

# Child Welfare Update: Differential Response and Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families Programs

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# Safe and Equitable Reduction of the Number of Children Experiencing Foster Care in Oregon

- Increase the number of children who can safely remain in the home.
- Increase the number of children safely and successfully returning home.
- For those children who cannot return home, increase the number who can exit the system to a higher level of permanency.
- Tend to the health, education and overall well-being of children while they are in care.
- Address the disproportionate representation of children of color in the system

# Primary Strategies for Implementation

## Oregon Safety Model Fidelity Work

- Ensuring the right children and families are served at the right level of intervention.

## Statewide Implementation of SB964/Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families Services

- Enhances the foundational Service array for Differential Response and provision of ongoing child welfare services.

## Implement Oregon's Model of Differential Response

- Implementing within the child welfare program an additional track designed to give families greater voice in their services and less consequence from being involved with Child Welfare.

**SB 964**

Outward Facing  
Community Providers  
Local Service Gaps  
Proven Programs

**DR**

Internal Facing (OSM)  
Policy and Practice  
Family Engagement  
Best Practice to Impact  
Neglect

***Foundation of  
Child Welfare Practice:  
Oregon Safety Model, SAFE Family  
Home study assessment***

Screening - Intake - In Home  
Ongoing - Certification - Adoptions

**Workload Staffing**

**ICWA Compliance**

# Oregon Safety Model

- Represents an overarching process that requires safety assessment and safety management at all stages of case management from screening through case closure.
- Emphasizes child safety by focusing on overall family functioning as opposed to simply focusing on whether an incident of abuse occurred or not.
- Includes a comprehensive approach to the assessment of the parent's ability to keep their children safe by clearly identifying conditions for safety within the family as well as conditions for return and the provision of any needed services.
- Focuses on safety threats using a safety threshold criteria, not risk.

## Oregon Safety Model Con't.

- Differential Response is an enhancement of Oregon Safety Model, not a deviation from that model.
- Effort is to refresh and enhance supervisors' understanding of the elements and application through training and intensive field consultation.
- Additional field consultation is being built into the ongoing support for the practice.

# Oregon's Differential Response Vision Statement

As a result of Oregon's implementation of DR, the following results will occur:

- Children will be kept safely at home and in their communities; using the Oregon Safety Model and its core concepts and tools to guide decision making.
- The community and Oregon DHS will work in partnership with a shared responsibility for keeping children safely at home and in their communities.
- Families will partner with Oregon DHS to realize their full potential and develop solutions for their challenges.
- Fewer children will re-enter the child welfare system through improved preventative and reunification services for families.
- Disproportionality will be reduced among children of color.
- Private agencies and community organizations will experience stronger partnerships with Oregon DHS on behalf of children and families.

## SB 964 – Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families

- Funded for statewide implementation this biennium.
- Programs identified through community collaborations conducting a gap analysis of the services available in that community.

# SB 964 – Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families

County	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Tillamook											
Deschutes											
D16-Washington											
D11-Klamath/Lake											
D5-Lane											
D4 -Linn, Benton, Lincoln											
Multnomah (x3)											
D3- Marion, Polk, Yamhill											
D6-Douglas											
Columbia/Clatsop											
Crook/Jefferson											
D9- Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler											
D13- Union, Baker, Wallowa											
Curry											
Grant/Harney											
Morrow											

# Reunifying Families

Counties have identified a wide range of services to fill the gaps in service delivery in their communities.

Examples of the services include:

- Relief Nurseries
- Parent coaching and navigation
- Housing access assistant
- Parenting training
- Drug free housing support
- Intercept services
- Family find services
- Front end intervention and support services
- Youth transition and mentoring services

# SB 964 – Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families

DHS continues to expand array of service investments, including but not limited to the following:

- Life Skills Coaches/Home visitors: Provides services to assist families accessing the services they identify as needed.
- Reconnecting Families: Specialists used to engage families and conduct relative searches for additional familial resources/placements.
- Trauma Services and therapeutic services: Intensive services to trauma affected families and children.
- Enhanced family visitation: Our traditional family visitation with additional services that assist the family with specific parenting issues.
- Mentoring: Youth Transition Mentoring for youth not eligible for DHS independent Living Program.
- Navigators: Specialists to help navigate social service agencies.

# SB 964 – Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families, Con't

- Parenting: Father, culturally specific, and intensive parenting classes.
- Parent Mentoring/Education: In-home, bi-lingual, available after work hours. Specialists to reinforce parenting behaviors, supportive services.
- Relief Nursery: Daycare, parenting, support services.
- Alcohol and Drug Treatment: Inpatient/Outpatient services that focus on multi-dimensional issues such as parenting, Domestic Violence services, child care and relief nursery services.
- Housing: Emergency, Short term, and Transition Housing services.
- Front End Interventions: Specialists (Alcohol and Drug, Mental Health, Domestic violence, and human service generalists) responding with Child Protective Services Workers.
- Intensive in-home services intervention: 24/7 availability, crisis prevention, medication management, skill building, therapeutic services designed to maintain at home.

# Differential Response Defined

- An approach that allows child protective services to respond differently to **accepted** reports of child abuse and neglect, based on such factors as the type and severity of the alleged maltreatment, number and sources of previous reports, and willingness of the family to participate in services. (American Human Association)
- In Oregon, the system will consist of two distinct response pathways: Traditional and Alternative Response.

# What is Alternative Response?

- 1 of 2 Tracks: Alternative to traditional child protection investigative response.
- Sets aside fault finding and ‘substantiation’ decision and Central Registry entries.
- Typically applied to reports that do not allege serious and imminent harm.
- Focus is more on assessing and ensuring child safety, less on forensic interviewing.
- Allows families to receive agency funded services without formal determination of abuse/neglect.
- Families may refuse services if children are safe.

# Common Principles of Traditional CPS and Alternative Response

- Focus on safety and well-being of the child.
- Promotion of permanency within the family.
- Recognition of the authority of child protective services to make decisions about removal, out of home placement, and court involvement, when necessary.
- Acknowledgement that other community services may be more appropriate than CPS intervention in some cases.
- Assessment of child safety and a comprehensive assessment conducted by the department.

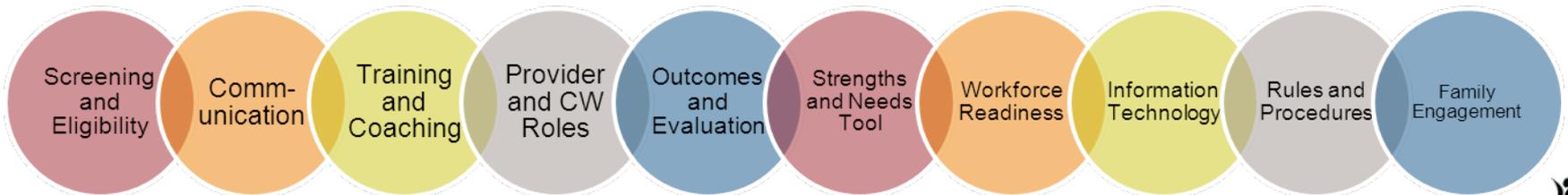
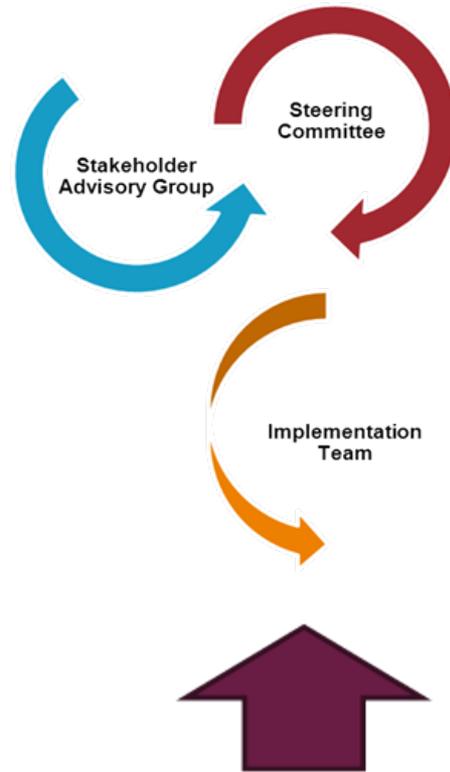
# Factors Considered in Track Assignment

- Severity of allegation.
- Present or probable impending danger.
- Statutory limitations/requirements such as Karly's Law.
- Ability to assure safety of child.
- History of past reports.

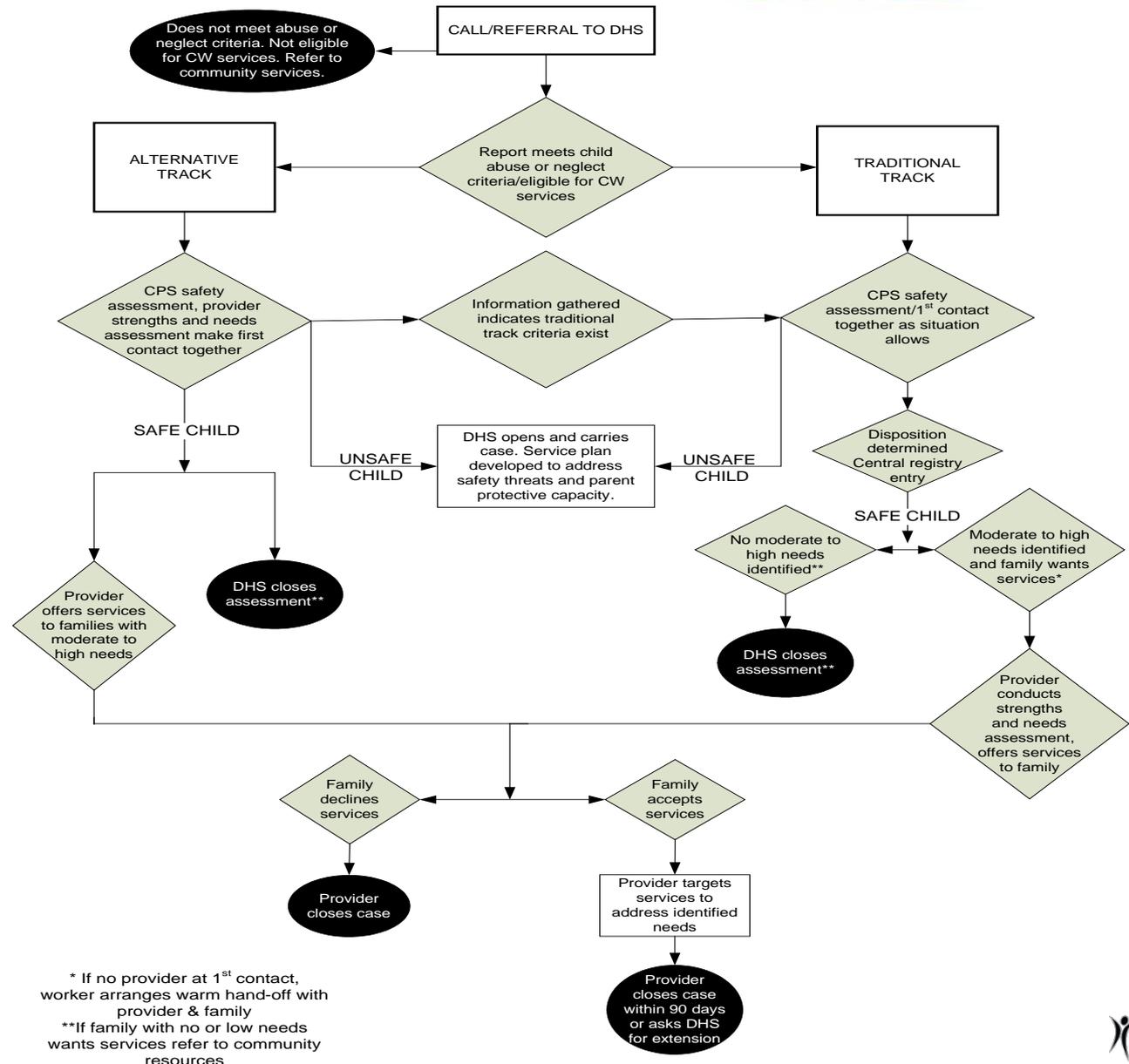
# What Differential Response Will Look Like

<b>Alternative Track</b>	<b>Traditional Track</b>
Comprehensive Safety Assessment on allegations of neglect and no serious or imminent harm	Comprehensive Safety Assessment on allegations of Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse and serious and imminent harm
Joint first contact with provider required (CPS conducts Comprehensive Assessment and Provider conducts Strengths and Needs Assessment)	Joint first contact with provider strongly encouraged (CPS conducts Comprehensive Assessment and Provider conducts Strengths and Needs Assessment)
No disposition/finding used	Disposition/finding required
No entry in Central Registry	Central Registry entry as indicated
Less adversarial approach based on identification of needs with family as partner	More investigatory approach based on fact finding

# Differential Response Implementation Team Structure



# DR Process and Decision Flow



# Oregon's Anticipated Timeline for Differential Response Implementation

- Complete Oregon Safety Model refresh trainings by May, 2014
- Statewide Implementation of SB 964/Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families Program by May, 2014
- Begin staged implementation of Differential response in May, 2014
  - Lane, Klamath

# Progress Indicators

<b>Description</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Number of Children in Foster Care	9,548	8,770	-8.1%
Percent of Children with Relatives, of All Foster Care	19.10%	29.1%	52.4%
Percent of Victims Served Who were Served In Home **	23.60%	10.7%	-54.7%
Absence of Maltreatment of children in foster care	99.10%	98.8%	-0.3%
Absence of Repeat Maltreatment	92.50%	95.4%	3.1%
** How a child is considered served in home has changed no longer a case plan but a construct developed by program			

# Equitable Foster Care Reduction: The Numbers

## FFY 2012 Race Comparison: Oregon Children to Children Served in Foster Care

Race	% of Oregon's children*	% of children served in foster care
African American	2.1%	6.8%
Asian	3.7%	0.6%
Caucasian	65.5%	66.5%
Hispanic (any race)	21.3%	14.8%
Native American	1.3%	3.8%
Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.5%
Two or more race groups	5.6%	na
Unknown/Not Recorded	na	7.0%

\*2011 Census Population under 18; U.S. Census

## Children Served in Foster Care, by Race FFY 2010, SFY 2011 and FFY2012

Race	FFY 2010	SFY 2011	FFY2012
African American	8.3%	8.2%	6.8%
Asian	1.0%	1.0%	0.6%
Caucasian	64.4%	64.4%	66.5%
Hispanic (any race)	13.7%	14.4%	14.8%
Native American	6.9%	5.9%	3.8%
Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%
Unknown/Not Recorded	5.1%	5.5%	7.0%