

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

CPCM {
KNOW | RESPOND | PREVENT
CENTER FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD MALTREATMENT

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Our Mission

CPCM is committed to ending child maltreatment in South Dakota by empowering professionals, communities, and the public to know about, respond to, and prevent child abuse and neglect in South Dakota.

5 Year Vision

By 2030, South Dakota will have achieved a significant culture shift in preventing child maltreatment. Through a continuous cycle of understanding, responding, and preventing, extensive training and education initiatives will have equipped students, professionals, and the public with the knowledge and skills to identify and respond effectively to child abuse and neglect. Interdisciplinary teams across the state will be well-prepared to address cases using best practices, and comprehensive public awareness campaigns will foster a statewide commitment to prevention. This will result in resilient, self-healing communities where informed actions continuously improve child welfare outcomes.



2026 Legislative Session Education Brief

Who We Are

The Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment (CPCM) advances statewide efforts to strengthen families, prevent child maltreatment, and improve child and family wellbeing. We provide neutral, evidence-based education to partners and policymakers on the systems that influence child safety, family stability, and long-term outcomes.

We do not lobby for specific bills. We share data, research, and insights to help leaders understand the impact of policy decisions on South Dakota children, families, and communities.

Why This Work Matters

Ensuring a strong start for South Dakota children begins with strengthening the families raising them and the communities that support them. Many parents are navigating trauma, poverty, behavioral health challenges, and complex caregiving responsibilities. Supporting families early prevents costly downstream consequences in child protection, foster care, health care, behavioral health, and corrections.

A System of Levers

Changes in one area of public policy create ripple effects across others. For example:

- Reduce support for families → Increased CPS involvement
- Increased CPS involvement → Higher foster care and court costs
- Childhood trauma → Long-term behavioral health and corrections costs
- When we support families early, we prevent far more costly interventions later.

Prevention work isn't charity. It's a fiscally responsible investment in South Dakota's future.

How CPCM Can Support the Legislature

- Provide clear, neutral summaries of research and state-level data.
- Offer context about system interactions and long-term cost implications.
- Translate ACEs science into practical insights.
- Share promising practices and potential pilots for South Dakota communities.
- Connect legislators with subject matter experts.

2026 Education Priorities

1. Family Economic Stability

- How changes to SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, or housing supports affect families' ability to meet basic needs.
- The connection between economic stability, reduced CPS involvement, and safer home environments.

2. Health & Behavioral Health Access

- The role of postpartum coverage, maternal/infant health supports, behavioral-health access, and disability services in reducing maltreatment risk.
- How system or funding shifts affect service availability and long-term outcomes.

3. Early Childhood & Child Care

- The importance of home visiting, early intervention, and early-childhood programs for strengthening parent-child relationships.
- The role of affordable, quality child care in child safety and parent stability.

4. Evidence-Based Parenting Supports

- Education on evidence-based parenting programs, including FFPSA-approved models.
- Guidance on implementation and pilots to strengthen protective factors and reduce maltreatment risk.

5. Intimate Partner Violence & Childhood Trauma

- The impact of intimate partner violence and children's exposure to violence; both are documented ACEs and contributors to maltreatment risk.
- How trauma-informed responses improve safety and long-term wellbeing.

6. Trauma-Informed Reporting & Response

- The importance of strong SANE services, mandatory reporter training, and coordinated response systems.
- How effective response systems complement prevention and reduce future system involvement.

7. Supporting Native Children & Families

- The need for culturally responsive services and strong State-Tribal partnerships.
- Data and insights on Native American children's over-representation in out-of-home care.

Message from Advisory Board Chair

Message from Advisory Board Chair Tim Reed

CPCM's 2025 Annual Report highlights another year of meaningful progress in strengthening South Dakota's response to and prevention of child maltreatment. While this report captures CPCM's core work, it also reflects the dedication of professionals, partners, and community members across the state who contribute every day to improving child and family well-being. Thank you for the role you continue to play in this shared effort.

This past year, our organization advanced several key initiatives that expand knowledge, build capacity, and promote safety for children:

- A new study on early childhood brain development—*How Policymakers in South Dakota Understand and Make Decisions About Early Childhood Brain Development*—provided valuable insight into how state and local leaders view the earliest years of life and the policies that support strong beginnings. The report revealed broad consensus on children's needs, alongside clear opportunities to strengthen data, communication, and resources.
- More than 2,400 South Dakotans have completed the online Recognizing & Reporting Child Maltreatment course, including 779 in 2025 alone—a 50% increase over the prior year. This accessible, online course continues to strengthen our state's ability to recognize and respond to child abuse and neglect.
- More than 300 individuals participated in professional development opportunities through SD Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (SD-ECCS) Collaborative increasing understanding of child development and state services.
- 7 businesses, were CPCM's inaugural Businesses for Babies, which recognizes employers with family-forward policies.



This important work is only possible because of the strong partnerships and shared commitment that exist across South Dakota. Together, we remain focused on empowering professionals, families, and communities with the knowledge and tools needed to prevent maltreatment, support healing, and ensure that every child in our state has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your continued collaboration and dedication.
Senator Tim Reed
2025 Advisory Board Chair

Advisory Board Members

Pamela Bennett, SD Department of Social Services
Tony Burke, American Heart Association
Cameron Corey, Lake Area Technical College
Dr. Mary Carpenter
Beth Dokken, SD Department of Health
Sara Kelly, SD Unified Judicial System
Teresa Nieto, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior
Tim Reed, SD State Senate
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Advisory Council Members

Shirley Bad Wound, Rosebud Sioux Tribe
Daniele Dosch, Federal Bureau of Investigation
Helene Duhamel, SD State Senate
Nikki Eining, USD Center for Disabilities
Krista Hereen-Graber, SD Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault
Dr. Brooke Jones, Child's Voice at Sanford Health
Heather Knox, U.S. Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice
Kathy LaPlante, University of South Dakota
Tatewin Means, Thunder Valley CDC
Paulette Red Willow, Maggie's House
Toby Russell, Internet Crimes Against Children Unit, SD Division of Criminal Investigation

Message from CPCM Director

I am so proud of what we have accomplished alongside our partners, communities, and dedicated professionals across South Dakota. Together, we continue building the systems that protect children, strengthen families, and support the well-being of every community. Our work remains guided by a simple truth reinforced throughout our Early Childhood Brain Development (ECBD) Report and our policy priorities: a strong start for children begins with strengthening the families and communities raising them.

This year, our policy focus centered on understanding more about family-supportive practices, including paid family and medical leave, as key levers for preventing maltreatment. Strong caregiver relationships, mental health, and stable caregiving environments create the conditions children need to thrive. Our ECBD findings highlighted broad agreement among South Dakota policymakers on the importance of early relationships and a shared desire for clearer, evidence-based data to guide decisions affecting young families.

To bring these conversations beyond policymaking spaces, we expanded our Businesses for Babies campaign, equipping employers with research and practical tools that help working parents succeed. Family-friendly business practices, from flexible scheduling to paid parental leave, reduce stressors on families and contribute to a healthier, more resilient workforce. These efforts reflect our belief that preventing maltreatment is not the responsibility of any one system; it requires businesses, policymakers, service providers, and communities working together to support families from the beginning.

A major highlight of the year was the launch of our new partnership with the Department of Social Services to strengthen South Dakota's foster parent and kinship licensing process. CPCM implemented the National Training & Development Curriculum (NTDC) as South Dakota's new, trauma-informed, standardized training model. Lutheran Social Services (LSS) complements this work through completion of home studies and a mutual assessment process to get families licensed. To support NTDC delivery, CPCM built a comprehensive learning management system that integrates live instruction, self-paced modules, and expert-led panels. Since launching in September 2025, nearly 30 new foster families have already completed training, with many more in progress. Alongside implementation, we worked with DSS and LSS to identify data gaps and provide information that supports efforts that help streamline licensing, provide clearer guidance to families, and allow children to enter well-prepared, supportive foster and kinship homes.

Our statewide convenings continued to highlight the strength and expertise of South Dakota's child welfare, medical, legal, and education professionals. More than 430 attendees joined the 25th Annual Community Response to Child Abuse Conference, and our 4th Annual Legal Workshop brought together students and professionals for in-depth learning on ICWA, immigration, trauma-informed practice, and equitable justice.

As we look to the year ahead, CPCM remains committed to advancing the policies and practices that prevent maltreatment before it begins; through family supports, trauma-informed training, safer online environments for children, and continued collaboration with our state and community partners. We will deepen our work in early childhood and elevate the family-supportive policy solutions that help children develop in safe, stable, nurturing homes and communities.

Thank you for your partnership and dedication. Every step we take together moves us closer to a safer, stronger South Dakota for all children.

Chrissie Young
Director, South Dakota Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment

CPCM Team

Chrissie Young, Director

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Beth Bruggeman, Quality Assurance Coordinator

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Marlys Big Eagle, Training Specilaist



CPCM By the Numbers

27,544

people have been trained with the Adverse Childhood Experiences Interface curriculum.

5,968

people have trained on child sexual abuse with the Enough Abuse curriculum.

298

people have completed the Child and Adult Advocacy Studies online training.

1,691

people have completed the Recognizing and Reporting Child Maltreatment course.

1,366

training participants have attended a monthly Court Improvement Program training.

394

sexual assault nurse examiners and other multi-disciplinary professionals supported with learning collaborative and clinical skills labs.

652

early childhood professionals and caregivers have participated in free learning opportunities through Early Childhood Comprehensive System.

5,005

people across multiple professions have attended a Community Response to Child Abuse Conference since 2018.

325

legal professionals, students, and community advocates have attended a Child Welfare Legal Workshop.

8

years of Children's Day at the Capitol have hosted more than 2,400 people in learning more about the state's youth-serving organizations.

Know

Understanding South Dakota's child maltreatment landscape using state and local data, while also integrating the latest national research, evidence-based practices, and innovations to guide prevention and response strategies.

How Policymakers in South Dakota Understand and Make Decisions About Early Childhood Brain Development

In 2025, CPCM released a study on how South Dakota's leaders view the earliest years of life and the policies that shape children's opportunities to thrive. The report is intended to be useful for policymakers, practitioners, and community partners as they continue important conversations about how best to ensure a strong start for every child in our state.

Early childhood brain development (ECBD) is critically important for healthy growth and learning throughout life. Through public services and programs, policy plays a unique role in ECBD by funding services and programs that strengthen families and by providing mechanisms to deliver these supports. Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment conducted a survey of elected officials across the state, including current state legislators, county representatives, mayors, and city council members. The survey asked policymakers about their understanding of ECBD and ECBD-related policies and how they make decisions about which ECBD-related policies to support. Thirty survey responses were received.

There was substantial consensus across political parties and at the state and local levels about what young children and their families need.

- South Dakota policymakers surveyed agreed that access to comprehensive pediatric and primary care and health care for mothers during and after pregnancy, including screening for depression, is important for healthy ECBD.
- Additionally, they understood that having a positive relationship with a parent or caregiver impacts ECBD.

Results from this study also revealed knowledge gaps and differing priorities.

- Although South Dakota policymakers surveyed agreed that investing in services for families and children aged 0-3 resulted in long-term social benefits, they were less confident that such investments resulted in long-term fiscal benefits.
- Over half of South Dakota policymakers surveyed reported they are missing data on program funding (how to fund and how funding will be used) for the public programs about which the survey asked, and they said that having such data would help them make better decisions about how to promote ECBD.

The full report is available to view at SDPCM.com.

Table 4a: Optimistic responses to statements about investments in early childhood brain development (SD20)					
	Positive responses to statements about investments in early childhood brain development				
	Agree/strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree/strongly disagree	Don't know
All local government	12.5%	6.7%	80%	0%	0%
Democrat	26.6%	12%	51.4%	10.5%	0%
Independent	17	10.5%	51.5%	21.5%	0%
Local government	10	10.5%	51.5%	34.2%	0%
State government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
Table 4b: Optimistic responses to statements about access to health care during pregnancy (SD20)					
	Positive responses to statements about access to health care during pregnancy				
	Agree/strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree/strongly disagree	Don't know
All local government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
Democrat	20	10.5%	51.5%	28.6%	0%
Independent	17	10.5%	51.5%	31.5%	0%
Local government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
State government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
Table 4c: Optimistic responses to statements about access to health care during pregnancy (SD20)					
	Positive responses to statements about access to health care during pregnancy (SD20)				
	Agree/strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree/strongly disagree	Don't know
All local government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
Democrat	20	10.5%	51.5%	28.6%	0%
Independent	17	10.5%	51.5%	31.5%	0%
Local government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
State government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
Table 4d: Optimistic responses to statements about access to health care during pregnancy (SD20)					
	Positive responses to statements about access to health care during pregnancy (SD20)				
	Agree/strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree/strongly disagree	Don't know
All local government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
Democrat	20	10.5%	51.5%	28.6%	0%
Independent	17	10.5%	51.5%	31.5%	0%
Local government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%
State government	10	10.5%	51.5%	37.5%	0%

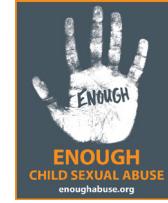


South Dakotans Trained on Adverse Childhood Experiences and Child Sexual Abuse

Professionals, parents, advocates, and community members from across the state continue to have access to learning opportunities about the basics of adverse childhood experiences and child sexual abuse thanks to an ongoing partnership between CPCM and Children's Home Society.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can have long-term impacts into adulthood. Physical health, mental well-being, as well as educational and job opportunities can all be affected. More than 27,544 people have been trained about the impacts of trauma, the ACEs study, and how to support positive change within a community. In total, 1,140 ACEs trainings have been completed since 2018 and 337 individuals have been trained to be ACEs Presenters.

Ninety-one percent of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone known by the child or the child's family. The Enough Abuse curriculum provides adults and communities with the knowledge and skills they need to put an end to the silence and, eventually, the epidemic of child sexual abuse. Since adopting the curriculum in 2019, 293 Enough Abuse trainings have taken place across the state. To date, 5,832 adults and 136 youth have participated in an Enough Abuse training opportunity.



Respond

Putting knowledge into action by implementing evidence-informed strategies tailored to South Dakota's landscape, such as developing and delivering specialized training, convening interdisciplinary teams, advising policy and legislative changes, raising public awareness, and providing comprehensive education and resources to prevent and address child maltreatment.

Foster Care Parents Provided New Learning Approach

Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment has partnered with SD Department of Social Services Office of Licensing and Accreditation to provide necessary licensing certification and ongoing training opportunities to South Dakota foster parents and kinship care providers.

The pre-service curriculum is provided by National Training and Development Curriculum for Foster and Adoptive Parents. The licensing curriculum is a combination of live online or in-person sessions and self-paced content.

"We have found the curriculum from NTDC to be thorough and engaging," said Alex Van Voorhis, Program Supervisor, CPCM. "One family noted, this pre-service training could have been daunting, but it wasn't and another family noted how they greatly enjoyed the pre-service training."

Along with the pre-service training for new foster parents, CPCM is also providing ongoing training opportunities, with monthly webinars featuring a variety of topics. 28 participants joined 4 training webinars at the end of 2025.

The pre-service training and ongoing training are both made possible through a new online learning management system, which efficiently guides new-to-foster-care parents through the training process.



37 families have utilized the learning system for their pre-service training, with an additional 48 families utilizing the system for ongoing training. In total, 800+ hours of training have been provided through the platform since it went live in September 2025.

"Our goal is to make the process of becoming a foster parent an efficient, effective, and enjoyable process," concluded Van Voorhis. "We are honored the state has entrusted our ability to manage the learning process for those willing to care for vulnerable youth in our state."

Families interested in the process to become licensed foster parents can visit <https://strongerfamiliestogether.sd.gov/> to learn more and complete the application process.



SANE Learning Collaborative Concludes

CPCM's SANE Learning Collaborative began with support from Office of Violence Against Women. 2025 was the final year of federal funding to support South Dakota's efforts to strengthen sexual assault response. Offered in 2025 was three clinical skills labs, including a pediatric clinical skills lab and supplemental trainings on injury assessment, the neurobiology of trauma, and courtroom proceedings.

Thanks to the 2025 trainers: Allie Reichelt, Jen Canton, Suzanne England, Jo Zanoni, Breana Lannen, Brooke Jones, Angela Lisburg, Tracey Decker, and SD Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault.

CPCM continues to support the state's ongoing effort to strengthen the sexual assault kit process and procedures.

CAASt Training Course Reaches 237 Educators



The 5-hour Child and Adult Advocacy Studies online training course provides school personnel and other service providers with knowledge for working in school multidisciplinary teams and discussion on the perceived barriers to implementing trauma-informed approaches. Training participants will increase knowledge of mandatory reporting, youth suicide prevention, multidisciplinary approaches, and trauma-informed interventions.

The course is approved by the SD Department of Education for required youth suicide awareness and prevention training.

The online course was completed by 237 South Dakota educators, and in total provided over 1,303 free training hours to enrollees in 2025.

Monthly Learning Series Trains 204 Professionals

The Court Improvement Program, supported by the Unified Judicial System Court Improvement Program, provided trainings on topics including trauma's impact on the brain, independent living services for youth in foster care, the role of the child attorney in child welfare cases, and utilizing Native American culture to heal.

"The South Dakota Unified Judicial System's Court Improvement Program is pleased to partner with the Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment in offering a virtual training platform for child welfare professionals and advocates," said Sara Kelly, Court Improvement Coordinator for the SD Unified Judicial System. "We look forward to continuing this collaborative training effort in the coming year."

Thank you to our 2025 presenters: Kathy Miller, SD Department of Social Services; Dr. BreAnne Danzi, University of South Dakota; Nikki Eining, University of South Dakota; Dr. Kelly Bass, University of South Dakota; Tanya Septka, SD Department of Social Services; Senator Tim Reed, SD Legislature; Shauna Batcheller, Helpline Center; Cassidy Stalley, Nooney and Solay; Damon Leader Charge, University of South Dakota.



South Dakotans Gain Knowledge of Reporting Abuse and Neglect

2,418 individuals have completed a free online course about child abuse and neglect since it became available online in 2023. The Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect course covers community and professional responsibilities, impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences on health and well-being, state child abuse/neglect and mandatory reporting statute, differences between civil and criminal cases, handling a disclosure, and value of multidisciplinary team response. The free, online course allows learners to progress at their own pace and provides a certificate of completion.

In total, the course was completed by 779 individuals in 2025, a 50% increase in completions over 2024. The free course is available to the public online at SDCPCM.com/Reporting, along with the Mandatory Reporting course provided by SD Department of Social Services.

RECOGNIZING & REPORTING CHILD MALTREATMENT

Online Training Course through USD's Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment

- Mandatory Reporting Overview
- Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Child Maltreatment in SD
- Process of Reporting in SD
- Resources to Support Reporting in SD

Online course allows progress at own pace and provides certificate of completion. Training covers community and professional responsibilities, impacts of ACEs on health and well-being, state child abuse/neglect and mandatory reporting statute, differences between civil and criminal cases, handling a disclosure, and value of multidisciplinary team response.

>>> [>>>](https://SDCPCM.com/Reporting)



Prevent

Implementing tailored, evidence-based strategies that proactively reduce child maltreatment rates, prevent future harm, and improve outcomes for all South Dakota children and families. Data from these prevention efforts continually informs our knowledge base, driving an ongoing cycle of responsive action.

Professional Development Opportunities Expanded through ECCS

The SD Early Childhood Comprehensive System Collaborative (SD-ECCS) strives to move from individual to shared responsibility for ensuring a strong start for all South Dakota children. SD ECCS is one of 20 awardees nationwide. The collaborative strives to move from individual to shared responsibility for ensuring a strong start for all South Dakota children.

In 2025, SD-ECCS strengthened professional development opportunities for professionals in early childhood focused fields. Learning opportunities in 2025 included a monthly webinar series, Touchpoints and a limited-series on understanding and supporting early childhood development.

"Our professional development opportunities were designed to be easily accessible, with varied topics that are top-of-mind for those working in early childhood," said Darla Biel, CPCM Assistant Director and ECCS Lead. "Our participation in the learning opportunities includes parents themselves, allowing us to continue to build in the family voice that is essential to collaborative early childhood work."

The Touchpoints webinar series points to the crucial brain development that happens in the first three years of life, each new brain connection made is referred to as touchpoint. The series included sessions on policy data, mental health, cultural birthing practices, mental health, and family voice. More than 280 hours of free professional development was provided through the series.

Focus on Fathers

Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment, through support from SD Department of Social Services, focused on fatherhood in 2025 through in-person events, online trainings, and father-led focus groups to strengthen support for dads in the state.

Dad's Night Out events were held in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and Mission. The events included free dinner and dad swag, along with an opportunity to discuss fatherhood with others. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from Dr. Kelly Bass, University of South Dakota, and J. Michael Hall, Strong Fathers-Strong Families.

"The Dad's Night Out events were a great opportunity for us to gather dads from a wide range of backgrounds and fatherhood experiences for a night of camaraderie," said Dr. Bass. "While knowing that everyone's experience as a father is unique, it was a great opportunity for us to discuss resources and ways fathers can be supported to be successful in their role."

The Growing Together three-part series on early childhood development featured presenters Dr. Andrew Stremmel, Professor Emeritus, South Dakota State University and Dr. Jennifer Kampmann, SD Birth to Three. The series explored the impact of social determinants of health in relation to developmental trajectories; the balance of nature and nurture; how relationships build neuropathways; and ways to engage families in conversations around their child's development. The three-part series was completed by 140 individuals through live and recorded sessions.

The professional development opportunities offered through SD-ECCS will continue to grow in 2026, with a newly developed master class to be offered in spring 2026. Growing Together: A Master Class in Child Development Professional Inquiry will be an eight-week online class designed to deepen professional understanding of child development through exploratory practice. The course will begin in March and be taught by Dr. Kampmann and Dr. Stremmel.



Along with the social events, J. Michael Hall provided a limited series of online trainings about the role of dads. More than 50 training participants took part in sessions that included:

- The Different Roles of Mothers and Fathers and How They Best Serve Children
- Co-Parenting and Co-Piloting a Child's Future
- Fathers and Their Positive Impact on a Child's Mental Health and Behavior
- Fathers and Their Positive Impact on a Child's Education Success—Now and in the Future

The training series is now available to view online at SDPCM.com/Training.

Power of Primary Prevention

Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment partnered with Voices for Healthy Kids to support an initiative focused on the important role of primary prevention, and specifically Paid Family and Medical Leave in child development. Primary prevention of child maltreatment connects families to resources and supports in their community. The aim of primary prevention is to prevent child maltreatment before it happens. Examples of primary prevention can include parenting education, affordable-quality childcare, economic supports, and family-forward workplace policies.

Research consistently shows that early childhood brain development is shaped by stable, nurturing relationships and reduced exposure to stress. When families have access to paid leave and supportive workplace policies, parents are better able to respond to their child's needs during critical developmental windows. South Dakota policymakers increasingly recognize that investments in early childhood are not only social supports, but long-term economic strategies that strengthen workforce participation, reduce future costs, and promote healthier communities. Family-forward policies help create the conditions necessary for children's brains to develop optimally, laying the foundation for lifelong learning, emotional regulation, and resilience.

The initiative was kicked off in April at the Ray of Hope Event. The event, attended by 120 CPCM supporters, featured a panel discussion of South Dakota businesses utilizing family-forward workplace policies, such as Paid Family and Medical Leave. Panel members were inaugural members of CPCM's new Businesses for Babies awareness campaign.

"At First Bank & Trust, families are at the heart of what we do, and because we are family- and employee-owned, we take extra care to foster the quality of family life," said panel member, Nan Poppen, EVP/Chief Human Resources Officer, First Bank & Trust. "Employees expect a strong benefit package, and ours is certainly strengthened by family-friendly policies and an onsite early learning childcare facility."

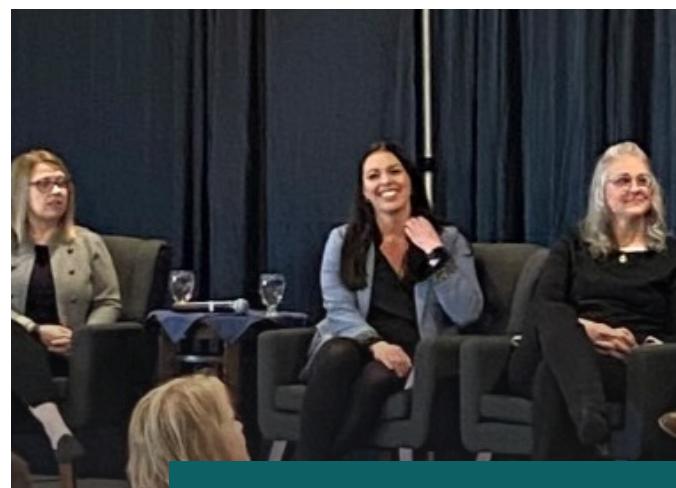
Other Businesses for Babies highlighted throughout 2025 include: Click Rain Inc., Avera, Solace (formerly known as The Compass Center and Move to Heal SD), First Fidelity Bank, RAS, and Horizon Health.

"Our inaugural Businesses for Babies recognize the role family-forward policies have in making a difference not only for the families, but also for the business," said Chrissie Young, Director, CPCM. "In a state, where 72.5% of all children under the age of 6 have all available parents in the workforce, these family-forward policies are a strong primary prevention resource."

And families in South Dakota appreciate the support from employers. CPCM collected anecdotes and impact statements from employed families with young children who utilized family-forward policies and benefits, such as paid family and medical leave.

"What we found is that employees utilizing employee support allowed them be present for their families during times of illness, major transitions, and medical needs," said Young. "Families who utilized paid leave noted less financial stress, increased family bonding, and an improvement in mental health."

Primary prevention, specifically family-forward workplace policies are a win-win-win. A win for SD businesses who boost their competitive advantage. A win for SD parents who are engaged with work and supported in nurturing a stable family. And a win for SD children, who have access to increased safety, stability, and nurtured relationships.



Businesses for Babies panelists at Ray of Hope event.

2025 Highlights

Hundreds Trained on Child Abuse Prevention

More than 430 professionals in the child advocacy field attended the 25th Annual Community Response to Child Abuse Conference, held October 2-3 at the Sioux Falls Convention Center.

The conference provided professional training and educational opportunities for child protection workers, teachers, medical professionals, dentists, law enforcement, social workers, mental health providers, youth service providers, the legal community and community members and child advocates.

Presenters discussed topics relevant to the well-being of children and families including:

- Hope in Action: Turning Struggle into Strength presented by Tifanie Petro, Victim Services Director, Pennington County State's Attorney's Office
- Utilizing Tribal ICWA and CPS Task Forces and States of Emergency for Optimal Outcomes and to Exercise Sovereignty: A Case from the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the ICWA Coalition of Sioux Tribes presented by Alicia Mousseau, Susan Schrader, Jessica Morson, and Shaina Johnson
- Mastering the Stand: Best Practices for Testifying as an Expert Witness in Criminal Trials presented by Sarah Thorne
- Understanding the Building Blocks of Attachment presented by Karen Rieck

The conference was opened with a message from Chief Justice Steven R. Jensen of the South Dakota Unified Judicial System and performance by Inyan Hocoka Singers from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe.

Gaelin Elmore, speaker, trainer, and belonging expert, opened the conference with the keynote Be the Difference: Belonging is the Support We Need, which provided an overview of the importance of belonging in fostering resilience and positive outcomes.

ICWA and Immigration Addressed in Legal Workshop

Law students, legal professionals, and others interested in better understanding trauma-informed approaches in legal proceedings attended the 4th Annual Legal Workshop, presented by SD Unified Judicial System, USD Knudson School of Law, and CPCM.

75 workshop attendees heard remarks from South Dakota Supreme Court Chief Justice Steven R. Jensen. Part one of the workshop featured ICWA: The History and a South Dakota Perspective by Dan Lewerns, University of North Dakota School of Law and Director of Indian Law and ICWA in Practice by Sheldon Spotted Elk, Senior Director of Judicial and National Engagement, Casey Family Programs. The workshop's second half featured Representation of Immigrants and Refugees presented by Taneeza Islam, Director, SD Voices for Peace.

The Outstanding Service Award was presented to Hollie Strand, Forensic Examiner, Internet Crimes Against Children, Pennington County Sheriff's Office. Hollie Strand was one of the initial Task Force members to get CPCM implemented. Hollie's passion for children and families is contagious, and her allied partners are vicariously inspired to do more!

As part of her work, she provides education and awareness across the age-spectrum and also does training for diverse, underserved population groups. During her career, Hollie has forensically interviewed more than 1200 children who have disclosed sexual abuse. Hollie has also chaired the West River Human Trafficking Task Force, serving as the coalition-builder, bringing together the multiple disciplines and non-governmental organizations to make a positive difference in lives of children being exploited for sex and to hold perpetrators accountable.

Conference co-hosts included Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment at the University of South Dakota, South Dakota's Unified Judicial System Court Improvement Program and Child's Voice at Sanford Health. Conference sponsors included Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection Services; Mud Mile Communications; Avera Health; and University of South Dakota, School of Health Sciences.



Outstanding Service Award recipient Hollie Strand.



4th Annual Legal Workshop

SD Organizations Unite for Children's Day at the Capitol

More than two dozen organizations converged in Pierre for the annual Children's Day at the Capitol Event. CPCM, Children's Home Society of SD, Early Learner SD, SD Afterschool Network, SD American Heart Association partnered to organize the event.

Participating organizations represented a variety of children and family services: child maltreatment prevention and response, childcare, early childhood education, after school services, youth residential care, and leadership development.

The 2026 Children's Day at the Capitol activities will take place January 21-22, 2026.



Providing Experiential Learning Opportunities

Thank you to our 2025 student interns and law fellows!

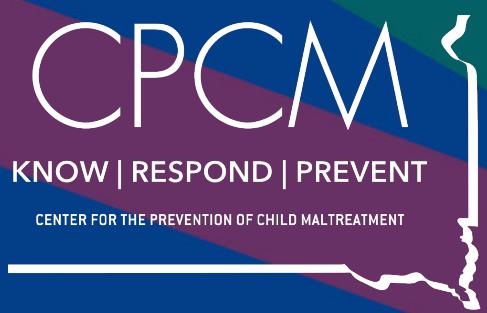
Ellen Jones RISE-Up Intern, Mercer University, Supported in SD by Center for Disabilities

Jess Murano, Intern, University of South Dakota, Master of Social Work

Raquel Rodriguez, Intern, University of South Dakota, Master of Social Work

Thank You Supporters and Partners

All About U Adoptions	Native Child Advocacy Resource Center	University of South Dakota
American Heart Association	Our Home, Inc.	USD Center for Disabilities
Avera Health	Perimeter Healthcare	USD Foundation
Avera St. Mary's Central SD Child Assessment Center	RAS	USD Graduate Admissions
Black Hills Special Services Cooperative	Rising Hope Counseling	USD Knudson School of Law
Call to Freedom	Royal Family Kids Camp	USD Masters of Social Work Program
Child Welfare League of America	SANE Learning Collaborative	USD School of Health Sciences
Child's Voice at Sanford Health	Sanford Children's CHILD Services	USD School of Medicine, Pediatrics Program
Children's Home Society	SD ACEs and Resiliency Presenters	USD School of Nursing
Children's Advocacy Centers of SD	SD Afterschool Network	Voices for Healthy Kids
Court Improvement Program Committee	SD Alliance of the YMCAs	Volunteers of America, Dakotas
CIP Trainers	SD Association of the Education of Young Children	Youth and Family Services
Click Rain Inc.	SD Child Care Task Force	Aaron Klinger
Court Appointed Special Advocates	SD Department of Education	Jana Richardson
Delta Dental of SD	SD Department of Health	Davison County Child Protection
Early Learners SD	SD Department of Social Services	Deb Fischer-Clemmens
First Bank & Trust	SD Education Equity Coalition	Annie Wold
First Fidelity Bank	SD Healthy Nutrition Collaborative	Stacy Andernacht
Foster 605	SD Kids Belong	Michelle Erpenbach
Helpline Center	SD Network Against Family Violence and Sexual assault	Brooke Jones
Horizon Health	SD Parent Connection	
Kennedy Krieger Institute, MCHC/RISE-UP Program	SD SAVIN	
Lutheran Social Services of SD	SD Unified Judicial System	
McCrossan Boys Ranch	SD Voices for Peace	
Mud Mile Communications	Sioux Falls Area CASA Program	
National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers	Solace	
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