

Lucas County Children Services Child Welfare Glossary

ACV – Alleged Child Victim; a child who is alleged to be a victim of abuse or neglect.

AP – Alleged Perpetrator; a person who is alleged to have inflicted abuse or neglect upon a child.

Abandonment – When a parent's identity or whereabouts are unknown, and the child has been left alone in circumstances where he/she has suffered serious harm, or when the parent has failed to maintain contact with the child or provide reasonable support for a specific period of time.

Adoption – A probate court procedure that establishes a parent/child relationship between individuals who may be not related by blood. Once the adoption is completed, the adoptive child becomes entitled to all the privileges belonging to a natural child of the adoptive parents, and the adoptive parents acquire all the legal rights, duties, and obligations of the child's natural parents.

Alternative Response – Child Protection practice that allows for more than one method of initial response to reports of child abuse and neglect. Also known as "differential response." Alternative response is usually applied in low-and moderate-risk cases and involves an assessment of the family's strengths and needs and offering of services to the family, without the assignment of a formal determination or substantiation of child abuse or neglect.

Caretaker – A primary caretaker or caregiver refers to the parent who has the greatest responsibility for the daily care and rearing of a child. It also refers to a person that has those same responsibilities but may not be related to the child.

Case Closure – the process of ending the relationship between the CPS worker and the family that often involves a mutual assessment of progress. Optimally, cases are closed when families have achieved their goals and the risk of maltreatment has been reduced or eliminated.

Case Plan – Document, to be developed by caseworker and involved parent(s), which identifies goals and intervention activities necessary to reduce the risk of re-maltreatment of a child.

CA/N – Child abuse and neglect (CA/N) is any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker that results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, of a child; or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.

CASA – Court-Appointed Special Advocates (usually volunteers), who ensure that the needs and interests of a child are protected during judicial proceedings.

Concurrent Planning – identifies alternative forms of permanency by addressing simultaneously both reunification and legal permanency with a new parent or caregiver, should reunification efforts fail.

Deferred Report – An allegation of child abuse or neglect made, either orally or in writing to a child protection agency by any person with first or second-hand knowledge,

which is judged by the PCSA to not meet its established criteria for assessment.

Emancipation – Legal status granted by the court that terminates LCCS custody of a child in foster care, typically when the child reaches the age of majority.

Emotional Abuse – Chronic attitude or acts that result in significant, verifiable psychological damage to a child's self esteem and interfere with their cognitive, emotional, psychological or social development.

Ex-Parte – An order issued by a Juvenile Court judge or magistrate authorizing the taking of a child into custody where other parties have not had advance notice and the opportunity to be heard prior to the issuance of the order.

Family Assessment – The process during which the children services caseworker, community treatment provider, and the family reach a mutual understanding about the behaviors and conditions that must change to reduce or eliminate the risk of maltreatment, the most critical treatment needs that must be addressed, and the strengths on which to build.

Family Case Conference – Meeting held whenever decisions about custody and/or placement of a child are needed. The purpose is to enable direct service personnel, parents, family members and other parties involved in the case to reach consensus, after considering all information and alternative decisions.

Family Centered, Neighborhood Based (FCNB) – The principle of providing the services that families need in their neighborhood of origin.

Foster Care – Placement of a child in a family-like setting certified by ODJFS. Foster parents are licensed and must participate in the agency's training and orientation program, undergo medical, financial, and criminal background checks, and obtain fire and other inspections of their home.

Guardian ad Litem – A lawyer or layperson who represents a child in juvenile or family court. This person considers the best interest of the child and may perform a variety of roles, including those of independent investigator, advocate, advisor, and guardian for the child. A layperson that serves in this role is sometimes known as a court-appointed special advocate or CASA.

Homestudy – Assessment of an identified placement or possible placement for a child. Includes a police check and fingerprint of all adults in the home, 2-3 references, and clearing of all adults for PCSA involvement.

Imminent Risk – Immediate threat of injury or harm to a child. Imminent Risk also applies when there is an immediate threat of injury or harm to a child and no interventions appear to have occurred or are likely to occur to protect the child.

Indicated Child Abuse/Neglect (CA/N) – Situations in which there is insufficient evidence of CA/N to substantiate, but there are circumstantial or other isolated indicators of child abuse or neglect lacking confirmation.

Initial Assessment or Investigation – The stage of the CPS case process during which the CPS caseworker determines the validity of the child maltreatment report, assesses the risk of maltreatment, determines if the child is safe, develops a safety plan

if needed to ensure the child's protection, and determines services needed.

Institutional Setting – A facility authorized to provide either secure or non-secure care for 11 or more children whose mental, physical, or emotional needs cannot be met in some other less-restrictive placement setting.

Intake – The stage of the CPS case process in which the CPS caseworker screens and accepts reports of child maltreatment.

Kinship Care – Kinship care is the full time care, nurturing, and protection of children by relatives, members of their tribes or clans, godparents, stepparents, or any adult who has a kinship bond with a child.

Least Restrictive Setting – A substitute care setting which is the most family-like setting available able to meet the child's physical and emotional needs.

Legal Custody – Legal status which vests in the custodian the right to have physical care and control of the child and to determine where and with whom he/she shall live, and the right and duty to protect, train and discipline him/her and to provide the child with food, shelter, education and medical care, all subject to any residual parental rights, privileges and responsibilities.

Mandated Reporter – Individuals required by State statutes to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the proper authorities (usually CPS or law enforcement agencies). Mandated reporters typically include professionals, such as educators and other school personnel, health care and mental health professionals, social workers, child care providers, and law enforcement officers.

Neglect – The failure by the parent or caregiver to provide food, clothing or shelter. It also includes abandonment, inadequate supervision of a child by a parent or caregiver, and excessive corporal punishment, unclean or unsanitary living arrangements and similar situations. Some specific types of neglect include educational neglect, medical neglect, and emotional neglect.

OABH – Other agency boarding home. A caregiving home provided by an agency (usually private) other than the public children services agency that is handling the child's case.

Out-of-Home Care/Substitute Care – Relative care, foster care, a group home, or institution, for a child, whether he or she is in the custody of the agency or in the temporary custody of a relative.

PCSA – Public Children Services Agency

Permanent Custody (PC) – Legal status which vests in a public child protective agency all parental rights, duties and obligations, including the right to consent to adoption, and divests the natural or adoptive parent of any and all parental rights, privileges, and obligations, including all residual rights and obligations.

Perpetrator – The individual(s) found to have inflicted abuse or neglect upon a child.

Physical Abuse – The inflicting of a non-accidental physical injury. This may include burning, hitting, punching, shaking, kicking, beating, or otherwise harming a child. It may, however, have been the result of over-discipline or physical punishment that is

inappropriate to the child's age.

Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (PPLA) – An order of a Juvenile Court in which the court gives legal custody of a child to a Public Children Services Agency without the termination of parental rights and permits the agency to make an appropriate placement of the child.

Protective Factors – Strengths and resources that appear to mediate or serve as a buffer against risk factors that contribute to vulnerability to maltreatment or against the negative effects of maltreatment experiences.

Protective Supervision – Disposition in which the court permits an abused, neglected, dependent, unruly or delinquent child to remain in the custody of his/her parent, guardian, or custodian and stay in his/her home, subject to any conditions and limitations upon the child, his parent, guardian, or custodian, or any other person that the court prescribes.

Referral – An allegation of child abuse or neglect meeting established criteria for assessment made, either orally or in writing, to a public child protective agency from any person in the community with first or second-hand knowledge.

Relative Custody – Refers to cases in which a relative holds temporary custody of the child(ren) placed in the relative's home by the agency.

Relative Placement – Refers to cases in which the child is placed by the Agency in the home of a relative, but custody of the child is held by the agency, rather than by the relative.

Risk Factors – Behaviors and conditions present in the child, parent, or family that likely will contribute to child maltreatment occurring in the future.

Safety Plan – Immediate interventions specifically designed to control identified safety threats when existing protective capacities have been overwhelmed or are insufficient. The safety plan should be considered part of an ongoing process that begins at the first contact and continues through to closure.

Safety Threats – Specific conditions that cause or sustain the potential of danger of serious harm to any child. These may be a situation, condition, behavior, thought, feeling or perception on the part of or involving the child's caregiver or other individuals with access to the child.

Substantiated CA/N – CA/N is typically substantiated through an admission by the person(s) responsible, an adjudication of child abuse and/or neglect, other forms of confirmation deemed valid by the agency, or a professional judgment made by agency staff that child abuse or neglect has occurred.

Sexual Abuse – Inappropriate sexual behavior with a child. It includes fondling a child's genitals, making the child fondle the adult's genitals, intercourse, incest, rape, sodomy, exhibitionism, sexual exploitation, or exposure to pornography. To be considered child abuse, these acts have to be committed by a person responsible for the care of a child (for example a babysitter, a parent, or a day care provider) or related to the child. If a stranger commits these acts, it would be considered sexual assault and handled solely by the police and criminal courts.

Temporary Custody (TC) – The pre-dispositional legal status of a child placed in temporary custody of a public children services agency, a private child-placing agency, either parent, a relative residing within or outside the state, or a probation officer for placement in a certified family foster home or in any other home approved by the court.

Treatment Foster Care – Foster home based treatment services for children whose special or exceptional needs cannot be met in other settings. The focus is on providing rehabilitative services to children with special or exceptional needs, with the primary location of treatment being in the treatment foster home. Treatment foster parents are required to complete specialized training.

Unsubstantiated (also Not Substantiated) – An investigation disposition that determines that there is not sufficient evidence under State law or policy to conclude that the child has been maltreated or is at risk of maltreatment. A CPS determination means that credible evidence does not exist that child abuse or neglect has occurred.