



# Legislative Lingo



I am taking a family leave of absence from the legislative position. I will be back in the drivers seat (Lord Willing) by the end of the year. Your prayers would be appreciated as this is a difficult time for my family. We have been through some hard days and have a few more ahead of us. Our son has to have surgery in September and I will be out of the loop until he is back on his feet. Until that time, Mr. Adams is keeping me and you updated on the "happenings" in the legislative area. Below you will find some very important areas that need to have your immediate attention. God bless you all,

Rise Wampler  
Legislative Chairperson

A lot is happening budgetarily. We have been advocating for an increase for foster parents (and expect to get it.) We have also been advocating for DFCS to pay for foster parent auxiliary services like respite, more clothing allowance, transportation, school supplies, ect. We expect to get these as well.

Note our Legislative alert below this deals with Foster Care. The foster parents can assist us in this. The DHR budget recommendations comes out next week and we will know more then.

### Legislative Alert(Your active participation is solicited in this alert.)

The Department of Human Resources is in the process of preparing their budget. We need your assistance in advocacy toward securing resources for our children. Your letters, emails, and phone calls are important. Attached is a position paper prepared for DHR. Please draft a message to the following persons advocating for the children in your agency's care. Your letter can follow this outline:

- Introduce your agency and the care that you provide.
- State what you would like the Department to do.
- Thank them.

Please blind copy to GAHSC or inform GAHSC that you responded. Send to the following persons:

- Audrey Horne, Commissioner [chpowell@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:chpowell@dhr.state.ga.us) Phone 404 656 5680 Fax 404 651-8596
  - Ken Jones, Budget Director [kjones@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:kjones@dhr.state.ga.us) Phone 404 656 4472 Fax 404 651-8596
  - Juanita Blount Clark, DFCS Director [jblount@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:jblount@dhr.state.ga.us) Phone 404 657-7660 Fax 404 657-3253
- Address: Department of Human Resources • #2 Peachtree Street • Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Open Letter to Policy Makers Concerning FY 2002 Budget Georgia Association of Homes and Services for Children June 1, 2000

The Georgia Association of Homes and Services for Children represents over eighty programs that provide services to children and families in Georgia. They contribute over 53 million dollars each year in donated services to Georgia's most at-risk children. A wealth of experience enables these agencies to "step in when others step out" of children's lives.

As you begin to formulate your budget recommendations for the Legislature, we would like to be the voice for the children and families served by these agencies. Since resources from the state are important to the ongoing care of Georgia's children, please consider the following three priorities:

First Placement/Best Placement, the ongoing reform of the foster care system, is our most urgent priority. We believe that this initiative represents the best efforts by Georgia to bring reform to a foster care system that, in the past, has failed Georgia's children. This initiative strives to provide more effective services, ensures accountability among communities for the care of its children, and enables families to become more self-sufficient. It is a public and private partnership that has shown remarkable success in seven pilots throughout the state. We support increased resources to make this reform effort a reality in Georgia.

It is imperative that in order to fully realize the effectiveness of this public/private partnership that providers move to a Level of Care system. All private agencies providing services to children in state custody need to have fair and equitable reimbursement based on the services provided to the child and family.

Our second concern encompasses both the number of children not served through the Troubled Children Fund (sometimes called the MATCH Fund) and the poor reimbursement to MATCH providers for services rendered. Over 600 children are served through MATCH, yet we know the number of children that need therapeutic treatment remains much higher. MATCH has identified over 160 children languishing on their waiting lists. Additionally, our providers report that fully two thirds of all children in residential care are placed inappropriately. Unfortunately, not serving these children adequately now ensures that more intensive, more expensive services will be required later.

Our MATCH providers are reimbursed according to the cost of the services they provide to the children in their care. Five years ago, the Department of Human Resources no longer honored these cost reports and subsequently froze rates. This action has resulted in financial hardship for our agencies. Inflation and the cost of additional services resulting from the increased intensity of services required has culminated in deficits ranging from ten to twenty five percent (10%-25%). Cost reports need to be honored and rates increased to represent the true cost of providing services.

Foster care reimbursement rates are our final concern. Foster parents presently receive \$12.00 per day to cover the cost of caring for a foster child. Most parents, however, would agree that \$12.00 does not adequately represent the true cost of raising a child. Foster parents would like to see a cost of living adjustment each year to reflect the increasing cost of care, similar to the cola received by state employees.

As you consider the budget, we hope that these items will be included in your recommendations. Please let us know if we can provide any additional information.

GAHSC - "A Voice for Children  
at-risk of Out of Home Placement  
and for the Agencies that Care for them"

Home Page: <http://www.gahsc.org>  
Referral Central: <http://www.gahsc.org/referral/index.html>  
Site Index: <http://www.gahsc.org/msconten.html>

<http://www.gahsc.org/nonmember/lealert1.html>



Here Are Some Very Useful Internet Links For Adults And Children Alike. If You Would Like To Submit Your Favorite Link, Please Contact The Editor At His Address On Page 2.

### NEO PETS☆☆☆

This is a good website for the kids...design your own virtual pet. Loaded with activities and even has a chatroom!  
[www.neopets.com](http://www.neopets.com)

### BOOKHUGS☆☆☆☆

Here is a club site where you can get FREE monthly personalized stories for your child ONLINE by simply filling out a simple form.  
[www.bookhugs.com](http://www.bookhugs.com)

### FREE STUFF!☆☆☆

You can get free stuff just for visiting websites! This site tells you how!  
[www.mypoints.com/?MCK=8b4c40043933f12c](http://www.mypoints.com/?MCK=8b4c40043933f12c)

### PARENT'S PAGE☆☆☆☆

This site will give you tons of information. From educational to fun things for your kids.  
[www.ala.org/parentspage/greatsites/parent.html](http://www.ala.org/parentspage/greatsites/parent.html)

### ONLINE CLINIC☆☆☆☆

Lots of Pediatric information  
[www.online-clinic.com/index.html](http://www.online-clinic.com/index.html)



### THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS Men and women are created equal, but boys and girls are NOT born the same...

1. You throw a little girl a ball, and it will hit her in the nose. You throw a little boy a ball, and he will try to catch it. Then it will hit him in the nose.
2. You dress your little girl in her Easter-Sunday best, and she'll look just as pretty when you finally make it to church an hour later. You dress a boy in his Easter-Sunday best, and he'll somehow find every mud puddle from your home to the church, even if you're driving there.
3. Boys' rooms are usually messy. Girls' rooms are usually messy, except it's a good smelling mess.
4. A baby girl will pick up a stick and look in wonderment at what nature has made. A baby boy will pick up a stick and turn it into a gun.
5. When girls play with Barbie and Ken dolls, they like to dress them up and play house with them. When boys play with Barbie and Ken dolls, they like to tear off their appendages.
6. Boys couldn't care less if their hair is unruly. If their bangs got cut a quarter-inch too short, girls would rather lock themselves in their room for two weeks than be seen in public.
7. Baby girls find mommy's makeup and almost instinctively start painting their face. Baby boys find mommy's makeup and almost instinctively start painting the walls.
8. If a girl accidentally burps, she will be embarrassed. If a boy accidentally burps, he will follow it with a dozen fake belches.
9. Boys grow their fingernails long because because they're too lazy to cut them. Girls grow their fingernails long, not because they look nice, but because they can dig them into a boys arm.
10. Girls are attracted to boys, even at an early age. At an early age, boys are attracted to dirt.
11. By the age of 6, boys will stop giving their dad kisses. By the age of 6, girls will stop giving their dad kisses unless he bribes them with candy.
12. Most baby girls talk before boys do. Before boys talk, they learn how to make machine-gun noises.
13. Girls will cry if someone dies in a movie. Boys will cry if you turn off the VCR after they've watched "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" movie three times in a row.
14. Girls turn into women. Boys turn into bigger boys.