

**256N.01 PUBLIC POLICY.**

(a) The legislature declares that the public policy of this state is to keep children safe from harm and to ensure that when children suffer harmful or injurious experiences in their lives, appropriate services are immediately available to keep them safe.

(b) Children do best in permanent, safe, nurturing homes where they can maintain lifelong relationships with adults. Whenever safely possible, children are best served when they can be nurtured and raised by their parents. Where services cannot be provided to allow a child to remain safely at home, an out-of-home placement may be required. When this occurs, reunification should be sought if it can be accomplished safely. When it is not possible for parents to provide safety and permanency for their children, an alternative permanent home must quickly be made available to the child, drawing from kinship sources whenever possible.

(c) Minnesota understands the importance of having a comprehensive approach to temporary out-of-home care and to permanent homes for children who cannot be reunited with their families. It is critical that stable benefits be available to caregivers to ensure that the child's needs can be met whether the child's situation and best interests call for temporary foster care, transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to a relative, or adoption. Northstar Care for Children focuses on the child's needs and strengths, and the actual level of care provided by the caregiver, without consideration for the type of placement setting. In this way caregivers are not faced with the burden of making specific long-term decisions based upon competing financial incentives.

**History:** 2013 c 108 art 17 s 5