

Screening and Transparency Workgroup

Lead: Hon. Kathleen Blatz

Members: Sheriff Terese Amazi
Judith Brumfield
Peggy Flanagan
Dr. Lisa Hollensteiner
Rep. Joe Mullery
Sen. Julie Rosen
Co Atty Michelle Zehnder Fischer

DHS Staff Support: Jamie Sorenson (651-431-4655) or Jamie.sorenson@state.mn.us

Charge to the Workgroup:

Screening: the Workgroup will review how screening decisions currently are made, assess whether they are adequate and make recommendations for improvements to strengthen the quality and consistency of screening decisions. The Workgroup should consider whatever expert or anecdotal information it deems appropriate, but should:

- Review child protection intake practices and screening guidelines
- Consider the results of the random screening audits conducted by DHS to inform current screening practices
- Evaluate use of prior child protection history and previous reports of maltreatment in the screening process
- Review cross reporting to law enforcement and
- Examine use of team decisions and supervision, as well as the qualifications of screening staff
- Review of mandated reporter obligations under the law, and how the system responds to such reports

Transparency: The Workgroup will identify opportunities to increase transparency of child protection practices and accountability of the child protection system. It should consider how data should be identified and collected/published at both the state and/or local levels.

Initial recommendations on screening are due by December 4, 2014. Initial recommendations on transparency are due at the end of February 2015. Final recommendations for both screening and transparency are due March 15, 2015.

Family Assessment/Adequacy of Resources Workgroup

Lead: Dr. Mark Hudson

Members: Chief Blair Anderson
Rich Gehrman
MayKao Hang
Stacy Hennen
Prof. Robert O'Connor
Sen. Kathy Sheran
Hon. Edward Toussaint

DHS Staff Support: Suzanne Arntson (651-431-3857) or Suzanne.Arntson@state.mn.us

Charge to the Workgroup:

Family Assessment: The Workgroup will review the family assessment process; assess whether the protocols governing it are adequate and, if so, being adhered to; and make recommendations for improvements. As part of its review, the Workgroup also will consider the adequacy of practice as it relates to substantial child endangerment cases more broadly. The Workgroup should consider whatever expert or anecdotal information it deems appropriate, but should:

- Review pathway assignment and supervision of these assignments
- Examine the rigor, practice and protocols of assessment and investigation
- Address opportunities for early intervention and the need for and delivery of services to children and families, whether through family assessment or other avenues
- Review the cultural needs of families and whether they are being appropriately served by the current family assessment model
- Consider whether “substantial child endangerment” should be redefined in statute to require more cases be assigned to investigation rather than family assessment
- Review and assess current and past research on outcomes of family assessment and consider recommendations about any need for additional research; assess the applicability of family assessment research on current practice
- Assess the adequacy of practice as it relates to substantial child endangerment cases

Resources and capacity: The Workgroup will assess the adequacy of current state, local and federal resources for child protection as it exists today. It will also address resources that would be needed to implement recommendations of the Task Force, including possible increased costs for services for children and their families. It will make recommendations to address gaps or inadequacies identified by the Task Force.

Initial recommendations on resources, as well as an interim report on Family Assessment, due by December 4, 2014. Final recommendations on Family Assessment are due by the end of February 2015 and final recommendations on resources due by March 15, 2015.

Training and Supervision of Practice Workgroup

Lead: Kathy Johnson

Members: Larene Broome
Kraig Gratke
Chairwoman Carri Jones
Molly Kenney
Rep. Ron Kresha
Comm. Todd Patzer
Dean Jean Quam

DHS Staff Support: Lori Munsterman (651-431-4705) or lori.munsterman@state.mn.us

Charge to the Workgroup:

The Workgroup will review the quality of the current state of training and of supervisory oversight of local agency practices, assess their adequacy, and where appropriate, make recommendations for improvements to strengthen the supervision of practice. The Workgroup should consider whatever expert or anecdotal information it deems appropriate, but should:

- Review qualifications of child protection staff
- Examine workforce challenges and opportunities
- Consider adequacy of training resources for child welfare practices for staff, supervisors and mandated reporters, among others
- Review upcoming changes to the adult protection system around centralized reporting and consider whether a similar approach would be appropriate in the child protection system
- Evaluate the level of supervision of practice by the state agency and make appropriate recommendations to strengthen quality and quantity of supervision.

Initial recommendations on Supervision are due on December 4, 2014. Recommendations on Training as well as final recommendations on Supervisory Oversight of Local Practices are due by March 1, 2015. This committee may be assigned additional work identified by the Task Force over the next two months as the Task Force gathers additional public input.