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Giving Root to Change...
...Planting Promises for Children

THE CENTER FOR
Children's Justice

Pursuit to improve ChildLine's operations and to secure independent oversight[1]

June 16, 2010   The Rendell Administration's Commission for Children and Families reports that "Since January 2010, between 9 and 13 percent of calls each month have been abandoned because of long hold times due to ChildLine operating at reduced staff levels."

June 24, 2010   The Center for Children's Justice (C4CJ)[2] wries to the Secretary of the Department of Public Welfare (DPW)[3] and standing committees of the General Assembly (e.g., Senate Aging and Youth, Senate Public Health and Welfare, House Children and Youth) stressing, "Despite ChildLine's fundamental role within the state's child welfare system, recently it has been reported that each month between nine and thirteen percent of all calls are being abandoned. We urge you to review the procedures and staffing of ChildLine to ensure that this vital life line for abused and neglected children is able to effectively fulfill its duties."

August 24, 2010   C4CJ confirms with the standing committees of the PA General Assembly that DPW data indicates "6,099 calls (nearly nine percent) to ChildLine were either abandoned or deflected (A/D) in the first six months of 2010." C4CJ further notes, "By way of comparison a total of 5,891 (or 4.7 percent) A/D calls were recorded for all of 2009. It should also be noted that during the first six months of 2010, ChildLine answered 2,879 more calls than during the same period last year." C4CJ asks the legislative committees to:
1. Establish performance measures for ChildLine
2. Require regular (e.g., quarterly) dissemination of data to the General Assembly and public about the operations of ChildLine (e.g., calls received, calls abandoned/deflected, staff vacancies, and utilization of overtime).

December 2010   The Associated Press reports that the Rendell Administration flagged Childline's operations within transition documents prepared for the incoming Corbett Administration.[4]

January 5, 2011   The York Daily Record publishes an editorial (Opinion: Child abuse hot line missed too many reports).[5]

February 2011   C4CJ makes a request of Auditor General Jack Wagner to undertake an audit of ChildLine.

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[1] The Intake Unit (800-932-0313) is available 24 hours to receive reports of suspected child abuse.
http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/childwelfareservices/childlineandabuseregistry/#.V0LOjXYm6yw
[2] C4CJ was formerly known as the Protect Our Children Committee.
[3] The Department of Public Welfare has been renamed the Department of Human Services.
[4] http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2010/12/pennsylvania_gov_ed_rendell_gi.html
[5] http://www.ydr.com/

April 2011	C4CJ mobilizes 60 organizations urging Governor Tom Corbett and the Pennsylvania General Assembly to convene a Commission to Improve the Prevention, Identification and Treatment of Child Abuse. The request identified seven questions to be answered by such a commission including: How is ChildLine – the state's abuse hotline – functioning?
November 2011	Gerald Sandusky is arrested and criminally charged.
December 13, 2011	PA Senate adopts Senate Resolution 250 establishing the Task Force on Child Protection.[6]
December 14, 2011	PA House of Representatives adopts House Resolution 522 establishing the Task Force on Child Protection.[7]
November 27, 2012	The Task Force on Child Protection releases its report and recommendations.[8]
September 3, 2014	C4CJ releases its 2014 Child Protection Gubernatorial Questionnaire including the question: *Will you initiate an independent audit of ChildLine in order to analyze the hotline's staffing trends (e.g., number of staff, turnover rates, use of overtime) and the recent implementation of modern technology?*
October 22, 2014	C4CJ coordinates more than 100 organizations and individuals to renew a call for Pennsylvania's gubernatorial candidates to respond to the September 3, 2014 questionnaire in order to provide voters with specifics about how they would prioritize prevention and ensure that children can live free from child abuse growing up in safe and supported families.
March 2015	PA DHS Secretary Dallas testifies before Senate and House Appropriations Committees identifying the 4 steps taken by Governor Wolf and DHS to improve ChildLine operations including increasing staff, enhancing the information technology system, improving staff efficiency, and encouraging online child abuse reporting and requests for background checks.[9]
December 2, 2015	Auditor General Eugene DePasquale announces "the start of a performance audit of the Department of Human Services' administration of the Statewide Child Abuse Hotline, commonly known as ChildLine."[10] He announces the audit will review ChildLine beginning with January 2014 to determine the "effectiveness" of the "intake process for ChildLine" and to "determine whether child abuse and neglect calls to ChildLine are processed in compliance with applicable laws, regulations and policies."

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[6] http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billInfo/billInfo.cfm?sYear=2011&sInd=0&body=s&type=r&bn=250

[7] http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billInfo/billInfo.cfm?sYear=2011&sInd=0&body=h&type=r&bn=522

[8] http://www.childprotection.state.pa.us/Resources/press/2012-11-27%20Child%20Protection%20Report%20FINAL.pdf

[9] http://www.pabudget.com/Display/SiteFiles/154/Documents/FY%202015-16%20GF%20Budget/Hearings/Hearing%20Summaries/Budget%20Hearing%20Summary%203.25.2015.pdf

[10] http://www.paauditor.gov/press-releases/auditor-general-depasquale-announces-audit-of-department-of-human-services%E2%80%99-administration-of-statewide-child-abuse-hotline