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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
 AND ENVIRONMENT

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Division of Health



Kansas Child Care in the 21st Century Listening Tour

Location: Topeka, Kansas
Date: November 5, 2007
Participants: Approximately 71 persons participated

Participant Process

The Department of Health and Environment is in the process of redesigning the child care licensing system to meet the needs of children and families in the 21st century. The process began in October 2007 with a state-wide listening tour to solicit comments on day care homes, child care centers and private preschools registered or licensed by the Department. The comments will be considered in the development of policies, procedures and standards of care that provide safety for children, encourage early learning, and balance best practices and the business realities that face child care providers every day. The participants were asked to respond to the question identified below. All the comments were recorded. The participants were then asked to vote on their most pressing concerns. Each person had a maximum of six votes. The question asked in the tour, the comments and the number of votes are listed below.

Listening Tour Question

If Kansas is to have a quality 21st Century Child Care system, what improvements or changes are needed in regulations and in the licensing process? (Please think both about content as well as process. Include the inspection process, sanction process, licensing policies and regulations.)

Number of Votes and Comments Received

Votes	Comments
39	Ratios: Would like to see them not increased under any circumstances for any groups whether school age, at nap time or any other time.
39	Define infant from 18 months to 12 months. Increase the number we can care for and change the 18 month old requirement to 12 months.
24	Would like to see all surveyors go through the same training when they do their annual survey. We need consistency from one county to the other.
22	Amount of children you can have should be increased based on square footage. Also when the child turns 5 they should move to the next level rather than waiting for them to start school.
16	Exceptions: It should be easier to obtain for siblings. Not to go over the amount. But if you have a newborn come in that has a sibling with you, it is not fair to send them away.
15	Would like to see individuals that are disabled that have a guardian not be eliminated automatically from the potential staffing pool of a child care facility. (Comment: Needs to be particularly addressed to the ratio issue. If the person that is the guardian is in the classroom, that person needs to be counted. This needs to be re-evaluated.)

Votes	 Comments 
13	Would like to suggest that we have all child care providers be licensed and do away with registered home.
10	There should be some opportunity to allow for all your kids together for special events like Thanksgiving dinner or when Santa comes...as long as their teacher is there.
12	Playpen rules: right now automatically move out at 18 months. This needs to be changed. Make the decision based on the child.
9	Would like to see a change where parents can access compliance information faster and quicker. This information should be on-line so the public will have access.
8	Would be nice with technology that when we request an exception to get a quicker response (within 3 – 4 days).
7	Ratios should not be increased. (Comment: Should be case-by-case look at numbers and counting of your own children. I should not have to count in a pre-schooler or toddler that is my own.) (Comment: People that don't want to take more children don't have to.) (Comment: Would like to see the infant ratio decreased for the safety of the children.) (Comment: I have three sets of siblings, if one of these mothers gets pregnant again; I think I should be able to take their infant.) (Comment: I disagree with that. As a center, that could add 6 to 8 more children. When you reach the number, this is in the best interest of the child.)
7	Would like to suggest that there be instituted pre-service hours and increase in-service hours.
7	Would like to see us consider some nutrition guidelines.
6	Would like to see first aid not just be done once but also be repeated as well as require CPR for all instructors and teachers.
6	Training hours: Would like to see these increased and look at what this should include. Should include child development, safety and health issues, etc. (Comment: This is difficult due to different people's backgrounds. Would like to see it left and up to the agency on what people are lacking in terms of knowledge).
6	The doors locked...they are supposed to be unlocked. Some of us live where this is not safe. (Comment: I agree. I have had people walk in. Need to clarify this.)
6	What constitutes a regular volunteer? We currently have to keep background information on our librarian for example. Especially when they go to several centers. Also included for special education staff (they already have provided all this information to the school district). We are a family cooperative so if a grandparent volunteers more than once, we need to have a background check on them and TB test. Perhaps allow for 4 visits per year. (Comments: We have a cleaning lady that comes in when the kids are not there, I have been told I need a TB test and background test done.)
5	Before a home provider opens their door, have required classes i.e. Special needs, Discipline management, CPR, Child development, Child abuse and neglect, behavior management, special needs plus do some observation in at least two places (Comment: A lot of us come from backgrounds without training but we do have special needs children. I think this depends on the person and their experience.)
5	Why can one person have ten but then a group can have 12? (Comment: Could there be a number of kids for each level of a home if there was provider on each level of the home?)
5	Would like to see in a center when you have a room licensed for 20 kids, I would like to be able to put school age children in there or 3 year olds in there as long as I maintain the ratios.
5	The policies and regulations in the book could be more specific. They are too vague. Need some examples.
5	Would like to propose that Secretary Bremby tax large corporations so they can support child care. We need a tax base to support child care.

Votes	 Comments 
4	I have a group home and my son helps me out and I can only add two more children. One person can have 10 children.
4	There is already a shortage of infant care. Be mindful of this.
4	Would like to have registered home inspected.
4	There needs to be a wave of parent education i.e. I don't know as a parent that if I see something in a day care center, who can I talk with? Am I supposed to talk to the center and provider first? Do I talk with KDHE? What should I report immediately? What are parents' rights to report something? (Comment: As a child care provider, I tell parents that if they see something, please let me know.)
4	Would like to see the age for the 2 year olds – I don't see the different between 2 year olds and 2.5 year olds.
3	When it comes to suspension, there should always be a second opinion.
3	Directors and centers are currently required to have less training than teachers. Directors should have to have as much training as teachers.
3	Would like to see a provision for emergency subs that might not have the same qualifications as other subs (like in the public schools.)
3	Increase training requirements including training on children with special needs. Believe KACCRRRA was 45 hours the first year...then look for tiered reimbursement from SRS based on education.
3	Registered sex offenders. One was a neighbor that moved in...can this be stopped. Also if a registered sex offender comes in to pick up a child (authorized as a pick-up person so they were on premises) Can we keep registered sex offenders off our premises?
2	We need to be able to have more before and after school kids.
2	You can have someone 16 to be a back-up for you but when you are a group day home; back-up has to be 18. Why this difference? (Comment: In a center, if you had someone that was 17, 18 or 19, these folks should be able to be a back-up while the teacher goes to the bathroom, for example?) (Comment: As a director of a center when during nap time there was a tornado warning...needed every teacher in the classroom to get the children into the tornado shelter.)
2	Can understand safety issues but being written up for toothpaste seems too much. (Comment: You can't lock up everything. Children need to learn that these things are around the home.)
2	I'm not sure I want my name on the internet. (Comment: However, as a parent, looking for a day care provider I want that information. I would like to be able to get that information from the horse's mouth. There are ways to get day care information out there yet provide enough protection.)
2	Have heard some day care providers complain that some surveyors are in their homes too long. Is there some way that some of the paperwork can be done in the office and not all done in the home so the visit could be shorter?
2	Forms: Would like to see a place on medical records form for cell phone numbers for parents. On immunization part, centers do not have to have copies made. Could you use dashes rather than slashes? TB forms for staff: There should be a separate form for volunteers. (Comment: On spot for father's name, why do we have to put "N/A"?)(Comment: Could we add the start date on the form as well?)
1	Could the child care annual report be available on-line rather than filling out the little boxes on immunizations?
1	Need something different for foster children. Foster children come in quickly...might not have all the shot records right away, for example. Needs to be written in different since we are waiting on the state to get the medical records.
1	Early childhood education training: needs to include early childhood development training.

Votes	 Comments 
1	On school age staff would like them to be required to get physicals and TB tests and then repeat every 3 to 5 years.
1	Could there be some type of collection agency or central place where we could go to check to see if there are parents that are not able to pay. (Comment: It would be nice to be able to check the parents out like they check us out.)
1	Review regulations for the need for bathrooms in a one year old room. There are still diapers in that room.
1	Don't understand why you can't foster parent and do child care at the same time.
1	Need more support for the surveyors if they find violations, could there be another set of eyes that come in to review those violations.
1	Would like to see enough surveyors so every home would be inspected twice per year. Comment: In Shawnee County we already pay to have them come out. Don't want to pay twice.)
1	Playground ground cover. Using grass with swings has been allowed. Now it is not acceptable to have bare spots under the swings. Seems we have lost common sense here.
0	Every home needs to be evaluated on numbers. i.e. if I have a 1700 square foot house than I would have more children than someone with less square footage (a safety issue)
0	Surveyors. When they come out, if something is out of place or knobs on cabinets are done, they ask for us to replace cabinets. Can they help us get the money to be able to do the remodel?
0	Consider increasing square footage in centers both inside and outside. Grandfather in current centers.
0	When the surveyors come in, why do they have to go into our bedrooms, closets, etc? Feels like an invasion of our privacy.
0	Observation: For a group home, we are supposed to do certain observations. We should be able to go to any day care to do our observations. We want to decide where to go.
0	Special needs children: Looking at how to determine rates. Can we look at increased rates for these children?
0	Would like to see better explanation of annual in-service hours. Do the hours have to be pro rated throughout the year?
0	On your own children not counting in your ratio, if you could have all your own not count, it is not fair to the other children you are providing care for. (Comment: Consider lowering the age from 11 to 9 for those you don't have to count.)
0	Question: What is the purpose of observations? (Providers observing to meet their training hours) Would like clarification on this. (Comment: Helped me see what I wanted to do and not to do.) (Comment: I think it is necessary but maybe not as much.)
0	I had a flash fire while doing care. I had 10 children with only one infant. My 10 year old daughter helped get the toddlers out. Without her help, I don't know how I could have done it. Need to consider these emergency situations and the logistics of getting these kids out.
	Closing comment: Would like to have separated home day care issues from center issues.