



**KEEPING KIDS SAFE AND FAMILIES HEALTHY 2.0**  
*Enhancing Child Protection Practices Statewide*

	FY 2012-13	FY 2013-14	FY 2014-15
Total Funds	\$13,350	\$536,896	\$425,752
General Fund	\$10,680	\$498,774	\$386,339
Federal Funds	\$2,670	\$38,095	\$39,413
FTE	0.0	2.7	3.0

***Summary of Request***

The Department of Human Services requests \$13,350 total funds including \$10,680 General Fund for FY 2012-13 and \$536,869 total funds including \$498,774 General Fund and 2.7 FTE for FY 2013-14. This annualizes to \$425,752 total funds including \$386,339 General Fund and 3.0 FTE in FY 2014-15 and thereafter.

The request will fund two state positions to improve Child Welfare’s screening and assessment process; contract dollars to hire a vendor to implement screening and assessment best practices statewide; and, one state position to enhance the Department’s child fatality review.

***Problem/Opportunity***

Historically, the State has not had consistent statewide rules or practices in place related to screenings and assessments of child welfare reports. The screening and assessment process is handled differently from county to county.

This request will help to ensure that counties are using consistent practices for screenings and assessments of child welfare referrals. In addition, it will ensure that fatality reviews are completed in a thorough and timely manner, enabling the State and county departments to use the finding from these reviews to continuously improve child protection services.

***Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes***

*Screening and Assessments:* The Review, Evaluate, and Direct (RED) Team model is a group decision making model that guides the process of determining which child welfare referrals require further assessment of suspected child abuse or neglect.

- Rather than having individual caseworkers conduct screening and assessment, this process involves county department staff from all levels and areas of child welfare to review referrals. These multi-disciplinary groups use enhanced screening protocols to determine whether further involvement by the county is needed. This process allows for shared accountability, divergent views, and responsible use of authority in the decision making process.
- Enhanced screening protocols will improve the quality of information gathered from reporting parties, consistency of documentation in Trails, and customer service at the county child protection hotline level. Through its use, as part of Differential Response, initial findings show that RED Teams will improve a county department’s ability to perform a thorough, balanced and consistent referral review.

*Child Fatality Review: Additional Staffing:* The Department has reassigned the fatality review process from the Division of Child Welfare to the Administrative Review Division within the Department and consolidated the work to be managed by one staff member, rather than the being allocated across six different staff members with other full-time work. This transition created efficiencies and improved Department support to the Child Fatality Review Team. An additional staff member, who is dedicated to the fatality review process, is needed to ensure a timely and thorough assessment of these incidents.

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