



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

MARGARET MEAD

2008 Budget and Legislative Accomplishments

December 2008 from

www.facesva.org/pdf/articles/budget_legislative_accomplishments_dec2008.pdf

During the 2008 Regular Session of the Virginia General Assembly, Governor Kaine's legislative and budgetary initiatives helped move Virginia forward in mental health services, economic development, early childhood education, campaign and election reform, consumer protection, public safety, children's services and environmental protection.

In December 2007, the Governor released details of his Budget in a [speech to the joint meeting of the Senate Finance, House Finance & House Appropriations Committees](#). In February 2008, the Governor announced a [revised budget revenue forecast](#) and released a [recommended budget reductions plan](#). The final budget is [now available online](#).

Increased Funding for Mental Health

The budget invests \$41 million for mental health reform. Initiatives include expanded monitoring and accountability of community services boards and continued and expanded support for jail diversion services. Funding also will establish a training program for crisis intervention, increase community services boards emergency services capacity, increase community services boards case management capacity, provide outpatient services to children and increase availability of outpatient clinicians and therapists.

Source: <http://www.governor.virginia.gov>

The 2009 budget took some sharp cuts, many of which will affect the services and programs which serve people who experience mental illness in Virginia. The cuts will have less impact on the over all service plan because of the legislative initiatives which were passed in 2008. However some services will be reduced in order to fund the new mandated programs, this means we must act as advocates to see that the current programs that are working continue to receive funds to do their job.

FACES will be tracking the Legislative session which begins in January in order to help you stay informed. You can monitor and express your opinion by accessing the following web-sites which provide regular updates and information on how to contact your representatives in Virginia.

2008 General Assembly Session
January 14, 2009 General Assembly Session Begins
February 28, 2009 General Assembly Session Ends

<http://www.vacsb.org/advocacy.asp>

Virginia Association of Community Service Boards

<http://www.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov/OMH-MHReform/FAQ.htm>

DMHMRSAS

Virginia department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substances Abuse Services

2008 Mental Health Law Reform

The 2008 General Assembly made significant changes to Virginia's civil commitment laws and enhanced access to services to ensure individuals with mental illness get the treatment they need. Changes in the criteria and procedures for emergency custody orders, temporary detention orders, involuntary commitment proceedings and other important measures took effect on July 1, 2008.

This page is intended to be a resource to professionals involved in the new law implementation process and to advocates and consumers of mental health services who would like to learn more about this process. We hope that the implementation of these new laws will lead to more consistent practices across the Commonwealth and will make the involuntary treatment process more fair and effective.