

child protection team
Children's Medical Services

For more information about the Florida Child Protection Team Program, contact:

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Florida Department of Health
 Children's Medical Services





The Child Protection Team (CPT) program is a medically directed, multidisciplinary program based on the idea that child abuse and neglect involve complex issues and require the expertise of many professionals to protect children.

What are the Child Protection Teams?

Child protection teams are independent, community-based programs that provide expertise in evaluating alleged maltreatments of child abuse and neglect, assessing risk factors, and providing recommendations for interventions to protect children and enhance families' capacities to provide a safer environment when possible.

CPT services supplement the child protective investigation activities of the Department of Children and Families and law enforcement.

Anyone who knows or has reason to suspect that a child has been abused, abandoned or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare is required by law to report such knowledge to the Florida Abuse Hotline by calling the toll free number 1-800-96-ABUSE.

Authority

Section 39.303, Florida Statutes, authorizes the Children's Medical Services Program in the Department of Health to develop, maintain, and coordinate child protection team services through contracts with local community-based programs.

Services provided

Upon acceptance of a referral from the Department of Children and Families or law enforcement, the child protection teams may provide one or more of the following services:

- Medical diagnosis and evaluation
- Nursing assessment
- Child and family assessments
- Multidisciplinary staffings
- Psychological and psychiatric evaluations
- Specialized and forensic interviews
- Expert court testimony

Additionally, child protection team staff provide:

- Training for child protection investigators and other community providers of child welfare services.
- Training for emergency room staff and other medical providers in the community

Eligibility

The existence of suspicion of child abuse or neglect that has been reported to the Florida Abuse Hotline and accepted for investigation provides automatic eligibility for CPT assessment activities. There are no financial criteria for team services.

Mandatory referral criteria

Child abuse, abandonment and neglect reports that must be referred by child protective investigators to child protection teams include cases involving:

- Injuries to the head, bruises to the neck or head, burns, or fractures in a child of any age
- Bruises anywhere on a child five years of age or younger
- Any report alleging sexual abuse of a child
- Any sexually transmitted disease in a prepubescent child
- Reported malnutrition or failure of a child to thrive
- Reported medical neglect of a child
- Symptoms of serious emotional problems in a child when emotional or other abuse, abandonment, or neglect is suspected
- A sibling or other child remaining in a home where one or more children have been pronounced dead on arrival or have been injured and later died as a result of suspected abuse, abandonment or neglect