

**Children's Law Center of Minnesota**  
**Policy Positions**  
**2025**

**ENGAGE AND ASSIST IN THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN**

- CLC supports consistent, centralized, and accessible state-wide reporting of child abuse to ensure consistency and uniformity in implementation of child protection matters.

**ASSIST IN THE FAIR TREATMENT OF CHILDREN IN JUDICIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS**

- Assist in ensuring Minnesota children and youth aged 10+ who enter child protection are provided quality legal representation, access, and fair treatment.
  - Youth who turn 18 can currently choose to participate in extended foster care until the age of 21 if they meet the requirements for the program. CLC supports making it easier for these youth to be in extended foster care through automatic enrollment unless they opt out.
  - CLC supports the legal representation of a child or youth's expressed wishes requiring the child or youth be of an age old enough to express those wishes. The position of the best interests of the child or youth is provided by other professionals, including the Guardian Ad Litem.

**INVESTING IN THE CARE OF FOSTER CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

- Assist in ensuring Minnesota children and youth receive necessary services and financial support for their future success.
  - Minnesota children under the age of 6 receive half of the foster care payments that older children receive. This leads to the underfunding of families caring for younger children and delays in permanency for these families. CLC supports an equal base rate of foster care support for children of all ages in foster care.
  - CLC supports financial accountability and transparency of incoming and outgoing state funds used to provide care of foster children and youth.
  - CLC supports routine fiscal analysis and accountability of all available funding streams to care for children and youth in foster care. Minnesota should make every effort to obtain and efficiently utilize all available state and federal funds designated for foster care children and youth.

- Social services agencies in Minnesota apply for and use federal funds that belong to foster care children and youth to pay for their care. CLC supports maintaining federal benefits for foster care children and youth. (See e.g. Arizona statutes for an example on protecting and preserving these funds for foster children and youth.)
- CLC supports proper funding of social services agencies to ensure the health, safety, and best interests of children and youth and that they are able to safely reunify with families when appropriate.
- Many children and youth in care need mental health services and often require placements focused on their mental and behavioral health. CLC supports the expansion of placement resources for children and youth in foster care with specific options for youth to receive mental health treatment. CLC opposes youth being held in juvenile detention centers unlawfully. CLC supports the establishment of an adequate number of appropriate placements to provide proper mental health care for foster children and youth.