

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Agency holds meeting to gather comments from parents and caregivers on child welfare services

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services is holding a statewide stakeholder meeting to gather information from parents and caregivers of children who were involved in the child welfare system and received services within the last year in the areas of foster care, adoption, child protection services, and family preservation services. The meeting will be held via telephone conference call on Tuesday, Sept. 13, from noon to 1 p.m. (CDT).

“The voice of families is so important when it comes to the child welfare system,” said Shari Doe, director of the department’s Children and Family Services Division. “Hearing from parents about their first-hand experiences helps agencies evaluate what is working and where changes can be made to help strengthen their work with families.”

Parents interested in participating in the one-hour joint meeting are asked to call the department’s Children and Family Services Division at 701-328-2316, toll-free 800-245-3736, or Relay ND TTY 800-366-6888 and ask for the Help Desk coordinator to register for the meeting. Call-in information will be provided upon registration. Confidentiality of participants will be assured.

The parent stakeholder meeting is part of an overall Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) conducted by the Children’s Bureau in partnership with state child welfare staff. The CFSR is a two-stage process that involves a statewide assessment and an onsite visit that includes case reviews, and meetings with children and families engaged in services, as well as community stakeholders including the courts, community agencies, foster families, service providers, and other child welfare partners. The state will receive a final report recapping the review, along with system recommendations and next steps.

Doe said the Child and Family Services Review brings together people who work with families to help identify strengths and opportunities for improvements in child welfare services to promote safety, permanency, and the well-being of children and families.

This is North Dakota’s third time participating in the federally-required Child and Family Services Review. All states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico must complete this process by the end of 2018.

Learn more about North Dakota’s child welfare system at www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/ or call the Children and Family Services Division at 701-328-2316, toll-free 800-245-3736, Relay ND TTY 800-366-6888, or dhsdfs@nd.gov.

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