SAFETY AND WELL-BEING IN FAMILY FOSTER CARE
CENTRAL REGION

Reporting and Responding to Concerns in Foster Homes
TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Distinguish between a report of abuse/neglect and a foster care referral
- Describe the role of foster parents in the system
- Explain the importance to children and foster families for reporting/referring/responding appropriately
- Identify key components in responding to reports or referrals
SUCCESSFUL TRAINING WILL MEAN:

- Children in foster care experience less trauma
- Appropriate type of staff are responding (law enforcement/CPI or CBC/CPA)
- Investigations are not compromised but strengthened
- Foster families are treated with respect and supported to provide the best quality care
- More foster families are available to provide quality care
- Staff have adequate resources for placement and matching
LET’S TALK ABOUT FOSTER PARENTS:

- **Volunteer** to provide care in their homes to children in state custody
- Have the most knowledge and experience with the children
- Are partners with child protection/welfare staff, GALs, attorneys, etc
- Provide the most homelike setting for children when their families cannot care for them
- Are assessed by the CBC and licensed by DCF prior to being allowed to provide care
- Have licensing staff assigned to support them
- Have specific expectations to meet (See the Partnership Plan-DCF Form CF-FSP 5226 or go to www.qpiflorida.com)
- Care for children who have been traumatized with a range of behaviors and needs
TYPES OF FOSTER HOMES

- Traditional Family Foster Home
- Therapeutic Foster Home
- CMS Medical Foster Home
- Residential Group Homes
Foster care referrals do NOT meet the criteria for abuse/neglect investigations.

Foster Care Referrals refer to “calls to the Hotline regarding concerns about the care provided in a licensed foster home, group home or emergency shelter that do not meet the criteria for acceptance of a report of abuse, abandonment, or neglect.” {F.A.C. 65C-30.001(57)}

Foster Care referrals are not handled by CPIs but by CBC licensing or foster home support staff.

Abuse/neglect investigations must meet criteria specified in law and must be handled by CPIs.

Hotline counselors are trained to ask questions to determine the difference.
Foster Care referrals are most often licensing violations.

A common Foster Care referral is corporal punishment without injury.

Many situations can be managed by case management.

Case managers should develop relationships with local licensing staff to learn more about expectations for foster parents and child welfare partners.

If a concern about a foster parent is called into the Hotline that does not meet the requirements for an intake, a foster care referral will be taken.
What to do First?

- **Upon receipt of a Foster Care Referral** the CPI Receiving Unit will immediately forward it to their Local CBC Agency.

- **Notifications** – The CBC staff will notify the following parties if involved with the family: CPI, Case Manager, CLS attorney, and the GAL.
ABUSE/NEGLECT INVESTIGATION ON FOSTER HOMES

- Report is assigned to specific Unit or person that has been trained to appropriately respond to a Foster Home abuse/neglect investigation

- Notifications - The CPI staff will notify the following parties if involved with the family; Licensing coordinator, Case Manager, CLS attorney, GAL, alleged child’s victim’s biological parents if rights remain intact

- CPI will do a joint response with licensing coordinator and case manager when feasible

- Law Enforcement shall only respond with CPI if there is a plausible and realistic concern for the safety of a CPI, household member, when criminal activity is suspected, or statutory requirement to have law enforcement present
BENEFITS TO CHILDREN AND FOSTER FAMILIES

- Licensing issues are handled by staff familiar to/with the child and foster family
- Children are not confused or upset by an “investigation”
- Foster families have the opportunity to develop skills without feeling threatened
- Law enforcement is involved only in abuse/neglect reports (when required)
## RESPONSE TIPS

### Investigations conducted by CPIs
- Respond with local licensing staff
- Communicate – explain time frames, outcomes, give them new informational sheet
- Use the approach warranted for the situation
- Ensure foster parent knows how to get follow-up information

### Foster Care Referrals handled by CBCs
- Determine if additional services are needed
- Connect Foster Parents with other training and supports
- Use the opportunity to teach/inform/mentor
- Coordinate with case manager, GAL, CLS as needed
- Communicate next steps
When doing notifications for foster homes notify these three DCF Contacts:

Amy Hammett  
Email: amy_hammett@dcf.state.fl.us  
Ph# 407-317-7300

Candace Cox- Burpee  
Email: candace_cox-burpee@dcf.state.fl.us  
Ph# 407-317-7277
Cont-
Sarah Yaccarino
Email: sara_yaccarino@dcf.state.fl.us
Ph# 407-317-7533

When doing notification for residential group homes or facilities notify:

Carlos Colon
Email: carlos_colon@dcf.state.fl.us
Ph# 407-317-7299
CENTRAL REGION CBC CONTACTS FOR FOSTER CARE REFERRALS

- CBC of Central Florida
  Beth Batten
  Email: beth.batten@cbccfl.org
  Ph# 321-441-2060

- Kids Central Inc.
  Melissa Papouscheko
  Email: melissa.papouscheko@kidscentralinc.org
  Ph: 352-873-6332
CONTI- CENTRAL REGION CBC CONTACTS FOR FOSTER CARE REFERRALS

- Brevard Family Partnership
  Danielle Santiago
  Email: danielle.dykes-santiago@brevardfp.org
  Ph# 321-7524650 ext. 3055

- Heartland for Children
  Stephanie Diaz
  Email: sdiaz@heartlandforchildren.org
  Ph# 863-519-8900 ext. 274
RESOURCES

- CFOP 175-12 and CFOP 175-21
- F.A.C. 65C-13.034 Complaint Investigations and Foster Care Referrals
- www.qpiflorida.com (training website for foster families)
- www.floridafapa.org/fast.html (foster allegation support team)
- www.fosteringflorida.com (DCF’s recruitment website for foster parents)
- http://centralregion.dcf.state.fl.us/intranet/ (DCF Central Region website)