

Kansas Department of

# **Social and Rehabilitation Services**

Janet Schalansky, Secretary

**Joint Committee on Children's Issues**  
December 1, 2003

## **Mental Health Services for Children**

The seal of the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services is visible in the background of the box. It features a circular design with the text "KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES" around the perimeter. Inside the circle, there are stars and a sunburst at the bottom right.

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Representative Landwehr and members of the committee. I am Sue McKenna, Assistant Director of Children and Family Policy of SRS. Thank you for the opportunity to appear today to update you on the child welfare and mental health collaborative.

The Child Welfare/Mental Health Partnership Steering Committee has formed a subcommittee to focus on and discuss the problems faced by Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) and SRS child welfare contractors, in delivering services to children in the rural communities of Kansas. This subcommittee has met in Great Bend several times and is well attended by representatives of the CMHC's and contract agencies. The University of Kansas facilitates the meetings, and provides support in researching data specific to rural service delivery. Recommendations are being formulated by this subcommittee for the larger Steering Committee to address. The subcommittee is also identifying issues to be addressed in training that is being prepared for CMHC and contractor staff.

Additionally, SRS has formed a workgroup to develop a strategic plan to assure child welfare staff and the public at large, understand how to access mental health services in Kansas. The public awareness plan includes SRS developing a web based training on mental health services, to be presented and/or available for all key stakeholders (SRS staff, community members, foster parents, parents, youth, and public/private partners, etc...). The training curriculum is in the process of being finalized. SRS has agreed to mandate all child welfare staff complete the on-line training. This training will not only help staff understand available resources, but will also help child welfare staff connect families to these resources.

To ensure maximum access, staff are working to make this training available on the internet. A press release will be issued to inform the public once this training is available. Additionally, SRS is in the process of developing a brochure for public education on available mental health services, and how to access these services.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this update. I would be happy to stand for questions.