

Minnesota Supreme Court Council on Child Protection and Maltreatment Prevention

House Children and Families Finance and
Policy Committee

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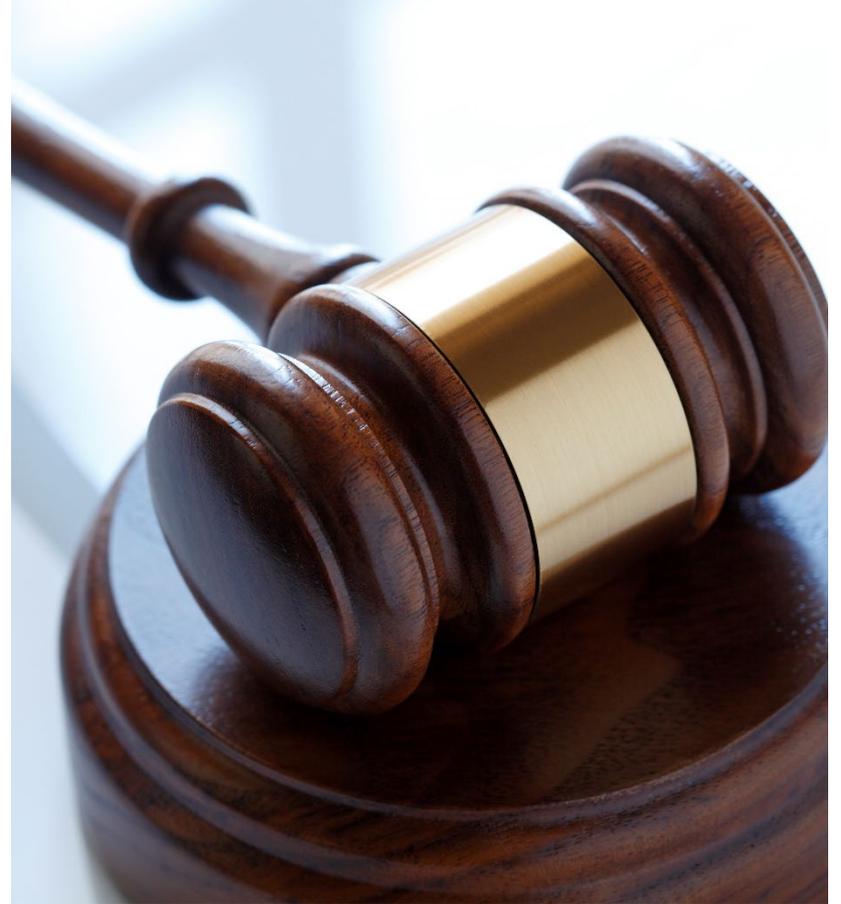
**MINNESOTA
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

*To ensure that children who have experienced
abuse and neglect attain safe, stable, permanent
homes and improved well-being.*

CJI Mission Statement

Legislation and Supreme Court Order

- Authorizing Legislation
– May 2024
- Supreme Court Order
Establishing the Council
– August 2024
- Established as part of
Minnesota’s Court
Improvement Program
known as the Children’s
Justice Initiative



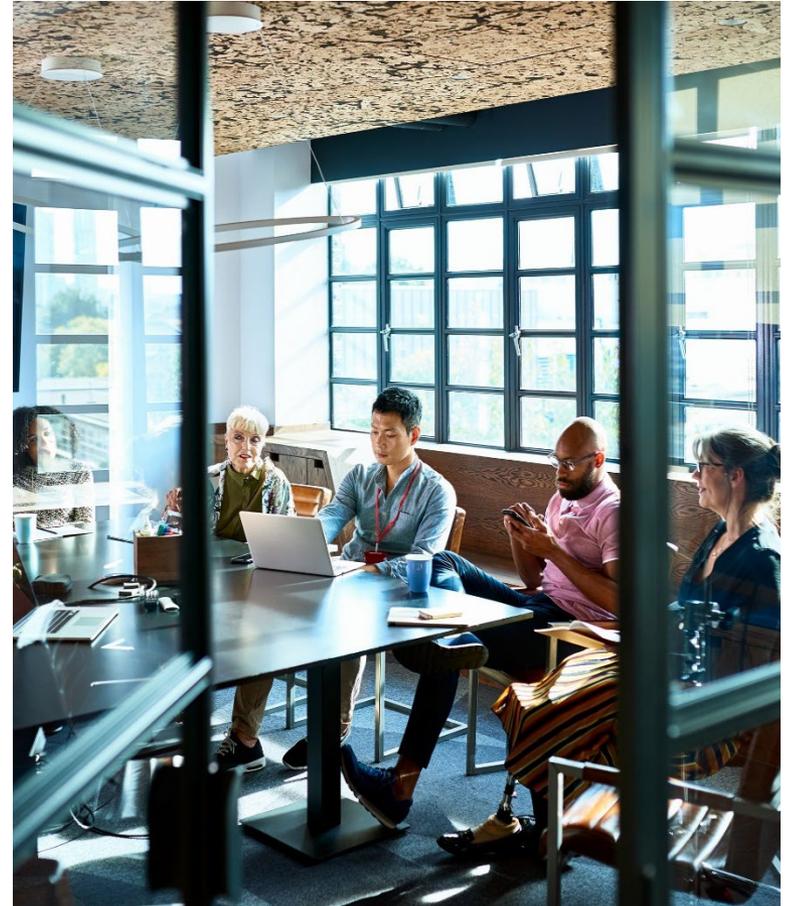
Council Purpose



- To develop a comprehensive blueprint to improve Minnesota's child protection system and prevent unnecessary entry of children and families into the system

Council Structure – Membership and Meetings

- Council membership based on categories specified in legislation (see Status Report Attachment 1)
- Statewide, multidisciplinary membership
- So far, 24 virtual meetings and 2 in-person, day long meetings



Focus on Child Safety



- Preventing child abuse and neglect
- Preventing unnecessary entry of children and families into the system
- Improving existing child protection system

Initial Presentations to Council

- Presentations on key topics to ensure all Council members fully understand scope of child welfare system, social services processes, and court process
- 52 presentations examined social services and court processes, prevention, early intervention, removal, reunification, permanency, and other topics (See Attachment 2)



Identification of Issues, Concerns, and Challenges



- Following each presentation the Council discussed what they learned, resulting in identification of systems issues and challenges
- Resulted in 14 pages of concerns, excluding concerns identified through focus groups and surveys

Identification of Issues, Concerns, and Challenges (cont'd-1)



- **Concerns identified on a wide variety of topics – examples:**
 - Child safety and well-being
 - Case management systems
 - Workforce training and retention
 - Lack of treatment and other resources
 - Federal and state funding
 - Processes and procedures of juvenile court and social services agencies

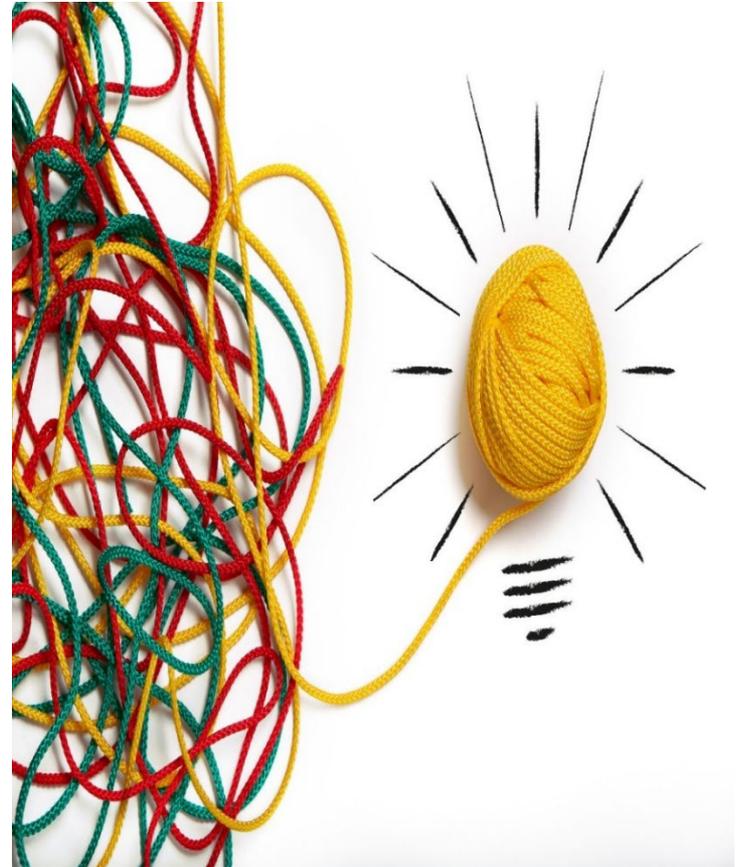
Six Focus Areas

- Issues and challenges organized into six key focus areas:
 - Maltreatment prevention
 - Child well-being
 - Court processes and procedures
 - Social services processes and procedures
 - Workforce development
 - Funding systems



Exploring Potential Solutions and Promising Practices

- **Initial Solutions:**
 - Preventing child maltreatment
 - Improving the existing child protection system



Focus Groups



- From April 2025 through January 2026, the Council conducted 26 focus groups to gain direct input from stakeholders and communities and to identify :
 - issues, concerns, and challenges
 - promising practices and potential solutions

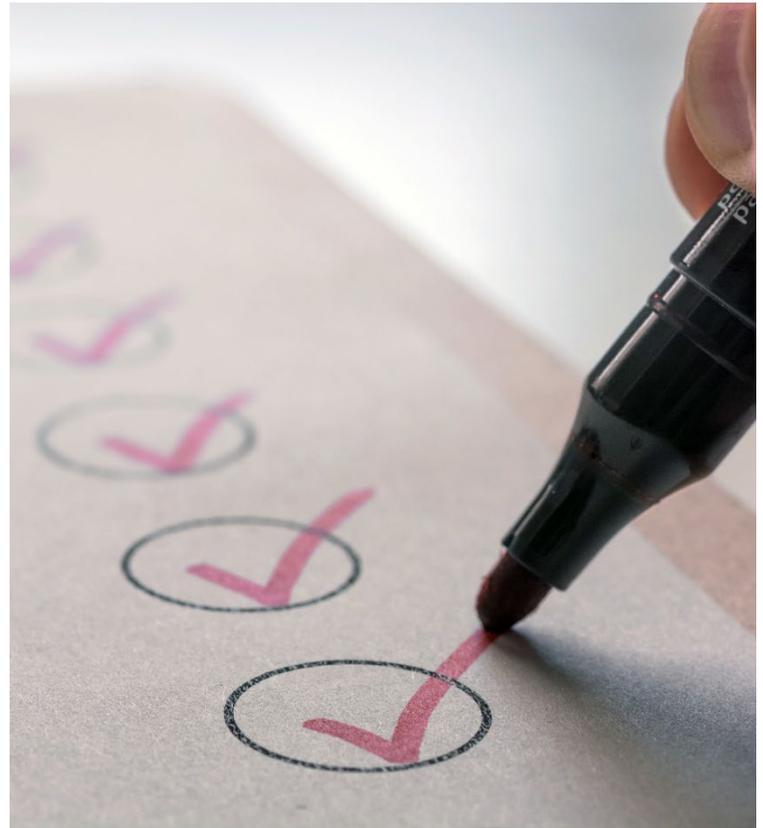
Focus Groups - Questions



- **Questions – similar for each group**
 - What could be done to help prevent child maltreatment, keep children safe, and prevent families from entering the child protection system?
 - What are the strengths of the existing child protection system?
 - What improvements need to be made to the existing child protection system?
 - Thinking back to the training you received, was it sufficient? What additional training should be implemented?

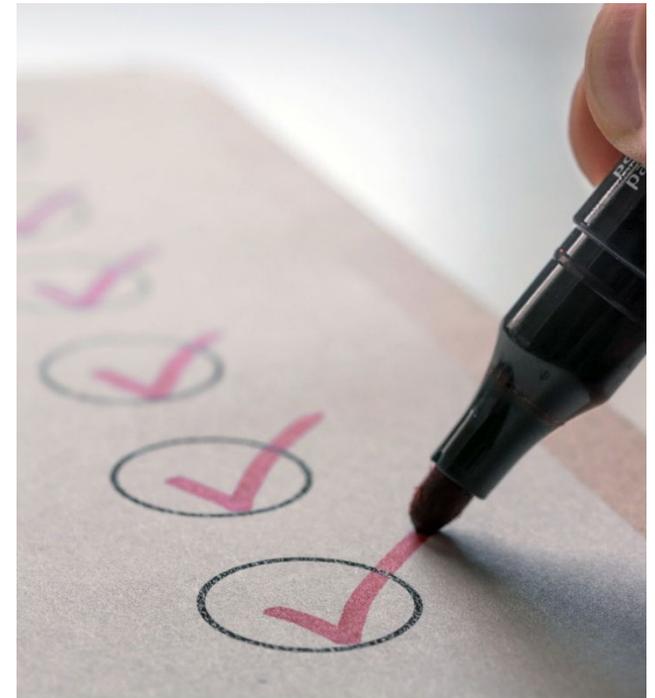
Statewide Survey

- A survey was distributed to the 87 CJJ teams statewide, as well as to 16 key constituency groups statewide
- Received over 1,700 responses
- Received 302 pages of written comments



Surveys Response Samples

- “Children’s needs are sometimes secondary to parent’s rights”
- The systems “needs to be less contentious and more collaborative”
- “Need more consistency across county agencies in terms of expectations, screening decisions, and how child protection as a whole is viewed”



Next Steps



- Continue synthesizing survey results and focus group responses
- Refine recommendations
- Submit Final Report by December 15, 2026

Questions

