

Differential Response

A Primer

What is Differential Response (DR)?

- DR is a different way of responding to low risk reports of abuse and/or neglect
 - No finding (Substantiated/Unsubstantiated)
 - First visit announced, but Safety Assessment required
 - If no CPS issues and children safe, family participation is voluntary
 - Family is driving force, DCF/Community in advisory/service provision roles
 - 90 days to complete assessment

How Reports Are Processed

- Report must meet statutory level for acceptance
- HL makes initial assessment of family eligibility for DR
- Link change will remove allegations from screen – looking at family functioning in totality, not a specific event
- Upon receipt at Area Office, AO will have ability to change track either from investigation to DR or DR to investigation

Community

- Service model is still being designed, but looking for community to work together, not as specific agencies
- Transfer to community as soon as is practicable
- Community takes responsibility for family after determination children are safe
- Family determines participants

Proposed Intervention

- Initial contact with family by phone within 72 hours of receipt of report
- Initial face-to-face within 5 days of report
- Initial Family Conference within 15 days of report
- At initial Family Conference, an action plan will be developed with clear expectations and actions (who/what/when)

Expected Outcomes

- Children remain as safe as with CPS intervention
- Fewer frequently encountered families
- Re-reports are less severe than previous reports
- Greater customer satisfaction
- Greater SW satisfaction
- More robust community services
- Aggregate spending may decrease (MN study)