

EXHIBIT 11
DATE 1/19/2011
HB

Testimony on behalf of Youth Dynamics

1/19/11

Mister Chair and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Kevin Wyse, I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and I live in Townsend Montana. However, I have a private practice in Helena and I am the Day Treatment Program manager for Alternative Youth Adventures, a therapeutic group home in Boulder, MT. AYA is owned and operated by Youth Dynamics and we support the DPHHS budget for children's mental health services. We have been partners with other members of the Montana Children's Initiative provider organizations and support efforts to reform the system of mental health services for children and their families. We would like to thank the committee for the support the State does provide for children and for the opportunity to speak to you today.

12-18-K-8

Youth Dynamics has served the State of Montana for 30 years and we currently have 19 different locations across the state. We reach into 54 Montana counties and have developed services in more rural areas such as Shelby, Coalstrip and Wolf Point. Youth dynamics has a variety of services ranging from case management to traditional outpatient services, as well as therapeutic foster care, a shelter care group home for kids in acute crisis and eight therapeutic group homes for kids in need of longer term treatment. Our agency serves between 800 and 1000 kids and their families on an annual basis and we are proud to say we exclusively serve the youth of Montana.

I began working with Youth Dynamics approximately 15 years ago in my private practice and then began contracting services with them approximately 5 years ago at AYA. Besides my supervision duties, I also conduct therapy with a variety of kids who have a variety of issues. These include kids who have depression, bipolar disorder, psychotic symptoms, oppositional difficulties and highly sexualized behaviors. These issues make it impossible for these kids to succeed in society, within their families and in public school. AYA provides inclusive services including therapeutic group homes, a day treatment school program and mental health therapy. These services are unique to AYA and have made a tremendous difference in lives of the kids and families we serve. In the past, several of the kids at AYA would have been sent out of state to residential treatment facilities or to the Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility. We at AYA have developed our programming in order to prevent kids being placed so far from their families and their home communities. I have witnessed kids who have been recommended for out of state placement, attend our facility and make tremendous inroads into understanding their own mental health difficulties and how these contribute to problematic behaviors in their lives. With this understanding they are able to learn and practice new skills within a safe environment and then work with their families in a manner that many times allows for reunification. If they are unable to return home, Youth Dynamics provides therapeutic foster families who can nurture and assist these kids in a manner where they are more likely to be successful. This is a very different model from shipping kids to out of state placements where the continuity of care is broken due to long distances and programs which are unfamiliar with the culture of Montana. My family homesteaded in Montana, I grew up in Montana, received my education in Montana schools and Universities and I have lived here most of my life. When I entered the field of mental health it was extremely disheartening for me to watch as child after



child was shipped out of Montana to some faraway place such as Texas or Georgia in order to receive treatment that was not available in this state. Now, in coordination with DPHHS we at Youth Dynamics are able to offer the type treatment and coordination of care that out of state facilities are not able to provide. I appreciate the efforts of everyone who has made this possible and this committee for helping us to provide realistic and effective treatment to the youth of Montana. Your efforts truly make a difference in the lives of the children of Montana.

Over

Thank you for your time.

Kevin E. Wyse Med. L. C.P.C.

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I work w/ adult of notes
who are convicted criminals
* They often relate that they
wish they could have had the
info which we discuss. This is
the info that our kids learn.

my kids