

Children & Families: Committee Overview

PRESENTED BY ANNIE MACH AND SARAH SUNDERMAN
MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

January 10, 2023

OVERVIEW OF COMMITTEE JURISDICTION | MINNESOTA HOUSE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

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Early Care & Learning – MDE

Developmental Screening

- School districts must provide developmental screening for children before they start kindergarten and receive aid for each child screened

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

- School districts may give kindergarten readiness assessments to incoming kindergarteners

Grant Programs

- ParentChild+
- Reach Out and Read

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Early Care & Learning - MDE

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)

- School districts may operate ECFE programs for children from birth to kindergarten, for their parents, and for expectant parents
- ECFE includes parent education to promote children's learning and development

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Head Start

- Federal program that provides comprehensive family-oriented services to children from low-income families with the goal of improving children's school readiness
- Encompasses Head Start, Early Head Start, and Tribal Head Start
- Funded with federal and state money

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School Readiness

- School districts may establish a school readiness program for 3- and 4-year-old children for the purpose of preparing children for kindergarten
- Program is free for children who have a specified risk factor
- Money for the program is allocated among districts according to a statutory formula

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Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) & School Readiness Plus (SRP)

- Both programs are for 4-year-old children
- VPK is free to all children; SRP is free to children who have a specified risk factor
- 3,160 VPK seats are ongoing; and 4,000 SRP seats will expire after June 30, 2023, if not extended by the legislature
- Money for the programs is appropriated through the general education aid formula

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Early Learning Scholarships

- Program for 3- and 4-year-old children, with some exceptions for younger children, in low-income families
- Pathway I scholarships are awarded directly to eligible children to be used at a Parent Aware-rated early care and learning program chosen by the child's family
- Pathway II scholarships are awarded to early care and learning programs that have 4-star ratings from Parent Aware on behalf of qualifying children

Early Care & Learning - DHS

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

- Federal-state program that reduces child care expenses for low-income, eligible families according to a sliding fee scale
- Child's eligibility is dependent on parents working or participating in education or training activities
- CCAP is available to children aged 0-13 years old or 15 years old, if the child has a disability
- Funded with federal, state, and county money

Early Care & Learning - DHS

Child Care Licensing

- Any individual, corporation, or organization providing child care services must be licensed or specifically excluded from licensure
- Two primary license types: child care center and family or group family child care
- Child care licensing studies currently in process:
 - Alternative child care licensing models
 - Regulation modernization

Early Care & Learning - DHS

Parent Aware

- Minnesota's voluntary quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for child care and early learning providers
- A QRIS is intended as a way for a state to assess and communicate the level of quality in the state's child care and early learning providers and increase the supply of high-quality providers

Early Care & Learning - DHS

Grant Programs

- Child care improvement grants
- Inclusive child care grant
- REETAIN grants
- TEACH grants
- Child care stabilization grants
- Workforce grants

Child Protection

Child Welfare Services

- Federal law requires each state to provide intervention and services to protect children from abuse and neglect.
- The legislature establishes the policy to implement federal law and provide services to families
 - Minn. Stat. Chs. 260E and 260C
- Funding for services comes from federal, county, and state sources.

Child Protection

Child Welfare Services

Maltreatment of Minors Act, ch. 260E

- Any person may voluntarily report known or suspected maltreatment.
- **Mandatory reporters** must report suspected or known maltreatment in the preceding three years to the local welfare agency, applicable law enforcement, or other responsible agency.

Child Protection

Child Welfare Services

Maltreatment of Minors Act, ch. 260E

- Counties provide services when a child is alleged to have been maltreated in the home, through a **family assessment** or **investigation**.
- Law enforcement investigates reports that allege criminal violations, with county agencies.
- When a caregiver outside of the home is alleged to have maltreated a child - responsible agency investigates.

Child Protection

Child Welfare Services - CHIPS

If a child is not safe in a home or a parent has not cooperated with a service plan, a county may file a **Child in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS)** case.

- Child is placed in foster care, case plan is developed to attempt to reunify the family within 6-12 months.
- Review hearings every 3 months

Child Protection

Child Welfare Services – Permanency

If a home remains unsafe after the child is in foster care for 11 months, the county will file a permanency petition.

- Termination of parental rights (TPR) and adoption;
- guardianship to the commissioner of human services (adoption with parental consent); or
- transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to a relative (“kinship”).

Reunification may be a permanency option if the court determines that the home is safe and reunifying with the family is in the child’s best interests.

Child Protection

Child Welfare Services

Northstar Care for Children provides monthly assistance payments for children in foster care, and children who are adopted or whose custody is transferred to a relative.

- Kinship or adoption assistance eligibility determination started by county/Tribal staff; final determination by DHS
- Payments based on age, and supplemental payments are based on the child's assessed special needs