

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 4: Assessment	Effective Date: July 1, 2008
	Section 16: Medical and Psychological Examinations, Drug Screens and Substance Abuse Evaluations	Version: 1

POLICY

During an assessment, the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may seek to obtain medical and/or psychological tests and evaluations, drug screens, or other substance abuse evaluations on an **alleged child victim** and **any child who lives in the home** of an alleged child victim to determine the health and well-being of the child.

DCS will pursue a **medical evaluation** when one or more of the following conditions exists:

1. The child has an injury that would cause a reasonable person to believe that medical attention is necessary;
2. The allegations include sexual abuse involving penetration and it is believed the information that will be gathered during the examination of the child will assist in making an assessment finding;
3. The child has been removed from a meth lab or meth home. See the Indiana DEC Response Protocol.
4. The child is under the age of two, and shaking or a head injury is alleged even if there are no visible injuries.

DCS will assure that all child victims who will be under the supervision of DCS will receive a **mental health screen** within five days of removal or opening a Case with their family, whichever occurs first. See separate policy, 5.11 Mental Health Services.

DCS will pursue a **psychological assessment** when one or more of the following conditions exists:

1. The child's mental health screen indicates a need for a full mental health assessment (See separate policy, 5.11 Mental Health Services);
2. The child exhibits behaviors that would cause a reasonable person to believe he/she is a danger to him/herself and/or others.

DCS will pursue a drug screen and/or a substance abuse evaluation of the child victim if one or more of the following conditions exists:

1. The alleged child victim may have had access to illegal substances being used by the parent/guardian/custodian or other adults in the home;
2. The alleged child victim's behavior indicates he/she may have used or been exposed to illegal substances as a result of neglect or lack of supervision on the part of the parent/guardian/custodian.

DCS may ask a parent/guardian/custodian of an alleged child victim to **voluntarily** submit to medical and/or psychological tests and assessments, drug screens, or other substance abuse assessments if the allegations involve CA/N which may be due to:

1. Illegal substance use;

2. Alcohol abuse; or
3. Mental incompetence.

Note: DCS does not have the authority to require such action. If the parent/guardian/custodian does not agree to voluntary testing, DCS may pursue a court order if such tests and evaluations are necessary to complete the Assessment.

DCS may seek access to mental health records of the parent, guardian, or custodian as part of a Preliminary Inquiry, if an emergency exists in which a child is alleged to be a Child in Need of Services (CHINS). DCS may petition the Juvenile court for an order to release the mental health records.

Code References

1. IC 31-32-12: Mental or Physical Examinations
2. IC 31-33-8-7: Scope of investigation by department of child services; order for access to home, school, or other place, or for mental or physical examinations
3. IC 16-39-3-8: Child in need of services; petition for emergency hearing on request for records of parent, guardian, or custodian

PROCEDURE

The FCM will:

1. Request consent from the parent/guardian/custodian.
2. Seek a court order, if consent is not given or an emergency exists and the child is alleged to be a CHINS.
3. Arrange for necessary medical and/or psychological examinations or substance abuse evaluations.
4. Request written findings upon the examination and follow procedures in separate policy, 4.17 Accessing Child's Medical, Psychological and Substance Abuse Records to obtain copies of the records.

RELATED INFORMATION

Medical Exams for Alleged Sexual Abuse Victims

The extent and type of evaluation will be determined by a medical doctor. The doctor will likely consider such things as the length of time that has passed since the incident, the age of the child (in relation to the trauma of an invasive exam), etc.

Waiting for Test/Evaluation Results

If the FCM has not received the results of a medical or psychological test/evaluation, drug screen, or other substance abuse evaluation by the end of the assessment deadline, the FCM should proceed with making a finding. See separate policy, 4.22 Making an Assessment Finding, without the test/evaluation results unless the results will impact the finding one way or another.

IC 31-32-12-2: Temporary Confinement of Child

The Juvenile Court may order that the child be temporarily confined for up to 14 days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays, for the completion of mental or physical examinations of the child.

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