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### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING WORKGROUP

**Workgroup Legislative Mandate.** Pursuant [SF 505](#) (FY 2016 Health and Human Services Appropriations Act), the Department of Human Services, in cooperation with the Departments of Education and Public Health, convened a workgroup of stakeholders to study and make recommendations related to children's mental health and children's services systems. The selected [members](#) of the workgroup were divided into two subcommittees to work on the corresponding parts of the workgroup charge. The DHS also sought the assistance of the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) to help provide information and a national perspective to what other states have done. The workgroup has met twice so far on September 24 and October 8 in Des Moines.

**Children's Mental Health Subcommittee.** The Subcommittee is addressing children's mental health crisis needs. Discussion centered around defining a crisis, crisis services, and entry into a mental health system. The Subcommittee also discussed barriers to developing a children's mental health crisis response system that include the services, funding streams, decision makers and stakeholders in the systems, and the general mental health workforce shortage in Iowa. As this dialogue continues, the Subcommittee plans to arrive at a framework of a children's mental health system.

**Well-Being Subcommittee.** The Subcommittee has focused on examining the relevant statistics on children's well-being and the many systems and funding streams that have a stake in the development and safety of children and families. The number of disconnected programs that are regulated by state and federal statute, also tied to the funding streams, creates a complex system that interacts with families in early childhood, at schools, through health care (Medicaid, private insurance, and lacking coverage), the child welfare system, and juvenile justice systems. These systems also utilize multiple providers to deliver services that further add to the complexity. The Subcommittee is endeavoring to identify the principles and framework of a cross cutting system to deliver the proper supports to children and specifying measurable outcomes and indicators.

**Next Meetings.** The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 29, 2015, in Des Moines for further subcommittee meetings, whole group updates, and public comment. Updates, future meetings, and meeting materials and minutes are available on the [Workgroup Webpage](#). A report is due to the Governor and General Assembly by December 15, 2015.

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