

## **Public Input for Governor Mark Dayton's Task Force on the Protection of Children**

Governor Mark Dayton's Task Force on the Protection of Children is inviting public input for improvements to child protection screening, Family Assessment Response, training for county child protection staff, state oversight, resources, and how the child protection system can be more transparent. Input is requested to help inform recommendations to the Governor to ensure the safety of children and improve Minnesota's Child Welfare System.

Questions have been developed based on the following topics: screening, Family Assessment Response and adequacy of resources, child welfare training and supervision, early intervention and prevention services, and transparency. You are invited to answer any or all of the questions below. More general comments are welcome as well. Public comments can be sent to: [dhs.child.protection.task.force@state.mn.us](mailto:dhs.child.protection.task.force@state.mn.us).

The Task Force will make initial recommendations by December 31, 2014 with final recommendations due by March 31, 2015.

The Task Force held public meetings on October 13, 2014 in St. Paul, October 22, 2014 in Duluth, November 5, 2014 in St. Paul, and November 14, 2014 in St. Paul. There are several additional Task Force meetings scheduled. For further information please visit the Task Force website at [www.dhs.state.mn.us/childprotectiontaskforce](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/childprotectiontaskforce).

- I. Screening reports of child abuse including:
  - a. How should Minnesota strengthen quality and consistency in screening reports of child abuse?
  - b. What level of oversight should the state agency provide to county and tribal child welfare agencies in screening of reports of child abuse or neglect?
  - c. How should prior child protection history be used when screening new reports of abuse or neglect?
  - d. What are the pros and cons for cross reporting screened out reports of child abuse/neglect to law enforcement?
  - e. What kinds of information should mandated reporters receive in response to making a report of child abuse or neglect?
  - f. What information should be made available to the public in reports of child abuse or neglect?
  - g. What are the pros and cons of a centralized child protection referral and screening system?

- h. What types of injuries to children ages birth to 4 should be considered substantial child endangerment?
- i. In cases involving physical injury, when should children age's birth to 4 be required to be examined by a medical professional?
- j. What are your suggestions to support mandated reporters in assuring that child abuse/neglect reports are not influenced by poverty and race?

II. Family Assessment Response and adequacy of resources, including:

- a. Should the child protection system be able to respond/intervene differently to child abuse reports based on certain factors like severity of an injury, age of the child, past child protection history, etc.?
- b. What suggestions do you have to make workloads of child protection workers more manageable?
- c. What are your suggestions for improving families' ease of access to high quality culturally-effective services and resources?
- d. How can child protection work more effectively keep children safe and families better off because of their involvement with the child protection system?
- e. Do you have specific suggestions for changing local, state, and federal resources for Minnesota's child welfare system staff?

III. Child welfare training and supervision, including:

- a. What should the minimum necessary qualifications be for workers who make screening decisions on child abuse and neglect report?
- b. What kind of educational background and/or training should child protection workers have before they start working in child protection?
- c. What kinds of training should the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System provide to social workers assessing allegations of child abuse and neglect, including injuries?
- d. What role should supervisors play in screening and casework decisions?
- e. What are your recommendations for improving outcomes for children and families by enhancing Minnesota's child welfare system?
- f. In a state-supervised, county administered child protection system, what role should the Department of Human Services have in holding counties accountable to performance outcomes?
- g. How could the Department of Human Services help support and improve child protection services at the county level?

IV. Early Intervention and/or Prevention Services, including:

- a. What suggestions do you have for providing early intervention and prevention services for children and their families at risk for abuse?
- b. What types of services or supports are most critical in supporting healthy child development and promoting safe and nurturing parenting?
- c. What can be done to better prevent families from entering the child protection system?
- d. What services are available in your area that are working to keep children safe and strengthen families?
- e. What services are missing or not effective in keeping children safe or strengthening families?

V. Transparency

- a. What would it look like if the Child Protection system was more transparent?
- b. What are the pros and cons of making the child protection system more open and transparent?