# MAY 2010  E-NEWSLETTER

## From the Director

The chair of the Assembly Budget Sub-Committee banged his gavel to start the April 28 hearing on the Governor's social service reduction proposals. Among the items being debated was the Governor's proposal to continue the 10% cut to Child Welfare funding that he had imposed with his blue pencil veto.  The Assembly Budget Sub-Committee chair looked out onto a sea of teal-covered shirts in the chamber audience, shirts that shouted "*Protect Our Children-Protect Our Future*" *(see photos on next page).*  Half of the faces looking back at him belonged to foster youth who were there to hold the legislators accountable for the decisions they were making that would directly affect their futures.   Seated next to several of the members of the Assembly Budget Sub-Committee were other teal shirted foster youth who were there as part of the campaign's *Take a Foster Youth to the Capitol* initiative.  Foster youth were paired up with legislators from across the state to help give a face to what the budget cuts mean.  Three legislators from Contra Costa County – DeSaulnier, Hancock and Torlakson, were among those who agreed to be paired up.

The *Protect Our Children-Protect Our Future* campaign had been launched by a broad-based alliance of organizations including the County Welfare Director's Association, the California State Counties Association, the Alliance for Child and Family Services, SEIU, AFSCME, other organized labor groups, child advocate organizations, NASW and others.  The goal of the campaign is to restore the Governor's 10% veto cut to child welfare services.  *Protect Our Children-Protect Our Future* has already orchestrated a state wide letter writing campaign and the passing of resolutions by county Boards of Supervisors [including ours].  A series of op-eds have also been generated in various counties across the state and mine was published in the Contra Costa Times on Saturday, April 24.

On April 22, the campaign marshaled forces to give

testimony at a Senate Budget Committee Hearing. Valerie Early, our Director of Children & Family Services, some of our staff, and some of our Parent Partners attended.  The testimony given by our Parent Partners was considered one of the highlights of the hearing.

At the Assembly Budget Sub-Committee hearing, a long line of persons waited to testify, including: foster youth, foster parents, child welfare workers, county welfare directors such as me, and representatives from other concerned organizations.  One tearful foster youth spoke of her growing loss of hope about ever being able to afford to pursue her dream of going to college. Speakers from the counties talked about their growing concern as the timely investigation of child abuse referrals or regular monitoring of children in foster care began to slip below the required federal performance levels.

All those testifying gave essentially the same message: we need to preserve essential services that protect the health and safety of our children. We need to protect our children not only because this is the morally right thing to do, but because continued underfunding of child welfare services will expose greater numbers of children to risk and negatively affect the future for all of us. In addition, the Governor's veto cut of $80 million in state funding for child welfare services will also result in the loss of another $53 million in federal funds – funding the state can ill afford to lose in the midst of a recession.

All of us involved in this campaign have pledged to continue our advocacy efforts until the funding cut from the Governor's veto is restored.

*Joe Valentine, EHSD Director*

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## Drop Boxes

Drop boxes have been installed at our major offices of 1275 Hall Avenue and 1301 MacDonald Avenue

in Richmond; 151 Linus Pauling Drive, Hercules; 4545 Delta Fair Boulevard, Antioch; 151 Sand Creek Road, Brentwood; and 400 Ellinwood Way, Pleasant Hill.  The purpose of the boxes is to allow clients to drop off documents after hours.  Also, clients can use the boxes during business hours if the documents they are delivering do not require a receipt or an immediate date stamp.  The overall goal of the drop boxes is to provide a convenience for our clients and reduce traffic and congestion in the lobbies.



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### Subsidized Employment Training Expands

The Subsidized Employment and Training (SET) Program has been expanded to the Non-CalWORKs 200% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) population.  Utilizing Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Funds (ECF), the One-Stops throughout Contra Costa County have begun offering SET services to individuals meeting the ECF 200% FPL criteria.  In order to qualify, participants must have a minor child and family income below 200% of FPL. Participants can request services at any One-stop throughout Contra Costa.

If you know of someone who could benefit from SET, please direct them to a One-Stop Center near them.  Click here for more information.

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### … and speaking of SET,
### Here's an ARRA Success Story

One of our SET participants was recently hired as a permanent employee at Martinez Convalescent Hospital and is earning $11/hr.  This came about in

only three months of being in the program (it's a six-month program), so we are very proud of her achievements and the success this program is having in the lives of our clients!

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### More About
### Protect Our Children Protect Our Future



Press Conference on April 22 for
*Protect Our Children Protect Our Future*



Group Photo on April 22 at
*Protect Our Children Protect Our Future*
in Sacramento

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We continue to invite your comments; just click here.

If you would like to *unsubscribe*, please click on the "Contact Us" link below, and we will remove your name from the mailing list.

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