

60-Day CIRT REVIEW REPORT

April 20, 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 Jewell Newland were reported in a 30-Day Report on March 22, 2005. 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 and death of Jewell Newland. 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 Actions Taken:

- 1. Finding:** The case history included information about a variety of issues, including physical abuse and domestic violence. There is no documentation that case history was considered in determining current safety threats at screening and assessment.

Recommendations:

- FACIS, the online child welfare information system, should be used as an investigative tool to assess previous child protective services history of parents and alleged perpetrators. CAF program staff will work with the local Service Delivery Area (SDA) 3 screeners and child protective service workers to ensure there is adequate training and support in how to cross reference cases in FACIS and access all information that is available in the child welfare system in making safety decisions.
- SDA 3 screening and CPS supervisors ensure that screeners and assessment workers complete a thorough review of case history consistent with administrative rule. Administrative rule requires a review of case history in making screening decisions and at key points of safety decision-making in the assessment and case planning process.

Action Taken:

- A. SDA 3 CPS Supervisors will access the services of the FACIS training staff to provide additional training for screeners and assessment workers on using the FACIS as an investigative tool to search history of adults and children in a household. Training to be completed by June 1, 2005.
- B. SDA 3 CPS Supervisors will provide written clarification to screeners and assessment workers regarding the expectation to review history on all adults and children in a household at screening and at assessment. To be completed by May 1, 2005.
- C. CAF program staff will review screening and assessment administrative rules and make revisions, if necessary, to clarify that a thorough and comprehensive review of history and appropriate documentation is required during the screening and assessment process. Review and revisions to be complete by June 1, 2005.

D. CAF program and Field administration staff have scheduled a meeting with Office of Information Systems to discuss potential for increased efficiency and functionality of Client Index as it relates to client history search tools.

2. **Finding:** Review of the information available indicated that consultation from a medical professional specializing in child abuse assessment would have provided valuable information as decisions were made.

Recommendation:

- With the assistance of a medical expert in child abuse, DHS will refine current policy and practice for obtaining medical consultations in child abuse cases.
- CAF will request that the Polk County Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) review the events of this case to evaluate the need for education in the community about medical identification of child abuse and to determine the need for training about child abuse reporting requirements.

Action Taken:

- A. CAF program staff will evaluate the need and available resources to provide consultations from medical experts regarding child abuse cases. Identification of medical consultation resources to be completed by June 1, 2005.
- B. CAF program staff will meet with child abuse assessment center medical experts and Child Welfare CPS training staff to develop specialized training for CPS staff to respond to critical injury child abuse cases.
A needs and resource assessment will be completed beginning June 6, 2005. Training development and implementation will be completed by fall, 2005.
- C. Polk County Child Welfare supervisors have scheduled time on the local MDT meeting agenda in May to discuss and evaluate the need for additional training for community partners on child abuse reporting. The MDT has agreed that review of the events of this case will be helpful. That case review will occur after the criminal process is completed.