

July 28, 2022

DCF concludes Summer Stakeholder Meetings

The Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) concluded its Summer Stakeholder Meeting series on July 7 in Independence. This summer was the first time DCF was able to host stakeholder meetings since the pandemic. The meetings help DCF provide programs and resources for Kansas children and families to thrive.

DCF leadership discussed the present and future priorities for the agency and provided insight about its direction and goals. Stakeholders asked engaging questions and discussed programs and resources in their regions. Attendees were invited to consider challenges present in their communities, and how they could partner with DCF to address the issues.

Family First Prevention Services, Kansas Practice Model, Thriving Families and TANF have made strides to strengthen prevention and protection services and provide resources for children and families. Additionally, DCF focused on new child care initiatives, child support services, economic and employment services, and mental health services.

“It’s been terrific to support community collaboration as we have implemented new approaches such as the Emporia School’s Communities Supporting Families project,” said Deputy Secretary Tanya Keys. “It’s important to hear the feedback from communities on our progress and their input on what’s needed to continue improvement and achieve the outcomes of the services.”

Moving forward, DCF plans to advance recruitment and retention efforts of employees, update the child care sustainability grant and child care relief spending initiatives, expand Family First Prevention Services, develop family resource centers and continue working on the partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation for the Support, Opportunity, Unity, Legal relationships (SOUL) program.

The agency’s budget was presented during the meetings. Kansans are invited to provide feedback on the budget at DCF.Budget@KS.GOV. The deadline to offer feedback for the DCF budget is Aug. 17.

“The budget is the plan of what programs, priorities and new initiatives receive resources at DCF. Input from internal and external stakeholders is always welcome as we decide how to allocate limited resources each year in the Agency,” said Deputy Secretary Daniel Lewien. “After a couple year pause because of COVID-19, it was good to get back out to three regions of the state to talk to employees and stakeholders. Keeping communities updated on DCF issues and initiatives is important.”

Andrea Warnke, Government Relations Manager, also presented a legislative update during the meetings to relay current bills that are in place and in progress for DCF. The agency hosted a total of three meetings, the first in Topeka and the second in Hays.