

RED TEAMS

SUMMARY

Review, Evaluate, Direct (RED) Teams are a group decision-making process at the Intake/Screening level to evaluate hotline referrals and determine the appropriate child welfare intervention and response time.

PURPOSE

- The purpose of Review, Evaluate, Direct (RED) Teams¹ is to provide a multidisciplinary group decision-making process as part of the screening decision for calls to the Child Welfare hotline. Potentially all hotline calls received by the agency are reviewed by the group to determine if referrals meet criteria for an in-person response and whether an immediate or 10-day response is indicated.
- RED Teams use a group consultation framework to support information-gathering, analysis and decision-making about the appropriate response to CWS referrals. Instead of the decision resting on one person, a group determines the necessity and timing of a response.
- RED Teams also can help ensure that the Structured Decision Making (SDM®) hotline tool is completed accurately and improve consistency of CWS agency decision-making.
- Each county determines its own criteria for which referrals are reviewed as part of the RED Team process. Ideally, every suspected child abuse report made to the hotline would be reviewed by the RED Team; however, in larger jurisdictions, this may not be feasible.
 - The RED Team process should never cause a delay in response time for immediate referrals; each county should structure their process accordingly.

RED TEAM MEMBERS

- Members of RED Teams include Child Welfare staff and supervisors, other county partners (such as Mental Health or Public Health) and community partners when possible, as determined by each county.
 - For new referrals on open cases, the case-carrying social worker should participate in the RED Team staffing of the new referral.

POSSIBLE RED TEAM MEMBERS

Hotline screener	Domestic violence advocates
Emergency Response supervisor	Mental or behavioral health providers
Additional CWS social workers or supervisors	Substance Use Disorder specialists
Tribal social workers	Law enforcement
Public Health Nurses or other medical providers	Members of other appropriate community agencies

- All members of the RED Team are considered to have an important voice in the RED Team process. Community partners attending for the first time may need training regarding SDM definitions and Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) §300.

RED TEAM PROCESS

- Generally, RED Teams are scheduled every weekday, once or twice per day (i.e., daily at 8:30am), depending on the volume of calls received by the agency.
- The RED Team process is typically as follows:
 - The SDM Policy and Procedure Manual and WIC are in the room to reference as referrals are discussed.
 - The screener or social worker who took the hotline call (or another CWS staff person, if necessary) presents the referral out loud to the group.
 - While the social worker presents the referral, another team member organizes the information on a white board or computer projector screen, using the Consultation and Information Sharing Framework® or a similar case staffing tool.
- Areas discussed about each referral include:
 - Reason for referral
 - Who is in the family (genogram)
 - Family supports (ecomap)
 - Review of CWS history
 - Harm/risk/danger
 - Complicating factors
 - Safety/acts of protection
 - Supporting strengths
 - Gray area (unknown/incomplete information)
 - Next steps
- Team members ask questions to ensure information is clear and adequate to make an appropriate decision.
 - If there are many areas of speculation or questions that cannot be answered, the team may ask the screener to call back the reporting party to obtain additional information.
- Be mindful of and call out issues related to cultural humility and bias in decision-making.
- Once the information is organized and documented, the team determines if the report requires an in-person response and in what timeframe.
 - The group reviews the SDM Hotline Tool to ensure it was completed accurately and that any items marked meet the appropriate definition.
 - For in-person responses, the group determines the appropriate response priority and whether it should be a joint response with another agency.
- If SDM overrides are utilized, the reason should be well-documented, and it should be noted that the RED Team made the decision to override.

¹Sawyer, R., & Lohrbach, S. (2005a). Differential response in child protection: Selecting a pathway. *Protecting Children*, 20(2 & 3), 44-53.