

60-Day CIRT REVIEW REPORT

October 10, 2005

I. Introduction

Oregon Department of Human Services adopted the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) protocol on November 1, 2004. This protocol was developed for the following purposes:

- To specify the Department of Human Services, Child Welfare procedures that will be used when a critical incident occurs;
- To increase the Department's accountability to the public;
- To ensure timely responses by the Department with respect to any critical incident in Child Welfare; and
- To increase the Department's ability to recommend necessary changes to statutes, administrative rules, policies and procedures, practices, training and personnel matters.

The initial findings of the Critical Incident Response Team in the case involving Devon Gould were reported in a 30-Day Report. The protocol requires that, within 30 days of completing that report, if system issues are identified, the Critical Incident Response Team must:

- Develop recommendations to address the system issues;
- Identify action steps. The action steps will be specific as to timelines, tasks and parties responsible for the tasks; and
- Communicate recommendations, action steps and progress to the public and stakeholders as appropriate.

As per the protocol, the above-identified areas are covered in this report. DHS has completed a comprehensive review and analysis of all child welfare involvement with the family that was the subject of this report and specifically the activities related to the injury of Devon Gould. The findings and actions described in this report reflects both local office actions as well as statewide efforts to address concerns and improve practice.

II. CIRT Review Progress and Action Steps:

- 1. Finding:** The Jackson Branch assessed parental capacity with resources and tools available to them but the review team finds additional tools are needed on a statewide basis to assess parental protective capacity and parenting capacity.

Recommendation: The Family Based Services (FBS) Program staff will provide statewide consultation in the identification of resources and research based tools to assess attachment, parenting ability and protective capacity.

Recommendation: Jackson Child Welfare manager and Child Protective Services (CPS) supervisor will meet with the juvenile court judges to discuss the balance of child safety, parental protective capacity, and attachment issues for young children when making out of home placement decisions.

Action Steps:

- FBS Program staff will research the availability of resources for parent-child assessment training. Identification of a research based process and available training will be completed by 1/06. Program staff will present a proposal for the development of a local resource to provide this training in each SDA. The proposal will be presented to CAF administration in 2/06.
 - Jackson Child Welfare Manager and CPS supervisor will arrange a meeting with the local juvenile court judges to discuss the above area of concern and collaborate on a plan to balance the safety and attachment needs of children in making out of home placement decision. Meeting to be held on or before December 30, 2005.
- 2. Finding:** The mother participated in services, but there was inadequate documentation that the mother had followed through with services or that service providers reported behavioral change that would support safe parenting.

Recommendation: The FBS and Child Protective Services (CPS) program staff will provide training locally and statewide on the revised policy expectation that current service participation and

provider recommendations be obtained prior to making reunification, or unstructured supervision plans for families.

Recommendation: The Child Welfare Manager and the FBS consultant will work with the local family based services providers to make sure they are providing timely reports on clients, specifically participation rates and progress in making change.

Action Steps:

- The FBS and CPS program staff will provide training and consultation to the Jackson office on the assessment of safety threats and protective capacity and the development of change based goals. The training will occur by 1/15/06.
- The Child Welfare Manager and FBS consultant will meet with local FBS providers to review contract expectations and reinforce timely, change based reporting on client participation. This meeting will occur by 1/15/06.

- 3. Finding:** Devon's older sibling was in the custody of DHS and had only unsupervised visits with his mother at the relative's home. Lack of supervision of these visits with the older child limited the ability of DHS to adequately assess the mother's capacity to manage the behavior of her toddler and adequately protect and parent her infant.

Recommendation: The Jackson child welfare managers will review the process for determining the level of supervision, monitoring, and documentation necessary for family visits.

Recommendation: Family Based Services, CPS and Foster Care program staff will review policy, practice and staffing related to the supervision of family visits. Statewide protocols will be developed to assist local offices in determining the level of supervision necessary and type of documentation.

Action Steps:

- Jackson Child Welfare Managers will complete local review of visitation practice by 10-30-05. The Jackson review of local practice will help inform the state program staff in possible revision of state protocol, policy and practice in this area.

- FBS, CPS and Foster care program staff will jointly incorporate into the staff procedure manual, guidelines for determining the level of supervision at family visits and documentation requirements. To be completed by 1/30/06.

4. Finding: Safety planning and the use of Team Decision Meetings at critical junctures and in domestic violence situations did not include all critical information available.

Recommendation: FBS and CPS program staff will provide a local practice forum (facilitated discussion to enhance practice and professional development) focusing on safety planning and the use of TDM's at critical junctures and in domestic violence situations. Local CET's (consultant, education and training staff) will assist with curriculum and scheduling. Forums on this topic will be provided in local areas statewide.

Action Steps:

- The FBS and CPS program staff will meet with Jackson child welfare managers and CET's to plan a local practice forum. The forum will be presented in Jackson County by 1/30/06. Forums will be presented on this topic in local areas statewide. All offices will have had a presentation by 3/15/06.

5. Finding: Social service assistants' documented supervised visits as caseworker 30-day face-to-face contact.

Recommendation: Jackson Child Welfare manager and supervisors will review the 30-day face-to-face contact policy with staff to clarify that documented supervised visits do not constitute required 30-day face-to-face contact.

Action Step:

- Jackson Child Welfare managers will complete a review of the 30-day face-to-face contact policy with all staff by 10-26-05.

II. Statewide Activity:

The state child welfare program is in the process of developing a procedure manual for child welfare caseworkers and supervisors. The manual will provide step-by-step clarification guidance in the practice areas identified in this report.