

Areas of Inquiry-DHS Office Director Interview

What we mean by special needs- We will be using a broad definition in order to include children with medical, behavioral, sensory and cognitive impairments. Therefore examples could range from chronic asthma, ADHD and severe allergies to cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and autism.

Confidentiality
Tape Recorder
We'll be taking notes

General Information:

- A. What is your agency's mission?
- B. How is it communicated to your employees?
- C. What is the average caseload of your employees?
- D. What would be an ideal caseload?
- E. What is the system of supervision of ASPIRE caseworkers?
- F. What training is offered or mandated as part of a caseworkers job? (training for caseworkers surrounding referrals to multibarrier, CDS, RDC)

Special Needs

- A. What is your familiarity with the issues facing parents of children with special needs?
- B. Do families with children with special needs make up a significant part of the caseload in your district?
- C. Does the intake and/or orientation process address children with special needs?
- D. What is DHS' relationship with multi-barrier agencies?

PI only -Youthnet (we haven't talked to anyone who knows what it is yet)

Policy Issues

- A. How does your agency determine who is eligible to be exempt under the federal governments 20% hardship designation?
(Internally closed cases----does this work for clients, their children with special needs, caseworkers?)
- B. What is your understanding of why the state of Maine chooses to exempt spouses of adults receiving SSI from the work requirements, and why they choose not to exempt parents of children receiving SSI?
- C. To what degree do you feel you have latitude in interpreting the federal government's policy for PRWORA?
- D. To what degree do you expect or encourage the individual offices to use their discretion in interpreting policy? (Sanctions, is outreach necessary (S. Paris goes to Rumford, PI does a lot of outreach)
- E. What would you change if you could about the way the system works?