



Maryland Children's Alliance, Inc.

Mandated Reporter Training



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Training Objectives

- Understand the role of MCA and Maryland Child Advocacy Centers
- Define the types of child abuse and neglect
- Identify groups of children who may be at a higher risk for abuse or neglect
- Define Mandated Reporters
- Learn how to respond to a child who discloses abuse or neglect
- Understand the legal obligations of Mandated Reporters
- Learn how to make a report
- Understand the process that occurs after a report is made





Maryland Children's Alliance, Inc.

Empowering Maryland's Child Advocacy Centers



Maryland Children's Alliance is the accredited statewide chapter which convenes Maryland's 24 Child Advocacy Centers.

MCA and Maryland's Child Advocacy Centers are determined to lessen the devastating impact of child abuse and neglect by ensuring that trauma-informed services are available to those who need them.



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Types of Child Abuse & Neglect



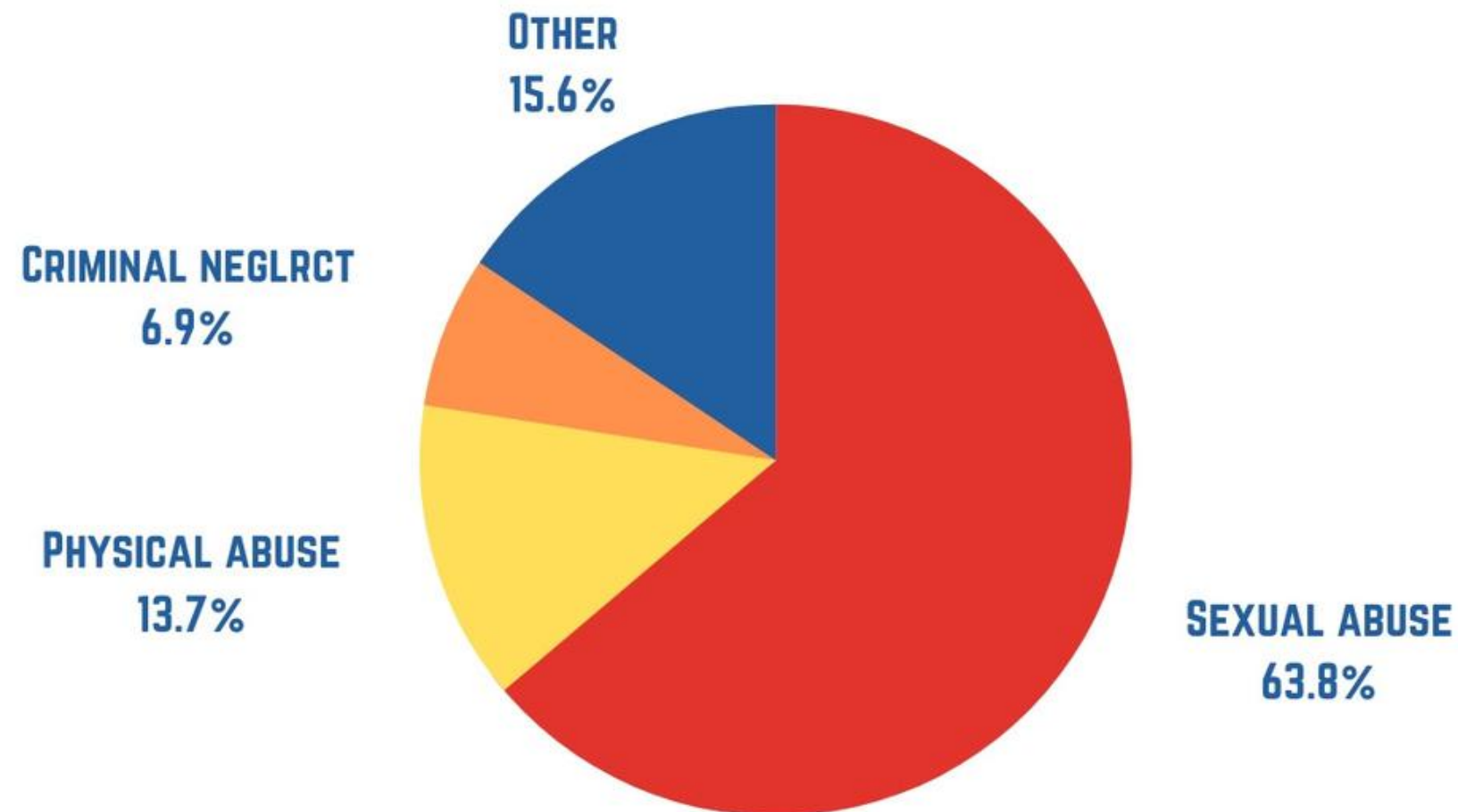
- Physical Abuse
- Mental Abuse 
- Sexual Abuse
- exploitation
- Sexual Assault
- Human Trafficking
- Neglect
- criminal neglect

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Maryland Statistics 2022

Maryland CACs served 5,665 children in 2022 for the following types of child maltreatment:



- Sexual abuse - 63.8%
- Physical abuse - 13.7%
- Criminal neglect - 6.9%
- Other - 15.6%

“Other” abuse may include witness to violence, witness to drugs, multiple forms of abuse, mental abuse, and trafficking.

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Physical Abuse

Definition

Physical injury (not necessarily visible) of a child under circumstances that indicate that a child's health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed.



Signs of Physical Abuse

- Visible bruises
- Unexplained illness or injuries
- Parents use harsh physical discipline
- Child absent from the classroom
- Personal hygiene and/or surroundings are not taken care of
- Parent or child is abusing drugs or alcohol



Mental Abuse

Definition

Mental injury means the observable, identifiable, and substantial impairment of a child's mental or psychological ability to function caused by an intentional act or series of acts, regardless of whether there was an intent to harm the child.



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Behavioral & Emotional Signs

- Constantly trying to please or attention-seeking
- Aggressive, domineering behavior
- Unable to trust people
- Withdrawn
- Telling lies
- Inability to have fun
- Low self-esteem

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Sexual Abuse

Definition

An act or acts involving sexual molestation or exploitation whether physical injuries are sustained or not.

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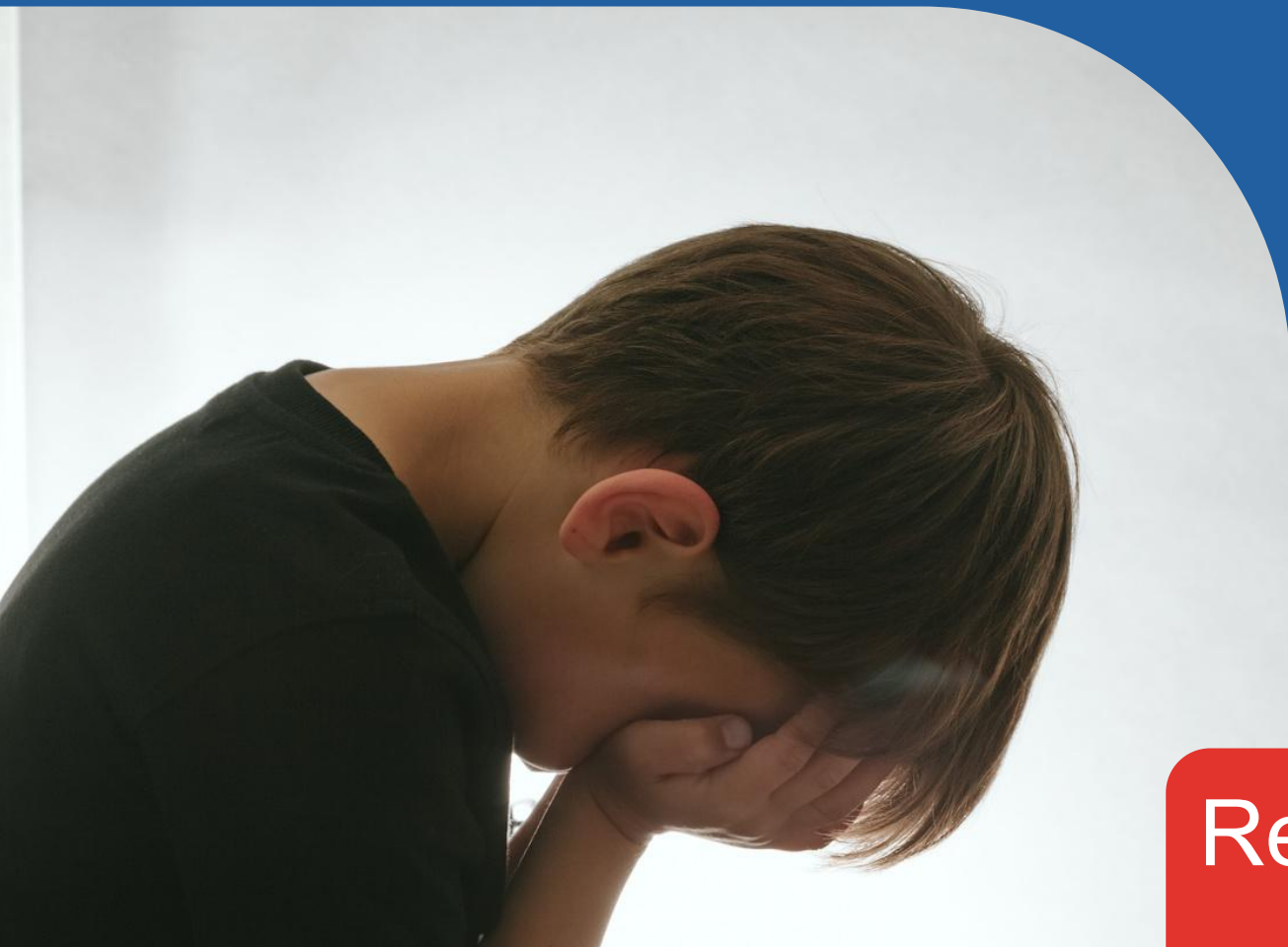


Potential Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Child has difficulty walking or sitting
- Experiences bleeding, bruising, or swelling in the genital area
- Suddenly refuses to go to school
- Reports nightmares or wets the bed
- Engages in self-harm
- Has a sudden change in appetite
- Demonstrates unusual sexual knowledge or

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Sexual Assault

Definition

Sexual assault is a specific form of sexual abuse that involves non-consensual sexual contact or activity. Sexual assault is defined as sexual contact with a child when the adult does not have care and custody of the child. It is a criminal offense.

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exploitation

Definition

Exploitation can be defined as the act of involving a child for economic or other reasons in criminal activities. Exploitation may take place at the hands of parents, caregivers, neighbors, schoolmates, cults, employers, etc.



Signs and Indicators of Exploitation

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behavior, mood swings
- Withdrawal or isolation from family and friends
- Fear, anxiety, or depression
- Unexplained injuries
- Sexualized behavior that is not²

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Human Trafficking

Child trafficking includes labor and/or sex trafficking. In the United States, the [Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000](#) (TVPA), defines adult and  minor victims of labor trafficking as anyone subjected to the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

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Neglect

Definition

“Neglect” means the leaving of a child unattended or other failure to give proper care and attention to a child by any parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of the child under circumstances that indicate that the child’s health or welfare is harmed or placed at substantial risk of harm; or mental injury to the child or a substantial risk of mental injury.



Potential Signs of Neglect

- Is frequently absent from school
- Beggars or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical care, including dental or vision care
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care



Criminal Neglect

Definition

Criminal negligence refers to conduct in which a caregiver ignores a known or obvious risk or disregards the life and safety of a child.



Signs and Indicators of criminal neglect

- Inadequate Supervision
- Inadequate hygiene and forms of reckless disregard for the child's safety and welfare
- Failure to provide or to allow needed medical care.



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Risk Factors That Contribute to Child Abuse and Neglect

Factors such as age, overall health, and the child's physical, mental, emotional, and social development can contribute to an increased vulnerability to maltreatment. ¹⁰

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Identifying Grooming Behaviors

Definition

Child grooming is a deliberate process by which offenders gradually initiate and maintain sexual relationships with victims in secrecy.

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Typical Stages of Grooming:

- Victim Selection
- Gaining Access and Isolating the Victim
- Trust Development
- Sexualizing the Relationship
- Maintaining Control

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Categories of Mandated Reporters:

- Health practitioners
- Educators
- Human service workers
- Law enforcement officers
(not limited to above)

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Responding to a child who discloses abuse or neglect

Stay Calm and
Reassuring

**Believe the
Child**

Ensure Privacy



Listen
Actively

Don't ask
unnecessary
questions/details

Report to
Authorities

Empower the
Child

Express
Gratitude

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Without CACs



With CACs



Understanding the Child Advocacy Center Process

The  Child Advocacy Center (CAC) is a child-friendly facility where professionals from various agencies and disciplines support the child and family through the investigative process of reporting and prosecuting abuse and the therapeutic process of healing from abuse.

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Legal Obligations of Mandated Reporter

Each health practitioner, police officer, educator, or human service worker, acting in a professional capacity in Maryland State who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect:



- shall notify the local department of social services or the appropriate law enforcement agency; **AND**
- if acting as a staff member of a hospital, public health agency, child care institution, juvenile detention center, school, or similar institution, shall immediately notify and give all required information to the head of the institution¹⁰ or the designee of the head.



Legal Obligations of Mandated Reporter

An individual who notifies the appropriate authorities shall make:

- **An Oral Report** by telephone (call **1-800-91PREVENT**) or direct communication, as soon as possible to the local department of social services or appropriate law enforcement agency; **AND**
- **A Written Report** ([Form DHS/SSA 180](#)) to the local department **not later than 48 hours** after the contact, examination, attention, or treatment that caused the individual to believe that the child had been subjected to abuse or neglect; and a copy of the report to the local State's Attorney.

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[View Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Form \(DHS/SSA 180\)](#)

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an individual who makes a report should include in the report the following information

If known:

- the name, age, and home address of the child;
- the name and home address of the child's parent or other person who is responsible for the child's care;
- the whereabouts of the child;
- the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect of the child, including any evidence or information available to the reporter concerning possible previous instances of abuse or neglect; and
- any other information that would help to determine: the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect; and the identity of any individual responsible for the abuse or neglect.

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Failure to Report

A person who is required to provide notice of suspected abuse or neglect of a child or make a written report of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under § 5–704 of the Family Law Article may not knowingly fail to provide the required notice or make the required written report if the person has actual knowledge of the abuse or neglect.

Penalty

Mandated Reporter who fails to report suspected child abuse/neglect is subject to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or both.

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Reporter Rights

Any person who makes or participates in making a report of abuse or neglect or a report of a substantial risk of sexual abuse or participates in an investigation or a resulting judicial proceeding shall have the immunity described from civil liability or criminal penalty.



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Confidentiality

Information contained in records or reports concerning child abuse or neglect is protected. Federal and State laws restrict the circumstances under which information contained in records and reports may be disclosed. Mandated reporters and local department staff must comply with Maryland confidentiality laws provided in Family Law Article §5-707 and the Human Services Article §§1-201-1-203, Annotated Code of Maryland when asked to disclose or discuss any information contained in records concerning child abuse and neglect.

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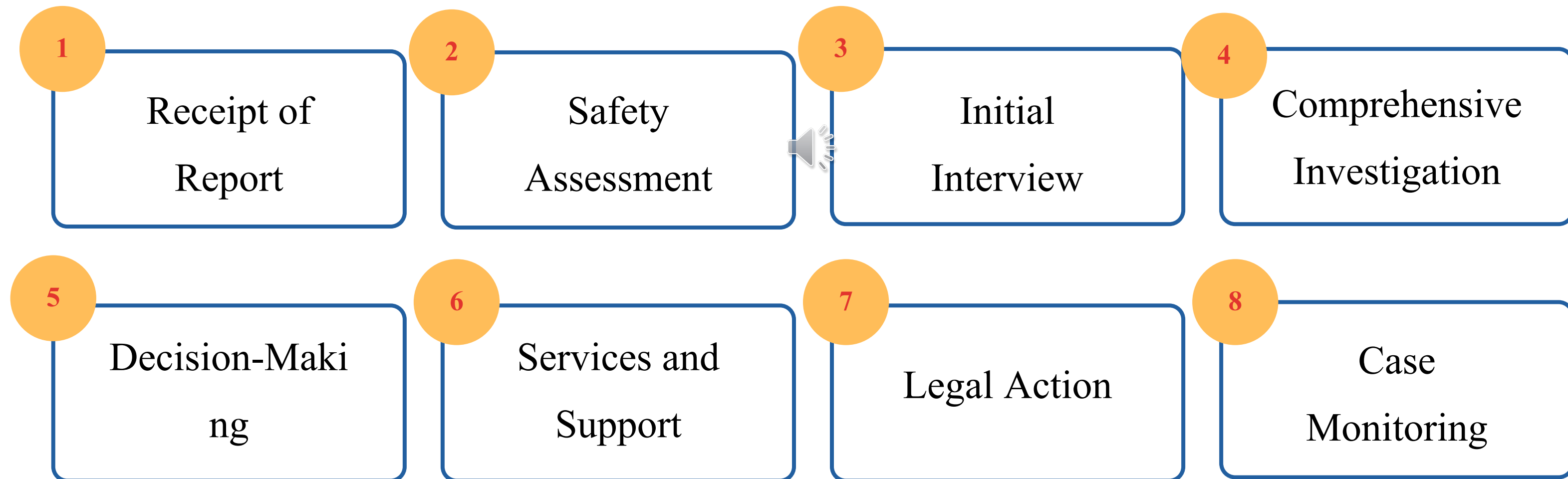
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Understand the process that occurs after a report is made

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References

- Maryland Family Law Code § 5-701(b); COMAR 07.02.07.02
- Maryland Child Protective Services - dhs.maryland.gov
- Maryland Family Law Code § 5-701(r)
- Maryland Family Law Code § 5-701(y)(z)
- Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network
- 7 FAM 1732
- 22 U.S. Code § 7102(9)
- Maryland Family Law Code § 5-701(s)
- Child Welfare Information Gateway - [Child Neglect: A Guide for Prevention, Assessment, and Intervention](#)
- Child Welfare Information Gateway - [Child Factors That Contribute to Child Abuse and Neglect](#)
- State of Maryland – Child Protective Services- [Form DHS/SSA 180](#) - REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT
- [National Children's Alliance](#)
- Maryland Family Law Code § 5-704(a),(b),(c)
- Maryland Law Criminal Code § 3-602.2
- Maryland Family Law Code § 5-708
- Maryland Family Law Article § 5-707; Human Services Article §§ 1-201-1-203



References

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12. RAINN- <https://www.rainn.org/news/grooming-know-warning-signs>
13. State of Maryland – Child Protective Services- [Form DHS/SSA 180](#) - REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT
14. [National Children's Alliance](#)
15. National Children's Alliance - [The CAC Model](#)
16. Maryland Family Law Code §5-704(a),(b),(c)
17. Maryland Law Criminal Code § 3-602.2
18. Maryland Family Law Code § 5-708
19. Maryland Family Law Article §5-707; Human Services Article §§1-201-1-203
20. Child Welfare Information Gateway - [Understand the process that occurs after a report is made](#)