



Proposed Family Assessment Response Protocols

ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY
PUBLIC MEETING

WELCOME AND THANK YOU

Meeting Objectives

- Presentation of proposed Family Assessment Protocols
- Community to offer comments regarding the protocols

Thank you for your time and comments

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY STAFF

- **Greg McKay** - Director
- **Shalom Jacobs** - Deputy Director
- **Rhonda Coates** - Program Development Manager
- **Sara Hunn** - Program Development Specialist

INTRODUCTION

- In recent years, Arizona has experienced an increase in the number of reports of child abuse and neglect and the Department of Child Safety (DCS) continues to face both workload and process challenges in its efforts to ensure safety and promote permanency and well-being for abused and neglected children.
- As of this report, DCS is responsible for over 17,000 children living in out-of-home care. There is a sense of urgency to create long-term, sustainable change that will transform the culture of the child welfare agency and to strengthen and revitalize our programs to promote successful outcomes for the children and families served.

INTRODUCTION

- Arizona Laws, 2014, Special Session, Chapter 1, Section 156 (Senate Bill 1001) mandates the Arizona Department of Child Safety to examine the necessity of requirements for protocols for not conducting a full investigation, but taking measures to prevent future risk of harm to the child in cases not involving criminal conduct and in which there is a reasonable belief that the child is currently safe.
- The Department shall seek input from the Child Safety Oversight Committee and hold public meetings to obtain community comment on any recommended protocols. The Department shall report its recommendations concerning the protocols and any suggested legislation to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate on or before July 1, 2015.

WHAT IS DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE?

A child protection practice that allows for more than one method of initial response to reports of child abuse and neglect, according to the rigor of the alleged child maltreatment and the family's level of need.

Traditional Investigation Response

- To determine if abuse or neglect took place on high to moderate risk cases and provide intervention to stop the maltreatment

Family Assessment Response

- To evaluate family strengths and needs and provide services to address needs on low to potential risk cases

Prevention/Community Response

- For cases with no clear allegations of abuse or neglect but identified risk factors and a need for services



CORE ELEMENTS

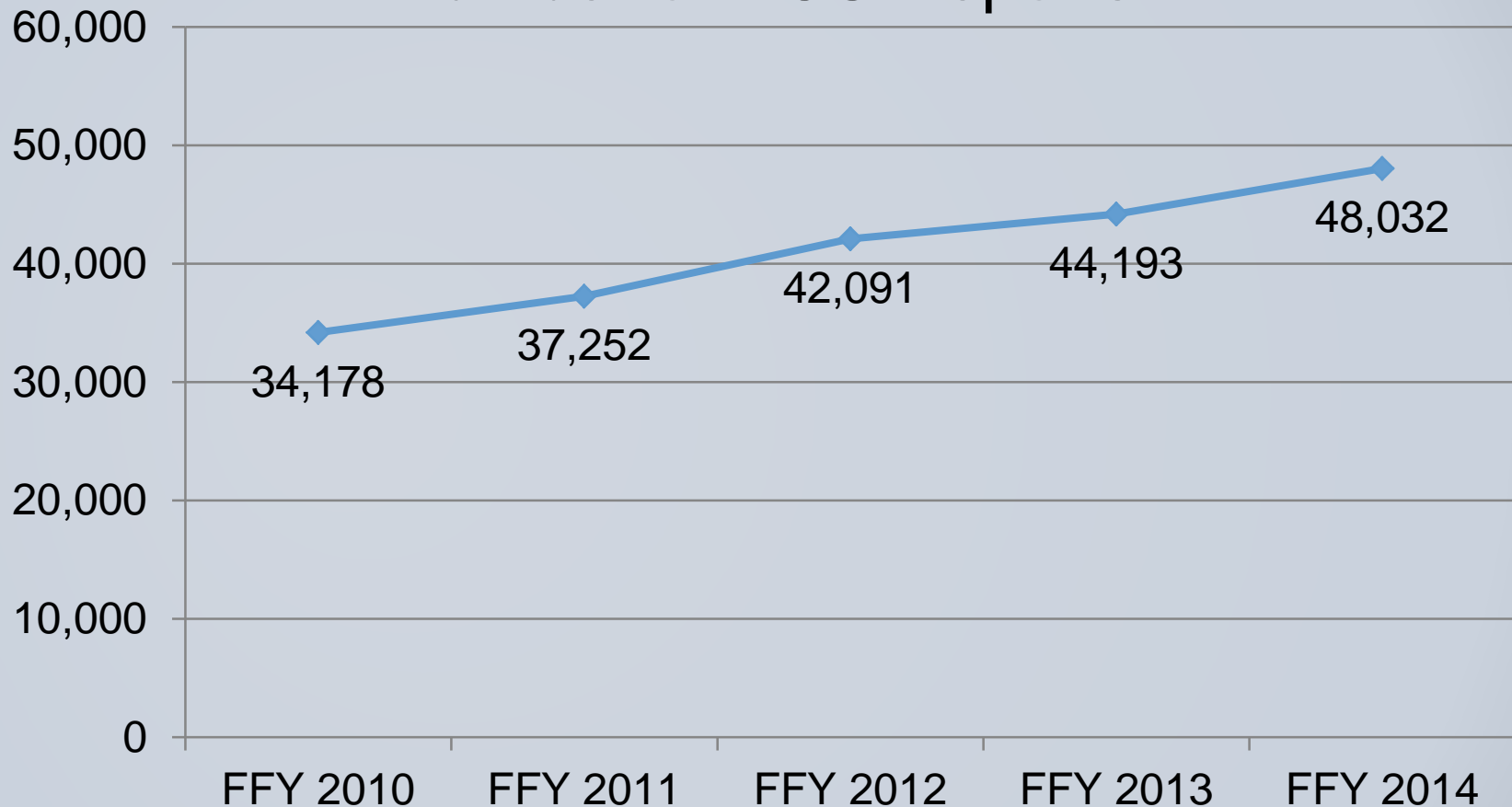
1. The use of two or more discrete responses of intervention;
2. The creation of multiple responses for reports of maltreatment that are screened-in and accepted for response;
3. The determination of the response assignment by the presence of imminent danger, level of risk, the number of previous reports, etc.;
4. The ability to change original response assignments based on additional information gathered during the investigation or assessment phase;

CORE ELEMENTS

5. The establishment of multiple response options is codified in statute, policy, and/or protocols;
6. The ability of families who receive a Family Assessment Response to accept or refuse the offered services after an assessment without consequences (i.e., services are voluntary);
7. No formal determination/finding of maltreatment for families in Family Assessment Response, and services not contingent upon such finding/determination; and
8. No central registry perpetrator listing of Family Assessment Response participants.

CHILD WELFARE STATISTICS

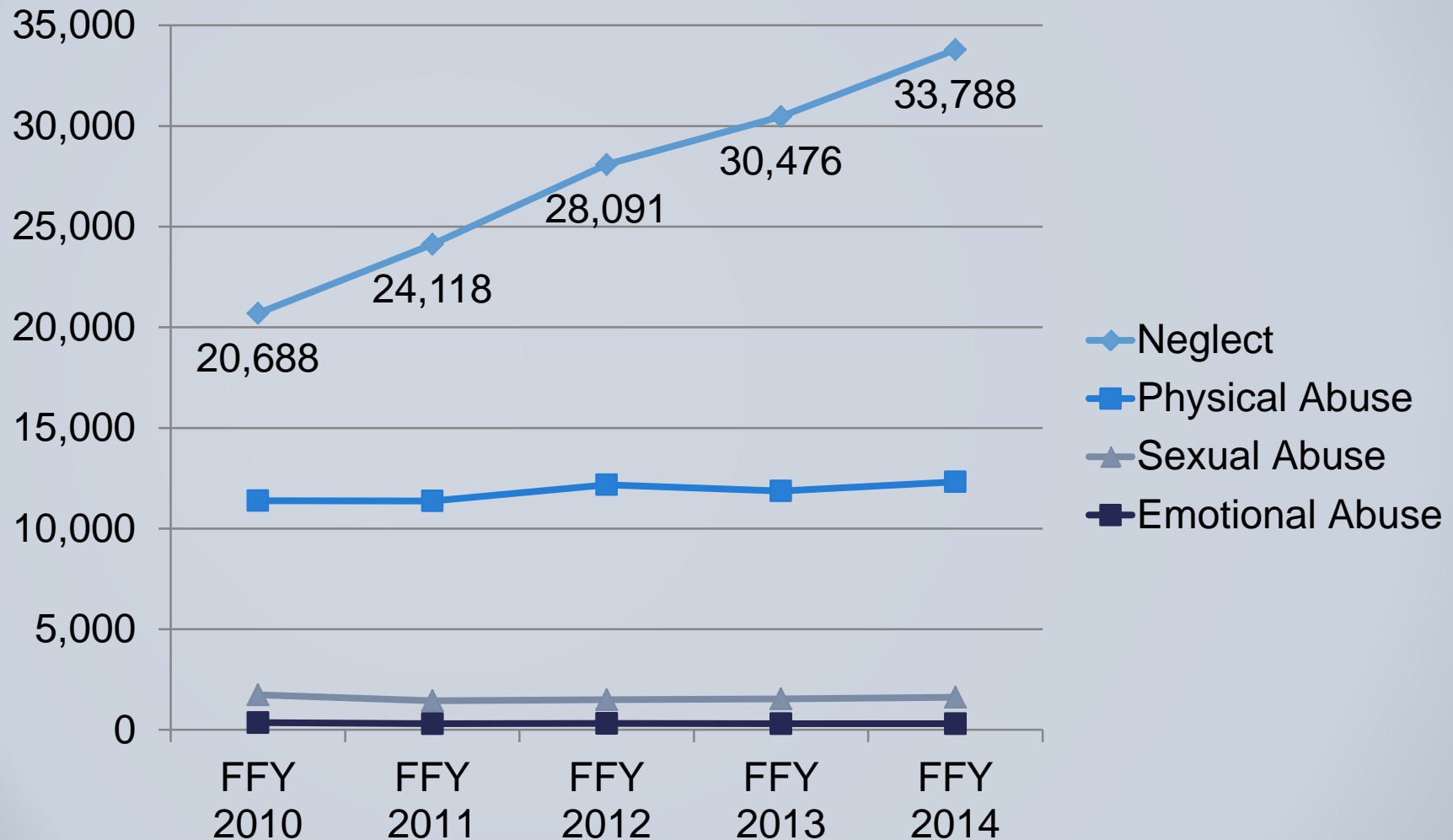
Number of DCS Reports



In recent years, Arizona has experienced a 23% increase in the number of reports of child abuse and neglect.

CHILD WELFARE STATISTICS

Number of DCS Reports by Maltreatment Type



In 2014, 70% of the reports received were due to neglect.

WHY A FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE?

Families are in need of:

- Concrete resources
- Basic household items, clothing, and food
- Resources for medical and behavioral health issues
- Connections to natural community supports

in
times
of
need



WHY A FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE?



WHY A FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE?

Engagement is the foundation on which Arizona's Family Assessment Response will be built.

***Achieve child
safety through
enhanced
family
engagement at
a deeper level.***

WHY A FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE?

Initial Outcomes

- A deeper level of engagement with families and extended families
- Improved relationships between the family and DCS
- Families to take immediate steps to address child safety
- Increased family engagement in services and community supports
- Increased partnerships with community

Long Term Outcomes

- Safe reduction in future out-of-home placements
- Safe reduction in repeat maltreatment
- Safe reduction in repeat reports
- Improved child and family well-being
- Greater public confidence in DCS

FAMILY ASSESSMENT DESIGN TEAM

Design team members included representatives from a diverse group of child welfare stakeholders:

- Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence
- Arizona Department of Child Safety
- Casey Family Programs
- Children's Action Alliance
- Mohave County Juvenile Court
- Office of the Attorney General
- Office of the Legal Advocate
- Phoenix Children's Hospital
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
- Washington Elementary School District

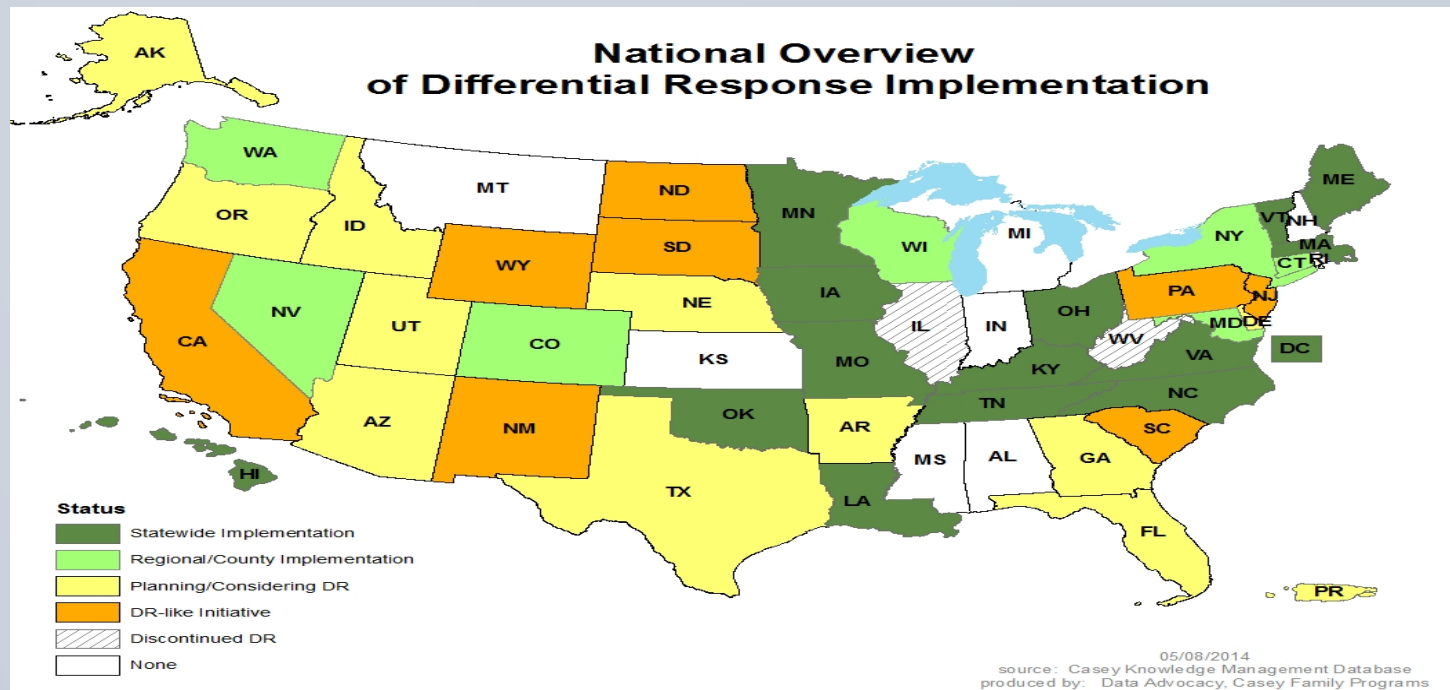
FAMILY ASSESSMENT DESIGN TEAM

- Focus on child safety
- Focus on the needs of children and families
- Equal voices
- Consensus in decision making



RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

- Teleconferences with Colorado, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Nevada, Ohio, Washington
- Site visits to Washington and District of Columbia
- Literature review
- Collection of various jurisdictions' policies, procedures, assessment tools, etc.



COLORADO RESEARCH FINDINGS

Family Engagement

- Families assigned to Family Assessment had 1.6 times the odds of rating their case managers “high” on demonstration of family-centered practice skills than did families assigned to Investigation Response.
- Families assigned to Family Assessment had 1.6 times the odds of rating satisfaction with their case managers as “high” than did families assigned to Investigation Response.
- Families assigned to Family Assessment had 1.7 times the odds of being willing to call CPS in the future than did families assigned to the Investigation Response.

Child Safety

- No statistically significant difference between tracks on safety outcomes.
- Families assigned to Family Assessment were 18% less likely to have a subsequent high-risk assessment, over time, than were families assigned to the Investigation Response.

(Fuller, Ellis and Murphy (2014). Examining Outcomes of Differential Response: Results from Three Randomized Controlled Trials in Colorado, Illinois, and Ohio)

MINNESOTA RESEARCH FINDINGS

- Cost effective over the long term, despite a higher initial investment, due to reduced costs for case management and follow-up.
- Families receiving differential response reported that they were treated in a friendly and fair manner, listened to by case managers, connected to other community resources, and benefited from the intervention more often than families receiving the Investigation Response.
- Staff generally like differential response. Most evaluations that examined agency staffing issues found greater case manager satisfaction for Family Assessment pathways versus Investigation pathways. Case managers reported that families in the Family Assessment response were more cooperative and willing to accept services.

(Loman A., & Siegel, G. (2005). Alternative response in Minnesota: Findings of the program evaluation. In Differential Response in Child Welfare, Protecting Children, 20(2&3), 78-92.)

FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Two different responses to reports of child abuse and neglect that are screened in and accepted for response as defined by Arizona statutes:

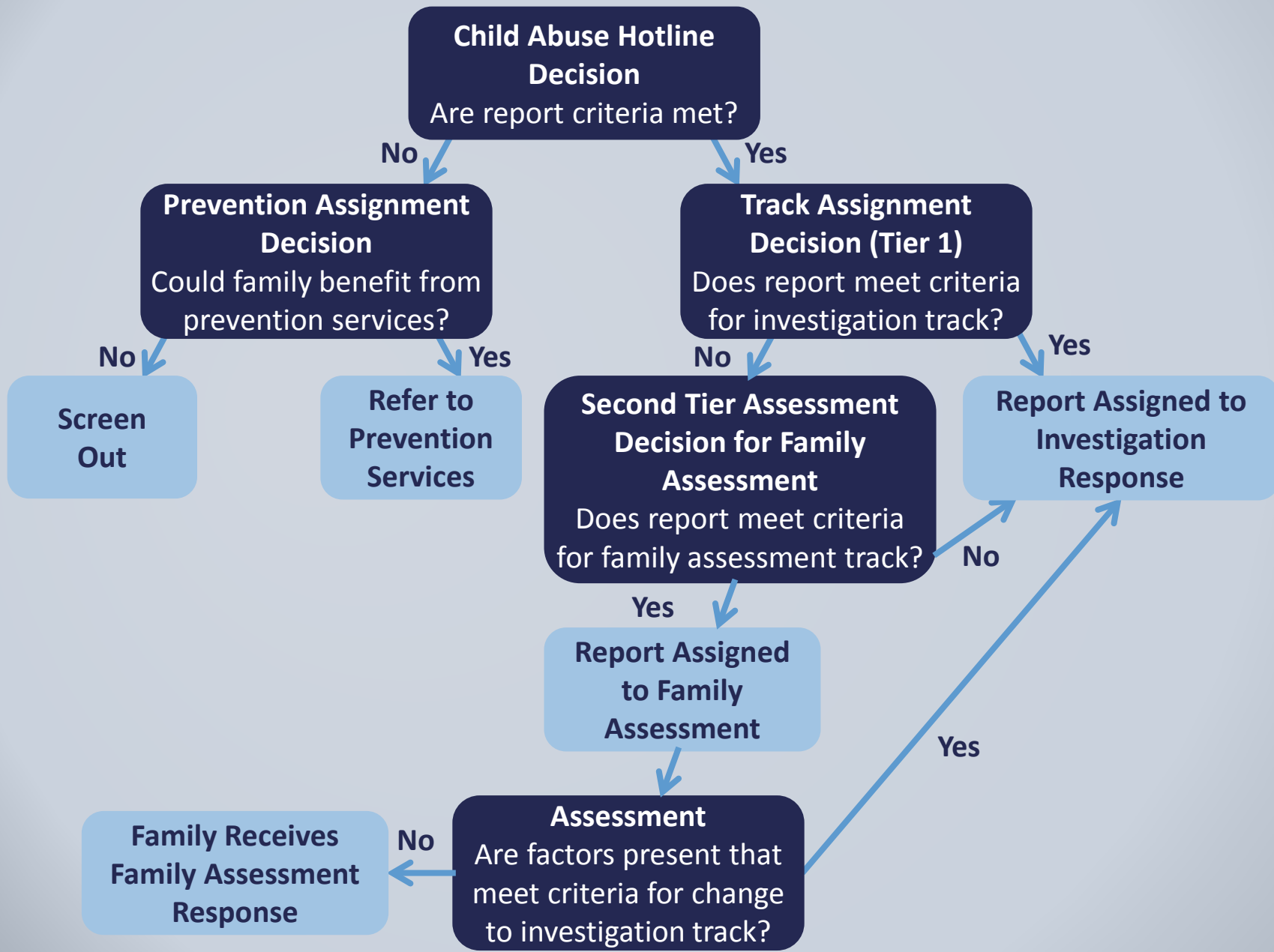
- Track 1 - Investigation Response
- Track 2 - Family Assessment Response

Development of Prevention/Community Response

- Families not subject of a report of abuse and neglect
- Families could be identified through Intake, the community, or self-referral

FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Decision Process Flow



FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

A two-tiered decision making process will allow for further assessment of discretionary reasons to ensure reports are appropriate for the Family Assessment Response.

First Tier Assessment Decision

- This decision determines, based on what is documented in the report, if the report requires an Investigation Response.
- No other factors need to be known to make this decision
- Performed at Intake

Reports that Require an Investigation Response

- Reports containing allegations of sexual abuse of a child
- High risk reports containing allegations of serious harm to a child
- Reports containing allegations of criminal conduct
- Reports involving children in DCS custody
- Reports containing an indication of current physical injury

FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Second Tier Assessment Decision

- This decision confirms the decision that the report is appropriate for the Family Assessment Response
- A more in-depth analysis completed
- Performed within a Centralized Assignment unit to ensure consistency in decision making

Discretionary reasons for Family Assessment Ineligibility

- Frequency, similarity, or recentness of past reports
- Parent/caregiver declined services in the past
- Parent/caregiver was unwilling/unable to achieve child safety in the past

FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Assessment

- Child Safety is paramount and must not be compromised
- The current child safety and risk assessment tool will be utilized for both the Investigation and Family Assessment Responses
- The entire family is engaged during the assessment
- Child Safety Specialist will work with the family in identifying what strengths and resources exist within the family and community
- Additional individuals will be engaged during the assessment, if deemed necessary

FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Change of Track

- A new report is received which requires an Investigation Response
- Criminal conduct allegations are discovered during the Family Assessment Response
- The family refuses to participate in the child safety assessment through the Family Assessment Response



FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Response Times

- The current response system and timeframes will be utilized for both the Investigation and Family Assessment Response

Informing Parents of Protocols and Rights

- Caregiver will be informed of the Family Assessment Protocols and the opportunity to participate in the Family Assessment Response

Gathering Documentation

- The Child Safety Specialist retains the ability to review any and all documentation as with the Investigation Response

FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Findings

- Although the roles of the alleged perpetrator and child victim will be entered into CHILDS for data reporting requirements, no findings will be determined

Central Registry

- Perpetrators who receive a substantiated finding of maltreatment through the Investigation Response will continue to be entered into the Central Registry

FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Services and Community Involvement

- One goal of the Family Assessment Response is to partner with families to identify their needs and link them to appropriate services, resources, and supports
- Community collaboration will be vital to actively engage and support families
- DCS In-Home services will be utilized, if appropriate

FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Next Steps for Development

- Intake and family assessment tools
- Writing of policies and procedures
- Training curriculum
- Staff training requirements
- Methods to involve community partners in the development of resources to meet families' needs
- In-Home Services that supports Family Assessment
- Staff coaching plan to ensure fidelity of the model
- Procedures to safeguard continuous quality improvement
- Phase-in schedule

WHY A FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE?



BECAUSE IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

To view this presentation or provide
comment, please visit our website:

www.dcs.az.gov