



*Celebrating 175 Years of Services  
To Children and Families*

# PRESS RELEASE

*415 South Fifteenth Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19146*

**215.875.8200**

*www.turningpointsforchildren.org*

*For information: info@turningpointsforchildren.org*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

For Press Information, Please Contact:

Bob Koenig: **610-408-8350**

[Bob@StrategicBrandServices.com](mailto:Bob@StrategicBrandServices.com)

## **Enhancing Intergenerational Caregivers' Quality of Life Is Focus as Sen. Anthony H. Williams Convenes Roundtable at Turning Points for Children**



### **AT LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLE**

Pictured, from left:  
State Sen. Anthony H. Williams;  
Michael J. Vogel, CEO, Turning Points for Children;  
Brenda Rich, director, quality and training, Turning Points for  
Children; and  
State Rep. Kenyatta Johnson.

PHILADELPHIA, PA *September 26, 2011* – How can legislation be developed that will positively enhance the quality of life for intergenerational caregivers of children whose parents are absent due to incarceration, addiction or neglect?

A roundtable meeting on September 12 to develop strategies to achieve this goal included state legislators, the Philadelphia health commissioner, community social service directors and representatives, and medical and older adult organization leaders. The meeting was organized by Pennsylvania State Sen. Anthony H. Williams at the offices of Turning Points for Children, the social service provider for children and families in Philadelphia, located in Williams' district. Williams served as moderator. Turning Points for Children's Chief Executive Officer Michael J. Vogel, and Brenda Rich, director, quality and training, hosted at their offices.

Intergenerational caregiving for the good of a child's welfare – by grandparents, aunts and uncles, older siblings and others – is a growing national challenge that requires support and guidance. Nationwide, more than seven million children live with grandparents, where some one in five of those grandparents serves as primary caretakers. This is an increase of more than 30 percent within the last 20 years alone, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. For many caregivers the financial and emotional burdens can be extreme.

Williams said of the roundtable meeting: "This roundtable is part of an ongoing process, not a quick fix. It's important that we not focus on panaceas – a conference here, a meeting there. The issue is too substantial, and we know that addressing the systemic needs of older relatives raising grandchildren and other younger relatives involves many facets and touches a range of social spheres. That's why continued and coordinated collaborative efforts are essential.

"As legislators, our first mission was to listen, to understand the depth and scope of the issues intergenerational families and their champions tackle and why. The next leg of the journey is to see how we can creatively craft solutions that are fiscally tenable and sustainable, in a collective way – and move on it. Only in facing this as a united community will we be able to provide the relief and support these families need and deserve."

Vogel said: "This conversation is critical because the public sector is becoming increasingly reliant on relatives to step up in a more formal way to be the primary caregiver when a child's parents are not available. As we make this shift we must also recognize that all families are not created equal in terms of the resources they have at their disposal. It is true that research supports that children have better results across the board when they live with relatives but there is a percentage of these caregivers who will need various levels of support if they are going to be able to successfully care for their children."

Those attending the conference included: from the Pennsylvania legislature: Rep. Vanessa Lowery Brown; Rep. Kenyatta Johnson; Rep. Ron Waters; Marlene Henkin, director of

operations, and Timika Lane, chief legislative counsel, from Williams' office; and Sean McCray, policy advisor for Sen. LeAnna Washington.

Also participating were: Anne Marie Ambrose, commissioner, Philadelphia Department of Human Services; and Alma Jean Taylor, for Arthur C. Evans Jr., commissioner, Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services; Joi Allie-Hopkins, AARP Pennsylvania; Jean Hackney, vice president, Grands as Parents; Estella Hyde, president, AARP Pennsylvania; Jamie Johns, The Salvation Army, Philadelphia Social Service Ministries; Nandi Jones-Clement, board member, Turning Points for Children; Christine Kang-YI, researcher, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia; Chartan Nelson, executive director, Grand Center, Inc.; James Oram, board member, Turning Points for Children; Richelle Phillips, coordinator, GrandFamily Resource Center; and David M. Rubin, MD, MSCE, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

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Celebrating its 175th year of service to the community, Turning Points for Children is a 501 (c) 3 charitable organization, the result of the merger of the Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Society for Services to Children. In 2010 alone, they provided more than 4,000 children and over 2,000 families with proven, innovative programs that nurture families with children through after-school family programs, teen parent education, assistance to relative caregivers, and in-home services to children who are at risk for potential abuse and neglect.

Anthony H. Williams is serving his fourth term in the Pennsylvania Senate. He has advocated for citizens' rights for more than two decades. Senator Williams has championed issues that include ending unfair insurance credit scoring practices, curbing natural gas rate hikes, protecting the environment, lowering taxes, and creating jobs for both his constituents and citizens of Pennsylvania.

For more information about the programs of Turning Points for Children, phone 215-875-4960, or email: [info@turningpointsforchildren.org](mailto:info@turningpointsforchildren.org).

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