

THE ROLE OF CPS

- Assess new referrals made on a family
- Have up to 60 days to complete the initial investigation
- Assess for safety
- Provide placement if needed
- Start court process if needed
- Make appropriate referrals
- Continue court process if needed
- Continue to assess for safety
- Continue to assess family situation and develop a safety plan
- Make referrals to community resources
- Maintain contact with the family, depending on the level of need
- Resolve issues that led to the abuse/neglect

HOW CAN TEACHERS HELP?

- Call CPS earlier in the day if possible to provide ample investigation time while the child is safe at school
- Have the staff person with the concern make the call to CPS
- Respect the family's right to privacy by limiting who you talk to about the family
- Support the child and the family

Mission Statement

Providing quality services for individuals and families in a safe, supportive, respectful partnership by promoting health, well-being, and self-sufficiency.

Vision Statement

To promote safety, well-being, and self-sufficiency for the individuals of Juneau County. We strive to do so by remaining open-minded to the ideas and suggestions of others; provide person-centered services in the least intrusive and least restrictive way possible; collaborate with our departments and community partners; to function with integrity in all matters, manage public resources responsibly; and acknowledge the values and beliefs of others in a courteous and respectful manner.

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Juneau County Department of Human Services

Frequently Asked Questions: Child Protection Services

Frequently Asked Questions About Child Protection Services

What is involved in a Child Protective Service (CPS) Investigation?

A Case Worker:

- Is assigned to interview/observe alleged victim and siblings and to assess for safety
- Conducts a home visit where they interview/observe parents and other family members in the home
- Gathers relevant information and social history to determine the level of services needed, if any
- Makes appropriate referrals
- Prepares a written report with the investigation findings

Can I find out the results of the investigation when I've made a report?

- Mandatory reporters will receive a letter sharing limited information. The information includes whether the case was assigned or screened out; what action was taken as a result of the referral

Why are certain referrals screened out?

- There is not enough information to warrant an investigation
- The referral has already been investigated
- The referral information does not meet the statutory requirements
- The Residence is outside Juneau County. (Referral is passed on to appropriate county)
- The referral is not of a CPS nature but will be referred to law enforcement.
- Screened out referrals are retained for future reference

Is there ever a time when information can be shared with school personnel?

- Case workers can receive information, but they cannot release the information without a signed Release of Information
- With the exception of the mandatory reporter letter, information can only be shared when a parent signs a Release of Information

Why can't case workers do more?

- The law limits the case worker's ability to intervene
- Case workers do a lot of work "behind the scenes" that cannot be shared due to confidentiality
- Case workers perform various roles, such as: activists, advocate, catalyst, mediator, enabler, facilitator, planner, outreach, worker, teacher, and trainer

Why isn't a child removed from the home when there is "bad parenting"?

- Bad parenting is not against the law
- Criteria for removing children is determined by state statutes
- Having criminal history does not necessarily prohibit a person from parenting
- The child is not unsafe

Wouldn't Foster Care be a better option?

- Removal from parents is emotionally traumatizing to children
- Many issues are best dealt with while the children remain in the home

- The law, based on the best interest of the child, mandates that the case worker make every effort to keep families intact
- Sibling groups might have to be split up because of lack of space in a foster home
- Children often act out in foster care because they want to be in their own home. As a result, multiple placements could occur. This would further traumatize the child.

When a child is placed in Foster Care, do parents retain their parental rights?

- Usually parents do retain custody, unless the court orders otherwise
- Parents usually have the right to regular visits with their child
- There may be certain limitations on their contract with the child

Why did you return the child home?

- The home/family was deemed safe
- The unsafe conditions have been controlled or eliminated
- It is in the child's best interest

What did you do to ensure the child's safety?

- Put a plan in place for safety of the child
- Provided services in the home to monitor and ensure safety
- Involve community agencies and family as needed