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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: Pittsburg, Kansas
Date: October 18, 2007
Participants: Approximately 40 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
27	Would like to see registered home inspected. (Should at least have an initial inspection and a fire inspection as well as a checklist.) There should be more requirements on registered homes.
15	Need to change the age bracket from birth to 12 months instead of 18 months.
13	Ratio when you go from having an in-home day care to group care is 2 children but doesn't even pay for your help. Needs to go to 14 or 15 (without infants).
12	An overlap time for double shifts and other reasons (i.e. parent is running late)
12	Define some things more clearly in the regulations. For example, first aid training – certified by whom? Is it by video? With TB, only have to have an initial test. Lesson plans: Is there a way to add a few words so that the regulation will drive the quality.
10	Inspectors are inconsistent between counties. We need more consistency between counties.
9	Why are there different safety standards between centers, in-home care and registered homes? Safety is safety.
9	Consider change in-home ratios. For example, change to 2 to 3 children 0 to 12 months and 7 – 8 children 12 months to 5 years.
7	On-line renewals especially vaccinations reporting when you renew. (We spent 80 hrs in our center filling out this information when we renewed.)
6	Discontinue allowing book reports and videos and calling this training.
6	Is there grant money available for home day care for replacements?

Votes	 Comments 
6	Would like stiffer penalties for people that are blatantly out of compliance.
6	Unannounced visits – is this really necessary? Believe the inspections should be announced? Would give you a chance to get someone to help out during the visit.
5	Training for surveyors – providers should have the same training they have so when new things come up, providers will be aware.
5	Would like to see some sort of pre-service for new child care providers coming on.
4	There needs to be a priority...it is more important to comfort a crying baby versus getting the lunch dishes done. Inspectors should put caring for the child above cleaning the dishes.
4	New safety standards could be more aligned with the NAEYC accreditation process.
4	Quicker turnaround on KBI checks...need it almost immediately. (One week would be great.) (Had one that didn't clear for 1.5 months.) When I turn in for a KBI check, I don't get anything back.
4	An expansion in the SmartStart and Excel programs to include additional staff.
4	More collaboration between KDHE and Fire Marshall's Office. Who has the final say? This is particularly difficult when working under a tight time frame.
3	When a child turns 18 months they go into next category. When the child turns 5, need to wait for a date certain. Would like that changed to when they turn 5.
3	In the surveyor process, what is consultation, what is survey review? We need clarification.
3	Would like to see increased involvement from surveyors. A once a year annual visit is not enough. Would like more of a working relationship with impromptu visits and surveyor helps with access to solutions. If we go with more consultation role, it is hard for some folks to be able to define if I "have to do it" or "should do it." More clarification and specifics would help.
3	Staff qualifications – would like these not to be so stringent that we can't find help. Need to be realistic on who will work for \$7/hour. Requirements need to match the market.
3	Stop calling this day care. Rename it child care or early learning. We don't care of days.
2	What can we do to make it where it is affordable to have infant care in a child care center?
2	Nutrition: need regulations to provide nutrition guidelines.
2	Safety issues: House being unlocked at all times isn't safe. At night I don't feel safe with kids at night having the door unlocked.
2	Rating systems: Have talked about these a lot. Is the answer attaching a rating system to licensing? Should the state entity responsible for licensing do the rating system?
2	Have a survey sent out from the state to the parents in the day care to rate what they like and what they see should be changed.
1	I think there should be unannounced visits. There should be both announced and unannounced.
1	If you have a child in your care under the age of 16, they are counted in your day care. Is this true? If the child comes regularly, they are. This needs to be changed to a younger age (say 12 or 13 years old).
1	The licensing process takes too long to go through. (Telling us 90 days to 6 months).
1	Would like to see some way to address the emotional side of day cares, specifically with the children. Would like to be able to ask the provider, "What do you do to comfort the child?" There needs to be some specific training for how to comfort a child.
1	There should be clarification on swimming pools and trampolines. If the day care children should not be on trampolines, should the provider even have one?
0	When falsely accused, can there be some recourse for the accuser? Why don't we have a right to know who has filed the complaint? (Most of the time KDHE doesn't get the name.)
0	The appeals process takes too long to go through.
0	There should be a certain height on how high things should be when they are put up.
0	There needs to be clarification on the transportation regulations.
0	Do more on playground surfacing. What is really approved and what is not?
0	Who decides how long someone stays at your house and therefore needs to have a TB test and a KBI check? (Anybody that lives, works or regularly volunteers). If you are working in a therapeutic center and a parent needs to work with their child, regulations need to allow this parent to work with their child without having to have clearances. (Has to do most of the time with integrated services in centers.)