talk to parents and they can tell you that.

JUDGE BLITZMAN: Right on.

CHAIRMAN WALTON: Ms. Gadow. Thank you.

MS. GADOW: Members of the Commission, my name is Diane Gadow. I appreciate very much being able to testify with you today. I'm going to say I've only been in this system almost 30 years and give deference to my colleagues here who've been in 30 plus, but in that period of time and working with the juvenile corrections system I've worked in three different states, so, hopefully some of the comments I make can be generalized beyond the State of Arizona where I serve as the Deputy Director.

I'd like to just make a distinction between adult and juvenile corrections. And, by the way, I really appreciated the comments this morning because it's obvious that the Commission is very aware of and seeking more clarification as to the distinctions between adult and juvenile corrections. I was very appreciative of those comments earlier on.

But we're held to a different standard by law, and by the child abuse and neglect laws of the different states, and that goes by requiring, we are required that minors be protected from harm, including abuse and neglect, rape and sexual assault, and each state has mandatory reporting requirements for these kinds of abuse and neglect.
Highlights of that that make us more -- and we may not be hitting the mark, but we are held to these standards -- is that the infliction of or allowing another person to cause serious emotional damage and also omissions of an individual having care, custody and control of a child.

Abuse shall include inflicting or allowing sexual abuse, sexual conduct with a minor, sexual assault, molestation of a child, commercial sexual exploitation of a minor, incest or child prostitution. The results of these kinds of acts should be investigated and the results of investigation should lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal as well as criminal prosecution where the evidence allows. I say that because this happens quite often in institutions, and I think you've heard over the morning the testimony that sometimes those things are neglected or looked the other way or a preponderance of evidence is not available to actually do the prosecution.

Training staff on appropriate expectations, including proper supervision and applied accountability, are of extreme importance to all administrators responsible for the care and development of youth in our custody. We may not be doing a good job, as you heard from Ms. Becker this morning about the number of states that are under agreement or investigations by the Department of Justice. Arizona happens to be one of those states, the second time that
we've been -- that the state has been under investigation in probably the last ten plus years. And I cannot answer the question that was asked this morning as to how do you get out and stay out, but we're working very hard in that direction. We are held to a higher standard, and I think we have to continue working to reach those higher standards.

Let me give you a snapshot of the youth that are committed to the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, and I think you'll see some similarities of some of the things that you've heard already. The average age of commitment is 16 years. Typically a youth is committed to the department for property offenses. Forty-five percent of our population is Hispanic. Forty-five percent are identified as special education eligible. I think in most of your public school systems it's probably 15, ten to 15 percent of youth are identified as special education. Forty percent of the department's population has a history of abuse. Seventy-eight percent of that population is female; 32 percent is male. Twenty-seven percent of the female population has a history of family sexual abuse. Ninety-six percent of the youth have drug and alcohol environment prior to coming to our area.

Now, youth should be held accountable for their acts which violate the community and law. States and communities have a part in this also. They need to do a
better job assessing the whole child instead of placing them in institutions that are not conducive to maintaining a safe environment. States and communities must make available the services needed of a youth and have a philosophy of preparing the youth to return to the community with the skills, knowledge, practices and decision-making needed to be successful. Youth who have experienced abuse and neglect and victimization present very differently and are more vulnerable to the environment in which they're being placed. And I think you've had comments, information relevant to this in previous hearings as well as what we heard this morning.

I'd like to just cover two areas. I think the area of physical environment has been covered fairly significantly, but there are a couple of highlights that I might make in that area, and I'd like to look to see what can be done and try to keep the perspective that we'll continue working to make it a much better system. Whether we'll get to the point where it will be totally risk-free of returning to a bad situation or not, I'm not sure of.

I want to talk a little bit about the vision and the mission of the agency and services provided and available to the assessed needs of the youth, actually interagency collaboration. The vision and mission of agencies across the states vary. They're dependent upon
state statute, the organizational structure, and the philosophy developed within the administration of the agency. Victimized youth are more vulnerable and have developed coping skills that make them more susceptible to abuse, inappropriate sexual behavior, and rape in institutions, rape in institutions that promote the lock-up, continuous confinement, minimal programming, inadequate staff-to-student ratios, and inefficient training for staff in areas such as adolescent development.

How staff perceive their roles within the institution is critical. If they perceive themselves just as a guard, viewing juveniles as criminals or inmates limits their ability to make appropriate assessment of the risk and needs of offenders. Rather, staff should perceive themselves as facilitators who are trained to consider social and behavior histories of each offender and then they are more apt to be able to service and supervise the youth in their custody.

One of the things that we have really been struggling with and working hard and focusing on in Arizona is actual agency cultural change. Many times, because your systems, your agencies are in different systems, the mentality -- and it's impacted also by your legislature and your governor -- but the mentality more is of lock the youth up, security is the major focus, and if that kind of a
culture is the only thing that's prevalent within your institution, it doesn't matter how beautiful the building is or how much money you put forth, that's what it's going to be. So, we have been focusing very heavily on culture change within the agency of our organization. Our vision statement is "Safer communities through successful youth."

Some of the norms and expectations that we have, not just of our youth, but also of our faculty and staff, are responsibility, respect, accountability, and a safe environment, and articulating what those four areas are and detailing it out as to what exactly that means for each child and also for each staff member is critical, and we're working very hard to change the culture and expectations down to our staff members who in many instances consider themselves guard, but how do they change and how do they apply what they do on a daily basis in their daily interactions with kids when they think about respect, responsibility, accountability and what is really a safe environment.

We've already talked about the physical institutions, as I said, and I just wanted to highlight that the issue of privacy is of critical importance. The structure of the facility institutions adds to that as well as the supervisory -- supervision that the staff do and the way they're supervised and how they're supervising the young
men and young ladies. Visual access, and also I think a
critical part is programming space. Classroom space and
programming space for groups and social skill development
programs and that sort of thing are very, very important.
The environment has a significant impact on how a
young man or young woman sees themselves and thus handles
himself. It's the same way with the staff is how and in
what conditions they work.

The other area that I really want to stress very
highly is the interagency collaboration, and those are words
that have probably been thrown around and discussed for
quite a period of time, but I think it's very critical.
You've heard testimony today that talks about throwaway
kids, it talks about other systems not being able to handle
our kids, and, so, they get sent to us, sent to juvenile
corrections. But I think it's very important to really take
a serious look at how to develop and how to work with the
continuum of services because the kids who come into our
system, as you are very aware, come from very difficult and
varied backgrounds, and I think the better we are at helping
and working with other agencies, child welfare agencies,
mental health and education, I think the better we can help
them work with the kids in a less restrictive environment
and more appropriate setting and give them the services that
they need. Interagency collaboration, they're state
agencies, and you would think and hope that they could work

198  together very well, and many times that's not totally the
202  issue. We have to very much work to tear down the silos
within our agency and also interagency-wide.

208  The services, I really believe services need to be
developed in the community for the youth and hopefully
deferring youth to and maintaining youth in the community
will be helpful. When not, the services need to be ready
for the youth when he or she re-enters into the community.
And the services in the institution, in order to get the
kids ready for that, have to include education programs, the
clinical, medical and mental health services and basic skill
programs.

253  One of the two areas that are of critical
importance to maintain the safety of the youth and prevent
actual additional sexual abuse towards youth who are within
our institutions and within our agencies I think we have to
have a very strong investigative system in place -- we've
talked about that a little bit today -- but an investigative
system that kind of goes beyond being able to write a report
and do an internal investigation. Within our agency we have
ex-police officers that are licensed police officers who do
the actual investigations. Any allegations of abuse or any
incident reports, all incident reports, actually, are
reviewed by them before they go back to the institution to
be reviewed and administered by the superintendents. These investigations on allegations have to be completed on a timely basis and additional staff training follow-up has to happen, whether it be disciplinary action, criminal charges filed, and/or additional staff training to correct the issues within the institutions.

Now, this aspect can be costly. I know in the adult system that there are investigative units that may be connected with the Department of Corrections and Juvenile Corrections. That's not as prevalent and yet I think with the significance of some of the cases that have occurred, I think it's of value to take a look at. It can be costly and it needs the support of the legislature and the community to make sure and maintain that.

It's also important that each institution put publicly stated standards in place and work towards gaining and maintaining accreditation. Allowing audits based on performance-based standards raises the level of delivery of services, and putting this quality assurance process in place requires both internal and external application. External auditing is of value. You can get compliance, non-compliance; you can also have performance-based standards that say here's how you rate and are compared to other institutions within the nation. You also have to have an internal process which is part of the cultural change
that staff, individual staff members, are looking at and
determining whether or not they can make improvements in the
system that they have, and whether or not they are, in fact,
in compliance with the standards that they have. So, it has
to be -- the quality assurance process has to go both
internally and externally. The departments within
institutions need to have the expectation of using quality
assurance programs to identify problems and issues.

So, what can be done? I think the public
perception and sentiment needs to continue changing. We
deal with the very difficult and very high risk and high
need population of youth in our country. Youth in the
juvenile justice system need to be kept safe and to be given
services needed to be successful.

The public agency interdependence and
collaboration needs to improve to provide services at all
levels and in all levels of a community.

Juvenile institutions should share the mission of
public safety and provisions of services necessary for youth
to be successful when transitioning to the community.

And lastly, funding sources at all levels of
government should be reviewed and increased to support the
above initiatives.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WALTON: Thank you.