

Community Services Board
Public Hearing – May 11, 2006
Excerpts of Testimony Concerning Needs of Youth

A summary of some of the testimony concerning youth at the *Community Services Board's* public hearing on May 11, 2006 follows:

- John Porter, *T.C. Williams* Principal, testified that they are “seeing more and more kids with more and more mental health and mental health-related needs. As I look at my 37 years of experience, we do seemingly have more kids with more issues now.”
- Kris Clark, *Hammond* Principal, noted that “Many of our kids are at risk for substance abuse” and spoke about “how more at-risk our students are now than ever before in mental health issues.”
- The Honorable Stephen Rideout, retired Chief Judge of the Alexandria Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, urged “that serious consideration be given to providing additional support for those programs that impact our youngest children as well as our teens who are traveling through a most difficult time in their lives.”
- Dave Wynne, a Social Worker, who in the past 15 years has worked at the CSB, the Juvenile Court, and *Hammond Middle School* said that all of this had not prepared him for what he now sees at *T.C. Williams*: “We’ve talked about suicide. We’ve talked about homelessness. The kids are suffering.”
- Carol Freeman, Program Manager, *Healthy Families Alexandria*, Northern Virginia Family Service (NVFS), noted that 70% of the 245 families served by NVFS last year at intake scored positive for depression and “many experience other issues such as anxiety, PTSD, personality disorders, compulsive disorders, and substance abuse.”
- Dr. Roberta New, School Psychologist, *Minnie Howard*, spoke of a girl who was cutting on herself, another girl whose mother has paranoid schizophrenia, a boy with parents who are both substance abusers, students who are depressed, a boy with OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder) and, as Dave Wynne noted, “The list goes on.”

Speakers at the hearing documented the overwhelming need for additional mental health services not only in the schools, but for families, the elderly, homeless, incarcerated consumers and others.