A child’s journey through the child-welfare system

Suspected child abuse or neglect

Report of suspected abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS)

Worker screens report

High risk:
Safety concerns exist and/or risk is significant

Moderate risk:
Safety concerns and risk are moderate

Low risk:
There are no safety concerns and risk is low

Report is “screened in”

42% of reports

58% of reports

Report is “screened out”: Situation does not meet the state’s definition of maltreatment, or too little information is supplied. Caller may be referred to supportive services.

Data from AFCARS Report #25 and Child Maltreatment 2016 from the Children’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Human Services Administration for Children and Families
CPS investigates

3.6 MILLION CHILDREN IN 2015

Evidence of abuse or neglect is “Substantiated” or “Founded”

Insufficient evidence or abuse or neglect is “Unsubstantiated” or “Unfounded”

Child welfare or community-based services may be offered to address family’s needs

No services are found to be appropriate. Family may be referred elsewhere.

Child has been harmed and a risk of future abuse or ongoing safety concerns are present

Low or no risk of future abuse found

Child stays with family. Supportive services are provided. Risk minimized.

Court petition may be filed

Family may be referred to voluntary services

Case closed

Child is placed in out-of-home care (with relatives, foster family or group care facility) and services are provided to the child and family.

Outcomes for children in FY 2017

Reunification with birth family 49%

Termination of parental rights and adoption or permanent legal guardianship 34%

Independent living with permanent family connections 8%

Custody to a relative 7%