

## FOSTER CARE SAFE AND SOUND TASK FORCE

### WORK PLAN

#### Work Plan Initiative

- On April 1, 2022 Governor Glenn Youngkin launched a task force to ensure safe placements for children in foster care.
- Bringing together state and local government agencies, all three branches of government, private providers, health networks, advocacy groups, the faith community and other community partners, the Safe and Sound Task Force will work to find solutions for safe and appropriate placements for children in foster care.
  - The Virginia Commission on Youth shall participate and assist the Safe and Sound Task Force in solving Virginia's child welfare crisis and to end the practice of children sleeping in local departments of social services, hotels, and emergency rooms.

#### Background

- Over a six-month period in 2021, 163 children in foster care were displaced for at least one night in unsuitable sleeping arrangements.
- There is a massive shortage of foster homes, kinship family placements, and staffed beds in group homes and residential treatment centers.
- These displaced children range in age 7-17 years old.
- When a child in foster care is displaced, a social worker or law enforcement personnel must stay overnight with the child. This adds to the stress of an exhausted workforce.
- Group homes and residential treatment facilities are unable to staff their facilities due to workforce shortages.

#### Work Plan Activities

- Attend Task Force Meetings.
  - April 11 and April 13, 2022
  - Additional meetings as necessary
- Update the Commission on Youth
  - Request Janet Kelly, Special Advisory for Children's Issues to give updates to the Commission.
- Monitor the activities of the Task Force.
- Provide assistance as needed to the Task Force.
- Present findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth.