

2005 CHILD WELFARE WORKER SAFETY INCIDENT SUMMARY REPORT January – December 2005

Child Welfare professionals are dedicated, helping agents who work towards improving quality of life outcomes for all children and families within their communities.

A child welfare agency employee can expect some client resistance because the focus for services entails an intensive, detailed view of many intimate family matters. Even though a degree of resistance to services is accepted, a clear distinction must be made between resistance and aggressive behavior which constitutes a danger to staff.

Through PCSAO's leadership, we have been collecting and reporting on Worker Safety Infractions across the state since 2002. PCSAO recently released the 2005 Ohio Aggregate Data Report on Child Welfare Worker Safety Incidents. From this data gathering process, we have learned the following:

- In 2005, 63 of Ohio's 88 county agencies utilized the reporting tool for worker safety incidents.
 - 100% of Major Metro Counties
 - 89% of Metro Counties
 - 87% of Large Counties
 - 76% of Medium Counties
 - 57% of Medium – Small Counties
 - 58% of Small Counties
- Of those 63 counties, 39 counties reported at least one incident occurred at the agency.
- A total of 258 incidents were reported to PCSAO which occurred in all county cohort groups.
 - 47 in Major Metro Counties
 - 91 in Metro Counties
 - 63 in Large Counties
 - 33 in Medium Counties
 - 15 in Medium – Small Counties
 - 10 in Small Counties
- Based on the data, verbal aggression (122 incidents) and verbal and/or written threats of harm (117 incidents) continue to have high rates of incidents.
- Predominately, adult clients have the highest rate of alleged offenders. (157 reported incidents with an adult client.)
- Mirroring the data from 2004, the top three location where incidents occurred in 2005 were on agency grounds (89 reports), by phone and/or e-mail (64 reports), and in the homes of clients (60 reports).
- There was not a significant difference within incident "triggers" identified by PCSAO.
 - 39 Routine Home Visits
 - 37 Visits as part of investigation
 - 36 Custody Discussion
 - 34 Parent visit with Youth
 - 30 Removal of Child
 - 28 Classified as Other
- Agency employees endured physical incidents, including being bitten by a dog, spit on, punched and bit by a child, and inhaling chemical fumes. Workers also reported witnessing a drug deal, having a gun fired outside of the home, experiencing bomb threats, were threatened with a gun, an umbrella, a dishwasher and a frozen turkey.

The table below shows the number of Counties who submitted a report to PCSAO, during at least one quarter, and the number of incidents reported from 2002 through 2005.

| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|------|------|------|------|
| Number of Participating Counties | 62 | 69 | 63 | 63 |
| Number of Incidents Reported | 309 | 232 | 299 | 258 |

Information about PCSAO Child Protection Services Standards for Effective Practice and the Worker Safety Reports are available online at http://www.pcsao/safety_incident_report.htm.