

- 1) **Gain input from frontline child protection workers** to inform any legislative reforms that impact the work we do to safeguard children from abuse and neglect.
 - Discuss with us the unintended consequences of legislative reforms.
 - Listen to our ideas to improve child wellbeing and achieve cost savings for government agencies.
 - Shadow a child protection worker for one day to understand our challenges.
- 2) **Establish and implement safe caseload/workload standards and require counties to abide by them.**
 - Direct DHS to recommend workload standards for screeners and investigators and make a legislative proposal in 2018.
 - Maintain previous recommendation that case managers have no more than 10 cases per worker.
 - Recommend that newly hired child protection workers carry no more than three-quarters of a caseload and do not carry high-risk cases until certified.
- 3) **Help counties hire, train and retain child protection workers.**
 - Hire case aides. Child protection workers typically spend one-third of their time on social work and two-thirds on paperwork and driving clients to appointments. We could spend more face-time with families if we had case aides to handle the driving and reporting functions of the job.
 - Expand Safety Planning as an innovative strengths-based approach that brings together family members to make decisions about how to care for their children and develop a plan for supportive services.
 - Focus training on [Signs of Safety](#) and [Family Group Decision-Making](#), not just technology and report training.
- 4) **Invest in child protection.**
 - Fund adequate staffing to respond to reports of abuse in the time required by law.
 - Remove financial penalties against counties that are unable to meet the 24-hour threshold for face-to-face visits for screened-in maltreatment reports and monthly visits by case managers. Counties currently lose 10 percent of state funding for each violation.
 - Secure more foster homes and shelter beds for children who require protective custody.
 - Provide free daycare so foster parents can go to work.
 - Support residential treatment programs to help parents recover from substance abuse.
- 5) **Track outcomes that matter.**
 - Are kids safer?
 - Did convicted abusers reoffend?
 - Are there fewer out-of-home placements?
 - Are caseloads manageable?