

**Take steps to align child welfare funding with desired child and family outcomes.**

- Advance child welfare financing that is driven by the principles of alignment, prevention and intervention, flexibility, incentives and performance awards, reinvestment and scaling.
- Improve data collection, reporting and technology to track performance.

**Strengthen the response to reports of child abuse and neglect and the services and supports children and families receive to reduce instances of child maltreatment.**

- Implement appropriate child protection policies related to Pennsylvania's new Child Protective Services Law.
- Ensure employment bans for certain criminal offenses and child abuse findings and professional sanctions related to licensure and certification are appropriate and consistent across child-serving systems.
- Broaden access to family strengthening services, such as home visiting, that are evidence-based and enhance the safety and well-being of children, including families at high risk of involvement with the child welfare system.
- Explore strategies to further professionalize leaders within the child welfare workforce .
- Employ a differential response system that improves response to child abuse and neglect through enhanced investigations, family assessments and safeguards that promote child safety and well-being.
- Ensure Child Advocacy Centers meet national quality standards and are available to serve all children in need of them.

**Ensure that all children in foster care receive services and supports that will help them be part of a permanent family.**

- Limit use of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement as a court-ordered permanency goal, and implement other permanency requirements related to the new federal *Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act*.
- Strengthen and require on-going permanency services for all children and youth in foster care, regardless of their court-ordered permanency goal, until permanency is achieved through reunification, adoption, guardianship, or placement with fit and willing relatives; and, ensure their access to appropriate post-permanency or aftercare services.
- Enhance requirements related to the Resource Family Care Registry that would enable county child welfare agencies access to further information to improve the placement of children, encourage use of family-based care and promote children remaining in the same schools and communities.
- Advance recruitment, licensing and retention policies that increase use of family-based foster care placements, particularly with relatives and kin, and reduce use of congregate care settings for dependent children in foster care.



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- Fully implement requirements to search and identify extended family and kin for children served by the child welfare system related to Act 55 of 2013.
  - Fully implement extended permanency subsidies and foster care services until age 21 related to Act 80 and 91 of 2012.

**Improve the education outcomes of children involved with the child welfare system.**

- Advance requirements to ensure all children receiving child welfare services are appropriately enrolled in school, receive an education that is aligned with the commonwealth's academic standards and their individualized needs, and that every effort is made to keep children and youth in the same school when they enter foster care or change foster care placements. Seek ways to strengthen the statewide collection and sharing of education data between schools and child welfare agencies.

**Federal Action:**

- Seek comprehensive federal child welfare finance reform.
- Support mandatory background checks for all existing and prospective school employees, employment bans for certain criminal offenses and child abuse findings, and efforts to address “passing the trash” on the national level.

