

Children's Justice & Advocacy Report

To promote community responsibility so every Pennsylvania child is protected from child abuse, including sexual abuse.

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Abused children's "voices will be heard, needs addressed" in Wolf Administration

Earlier this week Sarah Galbally and Sam Robinson, who served as policy advisors to Tom Wolf during the campaign and next week will join his administration, opened an important dialogue with child advocates.

In a meeting convened by the Center for Children's Justice, Wolf's staff heard strong encouragement that he bring a fresh perspective so that protecting PA children is recognized as a statewide strategy – cutting across state agencies and departments – versus being sequestered to the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Discussion ensued about the varied ways in which state departments (e.g., Corrections, Education, Health, Human Services, Insurance, State) have the opportunity to elevate child abuse prevention and protection. Galbally reflected on Wolf's own commitment to "break down silos" and to examine

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Child Maltreatment 2013 Report Released

[Child Maltreatment Report](#) 2013, which is issued annually based on child abuse and neglect data collected from the 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, was released Thursday.

The Children's Bureau of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families in the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services oversees the collection of the data through the

National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS).

Since 1988, federal law has required this collection of data and ACF has issued the annual Maltreatment Report. There are strengths to NCANDS and there are also inherent limitations to the data's ability to tell a

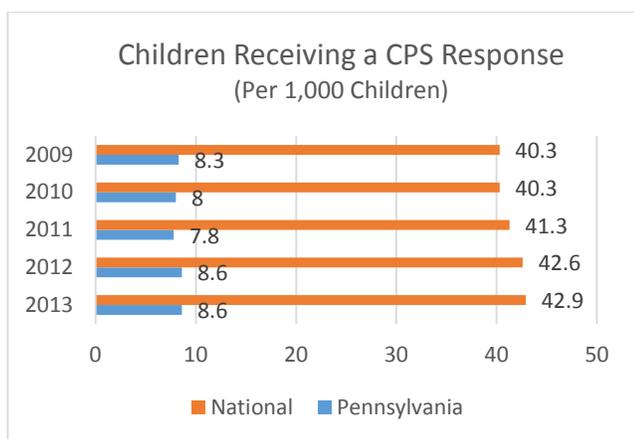
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PA retains its statistical outlier status

The 2013 Child Maltreatment Report reveals that for federal fiscal year 2013, the rate of child abuse victims declined from 9.3 to 9.1 per 1,000 children – translating into an “estimated 23,000 fewer victims in 2013.”

Before a child might be determined to be a victim, a report of suspected child abuse is made. In 2013, nationally 42.9 per 1,000 children were the subject of a report that led to an investigation or assessment. In PA

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NCANDS examines if states with a reporting by all standard changes the screened-in dynamic

The 2013 Maltreatment Report notes that “recent high-profile” child abuse cases have triggered legislative interest in considering making every adult mandated reporters.

Within days of Gerald Sandusky being arrested and criminally charged with serial child sexual abuse, [United States Senator Bob Casey, Jr.](#) introduced [legislation that sought to “require all adults to report child abuse and neglect to the appropriate authorities.”](#) His legislation - Speak Up to Protect Every Abused Kid (Speak Up) Act of 2011 – attempted to link a state’s receipt of federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) funding, in part, to the requirement that

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Wolf’s pick for PA State Police hails from a state leading the way on Lethality Assessment

[Colonel Marcus L. Brown](#), currently the superintendent of the Maryland State Police and former Baltimore City police officer, has agreed to serve as the head of the Pennsylvania State Police.

Brown will head to his neighboring state after serving a Governor, who included reducing violent crimes committed against women and children as one of his Administration’s 15 strategic goals. In 2008, Maryland Governor O’Malley outlined steps to reduce violence against women and children by 25%. The Governor also established the Governor’s Family Violence Council charged with providing “timely and accurate information on

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“Chaos” plagues Healthy PA enrollment

Governor-elect Wolf announced this week that Teresa Miller, a former legislative aide to the Oregon governor and Administrator of the Oregon Insurance Division, will lead the Pennsylvania Department of Insurance.

Miller will leave [her current private sector health care consulting](#) work in Washington, D.C. to ensure Wolf can fulfill his promise to expand traditional Medicaid – undoing Governor Corbett’s [Healthy PA](#).

Wolf and Miller will take over next week as the Department of Human Services (DHS) [acknowledged to the Philadelphia Inquirer](#) that of the 600,000 eligible Pennsylvanians, 151,000 have

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Brooks and Haywood to lead Senate Aging and Youth Committee

Two newly elected members of the Pennsylvania Senate will chair the Senate Aging and Youth Committee.

Republican Senator Michele Brooks, who previously served in the PA House of Representatives and was a Mercer County Commissioner and United Way Leader, is the Majority Chair. "Understanding that our children

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CPSL FAQ: Are volunteers required to be trained now that they are mandated reporters?

No, there is no legal requirement that volunteers be trained in recognizing and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.

Of course given the important responsibility involved in reporting suspected child abuse and the potential legal ramifications for willfully not making a report (e.g., being sentenced to prison or facing a fine), training makes sense.

Training is also reasonable in that a number of online resources – approved by the Department of

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CPSL FAQ: Does a mandated reporter have any legal obligations that extend beyond the official workplace or volunteer setting?

Yes, but not as broadly as some public education materials or training are suggesting.

Despite consistent direction from the Department of Human Services (DHS), many mandated reporters – across communities in Pennsylvania - are being trained that the legal obligations related to mandated report is a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week reality and responsibility.

Upfront let's acknowledge that any person – mandated reporter or not – always has the

opportunity to go beyond any legal obligations. There are often fine lines between what is legally required with what might be morally expected. Still the question is about the legal obligations for mandated reporters.

Prior to the recent change in PA law, the law was [To Keep Reading, Become a Subscriber!](#)