

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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Children's Justice Symposium to be held in Bismarck July 26-28

BISMARCK, N.D. – Professionals who work with children and families are invited to attend the North Dakota Children's Justice Symposium on July 26-28 at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck. The symposium features workshops on topics including strategies and resources for serving children and families more effectively and enhancing collaboration and child welfare leadership.

"We are pleased to continue our partnership with the Department of Human Services and to bring this caliber of training to North Dakota," said North Dakota Supreme Court Chief Justice Gerald VandeWalle. "This program is funded through our Court Improvement grant and is an excellent venue to focus on the needs of children in the foster care system."

Speakers will share information about responding to children with emotional and behavioral challenges using strength-based practice, normalcy in foster care, safety planning, preventing delinquency among youth in child welfare, preventing risk and promoting well-being and permanency for LGBTQ youth, drug exposure during pregnancy, building cultural responsiveness and resiliency, and other topics.

On July 27, workshops and a panel discussion are scheduled on differential response, an alternative method of completing child protection assessments that involves family engagement.

Pre-conference workshops on July 25 will focus on human trafficking, understanding the effects of secondary traumatic stress on professionals who work with children and families, and child welfare ethics.

"This symposium is valuable in that it brings together several different disciplines working within the child welfare system for training, collaboration, and conversations. This is very important for building a community team approach to the work of protecting children," said Shari Doe, director of the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Children and Family Services Division.

Law enforcement professionals, attorneys, social workers, judges, educators, therapists, and others who work with children and families and child welfare issues are encouraged to attend.

Continuing education credits are available for social work, law enforcement, continuing legal education, and continuing judicial education.

The Children's Justice Symposium is open to the public and there is no registration fee. A complete schedule, including online registration, is available at www.cfstc.und.edu.

The Children's Justice Symposium is held every other year in North Dakota and is organized by the North Dakota Supreme Court, University of North Dakota Children and Family Services Training Center, and the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Children and Family Services Division.

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