



The Expert

This is a newsletter dedicated to helping individuals and agencies work within a world that the average person can easily view with anxiety, feelings of intimidation and confusion

News Letter

Witness

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Another Year Older and Deeper in Debt!

Surprise, surprise! Our esteemed governor and our legislature have put foster children on the back burner once again.

The children that the state has removed from their homes “for their protection” have received another cut in their support. As has been true for the past six years, there has been no cost of living increase for foster care rates. This means that the purchasing power of foster care payments will have declined by approximately 19 to 24 % by the end of 2007-2008.

As a result, rates for group homes and FFAs are also frozen at the 2001-2002 level. In addition, group home, and in some areas, FFA placements have dropped precipitously.

Periodically, I review the CCL address lists of Group Homes and FFAs in order to update my address database. This most recent review of this database was quite revealing. At the previous count, there were 139 pages of group homes, (about 695 facilities). This last count, there were only 114 pages (about 570 facilities) which translates to a loss of 18% of facilities in approximately one year.

In contrast, FFAs showed an increase of 18 facilities or about 21%. In many areas there are more FFA foster homes then there are county homes. With all of this information, it is interesting to note that CCL is continuing to license group home beds. In my research, I found that there were 44 newly licensed facilities during this period. When these are factored out the actual loss of facilities amounts to a whopping 24+%.

Obviously, this is not a good business to get into unless you are able to fill a particular niche.

The smart, well run FFA and Group Home programs are looking to diversify their services and funding streams. I have been approached by agencies to help them develop mental health contracts and apply for adoption licenses. NPS (Non Public Schools) have become somewhat less attractive unless you have a well established program in place. If you operate a group home, you need to be looking at developing a Residentially-Based Services program.

In the adoptions arena, the interesting news is that Kern County is outsourcing all its adoption home studies to local fost-adopt FFAs. I have not heard if this is happening in other counties, but in Kern it is a real boost to FFA bottom lines. (More later)



Important

If you would like more information, a training for your staff, or coaching for an upcoming law suit, you may contact me at the contacts below. If you are going to be testifying, talk to your attorney before you call me.

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