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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: Garden City, Kansas
Date: October 24, 2007
Participants: Approximately 67 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	Age groups and how structured. Revisit some of that. Change infants to toddler age at 12 months. Hard to explain the kindergarten thing. Date specific (June) doesn't work. Needs to be when they turn five.
30	Surveyor rules – I want to know the rules. Be consistent. Let me know the new rules. Some regulations are very strict, some are very vague (providing adequate supervision). Had a child die from SIDs, written up that she wasn't watching the infant enough. What do you consider adequate supervision? How many times? How often? What is meant by "adequate basis"?
21	Better dispersal of information. Surveyor has new things they are reviewing but we as a day are provider don't get that information. We need to know so we can make the adjustments.
20	The rules are so hard to understand. We have had a large number of surveyors – surveyor turnover is large. Need consistency between surveyors – interpret the rules differently. The book sucks!
19	Would like to see our number for 2 adults to have 15 to 20 children.
14	All day kindergarten. Would like to see 4 year olds that attend ½ day move into the school age program. Need to allow for an overlap for lunch.
12	Surveyors need to respect us as business owners. Why do they have to go through dresser drawers and closets? They have a right to ask especially if accessible to the children. Respect us as professionals. The word "respect" is a big word – we are opening our homes for the surveyors to come in. Important how you are talked with.

Votes	 Comments 
12	After school programs – would like an exception for extra children to come in after school. These children need a place to go. Perhaps we need to look at our local situation – local surveyor should have more control since they know our situation. Need help for after school programs—these six year olds can't go home by themselves. Also need help with snow days, parent/teacher conferences, etc. School age kids in your home take care of themselves. (10–12 year olds) This could make me over for the day.
12	Would like to see the surveyors have better education about what we do. Need to have more power regarding exceptions. We have to wait forever for an exception (90 days) and these are usually an emergency. The surveyors know us. Need to be better educated and have more power. Surveyors need to help us rather than police us.
12	Day home provider. Was excepted to have paperwork on her grandchildren (and were included in her count when their parents were right there) during care provided during Thanksgiving break. This was her home and it was her family that was visiting.
11	Turnaround time on KBI needs to be quicker. Sometimes have had an employee for 6 months and then you find out they are prohibited. 2 – 4 weeks would be more reasonable. We should at least get notification that the employee is "ok." We shouldn't have to assume that they are OK.
11	We have so many people that are babysitting that are not even licensed and are not inspected. They can have 12 and I have 6 and they are charging what I am charging. There needs to be some kind of power to shut them down.
9	One of the best inspirations should be to pay providers what they are worth. What SRS pays is in no way enough to take care of a child for the hours we take care of them. These minimum wage jobs don't pay the parents enough. We need to involve more than just KDHE. Day care is the most important job that anyone can have.
9	Overlap period on after school.
8	Day care home. Hire an extra person to come in but only allow 2 extra children which is not economically feasible.
7	Group day care home. I have trouble paying help good. Just lost best employee to higher pay and health insurance. Could the state help us pay good people? We can't charge what is charged in the cities. Would like to have access to the state's benefit package. We want to keep good employees. Perhaps we will have to meet certain requirements or take a few courses. (Need to get with legislators about this.)
7	We are guilty until proven innocent. What is our line of communication so we can catch the parents that move from place to place? Everything is anonymous. We should be able to face our accusers. Where is the respect and support especially when we have been in the business for a long time? I asked to see my file and was told I could not, was told I had to contact Topeka. Then was told I had to pay \$7/hour to research the file to get the paper I wanted...and pay for a copy.
6	There have to be some changes when the map shows we have fewer homes in our county then what is needed. There needs to be some encouragement from the state. Our children are our future. We have to have some way to help us encourage people to be in this business.
6	Offer enough classes so we can get the hours to get the subsidies. Have the classes available and accessible (especially in western Kansas).
5	Look at KQRS/NAEYC accreditation standards and be comparable to these.
5	As a surveyor would like to be able to help parents know where there are openings. I would like to maintain a list of local providers (without recommendation).
4	Surveyors and day care providers in each county should be able to meet so we are not fighting against each other so we are all on the same page.
4	I'm a surveyor with child care experience. We do have to look behind doors. We find meth. We have found a large number of babies in different places in the house. Have to be prepared for anything. (As a provider, I don't think all of us should be treated as though we are all hiding children.)
3	When surveyor comes, needs to be one-on-one. Shadowing makes you feel nervous – feels like two of them after us.
3	We should be able to lock our doors – have a young girl that can open the door.
2	Ensure there are minimum food guidelines in the new regulations.
2	My county is surveyed by a different county. Licensing inspection fees are now being charged. (\$50 fee as an example)
2	Do community centers get more funding than do home providers? Is this true? We should be treated equally.
2	Let each county survey their own county. They understand the county situation.

Votes	 Comments 
1	Object to the frequency of the visits. I've been visited 5 times since May. If there is not a big issue, they should not be coming back. They don't tell us why they are coming. "We just had a complaint." Visits have always been a surprise.
1	Group day care home. Surveyors – have heard about the wonderful surveyors and the ones that are not. Surveyors receive limited training – don't have to have day care experience. Would be helpful if the surveyor had our perspective.
1	During one of our surveyors, had a big rain the night before and exterminator came that morning. We arranged with parents to not bring babies early. The surveyor came in anyway despite the fact that we did not have any children and we explained that we had no children. "We can't take your word" was said to us.
1	As a parent, my children are being loved where they are being cared for. If the state could do something about the small number of providers. Need to do something about access to after school programs. Need options for days when there is not school.
1	We have had the same confusion about handwashing. Told we need pump soap and then told it was toxic.
1	When I went into our health department and told her I wanted to start a day care, her words were "we do not need it." She has not helped me at all. Went in and asked "what should I do now that I have read the book?" Then she finally gave me the paperwork. It was discouraging.
1	I would advise new clients to not get into day care and that is wrong. I appreciate the department for taking time to listen.
0	Qualifications. My daughter is certified to run a school building. Because she had not had specific experience in a child care center, her teacher experience would not qualify her to run a day care center. Would have to go to work for someone else to get this experience. There is a lack of common sense in the regulations of what goes on in a day care home and qualifications for providers.
0	Everything is supposed to be closed up. I've been written up for having diaper cream out. I was written up for that while in the middle of changing diapers. Would be easier to keep stuff in the drawer where you are changing. Use common sense.
0	I'm an RN and had to have a first aid class before I could be a sub provider. I went ahead and watch a video and wrote a report. Should have been able to accept my RN credentials.
0	Do we want everything on-line? CLARIS implementation has started. Concerned that parents can pull up information on-line and call a former client that might have been a problem client before they talk with me.
0	What do you do when four of your mothers get pregnant in one year? That is when I went to the group day care home. Because of the infants, my numbers of older children were impacted. Losing money.
0	If we have children and have their siblings that are now in kindergarten, when they come after school do we have to include them in the count?
0	Would like to see the surveyors meet us at the door and spend the day doing our job.
0	Finney County needs more than one surveyor. Each surveyor needs to take a part of the county.