

## Child Protection Committee Responses

### Questions Posed from the committee:

1. Based on the Vermont State Police review of the “DS- DCF Investigation”, what are the lessons learned? As you know, the Committee is not charged with investigating that specific case. However the Committee wishes to know what you believe that case has revealed about problems or shortcomings in Vermont’s child protection system, and how to fix those problems.
2. Do you have any statutory or regulatory changes that you propose?

### Response talking points:

#### Question #1:

- This case revealed issues surrounding communication failures at multiple levels within the system.
- Multi-Disciplinary Team approaches to these types of investigations create a more thorough approach to each case and help to ensure that all information is looked at and ultimately provided to the court.
- Internal reviews of investigation should be routine and could have caught several of the information segments that got overlooked.
- This case had failures at all levels from Law Enforcement all the way to the courts
- Truly apparent that I was the first one to have all the information in this case and the conclusions to be reached were very different than what the case showed through the court process.
- MDT approach needs to become standardized across the state and needs to have full engagement from Law Enforcement, DCF and SA’s at each phase of the investigation to ensure the most thorough outcome.
- Particular shortcoming in this case was the failure to identify the actual offender who broke the child’s legs, and then continuing the process, without knowing this information.
- Information needs to be free flowing and there must be a system to ensure all information is reaching every level of the investigation and case proceedings.

Question #2:

- Public oversight in CHINS cases, and possible trigger thresholds (severe injury or risk of death) to ensure full review of these cases both internally and by Committee.
- Confidentiality of the CHINs proceedings needs to be changed to allow for greater public oversight and scrutiny.