



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE  
4126 Technology Way, Suite 100  
Carson City, Nevada 89706  
Telephone (775) 684-4000 • Fax (775) 684-4010  
<http://dhhs.nv.gov>

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Steve George, Public Information Officer  
(775) 684-4024; [sgeorge@dhhs.nv.gov](mailto:sgeorge@dhhs.nv.gov)

### **COMMUNITY PARTNERS HELPING IN EFFORT TO PROVIDE BETTER APPROACH TO CHILD WELFARE**

**Carson City**—Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director Mike Willden today expressed his appreciation for how the state's Differential Response pilot program is progressing. Willden said two programs have been operational in Clark County over the past year and have served more than 50 families. He added that additional programs in Clark, Washoe, and Elko counties will soon be serving their communities.

The Differential Response pilot program was developed in cooperation with Family Resource Centers (FRCs), which were established in 1995 by the Legislature to provide information, referrals, and case management to residents in eighteen service areas in Nevada. The FRCs collaborate with local and state agencies and organizations to help individuals and families access needed services and support.

The Differential Response program was designed as a new approach to help reduce the caseloads of the state's three child welfare agencies—Clark County Department of Family Services, Washoe County Department of Social Services, and the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services—by providing FRC staff with the training and expertise to assess and develop intervention plans for families who had reports of abuse or neglect.

State, county, and local government officials, in collaboration with FRC staff, [have participated in national trainings and meet regularly](#) with national experts who helped implement successful Differential Response programs in other states. [The Institute for Applied Research in St. Louis, Missouri is under contract with the state to provide evaluation and technical assistance through the implementation period.](#)

A joint plan to serve Nevada was developed, [local](#) training commenced, and in February 2007, two Clark County FRCs began accepting referrals: HACA Family Resource Center and the East Valley Family Services FRC.

In 2008, Differential Response programs will begin in Washoe and Elko counties, and expand to two more FRC locations in Clark County, with statewide expansion to all eighteen FRCs expected to be completed over the next two years.

“The Differential Response program is a tremendous example of a successful public/private partnership that will provide more efficient and quicker service to families in our communities,” Willden said. “These types of programs around the nation have proven to be very effective at keeping families together by providing community-based services.”

Willden added, “I would like to express my appreciation to the Casey Family Programs Foundation, a nonprofit agency that is a national leader in children’s well-being, for providing Nevada with its expertise and a substantial financial commitment to help establish this program in our state.”

For more information about Nevada Differential Response program, go to:

<http://dhhs.nv.gov/Grants/Committees/DR/DR%20Pilot%20Project%202007-02.doc>.

For locations of FRCs through Nevada, go to:

<http://dhhs.nv.gov/Grants/FRC/State%20FRC%20list.doc>.

The contacts for the two FRC locations which have already instituted the Differential Response program are:

- HACA Family Resource Center      Andrea Michaels      702-566-0576 x19
- East Valley Family Services FRC      Alicia Davison      702-455-7386

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