



**Florida Department of Children and Families
Hotline Case Review January, 2016
Review Completed by Action for Child Protection
Date: 2/4/16
Screened Out Reports**

**Prepared by
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Overview and Method

Action for Child Protection conducted a case review of a random sample of screened out referrals taken by the Florida Abuse Hotline between October 1, 2015 and December 30, 2015. The sample period was chosen to reflect the most recent work. The reviews were conducted by reading the written Hotline Intake Report and listening to the recorded calls. This was done for all referrals which were received via the phone. A small number of fax and web-based reports were also reviewed but these did not involve a recorded call, just a written Intake report.

The focus of the review was to assess the quality of information collection and decision making (screen in/screen out and response time) as it reflects the implementation of the Florida Safety Decision Making Methodology. Because this review included the written hotline report and the recorded call, the review also evaluated the extent to which the information in the written report was complete and consistent with the information presented by the reporter.

A total of 41 screened out reports were reviewed, 35 phone, 1 web report and 5 Faxed reports.

This report provides:

- Summary of key findings for the main areas of focus: Information collection, Completeness of information recorded on the Hotline report, Screening Decision
- Data summary for all items reviewed
- Narrative comments from reviewers

INFORMATION COLLECTION

Data Summary

- Demographic information about the victim child in the home is consistently high (98%), other children in the home is less consistent (83%)
- Information about the alleged maltreater is high (95%), the non-maltreating caregiver is 93%
- Information about collaterals is not consistent, asked in 78% of the cases and either did not ask or did not record it in 22% of the cases reviewed
- Information collection to specifically support safety decision making was varied and reflects an area in need of improvement. 97% of the cases had sufficient information related to maltreatment and 88% sufficient related to nature of maltreatment. Information related to parenting (72%) and discipline (63%) were lower. Information collection related to adult functioning (65%) and child functioning (74%) were also less consistent.

SCREENING DECISION

Data Summary

- 76 % of the reports were determined to have been screened out correctly; 15% were not screened out correctly, the reviewer believed they should have been screened in; and 10% of the cases we were unable to determine due to insufficient information.

1. A. Name of Reviewer

#	Answer	Response	%
2	Janney Spears	2	5%
3	Theresa Costello	39	95%
	Total	41	100%

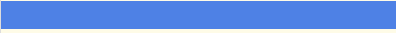

2. Report Type

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Phone Call	35	85%
2	Web-Based	1	2%
3	FAX	5	12%
	Total	41	100%

3. The hotline counselor inquired regarding the alleged child victim(s) ages and locations and information was documented in the hotline assessment to support the information obtained by the hotline counselor.

#	Answer		Response	%
4	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the alleged child victim(s) ages and location(s) AND information was accurately reflected within the hotline assessment/documentation.		40	98%
5	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the alleged child victim(s) ages and location(s), but DID not reflect the information within the hotline assessment/documentation.		0	0%
6	No, Hotline counselor DID NOT inquire regarding the alleged child victim(s) ages and location(s).		1	2%
	Total		41	100%

4. The hotline counselor inquired regarding other children in the home: ages, relationships and locations and information was documented in the hotline assessment to support the information obtained by the hotline counselor.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the other children in the home: ages, relationship, and location(s) AND information was accurately reflected within the hotline assessment/documentation.		34	83%
3	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the other children in the home: ages, relationship, and location(s), but DID not reflect the information within the hotline assessment/documentation.		0	0%
5	No, Hotline counselor DID NOT inquire regarding other children in the home: ages, relationship, and location(s).		7	17%
	Total		41	100%

5. The hotline counselor inquired regarding the presence or absence of a non-maltreating parent/caregiver within the household.

#	Answer	Response	%
6	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the presence or absence of a non-maltreating parent/caregiver within the household AND information was accurately reflected within the hotline assessment/documentation.	38	93%
8	No, Hotline counselor DID NOT inquire regarding the presence or absence of a non-maltreating parent/caregiver within the household	3	7%
10	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the presence or absence of a non-maltreating parent/caregiver within the household but DID not reflect the information within the hotline assessment/documentation.	0	0%
	Total	41	100%

6. The hotline counselor inquired regarding the parent not in household, including demographic information.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the parent not in the household AND information was accurately reflected within the hotline assessment/documentation.	15	100%
2	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the parent not in the household but DID not reflect the information within the hotline assessment/documentation.	0	0%
	Total	15	100%

7. The hotline counselor inquired regarding the maltreating parent/caregiver, including age, relationship, and current location.

#	Answer	Response	%
5	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the maltreating parent/caregiver, including age, relationship and current location AND information was accurately reflected within the hotline assessment/documentation.	39	95%
6	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding the maltreating parent, including age, relationship, and current location but DID not reflect the information within the hotline assessment/documentation.	0	0%
9	No, Hotline counselor DID NOT inquire regarding the maltreating parent/caregiver, including the age, relationship and current location.	2	5%
	Total	41	100%

8. The hotline counselor inquired regarding collaterals, to include contact information. (Includes doctors, school, neighbors, relatives, LE, CPT, etc.)

#	Answer	Response	%
2	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding collaterals AND information was accurately reflected within the hotline assessment/documentation.	32	78%
3	Yes, Hotline counselor inquired regarding collaterals but DID not reflect the information within the hotline assessment/documentation.	1	2%
4	No, Hotline counselor DID NOT inquire regarding collateral information.	8	20%
	Total	41	100%

9. Reviewer comment regarding assessment of demographic information collection. Include strengths and areas of improvement.

Got basic demographic information.

At the point this call is coming in, reporter mentions that school principle is also making the same report, so this counselor explained that they don't need two reports and tried to avoid taking the call. She ended up taking it, but did not document sufficient information. .Child's date of birth is not recorded correctly and name of High School is incorrect, she has Manier and it is Mariner.

This is a call about a teacher, so institutional report. Answered yes to demographic because got all that is needed for this type of call.

Only information known by reporter is the name and DOB of the child; parents (presumed) brought child to hospital and left without getting medical care or giving any information.

The person making this report from the school did not have the information needed; hotline counselor told her what else she needed to know and asked that the Nurse or teacher call back with additional information. It does not look like that happened.

Report regarding teacher so information gathered was appropriate. Incorrectly spelled Principal's last name even though she spelled it out.

Reporter calling from Massachusetts with limited information about family of concern in Florida. Hotline counselor did a very nice job of asking as much information as possible; very nice tone.

Reporter did not have address of the family, just name of the mother and grandfather. Reporter was helping with Assisted Living placement of grandfather.

Law enforcement making report, had all demographic information as needed

Hotline counselor did a very nice job of getting information. Had a very nice tone, showed empathy, interest in young girl who was the subject of the report.

Call is about concern for child in institutional placement who is smoking. Hotline counselor did a good job of asking reporter questions to understand the situation, whether it was a report of abuse or neglect. Additional concerns about child taking his medication and getting in fights. These were all explored in the call and documented.

Good empathy by Hotline counselor. Never asked if there is a father in the home, but this is on the intake so must have looked in system and determined this.

Fax report so information provided is all there is to go on.

This was a call that had no allegations of abuse or neglect, it was a custody concern and the reporter was directed to contact the court.

Somewhat limited information from reporter, genuine concern and Hotline counselor did a good job of helping reporter describe the situation.

Fax report with no information except name of child, date of birth. No address, no allegations of abuse or neglect. Nothing documented beyond the name of the child and the reporter is anonymous

Web report, provides child and mother demographic information, sufficient to locate.

Caller in New York at school where the children left, does not know where the family is right now.

Law enforcement making report, had demographics, not a lot more information.

Reporter is at behavioral health center, reporting sex between 13 year old and 22 year old.

Call gets off to a bad start because the reporter wants to remain anonymous and hotline worker assures her of confidentiality but she doesn't want to give her name or number. She ends up giving only her first name and then the Hotline counselor says her name about 20 times on the call. The Hotline counselor tries to get details but the reporter is annoyed because she can't give any details that seem to be enough for the hotline counselor. They interrupt each other many times. The child she is reporting hurt her nose a week ago, but the reporter does not know how. The hotline counselor says she has to know how the child received the injuries in order to take a report. This is a challenging call, no doubt, but I believe the approach of the Hotline counselor contributed to the frustration felt by the reporter.

Person making report at the beginning did not have first hand knowledge. Hotline counselor was very patient and kept asking some questions and then she got the right person on the call who had spoken with the child and knew the circumstances.

report is about incident at an uncle's house, child drank bottle of something looking like tea and child got really sick. Mother picked child up and called ambulance to get child to hospital.

Law enforcement, limited knowledge. Only contact with the family.

Call in Spanish, Hotline worker fluent and able to take all the information. Asked good questions.

Law enforcement had some basic information, not the names of all the children living in the home.

Person calling about family members who are homeless. Does not have concerns of abuse or neglect, need assistance, so given 211.

Nurse calling in referral, had demographic information.

reporter is probation officer who received a call from the 16 year old. Did not inquire about anyone else living in the home, only discussed the child and the grandmother.

reporter is with homeless coalition, reporting 8 people living in a van, has known family previously.

This is a Fax report and the information provided by the school is limited, does not give a home address for the child, or a parent name.

Fax report from school. Limited information on parents provided.

Fax report from Sheriff's department following domestic violence incident.

The caller was a very angry father. The call did not go well and the father did not feel his concerns were being heard or understood.

10. This section is concerned with evaluating the sufficiency of information for the six domains of information collection. Reviewers should be evaluating the information documented in the Hotline in regards to the sufficiency criteria for each domain and reconciliation of the reporter. Reviewer should select "YES" if information is clearly documented, sufficient for decision making, and reflective of the information obtained through the contact with the reporter. Reviewer should select "NO, information is not sufficient for decision making, and is not reflective of the information obtained during the hotline counselor's conversation with the reporter or did not ask reporter for information they likely knew. Reviewer should select "NO, Information is not sufficient for decision making and based upon the reporter and the report type information could not be obtained.

#	Question	YES, Information is Sufficient	No, Information is Insufficient- Not reflective of hotline counselor contact with reporter.	No, Information is not sufficient and based upon reporter type, information could not be obtained.	Total Responses	Percentage Yes and excluding cases where reporter did not know
1	a. Extent of alleged maltreatment (What is the extent of the maltreatment?)	34	1	6	41	97%

2	b. Nature of maltreatment? (What surrounding circumstances accompany the maltreatment?)	28	4	9	41	88%
3	c. Parenting disciplinary practices (What are the disciplinary approaches used by the parent, including the typical context?)	13	5	23	41	72%
4	d. General parenting (What are the overall, typical, pervasive parenting practices used by the parent? Do Not Include Discipline.)	12	7	22	41	63%
5	e. Adult functioning (How does the adult function on a daily basis? Include behaviors, feelings, intellect, physical capacity and temperament).	13	7	21	41	65%
6	f. Child functioning (How does the	17	6	18	41	74%

	child function on a daily basis? Include pervasive behaviors, feelings, intellect, physical capacity and temperament.)					
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11. Reviewer comments regarding information collection. Include strengths and areas needing improvement.

Information given by reporter was not recorded, child's emotional reaction to the situation, child stating that she did not want her brother or sister to be told, or her parents to be called.

The hotline counselor records limited information. Another report is being taken and the hotline counselor copied and pasted the screen out decision from the other report into this one. She also told the reporter she was taking a report and then screened it out.

Report from Juvenile Probation Officer and same report had already been investigated; girl sexually abused by her brother over 5 years ago and he went to prison for this. Institutional abuse call so information about adult functioning, parenting, discipline is not applicable.

The hotline counselor did the best they could, hospital did not have the information because the parents left without letting child be examined or receive medical care. There is some information documented in written report which is not stated on the call, details about what the father said happened to the child and what the mother said. Not clear how this information was obtained because it was not on the recorded call.

Would like to have heard some additional questions about the mother, any interaction the school has had with her. Did not ask. Answered no for adult functioning and parenting because did not ask about the mother beyond the description of this incident

Reporter did not have the information, hotline counselor did the best they could. School has para professional call in report but they did not have first hand information.

Hotline counselor asked questions to try to understand the circumstances of the teacher's actions; asked about any action taken by the school related to the teacher involved; asked about the normal interaction of the teacher with students.

Caller knew very little and realized the call would likely not be accepted because of that. Does not know the whereabouts of the family,

There are a couple of things on the call which did not get recorded in the written document, about an incident where the grandfather would not let the mother close the refrigerator door and a time when he "hugged her too long/hard" and made her feel uncomfortable. Not sure why these were not included in the report because they were specifics related to why the mother felt uncomfortable. Also fails to document that Grandfather has dementia, is taking meds for Alzheimers. Hotline counselor did a good job of asking additional questions, was professional and had a nice tone. Hotline counselor was also good about clarifying that the only concern related to the children was not an allegation of abuse or neglect (tickling them and they wanted him to stop). Reporter understood that call was not going to be accepted.

Concerns reported by police not related to children in their home environment.

The caller was not sure whether she was supposed to make the report or not and the Hotline counselor did a good job of exploring the situation with her through the information gathering. Also the hotline counselor suggested the hospital social worker be called to talk to the girl because not much information was known and this was going to be the next step.

Adult functioning, general parenting and disciplinary are not applicable, child in residential placement.

Generally pretty good job, but a couple of additional questions about 1) father and his role/any concerns for the mother or daughter 2) parenting in general 3) discipline in general.

Only information is that children return from visitation with their father and both have red marks on them, on thigh, stomach and groin. These are very small children, 1 and 2 years old.

Not abuse and neglect concern

Hotline worker asked really good questions, covered all the domains in a very professional and natural way. Did a nice job of summarizing the concerns at the end of the call.

No information, faxed report. Anonymous reporter so no follow-up possible.

Web report submitted by doctor via Georgia DHS.

Hotline counselor asked really good questions to try to figure out how to locate the family, employers, friends, school records, etc. Hotline counselor sought supervisory input, call was about educational neglect so reporter was instructed to call school board, given the phone number for that. Also told could all sheriff's office for wellness check at last known address.

Report is about custody, not child abuse and neglect. Hotline counselor was polite and professional, probably could have done a better job of explaining why this was a custody issue not an abuse and neglect matter. Reporter seemed confused at the end.

Focus was on child and perpetrator who is non family member. Report belongs with sheriff's department, not abuse and neglect report.

The reporter is a friend of the family and does not have direct knowledge. She gets frustrated because she has concerns but no details. She is offered the number for the sheriff's department to do a wellness check, but she doesn't want that. Some of her concerns are clearly not enough, child is with a babysitter a lot, aunt comes home drunk very late in the night....but no specifics about child being neglected. Only detail is about child having a hurt nose a week ago...no details.

Consensual sex among minors. No indications of neglect.

Unable to take report unless they know that child was given alcohol. Asked to call back if lab tests indicate it was alcohol.

Report does not constitute abuse or neglect, officer knew that but had to make report.

Family dynamics are complicated, involve numerous family members but the concerns boil down to a custody issue so were referred to Legal Aid.

14 year old got violent with mother, child was arrested for domestic battery. Hotline counselor encouraged law enforcement to tell family to call for PNA.

Hotline counselor was very helpful and professional with the reporter, gave her good direction and rationale for what needed to happen to try to help family.

Aunt who is caring for child needs PNA so nurse was advised to ask her to call in for this. Hotline counselor explained it well.

I believe counselor could have asked additional questions to understand these circumstances better, she documents that the reporter did not obtain enough detailed information to generate a report, but it is not clear that she asked everything.

No specific information about neglect or unsafe living conditions, believes children are not in school because sees him in the day outside on the street, suggests they call school board and also police for a wellness check. He explains that have to know if there are environmental hazards in the living situation. Also tells them that mother could call for PNA.

Report documents behavior problems of child at school. Includes documentation of how school has addressed the issues with the father. There are no allegations of abuse or neglect.

School reports 11 and 13 year olds left home alone, parents working. No indication they are unsafe or scared, no other concerns. School report appears to be just to be sure they are reporting, no specific concern that kids are not ok alone.

Incident did not involve the child; child already removed from parent custody so this was screened out, but information is in system to document new incident between the adults.

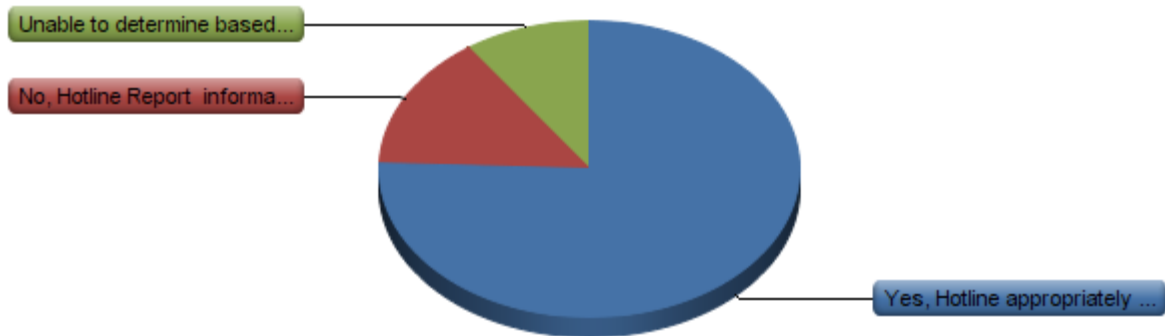
Details on the phone call which are not recorded in the intake; information about mother's functioning, things older child wrote in the journal of the younger child. These are important pieces of information.

Information on the call which was not recorded, specifics about child's behavior, parenting, not seeing any marks on the child, etc.

This father had concerns that would constitute medical neglect, untreated parasite, child underweight. Hotline worker believed it was a custody concern, which may be true as well, but the father has current medical concerns about his daughter and these were not reflected in this hotline report and decision. May be previous or other current reports in the system?

Verbal argument between adults with child present. No maltreatment. Law enforcement making required report, little information known beyond the reported argument.

12. Screening decision was supported by the case information. The information in the hotline did not support that there was a child victim; no child victim located in Florida; parent/caregiver responsible for the child is not identified as a maltreater; maltreatment and/or danger threat is not identified, and/or means to locate the family are not identified in the hotline.



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes, Hotline appropriately screened out.	31	76%
2	No, Hotline Report information obtained through hotline assesses identifies alleged maltreatment as defined by law and administrative code; child victim in Florida; parent/caregiver responsible for child is identified as a maltreater; maltreatment and/or danger threat identified. Report should have been screened in for investigations/assessment.	6	15%
4	Unable to determine based upon the hotline information.	4	10%
	Total	41	100%

13. Reviewer comments regarding screening. Include specific comments regarding areas of strength and areas needing improvement.

Hotline counselor explained to reporter that more information about a specific allegation was needed in order to accept report. Did not ask about family dynamics which might have been helpful to understand.

Poorly done, not assessed at all. Numerous reports in system for mental injury. Child suicidal, Baker Acted. Current open report at the time of this review.

No harm to child; school has placed teacher on leave and taken appropriate action.

Hotline counselor made appropriate comments about the desire to screen this call in except there is no information to locate the child. Asks good questions about any security cameras which might give license plates, also looks up Vital records and FSFN and finds nothing which will help to locate this child.

Hotline worker also references another Intake which has additional information. She tells the reporter it will be screened in but then documents that she called her back to say it would not be screened in because they have no way to locate the family.

14 year old having baby, no indication of sexual abuse or rape. Family at hospital with her and supportive. Advised to have hospital social worker talk to girl.

Reporter encouraged to call again if concerns in the future that constitute abuse or neglect. Reporter was thankful for the guidance provided by the Hotline counselor. Encouraged reporter to go to licensing agency that oversees this placement.

Hotline counselor expressed concern that family get the services they need (mother is feeling overwhelmed) so she suggested the reporter encourage mother to call back for Parent in need of Assistance.

I believe this should have been screened in because children have marks and unknown how they were caused, young, vulnerable children and mother reports seeing marks upon their return from father.

Hotline counselor was very clear with reporter that they would need to know where the family is in order to accept a report. Reporter was brother and he understood and was grateful for the way the counselor handled the call.

Medical neglect alleged by doctor in Florida, doctor believes there is urgent need for child to be evaluated for cystic fibrosis, child is one year old. Indicates screened out because "unknown if child is diagnosed with cystic fibrosis" This does not make sense, the reason for the medical referral is that the child needs to be tested to see if he has cystic fibrosis. Also a comment that the child does not seem to be affected by the possibility of having cystic fibrosis. The child is 1 year old, this does not make any sense.

In the call the reporter states that the child disclosed the sexual assault to her mother on the phone that day and says that it has happened 4 times. This is not reflected in the written report. Would have been good to ask what mother's reaction was to learning this and if she has any plans to assure her daughter does not go back over to this house again where the assault occurred. The girl is 13 years old and she said she was given a coke with alcohol one time and had sex and then returned again and was forced to have sex against her will. Information not gathered to determine if there is any neglect in this situation. Child is in day behavioral program but goes home each night.

I indicated unable to determine because more likely could have been known if the interaction between the reporter and the counselor had gone better.

Hotline counselor was very professional and thorough.

Only allegation is that grandmother will not let child leave the home and she hit the child. Nothing else is known or asked. If reporter knows nothing else that should be clearly documented.

Child is believed to have a broken arm and the school is concerned that they have not received proper medical attention. This meets the criteria for acceptance.

Agree with decision to screen out, but believe additional information should have been included in the written report.

Untreated medical condition for child, under weight and being given pills but not clear what they are for or where prescribed.

Based on the reporter indicating that the family was under supervision in NY, I believe that the report should have been screened in.

SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS AND AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION

- **The quantity and quality of information collected in screened out reports is not as good as the quantity and quality of information in screened in reports. Efforts should continue to train and coach Hotline staff to gather information in all the domains and not to short cut information collection in the non-maltreatment domains (parenting, discipline, adult functioning and child functioning).**
- **Screening decisions generally reflect an accurate application of the statutory criteria for screening reports. Efforts should continue to assure that all staff understand the statutory screening criteria for acceptance of reports.**