03-22

 **DHS Initiative:**

2022 Legislative Session

# Strengthening Minnesota families and reducing the need for out-of-home placements in the child welfare system

All Minnesota children deserve to live in safe, nurturing homes. The Governor’s proposed budget focuses on strengthening families and reducing the need for foster care and other out-of-home placements, especially for American Indian children who are disproportionately represented in the state’s child welfare system. Investments will support efforts to reduce the number of children entering the child welfare system as a whole, address the high rate of American Indian children entering the child welfare system, and provide funding to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe to support implementation of Minnesota’s American Indian Child Welfare Initiative. The budget also includes resources to continue implementing the federal Family First Prevention Services Act.

## Proposals

The Governor’s budget includes the following proposals:

* **Reducing the number of children who enter the child welfare system:** A series of upstream investments will focus on reducing the number of children entering the child welfare system by promoting family well-being, meeting families’ needs early and preventing unnecessary trauma to children and families. The proposal includes funding to expand effective prevention programs including the Parent Support Outreach Program, Family Group Decision Making and the Parent Mentor program. The state will also increase its contribution to Family Assessment Response funding for counties and Tribal governments. *FY 2023: $4.2 million; FY 2024: $46.6 million; FY 2025: $46.5 million*
* **Strengthening efforts to preserve American Indian families:** Adding new staff trained in the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) will help address the high rate of American Indian children entering the child welfare system. This proposal will expand prevention and early intervention efforts, resolve the backlog of complaints about non-compliance with ICWA, and develop a human trafficking response specific to American Indian children, young adults and families. Funding will support hiring an attorney who specializes in ICWA and other laws impacting American Indian children in the child protection system.   
  *FY 2023: $877,000; FY 2024-25: $2 million*
* **Planning the American Indian Child Welfare Initiative with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe:** The Mille Lacs Band will receive funding to implement Minnesota’s American Indian Child Welfare Initiative. When fully implemented in Fiscal Year 2025, the Tribal government will receive child welfare cases from counties and offer culturally based services. A two-phased approach will allow for development of federally reimbursable services, with resources to manage growth in administrative and direct care programs. *FY 2023: $1.3 million; FY 2024: $2.8 million; FY 2025: $86,000*
* **Continuing to implement the Family First Prevention Services Act:** New investments will help Minnesota continue to implement this federal law, with the goal of preventing out-of-home placement for children whenever possible. Proposals include new state staff to implement Title IV-E services, funding for information technology to meet federal requirements, and a new grant program to help individuals remain qualified to assess children and adolescents for services in family and community settings. *FY 2023: $495,000; FY 2024-25: $786,000*

## Related information

Governor’s 2022 Revised Supplemental Budget Recommendations:

* [Investments in Child Welfare Prevention and Systemic Needs](https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/2022-03-17-dhs-revised-supplemental-budget-recommendations_tcm1053-521738.pdf#page=116)
* [Preserving American Indian Families](https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/2022-03-17-dhs-revised-supplemental-budget-recommendations_tcm1053-521738.pdf#page=129)
* [American Indian Child Welfare Initiative Planning – Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe](https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/2022-03-17-dhs-revised-supplemental-budget-recommendations_tcm1053-521738.pdf#page=138)
* [Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Implementation Phase 3](https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/2022-03-17-dhs-revised-supplemental-budget-recommendations_tcm1053-521738.pdf#page=145)

Additional background:

* [Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)](https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/licensing/family-first/)
* [Indian child welfare](https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/program-overviews/indian-child-welfare/)
* [Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)](https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois/dhs/icwa)
* [Parent Support Outreach Program](https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/services/child-protection/programs-services/parent-support-outreach.jsp)
* [Family Assessment Response](https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/services/child-protection/programs-services/family-assessment-response.jsp)