

From: Doug Racine, AHS Secretary

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Subj: Federal Reporting of Child Safety Interventions – DCF Family Services

You have asked us to shed light on why Vermont’s report acceptance rate looks low compared to the national data. There are two realities that affect this:

1. **Number of Intakes:** Family Services has a very high per capita rate of intakes for several reasons:
 - a. DCF Family Service’s philosophy – which translates into training for mandated reporters – is to encourage reporters to call the Child Protection Hotline.
 - b. In Vermont, any call to the centralized intake unit that results in an intake being documented is counted as an intake. In other states, they have the ability to combine intakes concerning the same child and the same incident, but are called in by a different reporter. We do not. At times, the Hotline may receive multiple intakes on the same allegation. All are counted.
 - c. Because Family Services is not just the child protection agency, but also the youth justice agency, this includes intakes on child abuse and neglect, child behavior, delinquency, etc. For the 2009 federal reporting year, this resulted in Vermont having the highest rate on intakes per 1000 children living in the state. The table below is for 2009 intakes

State	Rate/1000 Child Pop	State	Rate/ 1000 Child Pop
Vermont	93.8	Massachusetts	47.3
West Virginia	82.1	Kansas	45.1
Oregon	73.6	Minnesota	44.9
South Dakota	73.5	Indiana	43.5
Missouri	72	District of Columbia	43
Oklahoma	70	Wisconsin	41.4
Florida	64.3	Wyoming	40.4
Kentucky	63.4	Utah	39.7
New Mexico	60.2	California	36.2
Maine	59.7	Delaware	35.5
Montana	58.6	Mississippi	35.1
Arkansas	57.4	Nevada	34.1
Iowa	56	Virginia	31.8
Colorado	55.2	Texas	30.5
New Hampshire	54.8	Alabama	27.1
Alaska	53.6	South Carolina	25.8
Rhode Island	53.4	Georgia	25.1
Nebraska	51.7	Arizona	20
Washington	48.4	United States	43.3

2. **Categories of Intervention Not Included in Federal Data Reporting:** Family Services has a category of child safety interventions which are not including in federal reporting, which are the Family Assessments listed below. They are not reported, as they are conducted under Family Services' authority under 33 VSA Chapter 53, not under the child abuse statute 33 VSA Chapter 49. In 2012, Family Services conducted 1044 Family Assessments.

	Reported to Feds?	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Child Abuse Investigations	Yes	2896	2831	2465	2591	2536
Child Abuse Assessments	Yes	N/A	638	1058	1192	1119
Family Assessments	No	630	1021	1078	1128	1044
Total		3526	4490	4601	4911	4699

Conclusion: The rate of report acceptance is calculated in the following way:

of accepted reports

of intakes

Because in Vermont (1) the # of accepted reports does not include Family Assessments, and (2) the number of intakes is very high, the translates mathematically into a lower rate of accepted report, as compared to the nation.