

I would like to include a legislative findings and a statement of intent. Findings would be something like – services for you are awful, families are not assisted in their communities, etc.

I included for reference only a statement of leg intent from the FL statute. Examples of goals from other state follow (consider these when reading section 4(b)):

Goals: Such services shall be designed to provide immediate response to families in crisis, to identify and utilize appropriate alternatives to out of home placement and to divert youth from being the subject of a CHINS petition

Goals: youth and community services which will assure that youth who come into contact or may come into contact with the child welfare and the juvenile justice systems will have access to needed community, prevention, diversion, emergency and independent living services.

From NY 735 LEAD AGENCY MISSION

- (b) *The designated lead agency shall:*
- (i) *confer with any person seeking to file a petition, the youth who may be a potential respondent, his or her family, and other interested persons, concerning the provision of diversion services before any petition may be filed; and*
 - (ii) *diligently attempt to prevent the filing of a petition under this article or, after the petition is filed, to prevent the placement of the youth into foster care; and*
 - (iii) *assess whether the youth would benefit from residential respite services; and*
 - (iv) *determine whether alternatives to detention are appropriate to avoid remand of the youth to detention.*

1 - *Findings of fact regarding the state of families and children*

The Legislature recognizes the need to distinguish the problems of truants, runaways, and children beyond the control of their parents, and the services provided to these children, from the problems and services designed to meet the needs of abandoned, abused, neglected, and delinquent children. In achieving this recognition, it shall be the policy of the state to develop short-term, temporary services and programs utilizing the least restrictive method for families in need of services and children in need of services. FLA 984.04

2 *Intent* (Taken from Florida's statute FLA 984.04)

It is the intent of the commonwealth -to address the problems of families in need of services by providing them with an array of services designed to preserve the unity and integrity of the family and to emphasize parental responsibility for the behavior of their children. Services to families in need of services and children in need of services shall be provided on a continuum of increasing intensity and participation by the parent and child.

Judicial intervention to resolve the problems and conflicts that exist within a family shall be limited to situations in which a resolution to the problem or conflict has not been achieved through service, treatment, and family intervention after all available less restrictive resources have been exhausted.