

what's up doc?

by Dr. Mary Livers, PH.D, MSW, Deputy Secretary

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Hello, Everyone:

It feels a little odd to be writing WUD on a Tuesday, but I wanted to make sure that you were aware of our newest budget outlook. This morning the Governor and Commissioner of Administration presented their Executive Budget based on next year's \$750,000 million shortfall. The Administration has been working closely with OJJ and other agencies to make sure that we are able to serve the people of Louisiana.

Well, the good news is that the Governor is proposing to the Legislature that OJJ's budget take about an \$18.1 million reduction rather than the \$78 million cut that was first discussed. This means a few different things for us.

We will not have any layoffs with this budget scenario. But due to limited resources, about 60 vacant positions in the facilities, field and central office will be eliminated.

In secure care, the number of youth served at BCCY and SCY will be reduced. The Acadiana Center for Youth in Bunkie will not open in FY2017.

In the community, the caseload of PPOs will increase slightly. And lastly, our community based residential beds will be reduced by about 10%.

The budget process is not anywhere near complete. Over the next two months, the House of Representatives will examine the budget closely and then pass it on the Senate for consideration. They must agree to and pass a balanced budget by June 6th.

The Governor has begun talking about another special session to raise more revenue sometime this summer. So it is possible that some of our \$18.1 million cut will be reduced further. The legislators will likely be listening to their constituents to guide them through the next few months. So, I would like you to continue to spread the good word about your work.

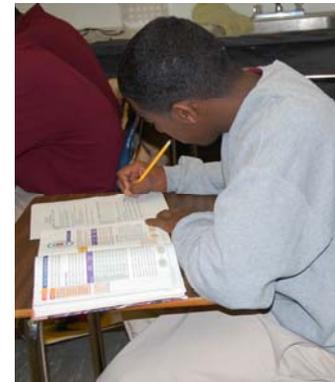
You may also see articles about the Raise the Age initiative in the paper today. Legislation has been introduced and supported by the Governor that would allow 17 year olds to be served in the juvenile justice system. As we all know, kids think differently than adults. It is the hope that these 17 year olds will benefit from the services provided by OJJ. The addition of 17 year olds will be implemented over a four year period. Like the budget, this legislation has to go through a process before final approval. We will keep you posted on the bill.

I'll close with my sincere thanks to every member of the OJJ team, wherever you serve, for all you do every day to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc"

Dr. Mary Livers



Comments?
Send them to
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