

**WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
FINAL REPORT  
TO  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AND FINANCE  
2014 - 2015 INTERIMS**

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The Joint Committee on Government and Finance met throughout the 2014 - 2015 interim period to discuss and study various issues related to children and families. The Committee was specifically assigned the following topics:

- Study recommendations following increasing physical activity for children and youth in communities

- Suicide Prevention and Awareness for West Virginia Youth

SCR49 - Requesting Joint Committee on Government and Finance study responsibilities for child protection and care

SCR68 - Study housing quality and affordability

The Committee met and considered the assigned issues and topics as follows:

#### JUNE 2014

The Joint Committee on Children and Families met on Monday, June 16, 2014. Stephen Smith, Co-Chair of the Try This West Virginia Project and Executive Director, West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition made a presentation on the recent Try This West Virginia Conference.

Kate Long, Co-Chair, Try This West Virginia Project made a presentation on the Try This West Virginia Project website.

Stephanie Tyree, Community Engagement and Policy Director, West Virginia Community Development HUB, made a presentation about SPARK regional workshops focused on countering childhood obesity.

#### AUGUST 2014

The Joint Committee on Children and Families toured the Harrison County Youth Reporting Center at 248 Factory Street in Clarksburg, WV, at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, August 25, 2014.

The Committee's second meeting was held on Tuesday, August 26, 2014. Michelle Toman, Breaking the Silence, made a presentation on suicide prevention in education. Staff was directed to draft legislation relating to suicide prevention training.

#### SEPTEMBER 2014

The Joint Committee on Children and Families held a joint meeting with the

Select Committee on Minority Issues and toured the “West Side” flats community from Stockton Street to Hunt Avenue in Charleston, WV, at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, September 9, 2014.

The second meeting of the Joint Committee on Children and Families was held on Wednesday, September 10, 2014.

Jamie Gudiel, Our Children, Our Future Campaign, addressed the committee and made a presentation regarding the Our Children, Our Future Policy Symposium's 22 policy proposals.

Jason Allen, high school student and Our Children, Our Future Campaign, addressed the committee and discussed the effects of poverty, drug abuse and support systems for affected children.

Lisa Radford, Our Children, Our Future Campaign, addressed the committee and discussed in home family education programs.

Justin Anderson, high school student, Logan County Youth Leadership Program and Our Children, Our Future Campaign, addressed the committee and discussed youth opportunities and involvement.

Kathy Smith, Our Children, Our Future Campaign, addressed the committee and discussed youth incarceration.

Nicole Banks, Concord University student and Our Children, Our Future Campaign, addressed the committee and discussed the importance of education.

Anthony Howard, KISRA and Our Children, Our Future Campaign, addressed the committee and discussed effects of alcohol and drug addictions.

The committee members also viewed Our Children, Our Future policy proposal exhibits.

## OCTOBER 2014

Karen Bowling, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Resources made a presentation entitled Update on the Three Branch Institute and the West Virginia CANS during the Tuesday, October 21, 2014 meeting.

## NOVEMBER 2014

The Joint Committee on Children and Families met on Tuesday, November 18, 2014 to discuss suicide prevention training legislation. Rita Pauley, Senate Counsel presented the proposed bill. With leave of the committee, the following individuals addressed the proposed bill:

Barb Brady, PhD, Coordinator, WVDE Office of Secondary Learning; Paula R. Fields, MSN, Community Schools Coordinator, WVDE Office of Special Programs; Jackie Payne DHHR, Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities; Michelle Toman, Breaking the Silence and Jon Amores, Parent.

Counsel was directed to make revisions to the proposed bill.

The committee then took up for consideration SCR68 Affordable Housing and heard from the following speakers: Marlena Mullins, Executive Director, West Virginia Affordable Housing Trust Fund and Erica Boggess, WV Housing Development Fund, Housing Needs Assessment.

#### DECEMBER 2014

The committee met December 16, 2014 at which time staff was directed to mail the draft suicide prevention bill and abstract to all of the committee members. The letter requested that the members be present in January in order to report out the bill.

#### JANUARY 2015

On January 12, 2015 the Committee discussed, amended and recommended for passage the suicide prevention and training bill. Additionally, the committee adopted the committee's final report to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Senator John R. Unger II, Chair  
Joint Committee on Children & Families

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Delegate Linda Longstreth, Chair  
Joint Committee on Children & Families