



*Core message from all stakeholders and administrative branches: policy makers, leaders, professionals, designers*

*Motto: Every child and young person needs secure and caring adult presence in their lives.*

## **Working towards good everyday life for children, young people and families. Together. Close to you.**

The objective of the programme to address reform in child and family services is to create good environments for children and young people to grow up in, and to support families' wellbeing. This requires comprehensive changes and long-term work. Our focus will be transferred from administration and professions to a children and family centred approach.

We will cherish human relations that support children growing up in homes and local social networks. We will strengthen our support for parenting, including diverse families and their resources. We will bring joy into learning. We will help children, young people and their parents participate. Our aims are: individual advice, guidance, upbringing, support and care, in other words sufficient support at the right time. This requires cooperation between all stakeholders.

This work of change will be carried out both at national and regional levels. We will build bridges between the central government, counties and municipalities, administrative branches, organisations, parishes and private stakeholders. We will utilise research results. Together we are more than the sum of our parts.

We will monitor both the level of wellbeing and the costs. When the focus is shifted from corrective services to preventive services, it helps to control the costs. Municipalities, counties and Finland will create a positive future for children and young people. Services and support will be more equal than today, which will reduce inequalities between children. We recognise children's rights as adults' obligations.

The programme to address reform in child and family services is bringing child and family centred content to the ongoing health, social services and regional government reform. The programme educates, creates networks and innovates. It also integrates good models into the operating environments of municipalities and of the new counties.

The national change focuses on reforming the operating culture, creating a better knowledge-base, distributing client data fluently and providing high-quality encounters with children, young people and families. We are opening a discussion on which skills professionals need and what our concept of children is. Multi-sectoral network management and smooth interfaces are necessary to enable good function of everyday service packages even after year 2020. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry of Education and Culture are together steering this work of change. We want to make a difference and extend this long-term work over several government terms.

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### **Together**

The work of change requires partnerships between professionals, leaders, policy makers, children, young people and parents. We are crossing the administrative borders of education and culture sector and health and social services. The work of change will connect municipalities, counties, organisations, parishes and private stakeholders and researchers. (Education and culture sector = upbringing, teaching, youth work, art and culture, recreation, physical activities.)

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### **Good everyday life**

When children and young people are growing up, many kinds of human relations and communities are important to them: home, peer groups, early childhood education groups, schools, educational institutes, health and social services, living environments, various places where they meet other people, organisations, parishes, leisure time activities. We will provide the right support at the right time as part of their everyday lives.

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### **Close to you**

Positive encounters create trust. For children and young people, services mean people and communities. Support will be brought to the everyday life of children, young people and families. We will not send anyone away. More consultation, services and support will be offered directly to homes, schools and early childhood education units. We will utilise digital and mobile services.

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***Work of change is carried out under four development projects of the programme to address reform in child and family services:***

**Family centre model to create a well-functioning network of services for families with children**

- Through cooperation with all stakeholders we bring open meeting places, assistance and support close to families. Local family centres are part of families' lives. Children are well when their family feels well.
- We are developing a family centre model that will be mainstreamed in the activities of municipalities, future counties, organisations and parishes all over Finland. This work is going on in all counties.

**Early childhood education, schools and other educational institutes support the wellbeing of children and young people**

- When children are well they learn and grow. Together we bring joy into learning.
- We create child and youth centred modes of operation for student welfare services and enhance multi-sectoral cooperation between municipalities and counties.
- We increase community spirit and prevent bullying by supporting emotional intelligence, interaction skills and relationships between friends. We organise recreational activities as part of school activities.
- We encourage all children to take part in the early childhood education.
- The work is going on in 12 counties.

**Special services will be networking and come closer to basic services and people's everyday life. Most demanding services will be gathered together in order to make them equally available to all when people need them.**

- We bring assistance, support and care closer to children, young people and families living in difficult situations, which will also support professionals providing basic services. Equal availability of services will be promoted.
- Highly specialised services cooperate closely across the administrative boundaries of education and culture sector and health and social services.
- In child protection multiple actors often participate and family therapy skills will improve. The control over substitute care will be uniformed.
- Changes are being carried out in 16 counties. Five centres of excellence and support will be established in Finland to provide the most demanding services.

**New operating culture even in government and decision-making, based on knowledge and the rights of children**

- Together towards municipalities and counties which form a good environment for children and young people: A child-friendly county is being piloted by six counties.
- We base our work on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We offer training and guidance for the assessment of the effects of decisions on children.
- We utilise new information on children's wellbeing and on costs. We will learn from children's experiences. Better knowledge gives better decisions.
- The model of child-friendly workplaces is promoting the reconciliation of family and work in six counties.

***The National Institute for Health and Welfare is supporting the implementation of the work of change under the programme to address child and family services.***