

Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Checklist for

Child Protective/Child Welfare Services

The purpose of this checklist is to offer a guide to ensure collaboration for a coordinated response to a child victim identified in a drug related environment and is intended to reduce the trauma to children as much as possible. This checklist is intended to specify information that needs to be shared between law enforcement and CPS in those situations where a child is found in a drug-using environment or parental/caretaker substance abuse is present, and law enforcement decides to make a referral to CPS.

Date: _____

Law Enforcement Agency Making Referral: _____

Officer Making Referral and Contact Information: _____

Child Protection/Investigative Worker: _____

Name(s) of child(ren) and date(s) of birth:

Name of Parent(s) Caregiver(s) alleged to place child(ren) at risk due to a drug/alcohol related environment: (e.g., driving under the influence, drugs on property where child located)

Name: _____ Relationship to child: _____

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General:

- Identify circumstances leading to referral and document in reports
 - Parent/Caregiver is alleged to be substance abuser or dependent and child is neglected and/or in hazardous situation
 - Parent/Caregiver is alleged to have placed child at risk of harm
 - Parent/Caregiver is alleged to have engaged in
 - drug sales
 - manufacturing (e.g., clandestine drug lab)
 - cultivation
 - other drug-related environment
 - Mother is alleged to have used substances during pregnancy
- Note signs of neglect including availability of clean air, clean food, and clean water in the home

Determine if allegations should be filed for a particular form of child maltreatment that is determined by investigation to be substantiated or indicated under State law such as physical abuse, neglect or deprivation of necessities, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional maltreatment, and other forms included in State law.

- o Physical abuse
- o Neglect or deprivation of necessities
- o Medical neglect
- o Sexual abuse
- o Psychosocial or emotional maltreatment
- o No alleged maltreatment
- o Other
- o Unknown

Ascertain the child's need for medical assessment and treatment:

- Determine if medical care and assessment is needed and coordinate care
- Ensure the child's first urine sample is collected for drug testing (diapers may need to be saved)
- Obtain consent for medical evaluation and testing from parents and/or guardians of child victim
- Obtain a releases of information
- Provide transportation to medical facility

Coordinate with Law Enforcement for child's immediate placement:

- Coordinate placement of children both on and offsite (e.g., child in school and must be removed) and facilitate transportation of child to emergency shelter or placement in an approach that reduces trauma to child.
- Determine safe placement for the child that will prevent further blaming or intimidation of a child victim.
- As age appropriate, tell child where parent and child are going and who will be taking care of child in the short term and any attempts to notify their close relatives about where they are going to be.

Coordinate with law enforcement and medical personnel on the documentation of evidence for each child victim to reduce the number of interviews and gathering of evidence (including photograph of child, documentation of physical state of child, living conditions).

- Document height of child and height of any potential hazards including, but not limited to, controlled substances, needles, chemicals, firearms, weapons, pornography.
- Do not allow unsupervised time for suspects with children to prevent contamination of the forensic interview and intimidation of a child witness.
- Authorize medical intervention for the child in accordance with local jurisdiction policy.
- Clandestine lab cases: Provide children with clean change of clothing, ensure no clothes or toys are removed from the home and no one returns to the home to remove contaminated items. These are not safe for children. If not a lab case, ensure child is allowed to take toy or personal belonging with them.
- Complete report and share with law enforcement, medical staff and other needed service providers.