

On February 17, Randy Gray and eleven other advocates met with Dr. Linda Blessing, Interim DES Director, who oversees all the department heads, including Barbara Brent, DDD Administrator. An email sent to all East Valley Legislators will provide some background information. Please note, Marc Center must reduce its operating budget by \$330,000 in DD funding for the last four months of this fiscal year ending June 30, 2009 and \$1.1 million for the next fiscal year. The state cannot expect us to make a 10% cut without it affecting services.

Randy is pushing back hard with the state, with Dr. Blessing, with our Legislators, and with the Governor's office. We may achieve some concessions, but the reality is we will still need to absorb some cuts. At the same time that we are requested to diminish services, the state continues to monitor our sites. Last week DD monitored our Day Treatment program at 924 North Country Club Drive. Yesterday, they made a surprise visit to our Freestone site. One of the few minor citations was for a 3-day expiration of a jar of mayonnaise in the refrigerator. On balance, we met all the major standards. Marc Center needs strong advocacy efforts in restoring some of the cuts and reducing intervention/monitoring by the state, which is costly and non-value-added. We do not need incessant monitoring. We must all do our part. Let families drive quality with their level of satisfaction. Again, if the state can still perform these non-value added functions (i.e., monitoring), then they can afford to take more cuts at the state level. As you will note in my email to legislators, the state "pushes paper"; we meet the daily healthcare needs of the people.

What we would like from stakeholders and the parents is to email legislators and Dr. Blessing regarding your concerns and personal stories about this impact.

Following are the email addresses for Dr. Blessing and Representative Kirk Adams, Speaker of the House:

Dr. Linda Blessing – [lblessing@azdes.gov](mailto:lblessing@azdes.gov)

Representative Kirk Adams – [kadams@azleg.gov](mailto:kadams@azleg.gov)

Also, please email the following legislators with your concerns:

Senator Chuck Gray – [cgray@azleg.gov](mailto:cgray@azleg.gov)

Senator Thayer Verschoor – [tverschoor@azleg.gov](mailto:tverschoor@azleg.gov)

Senator Russell K. Pearce – [rpearce@azleg.gov](mailto:rpearce@azleg.gov)

Representative Rich Crandall – [rcrandall@azleg.gov](mailto:rcrandall@azleg.gov)

Representative Andy Biggs – [abiggs@azleg.gov](mailto:abiggs@azleg.gov)

Representative Cecil P. Ash – [cash@azleg.gov](mailto:cash@azleg.gov)

Representative Steve Court – [scourt@azleg.gov](mailto:scourt@azleg.gov)