



Minnesota Child Maltreatment Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines

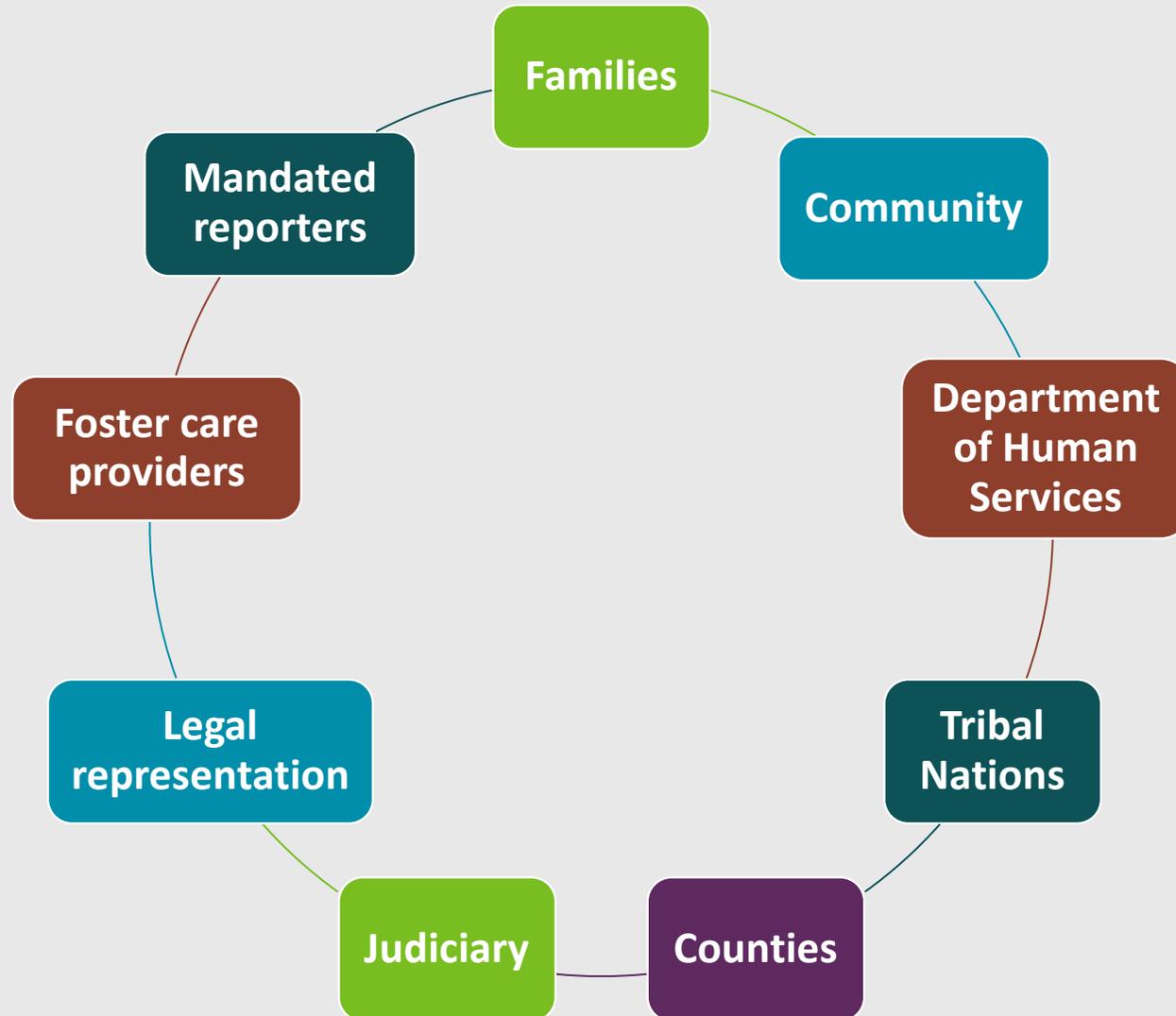
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Minnesota's Child Welfare System

- The public child welfare system operates at the federal, state, and local levels. Additionally, many private and community-based organizations are involved in providing for children's well-being. The child welfare system varies from state to state.
- Minnesota is one of nine states organized as a state supervised, county administered system. (See: [Map of state and county administered child welfare systems.](#))
 - It takes a collaboration between the Minnesota Department of Human Services (department) and counties/tribal nations to provide services to children and families.
 - The department's role in the delivery of most child welfare services is indirect. Counties and tribal nations provide direct services to children and families.
- The department works directly with and reports to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to ensure Minnesota is complying with federal program and fiscal policies.

Child welfare system



Department's role in delivery of child welfare services

- The department:
 - Establishes policies and procedures for statewide implementation.
 - Provides guidance, consultation, training, technical assistance and funding to counties/tribal nations.
 - Monitors county/tribal compliance with state and federal child welfare requirements and performance measures.
 - Issues grants and allocations to counties, tribal nations, community agencies, providers to support delivery of child welfare services.

Department's role continued

- The department:
 - Collaborates with Child Welfare Training Academy.
 - Collaborates with Children's Justice Initiative (Minnesota Supreme Court).
 - Collects, shares and reports data.
 - Provides information systems and technology to document and meet federal reporting requirements.
 - The primary information system for child welfare is Social Services Information System (SSIS), which interfaces with other state systems.

Child Welfare Services

The child welfare system is made up of public and private services that ensure all children live in safe, permanent and stable environments that support their well-being such as:

- Prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Family preservation and family support
- Child protection
- Foster care – relative foster care to children’s residential placement
- Adolescent services – youth transitioning out of foster care
- Kinship and adoption
- Indian child welfare – giving tribal governments a strong voice in child welfare proceedings that involve American Indian children
- [Factsheet on how child welfare system works](#)

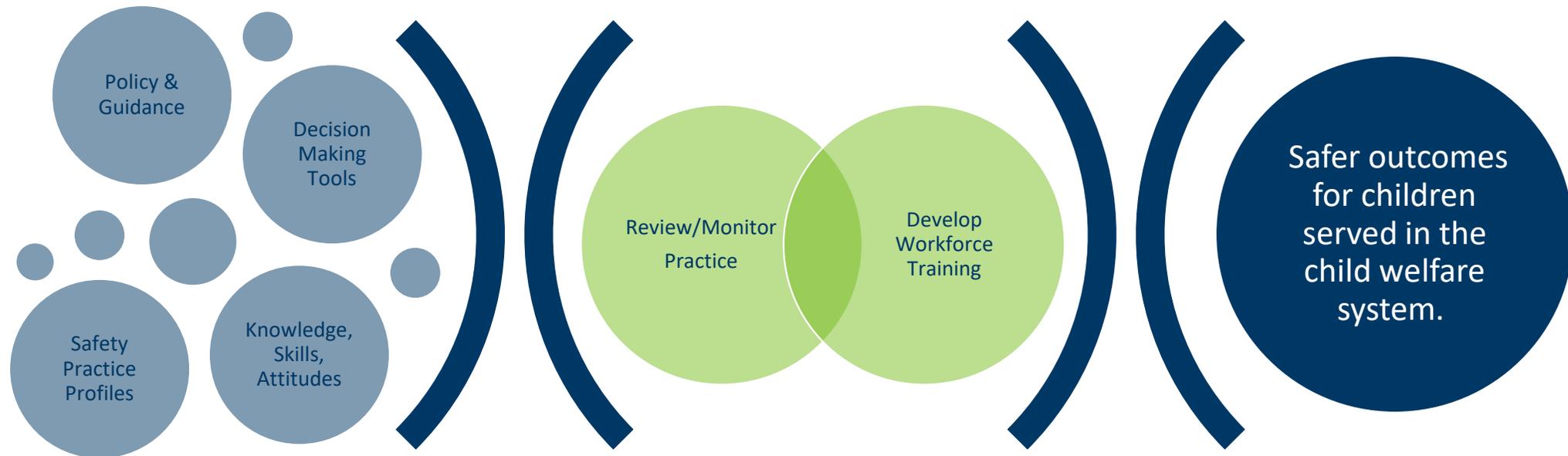
Child Welfare Funding

- Child welfare services rely on federal, state, county and tribal government funding
- Federal Title IV-E reimbursements offset some child welfare costs
 - Title IV-E is part of the Social Security Act and provides reimbursement for direct cost of paying for foster care, kinship and adoption assistance, training for child welfare workforce and foster/adoptive parents, administrative and system costs
- Other federal funding sources for child welfare activities include Title IV-B, Title XX, TANF, Medicaid, and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

Children's safety first

- Improve screening guidelines and practices
- Examine a continuum of child protection responses to allegations of maltreatment
- Reduce racial disparities
- Provide training
- Oversee county performance
- Ensure transparency
- Provide adequate resources

Strengthening Minnesota's Child Safety Framework



Safety Framework

Fidelity to Model

Continuous Quality Improvement

MN Child Welfare Training Academy



**Minnesota
Child
Welfare
Practice
Framework**

**Child Safety
Practice
Framework**



Safety Practice Profiles

Interactive tool used by child protection caseworkers and supervisors to facilitate reflective practice in responding to the safety needs of children and families.



Policy and Best Practices

Guidelines, best practice guides, and other resources further explain specific topics or stages of the child protection process, helping transform policy into culturally-responsive, strength-based practice.



Practice Tools

Evidence informed assessment tools used to guide and inform caseworkers' decisions about safety, risk, and family strengths and needs.

State policy related to screening

- Minnesota policy is to protect of children whose health or welfare is jeopardized by child maltreatment.

“While it is recognized that most parents want to keep their children safe, sometimes circumstances or conditions interfere with their ability to do so. When this occurs, the health and safety of children must be of paramount concern. Intervention and prevention efforts must address immediate concerns for child safety and the ongoing risk of abuse or neglect, and should engage the protective capacities of families.” [Minnesota Statutes 260E.01]

Purpose of Screening Guidelines

- The purpose of the Child Maltreatment Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines (screening guidelines) is to provide direction for local welfare agencies to promote statewide consistency in definition and practice, as mandated by state statute.
- These guidelines also provide information for mandated reporters and the public about types of child safety concerns that should be reported.
- Families and communities benefit when child maltreatment screening guidelines are clearly understood and readily available.
- These guidelines are based on Minnesota Statutes 260E, Maltreatment of Minors Act. Child protection staff, supervisors and others involved in child protection intake and screening of reports must follow these guidelines and must immediately implement updated procedures and protocols.

Implementation of new guidelines

- First introduced in 2015 after workgroup process to develop
- Statewide in-person training after implementation
- Integration into existing training
- Ongoing technical assistance
- Yearly updates to the guidelines to refine, clarify, adjust based on new laws
- Rapid consultation
- Screening review team

DHS Screening Guidelines

- Counties are required by state law to follow guidelines [Minnesota Statutes 260E.15]
- Counties cannot modify guidelines without prior approval
 - Cannot be less protective than mandated in law
 - Must not limit reports that are screened in

Components of the Screening Guidelines

- Focus on child safety, disparities, clarification, consistency
- Mandated reporting – who, where, and when to report
- Intake – information collected, handling multiple reports, urgent reports
- Screening – considerations, allegation types
- Response path assignment – requirements related to three paths
- Overview of child protection responses – Family Assessment, Family Investigation, Facility Investigation

- **Intake:** The process of receiving a report of child maltreatment.
- **Screening:** The process of determining whether the report meets the threshold for child protection response.
- **Response path assignment:** If the report is screened in, a pathway assignment is made based on the location of the alleged maltreatment (family or facility) and type of allegation.

Screened In Report

- The allegations in the report meet the statutory definition of child maltreatment.
- There is sufficient identifying information to attempt to locate the child, or at least one member of the family.
- The report contains child maltreatment allegations that have not been previously assessed or investigated.

Reasons for Screened Out Reports

Reasons to screen out a report include (but not limited to):

- No allegation meets maltreatment criteria, according to statute.
- Not enough identifying information about a child.
- All allegations were already assessed or investigated – includes those investigations or assessments that have been completed.

Screened out reports may be referred for other types of services.

Universal Promotion for Family Well-Being

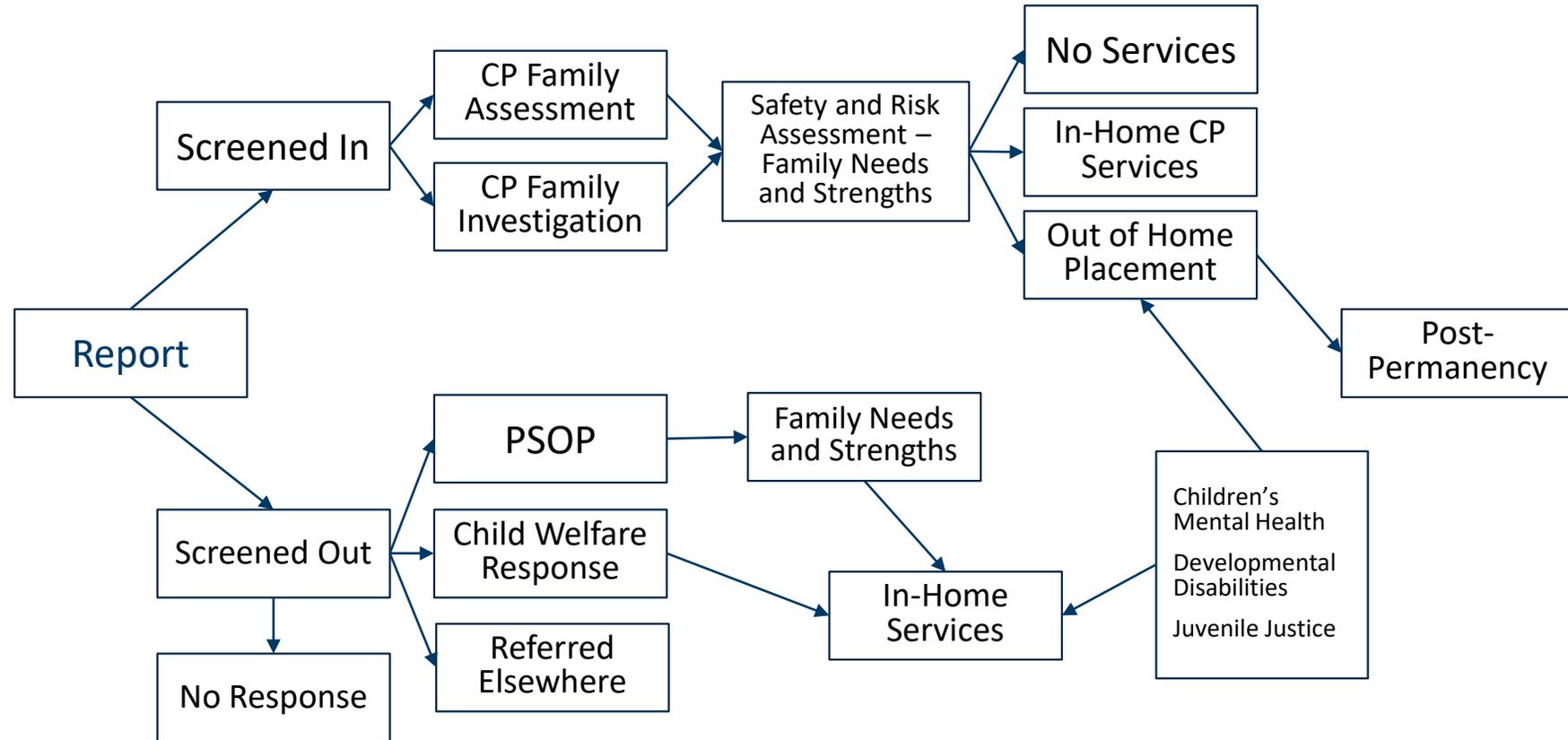
- Well Child Visits
- IEIC/MIF/advocacy/
- State agency Education Efforts (Brain Science, etc.)
- Follow Along Program



Primary Prevention Strategies and Family Serving Systems

- Help Me Connect
- Whole Family Systems
- Two Generation Cohort
- Community Solutions
- Family Home Visiting
- Social Determinants of Health/Basic Needs Systems: Housing; WIC/SNAP; MFIP; Child Care; etc.
- More

Report



Data on screening

Screening decisions of maltreatment reports received, statewide, 2021 (CY)

Total reports received	76,278 (100%)
Screened out reports	44,768 (58.7%)
Screened in reports	31,510 (41.3%)

Reasons for screened out child maltreatment reports, statewide, 2021 (CY)

Did not meet statutory threshold	40,279 (90%)
Alleged victims not in family or licensed entity	2,169 (4.8%)
Allegations referred to an unborn child	1,698 (3.8%)
Not enough identifying information	622 (1.4%)
Total	44,768 (100%)

[*Minnesota's Child Maltreatment Report, 2021](#)

Goals of Child Protection Responses

- Make child safety paramount and at the forefront of decision making
- Assess and ensure the safety of a child initially and ongoing during involvement
- Gather facts to help decide if a child has experienced harm and provide needed services
- Identify family strengths to help address risks and ensure child safety
- Affirm a family's cultural beliefs
- Coordinate and monitor services to families, including the use of trauma-informed interventions
- Promote children's well-being and permanency

Family Assessment / Family Investigation Comparison

- Family Assessment: Designed to respond to reports **not** involving substantial child endangerment, sexual abuse, or situations of serious danger.
- Family Investigation: Designed to respond to the most serious reports of harm and neglect to children, including those situations in which there is not a serious report of harm or neglect, but there are additional considerations or vulnerabilities that indicate a need for an investigation response.

Guidance across child protection response continuum

- [Minnesota Child Maltreatment Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines](#)
- [Resource Guide for Mandated Reporters of Child Maltreatment Concerns](#)
- [Minnesota's Best Practices for Family Assessment and Family Investigation](#)
- [Minnesota's Best Practices for Facility Investigation](#)
- [Minnesota's Best Practice Response to the Co-occurrence of Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence](#)
- [Minnesota's Best Practice Guide for Responding to Prenatal Exposure to Substance Use](#)
- [The Structured Decision Making System Policy and Procedures Manual](#)
- [Minnesota's Best Practice Response to Trafficking and Exploitation of Children and Youth](#)

Thank You!