



Office of Children's Services Child Welfare in Alaska

House Health & Social Services Committee

Kim Guay, Director

April 8, 2021



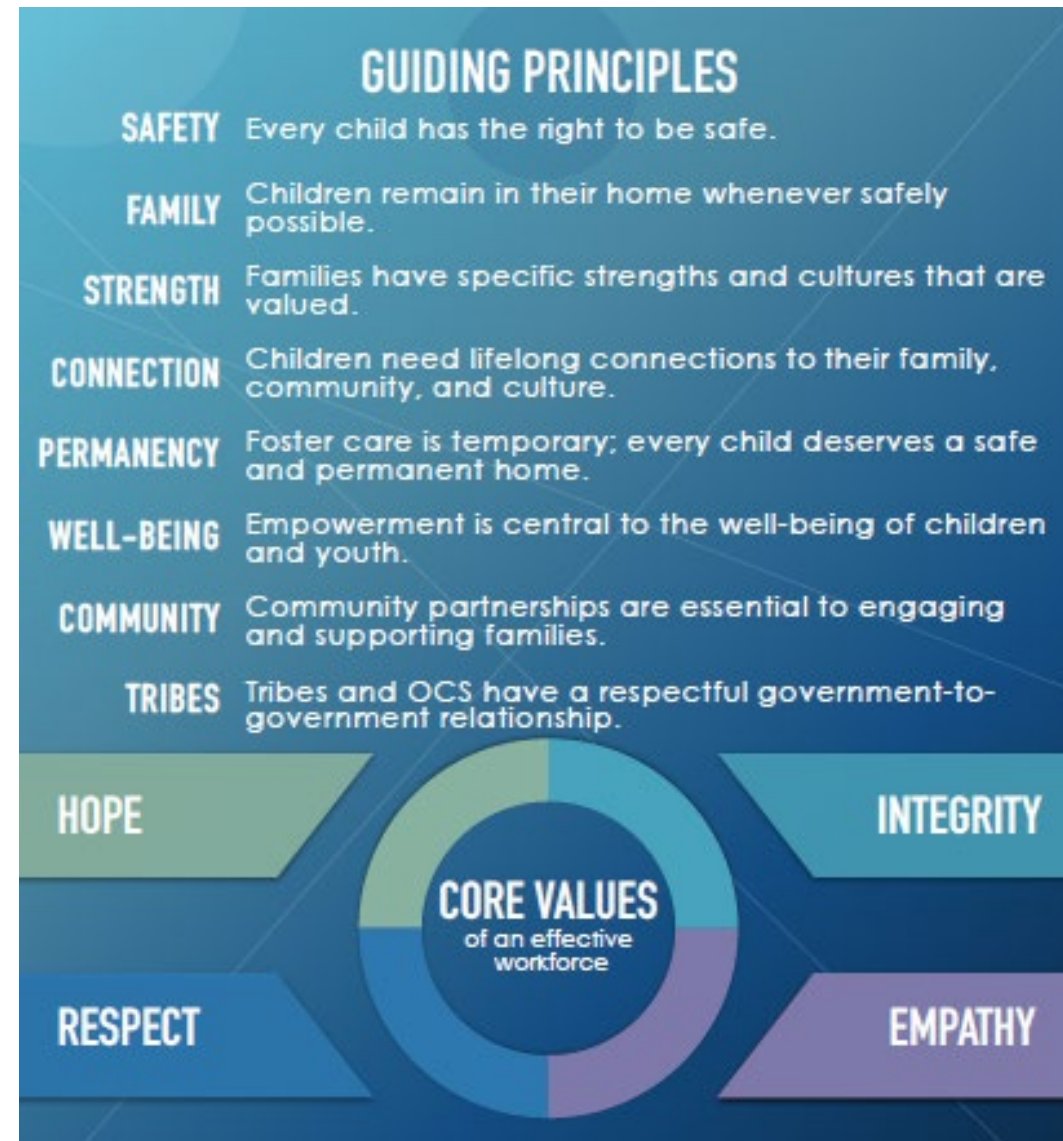
Office of Children's Services

MISSION:

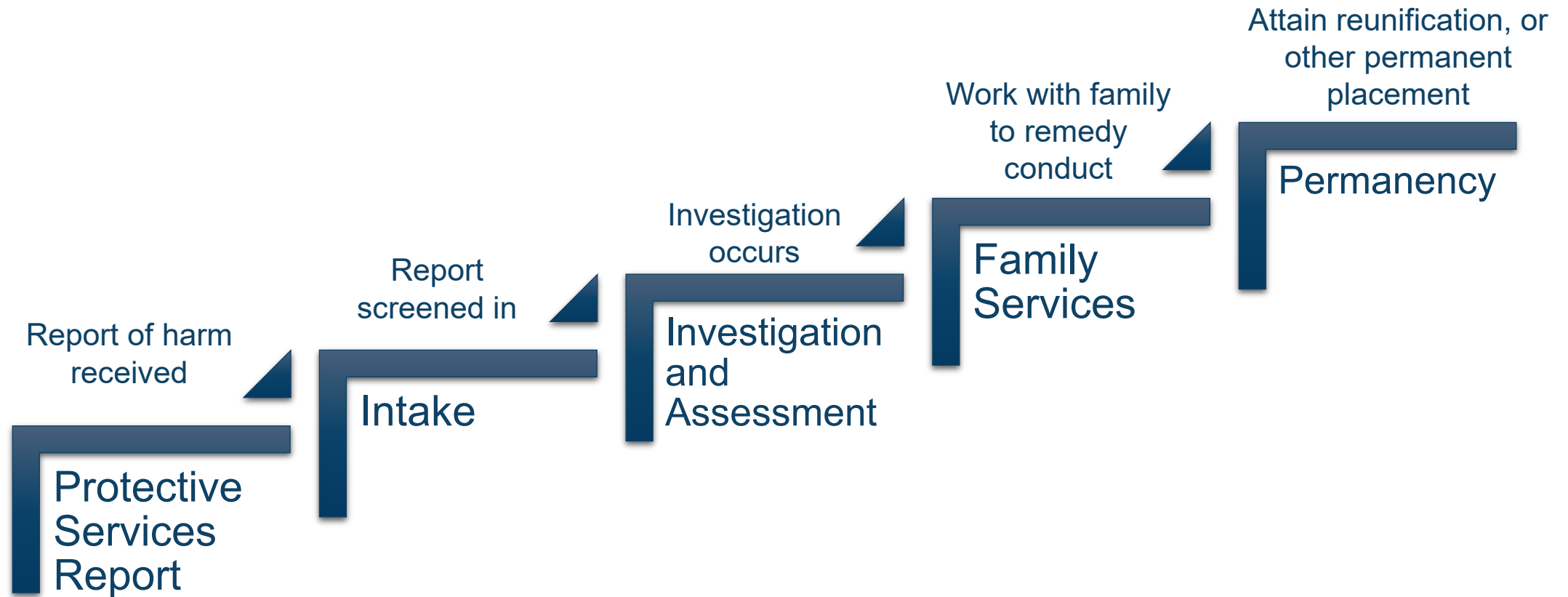
Ensuring the safety, permanency and well-being of children by strengthening families, engaging communities, and partnering with Tribes.

VISION:

SAFE CHILDREN &
STRONG FAMILIES



Office of Children's Services: Progression of a Case



Office of Children's Services: Intake

Centralized Intake unit receives reports via telephone, fax and email

Screen Out

- Insufficient information to locate
- Duplicate report
- Does not meet investigation and assessment criteria
- Law enforcement jurisdiction only
- Child residing out of state
- Referred to Tribe

Screen In

- Circumstances indicate child abuse, neglect, and threats of serious harm
- Information within the report is accurate and it is reasonable to believe that a child has suffered, is suffering, or could suffer severe harm
- Report indicates that caregivers may be or are unwilling and incapable of behaving in ways that result in protection of the child

Priority 1

Initiate within 24 hours

Priority 2

Initiate within 72 hours

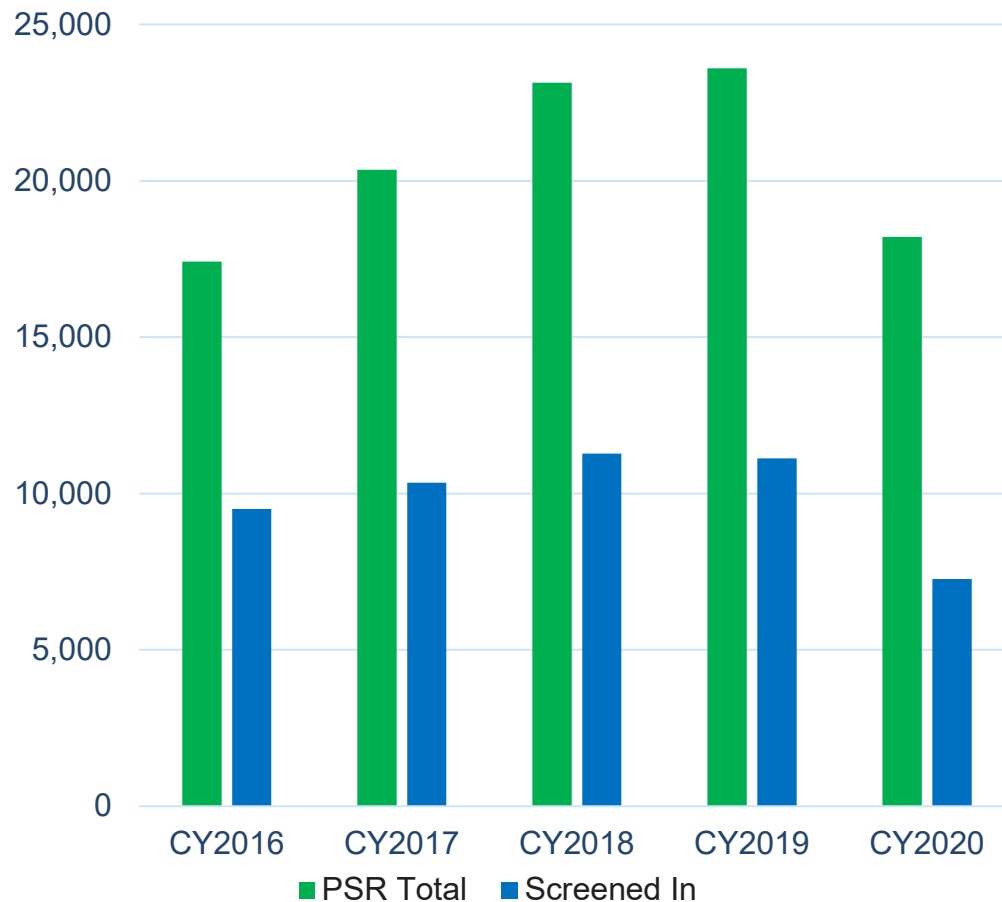
Priority 3

Initiate within 7 days



Office of Children's Services: Intake

Protective Services Reports



Types of Allegations of Maltreatment

- Neglect
- Mental Injury
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse

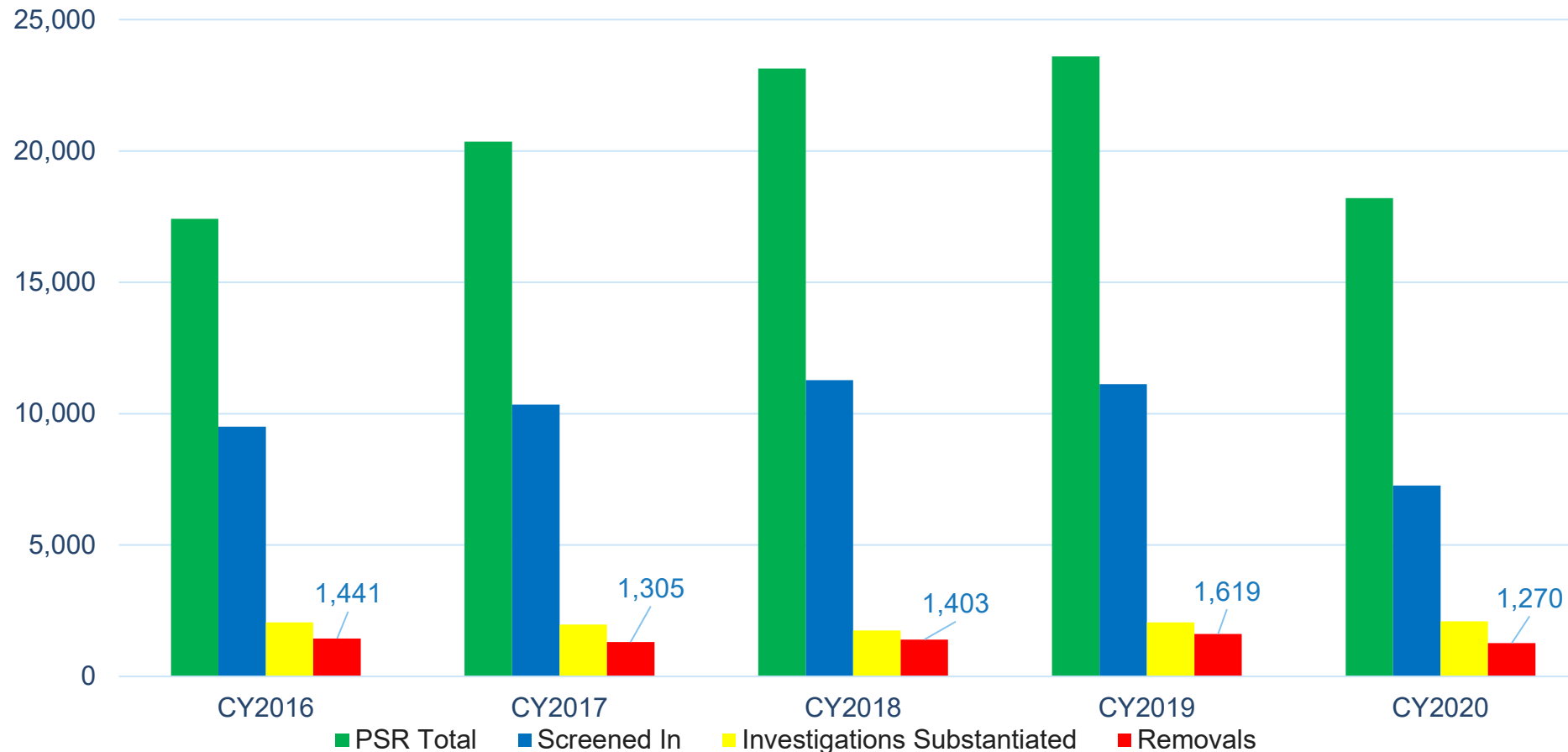
Percentage of reports with at least one allegation:

- ~75 % Neglect
- ~30 % Mental Injury
- ~25 % Physical Abuse
- ~10 % Sexual Abuse

Office of Children's Services: Investigation and Assessment

Intake, Investigation and Assessment	
Screening Decision	Screen In / Screen Out
Screen In	Assign for Initial Assessment w/ Response Time (Priority 1, 2, 3) Notify Tribe (ICWA) Initial Contact with Child(ren)
Present Danger	Yes / No
Present Danger	No Present Danger
In-Home Safety Plan Out-of-Home Safety Plan Emergency Removal	Gather Information Determine if Safety Threats are Present or Not Make Safety and Maltreatment Decision Close Case OR In Home with Safety Plan Out of Home with Best Placement Option, Family Contact Plan, ICWA Compliant Plan, Siblings Together, Permanency Goal Open for Services

Office of Children's Services: Investigation and Assessment



% Screened In Resulting in Removals	
CY2016	9.0%
CY2017	8.1%
CY2018	7.9%
CY2019	9.1%
CY2020	10.4%

% Investigated Resulting in Substantiation	
CY2016	24.7%
CY2017	19.2%
CY2018	18.4%
CY2019	18.5%
CY2020	19.3%

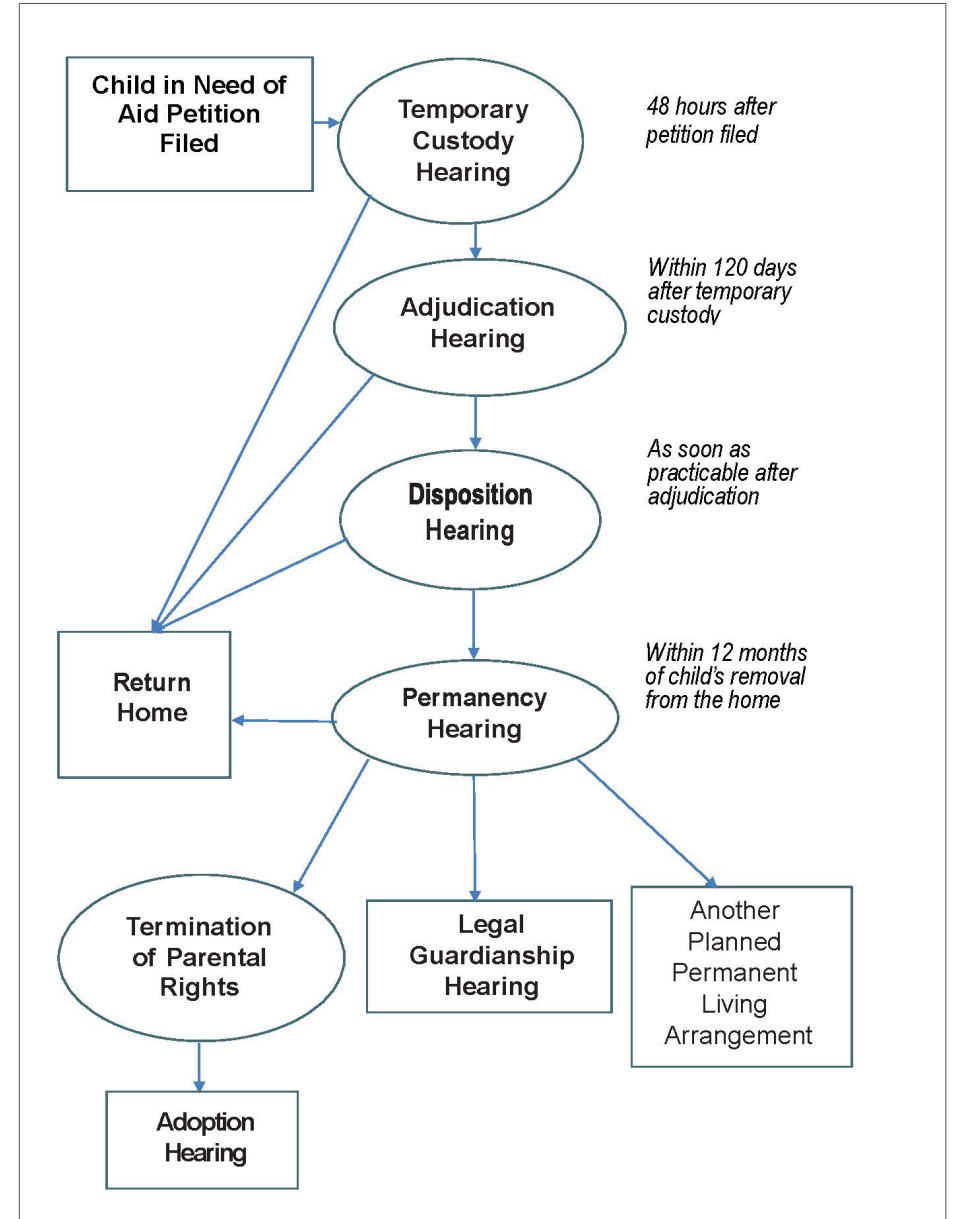


Office of Children's Services: Court Process

Child in Need of Aid AS 47.10.011

1. Abandonment
2. Incarcerated parent
3. Custodian unable or unwilling to care
4. Medical neglect
5. Runaway child
6. Physical harm
7. Sexual abuse
8. Mental injury
9. Neglect
10. Substance abuse by parent
11. Mental illness or deficiency of parent
12. Delinquent acts of child coerced by parent

Child in Need of Aid Court Process



Office of Children's Services: Family Services

Family Services

Meet with Parents	Invite Tribe (ICWA); Develop Case Plan Using Protective Services Factors; Establish Permanency Goal			
Meet with Child(ren) Placement Provider	Invite Tribe (ICWA) Develop Case Plan			
Arrange Services	Coordinate/Make Referrals; Communicate with Case Participants and Providers			
Ongoing Quality Caseworker Monthly visits with parents, child(ren), and resource family				
Evaluate Progress on Case Plan	Effectiveness of Safety Plan; Safety Plan Revision if Necessary; Coordination and Communication with Safety Plan Participants and Case Plan Providers; Case Worker Contact with Parents, Child(ren), and Resource Families; Evaluate Behavior Changes and Strengthening Protective Factors; Continuous Assessment and Appropriate Permanency Goal			
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Reunification	Guardianship	Adoption	Fit and Willing Relative	APPLA
Trial Home Visit	Full Disclosure Home Study Referral Guardianship Hearing	Full Disclosure Home Study Referral Termination Hearing	16 and Older Youth Relative Assessment	16 and Older Youth APPLA Meeting Director Approval Permanency Hearing



Office of Children's Services: Family Services

Engagement, engagement, engagement

Needs assessment – what does family need to be successful?

Assess what protective factors caregivers have and those that need enhancement:

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports in times of need
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Social emotional competence of children

A case plan is meant to help the family enhance their protective factors.

Case Plan Goals – is what their behavior will look like once they've enhanced their protective factors; desired future state.

Activities – are what they will do to accomplish the goal and achieve the desired future state

SMART goals – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time bound

Children's case plans should be trauma informed and be developed with the parents' input.

Imperative to discuss Federal timelines with parents.

Office of Children's Services: Child Experience

OCS

Tribe

Foster
Parent/Relative

Parents/Extended
Family

Courts

Office of Public
Advocacy

Public Defenders
Agency

Service Providers

- Maltreatment and repeat maltreatment
- Removal from the home
- Moved to a relative home
- Placed in a home with a stranger
- Contact with parents scheduled, possibly infrequent and in strange places
- Parents might not show up to scheduled visits
- Change schools, losing contact with friends and other support systems
- Depending on trauma and needs - medical and mental health appointments
- Reunification out of the child's control
- Average months in foster care – 21

A Child's Life in Care



Office of Children's Services: Parent Experience

OCS	Coordination of State Services	Tribe
Courts	Office of Public Advocacy	Public Defenders Agency
Service Providers	Child	Behavioral Change

- Necessary effort to resolve the issues that placed the child in danger
- Historical trauma
- Mental health assessments
- Treatment – anger management/substance abuse
- Frequent toxicity testing
- Required participation in parenting skills courses
- Lots of appointments to keep track of
- Transportation challenges
- Housing problems
- Self esteem
- Shame by family members
- Court appearances
- Attorneys
- Children placed with a relative estranged from parent

Office of Children's Services: Services Array

Grants

- Children's Advocacy Centers
- Circles of Support
- Emergency Shelter Services for Youth
- Family Contact Services
- Family First Prevention Services by Tribal Title IVE Agencies
- Family Support
- Mentorship for Independent Living
- Resource Family Training
- Statewide Coordination of Parenting and Prevention Services

Reimbursable Services Agreements

- Title IVE pass through with LAW, OPA, PDA
- Vital Statistics Data Inquiries
- Trust Management Services
- Kinship Navigator
- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Coupons
- Tribal Discovery
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Strengthening Families
- Child Care

Programs

- Foster care licensing
- Support for resource families
- Foster home recruitment
- Centralized travel
- Commodities
- Diligent inquiries
- Legal inbox
- Birth/death certificates
- Social Security
- Adoption and guardianship subsidy negotiations
- Independent Living
- Toxicity testing
- Transportation for Every Student Succeeds Act



Office of Children's Services: Oversight

Federal

Ombudsman

Audits

Citizens Review Panel

Courts

Oversight and Review Unit



Office of Children's Services: Current Priorities



Safe Children, Strong Families

- Prevention
 - Retention
 - Essential Services
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- Community and Tribal Collaboration

