



Policy: Prevention and Placement of Child Victims and Aggressors Involved in Child-On-Child Sexual Abuse, Sexual Assault, Seduction or Exploitation, and Other High Risk Behaviors, in Substitute Care (ALERTS)

ChildNet Number: CN 003.051

Original Approved Date: June 30, 2003

Policy Revised Date(s): August 18, 2005; October 4, 2005; September 30, 2007; December 3, 2009

Policy Sunset Date:

COA Standard(s): none

Statement of Policy:

It is ChildNet's policy to establish safeguards for identifying and assisting children in substitute care who are known alleged juvenile sexual offenders, sexual aggressors, or sexually reactive children, or who are known victims of sexual abuse and/or exploitation. These safeguards have been extended for children who are known to be physically assaultive and have been known to commit arson.

Board Chair's Signature:

Date:

11-15-10



Procedure: Prevention and Placement of Child Victims and Aggressors Involved in Child-On-Child Sexual Abuse, Sexual Assault, Seduction or Exploitation, and Other High Risk Behaviors, in Substitute Care (ALERTS)

ChildNet Number: CN 003.051

Original Approved Date: June 30, 2003

Procedure Revised Date(s): August 18, 2005; October 4, 2005; September 30, 2007; December 3, 2009; October 11, 2012; October 8, 2014

Procedure Sunset Date:

COA Standard(s): none

Definitions (If any):

Explanation of Terms: For the purposes of this operating procedure, the following definitions shall apply:

1. "Alert Codes" – alphanumeric coding assigned to identify the conditions in which special attention is required during placement of a child. See Attachment A for a complete listing of Alert Codes.
2. "Alert Manager Database" – the database, created and maintained by ChildNet, in which children, with assigned Alerts, names and Alert assignment is captured.
3. "Alert Review" – the review of information from the available sources regarding a child's past and present behaviors and/or victimization with the purpose of discerning if an alert code shall be assigned.
4. "Assessment" – the gathering of information for the evaluation of a child's physical, psychological, educational, vocational, social condition and family environment as they relate to the child's needs for rehabilitative and treatment services, including substance abuse treatment services, mental health services, medical services, family services, and other specialized services, as appropriate.
5. "Substitute care" - any child under the age of 18 years old in the care and custody of ChildNet in an out-of-home placement, which includes relative caregivers.
6. "Human Trafficking" the transportation, solicitation, recruitment, harboring, enticement, or maintenance of another person for the purpose of exploitation of that person.
7. "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of a Child" – As defined by the Department of Children and Families, it is the use of any person under the age of 18 for sexual



purposes in exchange for money, goods, or services or the promise of money, goods or services.

Statement of Procedure:

This operating procedure applies to ChildNet and authorized agents of ChildNet involved with the placement and care of children in out-of-home care. This policy also applies to children whose jurisdiction is with another county and for whom ChildNet or its subcontracted agencies are providing courtesy supervision.

A. Alert Code Assignment for Children in Substitute Care Who May Be Alleged Sexual Offenders, Sexual Abuse Victims, Sexually Reactive or Aggressive, Physically Assaultive or Arsonists

The following procedures are to be followed to ensure appropriate placement and treatment for victims as defined in the Alert Codes.

1. **For initial out-of-home placements:** If a history related to the alert codes is reported in the case opening documents received by ChildNet, verbal reports from the Child Protection Investigator seeking the placement and/or Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) report(s), the Director of Intake and Placement or designee assigns the initial alert code(s) (See Attachment A) to a child based on this initial information. The Director of Intake and Placement or designee enters the alert code into ChildNet's Alert Manager Database with an effective date and review date at 90 days from the date of alert code assignment.
 - a. The IPA writes the Alert and Placement Contract (Attachment B) to reflect appropriate actions and precautions to be taken in the placement of the child within 24 hours of the alert code being assigned.
2. **For reviews of alert codes assigned at intake:** The Director of Service Coordination or designee shall schedule and facilitate Alert Reviews based on the time lines below. The scheduler shall invite the Child Advocate/Dependency Case Manager (CA/DCM), Child Advocate Supervisor/Dependency Case Manager Supervisor (CAS/DCMS), and the designated Quality Manager with the subcontracted Case Management Organization (Palm Beach only) to the Alert Review. The DCF Southeast Region Criminal Justice Coordinator (Palm Beach) shall be invited to all Alert Reviews to discuss possible human trafficking alert codes. Additionally, a member of ChildNet's Intake and Placement department shall be included if there is potential that any children may need to be moved to an alternative placement. The CA/DCM is to invite the parties/participants to the case, which may include, but are not limited to, Guardian Ad Litem, Attorney Ad Litem, caregivers, Targeted Case Manager and therapist working with the child.



- a. The facilitator of the Alert Review shall take notes and complete the Alert Review Form (Attachment C) per the information shared by the participants at the review. All participants shall sign the form to acknowledge participation. The facilitator shall write in participants names that joined by phone.
 - b. The Alert Review Form shall be filed in the Service Coordination department and a copy shall be provided to the participants.
 - c. Subsequent Alert Reviews, after the 90-day review, shall be held at a minimum of every six (6) months, excluding D Alerts, which shall be reviewed annually. .
 - d. At any time the CA/DCM may request an Alert Review prior to the next scheduled review date to discuss the modification of the current alert code(s). The CA/DCM shall notify the Director of Service Coordination or designee to request an Alert Review. The Alert Review shall then be scheduled following steps in section A (2).
3. **For reviews of children, already in substitute care, who were not assigned an alert code at intake but currently demonstrate one of the high risk behaviors.** At any time, the CA/DCM may request an Alert Review if a child demonstrates a high risk behavior described in the Alert Codes (Attachment A). The CA/DCM shall notify the Director of Service Coordination or designee to request an Alert Review. The Alert Review shall then be scheduled following steps in A(2)
4. **For review of a child with an alert code(s) at placement change: If the CA/DCM determines that safety and well-being concerns are implicated with a placement change,** an Alert review may be requested by the CA/DCM in order to review the placement circumstances, treatment needs, and safety of all children in the placement. The CA/DCM shall notify the Director of Service Coordination or designee to request an Alert Review. The Alert Review shall then be scheduled following steps in A(2)
- B. The Investigation of Child-On-Child Sexual Incidents Involving Children in Substitute Care.
1. If a child-on-child sexual abuse incident occurs or is suspected to have occurred, immediate attention is to be given to the safety of all children residing in the placement.
 2. Upon knowledge of the incident (typically via an Incident Reporting Form) the Director of Service Coordination or designee shall schedule an Alert Review. The Child Advocate/Dependency Case Manager (CA/DCM), Child Advocate Supervisor/Dependency Case Manager Supervisor (CAS/DCMS), and the



designated Quality Manager with the subcontracted Case Management Organization (Palm Beach only) are the standing invitees to an Alert Review. Additionally, a member of ChildNet's Intake and Placement department shall be included if there is potential that any children may need to be moved to an alternative placement.

3. The CA/DCM shall then extend the invitation of the Alert Review to other relevant parties that may include, but not limited to, Guardian Ad Litem, Attorney Ad Litem, caregiver(s), Targeted Case Manager, therapist working with the child, and/or Child Protective Investigator.
 4. If the parties attending the Alert Review/Staffing determine an alert is to be assigned, then the Alert and Placement Contract (Attachment B) shall be completed and subsequent procedures followed.
 5. If at the Alert Review or at any other time prior to or after the alert assignment, if any party/participant may request of their CA/DCM to restaff the case. If after review with their supervisor, the CA/DCM deems services are needed to stabilize/support the child(ren) involved the CA/DCM shall make a referral for services. The CA/DCM may consult with the Director of Service Coordination or a Behavioral Health Services Specialist if they have questions about services or access to service.
- C. Placements of Children in Substitute Care Children Who May Be Alleged Sexual Offenders, Sexual Abuse Victims, Sexually Reactive or Aggressive, Physically Assaultive or Arsonists.
1. Any child in substitute care assigned an alert code shall have an Alert and Placement Contract (Attachment B) completed. For those children in the custody of Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) for which we do not control placement arrangements, the alert and safety contract shall be provided to the appropriate DJJ representative to enable them to make the appropriate placement arrangement to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.
 - a. The Alert and Placement Contract shall indicate the alert code(s) the child has been assigned with a brief statement of the information and/or history that the alert code was based on.
 - b. The Alert and Placement Contract shall indicate the specific parameters/requirements of the child's living arrangement. These parameters will be discussed and reviewed at the Alert Review, providing the CA/DCM guidance in making any living arrangement restrictions or rules.



- c. The Alert and Placement Contract shall list general prevention rules and intervention strategies along with child specific/family specific rules, as needed.
- d. The Alert and Placement Contract shall be signed by the CA/DCM and CAS/DCMS and presented to the caregiver(s) for their signature.
 - i. One copy of the signed Alert and Placement Contract shall be placed in the Child Resource Record at the placement.
 - ii. A second copy shall be placed in the case file.
 - iii. A third copy shall be provided to the designated Quality Advisor (in Broward) and the Quality Manager with the subcontracted Case Management Organization (in Palm Beach).
- e. The Alert and Placement Contract shall be updated upon any change in the conditions of the plan:
 - i. A change in the child's placement
 - ii. A change in the child's caregiver
 - iii. An alert code has been added or removed.
 - iv. A new CA/DCM has been assigned
 - v. The addition or removal of safety precautions

2. Placement and Referral Considerations

- a. The sexual, physically assaultive, or arson behavior and family dynamics and vulnerabilities (developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, age, physical size) of all family members living in the home must be given thorough consideration when matching a child with an alert code to a substitute care placement.
- D. Prevention of Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse. The following safeguards must be used when placing a child who has an Alert Code D (sexual abuse victim) or Alert Code B (sexually reactive/aggressive) as defined in the Alert Code (Attachment A) or:
- a. ChildNet Intake and Placement staff must provide proposed caregivers with detailed and complete information related to the Alert Code assignment for whom placement in their care is sought so they facilitate the safety and well-being of the child and other children in their home. The information given to caretakers is to include, but is not limited to, type of abuse, brief narrative outlining the event, type of treatment the child received and outcome of the treatment. If the child is currently in treatment when placed with the caregiver, contact information for the treatment provider must also be provided.

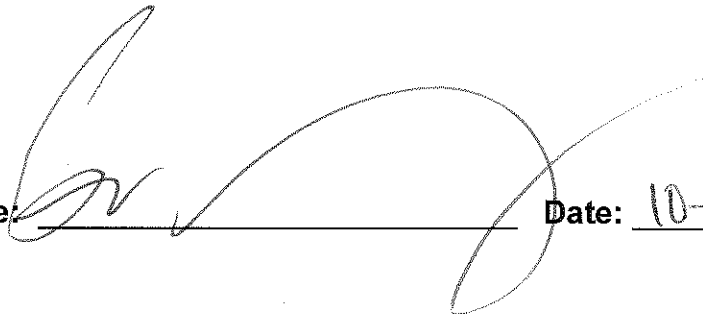


- b. Substitute caregivers for any children assigned an alert code will be given specific information and strategies to provide a safe living environment for all of the children living in their home that shall be outlined on the Alert and Placement Contract (Attachment B).
- E. The following guidelines for placements are to be recommended when children with alert codes are in substitute care placements
1. Never place a sexually aggressive child in a bedroom with another child of the same sex who they have acted out against.
 2. Limit access to bedrooms by establishing and enforcing ground rules on who is allowed to visit whose bedroom and under what conditions.
 3. Establish rules regarding bathroom utilization (one family member uses the bathroom at a time with the door fully closed).
 4. Establish a dress code which outlines the type of clothing acceptable, where it is acceptable and with whom present (not walking around the house in underclothes or pajamas).
 5. Establish reasonable guidelines concerning what level of supervision (auditory, visual, in the same room) is required for persons living in the home.
 6. Appropriate physical boundaries and interactions with others are modeled and enforced by caregivers for the children placed with them (requesting and refusing affection/hugs, greetings and good-byes).
 7. The caregivers will encourage, model and support open communication among family members about important events occurring in the home. No secrets allowed.
 8. The Alert and Placement Contract (see Attachment B) must be completed with the substitute caregiver prior to or upon the date of placement
- F. **Alert Manager Database (“database”) and Alert List on Resource Links**
1. Designated staff have access to managing the database. These staff include: Director of Intake and Placement, Director of Service Coordination, and their designees.
 2. The initial assignor of the alert code at intake and the subsequent facilitator of the Alert Review have the primary responsibility to enter the alert code and dates in the database.



3. The database has three key dates that must be defined throughout the alert code assignment and Alert Review process.
 - a. **Effective Date:** The date that an alert code was assigned. If the child has more than one alert code, it is possible to have multiple effective dates depending on when the code was assigned in the continuum of the case.
 - b. **Review Date:** The date the next Alert Review shall be held by (see A(2))
 - c. **End Date:** This is the date that an alert code is deemed to be no longer warranted and is removed from the child's profile. It may also be the date of the child's 18th birthday, for all alert codes are removed once the child turns 18.
4. The **Alerts List, which** is located on ChildNet's Resource Links home page, is a snapshot of the Alert Manager data. All ChildNet employees and subcontracted providers with access to ChildNet's network have access to view up-to-date alert code data by clicking on the Alerts List icon.

President's Signature



Date: 10-16-14