



## 2009 PCSAO CHILD WELFARE WORKER SAFETY INCIDENT SUMMARY REPORT

Child Welfare professionals are dedicated helping agents who work toward 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 of the services entails an intensive, detailed view of many intimate family matters. Even though a degree of resistance to services is expected, a clear distinction must be made between resistive and aggressive behaviors which constitute 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 2009 Ohio Aggregate Data Report on Child Welfare Worker Safety Incidents. From this data gathering process, we have learned the following:

### SUMMARY:

- **66 of 88 public children services agencies participated in the 2009 Child Welfare Worker Safety Incident report.**
  - 17 small counties
  - 12 medium-small counties
  - 16 medium counties
  - 10 large counties
  - 9 metro counties
  - 2 major metro counties
  
- **A total of 240 incidents occurred in 34 public children services agencies.**
  - 10 incidents in five small counties
  - 14 incidents in seven medium-small counties
  - 15 incidents in eight medium counties
  - 70 incidents in ten large counties
  - 89 incidents in eight metro counties
  - 42 incidents in all three major metro counties
  
- **32 public children services agencies reported that no incidents occurred in 2009.**
  
- **Incident Description:**
  - **Highest score:** verbal aggression(112) and written threats of harm (97)
  - **Lower score:** personal/agency property damage (16), and physical assault without injury (10).
  - **Lowest score:** stalked by client (7), sexual harassment (6), and physical assault with injury (4).
  - **Others:** Use of weapons was reported. screwdrivers, knives or toys were reported as weapons. Caseworkers also endured physical incidents such as being intimidated by co-workers or being bitten by dogs and child/youth clients, as well as being kicked, punched, and spit on by clients. Additionally, workers reported observing fights, shooting and drug dealers in clients' neighborhoods.
  
- **Alleged Offender:**
  - **Highest score:** adult clients (146)
  - **Lower score:** child/youth clients (32)
  - **Lowest score:** client's paramour (13), and caregiver's relative (8)
  - **Other:** Dogs were often reported as other alleged offender. Occasionally, foster child, former client and not-client were reported as alleged offenders, as well as

- **Location of Incident:**
  - **Highest score:** client’s residence (81), phone/e-mail (62), and agency (51)
  - **Lower score:** court (16)
  - **Lowest:** provider agency (9), and victim’s home (5)
  - **Others:** there were some incidents that occurred during transportation of clients, at health care facilities, schools, foster homes, victim’s residence and county jail, parking lot, in caseworker’s vehicle.
  
- **Incident “Trigger”:**  
 There was not a significant difference within the Incident “Trigger” identified—
  - **Highest score:** visit as part of C/A, N investigation (49), and custody discussion and pending action (43)
  - **Lower score:** routine home visit (29), parent visit with child (25), and removal of children (23).
  - **Others:** there were other triggers reported such as court hearing, meetings/assessments, and transporting clients.
  
- **Post Incident Responses:**
  - **Highest score:** law enforcement of local jurisdiction contacted for agency and victim (51), and law enforcement intervention (41)
  - **Lower score:** charges filed against alleged offender (12), and warning letter issued (10).
  - **Others:** there were other responses reported such as security/police notified, case transferred, visitation changed, incident recorded/entered to the safety system.
  
- The table below shows the number of public children services agencies who submitted quarterly reports to PCSAO and the number of incidents reported from 2007-2009.

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Number of Participating Counties	66	67	66
Number of Incidents Reported	271	231	240

**2009 ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY**

- **Number of agencies that reported: 66**
- **Agencies that reported incidents: 34**
- **Agencies that reported no incidents: 32**
- **Total incidents reported by agencies: 240**

**66 of 88 counties that reported in 2009**

*(At least one of the four quarters)*

<b>Small Counties (17 of 26)</b>	<b>Medium-Small (12 of 14)</b>	<b>Medium Counties (16 of 21)</b>	<b>Large (10 of 15)</b>	<b>Metros (9 of 9)</b>	<b>Major Metros (2 of 3)</b>
Adams, Carroll, Champaign, Coshocton, Defiance, Gallia, Hardin, Hocking, Meigs, Morgan, Noble, Paulding, Perry, Pike, Putnam, Van Wert, Wyandot	Auglaize, Clinton, Crawford, Fulton, Guernsey, Highland, Logan, Madison, Mercer, Ottawa, Preble, Shelby	Athens, Belmont, Erie, Geauga, Jefferson, Knox, Marion, Miami, Muskingum, Pickaway, Ross, Sandusky, Scioto, Seneca, Tuscarawas, Washington	Allen, Ashtabula, Columbiana, Delaware, Greene, Medina, Richland, Warren, Wayne, Wood	Butler, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, Mahoning, Montgomery, Stark, Summit, Trumbull	Franklin, Hamilton

**Incident Description**

- 112** Verbal / Written Threats of Harm
- 97** Verbal Aggression (w/ sense of danger)
- 16** Personal / Agency Property Damage
- 10** Physical Assault - not injured
- 7** Stalked by Client
- 6** Sexual Harassment
- 4** Physical Assault – injured
- 3** Use of Weapon (*Toy used as a weapon, screwdrivers, guns, knives*)

**Other:** bitten by dogs, witnessed shootings & drug dealing, found weapon at client’s house, received inappropriate letter from client, and physically intimidated by co-workers.

**Alleged Offender**

- 146** Client - Adult
- 32** Client Child/Youth
- 13** Client’s Paramour
- 8** Client’s family
- 1** Caregiver’s Relative

**Other:** dogs, foster child, former client, non-client, unknown.

**Location of Incident**

- 81** Client Home
- 62** Phone / Email
- 51** Agency
- 16** Court
- 9** Provider Agency
- 5** Victim’s Home

**Other:** health care facilities, parking lot, traffic.

**Incident “Trigger”**

- 49** Visit as part of C/A,N investigation
- 43** Custody Discussion, Pending Action
- 29** Routine Home Visit
- 25** Parent Visit with Child
- 23** Removal of Children

**Other:** assessments, court hearing, transporting child

**Post Incident Responses**

- 240** Incident Reported to Agency
- 51** Law Enforcement of local jurisdiction contacted for Agency and Victim
- 41** Law Enforcement Intervention
- 12** Charges Filed Against Alleged Offender
- 10** Warning Letter Issued
- 9** Employee Assistance Program Offered / Provided
- 8** Offender/s Picture Posted w/in Agency for Security Purposes
- 6** Victim Received Medical Attention
- 5** Offender Arrested
- 2** Incoming Phone Calls to Victim Taped
- 1** Post Incident Training Scheduled/Conducted

**Other:** security/police notified, case transferred, visitation changed, incidents recorded/entered to the safety system.

**34 of 66 Agencies that reported a safety incident had occurred during 2009**

<b>Small Counties</b>	<b>Medium-Small Counties</b>	<b>Medium Counties</b>	<b>Large Counties</b>	<b>Metros Counties</b>	<b>Major Metros Counties</b>
Adams (1), Hardin (2), Hocking (5), Gallia (1), Meigs (1)	Clinton (1), Crawford (1), Guernsey (10), Logan (1), Madison (1)	Athens (2), Belmont (2), Geauga (1), Knox (1), Ross (5), Sandusky (2), Scioto (1), Tuscarawas (1),	Ashtabula (2), Columbiana (4), Greene (6), Richland (56), Warren (2)	Butler (25), Lake (1), Lorain (8), Lucas (24), Mahoning (7), Montgomery (2), Stark (5), Summit (10), Trumbull (7),	Franklin (37), Hamilton (5)
<b>10 incidents</b>	<b>14 incidents</b>	<b>15 incidents</b>	<b>70 incidents</b>	<b>89 incidents</b>	<b>42 incidents</b>

More information, please visit [www.pcsao.org/SafetyIncidentReport.htm](http://www.pcsao.org/SafetyIncidentReport.htm). If you have any questions or need further information, please contact PCSAO at 614-224-5802.