

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

**February 03, 1999 Hearing Room HR D**

**3:30 PM Tapes 3 - 4**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Jackie Winters, Chair**

**Rep. Jeff Kruse**

**Rep. Kitty Piercy**

**MEMBER EXCUSED: Rep. Bill Morrisette**

**Rep. Betsy Close**

**STAFF PRESENT: Janet L. Carlson, Administrator**

**Diane M. Lewis, Administrative Support**

**MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD: Overview of Services to Children and Families**

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

TAPE/#	Speaker	Comments
<b>TAPE 3, A</b>		
007	Chair Winters	Opens the meeting at 3:40 PM and explains that the committee will be hearing continued testimony regarding the overview of Services to Children and Families (SCF), Department of Human Resources (DHR). Comments on the recent resignation of Kay Toran as director of SCF and states that she will be missed.

023	Margie Lowe	Assistant Administrator for Management Operations, SCF, submits and presents written information regarding the implementation of "System of Care." ( <b>EXHIBIT A</b> ).
042	Lowe	<p>Refers to EXHIBIT A, page 1, and discusses the Governor's 1999-2001 recommended budget for "phase III" of the System of Care implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct Services total funds budget is \$2.6 million -- half of total amount is general fund and balance is federal funds. Implemented mid-way through the biennium.</li> <li>• SCF contracts with individual service providers ñ tailored to needs of child and family.</li> </ul>
064	Rep. Kruse	Refers to EXHIBIT A, page 1, and asks if the difference between forty positions and 18 FTE is limited duration positions that currently exist in SCF.
068	Lowe	Replies that the number of FTE in the following biennium would be brought up to forty. Explains that EXHIBIT A notes 18 FTE because additional staff is not phased in until mid-way through the biennium.
072	Lowe	<p>Continues by discussing special payments within the budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special payments ñ individualized services, required by 1/3 of SCF cases for an average of five months, costing \$4,000 per case, which totals approximately \$1.5 million. Explains that the majority of this cost is general fund, and is not eligible for federal reimbursement.</li> </ul>
082	Chair Winters	Asks for a detailed breakdown of individualized services provided to children and families.
083	Lowe	<p>Replies that she will provide this to the committee.</p> <p>Continues by stating that the total cost for System of Care, Phase III is \$4.2 million.</p>
091	Rep. Piercy	Asks for examples of special services that SCF contracts with.
093	Lowe	Replies that mentoring for a child in school, mentoring for a parent in developing stronger parenting skills, and providing schooling or services that enable parents to secure housing are all special services. Explains that decisions regarding a family's need for special services are made at a "family unity" meeting.
107	Rep. Piercy	Asks if families are given the chance to evaluate the services they received.
115	Lowe	<p>Refers to EXHIBIT A, page 2, and explains "progress indicators."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 72% of the time, families believed they were provided with the services that they wanted and agreed that they needed.</li> <li>• 70% of clients strongly agreed that services were helpful.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of clients stated that their family was stronger as a result of services.</li> </ul> <p>Comments that in system of care branches, foster care rate of growth has been slower than branches without system of care. Explains that neighborhood foster care placements have improved and incidence of abuse has dropped. Explains that foster care placement stability has remained the same and states that SCF is looking to improve this indicator.</p>
149	Rep. Piercy	Asks if part of the plan to make foster care more stable includes using extended family members as foster care resources (relative foster care) and providing them with services.
151	Lowe	Responds that federal parameters existing under Title IV-E stipulate that if parents that the child was removed from met the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) standard in 1996, then the child will be eligible for relative foster care reimbursement.
173	Lowe	Refers to EXHIBIT A, page 3, and discusses the "System of Care" branch selection process. Explains the application process. States that many branches have responded.
194	Rep. Piercy	Asks about the criteria that will be used to select branches.
197	Lowe	Replies that applications will be reviewed and scored. Explains that branches will be looked at in terms of their partnerships and benefits, how they will be using resources, and how they will prepare their staff for System of Care.
207	Rep. Piercy	Comments that some communities have higher incidents of child abuse. Asks if community statistics will be taken into consideration when branches are being chosen.
216	Lowe	Responds that SCF conducts a biannual study with Portland State University called the "Cohort Study." Explains that this study looks at the issues of families with children entering the SCF system. This information is used by branches when they are specifying focus areas and evaluating benefits of a System of Care implementation.
233	Chair Winters	Asks what percentages of purchased services go to relief nurseries.
235	Lowe	Responds that a broad look at respite care services would be high on the list of purchases. States that she doesn't have specific information regarding relief nurseries and would be happy to get the Chair this information.
243	Rep. Kruse	Refers to EXHIBIT A, page 1, and asks if the 40 FTE are per site.
252	Lowe	Replies that the number of staff in System of Care phases I, II, & III, in the agency's budget, are 58.5. Explains that there are other staff increases in the agency's budget related to implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families

		Act (ASFA).
264	Rep. Kruse	Asks if the dollars referenced in EXHIBIT A, page 1, are all new dollars.
266	Lowe	Responds affirmatively.
268	Rep. Kruse	Understands that this program has been rolled-in, and asks for the total cost price of phase III, starting at the beginning of the biennium.
282	Lowe	Responds that she will provide the committee with full roll-up costs. Suggests that the committee take the \$4.2 million total figure and double it, then add approximately ten percent to get a full biennial cost. States that the full cost would be approximately \$10 million.
300	Dianne Lancaster	Assistant Administrator, Program and Policy Development for State Office for Services to Children and Families (SCF), introduces Victor Congleton, Program Manager, Child Protective and Family Treatment Services. Explains that they are prepared to continue discussions regarding SCF referral and screening process, SCF connections with community safety nets, and field assessment activities.
322	Victor Congleton	Program Manager, Child Protective and Family Treatment Services, SCF, submits written information regarding the first phase of SCF involvement with families, starting at the initial referral and ending at the point where a child may or may not be placed in substitute care. ( <b>EXHIBIT B</b> ). Explains that SCF becomes involved with children through referrals. Refers to EXHIBIT B, page 2, and states that 72 percent of referrals come from mandatory reporters.
365	Rep. Kruse	Asks for a definition of "threat of harm."
367	Congleton	Responds that "threat of harm" is in statute. Explains that children need not suffer actual harm to require protection. States that an example would be a child living in a home with a convicted sex offender.
392	Rep. Kruse	Asks how SCF learns that a child is living with "threat of harm."
405	Congleton	Responds that a typical reporting of "threat of harm" is a phone call to SCF by a concerned person who may or may not be a mandatory reporter.
409	Rep. Kruse	Asks if the mandatory reporter list is complete.
416	Congleton	Responds affirmatively. States that SCF has no new categories to recommend to the list.
425	Chair Winters	Asks for a definition of "mental injury."

433	Lowe	Refers to EXHIBIT B, page 18, and notes the summary of mental injury/psychological maltreatment. States that "observable damage" must be evident in order to evaluate a child with mental injury.
<b>TAPPE 4, A</b>		
024	Chair Winters	Comments that when she was a state ombudsman she received an abuse complaint from a teacher regarding a hair cut a child was given that the teacher felt was psychologically damaging to the child. Comments that the children's services agency has always wrestled with this issue.
036	Congleton	Responds that SCF wrestles with these issues everyday. Explains that this is why professional staff must be well trained.
040	Chair Winters	Asks for further discussion of training for mandatory reporters.
050	Congleton	Discusses issues of mandatory reporting. States that training is minimal and usually exists at the local level. Explains that SCF provides materials to many organizations so that they may educate their staff.
071	Rep. Piercy	Refers to EXHIBIT B, page 19, and asks about the current level of acceptable treatment for convicted sex offenders.
082	Congleton	Responds that the "exception" for threat of harm of a sex offender, EXHIBIT B, page 19, is indicative of the possibility of successful treatment. SCF staff does not make the determination of "successful" treatment. Explains that these determinations will rely heavily on treatment experts including law enforcement officials. States that determinations are done on an individual basis.
100	Rep. Piercy	Asks how SCF tracks whether or not determinations of an offender's treatment and a child's safety in a household are accurate and successful.
108	Congleton	Replies that data that SCF relies on are re-abuse rates. Explains that the process of investigation and assessment brings the whole history of an offender's actions forward. States that awareness is the key to protection and safety of children. Reminds the committee that primary protection of children is from parents and family members.
134	Janet Carlson	Committee Administrator, comments on the concerns of mandatory reporters who place calls to SCF and then receive no follow-up. Asks if there is something that SCF can do to improve the "feedback loop" for mandatory reporters.
143	Congleton	Responds that SCF has an expectation that callers are given feedback. Describes a situation when a call is generated from a school. States that often the school is given a follow-up call, but school officials don't communicate with the original reporter. Concurs that SCF can also be doing a better job of providing feedback.

164	Congleton	<p>Refers to EXHIBIT B, pages 3-6, and discusses the process of "screening."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receiving a report.</li> <li>• Identifying a child abuse situation.</li> <li>• Determining the agency's response.</li> <li>• Conclusion of no abuse may still require a determination of a family's need for other resources.</li> </ul> <p>Discusses screening activities and the consistent reporting to law enforcement. Explains that the "Child Abuse Reporting Law" requires a partnership between law enforcement and SCF.</p>
195	Rep. Kruse	Asks if all screeners are SCF employees.
198	Congleton	Responds affirmatively. States that they are case workers and child protective service workers
199	Rep. Kruse	Asks about collaborative efforts among child protective organizations. Asks if statute or rule determines that a screener must be an SCF employee.
206	Congleton	States that SCF is the identified recipient of child abuse reports along with law enforcement. Explains that there have been interagency agreements and contracts between branch offices and shelters or sheriff departments for "after hours" reporting.
224	Rep. Kruse	<p>Comments that there are two levels of screening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initial contact person starting the process</li> <li>• The incident screener- determining where the case should go.</li> </ul>
238	Lowe	Responds that screening involves a "professional staff" person. Explains that this person is the one who talks to the teacher who has seen bruises on a child. Explains that screeners are responsible for reviewing existing SCF or other agency history of a family. Screening is a professional assessment activity. States that screeners are trained in child protective services training programs.
266	Rep. Kruse	Comments that ordinary citizens have preconceived ideas about state agencies. States that these ideas will often get in the way of their willingness to make a call to an SCF office.
287	Congleton	States that this situation is one he dealt with a few hours ago. Believes that, as the safety net system spreads and more people become involved with protecting children, the process of reporting concerns will be easier. States that SCF understands the importance of making the reporting system user friendly.
320	Rep. Kruse	Comments that spreading the safety net system is a solution that he agrees with. Expresses his concern that each missed opportunity for intervention has devastating effects on a child. Explains that in Douglas County there are SCF workers in the schools.

332	Congleton	Concurs and states that having case workers in schools creates mutual comfort.
338	Rep. Winters	Asks at what point law enforcement personnel are brought into the process.
342	Congleton	Explains that law enforcement is brought in during the investigation and assessment phase. States that when an abuse case is reported, SCF automatically notifies the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Explains that there are times when SCF will go out and make a contact and times when law enforcement is the entity checking out a report. Explains that this varies from county to county. Discusses county multi-disciplinary teams (MDT), developed by each county district attorney. Explains that MDTs have the responsibility of ensuring that there are interagency agreements among SCF offices, law enforcement, the District Attorney's office, mental health offices, schools, and other groups active in abuse prevention. States that MDTs will also recommend when law enforcement should enter the picture.
413	Carlson	<p>Refers to EXHIBIT B, page 5, and asks if the questions asked in the risk factor checklist tip the balance of provided services toward levels one through three, since risk appears to be scored higher for younger children.</p> <p>States that, last biennium, levels 1-4 and into level 5 were being served, and this biennium levels 1-3 and into level 4 are seeing services. Asks if the decrease in services to higher levels is a trend that will continue into the next biennium.</p>
<b>TAPE 3, B</b>		
015	Lowe	Concurs with Carlson's comments and states that the level system is a retrospective research tool that SCF uses to know "who" is being served and how counties compare, regarding the allocation of resources. Explains that the level system is not a screening tool. States that it is through the risk factor checklist the SCF maintains consistency of service. Explains that all of the SCF training, supervision, case management, and office management is directed with the understanding that not everyone is going to be served. States that children at most risk are given priority for services. Points out that unless early intervention and prevention efforts improve, SCF will continue to raise the threshold of services.
060	Rep. Piercy	Comments that SCF doesn't deal with runaway children or homeless children if there is no assumption of abuse or neglect. Contends that SCF is inappropriately classifying runaways as 16-17 year olds. Refers to EXHIBIT B, page 17, and states that runaway children are experiencing all the components of "neglect," i.e., inadequate food, inadequate clothing, inadequate shelter, medical neglect, lack of supervision, and desertion. Maintains that these children are very expensive for the state not to treat. Reports that 10 and 11 year old children are living on the streets and belong under SCF jurisdiction.
091	Chair Winters	Asks about SCF policy regarding emancipation of a child.
107	Carolyn Graf	Manager, Transitional Resource Unit, explains the independent living program, which helps children learn to function independently by providing assistance with education, job skill training, and independent lifeskills training. Explains

		that all independent living services are contracted out in the counties.
127	Chair Winters	Asks about the percentage of kids who are substance abuse statistics.
130	Graf	Replies that she does not have substance abuse statistics with her. States that she will provide the committee with this information at the earliest opportunity. Discusses issues kids face including substance abuse, lack of education, social-emotional problems, and family dysfunction.
145	Chair Winters	Wonders how available the safety net system is for homeless and/or emancipated youth.
152	Graf	Responds that SCF does not emancipate children until they are 18 years- old. Explains that children under 18 years, who want emancipation, must go to court and state their case before a judge.
159	Congleton	Explains that emancipating children is low on the list of solutions to problems facing children and families. States that keeping families together and providing supportive care for a child are the priorities.
176	Rep. Piercy	Maintains that there are not enough safe places for kids on the street.
186	Congleton	Points out additional fact sheets in EXHIBIT B, pages 10 and 11.
200	Rep. Kruse	Asks how much money is in the Governor's budget for safety net programs.
203	Congleton	Responds that the Governor's total safety net budget is \$1.2 million including federal funds.
211	Rep. Kruse	Asks if the goal of having a safety net program in each county will be met with this budget.
217	Congleton	Explains that the money in the Governor's budget is a "jump start" to services. States that local communities will need to depend on community-based, volunteer efforts.
235	Rep. Kruse	States that community-based safety net programs make monumental differences in communities. Asks about the role SCF takes in providing dollars to local safety net coordinators.
263	Congleton	Explains that SCF coordinates the "pass-through" of funds to the county. Explains that multi-disciplinary steering committees assist with the process of delegating funds in the community.



271	Rep. Kruse	Asks who is in charge of developing the RFP, and asks how the funding request is coordinated.
285	Congleton	Responds that each county has a safety net plan. Community programs must make requests for funding to the community safety net program. States that counties receive funds and distribute them according to the requests they receive.
302	Congleton	Continues by referring the committee to the last few pages of EXHIBIT B, and points out statistical information regarding the number of children in Oregon who are entering the system, established in foster care, reunited with family, etc.
340	Chair Winters	Closes the meeting at 4:55 PM.

Submitted By, Reviewed By,

Diane M. Lewis, Janet L. Carlson,  
Administrative Support Administrator

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#### **EXHIBIT SUMMARY**

**A ñ SCF Overview information regarding System of Care, Margie Lowe, 3 pp.**

**B ñ SCF Overview information regarding Child Protective and Family Treatment Services, Victor Congleton, 24 pp.**