

MEMO

To: Joint Finance Committee

From: Marissa L. Band, Esq., on behalf of the following organizations:

Disabilities Law Program, Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.
Developmental Disabilities Council
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

Date: February 20, 2014

RE: Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services ("DPBHS") FY 2015 Budget

Please allow this document to memorialize the presentation made by Marissa L. Band, Esq., on behalf of the Disabilities Law Program ("DLP")¹, the Developmental Disabilities Council ("DDC"), Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens ("GACEC") and the State Council for Persons with Disabilities ("SCPD"). We support the Governor's Recommended Budget request to continue funding for the Parent Child Interactive Therapy ("PCIT") program.

We recommend continued focus on prevention and early intervention services. We encourage the State to appropriately plan in order to ensure that an adequate continuum of early childhood mental health services is available to Delawarean children. PCIT is one such early childhood mental health service currently available to children and families in Delaware.

PCIT is an evidence-based treatment for children aged 2-5 years with serious emotional and behavioral problems.² PCIT helps both to decrease negative behaviors of children and to improve parental interactions with their children.³ To date, DPBHS has trained over 170 clinicians in this treatment.⁴ Over 170 children and their families have been authorized for home-based PCIT services.⁵ More than 320 children and families have received outpatient PCIT services.⁶

This success is enormous; we want all at-risk children in Delaware to have access to this program if they are in need of early childhood mental health intervention. Thus, we support the request for funding to continue these services for young children. It is an evidence-based and effective treatment method that furthers the important goals of early intervention.

¹ The DLP serves on the DPBHS Advisory and Advocacy Council and collaborates with DFS staff on behalf of our mutual clients.

² PCIT is viewed as a model program and evidence-based treatment: see e.g., The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (see <http://www.nctsn.org/resources/topics/treatments-that-work/promising-practices>) and the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center, The Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress, and Office for Victims of Crime of the U.S Department of Justice (see http://musc.edu/ncvc/resources_prof/OVC_guidelines04-26-04.pdf).

³ A helpful summary of recent research is provided by Beth Troutman, Ph.D., ABPP et al. (2011). Developing a blueprint for training Iowa providers in early childhood mental health, pg. 30, available at http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/docs/BlueprintPaperFINAL_11-04-2011.pdf.

⁴ DPBHS Advisory and Advocacy Council Federal Requirements Report, dated November 19, 2013.

⁵ Id.

⁶ Id.