

BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS MANUAL

The proclamation of Chapter 48, amendments to the Manitoba Child and Family Services Act, in March 1999 marks a renewed commitment on the part of this province to a multidisciplinary approach to child abuse. The primary mechanism for bringing together the various disciplines involved in child abuse cases for a process of joint decision making is the agency child abuse committees, established under section 19(1) of the Child and Family Services Act. Chapter 48 reconfirms the mandate of child abuse committees to provide advice to Agencies regarding child abuse cases, and also expands their mandated role with regard to the child abuse registry.

Agency child abuse coordinators have played a pivotal role in the development and ongoing maintenance of Abuse Committees. Child abuse coordinators have each been responsible for initiating the development of one or more Child Abuse Committees in their agency's jurisdiction. They are in charge of ongoing recruitment; any orientation or training incoming members receive is provided by them, and they usually chair committee meetings. However, lacking any standardized guidelines regarding staffing of that position, agencies have varied from committing a full staff position to this role, to merely adding the role of child abuse coordinator to a person already carrying a full workload.

Committees also vary, from those that have been in place for more than a decade, and contain members who are known throughout the province and beyond for their expertise in child abuse; to committees that are just in the process of forming, and involve members without any specific training in child abuse.

The 1999 Child Abuse Regulation Guidelines provide a new standard for the position of child abuse coordinator. The responsibilities of the position, as outlined in the guidelines, confirm the child abuse coordinators' leadership role with regard to Child Abuse Committees, a leadership role that will be all the more crucial in the transitional period to come as committees strive to meet the challenges of their new mandate. When combined with additional responsibilities, such as those of assisting in difficult investigations, providing consultation to supervisors and to workers, and providing training in the area of child abuse and child protection, it is clear that the role of abuse coordinator will be critical to the maintenance of best practice in the investigation and assessment of child abuse.

PURPOSES OF THIS INITIATIVE

This training curriculum and manual have been developed through the initiative of the Provincial Advisory Committee on Child Abuse, with funding from the Healthy Child Initiative (formerly the Children and Youth Secretariat) of the Manitoba Department of Family Services and Housing. The purposes served by this initiative will be threefold:

1. to provide a suggested model to follow in order to complete the essential training required for child abuse coordinators to meet the responsibilities set out for them in the Child Abuse Regulation Guidelines;
2. to provide agencies and their abuse coordinators with a manual that can be utilized in an ongoing way for reference as well as serving as a basis for and a resource to the above training;
3. to provide abuse coordinators in the province the opportunity to learn from each other's experience, to develop a network that can serve as a support and an ongoing stimulus for learning, and to use their own combined expertise to develop additional informational resources and guidelines for this manual.

These are advanced level workshops, focusing on the specialized areas of expertise required to provide best practice in meeting the responsibilities of an abuse coordinator as set out in the Manitoba Abuse Regulation Guidelines (January, 1999).

The training, and the manual, are divided into two parts, or modules. The first module focuses on the knowledge and skills required in relation to the responsibilities related to facilitating the Abuse Committees in their mandated roles. The second module focuses on the knowledge and skill required to provide expertise in the investigation of child abuse from the child and family services perspective.

In this manual the more common term of child abuse is used throughout. This term is intended to include all forms of child maltreatment that impact on children, their families and the communities.

UNIT 1: ORIENTATION

Learning Objectives:

The participants will:

- understand the purpose and nature of the training to be provided.
- know what is required of them in their role as outlined in the Child Abuse Regulation Guidelines of March, 1999.

UNIT 2: THE IMPACT OF CULTURE AND COLONIZATION ON FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES WITHIN MANITOBA

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will have an appreciation of how culture impacts child welfare and become aware of some of the particular issues involved in providing child protective services to Canada's First Nations population.

Major points in Section 2:

- Problems affecting First Nations children are particularly pervasive.
- These problems, currently being experienced, are the direct result of the legacy of interference in the lives of Canada's First Nations peoples by non-native governments and institutions and agencies.
- The solutions we have been trying are not working.
- We now are mandated to do things differently.
- If we start to pay attention to the solutions First Nations people are finding for themselves, there is much that we can learn.

It is impossible to consider the issues of child abuse and child welfare without considering the impact of culture. Each of us is affected, to some degree, by our cultural heritage and our experience of culture in our families and communities. Culture affects our values, shapes our beliefs about what is "right" or "wrong" in human behaviour (especially as it pertains to families), and provides us with a framework from which we view the world. As members of a child abuse committee, we bring these values and beliefs, our culture, into our discussions and decisions about the incidents of alleged abuse we are asked to evaluate. Sometimes, our differences of opinion in child abuse committee discussions are related to our different cultural perspectives. In these situations, it is helpful to try to understand the perspective and experience of others, as a means to working through the conflict and avoiding misunderstandings.

Families too are affected by their cultural heritage and how that culture is viewed and experienced in their communities. It is important to be aware of how culture has played a role in the situations that families have experienced that have brought them to the attention of the child welfare system.

While child abuse is found to occur in all cultures and in all socioeconomic classes, it is important to acknowledge that families of First Nations descent are frequently involved with, in fact over-represented within, the child welfare system. Statistics from 1980 indicate that while people of First Nations descent accounted for only 6% of the Canadian population, First Nations children in care comprised more than 20% of the total number of children in care of the child welfare system (Hepworth, 1980). This pattern has not changed much in the last twenty years. While it is difficult to obtain exact figures in Manitoba, it is estimated that the majority of children in care, whether within a First Nations Child and Family Services agency or a non-native child welfare agency, are children of First Nations heritage.

There are many reasons for these alarming statistics, related to the historical role government and child welfare has played in First Nations communities and the unique problems that have subsequently developed for First Nations people. As noted by Sinclair, Phillips and Bala (1991), First Nations people “. . . have shown justified concern about the deterioration of their families, communities, values and customs as a result of the child welfare policies of Canadian governments” (page 171). In a general sense, misunderstandings held by European settlers and government leaders about the value of First Nations culture contributed to a number of political decisions and actions over the past 125 years; these actions, in turn, have had a devastating effect on First Nations culture and its people. Especially for First Nations families, culture has played a significant role in the situations that families have experienced that have brought them to the attention of the child welfare system. It is therefore extremely important to understand First Nations issues in child abuse training.

The Impact of Culture and Colonization on First Nations Child and Family Services in Manitoba

The problems currently being experienced are the direct result of the legacy of interference in the lives of Canada's First Nations peoples by non-native governments and institutions and agencies. Early Canadian laws reflected the belief of John A. MacDonald, the first Prime Minister of Canada, that reservations and the Indian people would be assimilated into mainstream Canadian society in time, so no plans to assist First Nations communities with social programs, economic development, or any community infrastructure were made. In fact, the British North American Act, which established Canada as a country, took away Indians' independent status by making them wards of the federal government.

From 1879, the government's commitment toward assimilation of First Nations people was evident in its policies and treaties. “The residential school system of the late 19th and 20th centuries clearly demonstrated the belief of governments and the dominant society that assimilation through education of young aboriginal children was necessary and was to be achieved by removing children from the influence of their parents and community” (Sinclair, Phillips, and Bala, 1991). Continuing until the 1950's and 1960's, efforts to control and influence the First Nations people toward assimilation resulted in the removal of children from their parents, to be raised and trained in residential schools, viewed at the time as the only way to “civilize” the First Nations people. Residential

schools taught against native culture, separated children from their parents during crucial formative years, and were marked with physical discipline, as well as physical and sexual abuse.

For many students of the residential school system, the personal toll of these experiences on self esteem, self identity, ability to form bonding relationships with others, parenting abilities, and sense of personal autonomy, has been considerable. While it was not recognized, or was ignored, at the time, “it is now clear that such removal of children from their families and communities was often a highly destructive emotional experience, and that the devaluation of the children’s culture and heritage which occurred in such institutions had a very negative effect on their self-esteem” (Sinclair, Phillips, and Bala, 1991). Additionally, the structure, cohesion and quality of family life suffered (Martens, 1988). As a result, parenting skills diminished as each generation became more and more institutionalized, and children received little nurturing or appropriate parenting in their lives.

These laws and practices, and the impact of residential schools over generations, have decimated the traditional teachings, values, practices and strengths of First Nations culture. In many respects, this loss has contributed to a loss of identity for First Nations people. With a lack of social and economic development by government on reserves, First Nations people also found it difficult to access the changing modern urban world. The loss of culture, combined with inadequate living conditions on many reserves and the lack of support services, resulted in First Nations people being “caught between two worlds” (Martens 1988). Many First Nations people became vulnerable to lack of education, unemployment, substance abuse, violence, suicide, and other social problems. These issues are often associated with increased risk to children for abuse and neglect, problems which are addressed by the child welfare system.

The residential school system was gradually phased out in the 1950s and 1960s. In many respects, the child welfare system in Manitoba has inadvertently picked up where residential schools left off. In 1951, the Indian Act was amended to allow all laws that were applicable to other citizens in each province to be extended to those of First Nations descent. This included the provision of child welfare services, which were offered in many urban centers, but were virtually non-existent on reserves. In fact, at this point in time, the number of First Nations children in child welfare care was minimal, due to the small number of First Nations people living in urban centers.

Unfortunately, the extension of child welfare services to First Nations communities was piecemeal at best, and no additional funding or direction was offered by the federal government to assist the provinces in servicing larger numbers of families or in organizing services for aboriginal communities. During the 1960’s, with increased migration of Aboriginals to urban centers in search of employment, education and other opportunities, the awareness of Aboriginal peoples and their living conditions gained public and political attention. Without any consultation with First Nations community leaders, child welfare services were delivered by non-native agencies employing non-native social workers. At the time, there was little understanding of the importance of

maintaining cultural ties and traditions. The apprehension of First Nations children, with adoption into non-native families, became the standard practice of child welfare agencies across the country. “Thus, even though the residential school system faded away, aboriginal people continued to be dominated by the push toward assimilation” (Sinclair, Phillips and Bala, 1991)”. By the 1970’s the child welfare system had, inadvertently, become the successor to the residential school system as an alternative care system for First Nations children, which only served to perpetuate the erosion of First Nations culture and devastating impact on individual functioning.

Since the late 1970’s, with recognition of the serious problems that exist in delivering child welfare services to First Nations peoples, Manitoba has slowly been making changes to its child welfare system, toward First Nations agencies having more control over and involvement in its child welfare services. A series of three tripartite arrangements have been utilized to facilitate First Nations involvement in child welfare services, partnering the federal government with financial responsibility for services to First Nations communities, provincial governments with the mandate to legislate the delivery and structure of child welfare services, and First Nations communities to coordinate and provide child welfare services in a culturally appropriate manner and setting. In many ways, Manitoba has pioneered for other provinces the movement toward formal involvement of First Nations communities in the delivery of child welfare services, with the establishment of Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services as the first such agency in Canada. In fact, the evolution of Child Abuse Committees in Manitoba also comes from the development of these tripartite agreements.

Revisions to the Child and Family Services Act in 1986 provided an explicit legal basis for recognizing First Nations communities and transferring to them the authority to act as agents of the province in delivering child welfare services. These amendments to child welfare legislation have also mandated non-native child welfare agencies to do things differently in our work with First Nations families. For example, #11 in the Declaration of Principles in the Child and Family Services Act states that Indian Bands are entitled to services provided in a manner respecting their unique status as aboriginal people, and #8 affirms for all families the right to service that respects their cultural, racial, religious, and linguistic heritage.

However, for many First Nations communities, tripartite agreements have been viewed as only an interim measure toward better child welfare services for First Nations people. With the requirement that all agencies (both First Nations and non-native) follow the same provincial child welfare legislation, there is little recognition of First Nations customary laws or practices. In the current period of movement toward First Nations self-government, further efforts are being explored to assist First Nations communities to take control of their own child welfare services and policies. This comprehensive initiative will involve the examination of legislation, services, funding, staffing, policy and practice. The creation of this new era in child welfare is an exciting, and challenging, process. We will see the outcomes of these endeavours in the years to come.

Finally, if we start to pay attention to the solutions First Nations people are finding for themselves, there is much that we can learn. To counter the negative effects of acculturation, many First Nations communities are attempting to develop healing processes and treatment programs, based on traditional beliefs and values. For example, the Community Holistic Circle Healing Program in Hollow Water has had more success in dealing with child sexual abuse offenders than any white community in Manitoba. Rather than the punitive approach that marks most provincial justice systems, the program is based on the core tribal values of sharing, caring and respect, and the belief that holding an offender responsible for behavior requires a justice process that does two things:

1. involves all who have been affected by the abuse in a respectful, non-blaming environment in which they can express their feelings about how the offender's behavior has affected them, and
2. helps the offender come to an awareness of the impact of his actions on the lives of the victim and others in the family and community (Connors & Oates, 1997).

In the first 9 years of their program, all 48 substantiated cases of child sexual abuse which were identified in the Hollow Water community resulted in the offenders being held accountable. 43 plead guilty and took part in the CHCH program. The remaining 5 went to jail. In all of the cases the child victims were protected and supported. During those 9 years there were only two reoffences. This is an impressive success rate for two reasons:

- 1) It compares well with known reoffence rates: <.05, compared to .19 for treated offenders and .29 for untreated offenders based on the results of 12 studies (Hall, 1995)
- 2) The offenders who went through CHCH remained in the community and were relatively closely monitored and did not have the protection of anonymity or secrecy about their past offences, so this rate is less likely to be an underestimation than most estimated recidivism rates.

UNIT 3: CHILD ABUSE AND THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM APPROACH

Learning Objectives:

- The participants will understand the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in child abuse cases.
- The participants will share strategies for achieving a multidisciplinary approach in a range of community types.

From April 1997 to March 1998, there were 2805 cases of child abuse reported to agencies in Manitoba (more if you assume our statistics gathering process is not quite perfect and some get missed), 1291 in Winnipeg, and 1514 elsewhere in Manitoba. Of those 2805 cases:

- 1523, or 54.3 % were reports of possible physical abuse, 1181, or 42.1% were reports of possible sexual abuse, 93, or 3.3% were reports of possible emotional abuse, and 8, or .3% involved the death of a child.
- In 1804 cases (62.9% of the total) the suspected abuser was a male. In 883 cases (30.8%) the suspected abuser was female. The abuser was unknown in 182 cases (6.3%).
- About 60% of the alleged victims were female and 40% male.
- Over 60% of the alleged victims were 10 years old or younger at the time of the referral. 339 or 12% were under 4 years of age.

Benefits of a multidisciplinary approach:

1. More effective decision making
 2. Shared burden of responsibility
 3. More complete information
 4. Greater credibility of findings
 5. Increased access to resources
 6. Involvement of service providers working in a coordinated fashion rather than at cross purposes
 7. Fewer errors
 8. Consistent approach to the child and the family
 9. Reduces duplication of services
 10. Increase to a greater range of expertise
- No one agency or service provider has the resources or mandate to meet all of the needed tasks in abuse cases.

UNIT 4: ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ABUSE COMMITTEES

(Reference: Child Abuse Committee Guidelines, March 1999)

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will understand the role and responsibilities of child abuse committees.

Committee Membership

The regulation requires agencies to appoint at least five mandatory members:

- The agency's child abuse coordinator.
- A duly qualified medical practitioner employed, retained or consulted by the agency to review cases of suspected child abuse for the agency.
- A police officer representing law enforcement services operating in the area within the agency's jurisdiction.
- A representative of a school division located within the area of the agency's jurisdiction.
- A staff member of the agency, other than the child abuse coordinator.

Information Provided By Agency

On referring a matter to the child abuse committee, the agency shall provide the following information:

- the name of the child suspected of being abused
- the name of all persons suspected to have abused the child
- the circumstances surrounding the suspected abuse incident
- the identity of the person who reported the information to the agency
- details concerning the child's physical and emotional condition, including any relevant medical or psychological reports
- details as to the action taken by the agency including:
 - any referral for a medical examination
 - the involvement of police officers
 - the provision of information to others involved in the investigation, and
- any other information to enable the child abuse committee to carry out its responsibilities under the Act and this regulation.

Committee Meetings

Child abuse committees shall meet within 30 days after a matter is referred to the committee, and at least once every 30 days to allow for the timely review of cases.

Committee Functions

A child abuse committee shall

- a. review every case of suspected abuse referred to the committee
- b. review as required, the involvement of the police, medical and hospital professionals, and others involved in the investigation and management of the case
- c. provide consultation in the investigation and management of the case
- d. make recommendations where it is considered appropriate or necessary to protect the child or any other child.

Opportunity to Provide Information

The child abuse committee shall give a person who is suspected of having abused a child an opportunity to provide information to the committee by giving the person, in accordance with this section, a copy of the Notice of Opportunity to Provide Information (Form CA-1).

Notice of Opportunity

There are three ways to deliver the Notice of Opportunity to the alleged abuser:

1. Personal Service to Person
2. Registered Mail (to last known address)
3. Notice at Person's Residence

Large Group Discussion:

One of the major tasks facing child abuse committees is the need to make decisions based on the careful evaluation of information. We have already discussed the type of information that the committee should receive in reviewing an allegation of child abuse. How the committee weighs and assesses this information, and the discussion processes that occur within the committee, are crucial elements to the effectiveness of the child abuse committee.

Child abuse coordinators can set the stage for purposeful and facilitative discussions of child abuse cases in part through meeting the role and responsibilities of the chairperson. Tasks such as preparing an agenda, starting and ending on time, keeping order, encouraging full participation, keeping the discussion focused and on topic, and bringing a discussion to a close, can be helpful toward purposeful discussions. However, even these tasks, skillfully done, are not sufficient to help the committee appropriately evaluate the case information in order to make recommendations to the agency about future actions or to make decisions around registration of an alleged abuser on the Child Abuse Registry.

With the proclamation of the amended legislation, the standard of proof for child abuse committees in determining if the person abused the child and whether the name should be entered on the Registry is the **balance of probabilities**. This means that there is more evidence **for** a finding of abuse than **against** a finding of abuse. The child abuse committee has two main decisions to make with regard to a given case of suspected child abuse:

1. Is the Committee of the opinion that the person abused the child?
(if “yes”):
2. Is the Committee of the opinion that the person’s name should be entered onto the Child Abuse Registry?

In determining whether the person abused the child, the committee considers all of the available information regarding the victim’s disclosure, hearsay evidence (eg. what the child told the teacher), physical evidence, behavioral indicators, witnesses to the abuse, admission of the offender, multiple victims, history of offending, and criminal processes and outcomes. The information may be given different weights, according to the significance and reliability of the information available. With more information **for** a finding of abuse than against one, the Committee is in a position to come to the conclusion that abuse has occurred and that the person has abused the child.

In determining whether the name should be entered on the Registry, the committee considers previous abuse incidents, the severity, frequency, and recency of the abuse, the intent of the alleged offender, the impact of the abuse on the child, multiple victims, the alleged offender’s access to children, the transiency of the alleged offender’s relationships, the extent of denial, degree of responsibility for the abuse, amount of treatment/rehabilitation, and the child’s best interests. The Committee should ask themselves “why wouldn’t we register this person?” in assessing the appropriateness of recommending the individual’s name for registration. As the Registry exists for the protection of all children, not just the last victim of the offender, the Committee is obliged to identify powerful and compelling reasons why the offender’s name should not be entered on the Registry.

The Child Abuse Coordinator plays an important role in ensuring that Committee members consider all of the available information appropriately in discussing the case and making its decisions around a finding of abuse and registration. These are not easy decisions to make, and it is not uncommon for differences in values, strong emotions, cultural backgrounds, different perspectives in disciplines, and the gravity of the decisions, to affect the Committee's discussion and decision making. It can be challenging for Abuse Coordinators to remain objective as well. Many cases are complex and invite several different, sometimes competing perspectives, so it is not unusual for a Committee to struggle with its decisions at times. This struggle can be healthy and productive, however. Often, acknowledging and exploring these differences can be helpful in moving the Committee toward some conclusions and decisions. The skills of summarizing the discussion, reviewing the key pieces of information, and focusing the Committee members on the factors to be considered, can all be helpful in facilitating the Committee's discussion and decision making.

The Child Abuse Committee is required to vote on the two questions pertaining to a finding of child abuse and a decision to register. Voting requires a quorum, or the attendance of at least three of the mandatory members of the Committee. The vote on each of the two questions should be recorded and reported to the agency. Any decisions with regard to a finding of abuse and a recommendation to register require the majority of all committee members present to agree.

UNIT 5: CHAIRING OF MEETINGS

Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- have knowledge of a chairperson's role, and of strategies for chairing meetings effectively.
- have an opportunity to share experience and ideas regarding chairing of abuse committees.

Major Points Covered in Section 5:

- Roles and responsibilities of the chairperson regarding:
 - Committee membership
 - Agenda setting
 - Chairing meetings
 - Liaison functions
- Strategies for effective chairing of meetings:
 - Preparedness
 - Cooperation
 - Focus
 - Order
 - Timing
 - Assertiveness

The chairperson of the Child Abuse Committee (usually, the Child Abuse Coordinator) has many key roles and responsibilities. The chairperson is responsible for:

1. Committee membership
 - a) recruitment
 - b) orientation
 - c) maintenance (with regard to attendance and morale)

2. Agenda setting

3. Chairing of meetings

- a) starting and ending meetings on time
- b) welcoming and introducing guests
- c) facilitating discussion:
 - keeping order
 - getting full participation when needed
 - handling disagreements
 - keeping discussion focused and on topic
 - bringing discussion to a close
- d) facilitating committee decision making

4. Liaison roles and responsibilities

- a) providing a link between the Committee and the Child and Family Support Branch
 - meeting legislative and regulatory requirements
 - providing required documentation and reports to the Director
- b) providing a link between the Committee and the Agency
 - transmitting and interpreting agency policies and procedures
 - liaison between Committee and investigating worker
- c) providing a link between the Committee and the alleged offender
 - serving alleged offender with Notice of Opportunity to provide information
 - facilitating the transmission of information from the alleged offender to the Committee

Handout #4 :Small Group Tasks

Task #1: Rules of order

- A. Review guidelines for facilitating committee meetings. Robert's Rules of Order is one example of a process that can be used. Your committee may choose another process that fits their needs. Using those rules of order as a starting point, develop a set of rules of order your discussion group will use for the next five exercises.

Task #2: Orientation and Committee maintenance

- A. Develop an outline of important issues to cover in providing orientation to new committee members.
- B. Develop a list of strategies for addressing problems with morale or attendance (which often go together)

Task #3: Liaison between Committee and investigating worker

- A. Develop a list of advantages and disadvantages to having the investigating worker attend committee meetings to present cases for discussion.
- B. Develop a list of strategies for the liaison role: 1) when worker is present for case discussions; and 2) when worker is not present for case discussion.

Task #4: Use of guests

- A. Develop a list of purposes served by guests attending committee meetings (or portions thereof).
- B. Develop a list of potential guests to abuse committees

Task #5: Conflict of interest guidelines

- A. Develop some guidelines that could be incorporated into a Conflict of Interest policy for child abuse committees, noting:
 - 1) whether these are realistic and appropriate for all communities represented in your small group, and
 - 2) what, if any changes would be recommended, and under what circumstances.

Task #6: Meeting the diverse needs of individual communities

- A. Explore the differences between the various communities represented in your small groups and note ways in which abuse committees differ (or perhaps should differ) as a result.
- B. Note what committees have in common or where they require some consistency.

UNIT 6: ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES RELATED TO ABUSE COMMITTEES

Learning Objective:

- Participants will know the administrative tasks required of them and will be familiar with the rationale for each of these as well as with the forms related to these tasks.

Form A

The Child Abuse Committee Membership List is recorded on Form A. This form confirms the identity of mandatory committee members, as well as additional members, for a given fiscal year (April 1, ____ to March 31, ____).

Form B

The Child Abuse Committee Meeting Information is recorded on Form B. This form can be used to record which members were in attendance at a committee meeting, list cases which were discussed, and record the outcome of the case discussion (deferred to a future date, decision around occurrence of abuse, and registration decisions).

Investigative Report (3g)

The social worker's investigation is recorded on Investigative Report 3g. This form includes data regarding victim, alleged offender, type of abuse and referral source, details of the allegations, information about the agency's investigation, and medical and police information. The form is usually submitted to the Child Abuse Coordinator as a means to indicate the need to present the matter to the Committee.

Form CA-1

The amendments to the Child and Family Services Act have resulted in a significant change to abuse committee processes. Where the committee has formed the opinion that abuse of the child did occur, the committee cannot proceed with any further decisions around registration until the alleged offender has had the opportunity to respond to the allegation. Form CA-1, called the **Notice of Opportunity to Provide Information**, is used to obtain that response from the alleged offender. This form must be delivered either by personal service to the person, by registered mail, or, as a last resort, by a notice at the person's residence with another adult followed by first class mail to the person's residence.

Form CA-2

The worker who has served the individual, or otherwise confirmed delivery of the Notice of Opportunity, must complete Form CA-2, the **Affidavit of Service of Notice of Opportunity to Provide Information**. This document confirms that service on the alleged offender has been accomplished, and allows the abuse coordinator to begin tracking the response time. Alleged offenders have 30 days in which to forward their response to the abuse coordinator. Once the response is received, or after the expiry of

the 30 days, the matter can be returned to the abuse committee for final deliberation and discussion.

Form CA-3

With the return of the alleged offender's response (or the expiry of 30 days), the abuse committee can proceed with its discussion around registration of the alleged offender. Previously, if the committee concluded that abuse had occurred through the actions of that individual, the committee had no choice but to register the individual on the Child Abuse Registry. The amended legislation allows for some discretion for the abuse committee to decide whether or not an alleged offender's name should be entered on the Registry. The committee can consider other factors, such as the severity of the abuse, the frequency of abuse, the offender's willingness to accept responsibility and receive treatment, etc. in deciding whether or not registration is warranted.

If the abuse committee recommends registration, the abuse coordinator will send out Form CA-3, the **Notice of Intended Entry on the Child Abuse Registry** by registered mail. Copies of this form must also be provided to the child victim if s/he is over the age of 12, to the parents of the child victim, and, if the alleged offender is over 12 but under 18, to the parents of the alleged offender.

Upon receipt of the notice of intent to register, the alleged offender has 60 days to file an objection with the Court of Queen's Bench and serve notice of same to the agency. A hearing will be held in court to consider the evidence of the agency, including testimony of social workers, victims, witnesses, and others relevant to the case. The burden of proof resting with the agency is based upon the balance of probabilities, as noted above. The court decision is final and not subject to appeal.

Form C

The Child Abuse Committee Case Information and Decisions are recorded on Form C. This form is used to note the relevant criteria of a case that are reviewed by the committee, as well as the outcomes of the two main decisions the committee must make:

- is the committee of the opinion that the person abused the child?
- is the committee of the opinion that the person's name should be entered onto the Child Abuse Registry?

CAR-2

If the Child Abuse Committee has voted to register an individual on the Child Abuse Registry, the alleged offender has received Form CA-3 notifying him/her of the Committee's decision, and a period of 60 days has passed in which the alleged offender has not filed a motion with the courts to oppose the registration, the abuse coordinator must complete the **CAR-2 Report on a Person who has Abused a Child**. This form is submitted to the Director for entry on the Child Abuse Registry.

Non-Identifying Statistical Information Reports

The abuse coordinator is responsible for completing this non-identifying statistical form for every abuse investigation conducted within the agency, to be submitted to the Child, Family and Community Development Branch for a given fiscal year (April 1 ____ to March 31 ____). The forms are used to record such data as the type of investigation, the age and gender of the victim, the age and gender of the alleged offender, the nature of the relationship between the victim and alleged offender, and the outcome of the agency's investigation.

UNIT 7: EVALUATION OF COMMITTEE FUNCTIONING

Learning Objectives:

The participants will:

- be able to define what is healthy and appropriate in committee functioning.
- be able to facilitate committee self evaluation.
 - 1) Reviewing all cases of child abuse that come in to an agency may not be a realistic expectation or measure in areas where the volume is high. According to Barton Schmitt, editor of The Child Protection Team Handbook (excerpts of which are in trainees' manuals) "a team can usually evaluate and review a maximum of 100 cases per year" (p. 7).
 - 2) Measures may not be the same for all committees as needs and priorities will vary depending on the community. Success can best be defined in relation to goals and priorities set by the committee itself.
- An annual self evaluation process by the committee can aid in identifying and eliminating problems as well as in updating priorities and reaffirming committee members' commitment.

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**FACILITATING BEST PRACTICE
TRAINING FOR AGENCY CHILD ABUSE COORDINATORS
AND CHILD ABUSE COMMITTEES**

TRAINING EVALUATION

TRAINER _____ **DATES** _____

Please provide us with an honest evaluation of this training session. Your comments will be helpful in improving the content and delivery of this program.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Circle the number that best indicates your response to the statement. Leave blank if the statement is not applicable. (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Mildly disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Mildly agree, 5=Strongly agree).

- | | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | The training was relevant to my needs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | My interest in the subject was increased | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | Instruction was well-organized, coherent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | Course objectives were reached | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | Time was used efficiently | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments: _____

TRAINER

- | | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Trainer had command of the subject matter | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | Trainer was friendly, approachable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | Trainer encouraged group participation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | Trainer related workshop content to practice | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments: _____

WHAT ASPECTS OF THE TRAINING WERE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL?

WHAT ASPECTS OF THE TRAINING FELL SHORT OF YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

WHAT ADDITIONAL TRAINING TOPICS WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO YOU?

- a) physical abuse
- b) sexual abuse
- c) neglect
- d) emotional abuse
- e) resilience

Other: _____

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS TRAINING FOR:

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| a) new Abuse Committee Members | yes | no |
| b) experienced Abuse Committee members | yes | no |

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

NUMBER OF YEARS AS ABUSE COMMITTEE MEMBER _____

THANK YOU!