



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

For Immediate Release

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**VDSS Selected to Participate in National Partnership to Test
Child Welfare Workforce Strategies**

Richmond, VA (January 24, 2018) - Following a national, competitive process, the [Virginia Department of Social Services](#) (VDSS) has been selected as one of eight child welfare agencies to partner with the [Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development \(QIC-WD\)](#) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to test strategies designed to strengthen the child welfare workforce.

Recruiting and retaining a strong, skilled, and innovative child welfare workforce is critical to meeting the needs of children and families. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, public child welfare agencies nationwide experience an average annual turnover rate of 20%. In 2016, the annual turnover rate for entry level child welfare workers was 29%. High turnover is just one example of costly workforce issues that can negatively impact vulnerable children.

“It is imperative that the child welfare workforce is stable, properly trained and equipped to deliver effective, best practice-based interventions,” said VDSS Director of Family Services Carl Ayers. “We are committed to supporting the child welfare workforce to ensure high quality services are delivered to children and families across the state. We look forward to contributing to this project, which will allow for greater collaboration, learning, and strategy-building.”

VDSS has collaborated with 18 local departments of social services to participate in the QIC-WD partnership. These local agencies represent each region of the state and include the following localities: Arlington, Bland, Botetourt, Chesterfield-Colonial Heights, Fairfax, Fluvanna, Henrico, Henry-Martinsville, Hopewell, Loudoun, Norfolk, Pulaski, Roanoke City, Rockbridge, Stafford, Williamsburg, Wise, and York-Poquoson.

Over the next four years, VDSS will work with QIC-WD to address and study potential solutions to workforce issues, with a specific focus on the implementation of technological interventions to support and improve the child welfare workforce as well as child and family outcomes.

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