WHEREAS, the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services in the Department of Human Services will undergo federal review of its agency under the Children and Family Services Review ("CFSR") conducted by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, beginning with a self assessment in 2003 and an onsite review in or about March 2004; and

WHEREAS, the CFSR monitors and evaluates the State's child and family services, including protective services, family preservation and support, foster care, independent living and adoption services; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services is establishing a steering committee the participation of external stakeholders as required by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and has commenced the preparation for the CFSR; and

WHEREAS, a portion of the CFSR will monitor and evaluate systematic factors, such as service array accessibility to such circumstances as domestic violence and substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, there exists involvement of all branches of government and multiple levels within these branches of government in circumstances such as domestic violence and substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, September is Substance Abuse Awareness Month and October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, the Governor has expressed his strong support of the improvement of services for New Jersey children and families; and

WHEREAS, the Governor has expressed his commitment to partner with other branches of government to work collaboratively to improve the services New Jersey provides to its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature has expressed a desire to partner with the Department of Human Services to conduct its own review of the interplay between domestic violence and the welfare of children and families and the interplay between substance abuse and the welfare of children and families;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JAMES E. McGREEVEY, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. The Commissioner may jointly conduct hearings with the Legislature where joint invitations are sent to interested parties for participation in two hearings; one involving the interplay between domestic violence and the welfare of children and families, the other involving the interplay between substance abuse and the welfare of children and families.

2. The Commissioner, in cooperation with the Legislature, may establish two separate work groups, one for domestic violence and one for substance abuse, the membership of which shall be comprised of persons jointly recommended, representatives of various branches of government, various State departments, community providers, advocacy groups, and interested parties, provided that at least two persons from the existing steering committee formed by the Division of Youth and Family Services under the CFSR, shall be a member of each work group to facilitate shared ideas, to avoid duplicat
and to promote cooperative endeavors for the common goal.

3. Within one year, the work groups shall present a joint report to the Commissioner and the Legislature in open session, focusing on how the various branches and levels of government, the various State departments, the multitude of community partners, advocacy groups and interested parties can be instrumental in the Division of Youth and Family Services better serving the interests of children and families through implementation of initiatives regarding issues of domestic violence and substance abuse, across systems in a collaborative fashion. The report shall include, but not be limited to, recommendations regarding modifications of existing policies/procedures and legislation/regulations as well as interdepartmental and advocacy group partnerships, as may be applicable.

4. This Order shall take effect immediately.

  GIVEN, under my hand and seal, this 23rd day of October in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand Two, and of the Independence of the United States, the Two Hundred and Twenty-Seventh.

  /s/ James E. McGreevey
  Governor

  [seal]

Attest:

  /s/ Paul A. Levinsohn
  Chief Counsel to the Governor