



FAMILY SERVICE LEAGUE, INC
790 Park Avenue
Huntington, New York 11743

Good morning. My name is Karen Boorshtein and I am the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Family Service League (FSL); a 501 © (3) not- for-profit human service organization throughout Suffolk County. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

About Family Service League...

- We have impressive roots: founded in 1926, 81 years of experience in delivering high quality services;
- Have developed 51 distinct programs (traditional & creative) to serve families - 5 Service Divisions: Behavioral Health, Youth and Seniors, Family, Vocational, Housing and Homeless
- Services are provided from 18 offices and touch the lives of approximately 47,000 Long Islanders
- We have a seasoned, professional leadership team oversees the work of 500 staff, 1,000 volunteers
- Recognitions:
 - * Accreditation from: The Council on Accreditation for Children and Family Services (COA)
 - * Bank of America “Neighborhood Excellence” award - (1st recipient on Long Island)
 - * Long Island Association: 2007 MVP Award in Not-for-Profit Category
 - * Suffolk Chapter of National Association of Social Workers: Agency of the Year 2007
- Tag Line: “Restoring Hope, Rebuilding Lives”

Over the years, we have developed 51 distinct programs (traditional & creative) to serve families - 5 Service Divisions: Behavioral Health, Youth and Seniors, Family, Vocational, Housing and Homeless. Our services are provided from 18 offices and touch the lives of approximately 47,000 Long Islanders and we have a seasoned, professional leadership team who oversees the work of 500 staff, 1,000 volunteers.

The issue...

With the basic building blocks of our society, families often become dysfunctional and have needs which are beyond their capacity to meet. The basics of food, shelter and security are essential as are strong social networks, physical and emotional good health, and economic well-being. For families in trouble, there are several gateways to service. And, most often, families

experience more than one need at any given time, and the services they receive are often fragmented and uncoordinated. Families, or their members, often obtain services later when the issue is catastrophic rather than when a small problem. We know then that intervention requires a higher and much more costly level of care over a longer duration.

Programs delivered by providers take on the form of the funding sources and become strong entities unto themselves with difficult barriers to transcend. The current silos of care just aren't working well for the people who need help as there is little connectiveness (horizontal) between programs, especially if operated by another provider of service.

A Possible Solution...

We at Family Service League have proposed a solution to the Governor's staff from the Division of the Budget, which would reach across these silos of care and funding streams. Individuals and families would then be able to truly benefit from comprehensive and coordinated care.

No matter through which doorway a family enters, we would:

- Assess the presenting problem(s)
- Prioritize the needs
- Develop a Care Plan with the family
- Get families into service more quickly
- Ensure that families don't fall through the cracks

And, the model we propose will utilize cross systems of connectivity with government human service agencies: Social Services, Probation, Youth, Senior Citizen, Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol, and Labor.

The core values of our paradigm are that services should be community-based, child-centered, family-focused and culturally-competent. The proposed model will also address system barriers and close systemic gaps. This will be achieved through an agency-wide system that is broken into four geographically situated sub-systems. Each of the sub-systems will meet every six weeks to review the shared cases of recipients of service, develop integrated care plans, share program updates and consider new or expanded services. Our model will be able to help children and families utilizing a strengths-based perspective.

We hope the Executive will support us in this initiative.

Thank you.