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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
 AND ENVIRONMENT

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Division of Health



### Kansas Child Care in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Listening Tour

**Location:** Hays, Kansas  
**Date:** October 30, 2007  
**Participants:** Approximately 42 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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
28	Kindergarten children...move the 4 year olds that attend ½ day move them to the school age category so we providers can get an overlap for am pre-school, pm pre-school and lunch.
20	If we are going to keep registered it would be good for them to have a yearly inspection. This would provide an opportunity to help the registered providers. They might just choose to be licensed anyway.
19	With the development of the kids today, when the child turns 12 months, they are a toddler. This would open more spots for infants. When you have these moms popping out the babies we need room!!
14	Group day care home. When you have a second person it would be nice to have more than 2 more children. (This number has to be high enough to be able to pay the second person. Perhaps you should have so many years in day care before you can do this. Be able to show you can do it.)
14	We should phase out registered homes and go to all licensed homes. Most of our complaints are toward registered homes so the first relationship we have with them is about complaints.
10	We need a meeting in Colby or Scott City.
10	Ask for an overlap for the after school. I have parents that are school teachers that have to pick up their child before the other children arrive.

Votes	 <b>Comments</b> 
9	Summer kids...we only have so much room. What do we do for them? Could we be allowed two extra school age children?
8	After 18 months we are not supposed to take naps in playpens. Two years is much more reasonable. (Other comment: My two year old is still in a baby bed.)
8	What kind of training is required for people before they have a child care home? (We think it is 15 hours.) Could they require more professional training? Not just watch a video. (One comment: Actually like the hands-on training with other providers.)
8	Thinking about registered versus licensed. The reality is that it is going to take a process to move people to licensed. We do need the registered homes. The average parent does not understand the differences. Could we do something like one star for registered, two stars for licensed, etc. Would help parents understand there is a difference, they don't understand the difference between certificates.
7	Would like to have a better system that promotes licensing. Too many people look at licensing as a bad thing. Need an effort to promote licensing.
7	Several years ago there were grants to help people get started. If you stayed in for at least 2 years, we did not have to pay it back. Really helped keep people in day care. Would help get good quality for the kids. (One comment: To get the grants you also had to do more training hours – 30 class hours per year.)
5	As a parent, I think it would be nice to have more unannounced spot checks with both the child care provider and the back-up care provider.
4	Director of center. I think ground cover should be handicap accessible. Other ADA items: The regs say the child has to be one year of age and walking. There are some children that will never walk. (One comment: My house is not handicap accessible.)
4	What are the procedures and policies for unsubstantiated complaints if a parent just has decided to have it out with us? When can the day care provider get involved when it keeps happening? Can we take legal action? Seems to protect the anonymous caller right now.
3	Children over the age of 12 whether related or visiting should not be counted in your capacity.
3	As a center we have an infant room, toddler room, etc. We operate at capacity. It is hard to move children as they age. Infant is birth to 12 months. I would like to have a 3 month window to move people. We get "land locked." Would like some flexibility as children age. We did license our toddler rooms from birth to 6 but do not have this option for infant care.
3	Would like to see KDHE move on the computer-based entry of survey results.
3	As a parent, would like to be able to go on-line to fill out a survey with our concerns or likes about the care. Also would like a star rating system at R & Rs.
3	We can't see our file. You have to ask for your file from Topeka. Needed to submit the request in writing and will be charged to research it and to mail the copy. (SRS does send a notice of finding when a complaint is filed.) Would like the same thing with KDHE.
3	If you have had a child for 2 – 3 years and they have a baby sibling and you don't have an opening, do you tell them you can't take their baby? Sometimes these things happen and you are stuck.
2	Would like for KDHE to respond quicker when I have written requests. For example for expanding capacity. It has taken up to 6 months to receive a response. Twice I wrote and never received a reply.
1	The KBI background check, we need a "yeah" or a "nay." If this could be on-line it would be quicker.
1	In Western Kansas, the farthest we came for the tours was Hays. We had to drive two or more hours to drive. Need the training offered further west. Training needs to be accessible.
1	We need to keep families together when the same day care does not have enough openings.

Votes	 <b>Comments</b> 
1	As a parent, I think we should update the Resource and Referral list (at least weekly). We got a name off the list, they were actually closed down by KDHE and we didn't know it and they were still taking kids. (Comment: This is getting better. We working to close the gap of time between when KDHE closes and we are notified.) (Comment: This is also very dependent on providers giving us the information about openings.) (Comment: Maybe there could be a mass mailing out saying "are there any changes for you?")
1	Why does the state take 8 weeks to come out to visit after we have turned in our paperwork for renewals? (One comment: Paperwork and timing. We don't have a set time for our survey. I thought it did not matter when they come. )
1	On the ground cover on the playgrounds. The licensing rule states it is up to the judgment of the surveyor. I have changed mine 4 times. Started with grass, surveyor said too hard, etc. We need more specificity.
1	Regs (on page 30 for center-based care) say we cannot have inter-generational activities for infants. I'm worried about my 50 to 60 year old staff. Why are we forbidding people at a certain age if they have the skills?
1	If there is a problem with a child care provider, why does it take several parent complaints to get something done? Why does it have to be a parent if KDHE knows there is a problem?
1	I have a problem that when surveyors come into my facility I feel like they are looking to see bad things. My surveyor takes care of 4 counties and now they are going to charge \$50 for the annual review. If there is not enough money to do the job, that is a problem. Can we just have local health department's take of the facilities in our county?
0	There are people out there doing care that don't realize they are providing illegal care. They just don't know.
0	Resource and Referral – could they offer some information on-line? (Comment: There is a lot of training on-line right now).
0	Communication gap – KDHE needs to do a better job of returning phone calls. (Comment: I have made three phone calls to KDHE that were answered or were returned.)
0	At some point, we lost three licensed day cares over the summer and have no new ones. What are people doing? Comment: If we don't take care of finding places for kids, it is not good for them (latch key kids, moving between care, etc.).
0	When the surveyor comes to our home, could we make it easier for them especially with immunizations? Can we work with them so it is easier so they can get out of our houses sooner? (Why can't we be given a form in our packet that we can fill out in advance on immunizations? They could then spot check these.)
0	We are all here to benefit kids so we should be getting credit hour for these.
0	How long will it be before we decide what route we are going? Will this be word of mouth?
0	Heard last night about needing more money for surveyors to educate them. We also need to educate providers on what to expect from surveyors.
0	Of the changes that are done, will this be statewide or just for specific counties?