



Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr., Governor  
James W. Payne, Director

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**Child Support Hotline: 800-840-8757**  
**Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 800-800-5556**

September 15, 2011

To: Regional Managers  
Directors, Local Offices, Department of Child Services

From: James W. Payne, Director  
Melissa Norman, Deputy Director of Practice Support  
David Judkins, Deputy Director of Field Operations  
Department of Child Services

Subject: Initiation  
DCS- 11-08

The initiation of the assessment is the first step a Family Case Manager (FCM) will perform in order to make a determination regarding Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N). Understanding how initiation works in conjunction with response times and assuring safety will be a critical part of how our agency works to fulfill our mission of protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Beginning October 1, 2011, the new definition of Initiation will be as follows:

"Initiation is defined as the time between the end of a call to the Indiana Child Abuse Hotline alleging maltreatment and face-to-face contact with the alleged victim (when appropriate), or contact with another person (other than the alleged perpetrator) who can provide information on the allegation(s)."

FCMs must use critical thinking skills to determine if contact with "another person" is the best way to assure the safety of the child. Each Supervisor, and Local Office Director has the responsibility to ensure that this policy is implemented and understood by each worker. The FCM will be responsible for diligently assessing safety to ensure that our mission has been fulfilled.

Updates will be made to the DCS Policy Manual to reflect these changes. If you have any questions regarding the information presented in this administrative letter, please address them to the DCS policy mailbox at [DCSPolicy@dcs.in.gov](mailto:DCSPolicy@dcs.in.gov).

Sincerely,  
James W. Payne, Director  
Department of Child Services



*Protecting our children, families and future*