

NEWS



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DHS reaches major milestone in Improving Outcomes for Children

*Bethanna, Turning Points for Children and Wordsworth
are final three selected to provide services to at-risk children and youth*

Philadelphia, –The Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) reached a major milestone in shifting the management of child welfare cases from the City to community-based organizations by selecting the final three agencies to oversee cases in their neighborhoods. With these selections, Community Umbrella Agencies (CUAs) are now in place for all ten coverage areas of the City under the sweeping DHS reform called Improving Outcomes for Children (IOC), a community-based approach to service delivery.

Turning Points for Children will manage cases in Southwest Philadelphia, Wordsworth will oversee cases in Mantua, Overbrook and Wynnefield and Bethanna will service South Philadelphia.

“Selecting these terrific organizations as our partners marks a very exciting conclusion to the first phase of this enormous transition, which will result in greater accountability to the families and communities we serve,” said DHS Commissioner Anne Marie Ambrose. “The competition was very strong and I feel extremely confident that we have chosen highly qualified, outstanding agencies to undertake this critically important work, the care of Philadelphia’s most vulnerable children.”

Turning Points for Children, which also serves as the CUA for the Lower Northeast, is the result of a merger between two long-standing organizations with a combined 300 years of child welfare experience – Children’s Aid Society of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia Society for Services to Children. The organization, an affiliate of Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC), one of the largest and most comprehensive public health organizations in the nation, has also bolstered its capacity to more expertly help children by joining forces with JJC Family Services and Women’s Christian Alliance.

“We are honored to be selected as a Community Umbrella Agency for both the Lower Northeast and Southwest districts of the City,” said Turning Points for Children CEO Michael J. Vogel. “We take this role very seriously, and believe that through collaboration with DHS in the IOC model, we can positively impact the lives of children and families in these regions.”

Wordsworth, earlier chosen as the CUA 5 in the Logan/Olney area, now adds the region in which its headquarters are located. Wordsworth is certified in The Sanctuary Model®, an evidence-supported organizational approach for creating a safe environment and higher level of care for children and families and the staff who serve them. The organization provides a full continuum of services to children and youth at risk of abuse, neglect and delinquency.

“We are well underway with our rollout of CUA 5 and have already learned so much through the process. We look forward to using this knowledge to benefit our rollout in CUA 10. We particularly look forward to partnering with the many wonderful people and organizations in the region to develop a strong network of support that can strengthen children, families and communities in and around West Philadelphia, said Wordsworth President and CEO Debra Lacks.

Bethanna has a long history of innovative responses to the needs of Philadelphia’s children. The organization has been a pioneer in providing Medical Foster Care for chronically ill children so that a child can receive medical care in a foster home setting rather than in a hospital setting. The agency has been effective in blending child welfare and behavioral health services to create a recovery oriented system of child care.

“We are very excited to join DHS as a Community Umbrella Agency,” said Bethanna Executive Director Charles A. Seith. “Bethanna has a very strong commitment to the multiple and diverse communities of South Philadelphia and we are very appreciative of the opportunity and trust placed with our organization to continue our partnership with DHS and the families that we will serve together to assure safety, create stable families and strengthen communities.

“The process of selecting organizations with varying approaches to healing and protecting children shows there are numerous paths to being successful. The beauty of the CUA network we have established is that DHS and the CUA’s can share methods and outcomes and learn from what works best. The ultimate beneficiaries are the City’s children,” Commissioner Ambrose said.

The 10 CUAs include:

- Region 1 – Eastern North Philadelphia - NorthEast Treatment Centers, a.k.a. NET
- Region 2 – Eastern North Philadelphia - Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha, a.k.a. APM
- Region 3 – Lower Northeast - Turning Points for Children
- Region 4 – Far Northeast - Catholic Social Services
- Region 5 – Logan/Olney - Wordsworth
- Region 6 – Northwest Philadelphia- Tabor Northern Community Partners
- Region 7 – North Central Philadelphia - NorthEast Treatment Centers
- Region 8 – South Philadelphia - Bethanna
- Region 9 – Southwest Philadelphia - Turning Points for Children
- Region 10 – Mantua, Overbrook, Wynnefield - Wordsworth

Of these, NET and APM, have begun accepting cases. The remainder of the transition in case management from DHS to the community-based groups will be complete by the end of 2015.

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The Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) is the City agency charged with protecting children from abuse, neglect, and delinquency; ensuring their safety and permanency in nurturing home environments; and strengthening and preserving families by enhancing community-based prevention services. In partnership with community organizations, DHS provides services to strengthen the overall well being of Philadelphia children, youth, and families using a customer focused approach that is responsive to evolving community needs.