
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Wyoming Child Protective Services

Introduction: Scope	i
Chapter 1: Background	1
Chapter 2: CPS supervisors do not consistently assign incidents to tracks	13
Chapter 3: The track system has not had its anticipated effect	21
Chapter 4: Evidence gathered during CPS investigations is not well documented.....	33
Chapter 5: Central registry heavily relies upon personal verification	41
Chapter 6: Assurances that children remain safe in the home need to improve.....	47
Chapter 7: Despite positive trends in DFS quality assurance, some critical CPS processes are not reviewed.....	57
Chapter 8: Conclusion	63
Agency Response	65
Appendices	
(A) <i>Selected statutes</i>	A-1
(B) <i>CPS intakes and incidents</i>	B-1
(C) <i>CPS service types and costs</i>	C-1
(D) <i>CPS track assignments for incidents</i>	D-1
(E) <i>Case file review incident sequence for investigation track incidents</i>	E-1

Appendices (continued)

(F) <i>CPS allegation types and findings</i>	F-1
(G) <i>Central registry statistics</i>	G-1
(H) <i>CPS placement statistics</i>	H-1
(I) <i>Research methodology</i>	I-1

INTRODUCTION

Scope and Acknowledgements

Scope

W.S. 28-8-107(b) authorizes the Legislative Service Office to conduct program evaluations, performance audits, and analyses of policy alternatives. Generally, the purpose of such research is to provide a base of knowledge from which policymakers can make informed decisions.

In August 2007 the Management Audit Committee directed staff to undertake a review of Child Protective Services (CPS) within the Department of Family Services (DFS). This report addresses the following questions:

- How well is the system of graduated tracks (investigation, assessment, and prevention) working?
- How does DFS carry out CPS investigations and how thorough is the documentation? Why do caseworkers investigate only some reports?
- What is DFS' electronic tracking system for CPS incidents and how effective is it as a social services management tool?
- Why do some abused and neglected children remain at home in the care of persons substantiated for maltreating them? How does DFS monitor the children's safety?
- What information goes into the central registry of CPS substantiated offenders? How does DFS manage the registry?
- How has the quality assurance system changed since our 1999 review of CPS?

Acknowledgements

The Legislative Service Office expresses appreciation to DFS personnel at the state office and throughout the state for assisting

in this research. We also thank the Office of Administrative Hearings, the Citizens Review Panel, the DFS Advisory Council, and the many other government and nonprofit sector individuals who contributed their expertise.