



# DCS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline

The DCS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline provides a central location for child abuse and neglect reporting. Before the hotline was implemented in 2010, more than 350 locations took these reports.

Although the number of reports has increased exponentially since the hotline was established, handling of those reports has become more thorough and better-documented.

## ■ QUALITY

- The hotline is staffed with specially trained family case managers (FCMs), referred to as intake specialists, who are available to take reports 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including weekends and holidays.
- An intake guidance tool provides a comprehensive set of questions to best capture the caller's concerns, ensuring each report is fully explored.
- Hotline calls are recorded, monitored and reviewed for accuracy and quality assurance.

## ■ CONSISTENCY

- The hotline streamlines the approach to taking reports, improves the intake specialists' ability to gather information from callers and expedites the preparation of comprehensive reports and their dissemination to local offices for assessment.
- The hotline uses a structured decision-making tool to ensure consistency, decreasing the risk for bias.
- Without responsibility for intake functions, field staff can spend more time with children and families.
- Wait times are tracked for each call, and monthly performance measures are reported online.

## ■ ACCURACY

- Previously, many screen-outs were not recorded because workers knew the data would be erased from the system a short time later.
- The hotline takes part in a screening threshold analysis in order to ensure accuracy when assigning and screening out reports.

## ■ STAFF

Hotline staff members receive training ranging from four to 16 weeks, including training on domestic violence, substance abuse and other areas that could help to identify safety concerns when sending an FCM to a home to investigate.

Although the hotline has one of the highest retention rates in the agency, efforts to improve both recruitment and retention are ongoing.

To diversify the talent pool, hiring managers began participating in local and regional job fairs.

Retention efforts include:

- Various opportunities for employees' professional development.
- Leadership academy for supervisors.
- Special projects aimed at improving hotline operations.
- Opportunities to shadow other parts of the agency to help hotline employees learn more about practices agency-wide.
- Intake-to-outcome program, which aims to mitigate secondary trauma by allowing employees to follow up on reports they were a part of, gaining closure and learning the positive impact DCS made.

**Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline**  
**800-800-5556**