or coordinating councils formed of representatives from numerous internal departments or interjurisdictional agencies (Countywide Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Transportation Commission, Data Processing Task Force, Fleet Maintenance Task Force, Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect)

Groups formed as a mix of public officials, service providers, and citizens to cooperate on problem solving, a program area, or a series of tasks (Little Hoover Commission, Children's Roundtable, Judicial Procedures Commission)

Special purpose external or mixed groups formed for a single purpose (President's Task Force on Juvenile Justice, Grace Commission, Citizens' Planning Councils)

General purpose external or mixed groups formed to unify the public in a geographical area (Community Coordinating Councils,

These kinds of groups are all relevant to the governmental system in Los Angeles County and to the problems the Board of Supervisors faces in governing. They share the following characteristics:

they provide a means for citizens to exercise the right to participate in government;

they generate proposals, recommendations, testimony and the like intended to influence the judgments of elected officials;

they are independent of one another, and in some cases may be structured to be independent of any single governing body;

they impose costs on government;

none has any mandate to work in an area to the exclusion of any other group.

Alternative Link to Government

A number of alternative relationships are open to the governing body of a jurisdiction and to its voluntary groups. The governing body may recognize the group formally, making it in some sense part of the public system of government. For example, the Board of Supervisors of LOS Angeles County has established and appoints the members of at least 94 advisory committees and commissions². Such broadly based groups as Common Cause are not sanctioned in this sense: they are purely private; they are not part of government; they influence government through formal communications that originate outside it. Formally

recognized groups vary as follows:

they may be funded or unfunded;

they may be temporary or standing;

they may be statutory or administratively authorized³;

their roles may be advisory or administrative;

they may be self-governing, informal, or operate with an imposed governance;

they may be comprised of appointees chosen by the elected official, appointees nominated by expert groups or professional societies, or appointees who volunteer or are elected to serve to represent a geographical area or a group.

Alternative Role Definitions

The law recognizes no distinctions among the various names of committees. That is, whether a formally sanctioned group is called a "commission", a "committee", a "council" or something else makes no difference in the fundamentals of its role. The fundamental is, the group is either purely advisory or administers a program within strictly defined statutory limits. Elected officials, acting in their elected capacity to exercise the

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By statutory, we mean established in the County Charter or in the laws of the State or Federal Governments. Those established by ordinance or by order of the Board of Supervisors are administrative, since they are created through the administrative authority of the Board.

public trust, make all final decisions.

Administrative Bodies. In Los Angeles County Government, Administrative commissions or boards are extremely rare. They may have three roles:

the commission itself performs a function of government (Civil Service Commission, Employee Relations Commission)

the commission operates a program of governmental services, including appointment of the department head (Board of the Museum of Art)

the County government participates in a Joint Powers Agency or a regional board which operates a program of governmental services, but does not control it in the elected capacity of the Board of Supervisors (County Sanitation Districts, Transportation Commission), although it may fund it in the sense that it provides the major resources supporting it

Advisory Groups. The majority of commissions organized, sanctioned and funded by the Los Angeles County government are purely advisory. Their role is to provide information, analysis and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The nature of the power of such groups is the power to influence. If the Board of Supervisors acts affirmatively on their recommendations, the reason is that the majority of the Board has confidence in the judgments of the people they appoint to serve, rather than that some power to act has been delegated to the group.

This basic advisory role of commissions can be realized in a number of different ways, usually expressed by the Board in the policy statement creating or continuing the group (i.e., the ordinance or the Board minute order). By controlling such

variables as funding, compensation, staffing, membership, and other details, the ordinance provisions can also affect the ability of the commission to carry out its mission and the level of activity the commission can realistically perform. Within that framework, County commissions vary widely with respect to the following:

Expertise. The role may be to provide the expert judgment of professionals in a field of concentration for which the commission was formed. The membership of the Productivity Commission and the Emergency Medical Care Commission includes experts in the technical fields of interest, appointed by the Board from nominations by professional societies in those fields, some of whom may include service providers in the field. (This is also true of certain administrative commissions. For example, the membership of the Employee Relations Commission consists of professionals in labor relations because the Board relies on it for judgments on matters of union security, bargaining rights, and employee organization.)

Problem Solving. The Board may establish a commission for advice from a broadly based group to assist it in solving problems or addressing issues of policy, independent of the assumptions of practitioners in the field, and independent of service providers. Such groups may have a broad mandate, such as that of the Economy and Efficiency Commission to "investigate any area of County government", or a program or department-specific mandate, such as that of the Judicial Procedures Commission to "recommend ... changes and improvements in judicial administration..." or that of the Institutional Inspection Commission to "... visit and inspect each jail or lockup ... and ascertain its condition as to effective and economical administration, ..., and in any other II respects.....". What is common to the roles of these groups is the presumption that their recommendations, if adopted by the Board of Supervisors, will lead to change and correct a problem.

Advocacy. The Board may establish a commission for advice on how to improve conditions which are believed to be deficient by a particular group. Membership is usually limited to those who are members of the group with the problem. These commissions may act in a problem solving role, coordinate the activities of other groups influencing county

activity, or develop and operate programs of their own; their main function, however, is to advocate the interests of a particular clientele or interest group. For example, the Board charges the Commission for Women to "recommend necessary procedures, programs or legislation to promote and insure equal rights and opportunities for all women... similarly, the Commission on Disabilities is comprised of people with disabilities, and is charged to "... make recommendations to the Board for improvement of policies, systems, and procedures "... in the best interest of people with disabilities." What is common to such groups is that they are composed exclusively of members of a clientele or constituency with a strong relationship to County government, and that they focus on problem areas peculiar to that constituency, some of which may not be under the control of the Board of Supervisors, rather than on a service production area or specific program.

Regulatory Decision-Making. The Board of Supervisors may delegate certain of its decision-making ("quasi-judicial") responsibilities to an advisory commission, subject to appeal to the Board or subsequent litigation by the parties. For example, the Assessment Appeals Board is charged "to hear appeals of equalization assessment", and the Engineering Geology and Soils Review and Appeals Board is charged to "serve as a board of review of the adequacy of geological reports....". The membership of such groups is frequently limited to professional practitioners in the field of interest, and may be checked by confirmation or selection of another branch of government, or trade and professional societies. To eliminate the possibility of conflicts of interest.

Department or Program Advocacy/Liaison. The Board of Supervisors charges certain commissions with the responsibility to work with a particular department or programs of a department. For example, the Board charges the Hospital Commission to "consult with and advise the Director of Health Services and the Board of Supervisors on all matters pertaining to the patient care policies and programs of the Los Angeles County hospital system...." Similarly, the Commission for Public Social Services is charged to "consult with and advise the Board of Supervisors and the director of Public Social Services on all matters relating to the provision of Public Social Services, including but not restricted to financial assistance and social services....". What characterizes these groups is that they concentrate on a service production area or specific program of County government, rather than on a clientele or constituency.

Fund Allocation / Distribution. The Board has established several commissions to assist it in distributing certain kinds of funding among the various communities in the County. The funds in question are usually block grants or categorical grants of a State or Federal Agency which specifies the nature of the commission which is to assist. The problem faced by the Board in these instances is to determine a need-based formula for distribution of the funds while preserving equity among Supervisorial Districts and ensuring that the funds will be used for the intended purposes. Many of them are inter-jurisdictional, interagency boards whose members are public and private service providers or professional practitioners in the field or category to which the funds apply. For example, the Justice System Advisory Group is charged to "make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning applicants to be selected to receive justice system block grant funds, assess County justice system heads, evaluate alternative programs for meeting needs, and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding needs." The Delinquency and Crime Commission is charged with "recommendations regarding programs administered by local governmental or non-governmental organizations submitted for funding on a matching basis through the California Delinquency Prevention Commission to the Department of Youth Authority." The Community Action Board recommends "allocation of community services block grant funds."

Alternative Orientations.

Depending on the nature of the problems or issues to be addressed, the group whose interests are to be advocated, or the degree to which technical expertise is important in the activities of the commission, the commissions may orient themselves to the task in a variety of different ways. Any commission may change its orientation from time to time, as conditions change, or as the leadership in the group changes; the Board does not specify an orientation or a method of approach for most commissions. We classify these various kinds of approach as follows. We do not intend these to be mutually exclusive. The items in the list are more an identification of extremes on an axis of measure than mutually exclusive choices.

Measures of Focus.

Policy/Planning	<<----->>	Implementation
Task/Problem (Temp.)	<<----->>	Role (Ongoing)
Change (Policy) (Evaluation)	<<----->>	Management
Own Initiative (External)	<<----->>	Board/Mgt. Initiative (Internal)
Service/Profession	<<----->>	Market/Constituency

Measures of Style.

Leadership	<<----->>	Reaction/Passivity
Acceptance/Support	<<----->>	Criticism/Confrontation
Media Exposure	<<----->>	Confidentiality
Research	<<----->>	Opinion/Feeling
Formal Reports	<<----->>	Informal/No Comment

Sources of Cost.

We noted above that all groups, even those organized completely externally, impose a cost on government. The minimal cost is an indirect cost: that is, the cost of information. County and other paid officials perform work to supply the commission with information or to respond to commission recommendations. In addition, commissions organized by the County impose direct and indirect costs associated with performing the work the County asks of them.

When considering the measurement of costs, one can focus on incremental costs, or on total/actual costs. Incremental costs are those amounts, usually budgeted in accounts that can be traced to the commission, which the County spends, solely as a

result of the commission's activity, in addition to its regular, ongoing expenses. For example, commissioner compensation is an incremental cost. Measures of incremental cost exclude amounts for services and supplies that would be spent regardless of the commission. For example, they would exclude the costs of the attendance of county officials at commission meetings, since the salaries of the officials would be paid regardless of whether they attend such meetings. The County can usually compute incremental costs from the budgetary records it keeps. The Grand Jury reported \$4.9 million budgeted incremental costs for fiscal. year 1986-87. Since budgeted funds need not be spent, the amount does not measure actual incremental costs. It is, however, an accurate indicator of the magnitude of such costs. Measures of total cost include all amounts attributable to commission activity. They include the cost of space, the cost of work performed for the commission by staff or by county officials, and all indirect costs of maintenance, management, and administration. The county does not typically keep records of total costs attributable to a commission's activity. Employees do not generally keep detailed records of how they spend their time, and the indirect administrative costs attributable to commission activity are not recorded in separate accounts. Consequently, the total costs of a commission must be estimated. The most recent documented attempt to do so for all county

commissions was accomplished by the Grand Jury in 1967. At that time, the number of Board commissions was 88, and the estimated total cost was \$ 1.7 million. The paragraphs below define each source of cost attributable to the operations of a commission.

Commissioner Compensation. The County frequently compensates members of commissions for the time and expense of their service. The form of compensation is a stipend - a fixed amount to be paid per meeting attended by the commissioner. Stipends range from \$25 to \$250 per meeting. The total amount is budgeted as a direct expense, based on the number of commissioners and the maximum number of meetings specified in the ordinance creating the commission.

Commissioner Expenses. In a few cases, the County provides means for commissioners to recover travel expenses associated with their work for the County. When the work of the commission requires extensive local travel, the County may supply a car and driver for commissioner use.

Staffing. The County provides staff services for commissions in a variety of forms. At a minimum, some County employee prepares and distributes meeting agendas, notices, minutes, and other clerical or logistical support. Staffing ranges from this minimum to, in some instances, professional and technical workers assigned full time to the commission. In most cases, the staffing of a commission is added to the regular duties of an employee, so the costs must be estimated. When the County provides dedicated staff to a commission, the cost can be measured directly from budgetary documents.

Space, Services and Supplies. All commissions use County space. They conduct meetings and other business in facilities maintained by the County. This basic, minimal cost cannot be measured directly from County records, and must be estimated. The County allocates permanent office space to a few commissions. In these cases, the costs attributable to the space can be estimated using County averages and allocation rules. All commissions also use such basic supplies as letterhead stationery and business cards supplied by the County. The County may also fund specialized technical or professional services of outside contractors for commission projects.

Meeting Attendance. Meetings are part of the nature of the participation expected of commissioners. Depending on the expectation that actions of the commission may affect them, on the need to respond to demands for information by the commission, or on the wish to supply testimony or other information to the commission, county employees and the employees of private firms paid by the County to provide a service relevant to the commission's work attend commission meetings. This is a cost. Someone else must be performing the work that would otherwise be performed by such employees, or the work is being neglected, or it is performed by the employee in overtime. Since the County keeps no detailed records of how employees spend their time, this cost cannot be measured from budgetary or accounting records. It must be estimated.

Response to Inquiries. The only reasonable source of information regarding a government's operations is the government itself. Commissions need information about the subjects relevant to their responsibilities; they cannot function without it. Therefore, someone must perform work to respond to commission inquiries. The time spent on that work is a cost. In addition, the commission may question the information supplied, wish to obtain more detail, or wish to recognize the contributions of those who did the work. In all such cases, the employees who did the work must spend additional time. These costs are typically not recorded, and must be estimated from the recollection of the people involved.

Response to / Defense from Initiatives. The output of a commission is a recommendation. It may be documented, in a report, or stated in a letter or other communication, but it is not a final action. Only the Board of Supervisors (or the governing body of some other jurisdiction) can take the final action to adopt the recommendation and order employees to implement it. In the case that affected employees disagree, they spend time in preparing replies and organizing resistance. In the case that they agree, they spend time documenting their agreement and organizing support. The costs of this time, which is generally assumed to be part of the job of a public official, are not recorded anywhere, and must be estimated from the recollection of those involved.

Summary

County government provides for extensive citizen participation through its formal commission system, in addition to its recognition of outside groups organized to interact with local government.

We distinguish commissions from one another in the following:

- Form: Broadly based/special interest; citizen/expert; self-organized/officially created; single geographic area/Countywide.
- Link: Funded/unfunded; temporary/standing; statutory/administrative; advisory/administering; self/directed governance; appointed/nominated/elected.
- Role: Single task/ongoing role; administrative (function, operation, participation) / advisory (expert, problem solving, advocacy, regulation, departmental, funding, other).
- Orientation: Policy/implementation, task/role, change/ management, service/market, external/internal.
- Style: Support/criticism; research/opinion; media/ confidentiality; leadership/passivity; formal/ informal input.
- Costs: Compensated/uncompensated, incremental/total (commissioner expense, staffing, space, services and supplies, meeting attendance, response to inquiries, response to recommendations)

In subsequent sections, we apply this scheme to the commissions established to work on children's issues.

COMMISSION RELATED ISSUES

Background

The use, and particularly the proliferation, of commissions in local government has always been controversial. Purists in public administration hold one extreme view. Purists in participative democratic governance hold the other. The tension between the two stabilizes the system; at the same time, it creates administrative problems.

Public administrators neither need nor want commissions. The public elects officials to determine policy and define the activities of government. In turn, the elected officials hire administrators - experts and professionals in the field - to carry out the policy. The public has ample opportunity to express its displeasure at the next election. In extreme cases, recalls, petitions, lawsuits, and initiatives are available. What business would appoint 94 freestanding associations to second-guess its managers? Better to replace the managers. Certainly the Constitutional right of free association and the right to petition the government permit unlimited formation of such groups, but this does not mean that they have a call on the resources of the government. Some citizens' commissions are useful - if they act as lobbies for bureaucratic or professional interests, and if they are kept to a minimum.

Many County departmental professionals believe that commissions are helpful adjuncts to the political system, when they assist the technical people with political problems or the Board with problems it cannot reasonably resolve unilaterally. That is, the commission is to be a "buffer" for the Board to buy time on some issue, or is to advocate and assist a departmental (or union) point of view on an issue by supplying public relations or information on the question. Alternatively, the commission is viewed as a lobby for a special interest group or a group of service providers, when it is not a lobby for county officials. This peculiarly bureaucratic view of commissions cannot be found in the formal ordinances and Minute orders of the Board, so we can cite no examples. It does, nonetheless, represent a widely held, albeit cynical, view of those commissions which are composed primarily of representatives of a particular service, such as the Hospital Commission (doctors) or the Judicial Procedures Commission (lawyers).

Similarly, there is no need for special efforts to coordinate. The elected governing board appoints each department head for specific purposes, and appoints the Chief Administrative Officer to "coordinate the administration of all departments, services, institutions or districts under his supervision and to "plan, coordinate, set priorities, and monitor all data

processing functions in the county.”⁴

At the other extreme citizens know that they must exercise direct participation in the affairs of government to preserve basic freedoms in a vehemently individualistic society. The basic points were made by Alexis de Tocqueville in 1835:

"It is difficult to draw a man out of his own circle to interest him in the destiny of the state, because he does not clearly understand what influence the destiny of the state can have upon his own lot. But if it is proposed to make a road cross the end of his estate, he will see at a glance that there is a connection between this small public affair and his greatest private affairs; and he will discover, without its being shown to him, the close tie that unites private to general interest. Thus far more may be done by entrusting to the citizens the administration of minor affairs than by surrendering to them in the control of important ones, towards interesting them in the public welfare and convincing them that they constantly stand in need of one another in order to provide for it.... Local freedom, then, which leads a great number of citizens to value the affection of their neighbors and of their kindred, perpetually brings men together and forces them to one another in spite of the propensities that sever them.”⁵

"In democracies, ... the sovereign power is not only supreme, but universally present. The American functionaries are, in fact, much more free in the sphere of action which

⁴County Code, 2.08.060 and 2.08.080.

⁵Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, edited by Phillips Bradley, Vintage, New York, 1958, Volume 2, 111.

the law traces out for them than any public officer in Europe. Very frequently the object which they are to accomplish is simply pointed out to them, and the choice of the means is left to their own discretion."⁶

According to this view, continuing, persistent and ongoing participation in the affairs of local government is necessary to preserve freedom in our vehemently individualistic society. Therefore, the more commissions the better. Everyone adds something to the general melee, and the election of the officers who make the final decisions prevents any single perspective from dominating for too long. Monopoly is no better in government than in private markets. The technocratic lock on the provision of public services must be checked by constant, probing challenge by citizens.

Organizations of professionals to coordinate their functions with those of other agencies and other jurisdictions are also necessary. The county Board of Supervisors has little or no influence over the actions of the 85 cities, 94 school districts, and 600 independent special districts in the County. In fact, the reverse is true. Other units of government can have significant influence over the county by effective lobbying of the State government, which controls most county policy.

⁶ ibid., Volume 1, 217.

Internally, the CAO never has coordinated and does not now. The CAO has no efficacious power to discipline department heads, and cannot coordinate their activities without it.

In summary, one extreme view of local political and administrative systems would keep citizen participation in the commission form to a minimum. Elected officials set policy and hire people to carry them out. The control is in the vote. If commissions cannot be eliminated, they should be co-opted. A contrasting extreme view is that commissions provide the only effective means to keep the power of government under control and to ensure an informed and interested electorate for voting.

Issues

Since commissions can form for any purpose, and since it is essentially an act of citizens rather than of professional service providers, there are few controls on proliferation and continuation of their operations. Consequently, commissions may become duplicative or redundant, may fragment a service system, or may become a nonproductive source of cost. We define the various issues below.

Duplication. We define duplication as performing the same work for the same constituency or clientele. Commissions can be duplicative for several reasons. First, such advocacy commissions as the Commission for Women may duplicate the work of such problem-solving or departmental commissions as the Commission on Aids and the Hospital Commission, since some women suffer from AIDS, and others are served in county hospitals. The work may be duplicative, and the resulting recommendations to the Board of Supervisors may conflict. The same is true in any areas where advocacy for a constituency crosses several departmental or service program lines: veterans who are disabled, children with AIDS, communicable

diseases in schools, and so forth. Second, commissions may be duplicative because they address the same issues related to the same problem area - that is, have identical missions. For example, the Grand Jury pointed out that the missions of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography and the Task Force to Curb Pornography seem to overlap.

Fragmentation. We define fragmentation as working on the same issues related to different groups, or working on different issues for the same group. For example, the Department of Health Services has six active commissions. In a sense, they fragment the unified approach to a single departmental mission. Similarly, the categorical financing system for many county operations tends to create multiple groups, many with nearly identical memberships, to perform similar fund distribution functions. For example, the Justice System Advisory Group, the Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Delinquency and Crime Commission allocate funds for similar kinds of purposes, with subtle categorical differences originating with the funding agencies. This fragments the county's system of service programs, particularly since they may all use slightly different allocation formulas.

Permanence. Commissions may continue in operation long after the social or governmental purpose for which they were created has faded into oblivion. This applies especially to commissions created to address a specific problem or timely issue on which the Board of Supervisors has little information; it may apply to commissions established to create a program or to monitor the effectiveness of an existing program. The problem is severe for commissions with assigned staff, since the staff has an economic interest in continuing the work of the commission.

Efficiency. Commissions may be a necessary element of local government, and they may be a desirable means of providing information and analysis that the government could not obtain in any other way. However, they are one of the least efficient means available to perform work. Without staff, the commission must obtain information by the use of hearings, in public according to California law. Commissioners must then review, summarize and analyze the information on their own time, regardless of any business or personal responsibilities. The commission must meet in public session to develop its formulation of a position and to work towards a consensus, and must then communicate its findings to the Board of Supervisors. If there are objections by those affected, the commission must perform further work to respond. With staff, the work of the commissioners themselves may become more efficient, since they no longer are required to spend significant amounts of time on details of data

gathering and review; the process of the group is no more efficient, since the staff must perform the work anyway. Most commissions are working in areas that require information that is not available in a suitable form from the government. Someone must perform work to obtain and report the information. Inefficiency is built into the system: the government will not produce this work itself, and will not provide the kinds of resources needed to produce it efficiently.

Cost. The issue of cost is a significant one. Just the direct budgeted costs of commissions studied by the Grand Jury amounted to \$4.9 million in 1986-87. The real costs are orders of magnitude higher.

<u>TITLE</u>	COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
<u>AUTHORITY</u>	Chapter 3.68 of the Los Angeles County Code.
<u>NUMBER OF MEMBERS</u>	Fifteen, three nominated by each Supervisor, all of whom have knowledge and experience in the area of children's services. None of whom are County employees or employees of agencies contracting with Los Angeles County.
<u>TERM OF OFFICE</u>	Two years, at the pleasure of the Board.
<u>COMPENSATION</u>	\$25 per meeting with a maximum of twenty-four meetings per year.
<u>MEETINGS</u>	At least once a month, with a maximum of twenty-four meetings per year, in the Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, 90012. Section 5.12.050 of the Los Angeles County Code provides that if any member (other than an ex officio member) fails to attend three consecutive meetings, unless excused by the members thereof, that member's office becomes vacant. The secretary shall so notify the appointing officer who shall immediately appoint a member to fill such vacancy.
<u>DUTIES</u>	The Commission shall have the authority to monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of Task Force recommendations adopted by the Board of Supervisors for improving the delivery of children's services and when necessary recommend modification of procedures to ensure compliance with the adopted recommendations. Also, the Commission shall report to the Board of Supervisors no less frequently than every three months for the first eighteen months of implementation. Thereafter, the Commission shall report to the Board of Supervisors every six months until implementation is complete.

(Continued)

DUTIES

The Commission shall also:

- a. Review all programs administered by County departments which provide children's services for all children at risk.
- b. Receive input from appropriate co-unity groups and individuals concerning County administered children's services programs.
- c. Review and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning legislation dealing with children's services.
- d. Make reco-endatlons3 as necessary. to various department heads to improve children's services.
- e. Make recommendations, as necessary, to the Board of Supervisors to improve children's services.
- f. Provide an annual report to the Board of Supervisors concerning the status of children's services, along with recomendations for their improvement, to be utilized for broad community distribution and discussion.

OATH

Not required.

COMMISSION ROLES

This section contains a review of the roles and responsibilities of the Children's Services Commission. First, we present a brief discussion of the commission's activities and accomplishments for each role specified in the ordinance. Second, we present a detailed description of the status of each of the 1984 recommendations of the Children's Services Task Force. The significance of the task force recommendations is that the Board assigned the commission the specific responsibility to monitor their implementation.

1. "Review all programs administered by County departments which provide children's services for all children at risk."

Since the commission is advisory, the use of the word 'review' here is to be taken as 'to study', or 'to survey' or 'to examine or inspect'. That is, it is an information gathering function. In government, however, the word carries the additional connotation that links it to judicial decisions: it connotes evaluation, as in judicial review, and carries the possibility of a reversal of a subordinate's decisions (such as that of a lower court). It is thus a source of confusion in the ordinance. It specifies a role which can be interpreted improperly to subordinate a public official's decisions to the commission. The term 'all programs administered by County departments' is appropriate for a commission appointed by the Board of Supervisors and created to inform and advise the Board on policy

questions. The system of services to children is delivered through numerous County, city and school district agencies. The Board, however, has jurisdiction only over those delivered by the County. Therefore, the Commission's subject area should cover all programs administered by County officials. The word `administered is appropriate. The County provides services principally as defined by the State government: it does not have unilateral control over policy; rather, it administered programs whose main elements are defined elsewhere.

The term, `for all children at risk' is, on the other hand, another source of confusion. `Children at risk' is a term of art in social services, defined in law. It refers to children who are, or who should be, under the protection of the County, and to children whose circumstances lead public officials to believe that they soon will be under the protection of the County. That leaves out a large number of children, who may or may not be in contact with some County agency at some time. It excludes runaways, dropouts, chronic truants, and all children who are exposed to the lure of alcohol, drugs, pornography, or delinquent behavior. That is, it excludes populations of children who are not recognized explicitly in the current laws, but who are, in any reasonable non-technical interpretation, at risk.

Throughout its history, the Commission has struggled with the issues brought up by this section of the ordinance. Many County departments believe that the commission's role is and

should be specifically focused on the programs of the Department of Children's Services - that is, the County's protective services for children. Indeed, the Commission has concentrated most of its effort on the Department of Children's Services. But many of the commissioners believe the focus should be on all children. Thus, the commission has accepted the responsibility of monitoring and reporting to the Board on the County's child care programs. Recently, the commission has turned to a focus on the Departments of Mental Health and Probation, in cooperation with the departmental commissions associated with those departments. So far, however, the commission has not concentrated efforts on the overall condition and welfare of all children, even though the commissioners told us that their area of concern includes children who are overlooked by the system.. The task force concludes that the ordinance is a source of confusion in the specification of a responsibility `to review and in the definition of its area of focus as `children at risk'. We believe it would be better to identify this role, which is intended to define the scope of the commission's responsibilities, to

“recommend Board policy regarding all matters which affect children and youth”

That is, by eliminating the use of the word `review', our proposal will eliminate confusion created by its connotation of subordination of public officials' decisions. By specifying `children and youth', our proposal *will clarify the scope as referring to all children in the County. `Board policy

regarding all matters' includes all programs of all departments, but also includes the broader issues that cross departmental lines, and issues that may not now be addressed by any department.

2. "receive input from appropriate community groups and individuals concerning County administered children's services programs."

To the extent to which this refers to the responsibility of the Commission to seek out and obtain information, it is unnecessary as an ordinance provision. Any commission can receive information. Commissions must receive information in order to do their jobs properly.

However, the presence of the word 'individuals' has also introduced the possibility of the commission actively intervening in the appeals and petitions of individuals whose cases are in the charge of the Court, of the Department of Children's Services, or of some other public official. While there is apparently no legal obstacle to the commission receiving such information, which is supplied voluntarily by those involved in the case, the practice creates distortions in the system of accountability of public officials:

it creates a presumption that the commission is competent to do something about a case that it hears. while the commission has no such authority, and cannot.

it makes certain cases - those brought by parties who know of the commission's interest in and activities on individual cases - a higher priority for public officials who must respond to the commission.

it creates an expectation on the part of those interested in the case that the commission's judgments will prevail, when the commission can be overruled by

numerous elected or appointed officials.

The task force concludes that this provision of the ordinance is unnecessary and a potential source of trouble. We believe that the Commission should minimize its involvement in individual cases, and gradually phase it out. The Department of Children's Services has, or should have, adequate case processing procedures. If it does not, then it would be valuable for the Commission to evaluate the procedures and recommend changes to the Board of Supervisors. Therefore, we believe this provision of the ordinance should be eliminated.

3. "Review and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning legislation dealing with children's services.

Except for the use of the word 'review', this is exactly what the commission can and should focus on, since it is one of the most effective means available to the Board of Supervisors to influence policy as it relates to children and their families.

- 4 "Make recommendations, as necessary, to various department heads to improve children's services."

The most effective role for a citizens' commission is to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. If the Board chooses to adopt the recommendations, then the effect is that the Department heads will implement them. The Board can act to ask the commission to continue its involvement by monitoring implementation and reporting to the Board. Without the Board, however, the commission has no means to ensure the efficacy of any recommendation it makes.

5. "Make recommendations, as necessary, to the Board of Supervisors to improve children's services."

The Board is the most appropriate client for the commission; recommendations addressed to the Board, if adopted, can be enforced and implemented. However, the commission may find that it wishes to recommend changes that have little or nothing to do with services, at least in the current service system. Therefore, we believe the focus should be `policy' rather than `services'. It is broader than current services, without excluding services or service delivery systems. In addition, we believe that the commission should concentrate on any issues or problem areas for which the Board wants current recommendations. That is, it should be able to take up issues on its own initiative or on the request of the Board.

6. "Provide an annual report to the Board of Supervisors concerning the status of children's services, along with recommendations for their improvement, to be utilized for broad community distribution and discussion."

we believe that the commission should continue to provide an annual report. As we have stressed, however, the issues are not confined to `services'. We believe that the report should be strategic in scope and content. Therefore, we propose that it cover the state of children in the county as well as an analysis of the commissions recommendations regarding services. An analysis of the status of the various recommendations of the Task Force (1984), which were to be monitored by the Children's Services Commission, follows.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES TASK FORCE

One role of the Children's Services Commission is defined by ordinance as follows:

The Commission shall have the authority to monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of Task Force recommendations adopted by the Board of Supervisors for improving the delivery of children's services and when necessary recommend modification of procedures to ensure compliance with the adopted recommendations. Also, the Commission shall report to the Board of Supervisors no less frequently than every three months for the first eighteen months of implementation. There after, the Commission shall report to the Board of Supervisors every six months until implementation is complete." (County Code 3.68).

This contains a review of the task force, its recommendations, and the current status of its recommendations. We have added the emphasis where shown.

Children's Services Task Force

The Board of Supervisors created the Children's Services Task Force on June 14, 1983. In its action (Minute Order 81), the Board did the following in relation to the provision of services to abused and neglected children (this is paraphrased in places)

1. Instructed the CAO to study the following with the Directors of Public Social Services, Adoptions, and the Chief Probation Officer:

creation of a separate children's services department and a children's services commission, the department to be responsible for child abuse and neglect, runaways, foster care placement, adoptions, and any other appropriate children's services.

establishment of a stronger organizational structure for the services now provided by the Probation, Adoptions, and Public Social Services Departments

consolidation of the services provided by the Probation, Adoptions, and Public Social Services Departments into one of the three existing departments

2. Instructed the CAO to initiate the formation of a Children's Services Task Force to study the above alternatives and make recommendations to the Board relative to feasibility, cost and legislation needed to implement task force recommendations. The task force would consist of:

representative from each Board office
two representatives from DPSS
one from Adoptions
one from Probation
one from the CAO
one from the Sheriff (Child Abuse Detail)
one from the DA (Child Abuse Section)
one from the Superintendent of Schools
five from community based organizations

3. continued various budget issues related to implementation of SB 14 in DPSS
4. instructed County Counsel, CAO, and Director, DPSS to report on the effects of SB 14 and propose amendments to reduce county cost and allow children's services workers to spend the maximum amount of time helping child abuse victims.

The task force presented its 49 recommendations to the Board in March, 1984. The recommendations addressed financial, operational, and legislative issues. On the structural question, a minority of the task force members proposed that the Board create a new department and a children's services commission. The Board adopted that recommendation, and the recommendations of the task force as well.

The table on the next pages lists the various recommendations, current status, and suggested ongoing work for the Children's Services or other County Department, the commission, ICAN* or other group. The recommendations are paraphrased in the table.

Basically, the task force recommendations, adopted by the Board in 1984, either have been, or are in the process of being implemented. For those that are not, the reasons are likely to be profound - that is, they either have been found to be wrong, or would be impossible, or would require legislative changes that have been proposed unsuccessfully.

Implementing recommendations is a task for public officials, not for citizens' advisory commissions. The role of monitoring implementation is reasonable for citizens' commissions, but there comes a point when it is no longer reasonable to monitor. The recommendations need to be reviewed, restated, or changed,