OREGON CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE ANNUAL REPORT

2021

Oregon Department of Human Services

CHILD WELFARE DIVISION

Oregon Child Abuse Hotline

Table of contents

A Note from the District Manager ..... Page 3

Guiding principle 1: Supporting families and promoting prevention ..... Page 4

Guiding principle 2: Enhancing staff and infrastructure..... Page 5

Guiding principle 3: Strengthening the structure of our system by using data and continuous quality improvement.....Page 10

Closing .....Page 14

A note from the district manager

The Child Welfare Division's Vision for Transformation is the spirit of what we believe the child welfare system can and should be in Oregon. We believe everyone can play a role in supporting families and that when families and communities are strong, fewer children experience abuse.

The Oregon Child Abuse Hotline (ORCAH) is the front door of the Child Welfare system. It not only screens reports of child abuse but also supports child and family well-being.

ORCAH's mission is to receive reports of child abuse and provide excellent customer service with equitable and consistent decision making to ensure safety for Oregon's children. We have used the Vision for Transformation as a roadmap for how we can transform. The three guiding principles give us direction to achieve the Vision for Transformation. This Annual Report will highlight how ORCAH carried out the Vision for Transformation in 2021. Each guiding principle includes updates and specific strategies to improve our outcomes.

Since launching our centralized system in April 2019, various challenges have made it difficult to manage incoming call volume. These challenges led to wait times for callers. To respond to these challenges, we are seeking to continuously improve based on feedback from staff, partners and collaborators. This will ensure ORCAH is providing the level of customer service that all callers and reporters deserve.

The pandemic changed the way we work, and 2021 was a rebuilding year at ORCAH. The pandemic affected Oregonians, Child Welfare, ORCAH and our workforce, but the lessons we learned are now shaping where ORCAH fits within the larger safety net for children and families.

Kristen Khamnohack
Screening Program and ORCAH Manager

Guiding principle 1: Supporting families and promoting prevention

Structured Decision Making®

ORCAH strives to reduce disparities in screening and improve consistency and transparency in decision making. It also seeks to promote prevention opportunities so fewer families need Child Protective Services interventions. To those ends, ORCAH began working with Evident Change in July 2021. Evident Change is a private nonprofit that uses data to inform systems to achieve better outcomes for children and families. ORCAH and Evident Change are creating a Structured Decision Making® (SDM) Screening and Response Time Assessment tool. This will be the first of several SDM tools used in Child Welfare.

The goals for the SDM are to:

- Make screening decisions and assignments to Child Protective Services more consistent and transparent
- Safely improve screening efficiency, and
- Address disparity in screening decisions.

Future versions of the SDM tool will carve a pathway for Family First prevention work.

By the end of 2021, ORCAH and Evident Change had a draft of the SDM tool. They had also gathered feedback from community and internal partners. Inter-rater reliability testing finished in November 2021. Improvement suggestions were collected by the end of December 2021. ORCAH will begin using the SDM tool in 2022.

Hospital notification letters

In the past, ODHS Child Welfare has notified hospitals with a request (not a mandate) to contact Child Welfare when an identified individual gives birth. This was done out of concern the infant may be subjected to abuse or neglect.

In June 2021, ORCAH stopped notifying hospitals when the individual giving birth is not receiving Child Welfare services. The department does have the authority to send a hospital notification if needed. The ORCAH district manager and the Child Welfare deputy director must approve the notification.

Historical use of hospital notifications was identified as a practice of oversurveillance rooted in bias and systemic racism. ORCAH acknowledges that Child Welfare has caused significant harm to communities of color and is committed to changing practices that perpetuate systemic racism.

Guiding principle 2: Enhancing staff and infrastructure

Training

ORCAH's internal training program provides new employee training and continuing education training. New employee training includes the Screening Training Academy and, in partnership with ORCAH office managers, Business Staff Training Academy. In 2021, the ORCAH Training Program provided:

- One Business Staff Training Academy for five new business staff (23.5 hours of training)
- Three Screening Training Academies for 45 new screeners (78.5 hours of training each), and
- Four continuing education training blocks (two hours each):
  - » Drug and Alcohol training for 138 staff
  - » Safe Sleep training for 131 staff
  - » Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) training for 179 staff, including staff from The Office of Training, Investigations and Safety, and
  - » OpenScape Agent Portal training for 123 staff.

ORCAH supervisors trained their staff in pronoun use in a two-hour training block. They also coached them to ask reporters for their date of birth. This is a new practice at ORCAH aimed at better identifying mandatory reporters who make multiple reports over time.

Equity and inclusion

The ORCAH Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) committee aims to address systemic issues that have led to inequity within Child Welfare. The group seeks actionable ways to create equity and safety for people of all races, genders, sexual orientations and socioeconomic statuses and for people with disabilities within the communities ORCAH serves. This includes Child Welfare employees and children and families in Oregon. In the past two years, the IDEA committee has shifted from a discussion style group to a sub-committee style group. It now has a training budget authorized by the ODHS Office of Equity and Multicultural Services (OEMS).

The IDEA committee meets twice a month. It provides the same agenda and content provided at both meetings. This allows employees on a variety of shifts to participate. The meeting is led by two co-chair roles which rotate quarterly. The volunteer pairs lead the ORCAH meetings and take part in state-wide equity and inclusion committee events. There are two subcommittees. The Newsletter subcommittee publishes a newsletter with original content for ORCAH staff semi-

regularly. The Training Advisory Committee develops and seeks out training for ORCAH staff. IDEA meetings start with a land acknowledgement and reading of community agreements. Then the subcommittees report out on business that has been carried out since the last meetings. Meeting leaders often share a video as a platform for discussion. Conversations relate to general topics of inclusion and accessibility as well as ORCAH-specific topics of the work and workplace. IDEA provides feedback to different ODHS entities upon request to ensure an equity lens is applied to process updates and new initiatives.

Talking Boldly

The IDEA Training Advisory Committee recommended using the last training budget for Talking Boldly, a curriculum by The Verna Myers Company. The curriculum was first presented to managers and Training Advisory Committee leaders using funds from the general ORCAH budget. The same training will be given to the entire ORCAH community in May 2022.

Presenting Talking Boldly to the entire ORCAH community is tied to a screening expectation that callers are asked about the culture of the involved family. Quality assurance reviews reveal that this is an area needing improvement at ORCAH.

The Training Advisory Committee believes staff cannot consider information about another's culture if they cannot articulate their own culture. The Talking Boldly curriculum seeks to develop staff's ability to identify and share their culture with others. The other goal of bringing this curriculum to ORCAH is to create a sense of belonging and community among staff. Familiarity with these kinds of honest discussions can foster better inclusion among ORCAH's diverse workforce.

Safety and Wellness Committee

Safety and wellbeing are important parts of enhancing and supporting staff. ORCAH's Safety and Wellness Committee meets monthly. Its members include screeners, business staff, a supervisor, an operations and policy analyst, an office manager, and a program manager. In 2021, the committee:

- Raised funds for recipient awards
- Added an "Out and About" page to the ORCAH OWL site to share pictures of staff engaging in fun outside of work
- Addressed safety concerns in the building and parking lot
- Sponsored a fitness challenge with more than 20 participants

- Collected enough donations for the food drive to provide 857 meals to those in need, and
- Developed an employee recognition program to begin in 2022.

ORCAH Documentation Guide (ODG)

To improve efficiency and consistency among screeners, ORCAH began developing a guided documentation tool called the ORCAH Documentation Guide (ODG). The first phase was carried out in 2020. ORCAH has continued to develop more functions within the ODG in 2021. The ODG workgroup asked for feedback from users. It also invited a representative from ORCAH's IDEA committee to the workgroup to advise on user experience and equity.

In early 2021, the ODG workgroup began to develop the Participant Matching function within the ODG. The new search function improves the likelihood of matching records accurately and makes it easier to find duplicate records. The improved search function uses a weighted search criteria that does not exclude results when exact criteria do not match. The Participant Matching function also allows screeners to update OR-Kids records within the same page. This limits the user's need to navigate to other systems or pages to make updates.

The workgroup also began adapting the Structured Decision-Making tool to function within the ODG. The current project goal is to move all primary elements of the OR-Kids Child Protective Services Familial Screening Report to the ODG by June 2022. At that time, screeners will create and complete reports entirely within the ODG application.

ORCAH Labor Management Committee

ORCAH Labor Management Committee includes ORCAH leadership and SEIU Local 503 union labor representatives (screeners and business support staff). It meets monthly to collaborate around workforce issues and operational challenges.

In partnership with the IDEA Committee and Safety and Wellness Committee, the union facilitated a culture survey in spring 2021. The survey highlighted strengths and areas needing improvement in:

- Management support
- Workload and its effect on workers' well-being
- Bias, inequity and discrimination, and
- Work culture and communication.

The results of the survey were shared with all ORCAH staff. The committees and ORCAH management worked to address the areas needing improvement. In summer 2021, a workgroup of screeners, supported by the Office of Continuous Improvement, developed five ideas to improve practices and flow of work. These ideas resulted in changes and improvements at ORCAH.

Performance management

In 2021, ORCAH put several operational strategies in place to improve responsiveness to the community by reducing wait times and abandoned calls. Screener, supervisor and leadership expectations were updated. A queue management plan was put in place that includes:

- 20 minutes of post-call processing time
- Updates to status codes to provide for cases needing immediate attention
- A "code red" threshold when wait times are more than 20 minutes, and
- A protocol for handing off incomplete screening reports between the outgoing shift and the oncoming shift.

ORCAH used a data-informed performance management tool called CARE card (Criteria to Achieve Response Excellence) monthly to inform supervisors of screener performance. These strategies were not effective in reaching the goals.

At the end of 2021, ORCAH developed new strategies to use in 2022 and ended the use of the CARE card in its existing form. Data analysis led to a new operational strategy. Planning began for an improved, data-informed performance management tool called Weekly Work. This tool informs supervisors of screener performance weekly. These new strategies were implemented early 2022 and were immediately effective in reducing wait times for reporters. Further analysis will be provided in future reports.

OpenScape call center software updates

2021 was a year of stabilization for staff regarding use of ORCAH's call center software, OpenScape. Most of the changes around the OpenScape call center programs were related to obstacles arising from remote work.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, ORCAH staff have answered calls through a complicated process that allowed the system to forward calls to state cell phones. While the call forwarding worked relatively well, calls were sometimes dropped or disconnected due to latency issues with the state network, staff internet service providers or even the callers' own cellular service. ORCAH

leadership collaborated with IBM (now Kyndryl, who develop and maintain the OpenScape system), Atos (technical support for OpenScape) and the state service desk to identify system issue trends and solutions.

These groups meet biweekly to continue to proactively address issues and consider changes to improve system efficiency and caller experience. These meetings have been productive in identifying solutions for ORCAH.

One of the solutions identified in these meetings was having the screeners transition from the older desktop version of OpenScape to an online browser version. All screening staff were trained to use the Agent Portal browser application in October 2021. Agent Portal is more intuitive and allows for upgrades without users needing to install updates. ORCAH also began rolling out OpenScape Desktop Client, a softphone application, to reduce call-forwarding issues. The softphone allows screeners to handle calls through their computer. This reduces the potential points of call disruption. Atos and Kyndryl can provide greater technical support for the softphone application because it is an OpenScape product.

Toward the end of 2021, ORCAH began work on projects to enhance caller experience through updates to the phone tree, hold music and caller priority. Many of these changes will be put in place in 2022.

Guiding principle 3: Strengthening the structure of our system by using data and continuous quality improvement

Data

ORCAH regularly uses data to understand and communicate our work. Data also informs performance management decisions.

ORCAH receives calls and cross-reported police reports. These are collectively referred to as contacts.

Not all contacts result in a documented screening report. Contacts that are not documented may be:

- Duplicative information
- Information unrelated to an allegation of abuse or concern for child safety, or
- A question or request for services.

Documented contacts are recorded as either a screening report or a case note.

- Screening reports include:
  - » An abuse allegation that is assigned, or
  - » A condition, circumstance or behavior that poses a risk to a child but is not an allegation and is closed at screening.
- Case notes include information on an open child welfare case.

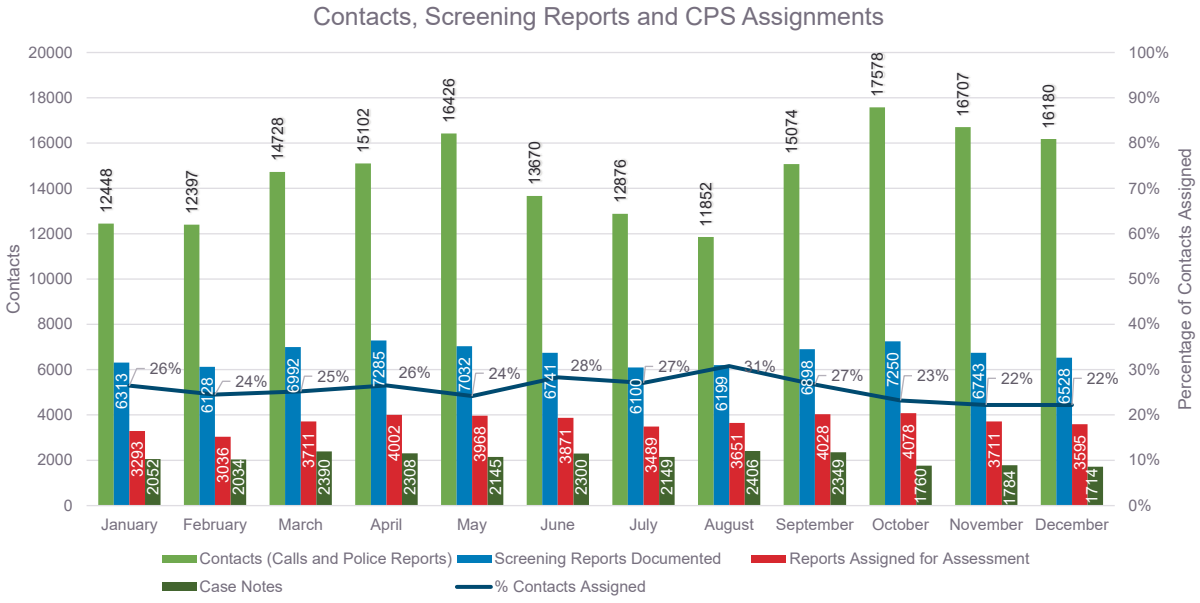
Important data that ORCAH monitors regularly includes:

- Call volume
- Cross reported police reports
- Average wait times
- Maximum wait times
- Service level (the percent of calls answered in under 4 minutes), and
- Abandonment rate (the percent of callers that hang up while on hold).

As noted on following page, ORCAH answered 111,388 calls in 2021. ORCAH receives calls in 5 call queues.

2021 Documentation

Total Contacts:	Total Reports:	Total Assigned:	Contacts Assigned:
175,038	**80,209**	**44,433**	**25%**

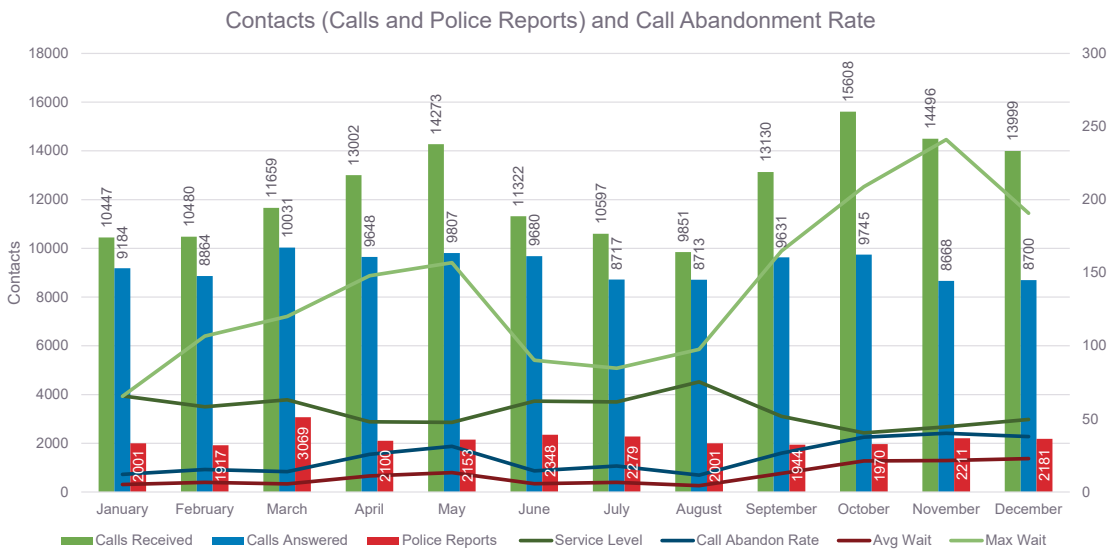


2021 ORCAH Contacts

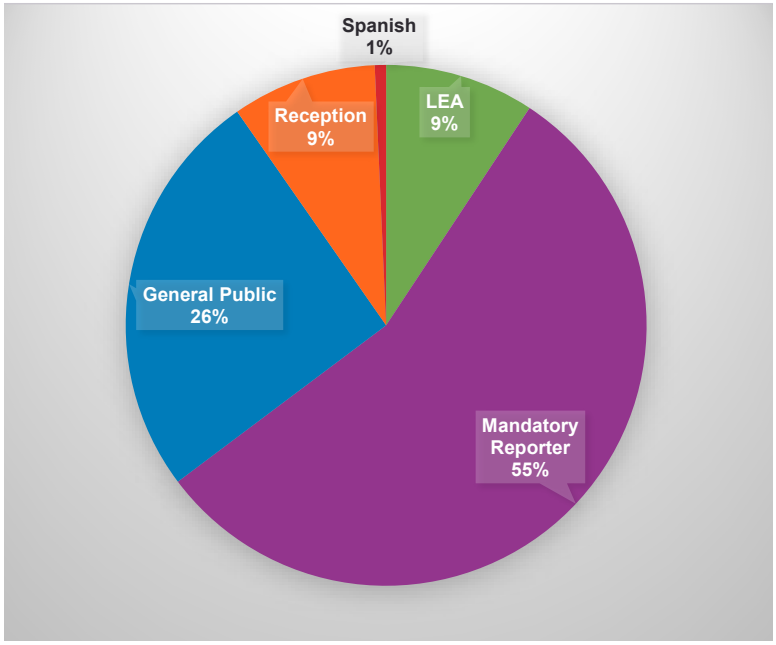
Calls Received:	Police X-Reports:	Calls Answered:	Abandon Rate (Calls):
148,864	**26,174**	**111,388**	**25%**

Service Level: **56%**

Average Wait: **12 minutes**



Calls Received by Queue



General Public – 37,929

Law Enforement – 13,776

Mandatory Reporter – 82,303

Reception – 13,335

Spanish – 1,039

Continuous Quality Improvement

ORCAH hosts a robust Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) program. ORCAH's CQI program is responsible for:

- Screening report quality assurance reviews
- Call quality assurance reviews
- Managing ORCAH's feedback email box and making resulting screening report corrections
- Quality assurance reviews of screening reports related to critical incident review teams
- Reviewing the timeliness of assignment for screening reports assigned and linked to cases that are pulled for Children and Family Service Reviews (CFSR)
- Data reporting for quality assurance and feedback box activities
- Recommending improvements based on trends identified from quality assurance and feedback box activities
- Weekly and monthly dashboards
- Producing the "Weekly Work" data book, and
- Quarterly reports.

Quality assurance data:

- The program conducted 1,956 quality assurance reviews of calls. Of these, 91 percent met expectations for call handling and screening interviews.
- The program conducted 1,233 quality assurance reviews of screening reports. Of these, 82 percent met expectations for screening report documentation.
- The program conducted 340 reviews of screening reports assigned to cases under review for Child and Family Services Reviews. Of these, 88 percent were assigned timely in a timely manner.
- ORCAH participated in 28 critical incident review teams and reviewed 220 screening reports. Of these, 90 percent were closed or assigned accurately.
- The program reviewed and processed 5,160 feedback emails.

Closing

ORCAH's goal for 2022 is to transition from the implementation stage to the maintenance stage and bring greater stability to our workforce, operation and screening practice.

In late 2021, ORCAH developed a plan for 2022 that will transform the way staff work. The plan includes short-, mid- and long-term strategies. These strategies aim to:

- Reduce wait times and abandoned call rates
- Build in efficient ways for ORCAH staff to do their work, and
- Clarify how callers and reporters will know when they need to call ORCAH.

This plan includes the following:

Short-term strategies within the first three months (January–March)

- Based on feedback from many members of the medical community, ORCAH created a new call queue for medical providers. This queue will be prioritized at the same level as law enforcement. This is now queue #5. This data-informed decision was made after feedback and an evaluation of outcomes related to Child Protective Services assignment and founded disposition rates. In addition, we know that the medical community has been one of the systems most affected during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ORCAH will put in place an expectation that screeners must take 8 to 10 contacts per shift. This will support adequate distribution of the work and equity in contacts per available screener. Screeners remain available to take calls until they have completed this number of contacts. The remaining time will be used to complete required documentation.
- ORCAH will develop a pilot electronic reporting process for designated Child Welfare and ODHS Office of Training, Investigation and Safety staff. These staff will be able to report electronically on open cases or assessments that already have a case number and case name.
- ORCAH will work to increasing access to training, resources and materials for mandatory reporters to improve their knowledge and awareness.
  - » Reporting information can be found on the Child safety webpage at https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/child-abuse/Pages/index.aspx.
  - » The mandatory reporter training video, resources and information about requesting training can be found at https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/ABUSE/Pages/mandatory_report.aspx.

Mid-term strategies within six to twelve months (April–December)

- ORCAH will modify rule, procedure and practice related to the Structured Decision Making (SDM) screening and response assessment tool. The tool was developed through a partnership with Casey Family Programs and a contracted partner, Evident Change.
- Implementing a new Child Welfare Information System will transform documentation requirements for screening reports and allow screeners to complete their work faster.

Preparation for long-term strategies within the next 1–2 years

- ORCAH will create a mandatory reporter of child abuse online portal for non-urgent reports.
- ORCAH will develop a workload model for screening separate from case management/ position allocation to adequately reflect the flow of the work and ensure adequate staffing.
- Legislative concepts being reviewed for 23–25 session include:
  - » Modifications to screening and investigation of third-party reports of child abuse
  - » A modification/technical fix to the threat of harm abuse definition in ORS 419B.005
  - » Adding annual training requirements for mandatory reporters to ORS 419B.010 (Duty of officials to report child abuse)
  - » A modification/technical fix to ORS 419.B.015 to allow online reports of child abuse to be received at ORCAH, and
  - » A modification/technical fix to 419B.035 to expand the referral of reports that are closed at screening for prevention and upstream work.

ORCAH is hopeful that these strategies will reinforce its vision to engage communities, including mandatory reports, and respond to reports of child abuse in a transparent way. ORCAH's goal is to do so while ensuring children and youth are safe and can remain in their own communities.

Oregon Department of Human Services
CHILD WELFARE DIVISION
Oregon Child Abuse Hotline
1-855-503-SAFE (7233)

Alternate format language: You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Email Feedback. OregonChildAbuseHotline@dhsoha.state.or.us or contact the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline at 1-855-503-SAFE (7233). We accept all relay calls, or you can dial 711.

DHS 4267 (05/2022)