

Out of Home Abuse

Background Notes

Out of Home Abuse allegations are those which occur in the home of a Department-certified foster or relative caregiver, Oregon Youth Authority foster home, or Office of Developmental Disabilities foster home. Sensitive cases refers to assessments on DHS employees, families in the community who are high profile or extremely difficult cases in which there has been a child fatality or near child fatality. Fortunately this is not the majority of cases that a child welfare worker encounters; however it is necessary to be aware of the unique dynamics that these types of cases present. They are often the more troubling, emotionally charged cases and can sometimes involve ethical dilemmas. These cases are always handled in consultation with other staff members, such as Supervisors and Child Welfare Managers. You are never expected to handle these type of cases on your own.

Tasks / Assignments:

- Talk with your Supervisor about attending a staffing held when there is concern about abuse in a foster home. Notice the issues that are discussed and the various people involved. How are these cases handled the same and differently than other cases?
- Talk with a worker who has such a case and find out what has been challenging in the case.
- Talk with your Supervisor about attending a high risk staffing and find out what the criterion is for being considered high risk. For example a young child with a serious injury may be designated as a high-risk case. How are these cases handled differently?
- Talk with your Supervisor about the process to follow if you determine that a family member on an assessment you are conducting is an employee of DHS or OYA.
- Talk with your Supervisor about the steps you should take if you believe that the media may become involved with a case you are assigned.

Discoveries:

- *What did you learn about out of home abuse cases?*
- *What techniques did you learn about in managing sensitive or high risk cases?*
- *What is the difference in a sensitive case staffing and a high risk staffing?*
- *Who is invited and expected to attend these two types of staffings?*
- *What did you learn about your office's Certification Safety & Well-being Review Committee?*