
**ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY
CFS OPERATIONS MANUAL**

Effective Date: September 18, 2008

Number: I-0209

Developmental Screening Referrals

Purpose To provide guidelines for referring children ages 0 to 5 years for developmental screenings.

Approved This policy was approved by Mike Ryan, Director of CFS, on September 18, 2008. *Signature on file.*

Background In late 2003, Congress amended the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) to require that states develop provisions and procedures for referral of children under age of three, who are involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect, to early intervention services funded under Part C (called "Early Start" in California) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Similarly, in early 2004 Congress amended the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) to require states to "have policies and procedures that require a referral for early intervention services...of a child under the age of 3 who is involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect, or is identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure."

The Conference report accompanying the IDEA legislation indicates that the conferees did not intend the IDEA provision to require every child under the age of three who is involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect to receive an evaluation. Rather, **the intention was that such children be screened** to determine whether a referral to early intervention services is warranted.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) consequently issued implementing regulations via All County Letter (ACL) 06-54 dated December 6, 2006. The ACL emphasized:

- That the amendment to CAPTA and IDEA encouraged enhanced linkages between child protective services, public health, mental health, and developmental disabilities agencies
- That there be provisions and procedures in place to refer children
- The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) would be the lead agency in funding early intervention services. These services are coordinated through the Early Start Program for ages 0-3 at the Regional Centers and through vendors contracting with local educational agencies for ages 3 to 5

Following the spirit of the ACL, a workgroup of community partners was convened. Implementation of the mandate was extended to ages 0-5 to take advantage of the fact that many of the community partners already served a population of children in this age range. Additionally, rather than only provide information to families with substantiated child abuse allegation, the presence of the worker in the home provided a strength based opportunity to extend existing community services to all families.

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- Legal Mandates**
- [Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, 42 USC 5106a \(b\)\(2\)\(A\)\(xxi\)](#)
 - Individuals with Disabilities Act, [Public Law 108-446, Sec101, 118 Stat 2744](#)
 - The Administration on Children and Families, Child Welfare Policy Manual, [2.11 CAPTA, Assurances and Requirements, Referrals to IDEA](#)
 - [All County Letter \(ACL\) 06-54](#), December 6, 2006
 - [20 USC 1432\(4\), Early Intervention Services](#)

Definitions

Screening: A brief assessment procedure designed to identify children who should receive more intensive diagnosis or assessment.

Evaluation: A complex process aimed at identifying specific developmental disorders that are affecting a child.

Early Intervention Services: Per 20 USC 1432 (4), Developmental Intervention Services that:

- A. Are provided under public supervision.
- B. Are provided at no cost except where Federal or State law provides for a system of payments by families, including a schedule of sliding fees
- C. Are designed to meet the developmental needs of an infant or toddler with a disability, as identified by the individualized family service plan team, in any one or more of the following areas:
 - Physical development
 - Cognitive development
 - Communication development
 - Social or emotional development
 - Adaptive development

POLICY

Responsible Party	The assigned social worker (ASW) responsible for investigating the child abuse referral will provide referral information for developmental screenings to the parent or caregiver. (This may include legal guardian, Non-related Extended Family Member, and foster parent).
Information Provided	The parent or caregiver of every child age 0 to 5 will be given the CFS brochure, " <i>How We Can Help Our Children Grow</i> " (F063-25-560).
When to Provide Information	The CFS brochure, " <i>How We Can Help Our Children Grow</i> ," will be provided to the parent or caregiver whenever responding to a child abuse referral where a child age 0 to 5 is residing in the home.
Documentation	<p>The ASW will document in the body of the investigative narrative that the brochure was provided to the parent or caregiver. Documentation will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of person provided brochure • Date brochure given • Relationship to child

For further direction on referral documentation, refer to CFS Policy and Procedure (P&P) Abuse Investigations—Findings, Documentation, and Cross Reporting (A-0305).

REFERENCES

Hyperlinks

Users accessing this document by computer may create a direct connection to the following references by clicking on them.

- CFS P&P [Abuse Investigations—Practice Guidelines \(A-0412\)](#)
- CFS P&P [Abuse Investigations—Findings, Documentation, and Cross Reporting \(A-0305\)](#)

Other Sources

Other printed references include the following:

None.

REQUIRED FORMS

Online Forms

Required forms listed below may be printed out and completed, or completed online, and may be accessed by clicking on the link provided.

Form Name	Form Number
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None.

Hard Copy Forms

Forms listed below must be completed in hard copy (including multi-copy NCR forms). ***For reference purposes only***, links are provided to view these hard copy forms, where available.

Form Name	Form Number
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None.

CWS/CMS Forms

The following required forms may ***only*** be obtained in CWS/CMS. ***For reference purposes only***, links are provided to view these CWS/CMS forms, where available.

Form Name	Form Number
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None.

Brochures Brochures to distribute in conjunction with this procedure include:

Brochure Name	Brochure Number
How We Can Help Our Children Grow	F063-25-560
How We Can Help Our Children Grow (Spanish)	F063-25-560SP
How We Can Help Our Children Grow (Vietnamese)	F063-25-560VN

PROCEDURE

Required Actions	The following actions must be completed when investigating a child abuse referral.		
Staff Responsible	Step	Required Action	
Assigned Social Worker	1.	Conduct child abuse investigation in accordance with guidelines set forth in CFS P&P "Abuse Investigation-Practice Guidelines" (A-0412). At initial contact, determine if any child age 0 to 5 resides in residence.	
	2.	If yes, provide parent or caregiver with copy of CFS brochure " <i>How We Can Help Our Children Grow</i> " (F063-25-560).	
		Note: If it appears that any child age 0 to 5 is exhibiting obvious developmental delays, discuss with caregiver the need to have the child screened as soon as possible. Discuss available resources in the community and review the brochure with caregiver. Suggest caregiver contact "Help Me Grow" to obtain immediate assistance in connecting the caregiver and child to an available resource for screening.	
	3.	Document per policy section above.	