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Contact: Karen Smigielski
Communications
651-431-2190
Karen.Smigielski@state.mn.us

Final report advocates significant child protection changes *Governor's task force recommendations make child safety top priority*

The Governor's Task Force on the Protection of Children released its final recommendations making key reforms to Minnesota's child protection system. Last year, 74,000 children were reported to the child protection system in Minnesota.

"The abuse of any child in Minnesota, is one child too many," said Gov. Mark Dayton, who convened the task force last year. "I thank the members of the task force for their work in preparing these recommendations. I look forward to working with the Legislature to enact additional child protections this session."

[The final report and recommendations](#) made to Gov. Mark Dayton and the Legislature includes more than 90 recommendations for seven major topics. They include:

- Improving child abuse and neglect screening guidelines and practices
- Examining a continuum of responses to allegations of child maltreatment
- Addressing racial disparities in the system
- Improving training for child protection workers
- Providing additional state oversight of county performance
- Ensuring transparency in the system, and
- Seeking additional resources to carry out the recommendations.

"The result is a paradigm shift that will change fundamental aspects of our child protection system and leave no doubt that keeping children safe is our first priority," said Human Services Commissioner Lucinda Jesson, who co-chaired the task force with Ramsey County Commissioner Toni Carter.

Many of the recommendations are long-term efforts and will require actions by legislators, including additional resources. Others can be implemented in the short-term by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and county and tribal agencies. Gov. Dayton's supplemental budget proposal sets aside \$52 million in new state funding for child protection.

"Adoption of these recommendations will enable state investments for a stronger and more consistent system to keep Minnesota children safe, said Commissioner Carter. "Task force members agree that our system must also work to strengthen families and communities who will need to ensure their wellbeing and growth into their full potential."

Gov. Dayton appointed the task force in October after a Minnesota child died following a number of child abuse reports. The task force included children's advocates, physicians, child protection experts, law enforcement officers, former judges, county and tribal representatives, and legislators. Additional information is on [the task force web page](#).

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