

Established in statute, [§ 30-174](#) and [§ 30-175](#) by the 1989 General Assembly, the Virginia Commission on Youth represents a legislative response to a two-year study examining the issues related to services to chronic status offenders. Virginia Code directs the Commission "to study and provide recommendations addressing the needs of and services to the Commonwealth's youth and families." Enacted in 1989, the Commission began operations in 1991.

Two full time staff: Executive Director and Senior Legislative Analyst

Support to the General Assembly

1. Provides a bipartisan forum for complex issues related to youth and their families
2. Studies and provides recommendations to the General Assembly on matters related to youth and families in the areas of child mental health, comprehensive services, child welfare, kinship care, adoption & foster care, child care, public safety, juvenile justice, substance abuse, education, health, and human services.
3. Contributes to the General Assembly's ability to make sound policy decision based on well-studied and reasoned recommendations. One recent example: Hosted 6 Family Impact Seminars, in partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University, at the Virginia State Capitol.
4. Assists members in developing or analyzing bills on study issues which reflect consensus among key agencies, organizations and special interests. Recent examples, successfully introduced and passed Restoration of Parental Rights legislation. Successfully introduced legislation requiring the promulgation of regulations for the use of seclusion and restraint in public schools.
5. Monitors developments in federal, state, and local government that pertain to Virginia's youth and their families.
6. Offered research and guidance on foster care and kinship issues, including support of legislation expanding foster care to age 21 and driver's licenses for youth in foster care. Hosted an informational seminar entitled "Foster Care for Legislators" during the interim. Created an informational resource binder to legislators.
7. Created and maintained a national award winning "Collection of Evidence-based Practices for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs" currently on 7th addition.

Children's Cabinet Established by Executive order in 2018, for the purpose of developing goals, strategies, and recommendations to support children and families across the Commonwealth. Chaired by the First Lady, comprised of the following members. Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Secretary of Education, Secretary of Health and Human Resources, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security. With a focus on Early Childhood Development and School Readiness, Nutrition and Food Security, Trauma-Informed Care and Student Safety.

1. The Cabinet is comprised of several workgroups. Student safety workgroup provided a report on several areas including threat assessments, promoting student-driven, peer-to-peer, communication campaigns focusing on suicide prevention. Increased funding for Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety to develop cross-disciplinary training, improve data collection, and enhance information-sharing.
2. The Cabinet created several Joint taskforces: one to study school based health centers; one to study trauma informed care. Stakeholder work group has been tasked to assemble a blueprint report that offers a comprehensive review of food access.