

Screening

Background Notes

Screening is often the first point of contact the community has with DHS Child Welfare. The screener plays a vital role in the agency as well as with the community. It is the screener's job to gather information in such a way that they are able to determine if what is being reported is a valid report. They need to gather enough information to give reasonable cause to believe that abuse and/or neglect is occurring or has occurred. It is also the screener's job, in consultation with their supervisor, to determine the type of response needed.

Tasks / Assignments:

- Arrange with your Supervisor to observe a screener at least 1/2 day (preferably a full day). Listen to their phone calls if possible. Even if you cannot hear the person on the other end, listen to the kinds of questions the screener is asking. Pay attention to the screener's tone of voice. Notice how the screener puts information into OR-Kids database.
- Ask the screener the following questions for a minimum of two calls:
 - What concerns are being reported?
 - How does the screener assess the caller's credibility?
 - Has the family had previous referrals? If yes, how many and were they for the same reason?
 - Was this information taken into consideration when deciding whether or not to assign the referral?
- Is the referral assigned to a worker? Why or why not?

Discoveries:

- *What did you learn from your observations?*
- *What new insights do you have about screening?*