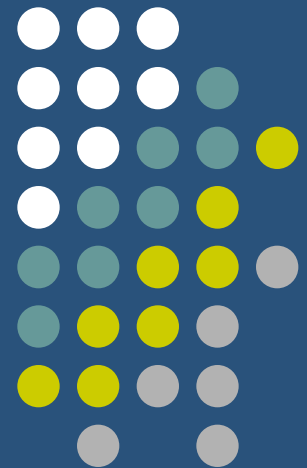


Agency Strategies for preventing child maltreatment in foster care

Robert Edwards

Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholar &
2009 DHS Child Abuse Prevention Fellow



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Areas of foster care containing risk for abuse and mal-treatment



- The foster care licensing process
 - Want to avoid licensing potential mal-treaters.
- Children in out of home placement.
 - Responsibility to keep vulnerable children safe.



Reasons to manage risk

- Protect vulnerable children
- No one wants abuse to occur on their watch
- Agency longevity/sustainability
- Qualify for premium liability coverage

An agency approach



- Continuous Quality Improvement Committee
 - Licensing and Policy Review Meetings with foster parents
 - Quality Improvements:
 - A No-Restraint Policy
 - Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCIF).

Sub-committee focused on preventing child maltreatment



Goals of the Sub-Committee

1. preparing youth to protect themselves,
2. providing social workers the best practice tools to assess for ongoing safety issues in foster homes,
3. reviewing situations with children and families after an unsubstantiated allegation to ensure safety and well-being and to help foster families acquire the ability to assess the safety of children in their home and community.
4. **educating workers to adequately assess foster and respite providers to ensure that no mal-treaters are licensed**

Two problem dilemma faced by many child-serving agencies



1. screening-out detectable predators who have been convicted, released, and want to work in a child serving agency
2. screening out the undetectable predators that lack criminal histories

Tools Available to help prevent licensing potential mal-treaters?



The “New Precautions”
By Safe Harbor Resources

The “Dianna Screen”
By Abel Screening

The “New Precautions”



- “The New Precautions (a proprietary screening offered by Safe Harbor Resources) consists of two background inquiries: a criminal background and a behavior background.
 1. The criminal background is done first.
 - Those passing it make their employer eligible for basic molestation coverage for their current misdeeds reported during the policy period.
 2. The behavior background inquiry is done later as a sample of names is drawn randomly.
 - Those passing it make their employer eligible for enhanced molestation coverage for their misdeeds occurring during a number of years prior to, and after, the policy period”

(Safe Harbor Resources, 2009, Section 1, subsection. 5).

The “New Precautions”



- **“The inquiry sources for the “New Precautions” model are extensive.**
 - Criminal history sources include the FBI,
 - state fingerprint repositories,
 - and records from county courts.
 - Sex offender registries plus investigative records are queried.
 - Headers from financial records are matched to worker-listed residences, and all aliases are submitted to comprehensive databases listing infractions gathered from all available sources.
 - Behavior history sources are contacted wherever lived, including Child Protective Services and Civil Protection Orders,
 - tracing and interview of references,
 - and monitoring of all newspaper arrest accounts back 15 years and forward daily for all US newspapers”

(Safe Harbor Resources, 2009, Section 1, subsection. 5).

The “New Precautions”



- These screenings can almost eliminate the children's risk of exposure to abuse and maltreatment.
- Organizations with the least risk of exposure can avoid higher priced liability insurance and qualify for premium types of liability coverage like molestation coverage.

(www.safeharborresources.com).



The “Dianna Screen”

- “The Diana Screen is a two-part computerized screen used to determine the risk of the test-taker having sexually abused a child in the past.
- While the Diana is a past/fail test, it goes beyond a simple questionnaire to include objectively measured sexual interest in children.
- The technology that identifies sexual interest, which is a major part of the Diana Screen formula, is empirically validated and has been used by therapists and criminal justice professionals more than 100,000 times”

(the Diana Screen, 2009, Section 3, para.1).

The “Dianna Screen”



- The Diana Screen protects children from sexual abuse and helps protect the organization from sexual abuse litigation.

The “Dianna Screen”



- “Foster parent education programs, home studies, and screenings performed before a foster resource becomes an approved foster care provider are essential. Still, there is **one critical element missing**: none of these methods **identify whether the prospective foster parent is a sexual risk to children**.
- Criminal background checks and fingerprinting are grossly ineffective. The Sex Offender Registry checks only inform you if an individual of that exact name has been convicted of a sex crime within your state. **This method, even when combined with fingerprinting, only identifies 1% to 3% of all child sexual abusers”**

(the Diana Screen, 2009, Section 8, para. 6).

The “Dianna Screen”



- Diana Screen claims to identify 50% of actual child molesters even if they’ve never been caught by law enforcement

(the Diana Screen, 2009, Section 8, para. 6).

How can foster care agencies be assured that Everything has been done to protect vulnerable children from Maltreatment?



- One can never be entirely assured....
- Constant diligence is essential....
- Tested models with clear priorities on preventing previously undetected mal-treaters and those of Sexual risk **can begin** to provide agencies a Measurable degree of assurance and protection.