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Child Abuse Investigations: How CPS and Law Enforcement Engage in Collaboration

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How CPS and Law Enforcement Engage in Collaboration

by

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Each person whose signature appears below certifies that this dissertation in his/her opinion is adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.

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will provide insight into the need for systems changes to improve children and family

lives.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Associates of Art
ACF	Administration of Children and Families
ASFA	Adoptions Safe Family Act
BA	Batchelor of Arts
BS	Batchelor of Science
CAC	Children Assessment Center/Children Advocacy Center
Cal-SWEC	California Social Work Education
CBX	Children's Bureau Express
CPS	Child Protective Services
DCFS	Department of Children and Family Services
DEC	Drug-Endangered Children
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DOJ	Department of Justice
DPSS	Department of Public Social Services
ER	Emergency Response
FM	Family Maintenance
FR	Family Reunification
IACP	International Association of Chiefs of Police
IR	Immediate Response
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LLU	Loma Linda University
MDT	Multi-Disciplinarian Team

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSW	Master's of Social Work
NASW	National Association of Social Workers
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NSCAW	The National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being
OSR	Office of Sponsored Research
PC	Penal Code
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act 1996
RPD	Riverside Police Department
SARB	School Area Review Board
USDOJNIJ	United States Department of Justice. National Institute of Justice
WIC	Welfare and Institution Code

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Social Policy and Social Research
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Child welfare social workers (CPS) and law enforcement professionals are the
sole professional groups in California assigned the task of investigating child physical
and sexual abuse allegations. Both professional groups report that child-well-being is the
ultimate outcome desired when addressing the needs of vulnerable and "at risk" children.
Despite this shared vision CPS and law enforcement professionals also described
competing outcomes that are often contradictory; particularly in how each group
characterizes different professional responsibilities in achieving child well-being. For
example CPS describes the dual responsibilities of preventing children from further harm
while at the same time identifying factors that led to the abuse and providing non-
punitive services aimed at preserving and strengthening family ties; including
maintaining the children safely in their homes whenever possible. On the other hand law
enforcement's view of child abuse as a crime shapes their perception of how things are
handled. Law enforcement has the responsibility for collecting criminal evidence that
frequently results in the offending parent being prosecuted and spending time in jail,
possibly dismantling the family unit. Understanding how these two professional groups

collaborate to execute their conflicting, professional responsibilities forms the overall focus of this study.

Child welfare social workers and law enforcement professionals were recruited from Riverside and San Bernardino Counties to participate in the study. Theoretical sampling, snowball sampling, and convenience sampling techniques were used to ensure that data was collected from a minimum of 20 participants who were identified as subject matter experts. Data was collected through face-to-face interviews using semi-structured interview guides. Transcribed interviews were entered into the QSR*NVIVO 8 software program for data management and to provide an audit trail. Seven major themes emerged from the data.

Findings revealed that CPS and law enforcement professionals do not collaborate; they cooperate and coordinate on an inconsistent basis. Overall, dissimilar professional standards engendered conflict and negative perceptions of each other producing poor working relationships. However, the research revealed that the working relationship between the two entities seems to improve when they are co-located/share the same physical workplace. More research is recommended to determine if such working arrangement impacts collaboration.

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CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Child welfare social workers (CPS) and law enforcement officers are required by statute to collaborate to investigate child physical and sexual abuse. The Administration of Children and Families (ACF) maintains that working in a coordinated effort both reduces trauma to the child and enhances the likelihood of a more positive outcome for the family as a whole. This chapter emphasizes how a largely deficient standard of practice prevents the two agencies from working in a meaningful and collaborative manner to meet the needs of clients. Missing from the standard of practice is a protocol that both delineate roles and responsibilities as well as providing guidelines for intervention strategies, and standard operational procedures (Ivery, 2008; Meyers, 1993; Williamson, Bell, Dwyer & Frierson, 2004). A protocol with clearly defined roles and responsibilities in place is necessary to reduce the likelihood that conflict during collaboration will occur especially when agencies with conflicting professional philosophies are involved (Goldman, Salus, Wolcott & Kennedy, 2003; Richards, 2002).

Absent such a protocol, the two entities have traditionally approached an investigation from very different perspectives, creating conflict and biases in their working relationships. For example, child welfare professionals are asked to assess such factors as child and family psychosocial functioning and well-being while determining if abuse has occurred, whether it is safe to leave the children in the home, and the likelihood of the abuse occurring again. In other words, social workers are charged with safeguarding the well-being of families and children, neither imposing punishment nor becoming an arm of the law in the process of doing so (Galva, Atchinson & Levey,

2005). On the other hand, law enforcement professionals are responsible for collecting and preserving criminal evidence for possible prosecution (Barnes, Carpenter & Dickinson, 2000; Child Abuse Prevention Handbook, 2000; Mason, 1991; Pence & Wilson, 1992). Succinctly stated law enforcement's legal mandate is to the criminal justice system (Manning, 1977). In a broader sense, the Criminal Justice system is responsible to society as a whole. The Child Protective Services (CPS) system is responsible to its clients, the child victim or family (Strouds, Martens & Barker, 2000). Thus, differences in professional responsibilities may be viewed as the impetus for conflict between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers. However, factors such as different intervention strategies, different professional philosophies and belief systems, different time frames, power differentials, dissimilar socialization, differences in defining and achieving child well-being, and misunderstanding/misuse of terms such as cooperative arrangements, coordinated arrangements and collaboration continue to contribute to ongoing conflict between these two professional groups. Each of these areas of conflict will be briefly discussed.

Different Intervention Approaches

Research studies report that child welfare social workers feared that law enforcement officers used heavy-handed, punitive tactics, making it difficult for them to protect children and unite families (Cross, Finkelhor, & Ormrod, 2005). Law enforcement professionals, on the other hand, were concerned that child welfare social workers interfered with evidence collection and criminal investigations which interfered with bringing the perpetrator to justice (Cross et al., 2005). Without a working protocol

delineating roles and responsibilities, strict adherence to professional philosophies and

beliefs systems became the norm, resulting in increased conflict.

Different Professional Philosophies and Belief Systems

Dissimilarity in professional philosophies and belief systems around the matter of

punishment versus treatment continues to be a major source of conflict between CPS

social workers and law enforcement officers. Specifically, law enforcement professionals

tend to emphasize punishment of the offender who perpetrated abuse against a child

while child welfare social workers tend to emphasize providing mental health treatment

not only for the offender but for the family unit as a whole (Besharov, 1987; Cross,

Finkelhor & Ormrod, 2005; Sedlak, Schultz, Wells, Lyons, Doueck, & Gragg, 2006).

Regarding punishment CPS social workers articulated that putting the offending parent in

jail was not necessarily the remedy for protecting child safety and well-being. In fact,

social workers noted that arresting the offending parent could potentially be more

harmful to the child's safety and well-being, especially in cases where an offending

parent was released from jail after paying a bail or fine. Similar viewpoints were

expressed by both Fraser and Paulsen.

> According to Fraser (as cited in Besharov, 1987),
> From a purely practical point of view, if the parent is convicted and
> incarcerated it is usually for a short period of time. When he is released
> from jail, there is absolutely nothing stopping him from returning to his
> abusive pattern of behavior. The conditions which precipitated the initial
> abuse will still be present and may give rise to other instances of abuse.

Criminal proceedings, according to Paulsen (as cited in Besharov, 1987), may

punish an offender who deserves punishment, but it may also divide rather than unite a

family, creating harm for the child in the long run. Further exacerbating the conflict between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers are the conflicting time frames under which these two professional groups operate.

Time Frames

Federal and State policies mandate that CPS and law enforcement professionals collaborate to investigate child abuse. However governmental mandates often do not offer guidelines for establishing collaborative protocols (Child Abuse Prevention Handbook, 2000; Wiklund, 2006). As an example, many law enforcement agencies do not distinguish between child sexual abuse occurring within the home (familial) and child sexual abuse occurring outside the home. Law enforcement categorizes all sexual abuse referrals as sexual assault cases and treats them as such whether the offender is a caretaker or not. Yet, this distinction is essential as Welfare and Institution Codes (WIC) dictate specific timeframes in which CPS has to conduct, and complete an in-home investigation of child sexual abuse allegations ranging from 24 hours up to 30 days. WIC also specify timeframes ranging from 12 to 18 months to reunify the family in the event the investigative outcome resulted in the child being removed from the home. Stroud, Martens and Barker (2000), in a study of 496 child sexual abuse cases referred for criminal prosecution, found that it took an average of 378 days for the prosecutor to make a criminal determination from the time law enforcement conducted the forensic interview in these cases. In a similar study, Martone, Jaudes and Cavins (1996) found that it took the criminal court system 12 to 18 months to make criminal decisions in child sexual abuse cases. The conflict in time frames between CPS and the criminal justice system

leads not only to further disruption in families' lives, but increases the tension and conflict between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers.

On the other hand, Faller and Henry (2000) demonstrated that better outcomes resulted for children and families when CPS investigations and criminal investigations occurred within the same time frames, and when case disposition for both investigating entity occurred within the same time frame as well. Making disposition outcomes on the dependency and criminal court cases within similar timeframes reduced the likelihood that children would be reunified with their parents only to end up being removed again based on timeframe differences. Faller's and Henry's (2000) study was conducted in a Midwestern state involving 322 sexual abuse cases, 184, or 57% of which CPS was involved. The study was a community collaborative arrangement made between CPS and law enforcement's responsibility for investigating caretaker and non-caretaker offenders. The community protocol specified that abuse allegations where caretakers were the abusers or offenders, or caretakers failed to protect children from abusers, required an initial investigation by CPS. Law enforcement participated in the investigation upon CPS' request. The protocol further specified that abuse allegations involving non-caretakers fell under the jurisdiction of law enforcement. CPS had no responsibility in investigating allegations of abuse involving non-caretaker offenders. In distinguishing between in-home caretaker offenders and non-caretaker offenders, the protocol permitted CPS and law enforcement to adhere to CPS' statutory guidelines dictated by WIC when investigating in-home caretaker offenders. Concurrent investigations and dispositions in this study represented an example of a balanced relationship in collaboration and decision-making. Absent a defined protocol, it is not uncommon for mandated

interactions to be intense and often imbalanced in favor of one of the agencies, creating a power differential (Aldrich, 1976).

Power Differentials

Along with conflict between timelines, government mandates also do not address or offer guidelines for arriving at consensus or handling power and authority differences (Cooley, 1994; Rist, 1982; Sanders, Francis, Lum & Schiada, 2004; Sandfort, 1999). Alford (2002) argues that "government often fails to articulate crisp mandates for public agencies, leaving their positions vague, internally contradictory, or simply unaddressed" (p. 339). Wiklund (2006) suggests that vagueness is designed to place emphasis more on the appearance that collaboration is occurring rather than putting forth sincere efforts and activities to make collaboration a reality. Currie and Suhomlinova (2006) go a step further proposing that vagueness in governmental regulations often strengthen the strained boundaries between organizations, which in turn, run against the logic of collaboration. As a result, without a working protocol, agencies mandated to implement collaborative efforts are left on their own to interpret and decide what constitutes collaboration and what does not (Brooks et al., 1994; Cross, Finkelhor & Ormrod, 2005; Sandfort, 1999).

A description of roles and responsibilities of child welfare and law enforcement professionals, as outlined in the California's Child Abuse Prevention Handbook (2000), offers a perfect example of vagueness in defining collaborative activities. Missing from the mandate was a prescription or protocol for how the collaborative process plays out. The description in part states, social workers perform vital roles in providing both crisis

intervention and ongoing services to protect children and families in difficulty. These services include conducting the initial assessment of suspected child abuse and neglect (Child Abuse Prevention Handbook, 2000). Law enforcement, however, decides whether to take the child into temporary custody, arrest the alleged perpetrator, seek filing of criminal charges, or refer the case to child welfare services or another appropriate agency. The very nature of the description puts CPS and law enforcement at odds with each other in the sense that no directions are provided for working out differences in philosophies and goals, or for addressing different intervention strategies for resolving the abuse matter.

In this case, the California policy itself renders CPS an unequal partner. True collaboration, according to Lane and Turner (1999), implies equal power and therefore consensus. Yet, in this case, law enforcement is the decision-maker; CPS is responsible for carrying the case forward through the juvenile court process and justifying the reason for removing the child from the home. This responsibility is relegated to CPS social workers even though the social worker may determine that an alternative course of action is equally as effective. Additionally, the policy as it is stated not only indicates inequity, but promote power differential as well. As noted by Lasker, Weiss and Miller (2001), power differentials undermine collaborative relationships since they dictate whose opinions are considered valid, and who has ultimate authority over decision-making. Further, Hingley (2005) suggests that power imbalance tends to erode trust and is therefore detrimental to sustaining effective working relationships.

Despite these problems, there are circumstances in which social workers and law enforcement professionals are more alike than they are dissimilar. For example, in their

roles as first responders, both CPS social workers and law enforcement professionals,

alike, were the least trained and the least seasoned staff in their respective organizations

(Arcuri, Gunn, & Lester, 1979; Alpert & Noble, 2009). Both were viewed as street-level

bureaucrats or local policymakers in that they deal with day-to-day situations in the

performance of their duties. In their daily interactions with the public both have the

authority, but not necessarily the knowledge and skills, to interpret and apply the law to

the circumstance at hand and to make judgments about the criminality or behavioral

standards of those with whom they come in contact with (Arcuri, Gunn, & Lester, 1979;

Sandfort, 1999; Smith & Donovan, 2003). It would therefore seem logical that having

discretion (law enforcement), coupled with the propensity to consult (social workers)

would make for a sensible recipe in which collaboration would occur. Rather than

complementing each other's roles, differences in training and socialization create conflict

and barriers to professional collaboration.

Dissimilar Socialization

Differences in socialization and training are part of what distinguishes one

profession from another. Without the proper protocols in place, these differences become

a source of conflict rather than a means for complementing each other. The decision-

making process is often cited as one major source of conflict between CPS and law

enforcement. As an example, consultation with peers and supervisors is considered to be

one of the major ethical responsibilities in decision-making in social work training (Cross

et al., 2005; NASW Code of Ethics, 2008). CPS staff in Riverside and San Bernardino

counties are often required to consult with supervisors prior to removing a child from the

home. Different from social workers, law enforcement officers work independently, and with a significant level of discretion in decision-making available to them (Alpert & Noble, 2009; Smith, Novak, Frank & Lowenkamp, 2005). Law enforcement professionals working in the field typically work alone where access to supervision is not readily accessible. Law enforcement officers are expected to assess situations and exercise judgment as to when and how they should use their power. They have the discretion to decide at the scene of an investigation whether to detain, arrest, and or use force to gain compliance (Alpert & Noble, 2009; Cross et al., 2005; Mendias & Kehoe, 2006). In exercising their discretion, it is worth noting that law enforcement professionals responding to low level violations of the law are not obliged to arrest every offender they encounter. Warnings or other means of resolving the problem may be just as effective (Mendias & Keho, 2006). For example, as part of ethical rules of conduct established by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) in 1957, law enforcement officers are expected to do the right thing at the right time in the right way and for the right reason when exercising discretionary powers (Grant, 2002).

Use of force and/or deception to gain compliance was another difference between social workers and law enforcement officers. Social workers are taught to be non-judgmental, have empathy, and take the path of least restrictive intervention when working with children and families. Prejudgment of clients on the part of social workers is considered to be a violation of social work ethical standards (NASW Code of ethics, 2008). On the other hand, law enforcement professionals are "taught to present things in the light most favorable to their side, and to zealously represent that viewpoint even if it means being less sensitive or more intrusive" (Roby, 2001, p. 309). Additionally, law

enforcement is not only taught, but is permitted by the courts in certain circumstances, and always with the confines of the law, to manipulate and deceive during interrogations in an attempt to elicit confessions and admissions to crime to support their views (Alpert & Noble, 2009). However in the performance of their duties, the police code of conduct, in conjunction with the law enforcement code of ethics, provide mandates that require law enforcement officers to act impartially in exercising discretion; law enforcement officers are expected to maintain confidentiality, integrity, and a professional demeanor at all times (Alpert & Noble, 2009; Grant, 2002).

Interpersonal communication skills that emphasize listening comprised another area of difference between social work and law enforcement professionals. Social work training emphasizes the importance of active listening. Conversely, law enforcement officers are trained to take charge and give orders, which can result in preconceived ideas and premature responses (Birzer & Tannenhill, 2001). Although CPS social workers and law enforcement officers differ widely in philosophies and belief systems, the two professional groups share a common goal of ensuring child safety and child well-being to the extent possible. However, different approaches for achieving child well-being present another source of conflict in the collaborative relationship between the two professional groups.

Differences in Defining and Achieving Child Well-Being

Traditionally, the concept of child well-being in child welfare emphasizes safety and permanency. Risk factors and family deficiencies were critical components in family assessments, and informing permanency decisions. Guided by legislation, the concept of

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child well-being was limited to making sure children were safe from physical harm and, receiving medical care along with being fed, clothed, housed and educated. Federal guidelines were developed to allow child welfare social workers and local court systems to move children who could not be reunified with family through the child welfare system as quickly as possible. The number of adoptions was the primary outcome by which child well-being was measured (Lou et al., 2008; National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) study retrieved 2010). Federal statutes were less concerned about children's losses that impacted their social, psychological and emotional well being (Brooks et al., 1994).

With the passage of the Federal Adoptions and Safe Family Act (ASFA) of 1997 the child welfare system shifted its primary focus from protecting children from physical harm to working with family to retain parental responsibility and care for their children. The conventional wisdom maintained that children are best cared for by their parents whenever possible (Wattam, 1997). ASFA expanded the concept of child well-being by requiring states to assess family capacity and ability to provide for their children's needs from a strength perspective. Instead of viewing the family as a pathological system with deficiencies in skills and abilities, child welfare social workers were mandated to consider family coping skills, knowledge, resourcefulness, and willingness to grow and change. An underlying assumption of the strengths perspective is that families are not only in the best position to identify their problems they also have the solutions to their problems. Thus a major focus of the strength perspective in child welfare is collaboration between the social worker and the family to define the problems, developing goals and

strategies for resolving the problems, and identifying desired outcomes (GlenMaye & Early, 2000).

With the goal of balancing deficit-based assessments with strength-based assessments, ASFA charged the child welfare system (CWS) with both ensuring children's physical safety, as well as providing evidence of positive outcomes. Positive outcomes included protecting children from future risk along with maintaining emotional and psychological safety (Anglin, 2002). Although physical safety is commonly thought of as the most basic component of child well-being, there was a recognition that attention to education, health, as well as social, emotional and psychological needs was equally as important for children to grow up to be healthy and contributing adults (Kivnick, Jefferys & Heier, 2003). As the child welfare perspective of child well-being has gravitated toward a more strengths based perspective and away from its traditional views, law enforcement has not kept the same pace. Well-being from law enforcement's perspective continues to mean removing children from physical harm, and punishment and prosecution of the offending parent (Wiley, 2009). This change in child welfare perspective has intensified the conflict between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers. Regardless of the differences in professional perspectives, a collaborative effort on the part of both groups is necessary for child well-being to be achieved.

Collaboration, Best Practice, and Child Well-Being

Collaboration between CPS and law enforcement can broaden perspectives and enhance best practices by reducing insular thinking in addressing children and families'

well-being (Daka-Mulwanda, Thornburg, Filbert, & Klein, 1995). Studies have shown

that the likelihood increases for children and families to get the services they need when

CPS social workers and law enforcement officers work in a collaborative manner. As an

example, Demarest-Tingus, Heger, Foy and Leskin (1996) found a 96% referral rate of

children to psychotherapy when child welfare social workers and law enforcement

officers jointly investigated allegations of sexual abuse. In comparison, only 58% out of

the same population of children were referred to psychotherapy when child welfare social

workers completed their investigations without the involvement of law enforcement.

In addition to increased client benefits, CPS and law enforcement professionals

benefit from collaborating as well (Harley, Donnell, & Rainey, 2003). Better

investigations, better interactions with the families, and supportive, complementary skills

were just a few of the benefits explained by Harley, Donnell & Rainey (2003). While

engaged in the collaborative process, the two professions are exposed to opportunities to

expand their knowledge and expertise about each others profession (Abramson &

Mizrahi, 1994, 1996). In addition to learning more about the law enforcement profession,

CPS professionals have the opportunity to learn more about the criminal justice system;

law enforcement professionals have the opportunity to learn about child development and

family dynamics matters.

In a study of a program for drug exposed children conducted by Altshuler (2005),

only 50% of the children removed from 'meth homes' by law enforcement officers were

referred to child welfare services when law enforcement officers were the sole

investigators. Collaboration not only emerges as the best strategy for providing a more

holistic and integrated approach for meeting the needs of children and families, it

promotes balance and bridges gaps in service delivery between and among helping

agencies (Daka-Mulwanda, Thornburg, Filbert & Klein, 1995; Selden, Sowa & Sandfort,

2006).   The need for collaboration is never more evident than when a child's parent or

parents are arrested.

Failure to Collaborate - Risk to Child Well-Being

According to Harris' study (as cited in Pogrebin, Dodge and Katsampes 2001),the

most significant people in a child's life are parents, regardless of the social and economic

conditions, values, lifestyles, or their method of parenting. Assumptions are made that

children are better off separated from their abusive parents, but Madden and Wayne

(2003) and Snyder (2009) argue that separation from parents may pose a greater risk to

children's well being. Yet, there are many circumstances in which laws and legal

proceedings, despite good intent, produce outcomes for children and families that are not

helpful and might even be harmful (Wexler, 1996; Winick, 1997). This outcome is

highlighted when a parent is arrested and law enforcement receives no assistance from

CPS; there are children who may be left behind to manage on their own.

In an eagerness to make the arrest and complete the ensuing documentation, law

enforcement officers have been known to 'informally' place children with nearest

relatives, friends or neighbors, with no follow-up to ensure their safety (Manning, 1999;

Puddefoot & Foster, 2007). Officers are not social workers and are neither trained nor

authorized by statute to assume placement roles in arrest situations. Lack of knowledge

about the background of the family member or friend with whom the child was placed

raises concerns for child safety. Safety concerns as well as concerns about the temporary

caretaker's ability to meet the child basic needs are common reasons secondary

disruptions in placement may occur (Manning, 1999). In fact, residential instability was

identified by Miller (2006) as one of the most common impacts on children following the

arrest of a parent. Additionally, Phillips and Dettlaff (2009) propose that children of

arrested parents, whether incarcerated or not, are more likely than other children in the

general population to become involved with the criminal justice system. Predisposition to

drug use and delinquent behavior such as truancy, running away, and aggression toward

others make these children high risk for being arrested themselves (Phillips & Dettlaff,

2009; Snyder, 2009). Given the current, national, sentiment of promoting intervention

and rehabilitation over punishment (Birgden, 2004), the challenge for child welfare

services and the legal system is to balance support for families in ways that enable

parents to be able to effectively meet the needs of their children (Gebo & Kirkpatrick,

2002; Lachman & Bernard, 2006; Phillips & Dettlaff, 2009). Collaboration is endorsed

among governmental and legislative bodies as promoting balance, and bridging

overlapping expectations and organizational goals; it has the promise of being a best

practice strategy for providing a more holistic and integrated problem solving approach in

meeting complex needs of families and children (Daka-Mulwanda, Thornburg, Filbert, &

Klein, 1995; Selden, Sowa & Sandfort, 2006). The interdependent nature of the duties

and tasks CPS social workers and law enforcement officers engage in as they intervene to

protect children makes these two professionals ideally suited for implementing

collaborative protocols.

Misunderstanding/Misuse of Terms: Cooperative Arrangements, Coordinated

Arrangements, and Collaboration

Just as there are differences in intervention approaches, differences in defining

child-well-being, and differences in philosophies among professionals, differences also

exist in terms of how collaboration is defined. Collaboration to improve child welfare

services has been the "buzz word" in human services over the last decade; Federal, State,

and local funding agencies encourage collaborative efforts as a prerequisite to receiving

funding support. However, according to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the

meaning of collaboration is often misused and misunderstood. What is commonly

referred to as collaboration is mostly limited communication, coordination, or

cooperation; simply communicating, coordinating and cooperating not only undervalue

and underestimate the work involved in genuine collaboration, these misconceptions

inhibit the abilities of agencies to be effective at delivering integrated services (National

Institute of Justice, 2006). Although communication is a common thread that runs

through coordinated, cooperative, and collaborative arrangements, there is a

misconception on the part of policy makers according to Mizrahi (1999) that getting

people together in a room to talk to each other is considered to be collaboration. The

degree to which communication is formalized, along with frequency, and a willingness to

exchange and share information for the purpose of meeting mutual goals are the features

that set cooperation, coordination and collaboration apart from each other (Horwath &

Morrison, 2007). Thus cooperation, coordination, and collaboration can be said to

describe working relationships along a continuum ranging from low levels to high levels

of interaction. At the lower level of the continuum, Denise (1999) described cooperation

as an adaptation to another agency's norms and culture; it is not intended to engender

high performance. Coordination, on the other hand, is about achieving efficiency in

procedures such as sharing informing about rules under which each agency operates.

Coordination, however, does not lend itself to communicating the reciprocal

consequences of those procedures (Denise, 1999). Collaboration, at the highest level of

the continuum, is not about adaptation. It is about creating a shared understanding, a

shared meaning and a shared outcome about an event (Schrage, 1990). To further

provide clarity, a discussion of the continuum relationship between cooperative,

coordinated, and collaborative arrangements are outlined below.

Cooperative Arrangements

Strimling (2006) defined cooperation as an interaction that is intended to

contribute, directly or indirectly, to the effectiveness of each other's work. Toward that

end, cooperative arrangements are often confused with collaboration. Collaboration

requires a firmly established and active relationship to foster mutually improved

outcomes (May & Winter, 2007). By contrast, cooperative working arrangements

between administrators and staff interacting across organizational boundaries are

informal and lack rigid structure. Each agency functions separately and without

consideration for the other's goals; interactions are based on an as needed basis. As such,

partners in cooperative arrangements are not necessarily helpful in assisting each other to

achieve their goals (May & Winter, 2007). A common example of cooperation occurs

when individuals sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support another

agency's project. For instance, Ivery (2008) found that most agencies are able to easily

identify existing and potential partners to obtain letters of support as required by funders.

However, when organizations implement their work plans, it becomes challenging to

develop a plan that is inclusive and facilitates individual agencies goal achievements.

Another example of a cooperative arrangement currently on the rise occurs when

one agency provides office space and another provides staff so that services can be co-

located, occupying shared physical space (Nicholson, Artz, Armitage, & Fagan, 2000;

State Justice Institute, 2002). Co-location was emphasized by participant in this study as

equal to collaboration. Lees, Salvesen and Shay (2008) strongly support co-location or

joint use of facilities as key to promoting greater collaboration. However, co-location,

alone does not produce a collaborative arrangement. A willingness to synchronize time

and contacts, share resources and ideas, and adjust activities is necessary to realize the

full potential for collaboration (Strimling, 2006). As an illustration, cross-reporting child

abuse reports is a cooperative arrangement that is mischaracterized as collaboration.

State statute recognizes the value of joint investigations between CPS and law

enforcement professionals, but having a mandate that allows for an initial investigative

contact by either rather than both professional group even when the two are co-located

(Child Abuse Prevention Handbook, 2002) devalues the spirit of collaboration.

Described as "enhancing the protection for, and reducing trauma to children,"

(Child Abuse Prevention Handbook, p. 54, 2000) collaboration requires a willingness to

work together that involves high levels of formal as well as informal communication and

contacts to achieve efficiency and quality service delivery (Axelsson & Axelsson, 2006).

Simply cross-reporting fails the test for collaboration. Similar to cooperative

arrangements, coordinated arrangements are also mischaracterized as collaborative

activities. However, both cooperative and coordinated arrangements can be described as part of a continuum that leads to collaboration (Omicini & Ossowski, 2004).

Coordinated Arrangements.

In coordinated arrangements staff and administrators may alter their work hours to accommodate the needs of another agency, but each agency remains independent from the other. Communication roles and channels for interaction are more formalized, but each agency maintains its own set of goals, structure, and responsibilities; neither agency is accountable to the other (Horwath & Morrison, 2007; Ivery, 2007; Kagan, 1991; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Smith 1998; Walter & Petr, 2000). As an example, CPS administrators in both Riverside and San Bernardino counties have made staff available on a 24 hour basis to be able to respond with law enforcement officers at any time a child abuse referral is received from a 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline member. However, state statute stops short of providing concrete guidelines or a protocol for directions in terms of how these two agencies should work together beyond receiving the cross-report. Omicini and Ossowski (2004) described participants in cooperative arrangements as following the roles scripted for them, and sharing and acting upon common objectives but without questioning or discussing the other participants' actions or behavior. The functions and roles of the other participants are neither known nor understood.

Although cooperation and coordination may occur as part of the early process of collaboration, collaboration represents a higher level of collective actions (Thomson & Perry, 2006). At minimum, collaboration is defined as engagement in minimal negotiations to develop congruent expectations (Thomson & Perry, 2006). Failure to

employ congruent expectations during child abuse investigations may lead to conflict between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers. For example, law enforcement officers maybe working to remove a perpetrator from the home, whereas child welfare workers are simultaneously working to keep the family together. Consequently, without collaboration each professional group can inadvertently interfere with the investigation and the anticipated outcome of the other professional group (State Justice Institute, 2002; Wiley, 2009). Collaboration will be discussed in more details in the literature review section. Up to this point a picture has emerged that provides a glimpse into the difficulties involved with child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers developing collaborative working arrangements. Factors such as different intervention approaches, different professional philosophies and belief systems, and power differentials contribute to the inability to form collaborative work environments. The two agencies have developed low levels cooperative and coordinated arrangements as beginning efforts toward collaboration. However, absent a lack of shared understanding and shared meaning of the collaborative process, the working relationship is constrained with conflict. Contributing to the conflict is a lack of procedural protocols defining roles and responsibilities for these two agencies as they approach a child abuse investigation with different agendas and different expected outcomes.

Research Aims

Drawing upon qualitative research methods and a grounded theory approach, the aims of this study are (1) to develop an understanding of how child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers work together in a collaborative environment to

investigate child abuse; (2) to explore the meaning each professional group attributes to the expression 'collaboration' and how collaboration frames their working relationships; (3) to explore the meaning each attributes to the concept of well-being and how these understandings guides decision-making; and (4) to examine what steps are taken to resolve conflicts and/or differences around issues of assessment and/or criminal actions to be taken. The grounded theory analysis will be used as the research approach to gain an understanding of the collaborative working arrangement between CPS social worker and law enforcement officers. Ideological formulations in grounded theory have evolved since its inception. For that reason, a brief overview of its background is presented here to better understand how it is used in this study.

Grounded Theory Background

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss known as the founders of grounded theory are credited with moving qualitative research beyond descriptive studies into the realm of explanatory theoretical frameworks, providing conceptual understanding of the phenomena under examination (Charmaz, 2006). Glaser and Strauss pursued divergent paths in developing their individual grounded theory orientation, resulting in ongoing debate over philosophical differences in the classical or traditional (Glaser) grounded theory method and the constructivist (Strauss and Corbin) grounded theory approaches (Charmaz, 2006).

It is worth noting that both the traditional and constructivist grounded theory approaches adhere to the same research processes of gathering data, coding, constant comparing, categorizing and theoretical sampling to generate theory (Walker & Myrick,

2006). The basic differences between Glaser and Straus seem to be centered on the way each perceive the researcher's role, the level of preparation needed to embark on a research project, and the procedures employed within the data analysis process (Walker & Myrick, 2006). Explicating the differences is tedious and often time confusing for the novice researcher. Overall, however, the differences between Glaser and Strauss seem to be more about semantics than actual substance (Walker & Myrick, 2006).

Classical or Traditional Grounded Theory

Glaser strongly advised that the researcher delay doing literature reviews until all research data is collected and analyzed. Glaser posited that introducing literature reviews prior to data collection and analysis could not only bias the study, but could possibly contaminate, constrain, inhibit, stifle, or even impede the researcher's analysis of the codes emerging from the data (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Mills et al, 2006; Walker & Myrick, 2006). As such Glaser took the stance that the researcher should enter the field of inquiry with as few predetermined thoughts as possible. Entering the field of inquiry as a tabula rasa or a blank slate enables the researcher to record events and activities without first having them filtered through pre-existing views and ideas (Glaser, 1978; Mills et al, 2006). Adhering to the 'no pre-existing framework' approach, Glaser (1992) argued that the focus of a grounded theory study is determined by the problems or theories that emerge directly from the data that is collected and analyzed, not by forcing the data to fit into pre-determined concepts or frameworks. Theory emerged, according to Glaser (1992) without any interpretation from the researcher. In this regard, the emerging theory solely explained the phenomenon under study.

Constructivist Grounded Theory

In contrast to Glaser, Strauss and Corbin (1990) advocate for the use of literature reviews to provide examples of similar phenomena from different perspectives that can stimulate questions about properties or dimensions of the study under review (Jones & Mason, 2002). Different perspectives include utilizing both the researcher's personal and professional experiences. Unlike Glaser who advocated starting the research process without a predetermined framework, Strauss advocated for the researcher to begin with an area of study and as the research unfolds, what is relevant to that study is allowed to emerge (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This perspective, according to Strauss, aids the researcher in staying focused on the area of study while following the directions to where the data leads (Charmaz, 2009; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The interplay between reading the literature, collecting and analyzing the data, along with what the researcher already knows, provide different ways for the researcher to explain, interpret and clarify emerging concepts. This process referred to as constant comparison method of analysis is central to grounded theory development (Parry, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1967). Additionally, the researcher's level of insight into the area of study, how attuned they are to the nuances and complexities of the participants' words and actions, and the researcher's ability to reconstruct meaning from the data generated with the participants leads to the development of theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The link between Charmaz and Strauss and Corbin is expressed in their belief that the researcher constructs theory as an outcome of their interpretation of the participants' words and stories (Mills et al, 2006). The researcher's interpretation of how participants create their understanding and meaning of reality forms the basis for constructivist

grounded theory analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The constructivist grounded theory research approach was the method of choice in this study. Constructivist grounded theory approach provides a structure for the use of literature reviews from various sources, including the researcher's prior knowledge. Also, there are no prior theories to prove; this allows the researcher the ability to apply meaning to the data collected, thereby generating theory.

Grounded Theory Rationale

While much has been written about the need for collaboration between CPS and law enforcement professionals, research has been mostly descriptive in nature with little attention afforded to identifying factors that contribute to, or inhibit the collaborative process. Because CPS and law enforcement share an interest in many identical client populations, and therefore depend on each other to achieve overlapping goals, a grounded theory of collaboration would be useful for moving discussion about how these two groups relate on a professional level beyond descriptive points of views to a more explanatory outlook. The grounded theory research method is selected with the aim at narrowing the gap between descriptive and explanatory discussions about how CPS social workers and law enforcement officers engage in collaboration across professional boundaries. Also, in contrast to classical grounded theory, constructivist grounded theory is generalizable to a larger social science audience, and is therefore applicable to a multitude of diverse social situations (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

First, grounded theory is especially relevant as it provides insight into human interactions involving individuals or groups working together on particular tasks

(Hughes, Bryan & Robbins, 2005; Turner, 1983). As previously noted, Federal and state statutes mandate that CPS and law enforcement professionals work together to investigate child abuse but fail to provide concrete guidelines or strategies for initiating and maintaining such a working relationship. From an explanatory perspective in the research literature, the working relationship between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers remains both largely overlooked and underinvestigated (Han, Carnochan & Austin, 2007). Given this oversight, grounded theory represents the most suitable methodological approach for learning how professionals with conflicting legal mandates and standards of practice work in a collaborative arrangement to achieve professional goals.

Second, grounded theory is known to be suitable for studies in areas where little or no prior research has been conducted, or, where existing theoretical frameworks have proven to be inadequate in explaining patterns of practice (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Sousa & Hendriks, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). There continues to be a demand by Federal and state funding programs, including nongovernmental funders for collaboration across disciplines to meet the multi-level needs of children and families. As mentioned earlier, families and children are more likely to be connected to services they need when CPS and law enforcement work together in a collaborative environment. Additionally, understanding how these two professional groups collaborate to meet their different goals and mandates can provide fertile data upon which future cross disciplinary research can expand.

Third, when selecting a grounded theory approach data comes directly from the practitioners themselves. It can be said that CPS social workers and law enforcement

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officers function between two conflicting disciplines on a daily basis - law and social

work. They are the most appropriate candidates to attach meaning to their cross-

discipline actions and social interactions, clarify the conditions in the environments that

shape their actions, and defend the consequences of taking such actions (Goulding,

1998). Patterns and concepts arising from the attached meanings and justifications

provide a glimpse into the two professions interrelationships which in turn can lead to the

development of a grounded theory of collaboration. As explicated by Audiss and Roth

(1999),

> The inductive nature of grounded theory requires immersion in the data, and from
> the data, the concepts are identified. As concepts are identified, the situational
> meaning becomes apparent, and as concepts and relationships are defined, a new
> theory related to the area of study can be defined. (p.48)

Fourth, grounded theory research efforts are directed toward gathering

information that has practical and functional use in real world or day-to-day work

environments (Myers, 2000). As such, the grounded theory research method is

specifically suited for studying professionals that function in divergent and often time

conflicting work environments (Martin & Turner, 1986). According to Martin and Turner

(1986) and Turner (1983), grounded theory enables the researcher to produce theoretical

accounts of the divergent work environments which are understandable to those in the

area being studied and which are useful in giving them a superior understanding of the

nature of their own situation. Armed with this understanding, professionals in such

circumstances in concert with their managers will be in an optimal position to identify

and institute changes to bring about improved collaborative relationships. Admittedly,

collaborative arrangements are not easily defined. Many different terms have been used

in the literature to capture its meaning. They all have slightly different meaning but are

frequently used interchangeably. Various conceptual definitions along with a review of

the literature will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review has a fourfold perspective: (1) to identify and discuss the multiple concepts under which collaboration has defined; (2) to examine the various barriers associated with each concept; (3) to provide a historical perspective of the relationship between social work and collaboration; and (4) to provide a synopsis of current and seminal research studies that provide insight into the collaborative relationship between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers. The intersection of these four perspectives forms the foundation for understanding how child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers collaborate when they engage to investigate child abuse.

The Federal government and many private foundations efforts are now either encouraging or mandating the use of collaborative efforts to deliver health and human services, often making engagement in collaborations a prerequisite for receipt of funding (Bailey, Helsel-DeWert, Thiele and Ware,1983; Graham & Barter, 1999; Johnson, Zorn, Tam, Lamontagne, and Johnson, 2003; Mandell, 2001; Oliver, 1990; Reitan, 1998; Sandfort, 2001). While collaboration is a useful concept, its meaning is diverse and far from being clear-cut. Depending on the setting in which it is applied collaboration is described under a wide variety of conceptual arrangements (Berman, 2006; Horwath & Morrison, 2007). Although described under different concepts, researchers generally agree that in practice, collaboration is a process for achieving goals that cannot be attained either effectively or efficiently by working alone (Olson, 2003). It involves two or more groups working together in a relationship that is mutually beneficial,

interdependent and well defined with shared visions or common goals. Participants in the

collaborative process are able to see different aspects of a problem and can explore their

differences and search for solutions that neither can achieve on their own (Gray &Wood,

1991). The relationship includes a commitment to mutual authority and accountability

for outcomes (Berman, 2006; Gil de Gibaja, 2001; Lowe, Parks & Tilkes, 2003;

Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Mizrahi, 1999; Walters & Petr, 2000). Although the

different conceptual arrangements share much in common, failure to clearly articulate

shared vision or common purpose makes collaboration in any context complex and

difficult to implement and sustain especially when working across disciplines with

different value systems (Berman, 2006; Huxam & Vangen, 2000).

A sampling of the different concepts under which collaboration has been defined

in the literature includes arrangements such as inter-organizational, interagency,

interdisciplinary, inter-professional, multidisciplinary teams, and partnerships. The

discussion that follows will focus on the benefits as well as the threats associated with

each concept. Additionally, it will highlight some of the complexities and ambiguities

involved in maintaining collaborative relationships regardless of the structure or

arrangement.

Concepts of Collaboration

Inter-organizational Collaboration

Huxham and Vangen (2000), Longoria (2005), and Mizrahi (1999) describe

collaboration as different individuals from different organizations working across

organizational boundaries. The theorists cited all agree that organizations enter into

relationships in order to respond to problems that cannot be solved or easily solved by their specific organization acting alone. As a result, Mizrahi expanded the definition to mean different organizations coming together for a common purpose while reconciling differences in power, commitment, ideology, and professional backgrounds and skills. Members who engage in inter-organizational collaboration must be willing to share knowledge voluntarily and accept new ideas from others especially when those ideas come from others outside of their internal organization (Berman, 2006). Huxham and Vangen (2000) caution that inter-organizational arrangements often fail for several reasons including difficulties in communicating because of differences in professional language, organizational culture and procedures, and problems managing perceived power imbalances. Addressing the issue of power imbalance, Rodriguez, Langly, Beland and Denis (2007) caution that inter-organizational relationships by nature are contradictory. These researchers suggest that it is illogical to expect organizations that compete with each other to be cooperative, or to expect autonomous organizations to form interdependent relationships with other organizations. Holding a more dismal view of inter-organizational collaboration, Longoria (2005) cautions that collaborative arrangements often fail because more often than not the idea of collaboration is about embracing a concept that appears to be mostly a gesture of symbolism rather than actual collaborative engagements. Closely resembling inter-organization is the concept interagency collaboration. Basically, interagency collaboration provides a different lens under which collaboration is applied.

Interagency Collaboration

Darlington, Feeney and Rixon, (2004), Lane and Turner (1999), Sowa (2008),

Walter and Petr (2000) describe collaboration under the heading of interagency

collaboration. Darlington et al. (2004), like Walter and Petr (2000), view interagency

collaboration as a way to turn fragmented human services agencies into a system of care

that addresses the multiple needs of children and families in a more comprehensive and

seamless service delivery system. Open communication between and among agencies,

including the sharing of resources such as staff or professional knowledge and expertise

are key components for achieving true interagency collaboration. Failure to share

information across agencies can result in families receiving inadequate or inappropriate

service because the other agency may be unaware of the impact of certain actions or

inactions may have on their client. Buchbinder and Eisikovits (2008) described the

limited sharing of information as a minimalist approach. "The minimalist approach

involves the exchange of basic information in a highly formalized manner with little if

any interpersonal exchange and without any commitment to the idea of collaboration"

(Buchbinder & Eisikovits, p. 5). This stance supports Longoria's (2005) position that

collaboration is more often presented as symbolism rather than actual engagement in

collaborative arrangements. Without concrete guidelines and regulations for managing

differences, the very barriers that interagency collaborative programs aim to abolish are

often the ones that make it difficult for these programs to be implemented. For example,

joining forces with professionals with different views and different goals and priorities

can also result in the inability of staff to agree on the level of seriousness of a problem

resulting in inadequate or inappropriate services (Darlington et al 2004; Gray, 1989).

Such practices include following one's own agenda at the expense of the other

collaborator (Johnson et al., 2003).

More often than not the mandates for collaborative engagements originate from

policy levels and are promoted as a way of delivering cohesive and coordinated service.

Without political and legislative support, which include implementation and maintenance

strategies for defining of roles and boundaries, effective information sharing, and

decision-making protocols, Darlington et al. (2004) and Walter and Petr (2000) warn that

successful collaboration will not occur. In fact, conflict and failure often occur according

to Gamm and Benson (1989) as a result of inconsistencies among governmental policies

that lead to logical, but contradictory outcomes. Such is the case where child welfare laws

emphasize keeping families together and criminal laws stress incarcerating perpetrating

parents. Similar to the case of inter-organizational collaborative arrangements, members

in interagency collaborative arrangements are required to relinquish decision-making

control and engage in joint decision-making. However, Lane and Turner (1999) and

Sowa (2004) argue that challenges arise when team members from different agencies are

used to making independent and quick decisions (e.g., police officers), but are expected

to wait and discuss details in a collaborative environment that includes other agencies

socialized to consult with additional, involved individuals (e.g., social workers). As a

matter of practice, modern families experience multiple and complex problems that are

virtually impossible for any one discipline or profession to effectively meet without

collaborating. Interdisciplinary and interprofessional are additional concepts used for

describing collaborative arrangements.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Inter-disciplinary collaboration, according to Buchbinder and Eisikovits (2008), involves different professional organizations, representing different disciplines working together, recognizing that clients receive more effective and better help in such circumstances. Interdisciplinary collaboration is described by Bronstein (2003) as an interpersonal process that facilitates the achievement of goals that can not be reached when individual professionals act on their own; colleagues work together to maximize the expertise each can offer the other in solving complex problems. Whether expressed as an interactional or an interpersonal process, Petri (2010) argues that different disciplines do not just work together to recognize and embrace the complementary contribution each makes in finding resolutions to problems; interdisciplinary collaboration also provides a structure for addressing divergent professional values that create challenges when defining and posing possible solutions to problems. As an example, child welfare social workers may view child abuse as a social issue, whereas, law enforcement officers may view the same circumstance as a criminal matter. Although heated and divergent professional values sometimes dominate the collaborative discussion as problem solutions are determined and agreements reached, Packard, Jones and Nahrstedt (2006) and Lindeke and Block (1998) suggest that outcomes for families and children are enhanced when various points of views are expressed. Buchbinder and Eisikovits (2008) and Lindeke and Block (1998) caution that interdisciplinary collaboration may be constrained by such factors as professional language and identity, role and cultural differences, unequal power and authority, and threats to functional differences such as social control versus treatment interventions. As a long term effect, inter-professional

education provides opportunities for socialization between disciplines to occur before

professional identities and stereotypes are shaped (Petri, 2010).

Inter-professional Collaboration

Buchbinder and Eisikovits (2008) described inter-professional collaboration as

taking place within an organizational framework. Inter-professional collaboration is

defined as a process by which members of different disciplines act from collective

viewpoints to achieve goals that cannot be achieved when each profession act on their

own to the exclusion of others. This perspective is consistent with the proposal put forth

by Lowe, Parks and Tilkes (2003) where professionals that included social workers, local

law enforcement, jail and probation staff, mental health professionals and counselors

were assembled to develop community intervention strategies in response to spiraling

domestic violence and substance abuse. The outcome that emerged from the collaborative

was a community outreach program that not only served cooperative offenders, but it also

served dangerous cases that previously fell between the cracks of the individual service

delivery system.

Axelsson and Axelsson (2009) cautioned that barriers such as organizational rules

and regulations, and territorial behavior make inter-professional collaborative difficult to

implement and sustain. Territorial behaviors are especially problematic because

professional groups spend more time defending their professional roles, specific

competencies, and unique approaches against each other rather than engaging in

collaboration. CPS social workers and law enforcement officers work in isolation from

each other and are generally committed to their own procedures, ideologies, and values

(Axelsson & Axelsson, 2009; Buchbinder & Eisikovits, 2008). Hence, territorial behavior

seems to typify the working relationships between child welfare and law enforcement

organizations. Organizational procedures or structural barriers can be managed through

formal agreements and protocols to improve the working relationship between these two

professional groups. By comparison, barriers that are related to territorial behavior such

as cultural differences, values and commitments must be nurtured through ongoing

communication, managing conflict, finding common interest, and sharing equal power

(Axelsson & Axelsson, 2009). Axelsson and Axelsson (2009) proposed that when inter-

professional collaboration is limited, organizations form temporary multidisciplinary

teams oriented toward different groups or clients. Accordingly, MDTs is another concept

under which collaboration is identified.

Multi-disciplinary Teams

Axelsson and Axelsson (2009) and Health Canada (1999) described MDTs as the

most successful form of collaboration in health care as they tend to have a stable

membership, representing different professions and different organizations, or they may

have a combination of core members. Common names under which child welfare MDTs

operate include Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) and Children Assessment Centers

(CAC). Both CAC types are independent facilities where different professionals provide

services for families and children at the same location. MDTs grew out of concern from

service providers of the need to prevent further harm to child abuse victims by limiting

insensitive procedures such as overly-intrusive and redundant interviews, intrusive

medical examinations and intimidating courtroom procedures (Lalayants & Epstein,

2005). Thirty three states have formed MDTs based on legislative mandates. An additional eleven states, including California, are permitted by legislation to form MDTs, and three states engage in MDTs based on internal departmental directives (Kolbo & Strong, 1997). State statute requires core members of MDTs to be law enforcement officers, child welfare social workers, district attorneys, and medical professionals.

Although MDTs have generally increased communication and information exchange, "the inability to effectively coordinate the activities of law enforcement agencies, the courts, and CPS agencies has proven disastrous when dealing with children who are victims of sexual and physical abuse" (Doss & Idelman, p. 676,1994). Unlike MDTs in the health care system MDTs in child welfare have not experienced the same success. Several factors have been identified as contributing to this lack of success. Inconsistency regarding which agency is designated to receive child abuse reports is one factor. Another factor relates to inconsistencies in the way different municipalities respond to reports of abuse. Third, there are differences among participants as to the definition of what constitutes child abuse, and fourth, each participant has different timelines in which to investigate abuse making it difficult to coordinate child abuse investigations. Additionally, Frost, Robinson and Anning (2005) cite power and status differences among participating members as contributing to an imbalance in decision-making outcomes. Power and authority among law, medicine and social work professions has traditionally leaned in favor of law and medicine, creating partnership inequities in decision-making for social workers (Blau & Meyer, 1956; Wilensky, 1970).

To create a more equitable working arrangement, guidelines outlined in the U S Department of Justice (DOJ) portable guide for investigating child abuse suggest formalizing MDTs by developing a statement of purpose and a written protocol. The statement of purpose defines the goals of the MDT. The written protocol not only outlines roles and responsibilities of participating members, it also serves as a reference for handling conflict or answering questions that may arise about team functioning (Berman, 2006; Lalayants & Epstein, 2005). Berman (2006) strongly advises defining roles and responsibilities warning that otherwise accountability will be non-existent and low standards of collaboration will become the standard mode of operation. Abramson and Mizrahi (1996) and Benson (1975) argue that well written protocols are necessary otherwise dominant or powerful disciplines may set the standard for the weaker profession in ways that protects its dominance. The powerful profession can force others to accept its terms in negotiations or to settle disputes. The lack of a written protocol governing the working relationship between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers predisposes social workers to the potential for abandoning their responsibility to clients, complying with law enforcement's responsibilities and goals instead.

Weiss, Anderson and Lasker (2002) make the claim that true collaboration is realized when participants in a collaborative arrangement form partnerships to create new and better ways not just for achieving individual goals, but for engaging and developing stronger relationships with the broader community as well. Honoring the perspectives, knowledge and skills of all participants in the partnership on an equal basis is necessary to accomplish this task. Thus partnerships, another form of collaborative arrangements,

are becoming increasingly prevalent as a way to fill the gaps in service delivery that an organization acting alone is unable to fulfill. The premise behind the formation of partnerships is that they can enhance the capacity of organizations in supporting and achieving clients' social and well being goals (Weiss, Anderson & Lasker, 2002).

Partnerships

Partnerships, characterized as encompassing all types of collaborative arrangements (e.g., consortia, coalitions, and alliances) have expanded beyond the inclusion of public agencies to now developing relationships with private nongovernmental organizations [NGOs] (Lasker, Weiss & Miller, 2001;Weiss, Anderson & Lasker, 2002). To meet the diverse needs of children and families ''partnerships enable different people and organizations to support each other by leveraging, combining and capitalizing on their complementary strengths and capabilities'' (Lasker, Weiss & Miller, p. 180. 2001). Working alone, potential partners frequently only see part of the problem and thus partial solutions. Working as a group, they can see problems from multiple perspectives and are therefore in a better position to provide a more holistic approach to solving problems (Gray, 1989; Mattesich & Monsey, 1992). As an example the San Bernardino City Police Department formed a partnership with the San Bernardino County Probation Department to intensify the supervision of juvenile probations and to reduce juvenile crimes. With each entity fulfilling separate roles and responsibilities, the overall aim of the partnership was to develop a protocol for sharing information in order to reduce duplicative investigations about particular crimes being committed in San Bernardino and its surrounding cities (Worrall & Gaines, 2006). Worrall and Gaines

(2006) cautioned about the need for each discipline to be conscious of working within the boundaries of their professional roles and not be drawn into distorting their own agency's goals and expectation. In other words one discipline is not to forsake its responsibilities to their clients in order to fulfill the goal of the other discipline. However, Kim, Gerber and Beto (2010) state that due to power differentials between law enforcement officers and probation officers, probation officers can be persuaded to relinquish their goals for the clients in favor of law enforcement's goals when it comes to partnering with the police. "They, in particular, can lose their focus on what has been considered a social welfare or humanitarian approach, one of their traditional contributions to criminal justice" (Kim, Gerber, & Beto, p.627). Similar to probation officers, CPS social workers who partner with law enforcement officers during the investigations of child abuse must be conscious not to relinquish their roles and responsibilities as social workers and start behaving like police officers.

Young (2000) describes the relationship between governmental agencies and NGOs as being supplemental, complementary or adversarial. Although the three affiliations provide different service needs, the service provided can often overlap. For example, NGOs fulfill the demand for services left unfilled by governmental agencies in supplemental relationships. Food banks accept volunteer donations that are used to supplement the need for food not provided by governmental food stamps. Young (2000) views complementary relationships between NGOs and governmental agencies as partnerships. In this type of relationship NGOs help governmental agencies deliver services that are largely funded by governmental agencies. For example Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) help child welfare organizations recruit and train foster parents to

receive and care for dependent children who may need out of home placements.

Unfortunately, despite the plan for supplementary relationships, adversarial relationships

may occur as the partnerships are perceived to be in name only, and not true collaborative

efforts (Schmid, 2003). Schmid (2003) outlined three adversarial scenarios.

First, NGOs struggle to maintain their autonomy and flexibility in the way service

is delivered while governmental organization push for the enforcement of rigid rules and

regulations. Second, perceived power is another source of adversity. For example, in the

case of FFAs, clients actually spend more time engaged in frequent phone contacts and

home visits with the NGO service provider (social worker) than with the governmental

service provide (social worker). As such, clients may feel more connected /invest more

credence in their direct service provider than to their governmental provider weakening

the governmental provider's (social worker) authority and ability to influence

compliance. This is an especially source of conflict between the two agencies since

NGOs normally rely on volunteers who may be less trained and less educated providers

than do governmental organizations (Schmid, 2003). Third, NGOs are perceived to be

less committed to the well-being of welfare clients and more interested in improving

private assets. As an example, Schmid (2003) asserts that organizations may consider

training of workers as an expense rather than an investment, an approach which may have

a detrimental effect not only on the quality of services but on client well-being as well. In

the case of foster care, the quality of care is lowered when the attempt to increase profits

is given priority over finding the appropriate foster family when children are in need of

placement (Schmid 2003). This points out the need for agencies engaged in partnership

arrangements to develop protocols or collaborative frameworks to which all participants

are expected to subscribe, otherwise there is a risk that clients will not receive the services they need. Complexities highlighted in the complementary relationship between FFA staff and child welfare social workers provided a glimpse into common barriers private and governmental agencies confront when providing overlapping services. Even so, with the aim of accessing the most appropriate assistance and support for families, reducing environmental risks and preventing families from falling through the cracks, collaborative strategies are embedded in the fabric of social work practice (Hendrickson & Omer 1995). However, without guidelines for managing the collaborative relationship, different professional perspectives may result in conflicts and instead hinder collaboration. Nevertheless, all systems must learn to work in a collaborative manner to meet the multi-level needs of clients.

Collaboration Embedded in Social Work

Collaboration, viewed from a systems perspective, has been taught as a practice skill in social work education throughout its history (Graham & Barter, 1999). These systems include family members, community, work, education, health, and various social policies and laws. Thus an emphasis was placed on the need for social workers to engage with other professionals to identify and find solutions to families' overlapping problems (Buchbinder, Eisikovits & Karnieli-Miller, 2004). As an acknowledgement of the systems approach there was an understanding that the problems families were experiencing were multi-faceted and overlapping, and required a multifaceted intervention approach.

From a child welfare perspective, collaboration with other service providers improves efficiencies and reduces duplications in intervention strategies. In addition, coordinating interventions results in fewer service disruptions and ensures enhanced continuity of care that supports families and children emotional, social and physical well-being (Poland et al., 2005). Communication and joint decision-making with the expressed goal of maintaining the child's safety and well-being, while engaging and respecting the expertise of other professionals is what makes collaboration a recipe for successful outcomes (Coluccio & Maguire, 1983). Social work pioneer, Mary Richmond (1861-1928), was the first to raise public awareness of how various systems with which families interacted impacted their lives and affected their behaviors (Toikko, 1999).

The social work profession from its origin to the present has had a close relationship with the legal system, emerging at the beginning of the twentieth century (Barker & Branson, 2000). Social workers fulfilled many legal functions such as advocating for children and families in court, prisons and law firms. Lobbying for laws to diminish what they saw as injustice against the socially disadvantage, social workers worked with the legal system to protect children from abuse, enforcing child labor laws, and protecting vulnerable and elderly adults (Barker & Branson, 2000; Guin, Noble, & Merrill,2003). In the 1930s social work shifted its focus from a legal orientation to working with psychiatry to promote mental health as a means of effecting social change. This represented the beginning of interagency collaboration between the juvenile courts and the mental health profession (Brownell & Roberts, 2002).This departure in focus also resulted in a reduction in social work positions in the courts (Barker & Branson, 2000; Brownell & Roberts, 2002). However, social work took its most drastic turn from the

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legal system as a result of the Supreme Court decision of *In re Gault* (1967).[1] Juvenile

proceedings became more adversarial. Trained lawyers were now required to perform the

roles that had been previously held by social workers. Given that social workers have

promoted prevention and treatment while the legal system has focused on punishment,

the two groups function in an adversarial relationship. The legal system operates under a

rule oriented system focusing on evidence and burden of proof. As such, the structure of

the legal system is such that it presents information to maximize its own views, while

minimizing the intrinsic worth of the other system's views such as the child welfare

system (Weber & Khademian, 2008; Roby, 2001).

In contrast, a core principle of social work practice is to examine and present the

multiplicity of intervening factors in individuals' environments that adversely impact

behavior and responses to life situations (Hough, 1999; Jack, 1997). Thus, the social

worker's primary role is to develop the client's life story through an extensive inquiry

into the person's history in order to make best practice assessments (Guin, Noble &

Merrill 2003). Equally important is for the social workers to work with intervening

systems to present and ensure that the client's life story becomes a part of the decision-

making strategies.

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[1] The Oyez Project, In re Gault , 387 U.S. 1 (1967). Gerald Francis Gault, fifteen years old, was taken into custody for allegedly making an obscene phone call. Gault had previously been placed on probation. The police did not leave notice with Gault's parents, who were at work, when the youth was arrested. After proceedings before a juvenile court judge, Gault was committed to the State Industrial School until he reached the age of 21.

The proceedings of the Juvenile Court failed to comply with the Constitution. The Court held that the proceedings for juveniles had to comply with the requirements of the Fourteenth Amendment. These requirements included adequate notice of charges, notification of both the parents and the child of the juvenile's right to counsel, opportunity for confrontation and cross-examination at the hearings, and adequate safeguards against self-incrimination. The Court found that the procedures used in Gault's case met none of these requirements.

Bridging the past to the present, research involving collaboration between child welfare social workers and law enforcement professionals is increasing in the literature that focuses on the usefulness of collaboration. However, " Collaborative structures need to be understood as ambiguous, complex and dynamic in order for professionals convening them, or policy makers promoting them to clearly understand the enormous challenges which collaborations present" (Huxham & Vangen, p. 800, 2000). Stated more specifically, the National Institute of Justice [NIJ] (2004) advised that it takes time to teach agencies to look beyond their own needs and consider the effects of their actions on other agencies. Time to teach systems thinking is especially needed where agencies have competing roles and missions, and where politics may thwart cooperative efforts. Learning to think systemically in a rule oriented system such as the legal system will be difficult given the adversarial environment in which the legal system operates, i.e., a system that sees behaviors as either 'right or wrong', 'black or white', and 'either, or' (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006).

Child Welfare and Law Enforcement Collaborating

Federal and state statutes mandate that CPS social workers and law enforcement officers engage in collaboration to investigate child abuse. Yet guidelines or protocols for defining and implementing collaborative arrangements remain non-existent (Child Abuse Prevention Handbook, 2000; Ivery, 2007; Sandfort, 2001; Sheppard & Zangrillo, 1996; Wiklund, 2006). For example, in evaluating a program that was designed to respond to children exposed to drugs, Altshuler (2005) rated the level of collaboration between participating CPS staff and law enforcement officers using self-report questionnaires and

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observations. Participants in the study identified themselves as collaborating highly even though their ratings ranged from 4 to 20 on a scale ranging from 1 to 20. Conversely, research observers rated collaboration between the two professions as low from 2 to 8, or 3 to 12 on the identical 20 point scale. This study draws attention to the need to have clear guidelines for defining and implementing collaborative efforts; otherwise, agencies decide on their own what constitutes collaboration and what does not.

There is precedent setting circumstance involving a case of a parent being arrested that warranted a plan for collaboration between CPS and law enforcement, but no such plan was in place. The lack of a plan resulted in children being left in situations that placed them at risk for harm. There were known circumstances where children had been left alone in cars overnight and harmed, or children had been left home alone after a parent's arrest until discovered by neighbors and called CPS (Puddefoot & Foster 2007). Puddefoot and Foster (2007) clarify that children of arrested parents usually fall outside of the definition of abused and/or neglected children, since parental arrest does not suggest parental abuse or neglect. Although these children do not meet the statute for parental child abuse, system intervention puts these children at risk of being neglected and even harmed. That meant that children of arrested parents could be ignored and left on their own to fend for themselves, left with a relative, or a neighbor, or anyone willing to care for the children. Such action not only results in systems abuse, but also leaves the children at risk for stranger abuse.

According to Charlene Wear Simmons (as cited by Puddefoot and Foster, 2007) California law enforcement officers have no legal responsibility and are not liable for ensuring the safety and well-being of children left behind as a result of a parent's arrest.

Law enforcement officers further have no official responsibility to assist the arrested

parents in making arrangements for the child's care, arrange transportation for a child to a

neighbor's or relative's residence, or to conduct a background check to see if the

neighbor or relative is a suitable caregiver. In fact, a law enforcement officer is only

required to make a child abuse report if the officer has reasonable suspicion that abuse or

neglect has occurred. "A determination that a child could be at risk (due to parental

arrest) is not enough to trigger the reporting requirement" (Puddefoot & Foster, p. 27,

2007). Also, there was no legal requirement for CPS to respond to law enforcement's

request for assistance when parents were arrested. This clarification of law enforcement's

inaction not only provides an example of the differences in roles and responsibilities

between social workers and law enforcement officers, it highlights the gaps in service

delivery as it relates to children.

     Assembly Bill No.1942 (See Appendix A) was signed into law in 2006

encouraging CPS and law enforcement agencies to develop formal protocols for

safeguarding children when their parents were arrested. In 2007 Puddefoot and Foster of

The California Research Bureau conducted a survey to find out which California local

police departments, county sheriff's department, and county welfare agencies already had

formal protocols in place delineating how to respond to children at the time of a parent's

arrest. Two-thirds of the responding law enforcement departments reported that they had

no written policy outlining their officers' responsibilities. Half of the responding CPS

offices also reported that they had neither a written policy on how to respond to an arrest

situation, nor a consistent policy on how to place the children of the arrested parent in

temporary care. It is essential to reiterate that without specific guidelines for developing

collaborative protocols, agencies either choose not to, or decide on their own what encompasses collaboration.

San Francisco and San Jose/Santa Clara were the only two jurisdictions with formal "joint response' protocols for parental child abuse and non-child abuse arrests where children were present (See Appendices B and C for Sample Protocols).Rather than developing a formal protocol, leaders from both Los Angeles city and county law enforcement agencies established a working agreement with the county Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to designate a child welfare services-law enforcement liaison. The liaison's responsibility is threefold, (1) to establish a cooperative working relationship with all law enforcement agencies within the city and county, (2) to educate law enforcement personnel about the effects of parental arrest on children, and (3) to coordinate child welfare services responses/request from law enforcement. With few child welfare and law enforcement agencies developing working protocols, it is clear that unless mandated to do, governmental agencies are less likely to enter into collaborative working agreements in spite of the benefit to all parties involved. Encouragement, alone, is not a sufficient impetus for agencies to developing collaborative protocols.

Collaborative protocols have the potential for producing positive outcomes for children according to research literature. Manning (1999) described a joint response, Drug-Exposed Children (DEC) program that was established in San Diego County in 1998. The DEC program emerged to meet the needs to provide for the safety and well-being of children who were found living in "meth lab" homes that were targeted by law enforcement agencies who conducted joint drug raids and arrested parents. After arresting

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the parents, law enforcement had no further responsibility for the care and safety of the children. The DEC program has been in operation for over ten years and serves as an introductory model for developing interdisciplinary collaboration. However, the DEC model seems to be more of a symbolic gesture of collaboration rather than true collaboration (Lindeke & Block, 1998; Longoria, 2005). For example, the DEC protocol called for CPS social workers to be available to transport children for medical care and to make out-of-home placement arrangements; health care providers were responsible for examining the children for risk of health and toxin exposure, and to provide follow-up medical care. Social workers and health care providers were not part of the decision-making process. Their involvement was not to assist law enforcement in assessing whether treatment rather than jail was the most appropriate plan for the arrested parent; their involvement did more to boost the criminal case for prosecution. Law enforcement had sole responsibility for the investigations.

It can not be ignored, however, that prior to the DEC program and similar to children in the Nieto (as cited in Puddefoot and Foster, 2007) study, children were often left on their own without care and supervision, with neighbors, or with relatives when a parent was arrested. No attempt was made to ascertain the neighbor's or relative's ability to care for the child. Neither was there any attempt made to verify the neighbor's or relative's character, including whether they posed any risk to the child. In this regard the DEC program is a step in the right direction. Nevertheless, more can be done to ensure equity in decision-making rather than having social workers acquiesce to the needs of the more powerful partner – law enforcement.

Lack of Protocol

All 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories have Federal statutes outlining procedures that State agencies must follow in handling reports of suspected child abuse or neglect. These procedures include requirements for cross-reporting between CPS and law enforcement on cases involving child physical abuse (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2009; Goldman, Salus, Wolcott & Kennedy, 2003). Winterfield and Sakagawa (2003) presented a paper to the Center for Community Partnership in Child Welfare in New York that outlined three models of collaboration between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers. One, "minimal collaboration" was described as the traditional collaborative arrangement between these two agencies. For example, both agencies may investigate the same case but retain their own jurisdictional responsibilities. Sixteen states, including California, were identified as adhering to this model. The second collaboration model described law enforcements officers as routinely participating in joint or coordinated child abuse and neglect investigations with CPS. This model employed Memorandums of Understandings (MOUs), multi-disciplinary teams, or child advocacy centers to coordinate investigations. Twenty-eight states were reported to be using this method of collaborating. In the third collaborative model, abuse allegations were investigated exclusively by law enforcement. Child welfare social workers were only involved in this process after the investigated was completed and a determination was made that there were children who needed to be placed in out-of-home/foster care. Six states were reported to be using this type of arrangement.

Lloyd and Burman (1996) studied three different collaborative arrangements in Scotland described as separate, informal joint, and formal joint engagement practices. These three collaborative arrangements closely resembled the three collaborative

arrangements presented by Winterfield and Sakagawa in 2003. CPS social workers and law enforcement officers had no organizational arrangements for conducting investigations in separate collaborative arrangements. Each entity worked independently of each other. There were no formal agreements in the informal joint arrangement; each agency agreed to cross-report to the other when a report of suspected sexual abuse or serious physical child abuse was received; these cases were more likely to be investigated jointly. The study revealed, however, that not all allegations of physical abuse referrals were cross reported between the two agencies.

In yet another dated, but relevant study, Sheppard and Zangrillo (1996) conducted a national random sampling of 325 municipal police agencies, 279 sheriff departments and 239 child welfare agencies to identify the collaborative arrangements CPS social workers and law enforcement employed to investigate child abuse. Data was collected between 1991and 1992. 80% of the responding police agencies and 95 % of the sheriff departments reported that they conducted joint investigations with CPS social workers; 23% of the law enforcement departments reported having written, signed agreements with their CPS agencies. Typical agreements outlined cross reporting responsibilities, referrals requiring joint investigations, geographical areas of responsibilities, and the requirement to conduct interviews. 60% of the law enforcement agencies reported that they had unwritten agreements. Similar to the Los Angeles County arrangement, these agencies engaged the assistance of liaisons to coordinate requests for assistance from CPS. Larger law enforcement agencies tended to have more formal agreements, whereas smaller departments tended to be less formal, with unwritten guidelines. None of the agreements, written or unwritten, had provisions delineating roles

and responsibilities, including but not limited to the decision-making process. Also, there were no plans for how to deal with difference when CPS and law enforcement professional disagreed on how to handle a case. In spite of the call for collaboration in investigating child abuse, nationally as well as internationally, reports from Winterfield and Sakagawa (2003), Lloyd and Burman (1996), and Sheppard and Zangrillo (1996) illustrate that collaboration remains inconsistent and in many cases not yet realized. Inconsistency in handling child abuse reports has become the norm rather than an anomaly.

Inconsistent Cross-reporting

Despite Federal legislation requiring allegations of child abuse to be cross-reported between CPS and law enforcement, cross-reporting does not occur on a consistent basis. Lloyd and Burman (1996) found that social workers made arbitrary decisions whether to conduct joint investigations with law enforcement after an initial intervention with the family was made. Decision to cross-report or to involve law enforcement was based on the social worker's assessment of the seriousness of the referral. Conflict occurred in the collaborative relationship when CPS social workers failed to cross-report, or when investigation of the referrals was conducted separate from law enforcement officers. Conflict was especially heightened when social workers 'unfound' the allegation, or concluded that no further involvement was warranted either by CPS or law enforcement (Cross et al, 2005). According to Walsh (as cited in Cross et al, 2005), when interviews were conducted separate from law enforcement officers, social workers forewarned the perpetrator that a criminal investigation was forthcoming. This

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warning enabled the perpetrator to carry out several actions to avoid possible prosecution, (1) destroy evidence, (2) pressure the child to recant the allegation, (3) construct an alibi, and (4) obstruct investigation by securing legal counselor or flee the location by the time the criminal investigation was conducted. Sheppard and Zangrillo (1996) observed additional factors that impeded law enforcement efforts when CPS social workers interviewed child victims without the presence of law enforcement officers. Social workers cannot (1) be expected to preserve the chain of evidence, (2) properly conduct a crime scene search, or (3) apply the alleged perpetrator Miranda rights. Such oversights, according to Sheppard and Zangrillo (1996) can jeopardize law enforcement officers' opportunities to file charges against an alleged child abuser.

Similar to CPS social workers, Lloyd and Burman (1996) found that when law enforcement officers conducted child abuse interviews separate from the CPS social worker, referrals determined to be less serious cases of physical abuse or neglect were never cross-reported. It was not until an anonymous phone call was received with information that children had been left on their own that the cases came to the attention of CPS. These circumstances are similar to cases previously discussed in which Assembly Bill 1942 was enacted recommending law enforcement and social services agencies develop protocols designed to improve collaborative relationships.

Dawson and Wells (2007) conducted a survey in which police data, including incident reports, arrest reports, and CPS reports from two rural northeastern towns were examined. Data was collected from two police departments and one CPS office in the period from 1990 to1999. This study was designed to identify the type of referral law enforcement officers cross-reported and did not cross report to CPS. The study revealed

that of the 494 child victim cases reviewed, 82% of the referrals were never forwarded to CPS.

Dawson and Wells (2007) reported that men were more likely to be the offender in child victim cases, but the mothers in the home rather than the men were more likely to be reported to CPS. For example, fathers and stepfathers were more likely to be arrested, but not reported to CPS. By contrast, the mothers or stepmothers offenders were less likely to be arrested, but more likely to be referred to CPS. In fact, the Dawson and Wells study (2007) reported mothers to be arrested 22% of the time as a result of an allegation of abuse, but referred to CPS 71% of the time. From a safety perspective, arresting the father but not making a cross-report to CPS places the children at a greater risk of being re-abused. Inmates in jail awaiting pre-trial hearings, or those sentenced to jail spend less than three months incarcerated. After short-term incarceration these men return home to their families possibly placing children at risk for re-abuse (Pogrebin, Dodge & Katsampes, 2001; Sheppard & Zangrillo, 1996). Other alternatives such as community-based approaches to treatment and social control seem be safer and economically more effective than incarceration (Lengyel, 2006).

Working separately or failure to cross-report allegations of abuse, whether an omission by CPS or law enforcement professionals, reduces the likelihood that the children or family will get the help they need (Sheppard & Zangrillo, 1996). Separate CPS and law enforcement investigations also meant that the child will inevitably be interviewed multiple times by different investigators who ask the same question. Redundant interviews impose extra stress on the victims, possibly leading to inconsistent

statements which could result in CPS social workers and law enforcement officers

working with conflicting agendas (Sheppard & Zangrillo, 1996).

Although collaboration in child abuse investigations has been emphasized since

1974, there is little empirical data about collaborative working arrangements between

CPS social workers and law enforcement officers (Cross et al., 2005; Newman &

Dannenfelser, 2005). Cross et al. (2005) summarized the working relationship between

CPS social workers and law enforcement from secondary data reviewed from the

National Survey of Child Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW). Researchers were interested

in knowing how frequently CPS and law enforcement participated in joint investigations,

how often CPS investigated cases alone, and the frequency with which joint placement

decisions were made. A stratified, random sample [2]of 92 Child Protective Services

Agencies nationwide was selected, from which a list of cases that had been investigated

and completed was compiled. The 3,842 cases selected involved the most serious

allegations of physical abuse (n=1,054), sexual abuse (n= 590), and neglect (n= 2198).

Table 1 illustrates the percentage of time child welfare social workers conducted joint

investigations with law enforcement for each allegation, and the percentage of time child

welfare conducted investigations alone. Additionally, the table shows the percentage of

time child welfare social workers made joint placement decisions with law enforcement,

the percentage of time child welfare social workers made placement decisions alone, and

the percentage of time a multidisciplinary team task force made placement decisions.

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[2] Frankfort-Nachmias, C., & Nachmias, D. (2000). Research methods in the social sciences. The underlying idea in stratified sampling is to use available information on the population "to divide it into groups such that the elements within each group are more alike than are the elements in the population as a whole", p. 172.

Table 1

Relationship of Police Involvement to CPS Cases

AGENCY INVOLVEMENT	PHYSICAL ABUSE N= 1054	SEXUAL ABUSE N= 590	NEGLECT N= 2198
CPS and law enforcement conducted joint investigations	28% (295)	45% (266)	18% (396)
CPS conducted abuse allegations alone	72% (759)	55% (324)	82% (1802)
CPS and law enforcement made joint placement decisions	8% (84)	16% (94)	4% (88)
CPS made placement decisions alone	88% (928)	74% (437)	93% (2044)
Multidisciplinary team task force made placement decision	4% (42)	10% (59)	3% (66)

SOURCE: Cross et al., 2005

Findings revealed that when law enforcement officers were involved, abuse was more likely to be substantiated and children were more likely to receive a variety of service interventions. The researchers concluded that joint investigations by CPS social workers and law enforcement officers do not hinder CPS social workers effectiveness, but may, in fact, promote effectiveness.

Newman and Dannenfelser (2005) conducted telephone interviews with 290 CPS social workers and law enforcement officers from 28 child advocacy centers in 20 different states. Employing two open ended questions, participants were asked to identify barriers and facilitators to collaboration. Factors such as different mandates, different

timeframes, and conflict over case control, lack of knowledge about each others roles, and distance /location of the advocacy center were barriers identified as impeding collaboration.

Sheppard and Zangrillo (1996) conducted a survey of 325 municipal police agencies, 275 county law enforcement agencies, and 239 child welfare agencies, nationwide. Researchers were interested in how law enforcement professionals and CPS social workers carried out child abuse investigations, and how joint investigations could be improved. In traditional joint investigation settings, law enforcement professionals reported that high turnover rates among CPS social workers made it difficult to conduct joint investigations. Their chief complaint centered on constantly having to deal with new and inexperienced CPS social workers. Additionally, high turnover rates made it difficult for law enforcement to develop working relationships with CPS staff. A traditional joint investigation setting is one where investigators work out of their respected agencies. They meet at a predetermine location to conduct a joint investigation. CPS social workers reported turf issues, resistance from law enforcement around decision-making and lack of training as barriers to working collaboratively with law enforcement.

In addition to the survey, Sheppard and Zangrillo (1996) observed the child abuse investigation techniques in seven counties of various population sizes, including urban, suburban, and rural settings, different racial and ethnic compositions, and different economic levels. In addition to interviewing law enforcement officers and CPS administrators, investigators, and supervisors, prosecutors, judges, medical and mental health personnel were also interviewed. Three counties conducted interviews at a child advocacy center (CAC). Two counties had multidisciplinary (MDT) interview centers.

Investigating staff at the MDT were not co-located. The center was used mainly for conducting interviews and holding team meetings. One county (district attorney) hired a child interview specialist to interview victims of sexual abuse. The interview specialist conducted interviews out of the district attorney's office in a specially designed room with observation capabilities. One county was more traditional in its investigation approach, i.e., investigators from both CPS and law enforcement met in the field or at the police station to conduct joint interviews. Three of the seven counties had social workers and law enforcement officers co-located at each other's agencies to facilitate quick reciprocal responses. Sites where there was either a CAC or MDT has several advantages over traditional joint investigation sites. These advantages included commitment and support from civic leaders, visible identification with the community, staff assigned to the program to ensure that it functioned well, readily available expertise, and easy access to investigation team members (Sheppard & Zangrillo, 1996). CAC and MDT centers also had more written protocols and more formalized joint investigation procedures than traditional investigation settings.

Similar to Sheppard and Zangrillo, Lloyd and Burman (1996) studied the working relationship between law enforcement officers and social workers in the United Kingdom, Scotland. In this study, law enforcement officers reported working with different social workers from varied geographical areas and jurisdictions to be a barrier to developing relationships with social workers. Conducting an investigation with the same social worker was reported to be practically non-existent. Also, conducting an interview during a joint investigation created another barrier. Typically, law enforcement officers take the lead; they set the parameters and dictate the questions. Even though both entities

agreed to participate in the interview process, tension arose around how the interviews were conducted. Law enforcement viewed the interview as the main purpose for gathering legal evidence for prosecution; social workers, on the other hand, saw it as an opportunity to evaluate risk to the child and decide on strategies for intervention. Additionally, social workers felt that law enforcement officers lacked training on how to communicate and interview children. Social workers described law enforcement's techniques as heavy-handed and frightening to children.

A difference in perspectives about informing parents that their children were being interviewed was a source of contention as well. Law enforcement officers were concerned with 'tipping off the suspects' and possibly contaminating evidence; social workers were concerned about the parents' rights to know.

Concerns over professional identities created another barrier to collaborative relationships. Both professional groups expressed concerns that their identities could be eroded; social workers reported being referred to as 'police aids', while law enforcement officers expressed that they were referred to as 'glorified social workers (Sheppard & Zangrillo, 1996). Cross et al. (1996) disagreed that personal identities interfered with child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers' abilities to collaborate with each other. The researchers asserted that CPS social workers and law enforcement officers' commitment to the well-being of children often transcended interpersonal differences and so-called turf battles. Further, the researchers asserted that the difficulties that surfaced between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers stemmed from differences related to their mission, training, investigative methods, beliefs, and they way they are socialized by their respective agencies. Historical mistrust and lack of

understanding between the two groups exacerbated the differences. Cross-training was identified as one approach for alleviating mistrust and misunderstanding.

Training

Patterson (2004) conducted a quantitatively based study about the effects of child abuse training on the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of police recruits. Eighty-one recruits were assigned to an experimental pretest-posttest group. 101 recruits were assigned to a control group. Findings revealed that after training, participants in the experimental group were better prepared to work with families experiencing child abuse than their comparison group. This study, similar to the Lonsway, Welch and Fitzgerald (2001) study, supports the value of training in affecting changes in attitudes.

Lonsway et al. (2001) evaluated an experimental training program involving 161 police recruits hired by the state of Illinois using a quantitative/qualitative mixed method approach. Fifty-six recruits were assigned to a 400 hours traditional training class with lectures regarding laws pertaining to sexual abuse and general dynamics of sexual assault crimes. The remaining 105 recruits participated in an experimental training program. This program consisted of both lecture and discussion provided in three instructional modules: 60 minutes on the Illinois Sexual Assault Act; 90 minutes on the dynamics and preliminary investigation of sexual assault, and 60 minutes on the impact of sexual assault and interviewing the victim. Findings showed that the experimental group outperformed the traditionally trained group on simulated sexual assault interviews, but there was no change in attitude about the sexual assault act.

As an approach to dismantling barriers related to roles and responsibilities, Lave and Wenger (1991) and Brown and Duguid (2000) observed that it takes more than just trainings and reading a book; actual engagement in investigative processes must take place. More succinctly stated, Lave and Wenger (1991) suggested that learning required working in the company of expert participants who perform such tasks on a daily basis.

Co-location/Sharing Physical Space

Sharing the same physical space or being co-located eliminated the need for CPS social workers and law enforcement officers to conduct separate interviews (Tapper & Kleinman, 1987). Lave and Wenger (1991); Lindeke and Block, 1998; and, Brown and Duguid (2000) suggest that co-location or shared physical space is the optimal work setting for CPS social workers and law enforcement officers to learn about each other's work beyond professional languages and symbols. Co-location is a more favorable arrangement for collaborating because it draws attention to the difference between what a task looks like in a policy manual and what it looks like in reality; and there is a difference between what people think they do and what they really do (Lave & Wenger, 1991, Brown & Duguid. 2000). Claiborne and Lawson (2005) considered co-location to be a means to maximize face-to-face communication, improve coordination and to facilitate building relationships.

Garrett (2004) paints a rather pessimistic picture regarding the ability of CPS social workers and law enforcement officers to work well together. Garrett (2004) studied the relationship of 14 police officers and seven social workers in three separate specialist units in the United Kingdom. Law enforcement officers and social workers were co-

located in two of the units; only police officers were located in the third unit. Using semi-structured interview questions, Garrett (2004) found that regardless of the way the units were structured, police officers were reluctant to form equal partnerships with the social workers, citing their need to retain the responsibility as the lead agency in the investigation. Describing the skills needed to conduct child protection work, police officers in the co-located unit expressed the belief that they could easily take on the role of the social worker stating, "Just like any officer should be able to deal with a serious road traffic accident, any police officer should be able to do child protection work."

Garrett expressed concern that instead of collaborating to complement each others' roles and responsibilities, social workers showed signs of thinking and behaving more like police officers. For example, one social worker expressed concerns that social work interventions were being altered to include gathering clean evidence for the police rather than focusing on harm done to the child. Under such work environments Garrett warns, "social workers risk becoming de-skilled and rendered superfluous" (p. 91, 2004).

The law enforcement unit in this study that was not co-located with social workers reported being more stressed. These officers reported feeling like outsiders within their own police stations as they were often referred to as Cinderella departments, 'babysitters', or 'cardigan squads.' This group of officers also had more difficulty engaging and working collaboratively with other community services agencies because they were insensitive to the fact that traditional policing practices and techniques were not effective in connection with child abuse within families. While there are indications that there are benefits to co-locating CPS social workers and law enforcement officers in the same physical space, Garrett (2004) makes the case that curriculums offered by

schools of social work must include critical thinking, as well as building up of social

workers' confidence in their own skills and knowledge so that they will be prepared to

work in a multi-professional setting. To be self-confident, he continues, social workers

must be able to articulate and maintain their social work roles, purpose, and values, rather

than relinquishing their authority and responsibilities to the police. Collaboration across

disciplines requires mature professionals with good articulation and communication

skills, strong identities, self-confidence, and integrity (Lindeke & Block, 1998).

CPS social workers and law enforcement officers co-located, and working

collaboratively in Scotland reported improved communication, an ease in sharing

information, and the opportunity to learn more about each other's jobs. Social workers

reported learning more about the criminal justice system from their counterparts while

law enforcement officers reported becoming more sensitive about people's problems and

learning how to better communicate with children. Both reported greater flexibility in

roles and responsibility during the interviewing of children (Lloyd & Burman, 1996).

Relationship Building

Conte, Berliner and Nolan (1980) conducted a study in Seattle, Washington with

social workers, law enforcement officers, and prosecutors to develop joint procedures for

dealing with victims of sexual assault. A review of prior police records, along with semi-

structured interviews with law enforcement officers and prosecutors, provided the data

that reflected the separate ways sexual assault cases had been handled in the past. Both

professional groups held the assumptions that they were incapable of working together

due to their different and conflicting roles and responsibilities. In an effort to improve

relationships and to underscore roles compatibility, informal and formal meetings with the three professional groups were held on a weekly basis with the three professional groups over a two year period. Findings revealed that social workers and law enforcement officers developed a strong interpersonal relationship over the two year period characterized by mutual trust and mutual respect. However, "this relationship was formed, in part, by the social worker's emphasis on prosecution of the offender"(p. 9, Conte, Berliner & Nolan. 1980).This observation infers that social workers relinquished their social work roles to the expectations of the criminal justice system. If such was the case, it confirmed that an imbalance in power renders the social workers' decision-making irrelevant in cross-discipline relationships. It also confirmed the need for social workers to be confident in articulating and defending their roles and responsibilities when collaborating with other disciplines. As was noted earlier, without such confidence and equal power, the more powerful professional dictated whose decision would prevail during the decision-making process.

On a more positive note, participants in this study did report an increase in mutual trust and mutual respect. Networking and training do help individuals become more acquainted and build trust with each other. According to Tidd, McIntyre and Friedman (2004) as trust increases stereotypes and biases toward the other groups become weakened and relationships begin to build. Both professional groups expressed gains in knowledge and performance as a result of their cooperative efforts. Social workers reported having a better understanding of police procedures, rules of evidence, and the process of developing a case; law enforcement officers reported an improvement in their interviewing skills and better understanding of the needs of sexually abused children and

their families. Further, Simon and Peterson (2000) proposed that when individuals trust

each other they are more likely to accept disagreements and different viewpoints.

Additionally, when there is trust among participants less time and energy are spent

focusing on the shortcomings of each other; more time and energy are spent on working

out solutions to the problem at hand. Despite differences in viewpoints or approaches,

quality decisions are made when collaborative participants establish good working

relationships (Simon & Peterson, 2000).

Different Approaches

The Dawson and Wells (2007) study revealed that law enforcement officers

utilized different approaches or practices for determining whether a child abuse referral

warranted cross-reporting or further investigation by CPS social workers. There were a

number of instances in which abuse referrals were not cross-reported. In one such

example, abuse referrals were not cross-reported to CPS due to law enforcements' belief

that the children did not suffer substantial harm or injury. In another instance abuse

referrals were not cross-reported because it was believed that the parents were legitimate

in using corporal punishment. Third, abuse referrals were not cross-reported to CPS when

it was determined by law enforcement that the offender was no longer in the child's

home. Fourth, abuse referrals were not cross-reported when law enforcement determined

that the victim was unable to articulate an account of what happened. Fifth, cases in

which there was a delay between the time the abuse incident occurred and when it was

reported to police (one week) were also not reported to CPS. Sixth, the Dawson and

Wells' (2007) study revealed that if the child victim disclosed the abuse in therapy, law

enforcement did not cross-report to CPS. The explanation given was that the child's

needs were being satisfied in therapy. Seventh, the study revealed that law enforcement

did not cross-report to CPS in circumstances where parents reported the abuse. The

justification promulgated in this case indicated that law enforcement officers believed the

parent was a competent supervisor and capable of protecting the child from further harm.

Allegations of abuse involving teenagers 13 years of age and older were also less likely

to be cross-reported to CPS. The rationale provided was that law enforcement officers

perceived adolescents to be untruthful, sexually promiscuous, or delinquent and that their

behaviors contributed to their abuse. This finding is consistent with a study conducted by

Hicks and Tite (1988) that concluded that the perceptions about who victims are and how

they behave influenced reactions to their alleged abuse circumstances.

Hicks and Tite (1998) studied 50 social workers, 55 police officers, and 45

education professionals in Newfoundland, Canada to determine these professionals'

views about the characteristics and credibility of sexual abuse victims. Teenagers,

especially those who were labeled as 'runaways' or problem children, were less likely to

be believed by the police and education personnel as being sexual abuse victims. Both,

the Dawson and Wells' study and the Hicks and Tite's study revealed that abuse

allegations where teenagers were the victims were less likely to be cross-reported to CPS,

especially if the police and education professionals believed that the teenagers' behavior

contributed to them becoming abuse victims. In the same way different approaches or

methods for determining which referrals necessitated further investigations, CPS social

workers and law enforcement officers have different standards for investigating and

making outcome decisions. Different standards like different approaches contribute to the

ongoing contention between CPS social worker and law enforcement officers.

Different Standards

Trute, Adkins and MacDonald, (1992) studied the attitudes of 80 police officers,

35 child welfare social workers (CPS), and 21 mental health professionals in Winnipeg,

Canada regarding the meaning and treatment of child sexual abuse victims. This study

was conducted using surveys and the Professional Attitudes Regarding the Sexual Abuse

of Children (PARSAC) Scale. All three professional groups agreed that child sexual

abuse was widespread and had a deleterious effect on children.

However, findings revealed significant differences in professional attitudes about the

sexual abuse of children relating to punishment versus rehabilitation. The study

demonstrated that law enforcement officers believed that perpetrators came from a

deviant sector of the population and deserved to be punished for their deviant behavior.

Social workers and mental health professionals maintained that perpetrators of child

sexual abuse come from all segments of society and required intense mental health

treatment.

The study found the most significant differences in attitudes were found between

child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers. Similar to earlier studies by

Saunders (1988) and Wilks and McCarthy (1986), this study revealed that law

enforcement officers favored strong legal intervention, including jail time to curb sexual

abuse. Social workers, on the other hand, were more in favor of interventions focusing on

the families' overall social, physical, and mental well-being, which included plans for

strengthening the family unit. Additionally, social workers were striving to bring about

change in the family's circumstances through cooperation, while law enforcement

officers were enforcing the law through confrontation. This study serves as a reminder of

the ongoing challenge these two agencies face in trying to meet the needs of their

competing mandates.

Saunders (1988) studied the attitudes of social workers and law enforcement

professionals toward child sexual abuse in a large urban county in an eastern state, using

purposive sampling and distributing 216 self-report questionnaires.132 professionals

responded, representing a 61% response rate.   31 or 23% of CPS social workers, 49 or

37% of police officers, 37 or 23% of district attorney and court judges, 10 or 8% of

assistant public defenders, and 5 or 4% of assistant district attorneys responded. Social

workers, police officers and district attorneys found the victim to be credible and without

blame in contributing to the assault. However, professional attitudes determined whether

sex abuse was regarded as a sickness, a crime, or a family problem. Social workers were

determined to be less punitive than police officers, district attorneys or judges. The study

confirmed that public defenders found perpetrators to be least culpable in the commission

of the sexual abuse crime; public defenders also advocated for the least punitive response

on the offender's behalf.

Wilk and McCarthy (1986) conducted a mail survey of 25 law enforcement

professionals and 25 intake social workers (CPS) in a rural county in Florida who were

first responders in child sexual abuse investigations, and 25 mental health therapists. 54

of the 75 questionnaires were returned, 18 from law enforcement officers, 19 from mental

health therapists, and 17 from CPS social workers. There was an overall response rate of

72%. The study was designed to determine the three professions' perceptions of what constituted an appropriate intervention in child sexual abuse cases. Law enforcement professionals were more in favor of arresting the father (the perpetrator), and sometimes the mother; more often viewed the father as a criminal and tended to favor court intervention and incarceration as the appropriate action to take. In addition, law enforcement professionals were less likely to leave the child in the home even if the father was arrested. CPS and mental health professionals viewed the fathers as mentally ill rather than as a criminal; they believed that the child should remain in the home. All three professional groups believed that the father should be arrested, but not necessarily jailed. CPS and mental health professionals believed that instead of being incarcerated, the family would benefit more from court-ordered mental health treatment.

Shireman, Miller and Brown (1981) examined 288 cases drawn from The Cook County Juvenile Court, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the Chicago Police Department files to determine if there was any difference in the number of out of home placements when law enforcement officers or DCFS social workers were the first to respond to allegations of abuse. Table 2 provides a description of the differences in out-of-home placements when DCFS and law enforcement officers were first responders. Of the 76 cases sampled from Juvenile Court, 42 were first investigated by law enforcement; emergency out of home care resulted in 39 or 93% of those cases. CPS/DCFS was less likely to be involved when law enforcement was the first responder and handled the cases.

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Table 2

Differences in Out-of Home (O-H-C) Placements Based on CPS/DCFS and Law Enforcement's (LE) Involvement as First Responder

CASE SOURCE	# OF CASES LE FIRST RESPONDER	% OF LE CASES RESULT IN O-H-C	# OF CASES DCFS FIRST RESPONDER	% OF DCFS CASES RESULT IN O-H-C
Juvenile Court N=76	42	93% (39)	34	50% (17)
Cases Handled by DCFS N= 126	38	68% (26)	88	11% (1)
Cases handled by law enforcement N= 86	86	61% (52)*	N/A	N/A

SOURCE: Shireman et al., 1981
* Note: 19 or 22% of the cases were place with relatives; 15 or 17 % of the cases remained in the home

Differences in agency philosophies, rather than the severity of the case were determined to be the deciding factor regarding emergency placement. Law enforcement officers focused on removing the children from harmful situations and bringing the offender to justice. DCFS social workers, on the other hand, were focused on maintaining the child in the home and preserving the family unit whenever possible.

In the mid 1990's research began to emerge aimed at highlighting outcomes for families and children when child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers worked together as opposed to working separately to investigate child physical and sexual abuse. Prior to the mid 1990's, research in this area focused mainly on differences in professional attitudes toward sexual abuse, and the need for CPS and law enforcement to work together. Also, prior research findings were primarily descriptive, relying upon

survey research with few outcome studies (Newman, et al., 2005). Differences, such as

beliefs and attitudes about the sexual abuse of children, as well as differences in

education, training, and professional socialization were frequently cited as inhibiting

collaboration. Most studies identify a lack of knowledge both CPS social workers and

law enforcement officers possess about each others' profession, including competing

goals and expectations as limiting collaborative relationships. Interpersonal factors such

as mutual distrust, suspicion, professional stereotypes and biases further limited the

ability to build collaborative relationships (Garrett, 2004; Hicks & Tite, 1998; Lonsway,

Welch & Fitzgerald, 2001; Patterson, 2004; Saunders, 1988; Trute, Adkins &

MacDonald, 1992; Waterhouse & Carnie, 1991; and, Wilk & McCarthy, 1986). Cross et

al. (2005) conducted a literature review and secondary data analysis of police

involvement in CPS investigations and concluded that the difficulties arising between

CPS social workers and law enforcement officers were based on historical mistrust and a

lack of understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the two professions. Differences

in mission, training, investigative methods, experience, beliefs, and organizational culture

of each agency exacerbated these difficulties.

    Child physical abuse and neglect cases had not yet received the same focus and

attention as sexual abuse cases. A study conducted by Hazzard and Rupp (1986) of 47

pediatricians, 53 mental health professionals, 104 teachers, and 68 college students from

a large southeastern U.S city may provide a possible explanation. The researchers were

interested in learning how much knowledge each group possessed about child physical

abuse. Pediatricians were found to possess more abuse-related education. Most of their

knowledge was a result of medical training. Mental health professionals were better

informed about the psychological and dynamic aspects of abuse. Conflict related to differences in perspectives regarding what comprised physical abuse resulted in few child abuse diagnoses and thus few child abuse referrals. Teachers and college students were described as having "knowledge deficits". These two groups were not aware that they were immune from law suits for making suspected child abuse referrals and thus did not make such referrals. Few referrals or no referrals resulted in a lack of data from which to develop physical abuse and neglect research projects.

In response to an increase in the number of sex crimes perpetrated against children, Conte, Berliner and Nolan (1980) conducted a study in Seattle, Washington to determine how to best work with child sexual abuse victims by improving the collaborative relationship between law enforcement officers and social workers. The collaborative relationship between these two entities had been characterized by mutual distrust and suspicion. Law enforcement officers viewed social workers as 'do gooders' who wanted to deal with crime as a social disease to be treated with therapy rather than prosecution. The social workers, on the other hand, viewed law enforcement officers as insensitive, believing that the criminal justice system did more harm than good for the victims and their families.

Parkinson (1980) evaluating a community policing program in Canada, asked 25 police officers and 25 social workers to complete a modified version of the Finney (1967) questionnaire. In the original study 192 male police officers were asked to describe their impression of themselves and of social workers. In the more recent study (NOW 30 years old) using the modified questionnaire, all of the 25 police participants were men; the social work participants were both men and women. Although the number of men and

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women social workers was not specified, the majority were women. Parkinson's (1980) study confirmed the stereotype findings in the Finney study which will be discussed later, but suggested that sex roles stereotypes, rather than professional stereotypes may account for the differences in the way police officers and social workers perceive each other.

Finney's (1967) evaluation of a pilot project that consisted of law enforcement professionals working in a delinquency prevention center laid the ground work for Parkinson's (1980) study. Perceiving their work, as well as the work of non-law enforcement personnel to be social work, 266 police officers in Finney's (1967) pilot project were asked to describe their impression of themselves and the impression of social workers by responding to a 52-item check list. 192 questionnaires were returned, representing a 72% response rate. 57% of the officers reported having little or no contact with social workers, as well as having no tangible knowledge about what social workers did even though they perceived the work they were doing to be social work. Results from the checklists revealed that law enforcement officers perceived themselves to be better trained than social workers but perceived social workers to be better educated. Even so, law enforcement placed a higher value on training than education. Additionally, law enforcement officers described themselves as forceful and being able to match wits with any underworld character they came in contact with but described social workers as 'wishy washy' and easily conned by their clients. Social workers were also perceived to be less suspicious, less forceful, less aggressive, and more lenient. Although the results from Finney's 1967 evaluation are considered to be passé, compared to current literature findings, little has changed to improve the working relationship between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers.

The review of the literature has shown that regardless of the context in which it is expressed, collaboration involves professionals working together to create and supply solutions to solve overlapping problems, improving efficiencies, making government both less bureaucratic and more seamless, and addressing clients multi-level needs. While balancing individual agency's goals along with achieving common collective goals is the hallmark of collaboration, accomplishing this task is also the most challenging (Deakin, 2002). The ultimate goal of governmental and private funders is for different professions, agencies, or organizations to join forces in a collaborative effort to address social issues from each of their perspectives to improve services to clients (Claiborne & Lawson, 2005).

Different research studies have listed some of the barriers to successful collaboration. These include different goals and agendas (Sowa, 2008), turf wars (Newman & Dannenfelser, 2005), imbalance authority in decision-making (Berman, 2006; Lowe, Parks & Tilkes, 2003), lack of role clarification (Horwath & Morrison, 2007; Northway & Mawdsley, 2008), lack of knowledge about the other's roles and responsibilities, (Osterling & Austin, 2008), differences in educational levels, including the way in which professionals are socialized(Bronstein & Abramson, 2003;Claiborne & Lawson, 2005; Strom & Eyerman, 2008), power and status differences (Claiborne & Lawson, 2005; Mandell, 2001; Mizrahi, 1999), lack of a common language (Buchbinder & Eisikovits,2008; Horwath & Morrison, 2007; Strom & Eyerman, 2008), poor formal and informal communication (Darlington, Feeney & Rixon, 2004; Han, Carnochan & Austin, 2007), constraints in sharing information (Richards, 2002); and, professional stereotypes (Lewandowski & GlenMaye, 2002).

Having an understanding and an appreciation for what each participant in a collaborative arrangement contributes enhances the likelihood that collaboration will be successful. Given the differences in professional expectations and responsibilities, professional socialization, and diversity in education and training, the purpose of this study was to gain insight into the collaborative practices employed by child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers in Riverside and San Bernardino counties when they engage to investigate child abuse allegations.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a grounded theory analysis to examine the experiences of child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers when they engage in collaboration to investigate child abuse. The qualitative research approach was determined to be most suitable because it was designed to be interpretive and useful in making sense of overlapping work environments. The information gathered came from the viewpoints of the professional groups involved in the collaborative process. Employing grounded theory as an analytical approach in this study was threefold: (1) to develop an understanding of how the two professional groups' cultures and behavioral frameworks impacted their social processes and social interactions, (2) to explain how each discipline's socialization, trainings, codes of conduct, and procedures dictated the professionals responses to certain situations, and (3) grounded theory was utilized because it facilitated the discovery of how different standards, statutes, and codes of conduct intensified conflict, misunderstandings, and breakdown in communication.

Overall, grounded theory was considered to be particularly appropriate and a "good fit" for this study because there is a lack of developed theories to explain the social processes and social relationships between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers. Hence, grounded theory does not seek to prove a theory. Rather, the main objective for employing grounded theory is to discover and build a theory from the participants' responses. As participants responses are analyzed a deeper understanding and explanation of the collaborative relationship between the two professional groups emerged. It is worth noting that as a professional social worker with experience in

investigating child abuse allegation I bring prior knowledge to the subject matter under inquiry. However, consistent with Lincoln and Guba (1985), Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Turner (1983) my personal preconceptions, values and beliefs about emerging concepts were held in abeyance. Instead, the data dictated the social reality of the working relationship between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers as articulated by the two professional groups themselves.

Qualitative research and the grounded theory analytical approach are inextricably linked in that both are concerned with exploring phenomena and gaining insight into people's attitudes and behaviors, and the reason for that behavior (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Employing techniques such as depth interviews, qualitative research attempts to study things in their natural setting answering what, why, and how questions and giving meaning to the phenomenon from the participants' perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The qualitative research interview method of data collection was determined to be particularly suited to gain insight into the difficulties and obstacles encountered when key players, with different definitions of a problem and different courses of action, interact to remedy the problem (Barbour, 2000). For example, social workers and law enforcement officers apply well intended, but different meanings to the term "child well-being" – a process which was determined to have far-reaching, adverse consequences on children and families that neither profession may have anticipated. Such discovery emanating from the points of views of professionals involved in the activities being studied makes qualitative inquiry especially relevant for practical, everyday experiences. Patterns of behavior and experiences expressed from the participants' perspectives are germane for informing governmental agencies and stakeholders if collaboration is functioning as a

reality in the work world or as a symbolic gesture. Viewed from that perspective, qualitative research was undertaken to develop an understanding of how CPS social workers and law enforcement officers interpret and give meaning to their work environment when they collaborate to investigate child abuse. "Qualitative methods can illuminate the variety of meanings attached by different individuals to particular events or issues – whether these arise from their professional backgrounds and trainings or from personal experience – and can provide an understanding of how these different perspectives give rise to particular conflicts, misunderstandings or breakdown in communication" (Barbour, 2000, p. 157).

Interview Protocol, IRB Approval, Interview Process, Sample Selection

Interview Protocol

The process of data collection began with pilot interviews conducted with two individuals who possessed knowledge of the working relationship between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers. A preliminary interview protocol, consisting of depth and open ended questions was used to conduct the pilot study. The pilot interviews served three purposes: (1) provided an opportunity to test the wording and clarity of the questions in the interview guide prior to launching the primary study; (2) testing the sampling and recruitment strategies, and (3) collecting preliminary data. The preliminary data collected from the pilot study interviews was used in part to develop the final interview guide that was used to gather data from CPS social workers and law enforcement officers.

Additionally, the pilot interviews revealed two crucial conditions that were necessary for conducting and retrieving accurate/representative research data. One condition was making sure that the electronic recording equipment was functioning properly, and secondly securing a quiet place for conducting the interviews to avoid interruptions. The two pilot interviews confirmed that the questions contained in the interview protocol were appropriate. The interview protocol was developed with the goal of understanding the differences in the way child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers intervened with children and families who were experiencing child physical and sexual abuse problems in the home. Both professional groups espoused a commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Understanding the different and conflicting intervention strategies each professional group employed to ensure child safety and well-being was scientifically meaningful -both in building funds of knowledge and in informing practice. Starting broadly with the standard questions of *who, what, when, where,* and *how,* eleven depth, open-ended questions were developed which made up the initial interview protocol. Examining the who, what, when, where, and how provided the basis for explaining and understanding the way the research participants functioned and behaved when they engaged in a collaborative relationship (Barbour, 2000). Following the development of the interview protocols the next step was to identify the research participants.

Sample Selection

Research subjects for this study were based on a combination of sampling methods. The research used theoretical sampling, snowball sampling, and convenience

sampling. Theoretical sampling emphasizes the importance of access to the most

knowledgeable participants who can provide realistic information about the topic being

studied (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Drawing upon this idea, letters were drafted and sent

to Administrators from the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Riverside

County, Riverside Police Department (RPD), San Bernardino County Department of

Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the San Bernardino County Sheriff

Department, Crimes against Children Unit, explaining the purpose of the study and

inviting them to permit their staff to participate in the study (See Appendix D, Letter of

Invitation to Participate in Research Project). Administrators were identified as having

the most knowledge about who would be the appropriate staff members to recruit for

participation in the study. Being sensitive about the mandatory nature of confidentiality

in child abuse investigations, there was heightened concern that some child welfare social

workers and law enforcement officers might be reluctant to participate in this study due

to uneasiness that confidential information about particular clients may be disclosed.

Even though this study was not aimed at collecting information about particular child

abuse clients, it was important to be sensitive to participants' comfort level in potentially

disclosing confidential client information. Based on this sensitivity there was awareness

that recruiting a sufficient sample of participants for this study might be severely

hindered. The snowball sampling technique and convenience sampling were employed to

ensure the proposed number of research participants were available for this study. The

snowball sampling technique allowed for the opportunity to request initial research

participants to refer additional referral sources for the study (Lopes, Rodriguez, &

Sichieri, 1996). Convenience sampling involved interviewing whatever respondents from

the interview sites that were available, interested in the research topic, and who met the eligibility criteria for the researcher (Chiovitti, 2003; Soriano, 1995). Sample sizes in grounded theory research typically range from 10 to 60 persons (Starks & Brown-Trinidad, 2007); the proposed number of participants in this study was twenty.

As a result of the three different sampling techniques, the total number of participants in this study was exceeded with 21 individuals agreeing to be interviewed as part of the data collection process.

Upon receipt of letters which included the names and contact telephone numbers of "first responders" staff members expressing willingness and commitment to participate, an application was submitted to Institutional Review Board (IRB), Loma Linda University (LLU), Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) for review and approval. With IRB approval, the names of individuals submitted by their respective agencies were placed in three separate envelopes and five names were randomly drawn from each envelope. One law enforcement officer was selected through convenience sampling. Three law enforcement officers and two social workers were selected as a result of snowball sampling. One social worker was not interviewed after not meeting the specific criteria for study participants. Six social workers were selected from San Bernardino County and five were selected from Riverside County. Five law enforcement officers were selected from San Bernardino County and five were selected from Riverside County. These counties were selected because of their close proximity to the study site as it was felt that this would facilitate greater access to research participants.

IRB Approval

The initial application to the Loma Linda IRB was approved with minor changes for the period covering April 10, 2009 to April 9, 2010. Language changes were made in the recruitment letter to include a statement that no staff was <u>required</u> to participate, and each had given permission to participate prior to having their names submitted for the study. Subsequent approval was extended from April 6, 2010 to April 5, 2011 (See Appendix E, Institutional Review Board Approval/Extension).

Interview Process

Prior to scheduling interviews, individual were contacted by phone to obtain verbal consent for participation in this study (See Appendix F, Individual Telephone Script). Arrangements were made at that time for a convenient meeting date, time and place to review and obtain written consent, and to conduct the research interview. Three social workers names that were randomly selected did not follow-through on their agreements to participate. After three attempts to contact these three individuals, with no response and no explanation for not participating, a second round of random drawings was conducted. One social worker initially declined to participate in the study but later called back to express an understanding of the need for such a study to be undertaken and a desire to be one of the participants. Another social worker interview had to be rescheduled because the worker was called out to investigate an Immediate Response (IR) child abuse referral on the day of the scheduled interview.

One law enforcement agency did not submit a sufficient number of names from which to select, prompting the need for snowball and convenience sampling. One law

enforcement professional was contacted six times. Those contacts did not result in the scheduling of an interview. Five law enforcement interviews had to be rescheduled due to an Amber Alert in effect at the time they were scheduled. Three of those five interviews had to be rescheduled due to previously scheduled vacations and two of the three rescheduled interviews had to be rescheduled because the detectives were called to testify in a criminal court trial.

The second round of interviews began in May 2009 and ended in September 2009. After the first three interviews, an additional question was added to obtain respondents' feedback about the co-location of CPS social workers and law enforcement officers in sheriff or police stations. This question was added because new data emerged once two social workers from the sample were co-located with law enforcement officers at law enforcement work sites. A new question was added increasing the total number of questions from 11 to 12. Question number 12 was revised from the original question number 11 to allow interviewees to identify questions that might have been helpful for the interviewer to ask to further understand the working relationship between CPS social worker and law enforcement officers. Additionally, based on comments from one respondent among the first three interviews, it was clear that social workers and law enforcement officers did not go out together to conduct joint interviews. Instead, they either met at a predetermined location then proceeded separately to the site where the child interview/investigation took place; or, they met at the interview site itself. Armed with this new information, question number five was changed from *how frequently you go out with… to how frequently do you meet up with....* "Probe" questions were added to allow for further elaboration and deeper understanding of the phenomena under study

(Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Through the process of interviews with subject experts using open-ended questions, data was simultaneously collected, coded and analyzed. Expert participants were able to provide more knowledgeable insight and a higher quality of data resulting in the original list of research questions being modified. The interview protocol for child welfare social workers can be found in Appendix G. The interview protocol for law enforcement officers can be found in Appendix H.

A major aspect of grounded theory is its flexibility. As a sampling technique, theoretical sampling allowed for interview questions in the collaborative relationship to be adjusted while actual interviews were in process. Through the use of comparison, additional concepts emerged which allowed for additional interview questions to be added. This aspect of theoretical sampling was such that it guided the interview process in the direction of what subsequent questions needed to be asked in order to expand emerging categories. Theoretical sampling on site prevented the need to re-interview in order to retrieve important missing data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Two social work interviews and one law enforcement interview were conducted at the Department of Social Work at Loma Linda University (LLU). The remaining 18 interviews were conducted at subjects' work sites. All interviews were de-identified to maintain anonymity. Prior to beginning the interview, each participant selected a number between one and 21. In lieu of using names, that number became the participants' identification. Interviews lasted from 45 minutes to one and one-half hours and were audio recorded with participants' consent. One law enforcement officer initially refused to be audio recorded, but subsequently agreed saying there was no reason not to be recorded. Interviewees were audio recorded using both a cassette tape recorder and a

digital voice recorder. This process was utilized to address what Easton, McComish, and Greenberg (2000) described as potential pitfalls in qualitative research, i.e., equipment failure. Each participant was assured of confidentiality and the right to refuse to answer questions, or to end the interview at any time. The informed Consent statement can be found in Appendix I.

Each participant was given a $25.00 gift card from Starbucks, or Juice-It-Up as a token of appreciation for their time spent in the interview. Two social workers refused to accept gift cards, citing their ethical responsibilities to participate in research.

Description of Participants and Workplace Settings

One social worker was male and 10 were females. Four law enforcement officers interviewed were males and six were females. Six law enforcement professionals, two males and four females, worked in sheriff departments; two males and two females, represented city police. The 21 research participants, five males and 16 females, ranged in age from 20 to 63 years. Figure 1 provides a description of the study participants by age.

Based on observation, participants in the study were African-American, Caucasian, and Hispanic. Specific demographic information on race was not reported as relevant to this study. However, a general description of the racial make-up of the group was presented to reflect the diversity of study participants. More important was recognition of the difference in education among the participants. Six social workers had earned Masters of Social Work (MSW) degrees, while five possessed Bachelor of Art (BA) degrees. Two law enforcement officers had earned Bachelor of Science (BS)

degrees, three had Associate's (AA) degrees, and five completed their high school

education. Figure 2 provides a description of the participants by education.
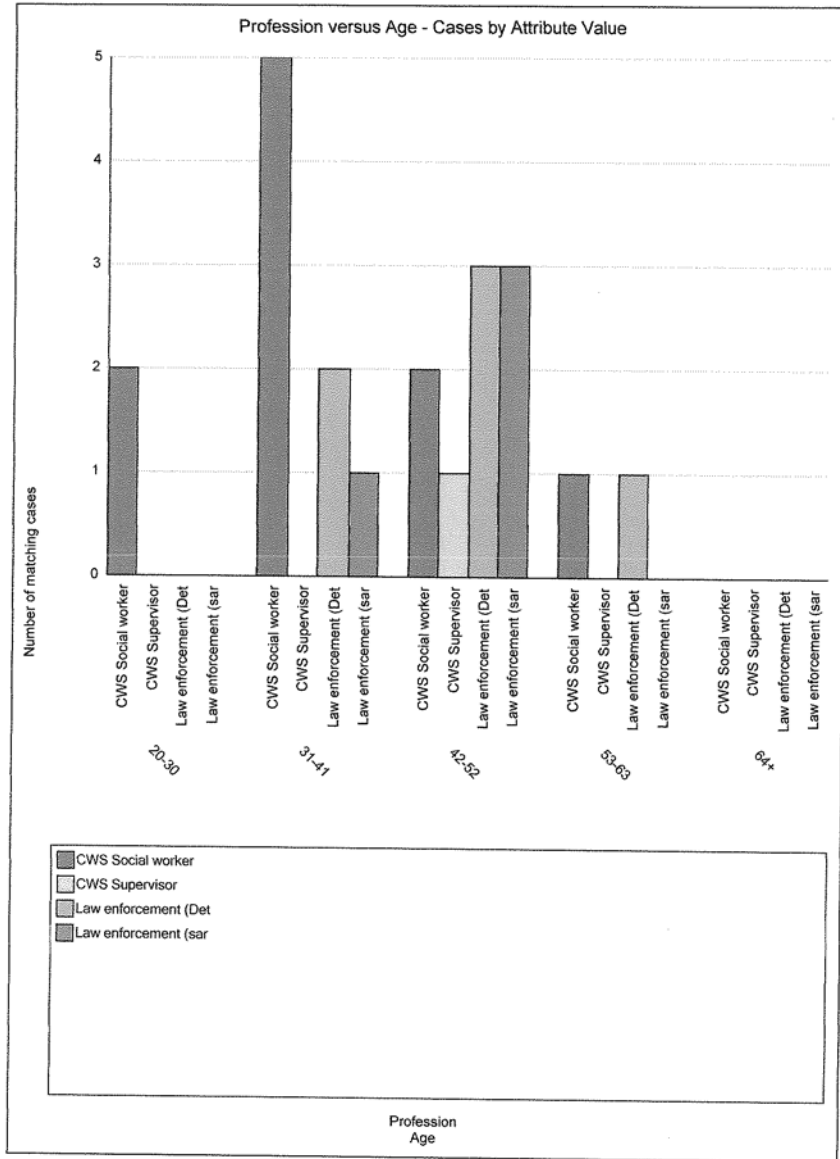
Figure 1. CPS social workers and law enforcement professions by age
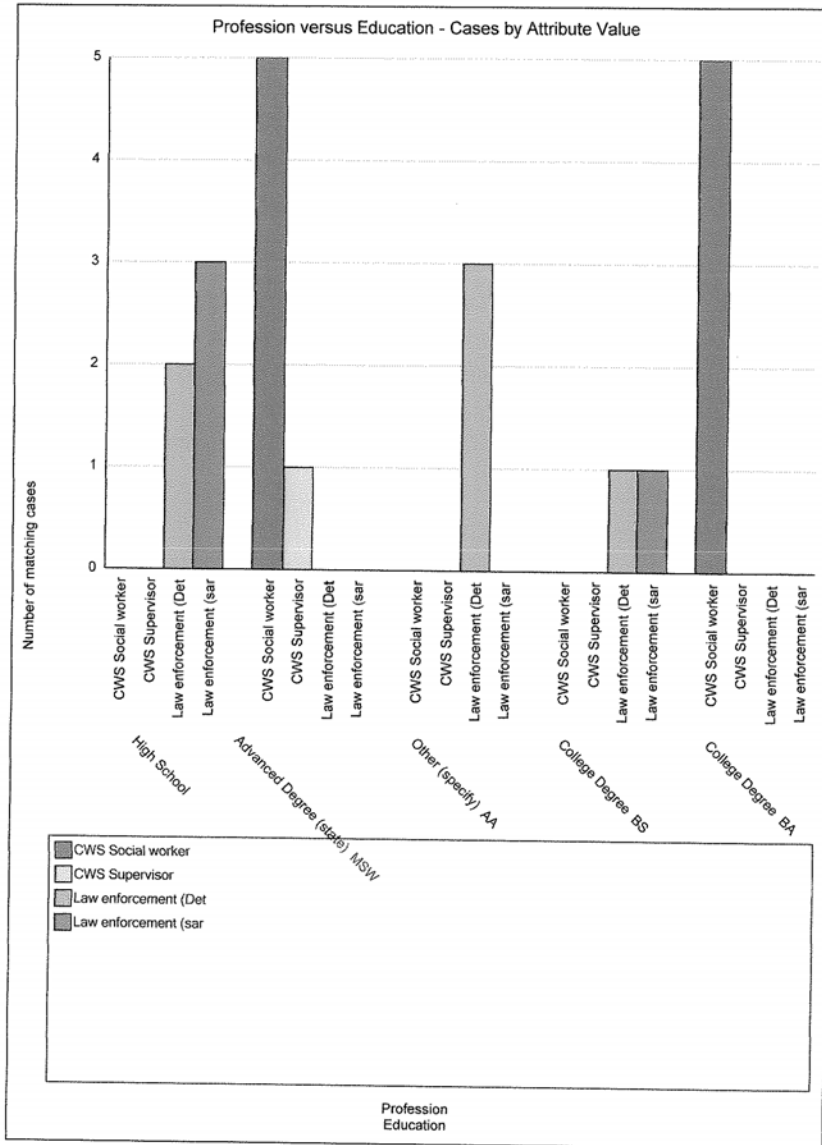
Figure 2. CPS social workers and law enforcement professions by education

Social workers reported being in their current work assignments for periods ranging from 2 to 13 years; one social worker had been working in the capacity of supervisor for a period of two years. Law enforcement officers reported being in their current assignments ranging from 2 to 27 years. Three law enforcement officers worked in supervisory capacities (sergeants); two were males and one was female. Figure 3 provides a description of study participants based on length of time on the job.

Participants' education and length of time on the job are key elements for extracting relevant information for the phenomena under study. Additionally, theoretical sampling procedures dictate that appropriate participants be chosen who are able to provide expert and relevant responses to the research questions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Consistent with theoretical sampling, detectives, rather than patrol officers were selected as research participants in this study. A patrol officer or deputy sheriff can be dispatched to varying crime scenes, i.e., traffic accidents, home invasions, robberies, etc. Detectives and sergeants working in Crimes against Children Units are expected to have expert training in child abuse investigative techniques and thus be more knowledgeable about investigating crimes against children. Because allegations of physical abuse and sexual abuse involve behaviors considered to be potential crimes, and require more thorough investigations, all law enforcement personnel in this study were detectives.

At the onset of the research, it was discovered that 'first responders' involvement and engagement in child abuse investigations differed widely between child welfare and law enforcement professionals. In Child Welfare the first responder was the specific social worker who was assigned an investigative role and was dispatched to a location to investigate allegations of child abuse. The first responder social worker

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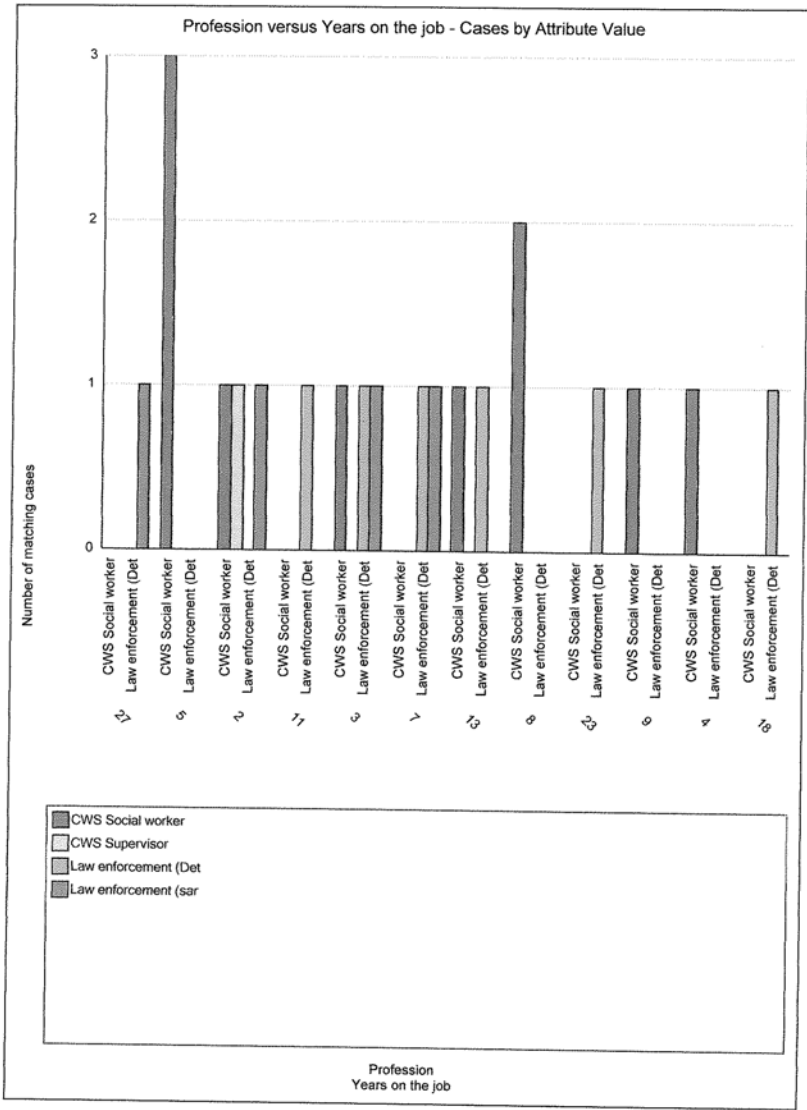
Figure 3. CPS social workers and law enforcement professions years on the job

remained assigned to the referral until the investigation was completed in a timeframe

ranges from 30 to 45 days. In contrast, the Law Enforcement Protocol required that the

first responder be either a patrol officer, deputy sheriff, or a detective. A patrol officer or

a deputy sheriff is initially dispatched to a location where an individual reporter alleges suspicion of abuse. The patrol officer or deputy sheriff is responsible for taking a report and determining whether the investigation can be completed at that level, or if the investigation required the involvement of a more experienced officer, usually a detective. Depending on the severity of the alleged abuse, the patrol officer or deputy sheriff either requested that a detective be dispatched to the scene, or forwarded the report to the detective for follow-up. When one of these conditions occurred, the patrol officer or deputy sheriff withdrew from the investigation and the detective assumed the role of first responder. Not all social workers and law enforcement officers worked in the same workplace arrangement. As a result challenges such as to loss of case control and poor relationship building surfaced when a social worker or law enforcement officer who was not first responder assumed responsibility for the case.

Individuals who participated in the study worked in different workplace settings and different jurisdictions. In one setting, 2 social work professionals shared physical locations with law enforcement officers in Riverside County; one law enforcement officer shared a physical location with one of the social work participants. The work units were located in police stations. It was more traditional for the two professions to maintain separate work sites. 9 social workers and 9 law enforcement officers fit this description. 6 of the 9 social workers fitting this description were from San Bernardino County; 3 participants were from Riverside County. 5 of the 9 law enforcement officers fitting this description were from San Bernardino County; 2 were from the city of Corona in Riverside County, and 2 were from the city of Riverside in Riverside County.

3 social work and 3 law enforcement participants in Riverside County were responsible for investigating allegations of abuse in specific zip code areas. 2 social worker and 2 law enforcement participants from Riverside County, 6 social workers and 5 law enforcement officers from San Bernardino County were responsible for investigating allegations of abuse in multiple jurisdictions. 1 social worker was a first responder with the Drug-Endangered Children (DEC) program. The DEC program directs a multi-disciplinary team consisting of law enforcement officers, CPS social workers and health care providers to provide protective and health care services to children exposed to methamphetamine manufacturing in their homes. This team is responsible for arranging safe caretaking and medical follow-up for the children when their parents are arrested (Manning, 1999). 1 social worker worked only on weekends responding to immediate referrals (IR's), which is a referral that requires a face-to-face investigative follow-up in a period of at least 2 and not to exceed 24 hours. The remaining 9 social workers worked a traditional 40 hour work week, responding to IR calls as well as emergency response (ER) referrals.

Coding and Data Analysis

The taped interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. To avoid transcription errors, Easton, McComish and Greenberg (2000) suggest that the researcher should be both the interviewer and the transcriber. Using participants' own language at all levels of the coding added to the credibility of the findings (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Interview transcripts were analyzed utilizing the grounded theory method of coding, comparing, and memo writing. The process of analyzing the data began with coding, i.e.,

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attaching label to segments of data that summarizes what each segment is about

(Charmaz, 2006). Open, axial, and selective coding depict the three levels of coding in

grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

The first level in the interview process began with open coding by identifying

events, actions and interactions. The events, actions and interactions were then labeled.

By asking what, where, when, how and how much questions, categories and sub-

categories were developed (Charmaz, 2006, Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Strauss & Corbin,

1990). In addition to coding, memo writing was used throughout the research process to

aid in reflecting and discovering ideas about what was happening in the situation or the

phenomena being studied (Charmaz, 2006; Haig, 1995, Pandit, 1996).

The next level of analysis involved axial coding. During axial coding, the

researcher examined the data to determine under what conditions the phenomena under

study occurred, the context in which it occurred, and the consequence of the action taken

in response to the phenomena. All categories were repeatedly compared within and

between each other until themes and sub-themes emerged. Saturation was the point at

which no new ideas or information was uncovered (Bowen, 2006; Charmaz, 2006; Curry,

2003; Glaser &Strauss, 1967; Knodel, 1993; Sousa & Hendriks, 2006; Strauss & Corbin,

1990. The final listing of themes and concepts was used to offer a broad understanding

of the working relationship between child welfare social workers and law enforcement

officers.

The final step in the coding process involved selective coding. Corbin and Strauss

offer an excellent definition of this process when they explain, "Selective coding is the

process by which all categories are unified around a core category. The core categories

represent the central phenomenon of the study" (Corbin & Strauss, p. 14, 1990). Stated another way, selective coding focuses on the main ideas emerging from the data; it is a process of linking all of the other categories to form an explanatory story of the phenomena under study (Brown, Stevens, Troiano, & Schneider, 2002). As a result, the core categories should not only resonate with the participants in the study, they also resonate with other professionals with similar experiences (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Basic to this idea, two professional peers with prior knowledge of the working relationship between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers were asked to review the categories and provide feedback. They were given draft versions of the themes, along with a sampling of the interview transcripts and asked to provide feedback about the accuracy in capturing the described experiences. Interview transcripts were identified by numbers and pseudo names. Pseudo names were assigned to various municipalities to prevent potential identification of the various jurisdictions and municipalities mentioned in the study. Consensus was reached by the researcher and the two individuals providing peer review on five out of seven, or 70% of the themes. In addition to themes that resonated with these peers, suggestions were made that resulted in the modification and development of two additional themes. The themes 'complementary roles' and 'openness to collaborate' were merged into the theme 'complementary roles. The themes 'relationship building' and 'co-location in police stations' were merged into the theme 'relationship building'. A total of seven themes or nodes which will be discussed later emerged from the data. These will be discussed in detail in chapter 4.

Using the QSR*NVIVO 8 computer program the data was coded and organized into categories described as parent nodes and child nodes (Bringer, Johnston &

Brackenridge, 2004; Richards, 2002; Roberts et al.,2006). Parent nodes, sometimes referred to as tree nodes, are synonymous with core categories or themes; child nodes, sometimes defined as sub-nodes, are multiple in numbers and define the relationships to the core category. As an example, "images of volunteers" is identified as the parent node or core category; community- minded, elderly-retired, and passionate defined the "image of volunteers", and are referred to as child nodes (NVivo 8, 2008). Succinctly stated, this coding aided the analyst in organizing and making sense of the data (Basit, 2003). When undertaking this process, the researcher determined the categories, the relationships (See Table 3, NVivo Matrix Coding Structure) and the assumptions that informed the participants' view of their day-to-day world. This involved gaining insight into the underlying meaning participants attributed to certain social interactions or particular experiences, identifying patterns in attitudes, or examining beliefs and reactions during investigative circumstances (Lewin & Silver, 2007). In addition to serving as an organizing tool, NVivo provides rigor in qualitative research by allowing others to follow the trail of memo writing, viewing coding structure, visualizing models created from the data (See Figures 4 and 5, NVivo Sample Relationship Models), and quickly retrieving text from which categories emerge (Crowley, Harre, & Tagg, 2002; Johnston, 2006; St John & Johnson, 2000: Richards, 2002).

Rigor and Trustworthiness

Qualitative research methods have been criticized for lack of rigor (Cutcliffe & McKenna, 1999). The criticism have occurred because of attempts to judge the rigor of qualitative research employing rules that were developed to judge quantitative research

(Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, Spiers,2002). Some researchers argued that terms such as reliability and validity commonly used to judge rigor in quantitative research were not relevant to qualitative studies (Altheide & Johnson; Leininger as cited in Morse et al., 2002). In adopting new concepts for ensuring rigor in qualitative research, Guba and Lincoln substituted reliability and validity with the parallel concept of trustworthiness (Morse et al., 2002). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) trustworthiness is achieved by the attainment of four constructs that relate to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, which together establish applicability, consistency and neutrality. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described credibility in qualitative research as the confidence one can have in the truth of the findings. In other words, meanings applied to the concepts resonate with individuals experiencing, or who have experienced the phenomena under study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the truth of the findings, can be established by prolonged engagement with research participants, peer debriefings, and member checks. Two female peers with knowledge of child abuse investigative procedures were asked to comment on the logic and reasonableness of concepts and themes captured from the data in this study to increase credibility (Beck, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tobin & Begley, 2004; Tuckett; 2005). Peer debriefers assisted in clarifying aspects of the data that was missed during the initial analysis.

Transferability, another concept used to judge qualitative research, refers to how applicable the participants and findings in the study are to others found outside the experimental setting (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000). Stated another way, transferability refers to the likelihood that research findings have meaning to others in similar inter-professional situations (Barbour, 2000; Beck, 1993; Brown, Stevens,

Troiano, & Schneider, 2002; Chiovitti & Piran, 2003; Tobin & Begley, 2004). Literature reviews describing how the area of study fits research findings in similar cross-discipline environments also contributed to transferability of the findings (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Conducting literature reviews simultaneously while doing analysis creates an opportunity for the researcher to become acquainted with both broader and more focused conditions that influence the phenomenon being studied (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The matter of whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same or similar situation would yield the same results each time establishes reliability in quantitative research and dependability in qualitative research (Hinds, Scandrett-Hibden & McCaulay, 1990; Rubin & Babbie, 1993). Dependability refers to consistency, or the ability of subsequent researchers to follow the decision made by a researcher at each stage of the data analysis (Beck, 1993; Chiovitti & Piran, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985: Tobin & Begley, 2004). Simply put, Beck (1993) describes dependability as the stability of the data over time. Audit trails in the forms of detailed documentation of both steps and decision-making processes establish dependability and credibility (Beck, 1993; Chiovitti & Piran, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ohman, 2005; Tobin & Begley. 2004; Tuckett, 2005). Audit trails are necessary so that "the pathway of decisions made in the data analysis can be checked by another researcher" (Cutcliffe & McKenna, 1994, p. 377). Further, data triangulation, or collecting data from different places and different people, including diverse geographical and jurisdictional areas, contributed to dependability (Appleton, 1995; Johnson, 1997; Platt, 2006; Tobin & Begley, 388; Tuckett, 2005). Data was collected from participants from various geographical areas jurisdictions, and work settings in this study.

Finally, confirmability is achieved when the findings of the study emerge from the participants, ensuring that the data spoke for itself, not from the biases and assumptions of the researcher (Brown, et al., 2002). Raw data such as audiotapes, verbatim transcripts and memo writing from the interviews provide the audit trail/documentation to confirm the research.

Overall, the NVivo audit trail provides a record of the research project as it developed from its early stages to the point where themes along with supporting statements emerged. Audit trails allow examiners to review not only the data, but to also track the process involved in the research journey (Johnston, 2006). Working within NVivo not only created the opportunity to link various interviews and memos to different nodes and categories, journal articles were transported into the program and linked as well. Transporting journal article directly into NVivo facilitated the ease in electronically coding particular themes directly into the article for later retrieval (di Gregorio, 2000). The ability to link these pieces of data together from different sources provided the foundation for building up categories/themes. In addition to making data more accessible, this facet of QSR NVivo 8 assisted in the development of audit trails. Additionally, the QSR NVivo 8 software program provides an electronic audit trail that includes easy retrieval and linkage of transcribed interviews, memos, and categories, further contributing to creditability and dependability in the research findings. Segments of the research data will be used to support and discuss the findings in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

This study focused on interviewing first responders from Riverside and San Bernardino counties who were responsible for investigating allegations of child physical and sexual abuse. The study sample consisted of 11 child welfare social workers and 10 detective law enforcement officers. Six social workers worked for San Bernardino County; five worked for Riverside County. Two social workers were co-located with detectives in sheriff department units. The remaining nine social workers worked in traditional child welfare offices; one of the nine social workers had previously been co-located with law enforcement in a sheriff department unit. Five detectives worked in sheriff department units in San Bernardino County. In Riverside County, one detective worked in a sheriff department unit and was co-located with a social work participant; four detectives worked in police department units.

Employing the process of open, axial and selective coding five initial selective codes or core categories/themes were developed. Open coding was the process of fragmenting, or breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Fragmenting the data allowed the researcher to dissect emerging concepts into all the possible ways it could be applied to a particular category (Lewins & Silver, 2007). Axial coding was the process of putting back together the fragmented concepts and categories that were identified in the open coding process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This process allowed the researcher to explore the relationships and make linkages between the emerging categories. In other words, axial coding linked the connection between categories that most suitably illustrated the

selected code or core category/theme (Lewins & Silver, 2007). With assistance and

confirmation by peer reviewers, seven selective codes or core categories/themes, five

initial themes and two additional themes became the main findings of this study. (See

Table 3, NVivo Matrix Coding Structure). The seven themes that emerged as

representing the collaborative world of CPS social workers and law enforcement officers

as told from their experiences include: (1) Different investigative approaches, (2)

Inconsistent engagement practices, (3) Challenges in collaborating, (4) Law enforcement

officers views of social workers, (5) Social workers views of law enforcement, (6)

Complementary roles, and (7) Relationships Building. Although there are systemic

differences that impact the way CPS social workers and law enforcement officers engage

with each other, the two entities recognize that their roles and responsibilities are

interdependent. As such, each expressed a desire for building better professional

relationships in order to better serve families and children, while also meeting their

agency's goals and expectations. Major themes that emerged from the data provide a

glimpse into some of the systemic differences these two entities experience on a daily

basis.

Different Investigative Approaches

Child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers (detectives), even

within their own professional groups, hold different views about how to best approach

various levels of child abuse referrals. These varying outlooks highlight the need for the

creation and implementation of investigative protocols. Rather than adhering to different

approaches, an investigative protocol would ensure investigative consistency among all

law enforcement officers. Three law enforcement officers from San Bernardino County

and three from Riverside County reported investigating every single referral that was

assigned to their division. There were strong sentiments among these officers that the

department was duty bound to follow up on any referral that came to their attention even

if it did not meet the criteria of a potential crime such as physical abuse or sexual abuse.

One officer reported:

> If someone calls in… a husband and wife who are going through a divorce and
> she calls and says she does not want her child to go for visitation this weekend to
> the father because she believes that he is sexually molesting that child, we go out
> to the residence, deputy goes out, takes an interview from the reporting party.

Three other law enforcement officers reported only investigating allegations of

abuse where there were indications of a prosecutable crime. The general sentiment

expressed was that it was a waste of time to spend time on a case that did not result in a

prosecution. One of the officers noted:

> Some mandated reports I will get I read them and there is no crime that is
> prosecutable and I'll see if it's an emotional thing…the RP (reporting party) calls
> in and says dad is, mentally abuses his kid by calling me stupid or things like that.
> We get a lot of those. Those I will contact CPS worker and then I will close it
> because there is nothing, criminally, I need to investigate.

Two law enforcement officers stated that there were cases that could have been

categorized as criminal, however they did not investigate the case as such. These officers

determined that the circumstances in the cases were better dealt with by CPS. These

officers believed that leaving the child in the home and providing counseling services

was a more appropriate approach. This practice is not only consistent with the CPS model

of adhering to the least restrictive placement, but is also consistent with CPS's procedure

of 'evaluating out' referrals that do not merit a criminal investigation. An example of such a referral was described by one of the officers:

> Ahh, it depends on the injury, it depends on the statement. Do the statements match the injury? Do the injuries match the statement? The history. Sometimes they'll say stuff, the kids will say stuff, like for example foster homes, they've been hitting me, they have been doing this and that. Well then there is a history where the kid did that at the last three foster homes they said there was abuse and there is nothing substantiated. They just want to be removed from the home. If there is no history, there are no injuries you can just tell the kid just does not want to be at that house whether it's the step-parent or the regular or the foster home, then I will react one way or the other.

Similarly, all eleven social workers reported that they are required to investigate every referral that is assigned to them. However, there are points in the referral process where referrals are received, but 'evaluated out' at the hotline or the supervisory level. Typically, a referral is evaluated out because it does not meet the criteria for child abuse, or the referral involves a family that has been investigated several times and the outcome(s) of prior investigation(s) was/were unfounded (no evidence of abuse). A typical referral that would be evaluated out is described by one social worker:

> Sometimes when we get repeat referrals or they have problems of custody battles between parents and you have the same stuff coming in over and over. Sometimes the supervisor can evaluate it out because it has been investigated a million times.

From the data it emerged that there are also times when a social worker reviews a referral that has been assigned for investigation and after a thorough examination of the contents and consultation with the supervisor, determines that the referral can be evaluated out. Such a referral was described by the social worker as a neighbor who calls the hotline to report overhearing parents new to the apartment complex yelling at the

children. The social worker explained that "This referral can be 'evaluated out'. There is no history. There is absolutely no risk at all to the child and it could be mitigated at a level that does not require an in-person investigation".

'Evaluating out' a referral is one approach CPS utilize in determining how to respond to an allegation of abuse. On the other hand, law enforcement's procedure is to conduct an investigation on every referral received. As dictated by Federal and State statutes, both CPS and law enforcement are consistent in cross-reporting to each other. This process gives the appearance that the two agencies are working collaboratively. However crucial information about 'evaluating out' or the outcome of the investigation has not been incorporated as part of the cross-reporting requirement. The cross-report document only detailed the incoming allegation leaving out useful information to assist the other professional in determining the next step to be taken. As a result, the cross-report is reduced to a symbolic gesture rather than a true collaborative arrangement. At the outset, there are clear indications that without a clearly defined working protocol, CPS social workers and law enforcement officers do not conduct joint investigations. They share limited mandated information, but they do not communicate. At minimum, the lack of communication reduces the likelihood that the client who is the focus of the referral will get the help needed to prevent being a client of future referrals. Inconsistent investigative approaches are one way to define the working relationship between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers; another is inconsistency in joining together or engaging each other in joint investigations.

Inconsistent Engagement Practices

Inconsistent engagement practices seem to define the working relationship between CPS and law enforcement professionals. Engagement practices vary widely between the two groups. Four law enforcement officers reported participating in joint investigations with CPS in almost every instance of a cross-reported referral. However, among these four officers, engagement with CPS had different meanings and was undertaken for different reasons. Two law enforcement officers indicated they engage in joint investigations with social workers to prevent interviewing the victims of abuse multiple times. Also, they reported that preparing child abuse and criminal investigation reports simultaneously enhanced the opportunity to produce corroborating, rather than conflicting evidence for court proceedings. Sitting together while a child abuse interview was being conducted and validating each other's evidence was deemed to be participating with CPS. This arrangement resembled attempts at collaboration, but continued case discussion ended at the point CPS social workers and law enforcement officers collected the information needed to boost their investigations. True collaboration would have meant not only sharing information, but making a joint decision as to the outcome of the case. Describing the joint working relationship, an officer interviewed stated:

> If there is an interview at the assessment center then we do join there so that that child only has to be interviewed that one time. If we choose to interview on our own and do our own, you know you are capable of interviewing them there if they are amenable to you interviewing, then you probably should call them and get them in so that again the child is only interviewed one time. It doesn't always happen.

As a point of clarification, the social worker who conducts an initial interview with an alleged abuse victim is considered to have conducted a clinical or therapeutic

interview. Stein (2004) described a therapeutic or clinical interview as focusing on

problem solving. Information derived from the interview may not be verifiable by hard

evidence. By contrast, Stein (2004) stated that "the purpose of the forensic interview is to

facilitate the fact-finding role of the court without presenting evidence that is either

unfairly prejudicial or confusing" (p.125). The clinical interview and the forensic

interview describe the interviewing process for children who are the alleged victims of

physical and sexual abuse. First, the investigating social worker conducts a clinical

interview. If the child discloses abuse the investigating social worker stops the clinical or

therapeutic interview and waits for a law enforcement officer to join the interview. A law

enforcement officer resumes the interview to collect and preserve hard evidence. A

subsequent interview is conducted by a forensic interviewer at a site, usually a CAC, with

a two-way mirror. The CPS social worker, law enforcement officers, district attorney, a

physician, and other interested parties may observe the interview process. As has already

been noted, forensic interviews are not always conducted with all of the appropriate

investigating parties being present. In a sense, children may be interviewed at least three

times when CPS social workers and law enforcement officers fail to conduct joint child

abuse investigations.

Involving CPS to ensure victim's compliance with a scheduled forensic interview

is how one law enforcement officer described engagement with CPS. As an example, law

enforcement had arrested a parent the prior night for allegedly molesting a child. The

child was left in the home with the non-offending parent. The officer made an

appointment for the non-offending parent to take the child to the local children

assessment center (CAC) for a forensic interview and examination to be conducted. Law

enforcement engaged the assistance of CPS as a way of leveraging the non-offending parent's compliance in keeping the CAC appointment. Although not stated, the CPS social worker also had a joint responsibility in assessing the non-offending parent's capacity for maintaining the child's safety following the arrest. As has been previously noted, arresting an offending parent does not ensure the safety of the child. In fact, the child may be more at risk if the arresting parent can post bail and return to the home. According to one police officer:

> If I involve child welfare they will see to it that the mother gets there, that she has the ability to get there, or that she has the will to take the child there. So they have a little bit more twist than I do.

This lack of knowledge about the interdependent nature of each other's professional roles is all the more reason for law enforcement and CPS to conduct joint investigations.

In another scenario, involving CPS had to do more with a means for gathering information rather than actually collaborating. One law enforcement officer reported involving CPS because CPS had a lot of knowledge about the family's history. However, engaging CPS in the investigative process began and ended with the written cross-report. The officer explained, "If we get called out on a certain call, we take the investigation over at the very beginning then that's what our responsibility is to contact CPS and report it."

One law enforcement officer reported maintaining an open working relationship with CPS saying that any time one of the entities felt a need, whether it was for safety reasons or because of a potential criminal case, each could call the other for support and to conduct a joint investigation. Another law enforcement officer described always cross-

reporting to CPS, but not engaging or communicating with CPS unless law enforcement has made a determination to remove the child from the home. This scenario exemplifies one of the more contentious working relationships between CPS and law enforcement officers, especially when the two entities did not agree that the removal was necessary. Legally, a peace officer can remove a child from the home without a court order. However, CPS has the responsibility for providing the justification for moving the case through the dependency court system.

One law enforcement officer conceded that "removing the child and keeping the child" are two different things. The officer cited a case in which law enforcement removed a child from the home only to have their decision and the removal overturned by the court. This is another portrayal of the interdependent roles and responsibilities CPS social workers and law enforcement officers have in protecting children; it also underscores the negative impact of not working collaboratively to protect children's physical and emotional well-being. Another law enforcement officer recalled engaging/joining with CPS to investigate child abuse at the point a child victim makes a disclosure, but also alluded to the inconsistency in which this process takes place. According to this interviewee, when an allegation of physical or sexual abuse is received, CPS responds alone to conduct the investigation. Upon determining that a possible crime has occurred, the officer reported: "CPS will sometimes halt right there and contact us and take a back seat to the criminal investigation."

Noting the inconsistency in joining to investigate abuse, one officer shared:

At times we do work together, but most of the time they handle their investigations, at least in my experience. I handle my investigation. There are

times if there have been past allegations against a suspect or a child we would ask for assistance from them. We really don't coincide.

Further noting the inconsistency, another officer observed:

> It seems like years ago child protective services and law enforcement were just completely separate, doing their own thing and no one knew what the other was doing but as time has gone on the two agencies have become a lot more integrated.

CPS social workers and detectives described a unique, but unrecognized similarity in their handling of Immediate Response referrals that centered on the issue of case control. Each profession criticized the other for poor communication linkage and the adverse effect it has on the investigation outcome. As stated previously, law enforcement indicated that their protocol dictates that a patrol officer or a deputy sheriff is the first to respond to an immediate response allegation. Upon determining that a more thorough investigation is required, the patrol officer or deputy sheriff relinquishes responsibility of the case to a detective. One social worker explained:

> The patrol officer go out and take the initial report and if he feels that there is something there then that case is transferred on to a detective. I am not going to be working with that patrol officer after that day. There is a time, a lot of time we are calling around trying to find out who the detective is. It would be helpful to us if that transfer process could happen a little quicker. In ER I am suppose to close a case within 30 days.

An additional social worker remarked,

> We have timelines. Like in ER I am suppose to close a case within 30 days. A lot of times we will wait for law enforcement to get their take on it, but they take a little bit more time, a lot of the time. So we are kind of left in the position of what are you going to do with this because I need to decide what I am going to do with it.

Similar to patrol officers, CPS social workers who are first responders only

respond to immediate and emergency response (IR/ER) allegations. As noted, within 30

or 45 days maximum the initial investigation CPS social workers must either close or

transfer the case to another CPS social worker for follow-up. The issue of case transfer

results in a loss of communication linkage with the initial responders for both CPS social

workers and detectives; what follows is a complicated effort on the part of both

professional groups to locate and develop a relationship with the new person handling the

case. The new person assigned to the case whether it is another social worker or a

detective may have little or no information about the either the allegations or what

progress has been made in the case. This lack of understanding about each other's

internal and similar procedure results in reciprocal negative attitudes about each other.

Social workers blame law enforcement for contributing to their delay in closing their ER

case in a timely manner. Both professional groups blame each other for the loss in

relationship and familiarity with the case content. A clearly defined protocol outlining

roles and responsibilities, including procedures for maintaining case liaison during the

transition period could close the loss in communication and relationship gap. The

following quote reiterates the lack of understanding CPS social workers and law

enforcement officers have about how their internal procedure adversely impacts their

working relationship. One law enforcement officer noted,

> My problem is with CPS is that the person who comes out is not necessarily the
> person who is going to have that case. In fact you call three weeks later and find
> out it's gone through three or four and it's already in transit so they don't know
> where the file is because its going to somebody else and I am sure there is a
> reason why they do it that way, I am sure there is, but it makes things a lot more
> difficult for both persons, for law enforcement and for the CPS worker who may

have just gotten that case yesterday and really does not know what's going on and you are calling up and going I need this and this and this.

As this quote demonstrates, communication between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers seem to be almost non-existent once deputies and/or patrol officers transfer a case to a detective. At the point a detective becomes involved with a child physical abuse or sexual abuse case, the emergency time frame of a 24 hour in-person response may have already passed. Thus, the social worker and the detective are not only working with different time frames, but with staff other than the initial responder as well. As discussed previously, in addition to the case transfer between a deputy or patrol officer and detectives, the initial responding social worker may have transferred the case to another social worker as well. These changes in case control occur without communication between the two agencies. Blaming the other for lack of communication becomes the standard decorum. It is essential to reiterate that a clearly defined protocol that included the role of a liaison would close this communication gap. Six detectives mentioned problems associated with their lack of communication with social workers. One detective stated,

I think when ever CPS receives an allegation of child abuse I think it would be good for them to try to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency and find out if someone is working this case. And if so, to try to speak to who was working the case and try to find out the status of the case.

Another detective noted,

Our criminal report can be shared 100% with the social worker presenting the case in dependency court. The social worker forgets to request the report. They don't establish a relationship with the detective and ask for the report and they are not always included in the court files and that needs to happen more frequently.

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When CPS social workers and law enforcement officers neglect to re-establish their relationships and case connection beyond the initial contact, information crucial to both their intervention strategies may be lost. For example, the newly assigned social workers may have been at a point in the dependency process where interventions were being developed to reunify and preserve the family. The detectives have sometimes been in the process of building a case to prosecute the offending parent. Without communication, opportunities to clarify the different roles, the different intervention strategies, and the expected outcomes become conflictual rather than collaborative. One law enforcement officer summed up the working relationship saying:

> Their only goal is to protect the child. It is left up to us to arrest the suspect. They do their job; I do my job as long as we make sure we protect the child. That's the main deal for both of us.

As has been mentioned earlier, the arrest of a parent in no way ensures the safety of the child. Collaboration between the two agencies is necessary for developing safeguards for protecting child victims.

All eleven social workers described their practice of cross-reporting and involving law enforcement when IR's are received. Defining what constituted involvement varied widely among these social workers. More often than not, the investigations were separate and parallel. Separate responses by CPS social workers and law enforcement officers to IR referrals occur, but less frequently than ER referrals. Emergency response (ER) cases comprise the circumstances under which joint investigations are least likely to occur, except in cases where a warrant for removal is required.

Similar to what law enforcement officers who were interviewed reported about social workers, two social workers reported that law enforcement officers responded separately from them to investigate ER referrals involving physical and sexual abuse. Upon arriving at an investigative site CPS social workers reported learning that law enforcement officers had already completed an investigation, and determined the alleged abuse to be untrue (unfounded). Law enforcement officers, reportedly, determined that no further involvement with the family was necessary. Consistent with the lack of detailed information contained in cross-report documents, their investigation and outcome decision was not communicated to CPS social workers. One CPS social worker commented:

> A lot of time they'll go out on their own referral without me. So sometimes I don't even know what their level of involvement is unless the family tells me. They will say, oh officer so and so was here the day before asking me the same questions. Sometimes they tell me, oh they didn't even take a report, or, you know, they already considered it unfounded.

CPS social workers are equally remiss in communicating information about the outcome of a case with law enforcement officers. The incidences of not sharing outcomes occur consistently when CPS staff 'evaluates out' a referral and law enforcement officers continue to investigate the referral even though CPS staff have evaluated it out. Cases involving child custody matters are typical of cases CPS 'evaluates out'. Child custody cases place social workers in 'double jeopardy' situation. Often time one parent will make abuse allegations against the other parent as a way to gain advantage in the custody decision. Normally, child custody cases do not fall under the jurisdiction of protective services unless there are allegations of neglect or abuse. At this point the social worker

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must weigh the potential for harm if nothing is done against the risk that intrusion in the family's life could be more detrimental for the child. One social worker stated,

> Sometimes we get calls from parents who are separated ; they are having some kind of custody issue; they have called in the past and we are able to identify that; and, if there does not seem to be any risk to the child, if it seems like it is just a custody thing, they may just 'evaluate it out'. Anything that's already been investigated is 'evaluated out.'

On the other hand law enforcement officers who investigate all abuse allegations are likely to continue to pursue an opportunity to interview the family. The differences in responses to cases such as these draw attention to gaps in communication; and more importantly, gaps in service delivery. Both circumstances can be directly related to a lack of established collaborative protocols. One law enforcement officer explained,

> We had a case where the mother and her little girl lived in another county; the little girl said her dad touched her 'pepe'; the dad lived in our county. Of course it was a custody thing. The family wanted us to get involved. It took us three months to get the interview going. I was vacillating back and forth whether we should even do the interview. The forensic interviewer said the little girl changed her story and said 'naw, he didn't do that.' You have to work together and make sure it gets handled criminally and the child gets taken out of danger from the parent or the caretaker or whatever.

Cooperative arrangements between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers appeared evident; each reported that they cross-reported allegations of physical and sexual abuse to the other on a consistent basis. Unfortunately, without a clearly defined working protocol agencies have decided on their own that cooperative arrangements have become the definition for collaborative relationships. The following quotes from social workers exemplify how social workers and law enforcement officers have instituted coordinated and cooperative practices in their working relationships.

Three social workers reported joining with law enforcement to investigate IR where law enforcement was the reporting party and already on the scene. In those cases law enforcement officers were either arresting the parents or they were first responders on a referral where children were living in an uninhabitable home. One social worker noted, "a lot of time I have encountered when they call us they are very nice because we are helping them; they are much more helpful, and will give us pretty much whatever reports we ask for."

Two additional social workers reported responding separately from law enforcement to interview a child regarding physical and sexual abuse where the reporting party indicated that there were no obvious marks or bruises on the child's body. One social worker explained.

> If we go out and interview the child and there is no disclosure of any current abuse, I would not get law enforcement involved in that. But any time there are marks or bruises on the child at that time, let's say I went and saw the child at school, and I say how did that happen. If he says my mom hit me with a belt, I will stop the interview at that time and call law enforcement and wait for them to come, let them know what's going on, let them start their interview.

Rather than standardizing practice procedures, both CPS social workers and law enforcement officers exercised independent judgment in determining when to involve the other. CPS social worker exercised independent judgment in determining what constituted a crime; law enforcement officers exercised individual judgment in determined what comprised a CPS matter. One social worker revealed,

> You will get people who call law enforcement to come out and haven't called us. So law enforcement will typically go out, assess the situation because they get them as well where it's a custody matter, people being mean to one another. If they (law enforcement) can figure that it is not necessarily a CPS issue, they don't

even cross report to us. If there is some merit, they try to determine the level, the severity.

It can not be overly stated that an established protocol would standardize child abuse investigation practices. Without an established practice protocol collaborative arrangements have remain underdeveloped. Two social workers talked about the difficulty of engaging law enforcement officers from small municipalities with poorly trained police staff to serve warrants for removal of children from homes where there was no imminent danger. One social worker shared the following encounter where the officer exclaimed, "I am not going to take this kid into custody, there is no immediate danger, they are not going to die if they are not into custody by tomorrow so you guys go back and talk to your management."

There are circumstances where law enforcement officers have legitimate discretion to disclose information or create stories to obtain confessions from alleged perpetrators. Social workers would be in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics if those same practices were employed when intervening with clients. One social worker complained,

> When they go out separate from us it tips off the family that a report has been made. And, one thing I have noticed is that by the time I get out there, not only is the family aware of the report, they also know who the reporting party is. By law I can not divulge that information. They tell me who it is or who the officer said it was, and I have to tell them, I am sorry; I can't confirm or deny that.

Both CPS social workers and law enforcement officers complain about the other tipping off the client when pursuing separate investigations. This is only one of the many

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challenges expressed by these two professional groups. Interviewees in this study

identified five factors that contributed to the challenges in collaborating.

Challenges in Collaborating

Federal and State statute encourage collaboration between CPS and law

enforcement agencies to improve service delivery for children and families involved with

child physical and sexual abuse problems. The need for fostering collaborative efforts

are well documented in the literature (Bailey, Helsel-DeWert, Thiele and Ware,1983;

Graham & Barter, 1999; Johnson, Zorn, Tam, Lamontagne, and Johnson, 2003; Mandell,

2001; Oliver, 1990; Reitan, 1998; Sandfort, 2001).However, statutes do not provide

procedures delineating how collaboration should occur, leaving investigating agencies on

their own to define the collaborative structure. With competing professional goals and

expectations, CPS social workers and law enforcement officers find themselves engaged

in conflict rather than collaboration. Their conflict centers on factors such as a lack of

understanding of each other' roles and responsibilities, different investigation approaches

and engagement practices, different time frames, different standards, different languages,

and response time to requests for assistance.

Lack of Understanding of Each Others' Roles and Responsibilities

The manners in which CPS social workers and law enforcement officers are

socialized contribute to the lack of understanding between these two professional groups.

Six social workers commented that law enforcement officers do not understand social

work roles and responsibilities; four of the six social workers remarked that neither CPS

social workers nor law enforcement officers understand each other's roles and

responsibilities. Four law enforcement officers remarked that CPS social workers do not

understand why they do what they do; four additional law enforcement officers noted that

neither CPS nor law enforcement officers understand each others' goals and

responsibilities. A lack of understanding about each other' roles and responsibilities

result in negative views and stereotypes. During a child abuse investigation law

enforcement officers are expected to collect and preserve evidence for possible

prosecution. CPS social workers are responsible for providing intervention strategies that

preserve and strengthen the family unit. Systemic differences result in conflict about the

best way to handle a case when the two professional groups meet to investigate child

abuse. One social worker remarked,

> It is a fine line we have to walk especially when working with law enforcement
> because we understand their concern with the criminal aspect of the case and
> getting a conviction, we want to cooperate, but at the same time we need to make
> sure that we are doing our role… make it clear that our role is not to punish the
> parent, that our role is to make sure the children are safe.

In a similar vein, one detective commented,

> Sometime you have oil and water trying to work together, but as long as the oil
> and water understand this is my goal and this is your goal, we are going to
> achieve our goals together, then everything is fine. But if the social worker starts
> to intrude into what the deputy feels is their responsibility or vice versa you can
> become… you can form a contentious working relationship. If a social worker
> understands why deputies are doing what they do, they tend to get along better.
> And vice versa, deputy sheriff need to understand what the social worker
> requirements are.

Statements articulated in the preceding quotes by both the social worker and the detective

are clear indications that collaborative relationships between these two professional

groups remain underdeveloped. The implications are that the two professionals work alongside each other but without a clear understanding of each others' roles and responsibilities. Further, the comments from both interviewees imply that there are power differentials between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers. Even without a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, implications are that the balance of power leans toward law enforcement. One social worker reported that law enforcement officers do not understand dependency court procedures, including not knowing that social workers even go to court. An awareness of Juvenile court rules and procedures about the elements that must be in place to remove a child from the home and to maintain the child out-of the home is critical knowledge for law enforcement officers to possess. The social worker explained that, "There have been times when they think we just put the kids in foster care." By having knowledge of dependency court rules and procedures, law enforcement officers can more appropriately assist CPS social workers in maintaining children's safety and well-being. Confirming the lack of knowledge about dependency court procedures one detective shared,

> Most deputy sheriffs don't know what dependency court is. Most deputy sheriffs don't understand the burden is different in dependency court. They don't know what documents those social workers have to prepare; what attorneys they work with; the rights that are afforded to parents. They don't…it is unfamiliar territory….

The individuals interviewed mentioned several factors that contributed to their lack of understanding of each others roles. One social worker explained that there is no working protocol that defines social workers and law enforcement officers' roles and responsibilities when they work together to investigate child abuse. Eleven social workers

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attributed factors related to insufficient training as contributing to a lack of understanding of how social workers interact with clients. Those factors included a lack of training in understanding the psychological and emotional effects of sexual abuse, a lack of understanding of how to elicit information from children, including sensitivity in asking intimate questions. All eleven social workers agree, however, that detectives are more experienced and better trained than patrol officers or deputies. As part of law enforcement's protocol, law enforcement interviewees reported that patrol officers and deputies are first responders and determine whether a case is to be transferred to detectives. Referring to patrol officers and deputies, one social worker stated,

> The training that they get in child abuse sexual assault investigations, it's a week long training…. So my experience or knowledge of the sheriff department is that they come out of the academy, they may go into the jail for two years, and work their assignment there, then they are assigned to patrol so they have constant assignment changes.

One law enforcement officer noted that no working protocol existed between the child welfare and law enforcement agencies to delineate roles and responsibilities during child abuse investigations. Ten detectives upheld the view that CPS social workers do not understand that law enforcement's goal is to put the suspect in jail, and in so doing they need time to gather the required evidence to prosecute the case in court. However, the CPS' time lines for reunifying the family and the time lines established for law enforcement to gather evidence for felony prosecutions were not compatible. There were times when families have been reunified based on CPS standards and the criminal court case was still pending. Consequently, differences in time frames were a major area of

contention between CPS Social workers and law enforcement officers. One detective commented,

> Right or wrong they have to provide them (the parents) service to get those kids back and if those people **do** these things then they get those kids back. Half the time, not half the time, a lot of time you'll go to court and that family will have those kids back before your criminal case ever goes to court; so you'll be in court trying to prosecute him and he comes in with the victim because CPS has already given him the kid back.

Failure to align the dependency court case with the criminal court case could result in children being reunified with parents while the criminal case is still pending. The result is a strong likelihood that the child can be removed from the parent's care again if the parents are subsequently prosecuted and incarcerated. One law enforcement officer expressed,

> I would say before giving a child back that you check the status of the investigation to make sure it has been adjudicated already, not just adjudicated on their end but on our end also; because if you know he is going to jail, and he should go to jail, then those kids shouldn't go back whether he does what he is suppose to do; because you know these cases can take two, three, four years before they go to court (criminal).

Different professional time frames, different standards, and different languages are all systemic challenges that ultimately impact the way professionals interact with each other on an interpersonal level.

Different Standards

According to the individuals interviewed, different standards were employed to determine child well-being as it relates to safety. CPS social workers were responsible for

not only assessing children's current abuse circumstance, but also assessed the risk that

abuse would occur in the future. By contrast, law enforcement was only interested in

investigating visible signs of abuse. From law enforcement's perspective there was no

reason to be further involved with the family if there were no evidence that a crime had

occurred. One social worker explained,

> You know they look at physical signs of abuse. Well I tell them I know there is
> nothing physical indicating that there is abuse, but these are the risks that I think
> are present that could lead to abuse. I let them know I am going to do a safety
> plan with the family. When it is that kind of scenario with the family we take it
> over. They are gone by then.

Contrasting the response to visible signs of abuse as opposed to risk of abuse, one law

enforcement officer responded "It is just like a crime has occurred or a crime has not

occurred. If a crime has not occurred, (no visible signs of abuse) our hands are tied.

Nothing you can do but have sympathy and empathy."

Another law enforcement officer acknowledged, "We have different standards of

evidence. They go by the *'preponderance of the evidence'* standard. We go by *'beyond a*

reasonable doubt' standard to prove our case in court". *Preponderance of the evidence*

means that the information the social worker presents to the court is credible enough to

support the social worker's decision that abuse has occurred, or that there is a risk that

abuse will occur. On the other hand, *beyond a reasonable doubt* means that law

enforcement has to be certain and without doubt to prove that abuse has occurred.

All 10 law enforcement officers took issue with social workers interviewing to the

'suspect' before they had an opportunity to interview the 'suspect'. The chief complaint

among detectives centered on the social worker tipping off the 'suspect' that a criminal

investigation was in progress. According to the detectives, the social workers gave the

suspect time to destroy crucial evidence when they conducted interviews of abuse victims

before law enforcement has had an opportunity to do so. One detective stated,

> Sometimes social workers will want to jump the gun on a case meaning that they
> want to rush out and interview people in certain situations; they want to rush
> having an interview done with the child and when that happens if they rush out in
> a situation particularly a child molestation situation, if they rush out and they talk
> to people too quickly and talk to the wrong person too quickly then it could really
> hurt the criminal case you know… we have to try to prove the criminal case
> against the perpetrator who is doing the crime and if a social worker is
> overzealous and irresponsible in what their role is then they can damage the
> criminal case.

Different standards can result in one profession working to meet its own goals and needs

rather than acting collaboratively to ensure that the other professions' goals and needs are

met as well. Additionally, this conflict could be easily resolved if the two agencies

conducted joint investigations as a standard operating practice. Similar to different

standards, the use of different language to describe the same circumstance is another area

that creates challenges in collaborating between CPS social workers and law enforcement

officers.

Different Languages

CPS social workers and law enforcement officers have very different meanings

and responses to the terms child physical and sexual abuse. For example, CPS viewed

both behaviors as family dysfunctions. The family dysfunction was remediated by

providing intervention strategies that restored the family unit and improved family

functioning. One social worker explained,

> In terms of disciplining children and that sort of thing, I think social workers are more discussing social issues with the family and maybe alternate forms of discipline. Law enforcement might come in with a more punitive perspective on things rather than community resources.

By contrast, law enforcement officers view child physical or sexual abuse as either a physical assault or a sexual assault that deserves punishment and long term jail time. One law enforcement officer expressed,

> Our goal is to determine if abuse has occurred, to find the perpetrator and send him to jail. It is not our primary goal to reunite the family. Most time it's our goal to break up the family with one of them going to jail.

Another law enforcement officer explained,

> I know social services want children protected from the people that hurt them. And I know they want to provide whatever is necessary to the well-being of the child. We just go about it in different ways. I go about it by arresting the perpetrator and taking him to jail and hopefully prison.

CPS social workers apply the term child sexual abuse to describe any situation in which an adult or another child threatens, forces or manipulates a child into sexual activity. When this activity occurs between an adult family member and a child or between siblings it is referred to as incest. Law enforcement makes no distinction between physical or sexual abuse occurring inside the home from that occurring outside the home. Child sexual abuse, rape, attempted rape, incest, exhibitionism, voyeurism, obscene phone calls, fondling, and sexual harassment are all defined by law enforcement as sexual assault. Different intervention strategies are utilized depending on the different language applied. One law enforcement officer explained the differences in how the two professional groups handled a case that characterized language differences.

The social worker goes to the home and learns by interviewing the family that they (the family) discovered the sexual assault had been occurring and they stopped it three months, four months prior by keeping the girl in their room at night, protecting her, and seeking counseling for the family. In the social worker's mind, the family's needs are being met because the parents are protecting the girl and everybody is in therapy. That's not my position. My position is this little girl has been raped. In my mind this young man has committed terrible felony crimes. He has no business being anywhere but in jail.

Other terms that CPS social workers and law enforcement officers use differently to describe the same action are offending parent and suspect. CPS social workers routinely refer to parents who perpetrate physical or sexual abuse against children as the offending parent, or one who has violated a household rule. On the other hand law enforcement describes the perpetrating parent as a suspect, or one who is imagined to be guilty pending proof by evidence. On the surface, describing an offending parent as a suspect seems rather inane. However, categorizing individuals as suspects allows law enforcement officers discretion in eliciting information from offending parents that would be considered a violation of ethical standards if practiced by social workers. One law enforcement officer explained,

We have ways of getting the suspect to admit to stuff without actually talking to him. When CPS goes and speaks to the suspect, gives them knowledge of what's going on, and that we are involved, that takes a lot of the cards out of our hands; it makes it more difficult to prosecute these people.

According to a law enforcement interviewee, a pretext phone call is one example of the ways law enforcement officers secure admissions of crime from alleged perpetrators. Law enforcement officers enlist the assistance of child victims or family members to make telephonic contact with the alleged perpetrator; the purpose of the pretext phone call is, hopefully, to have the alleged perpetrator either apologize or

confess his behavior to the victim. For example social workers may substantiate evidence of sexual abuse in their investigation but are unable to act on their findings until law enforcement has collected sufficient evidence to prosecute the case in court. Without physical evidence of abuse, confession by the perpetrator is the next level of evidence available to support filing a criminal claim. The claim can be made that such an arrangement places safety of the child secondary to catching the criminal. One social worker commented,

> I understand that they gotta have all of their ducks in a row before they can do that [arrest a parent], particularly, for example in sexual abuse cases. We'll have sooo much evidence from a child that has reported, but we also know that they have to build their case and they can't blow it. They have gotta have absolutely everything before they can step in. That bugs me. But again, I do understand why.

Another social worker stated "They are trained differently. They are there to do a criminal investigation, not to look at all of the psychosocial dynamics we look at." Understandably, law enforcement would much prefer interviewing the alleged perpetrator of abuse before CPS social workers have had an opportunity to do so. Given the time lines required of social workers to complete a child abuse investigation, talking to the 'suspect' prior to law enforcement officer is an inherent conflict based in statute. Both CPS social workers and law enforcement officers identify the time waiting for assistance from the other professional as another source of contention between the two professional groups.

Response Time, Time Waiting

Six social workers and four law enforcement officers referred to response time or time waiting for the other to arrive as one of the most challenging aspects of the collaborative relationship that occurs when children are present and a parent is being arrested. There are known circumstances where law enforcement officers have left children on their own, or placed children with inappropriate caretakers while waiting for CPS social workers to arrive at an arrest scene. One law enforcement officer stated,

> Sometimes we call CPS to pick up a child and it takes CPS up to three, four or five hours to respond. It is a long process, but we have been working on ways to try and quicken up that process so that when they get there we can say here is your warrant, here is the child bye-bye.

According to interview subjects, the social worker's main responsibility is ensuring that the children are safe and placed with appropriate caretakers. Essentially law enforcement's concern was for the perceived physical safety of children. One social worker commented,

> There was this situation where I responded on a night duty, IR, immediate response referral and they had gone and arrested the parents for drugs or something, and there was a baby in the house, and so they wanted me to respond to this home and just take the baby into custody and I said okay I'll be there in about half an hour or 45 minutes. That's how far away I was. And as I am enroute about 20 minutes away they called me back on my cell phone. The officer tells me there are some other adults here milling around. He wanted to know if it was okay to leave the kids with them until I got here. I go absolutely not. I don't know who these adults are. I haven't checked them out.

Circumstances such as these often time left law enforcement officers and social workers, alike, to develop stereotypical views of each others. Theses stereotypical views largely

form out of a lack of knowledge each group has about the other profession's roles and responsibilities.

Law Enforcement Officers' Views of Social Workers

For purpose of this discussion, it is necessary to reiterate the distinction between a law enforcement officer who is a patrol officer or a deputy and a law enforcement officer who is a detective. Detectives were the interview participants in this study for the reason noted. In large counties such as Riverside and San Bernardino first responders to child physical and sexual abuse allegations are patrol officers or deputies. If a patrol officer or deputy determines that the allegations involved a prosecutable act, the case is turned over to a detective to conduct a more thorough investigation that will stand up in criminal court. Detectives have specialized training in investigating child victimization. This means that the patrol officer or deputy is no longer involved in the investigation; it also means that based on timelines, the CPS investigation has already been completed.

As previously discussed, change in case control, coupled with each agency's different timelines, set the stage for one of the most contentious working relationships between CPS social workers and detectives. Relating to timelines, terms such as 'irresponsible', 'overzealous', or 'jumping the gun' became to define social workers who completed their investigation prior to detectives becoming involved. More importantly, this is a typical example of one agency not understanding the roles and responsibilities of the other.

There have been circumstances where CPS social workers have completed their investigation and determined the allegations to be unfounded (untrue). Subsequent

investigations by law enforcement officers resulted in those same allegations being

substantiated (found to be true). Without specifics about the case, it is difficult to provide

an explanation for the differences in outcome. However, until CPS social worker s and

law enforcement officers develop a standard practice for joint investigations these

differences are likely to continue to occur. One detective expressed,

> I have come across a lot of CPS referrals that are unfounded and then one finally
> comes in that there is a enough evidence and you are like how in the world did
> they unfound that. It is like they didn't do anything.

Overall, detectives expressed mostly negative views of social workers. Four

detectives described social workers as naïve and shortsighted with too much emphasis

being placed on their book learning rather than training. On the job training was viewed

as the best way for social workers to become skilled at learning investigation procedures.

Another detective commented,

> I think they should go out a couple of months on big investigations; call outs in
> the middle of the night investigations, not routine stuff during the day, and get
> some of that experience because I think that's what they lack.

Describing social workers with advanced degrees, one detective commented,

"Book smarts doesn't make you savvy in essence of doing the job because lots of

answers are not found in books when you are dealing with people at a personal level."

Three detectives described social workers as relying too heavily on supervisors to make

decisions from afar. Rather than viewing consultation with the supervisor as an ethical

responsibility, law enforcement characterized social workers as lacking discretion and

critical thinking skills. One officer noted,

There is some micro management going on in the sense that the workers either because of the lack of experience, are unwilling or unable to make a decision on whether to take the child or what to do in a case.

Two detectives described social workers as passive, too soft, and lacking in assertiveness skills. One detective remarked, "Some social workers sometimes don't have the savvy to see the lies that are being told because of the rose colored glasses." While another stated, "They are not assertive enough to ask us for the reports they need to support their case. Sometimes they don't ask us for anything." Two detectives described social workers as putting up road blocks and working against each others. One detective related,

We see what is going on with these children and it gets very frustrating because you want to take the person that did this… well there are a lot of things you would like to do to that person, but alls you can do is to…the only thing that you can do is try to put them in jail as long as possible. And it just …It gets very frustrating when you feel like you have another county agency, not all the time, but at time, putting up roadblocks.

Despite law enforcement officers criticism of advanced education there are indications that younger and better educated social workers are open to engaging in dialogue and case discussions. They are described as being curious and wanting explanations for procedural decisions. This may suggest that the California Social Work Education (Cal-SWEC) program which was designed, in part, to professionalize child welfare may be paying off. One detective described younger social workers as more open to learning and asking questions saying, "The older social workers, as well as older law enforcement officers, seem to be less interested in having a discussion. It becomes this is the way I do it and a power struggle ensues."

Stereotypical views of law enforcement officers by social workers are expressed

most frequently at the patrol officer or deputy level. Patrol officers and deputies are more likely to interact with CPS social workers as they are initial first responders in child physical and sexual abuse allegations. Interactions with detectives occurred on an infrequent basis. The primary function of the detectives was to conduct a thorough investigation for prosecuting the perpetrator of abuse in criminal court. Based on participant interviews, there was very little communication between CPS social workers and detectives, except for those who were co-located. Unlike detectives who expressed negative views of social workers, social workers expressed overall positive views of detectives.

Social Workers Views of Law Enforcement Officers

Social workers expressed mixed views of law enforcement officers, especially patrol officers and deputies. Six social workers described law enforcement officers as punitive and more interested in catching the criminal. One social worker commented, "…They are more interested in taking the perpetrator down regardless of the consequences on the children." Another social worker noted, "They have tunnel vision, more looking at the criminal side of things and always looking at can I put a Penal Code to whatever is happening."

Six social workers observed law enforcement officers to be impatient and unwilling to spend the time waiting for social workers to complete their paperwork. Their overall impression was that law enforcement officers viewed child abuse as a low level crime and not as exciting as a homicide or a robbery. One social worker described the impatience stating, "We get officers who are very, they really don't want to be there.

They are in a hurry to leave. Our investigations are pretty lengthy, so they are, they become annoyed. Some of them do actually leave." Reiterating that law enforcement officers are impatient and more interested in the criminal side of a case, another social worker shared the following experience,

> I have seen officers want to hurry up and get through the interview so they can rush the criminal, I know they have other calls that are waiting and so sometimes I think their line of questioning I feel like can be very leading.

Overall, eleven social workers interviewed presented complimentary views of detectives. However, two out of the eleven social workers interviewed who worked in the two different counties made comments that presented as compliments, but with disclaimers. One social worker stated, "I am usually familiar with the detectives on my case. But, a lot of times we don't ever see a detective." Such a comment sends the message that the two agencies are working separately rather than collaboratively on mutual cases to meet their individual needs and goals. Another social worker commented "You know the detectives that do the individual physical abuse, sexual abuse assessments are on top of things, but crimes against children is a low position in the police department. It is almost like a 'you screwed up' position." In contrast, an additional social worker made the following comment "I have never had a problem with an officer. They are friendly. They are supportive. We are on the same page." One other social worker compared detectives to patrol officers saying, I can see the difference. Detectives have been investigating child abuse a long time; they are trained. They are more sensitive." Yet another social worker stated,

I think the detectives are more prepared. If the case ends up being transferred to their hands, they have good skills working with kids. But the everyday patrol officer, they come across as harsh with the victims, and harshness is not always in the kid's best interest.

Two other social workers explained, "Some of the detectives are very committed to having positive results in the case that meet the well-being of the child." Both CPS social workers and law enforcement officers employed the language of child well-being equally. However, they applied different meanings and different practices for achieving well-being outcomes. Their practices for achieving child-well-being were more often incompatible with the other professional's goals rather than complementary achievements.

Complementary Roles

Eleven child welfare social workers and ten detectives expressed safety and child well-being as ultimate goals when investigating child physical and sexual abuse. However, they go about achieving safety and well-being in different ways. Nine detectives expressed the belief that CPS social workers complement their roles as law enforcement officers when the child is removed from the home and the suspect goes to jail. Thus, physical safety, either the perpetrator goes go jail or the child is removed from the home represents child well-being for law enforcement. One detective explained, "When everything runs smooth, everything is covered, either the suspect is convicted, or the child is taken away and no longer in danger, and no other children are going to be in danger." Another detective commented "I think overall is to make sure the threat is not there anymore. Either take the threat away, being the suspect, or take the child, the

victim, so the threat is not near them anymore." Yet another detective remarked, "…We just go about it in different ways. I go about it by arresting the perpetrator and taking him to jail, and hopefully prison. They go about it through dependency court actions." Given the adverse affect on children being separated from their parents, social workers responsibilities to the children left behind extend beyond the parent's arrest. From the social worker's perspective, physical safety is just one aspect of child well-being. One social worker explained,

> Ensuring the well being of the child means to assess for risk and safety of the child in all aspects, physical, psychologically, emotional aspects of the life of this child. Ensuring that the child is going to be in a healthy, nurturing, appropriate environment as much as we can.

Another social worker expressed the following,

> Well you want their well-being, obviously their physical well-being, but also their emotional well-being. Are they safe, are they emotionally stable, if not are there efforts made to further their positive mental health. Do they need medication, therapy? I mean well-being is every aspect of that child's life, not just physical, but their emotional well-being.

Although CPS social workers and law enforcement officers have different roles and responsibilities, those roles sometimes become blurred as indicated by the one detective who stated,

> There are certain people , a few, when I say a few, a select handful, that I do work with and they do understand that their goals as well as mine is to put people in jail for as long as possible so I work very closely with those. The other people, some of them don't care. All they care about is their job and what they have to do as long as they are getting their stuff done, they don't care.

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The above quote also indicates that there are CPS social workers who may have relinquished their roles as social workers and begun to behave like police officers. Four of 10 detectives described their reliance on CPS social workers to provide information about the family's history, especially as it relates to prior CPS allegations of abuse. One detective exclaimed, "Oh!, they get information I can't get."

Overall, protection and personal safety was named by nine out of eleven social workers as the primary way in which law enforcement officers complemented their work. Only one detective indicated being available to accompany social workers on joint home calls, saying "anytime during, or after the initial investigation they may feel there is an investigative need, they can go to patrol or detective."

One social worker commented on welcoming the protective factor, but expressed a desire for more professional appreciation stating, "They protect my safety; they protect the safety of the child. I wish sometimes though they would value our professional world more and understand what we are there to do." Another social worker talked about the authority of the uniform and the benefit of an arrest saying, "With law enforcement, usually the parents become more cooperative and you feel safe. If law enforcement does arrest the parents, let's say for physical abuse, that gives us what we need as far as proving our cases." Yet another social worker discussed how law enforcement officers provide another set of eyes saying, "All we have out there is a little plastic badge and a plastic notebook to neighborhoods we don't even know are dangerous. And law enforcement tells us we don't even go in there without backup."

Social workers not only visit the homes of parents who are hostile, they frequent neighborhoods that are known by law enforcement to be unfriendly and unsafe. Social

workers can request that they to be accompanied by a patrol officer or deputies under these circumstances. One social worker described the roles of law enforcement and social workers as resource dependent stating, "When we work together there are services that we can offer the clients, services that they don't have and vice versa.

Three social workers described detectives as better prepared to conduct child abuse investigations than deputies and patrol officers. One social worker explained, "Sometimes you have officers just coming off a rotation from the prison system. They don't know anything about child welfare and how we work." As previously noted, deputies and patrol officers usually work on rotating assignments as well as rotating shifts and are less likely to be trained in matters relating to child abuse. Their interactions with CPS social workers are limited to particular points in time of an event. CPS social workers, patrol officers, and deputies do not interact prior to, or after the event concludes. One social worker illustrates saying, "So if I go out on a case with a patrol officer, that's not who I am going to be working with after that day. After that day it is going to be transferred to a detective." Patrol officers and deputies were determined not to be appropriate subjects for this study due to the brief duration in which they interacted with CPS social workers. Such transitory engagement prevented opportunities for learning about each other's work ethics and work habits; it further hindered opportunities for patrol officers and deputies to develop collaborative relationships with CPS.

Relationship Building

The nature of child welfare work, especially as it relates to abuse investigations, makes relationship building between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers

practically impossible. The patrol officer or deputy who responds to investigate a child

abuse allegation is based on the luck of the draw, or whoever may be available at the

time. One social worker explained, "We never go out with the same officer. No, I

shouldn't say never. You might get the same maybe once in every four months, but we

are not assigned law enforcement officers, nor are they assigned to us." Child welfare

social workers who are first responders investigate child abuse across multiple

geographical locations, a mixture of municipalities, and with different deputies and patrol

officers who work on rotating shifts. Five out of eleven social workers who had been

employed in their positions ranging from two to eight years reported meeting with the

same officers to conduct an investigation no more than two times in their work history.

Observations such as these provide a picture of the limited opportunities to develop

working relationships between these two professional groups. One social worker

described conducting an investigation with the same officer as follows:

> I think when you go out with the same officer we worked really well because the
> officer knew my style. I knew the officer's style, and you have that working
> relationship, and you also have that trusting relationship, and the professionalism.
> Whereas when I go out with officers we don't know each others, they may want
> to take over.

Another social worker described the working relationship experienced when

constantly paired with a different officer when investigating,

> It is based on the officer's training and knowledge of the subject because
> sometimes they don't know what they are supposed to do. Sometimes they will
> just show up and, you know, if the officer and the social worker don't have a pre
> meeting on what they are about to engage in with this family, then it could be
> disastrous because there are different expectations on both sides.

An additional social worker provided an example of the impact of a lack of open

communication with detectives saying,

> We never know when to interview or when not to interview unless they
> tell us. Unless they know we are on this case too. We need to keep the
> dialogue a little tighter with the detectives so that the kid would only be
> interviewed once and that is not happening.

Still another social worker explained,

> They (social workers) don't necessarily have connections to the intermediate
> detectives so it's like trying to call the station, you leave a message hoping that
> whoever is assigned will call you back. And that tends to be a hassle for those of
> us who are not stationed with police/law enforcement.

Similar to social workers, detectives depict varying degrees of relationships with CPS

social workers as well. One detective expressed the value in working with the same

social worker on a consistent basis saying,

> I think it is a lot easier to share information when you constantly work with the
> same person. You get to know them and know their style, and how they like to
> approach certain cases. I think it would be helpful if we were working with more
> of the same ones more often than different coming and going all the time because
> it's harder to work with people if you don't have that relationship with them.

Three detectives indicated they make themselves available to provide support to CPS

upon request. One detective stated,

> Anytime they are going out on a situation and they may feel there is an
> investigative need because of a potential criminal case they can go to patrol or
> detective. I can't give you a percentage because I don't know the numbers but I
> can say it's frequent.

The quality of the relationships appears to be a necessary asset in order for some

CPS social workers and law enforcement officers to work collaboratively. One detective

commented,

> I never go out with CPS unless they have called and requested me. There are
> some incidences that I do and that's usually with CPS workers that I have known
> for a long time and they call me out and say hey, can you help me out on this and
> I'll do that but on a regular basis, NO, I don't go out with them since I am the
> detective.

Another detective recounted,

> I have made a lot of contacts and I have worked repeatedly with most of them. In
> fact when they…even the ones I don't know will have a run in with a detective at
> a station, they will call me to get me to get the detective to do the right thing. I
> have a very good relationship with CPS.

Two detectives described engaging with the same social worker at least once after an

initial investigation. Having a prior relationship seems to make the investigation process

move much more smoothly. One detective commented,

> So it's pretty easy once I get there to coordinate with that CPS worker if it is
> somebody I have worked with before because they know how I work and they, we
> define the borders between what they do and what I do and that we both
> understand we do two different investigations.

Conversely, there are detectives who reported having limited relationships with

social workers. One detective reported,

> A lot of time I will find that if I am, if a deputy took a report and say they took it
> today and I called the social worker who had contact with the family in the past
> they are usually not available any more so I can't get any information about the
> past.

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Four detectives indicated that they hardly ever engaged with the same social workers on a

frequent basis. One detective commented,

> My understanding is when you have emergency responders, they can come from
> anywhere. They can come from three areas, so we can get anyone. We like to
> have a …one. I don't always get the same one. Every once in a while I do and like
> …, it works out pretty good.

At least one detective reported never working together with CPS, stating "I don't even

know where a CPS office is." Describing the frequency in engaging with the same social

worker, one detective noted,

> It should happen 100% of the time and it probably happens 5% of the time. I have
> never studied it, but I would estimate that about 5% of the time it occurs and it
> should be all of the time.

The aforementioned comments by both CPS social workers and law enforcement

officers illustrate the significance of developing strong working relationships with each

other. Law enforcement officers who reported to have developed good working

relationships with CPS social workers also reported having better communication and a

more openness to cooperate with each other. The cooperation extended beyond working

on cases in which they had mutual responsibility. There was a willingness to act as an

intermediary between the two professions when one or the other encountered a difficulty

while working across professional boundaries. Not only was there an implied respect for

each others' roles and responsibilities, professional trust was present among those CPS

social workers and law enforcement officers who had developed ongoing working

relationships. Overall, social workers who were co-located in sheriff departments

reported a much closer working relationship with detective. One social worker described

the detectives as "going beyond their expected duties for children and to help me out."

Another social worker stated "You tend to build relationships with them. If you call

dispatch it's a call log. If they know that your name is attached, and they know you, they

know you are competent, they'll get out there and help you." This social worker's

statement sums up the value of mutual respect and trust in the working relationship

between these two professional groups. On the other side of the subject of co-locating,

two detectives expressed the belief that co-locating social workers and detectives in the

same physical space was not a good idea. One detective expressed, "It is a bad idea to

have social workers and law enforcement co-located. It blurs the boundaries too much."

This observation is consistent with Garrett's (2004) findings that social workers who

were co-located with law enforcement officers began to take on law enforcement's

attitudes and behaviors. Expressing support for co-location, another detective explained

"co-location in every sheriff station is ideal for building and maintaining networking

relationships.

    In reviewing the elements required to build relationships between CPS social

workers and law enforcement, there are indications of a willingness to collaborate.

However, systemic barriers such as a lack of collaborative protocol delineating the

'when', 'where', 'how', and 'why' of each profession's roles engenders a stalemate in the

collaborative relationship. Another ingredient, 'communication', was clearly identified as

missing from the relationship building formula. As an example, communication between

social workers and law enforcement officers (whether it was a patrol officer, deputy, or

detective) seemed to come to an end at the point the case was transferred after the initial

investigation was concluded. Trust and mutual respect, the two additional ingredients for

relationship building come as a result of working together. Suspicion rather than trust, and blame rather than respect seem to dominate the relationship between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers. In the two circumstances where both professions were co-located, expressions of communication, trust and respect were evident. Whether co-location is an ideal arrangement for building relationships is a subject for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss the findings and implications of this study, beginning with an analysis of how CPS social workers and law enforcement engage in collaboration to investigate child abuse. Next theoretical implications will be discussed, followed by a discussion of implications for policy. Finally, limitations of the study will be reviewed and suggestions for future research will be made.

Overall, this study not only revealed significant information that offered important insight into the different communication styles of CPS social workers and law enforcement officers; it also illuminated how the different styles severely hampered collaborative efforts between these two professionals. Interviews with social workers revealed either an inability or an unwillingness to clearly articulate that their roles included protecting children, while at the same time maintaining the family unit. As an example of articulating their position as it related to investigating child abuse, social workers tended to be less forceful in asserting their roles and responsibilities to not only ensure physical safety of children, but to keep the family intact and protect the children's emotional safety as well. Law enforcement officers/detectives, on the other hand, very clearly stated their roles to include ensuring the physical safety of child abuse victims, and putting the offending parent in jail. Based on this observation this study also supports Garret's (2004) recommendation that schools of social work curriculums must include training that builds up social worker' confidence in their skills and knowledge so that they are secure within themselves to work in multidisciplinary settings.

Regarding the issue of education and training it is worth noting that CPS social workers expressed the need for law enforcement officers to be better educated about CPS functions while law enforcement officers expressed the need for social workers to be better trained on law enforcement matters. These are valid observations made by both professional groups. It would be useful for law enforcement to have a better understanding of the emotional impact the arrest and separation from a parent has on a child. On the other hand it would also be useful for social workers to have knowledge about the limits of law enforcement responsibilities when a child is present during a parent's arrest. The recognition that each entity possess essential but separate knowledge base that determine the outcome for children and families is all the more reason for them to engage in collaboration. As an example, this study revealed a wide disparity in the educational level between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers. All11 social workers had earned a BA/BS degree or higher. On the other hand, five law enforcement officers had earned a high school diploma, two had earned a BA/BS degree, and three had earned AA degrees. This observation is consistent with Reaves (1990) study which showed that individuals entering into the field of law enforcement are allowed to do so with far less educational background than other professional arenas. With such disparity in educational levels, joint training is a necessity to bridge the knowledge gap between the two professions.

This study also revealed a rather loosely connected relationship between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers. The loose connection began at the point each entity received a referral and made the determination as to whether the referral required a face-to-face investigation, or could be 'evaluated out'. In California, either the

child welfare intake center or the CPS supervisor has the option of 'evaluating out' a referral, meaning a decision could be made that the referral required no further action. All referrals with an allegation of child physical or sexual abuse that are initially reported to CPS are cross-reported to law enforcement. Conversely, law enforcement cross-reports to CPS if they are the initial recipient of the referral. Unfortunately, both entities viewed this mechanical process of notifying the other as a form of collaborating. Law enforcement's approach to investigating child abuse was to investigate each referral received in their work unit. As a result law enforcement continued their investigation of referrals that were 'evaluated out' by CPS. What should have been the impetus for the start of a collaborative process actually became an exercise in poor communication, if there was any communication at all. Neither entity reported to the other of their decision to 'evaluate out', or the outcome of their continued investigation. Parallel and separate investigations became the norm even for those emergency referrals that required joint investigations; a failure to cross-report the investigation outcomes to the other entity also became the norm. As a result of separate investigations and gaps in communication, children and families were less likely to be connected to service interventions to address their needs. In this regard CPS and law enforcement are said to be loosely coupled systems. In loosely coupled systems, each entity focuses on activities of concern to their own profession and organizational needs, objecting to, and often time ignoring some of the other professionals' goals.

Both professional groups criticized the other for communication lags; communication lags adversely impact the ability of each of the agencies to secure timely evidentiary documentation to support their case. Detectives complained that CPS social

workers do not make the effort to find out if there is a detective investigating the case and what evidence they may have. CPS social workers complained of the difficulty in finding out the name and contact information of the detective. Instead of taking an aggressive posture to collect supporting documentation, both entities have adopted 'go it alone' mentalities. 'Go it alone mentalities' meant leaving gaps in service delivery for children and families.

The communication gap draws attention to a much larger subject matter that creates conflict between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers throughout the life of a case, i.e., different time lines. Differences in timelines are systemic problems that have contributed to the loosely coupled relationship between CPS and law enforcement. For example, there are times when CPS has reunified the children with parents when law enforcement is still pursuing efforts to prosecute the case in criminal court. Law enforcement officers expressed much disdain for social workers when a parent appears in criminal court with their child when law enforcement is still attempting to prosecute the parent for abusing that particular child. Child welfare laws that require families to be reunified if at all possible within 12 months are incompatible with criminal laws that often take 12 months or longer to gather enough evidence to prosecute a case in criminal court. Timelines will continue to be a source of contention between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers unless there is an alignment in Welfare and Institution Codes (WIC) and criminal codes relative to familial child physical and sexual abuse matters. Aligning Penal Codes in familial physical and sexual abuse cases with Welfare and Institution Codes would minimize the disruptive impact on the child and give rise to the notion that the well-being of the child is in fact the ultimate consideration for both

law enforcement and child welfare services. Although these two systems are linked, they are very separate in the way they perform their duties in the protection of children. They are said to be 'loosely coupled systems'. Overall, this study revealed that collaboration is not occurring. Rather, CPS social workers and law enforcement officers work separately and often time in conflict with each other.

Theoretical Implications

The concept, 'loosely coupled systems' theory, informs the working relationships between child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers. Introduced by Karl Weick in 1976, "coupling is the degree to which organizational aspects are linked, connected, related, or interdependent" (Maguire & Katz, 2002, p. 504). Weick (1976) and Hagan and Hewitt and Alwin (1979) described coupled organizations as being responsive to each other but they preserve their own identity and their own physical, and logical separateness. Pajak and Green (2003) described loosely coupled systems as organizations that work together but have separate standards and separate performance measures. CPS social workers and law enforcement officers are clearly responsive to each other and interact with each other at critical points in children and families lives, yet, they are distinct and separate with different approaches, different timelines, and different expectations and outcomes. As such, the lack of understanding of the systemic differences in professional timelines and expectations has become the impetus for growing biases and stereotypes.

Pinnelle and Gutwin (2006) described loosely coupled systems as being guided by ambiguous mandates that promote irrational work practices; each system practices in a

manner that meets its organizational goals with little regard for how the other

organization in the collaborative arrangement achieves its goals. As an example, Federal

and state statutes mandating the collaborative formation provide minimal guidelines for

implementation and there is minimal oversight to ensure that the collaborative

arrangements are occurring. Consequently, organizations conform closely to behaviors

that symbolize mandated expectations but do not attempt to seriously implement them at

the operational level (Scott, 1998). This is true of CPS and law enforcement. As an

example the mechanical activity of coordinating and cross-reporting referrals symbolizes

collaboration; engagement in discussions beyond the paper trail minimally exists. To

illustrate, the study revealed that CPS social workers and law enforcement officers are

methodical in cross-reporting referrals of abuse to each other. Yet, the two agencies have

very different approaches for responding to those referrals. CPS may decide that the

referral requires no follow-up – they 'evaluate out 'the referral. In the meantime, law

enforcement follows through with an investigation on the same referral, sometimes

finding the allegations in the referral to be substantiated, i.e., true. However neither

agency reports to the other of their decision to 'evaluate out' or their substantiated

outcome.

In loosely coupled systems interdependence is reduced; interactions are

secondary, occasional, involuntary, and unequal (Weick, 1980). This study revealed that

choosing to engage the other in joint investigations became subjective, inconsistent, and

based on whether or not the investigating professionals had developed a working

relationship between themselves. Absent a defined investigative protocol, the

development of an interpersonal relationship became one of the prerequisites for

collaborating. As an example, one social worker noted "…If they know your name and they know you are competent, they'll get out there and help you." Whereas, one detective stated, "I think it is difficult to get started on a case if you don't know them (social workers). You don't know how they are as far as their work habits." However, the study revealed that both agencies exhibited professional practices that created procedural impediments. These impediments severely limited both groups' abilities to develop and maintain consistent working relationships. As an example, it has been reported that weeks, months can go by before the identity of the assigned detective handling a case was known after the case was initially investigated at the patrol level but later transferred to a detective for follow-up. Similarly, weeks or months hence, the social worker currently handling the CPS case was unlikely to be the same social worker who initially responded to the allegations of abuse.

Throughout the study, social workers and law enforcement officers alike talked about dreading the inability to engage with the responder who initially investigated the case. This lack of consistency in professional partnerships/collaboration precluded investigators from obtaining firsthand knowledge about the case since the newly assigned social worker/detective may not have any knowledge about the case at all. The finding that CPS social workers and law enforcement officers became skeptical of each other as a result of the loss of sustained contact illustrated how separate and 'loosely connected 'the two agencies function in their working relationships. The 'loose connection' was especially illustrated given that each professional was critical of the manner in which the others' internal procedure disrupted communication flow while ignoring how its own internal procedures disrupted communication flow.

Pinelle and Gutwin (2006) explored how loosely coupled organizations can limit

the flow of information in healthcare settings, and make coordination of patient care

difficult to coordinate across professional units. The same can be said of the 'loosely

coupled' relationship between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers. As an

example, a lack of communication between CPS social workers and law enforcement

officers has resulted in children showing up in criminal court proceedings with parents

who abused them while law enforcement was still in the process of trying to prosecute

the parent for abusing that same child. Whether or not it was appropriate to reunify the

family, or whether the parent deserved to be punish was not a matter open to debate. This

current study validates the Pinelle and Gutwin (2006) study as it so aptly demonstrates

the unintended consequence when systems that are responsive to each other fail to

coordinate and share information with each other.

Yet another example that demonstrates the loosely coupled relationship between

CPS and law enforcement relates to the time limit for reunifying families, and the delay

in concluding criminal court decisions. Meyer and Rowan (1979) characterized loosely

coupled organizations as being linked to common activities; rules are often violated;

decisions often go delayed or unimplemented, or if implemented have uncertain

consequences; and, procedures often lack structure and coordination. A failure to

coordinate WIC procedures with criminal court procedure has the potential for disrupting

rather than promoting child-well-being. Delayed prosecution and incarceration of a

parent who has been reunified with a child falls within the realm of systems re-abuse.

Discussions around the co-location of social workers with law enforcement

officers in sheriff or police units in order to build relationships and close communication

gaps were greeted with mixed opinions. Opportunities to learn more about each other's professions, and ease in sharing information were just two of the relational benefits identified. Although co-location has benefits, concerns arose that social workers may take on the attitudes and behaviors of law enforcement officers as supported in a study by Garrett (2004). This current research reinforces the validity to Garrett's study, especially when law enforcement officers voice viewpoints that co-location arrangements would be welcomed if it would make social workers more aggressive. However, when the question was approached from the perspective of placing law enforcement officers in CPS units, the idea was greeted with apprehension. Such responses suggest that co-locating CPS social workers in law enforcement units should proceed with caution and much oversight.

With different philosophies, methodologies, rules, and values, it is difficult for CPS and law enforcement to blend professional perspectives (D'Amour, Ferrada-Videla, San Martin Rodriguez & Beaulieu, 2005). However, this study revealed that federal and state statute strongly recommend, and non-governmental funding sources require agencies to develop collaborative relationships as a prerequisite to receiving financial support for implementing innovative programs. Yet these funding sources do not provide guidelines for developing collaborative protocols. The lack of guidelines leave agencies to decide on their own what is collaboration and what is not. Loosely coupled systems theory is therefore suitable for understanding current policies that create difficult working relationships between CPS social workers and law enforcement officers; the theory also raises awareness of the need for policy changes to improve or truly develop collaborative relationships.

Policy Implications

There are several policy implications that can be drawn from this study. First, it is recommended that Federal and state policy mandate stricter requirements rather than recommended requirements that CPS and law enforcement agencies develop collaborative protocols when engaging to investigate child abuse. Child physical and sexual abuse allegations are potential crimes, and require an investigation by <u>both</u> CPS social workers and law enforcement officers. A mandated protocol should be developed that clearly identifies roles and responsibilities during investigations, including a requirement that CPS social workers and law enforcement officers investigate the allegations together; currently, the two agencies conduct parallel investigations. Without a clearly defined protocol, CPS and law enforcement have developed a protocol that is without substance, i.e., collaboration from their perspective means cross-reporting the referral report to the other. It is essential to reiterate that the study revealed that CPS social workers and law enforcement officers have come to define cross-reporting referrals of abuse (cooperating) and arbitrarily deciding when to conduct a joint child abuse allegation (coordinating) as collaborating. Engagement or working together beyond cooperating and coordinating to achieve mutual outcomes has yet to become a standard of practice. The study also revealed that when CPS social workers and law enforcement officers investigate referrals separate from each other, both entities make counterclaims that this behavior has an adverse impact on their ability to carry out roles and responsibilities unique to their agency. Law enforcement officers make the claim that CPS social workers 'mess up their criminal investigation case, preventing them from using certain investigative techniques, when the offender is alerted that a criminal

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investigation is forthcoming.' CPS social workers make similar claims about law enforcement officers, stating that officers conduct child abuse investigations without them and often unsubstantiate allegations when there are clear social service intervention needs, and fail to notify or involve CPS. Not only do these families fall through the cracks criminally, they are not connected to therapeutic interventions when either one of the agencies does not involve the other.

Second, it is recommended that a policy be developed that removes familial physical and sexual abuse crimes out of the sexual assault Penal Code section and align the crimes with Welfare and Institution Codes. Such alignment would eliminate the conflicting timelines CPS social workers and law enforcement officers have for investigating, decision-making, prosecuting, and or reunifying families. Currently, CPS social workers are mandated by strict timelines to investigate, provide services to preserve the family, and reunify the family, if possible, usually within 12 to 15 months. Sexual assault cases moving through the Criminal Court systems in California have been reported to take up to three years to investigate and even longer to prosecute. Concomitant timeframes would reduce the likelihood that children would be reunified with parents only to be removed again due to delayed prosecution.

Implementing a structure to align Welfare and Institution Codes with Penal codes would severely impact the structure of both the Juvenile Court and the Criminal Court systems. Therefore a third recommendation would entail conducting a pilot study to determine the feasibility and potential outcome of such restructuring.

Fourth, it is recommended that child welfare agencies responsible for investigating child abuse employ skilled social work staff who understand human

behavior, be able to articulate their roles and responsibilities for protecting children and maintaining the family unit, and who has the ability to collaborate with confidence in cross-discipline settings. In addition to possessing a Masters Degree in social work (MSW), staff should be required to participate in ongoing training and professional development courses to stay abreast of current research and trends in child welfare practice.

Fifth, it is recommended that schools of social work develop curricula that teach social work students how to collaborate and resolve conflict in cross-discipline settings. This includes teaching classes that are interdisciplinary in nature. At minimum, interdisciplinary studies can provide an understanding of how the involvement of different professions is necessary to resolve broad and complex societal problems. Additionally, interdisciplinary studies are designed to integrate a range of perspectives in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of clients' multilevel needs and challenges.

Sixth, according to a study conducted by Daly (2005), police academies provide police officers and police detectives with an average of 402 hours of classroom training and 141 hours of field training in conducting child abuse investigation. It is strongly recommended that law enforcement/detectives responsible for child sexual abuse investigations be trained on appropriate interview techniques for children rather than employing the traditional deception and interrogation techniques. Additionally, training needs to be extended to address topical areas related to child development, including childhood trauma. Further, police training should be conducted jointly with CPS social workers. Training modules should include an outline for learning about the role of social

workers and the role of police officer. Additionally, a training module to learn how to collaborate across disciplines to meet their individual agency's goals and expectations would be a signal that both professional groups are serious about engaging in collaborative efforts. Joint training would be a catalyst for the start of building relationships; both CPS social workers and law enforcement officers recognized relationships as fundamental to successful collaboration. Police training modules were not reviewed for this study. However, Daly (2005) reported that in a study of 250 police academies respondents indicated that police officers assigned to child protection units received training in investigations, interviewing, and interrogations, but the training only prepared them for generalized investigations, not for addressing the unique needs of child sexual abuse victims.

From an interpersonal perspective, the practice of involving multiple social workers especially at the beginnings of an investigation makes it very difficult for social workers and law enforcement officers to develop strong working relationships as it relates to communication gaps. A seventh recommendation would be to assign a liaison from both entities who can track a case at any point in the investigation process and provide reciprocal updates upon request. This process would not only close the communication gap it could potentially aid in the alignment of Welfare and Institution Codes with Penal Codes in cases involving in family child physical and sexual abuse cases.

A clearly defined protocol delineating roles and responsibilities, aligning investigative timelines, assigning a liaison (both entities) to maintain an open communication flow, and mandating joint training and education would not only

reinforce the interdependent nature of the work CPS social workers and law enforcement officers perform, an enhanced understanding of the others' roles would result in improved collaborative relationships. Improved collaboration would also result in healthier outcomes for children and families.

Limitations

Riverside and San Bernardino counties rank number four and five among the top ten largest counties in population in the state of California. The population sizes for the two counties are 2,100,156 and 2,015,355, respectively. In geographic area, Riverside county ranks number three and San Bernardino County ranks number one in square miles coverage among the largest 10 counties. Riverside County's geographic area covers 7,208 square miles; San Bernardino County's geographic area covers 20,062 square miles. Thus the problems discussed in the findings are exacerbated by the size of these counties. The remaining 48 smaller counties have population sizes ranging from 1,061 to 845,559 and geographic areas ranging from 48 square miles to 4,060 square miles. Findings from this study may have significant implications for practice for the remaining eight largest California counties. However, the study findings may not be generalizable to the remaining 48 smaller counties given the differences in population sizes and square miles coverage. The study findings do provide a glimpse into the difficulties all California counties may experience when child welfare Federal and state statutes conflict with criminal Federal and state statute. Additionally, the small sample size (N=21) coupled with the inability to interview the initial first responders from law enforcement limits generalization of the findings to the broader child welfare-law enforcement

relationship. Another perceived limitation may be related to the awareness that the researcher in this study possessed prior knowledge about the subject matter under inquiry. However, to allay concerns about injecting bias into the outcome, the researcher was mindful to allow the data to lead the direction of the outcome rather than imposing personal preconceptions, values, and beliefs.

Conclusions and Future Directions

Generally, findings demonstrated that overall child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers do not engage in collaboration to investigate child physical and sexual abuse. A lack of protocol delineating roles and responsibilities was revealed to be the primary blame. This study illustrated that incompatible Federal and state statutes that direct the practices of CPS social workers and law enforcement officers share an equal responsibility for the lack of collaboration. Differences between child welfare laws and statutes and criminal laws and statutes result in conflicting rather than collaborative relationships between the two professional groups. The study conducted by Faller and Henry (2000) in which Welfare and Institution Codes and Penal Codes were aligned in joint child abuse investigation cases provided hope to the possibility that such an arrangement was possible in the future. However, additional research is recommended in order to make better judgments of the impact on children and families when CPS social workers and law enforcement officers practice the same timelines for investigating child abuse occurring in the home. Concomitant with a lack of protocol and conflicting laws, other factors such as the way the two professional groups are socialized, power

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differentials, and differences in education attainment contribute to poor collaborative relationships.

Relationship building was described by both professional groups as essential for establishing collaborative relationships. Normatively, social workers have been co-located in sheriff or police units. The idea of detectives being co-located with social workers in child welfare units was not readily welcomed by detectives. On the other hand, social workers welcomed the idea of detectives being co-located in the same physical space in social work units. Better working relationships were reported among social workers and law enforcement officers who were co-located in the same physical work space.

Data emerging from this study is fertile with prospective research topics. First, future research is needed to determine the impact co-location in law enforcement units has on social workers' attitudes and behaviors; if co-location improve collaboration between these two professional groups; or if such an arrangement results in social workers becoming more like police officers as has been reported in a study (Garrett, 2004) of social workers and police co-located in the United Kingdom. The inability of social workers to sustain their roles and responsibilities in police environments can have adverse effects on preserving and maintaining family units. Second, more research is recommended to determine if the power differential between law enforcement and social workers has an impact on social workers' attitudes and behaviors in the performance of their responsibility to safeguard children and at the same time preserve the family unit. Third, future study is recommended to examine the relationship between the culture of child welfare agencies and police departments in building teams and creating teamwork

with external organizations. Fourth, a study involving other professionals working in cross-discipline settings would be useful in determining if the practice model discussed in this study is more globally applicable.

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APPENDIX A

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 1942, CHAPTER 729

An act to add Section 833.2 and 13517.7 to the Penal Code, relating to arrests.

APPENDIX 2 – LEGISLATION

Assembly Bill No. 1942

CHAPTER 729

An act to add Sections 833.2 and 13517.7 to the Penal Code, relating to arrests.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2006. Filed with

Secretary of State September 29, 2006.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1942, Nava. Arrests.

Existing law generally regulates the conditions of arrest.

This bill would express the intent of the Legislature regarding the

development of protocols by law enforcement and other entities,

pertaining to arresting caretaker parents or guardians of minors, to ensure

the safety and well-being of the minor. The bill would also state that the

Legislature encourages the Department of Justice to apply for a federal

grant to train local law enforcement agencies and assist them in developing

protocols pertaining to child safety when a caretaker parent or guardian is

arrested. Existing law establishes the Commission on Peace Officer Standards

and Training and charges it with various responsibilities.

This bill would require the commission to develop guidelines and

training for use by state and local law enforcement officers to address

issues related to child safety when a caretaker parent or guardian is

arrested, as specified.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 833.2 is added to the Penal Code, to read:

833.2. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature to encourage law enforcement and county child welfare agencies to develop protocols in collaboration with other local entities, which may include local educational, judicial, correctional, and community-based organizations, when appropriate, regarding how to best cooperate in their response to the arrest of a caretaker parent or guardian of a minor child, to ensure the child's safety and well-being.

(b) The Legislature encourages the Department of Justice to apply to the federal government for a statewide training grant on behalf of California law enforcement agencies, with the purpose of enabling local jurisdictions to provide training for their law enforcement officers to assist them in developing protocols and adequately addressing issues related to

 (2) Authorizing additional telephone calls by arrestees so that they may arrange for the care of minor dependent children.

(3) Use of county child welfare services, as appropriate, and other similar service providers to assist in the placement of dependent children when the parent or guardian is unable or unwilling to arrange suitable care for the child or children.

(4) Identification of local government or nongovernmental agencies able to provide appropriate custodial services.

(5) Temporary supervision of minor children to ensure their safety and well-being.

(6) Sample procedures to assist state and local law enforcement agencies to develop ways to ensure the safety and well-being of children when the parent or guardian has been arrested.

(c) The commission shall use appropriate subject matter experts, including representatives of law enforcement and county child welfare agencies, in developing the guidelines and training required by this sect

child safety when a caretaker parent or guardian is arrested.

SEC. 2. Section 13517.7 is added to the Penal Code, to read:

13517.7. (a) The commission shall develop guidelines and training for use by state and local law enforcement officers to address issues related to child safety when a caretaker parent or guardian is arrested.

(b) The guidelines and training shall, at a minimum, address the following subjects:

(1) Procedures to ensure that officers and custodial employees inquire whether an arrestee has minor dependent children without appropriate supervision.

APPENDIX B

SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT PROTOCOL

CHILDREN OF ARRESTED PARENTS

12/26/06

Numerous studies have documented the negative effect of children witnessing violence and witnessing parental arrests. There have been a number of situations nationally and locally in which young children were left without adult care in the aftermath of parental arrests. The goal of responding officers and the Child Protective Service worker shall be to minimize the disruption to children by providing the most supportive environment possible after an arrest, to minimize unnecessary trauma to the children of arrestees, and to determine the best alternative care for the children. The purpose of this protocol is to determine the best methods of working with CPS and first responding officers.

Nothing in this protocol negates parental rights to choose appropriate placement for their children. Unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary (obvious drug use, weapons or other indicators of an unsafe environment) parental discretion shall be respected. CPS maintains the ultimate responsibility for determining placement in the event the parent does not designate placement. Responding officers shall assist CPS by adhering to the following procedures.

1.   When officers make an arrest, they shall inquire about the presence of children for whom the arrested adult has responsibility. If the arrest is made in a home environment, the officer should be aware of items which suggest the presence of children such as toys, clothing, formula, bunk bed, diapers, etc.

2.   Whenever it is safe to do so, make the arrest away from the children or at a time when the children are not present.

3.   Whenever it is safe to do so, allow the parent to assure his or her children that they will be provided care. If this is not safe or if the demeanor of the in-custody parent suggests this conversation would be non-productive, the officer at the scene should explain the reason for the arrest in age-appropriate language and offer reassurances to the children that both parent and children will be taken care of.

4. When an arrest or search warrant is planned, the ages and likely location of the children shall be considered when determining the time, place and logistics of the arrest. Whenever possible, notice should be provided to CPS if such information will not compromise the investigation. In ideal situations, CPS will provide on site support

5. If children are present, and the other parent is not available, officers shall attempt to locate an adult relative who is willing to take responsibility for the children. Preliminary criminal background checks of the relative shall be completed. Any history of sexual crimes, 290 registration status, or violence against children shall make the adult ineligible to assume custodial care. This does not apply, however, to the parent not in custody, unless there is a court order limiting contact with the children. In any event, this information shall be given to the CPS worker.

6. Officers shall include the names and contact information for any family members they have identified whether or not the children are placed with them. This information is crucial for CPS workers if future placement becomes necessary.

7. Child Protective Services shall be contacted prior to placing any child with an adult other than the non-arrested parent. Placement for the child shall be done only after consulting with CPS. CPS workers shall provide the officers with any child abuse history and authorize temporary placement. Officers shall call 558-2650, identify themselves and the nature of their

call and ask for an expedited response or call back from CPS. CPS workers have been advised to expedite these calls to officers and/or supervisors in the field.

8. If the children are currently in school, the responding officer shall contact the School Resource Officer (SRO) of that school. If an SRO is not available for that school, the officer shall advise the school principal or the principal's designee of the parent's arrest and his/her stated preference for placement.

9. Reporting officers shall include the names and contact information for the adults with whom a child is left. Officers shall also include the name of the CPS worker or school personnel contacted in their reports.

APPENDIX C

SAN JOSE-SANTA CLARA MATERIALS

JOINT POLICE – SOCIAL WORK CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESPONSE

PROTOCOL

APPENDIX 6 – SAN JOSE-SANTA CLARA MATERIALS

Attachment A

Memorandum

CITY OF
SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

TO: All Department Personnel

FROM: Robert L. Davis
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Joint Police – Social Worker Child
Abuse and Neglect Response Protocol

DATE: May 3, 2003

APPROVED:

DATE:

BACKGROUND

Since 2002 the San Jose Police Department and Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) have participated in two pilot projects that have demonstrated the value of social workers and police officers responding in a team approach to child abuse and neglect cases. The initial pilot project took place in District M, and was later expanded in a second phase to the Foothill Division. A new joint response program will be expanded to Citywide operations effective May 10, 2004. This new protocol will be in effect seven days per week, 24 hours per day. The program's new procedures will not change the Child Abuse Protocol for Santa Clara County Law Enforcement, but will expand upon a limited number of its existing provisions.

It is the goal of both agencies to place or maintain children in environments that are safe, offer permanency, and are the least restrictive, meaning the child still has access to schools, friends, and family members. The DFCS has moved in this direction over the last year by increasing community housing resources for dependent children. As a result, the daily census in the Children's Shelter has been reduced on average from 120 to 30 children. With the assistance of social workers responding to specified calls for service, officers will have additional access to housing alternatives outside of the Children's Shelter for children taken into protective custody. A secondary goal is that children in protective custody will be transported by social workers in unmarked vehicles when safe and practical.

ANALYSIS

The following protocol will primarily impact personnel from the Patrol and Communications Divisions, as well as the Bureau of Investigations. Adherence to the following procedures should be considered a Department priority.

1. At the time a call is received of an allegation that involves child abuse (physical or sexual) or child neglect, the Complaint Taker will incorporate the phrase "Joint Response" into the event details (for CADMine tracking purposes). Channel Dispatchers will create a "Call Back Command" and a "Bridge" Senior or Supervisor will notify the DFCS Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Center on Monday – Friday from 0800 –1600 at 529-0308, and request that the Joint Response Social Worker (JRSW) respond to the specified location. From 1600 to 0800 and weekends, the bridge should call the on-call DFCS supervisor at the cell phone number indicated in the Bridge "Call-Out Book" and/or CAD "scratchpad." Communications will provide available name, location, event details information. If the Complaint Taker or Dispatcher is unsure if a joint response is necessary, the District Sergeant and/or Family Violence Unit (X3700) should be consulted. If Communications knows the police

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response will be extensively delayed, this information should be conveyed to the CAN Center/DFCS Supervisor.

2. CAN Center personnel or the on-call DFCS supervisor will then notify the designated JRSW and in turn provide the JRSW's cell phone number to Communications. DFCS will also provide Communications with a monthly calendar of on-call JRSWs and Supervisors, and will update the list with "Bridge" supervisors (277-8995) as needed.

3. As the JRSW responds, CAN Center staff will conduct DFCS background checks on the involved parties, and the information will be conveyed to the JRSW upon their arrival.

4. The CAN Center or DFCS supervisor may also be called at any time for a phone consultation for non-custodial situations where advice is needed or the need for family intervention resources is deemed appropriate.

5. If an officer in the field encounters one of the following situations, the officer will request the Dispatcher to contact the CAN Center or DFCS supervisor for the immediate response of a JRSW:
   * Child abuse (physical or sexual),
   * Child neglect.
   * Any call for service or on-view event that may result in a protective-custody action.

6. The JRSW will respond to the scene within 30 minutes. If the response time is anticipated to be longer than 30 minutes, the DFCS will notify Police Communications supervisors at 277-8995, who will in-turn advise the District Sergeant, who will determine how to proceed.

7. If the response by the JRSW exceeds 30 minutes, and the assigned officer has completed the preliminary investigation, the officer may elect to transport the child to the Children's Shelter's Assessment Center, where the social worker can respond to assess the circumstances.

8. The CAN Center/DFCS supervisor can arrange to have a child-friendly Children's Shelter van transport the child or children to an agreed upon location if the following circumstances exist:
   * More than three children must be transported, or
   * The JRSW's ETA is extended, or
   * The JRSW is unavailable, and
   * A phone consultation with an on-call DFCS supervisor determines that protective custody is appropriate.

9. Officers will not permit the JRSW or Children's Shelter van driver – a Shelter Counselor – to enter a scene unless the circumstances are stable. If the state of the scene changes from stable to unstable while the JRSW/Counselor is enroute, Communications will, if practical, call the JRSW's/Counselor's cell phone to provide direction to stand-by until they are notified that the scene is safe to enter.

10. An officer waiting for the JRSW's or transport van Counselor's arrival, who feels officer safety or the child's safety could be jeopardized by remaining on scene, may elect to transport the child to a intermediary site such as a Community Policing Center, Child Interview Center, or Children's Shelter Assessment Center, pending the JRSW's response.

11. Upon arrival at the scene, the JRSW/transport van Counselor will call the "Bridge" Senior/Supervisor at 277-8995 to determine the safety/stability of the scene, officer's ETA, or any other update information. The Senior/Supervisor will record the JRSW's/transport van Counselor's arrival time into the event details.

12. If the JRSW arrives at a school or other safe/stable institutional setting before the officer, they may begin their preliminary investigation, but will refrain from conducting victim/suspect interviews prior to the officer's arrival - to ensure the integrity of a potential criminal investigation.

13. If officers are planning an operation where it is anticipated that children will be taken into protective custody, the CAN Center or DFCS Supervisor should be given advanced notice and a request made for a JRSW's presence.

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California State Library, California Research Bureau

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TO:	All Department Personnel	FROM:	William M. Lansdowne
SUBJECT:	Disposition of Minor Children of Severely Ill or Arrested Parent	DATE:	3/12/2003
Approved:		Date:	2003-017

BACKGROUND

Police Department members sometimes encounter field situations in which a custodial parent is unable to continue to care for his/her child due to the custodial parent's arrest or severe illness requiring emergency medical care. The Police Department recognizes that these situations involving minor children are stressful and disruptive for the children involved. To that end, officers should strive to handle these situations in a manner that respects the parent's judgment regarding arrangements for the child's care, thereby allowing the child to remain in a familiar environment with relatives and family friends, whom they know and trust. If the custodial parent is able either to make arrangements for the care of the child or to articulate what the arrangements should be, the officers at the scene should take reasonable steps to facilitate those arrangements. The goal of new policy is to create a simple process in which officers can take direction from the custodial parent to place the child in a suitable environment without the officer taking custody of the child. This memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

ANALYSIS

In cases where the following takes place, officers will adhere to guidelines (1) – (6).

* the custodial parent cannot continue to care for his/her child because that parent is being arrested, or
* the custodial parent is so severely ill as to require emergency medical care,
* and the officer does not know or reasonably suspect that the child has been the victim of child abuse or neglect perpetrated by the parent(s) or a legal guardian.

1. The officer shall ascertain the parent's preferences concerning arrangements for the care of the child. The officer may take reasonable steps to facilitate the custodial parent's decision to leave the child with a relative or family friend. Criminal record checks are not required on prospective caregivers, unless a criminal investigation involving the prospective caregiver arises. Criminal record searches on potential caregivers for non-criminal purposes in such circumstances may require submitting fingerprints to the State Department of Justice on the subjects of the records checks. In the event that the parent's expressed choice of care arrangements cannot be fulfilled for any of the reasons given in Paragraph 5, below, then the officer shall take reasonable steps to facilitate a secondary choice.

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PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT
DOCUMENTATION
(Must be attached to form 2 or 3)

I, (parent/legal guardian) _____, am the parent/legal guardian of the minor

(minor) _____, who is _____ years of age. I have arranged for

(minor) _____ to be cared for by

(family friend or relative) _____.

Signature: (parent/legal guardian) _____

Case Number: _____   Date: _____   Time: _____

Officer: _____   Badge: _____

204-18 (03/03)

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT
DOCUMENTATION
(Must be attached to form 2 or 3)

I, (parent/legal guardian) _____, am the parent/legal guardian of the minor

(minor) _____, who is _____ years of age. I have arranged for

(minor) _____ to be cared for by

(family friend or relative) _____.

Signature: (parent/legal guardian) _____

Case Number: _____   Date: _____   Time: _____

Officer: _____   Badge: _____

204-18 (03/03)

THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

JUVENILE COURT

STANDING ORDER

This order addresses the exchange of information between the District Attorney authorized to prosecute criminal or juvenile cases under state law (District Attorney), law enforcement officers who are actively participating in criminal or juvenile proceedings involving a minor (Law Enforcement), the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS), and the Juvenile Court.

The Court finds Santa Clara County is committed to increasing collaboration among courts, child protective services, law enforcement, and others in the community to devise better service delivery systems for families experiencing child maltreatment. This commitment is evidenced by programs like the Greenbook Project and the Family-to-Family Initiative.

The community and its institutions encourage joint responses to child maltreatment. Joint responses provide more meaningful help to families, including protection for all victims from physical and emotional harm; adequate social and economic support for families; and access to services that are respectful, culturally relevant, and responsive to the unique strengths and concerns of families. Simultaneously, the community must hold perpetrators

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1   responsible for abusive or neglectful behavior and provide a variety of legal interventions and

2   social services to stop child abuse and neglect.

3

4   Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 827 and California Rule of Court

5   1423, the District Attorney and Law Enforcement may inspect juvenile case files without

6   authorization from the Court.

7   The Court finds that the interests of children and victims appearing before the

8

9   Juvenile and Criminal Courts are best served by permitting the investigating agencies to share

10   relevant written information. Further, the Court finds that there is a public interest in

11   coordinating and expediting investigations and avoiding duplication of effort by the Courts

12   and by the investigative and supervisory agencies serving the child, Court or court-serving

13   agency. These interests constitute good cause for authorizing the investigating agencies to

14   share relevant written information. Therefore, The Court makes the following Order:

15

16   The District Attorney, Law Enforcement, and DFCS may provide relevant documents

17   to each other. These documents may include but are not limited to relevant portions of

18   investigation notes or reports, progress notes and summaries, and court reports pertinent to

19   the investigation of child abuse or neglect. This standing order does not extend to court-

20

21   ordered psychological evaluations, copies of which can be obtained only by a petition for

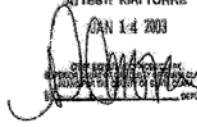22   disclosures under Welfare and Institutions Code section 827.

23   Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 827, the District Attorney shall be

24   given access to all records relating to a minor which are held by the County Clerk. The

25   District Attorney shall also have the right to secure copies of such records.

26

27   ///

28   ///

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Copies of written documents or records obtained pursuant to this Order shall not be disseminated by the receiving agencies except as proved by Welfare and Institutions Code section 827(a)(4) and California Rule of Court 1423.

DATED: 1/14/03

LEONARD P. EDWARDS
Supervising Judge
Juvenile Dependency Court

THE FOREGOING INSTRUMENT IS
A CORRECT COPY OF THE ORIGINAL
ON FILE IN THIS OFFICE
ATTEST: KIRI TORRE

JAN 14 2003

DEPUTY

LE/tz

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APPENDIX D

LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY

School of Science and Technology
Department of Social Work & Social Ecology
1898 Business Center Drive, San Bernardino, CA 92408

(909) 379-7570
FAX: (909) 379-7594
Email: sowk@llu.edu

Dear

You have been identified as someone who possesses expert knowledge about the working relationship between Child Welfare Social Work and Law Enforcement professionals. I am writing to you to invite you to participate in a research project which I am currently undertaking as a PhD student at Loma Linda University. As a participant in this research project, I am interested in interviewing you to learn about your views on the subject. Also, I am asking for your help in identifying and referring others who are experts on the subject as well. As participation in this research project is voluntary, it is imperative **that no employee or other persons referred be required to participate. It is also necessary that permission from potential participants be granted prior to submitting their names for this study.**

This study will involve an interview approximately 45-60 minutes in duration. The interview will take place at a time and place that is convenient for participants. Participants may decline to answer any of the interview questions at any time without any negative consequences by advising the researcher of the wish to do so. With participants' permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate collection of information, and will be transcribed for analysis. Within 10 working days after our first face-to-face interview, a second meeting may be necessary to add or clarify any points that participants wish. All information provided by participants is treated confidentially. This means that participants' names will not appear in any reports resulting from this study. Possible risks, although unlikely, are breaches in confidentiality. Please be assured that participants' privacy will be maintained in all publications or presentations resulting from this study. The information provided by participants will be analyzed and studied in a manner that protects their identity. This means that a code number will be used to identify participants and that their real names will not appear on any of the study materials. Participants' information, including demographic material, questionnaire/interview transcripts and audiotape will remain confidential and locked in a file cabinet in the researcher's office at Loma Linda University. Data will be entered in password protected computer and only members of the research team (Vi Lindsey, Dr. James and Dr. Leap) will have access to these data.

As an appreciation of participants' time and contribution to this project, a $25.00 gift card will be given at the conclusion of our first face-to-face interview.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to help you make a decision about participation, please contact me at (909) 379-7583, or by e-mail at vlindsey@llu.edu. You may also contact my research supervisors Dr Sigrid James at Loma Linda University, School of Science and Technology, Department of Social Work, Loma Linda California at (909) 379-7591, or Dr Jorja Leap at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), School of Public Affairs, Department of Social Welfare, Los Angeles, California (310) 206-6170.

To assure confidentiality and safety for all research participants, this research study is under review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) through the Office of Sponsored Research at Loma Linda University.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be of benefit to child welfare staff and law enforcement agencies, as well as to families and children involved with the child welfare system.

I look forward to speaking to you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this study.

Sincerely
Viola W. Lindsey, Project Researcher

Loma Linda University
Adventist Health Sciences Center
Institutional Review Board
Approved 4/10/09 Void After 4/9/2010
59057 Chair R L Rigsby MD

A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST HEALTH SCIENCES INSTITUTION

APPENDIX E

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL/EXTENSION

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Extension Requested - Approval Notice (Expedited)

IRB# 59057

OFFICE OF SPONSORED RESEARCH • 11188 Anderson Street • Loma Linda, CA 92350
(909) 558-4531 (voice) • (909) 558-0131 (fax)

To: **James, Sigrid**
Department: **Social Work**
Protocol: *Joint child abuse investigations: Engaging CPS and law enforcement to understand collaboration processes*

Your request to extend the protocol indicated above has been reviewed administratively.

Extension Request: **Approved**
Risk to research subjects: **Minimal**
Approval period begins **06-Apr-2010** and ends **05-Apr-2011**
Stipulations of approval are:

Consent Form
If this study was approved on the condition that a consent form is required AND subjects are still being enrolled, only the consent form bearing the IRB authorization stamp can be used. This will become your OFFICIAL consent form for the dates specified and should be used as the new master for making copies to give prospective subjects.

☐ Master consent form with up-dated authorized stamp is enclosed.

☑ Updated consent form not required. Approval limited to data analysis or follow-up of currently enrolled subjects only.

☐ Not applicable; IRB approved a waiver of informed consent, as noted above.

IRB Communications
Please continue to notify the IRB in writing of any modifications or adverse events relating to the approved research protocol. Your assistance in providing the PI's name and the protocol's IRB # on all communications with the IRB about this project will expedite necessary communications.

Thank you for your cooperation in LLU's shared responsibility for the ethical use of human subjects in research.

Signature of IRB Chair/Designee: _R I Rigsby_

Loma Linda University Adventist Health Sciences Center holds Federalwide Assurance (FWA) No. 6447 with the U.S. Office for Human Research Protections, and the IRB registration no. is IORG226. This Assurance applies to the following institutions: Loma Linda University, Loma Linda University Medical Center (including Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, LLU Community Medical Center), Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine, and affiliated medical practices groups.

IRB Chair:	IRB Administrator:	IRB Specialist:
Rhodes L. Rigsby, M.D.	Linda G. Halstead, M.A., Director	Mark Testerman
Department of Medicine	Office of Sponsored Research	Office of Sponsored Research
(909) 558-2341, rrigsby@llu.edu	Ext 43570, Fax 80131, lhalstead@llu.edu	Ext 43042, Fax 80131, mtesterman@llu.edu

APPENDIX F

INDIVIDUAL TELEPHONE SCRIPT

Telephone Script

- Hello, my name is Vi Lindsey with Loma Linda University's Department of Social Work, School of Science and Technology. May I speak to _____?

- I would like to tell you about a research study that I am doing as part of Doctoral Degree requirement and invite you to participate in this study.

- The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of how child welfare social workers (CPS) and law enforcement officers work together to investigate child abuse.

- I am calling you because you have been identified as someone who has knowledge about the working relationship between CPS and law enforcement.

- If you agree to participate, you will be asked to answer some questions about when and how these two agencies work together to investigate child abuse.

- The initial interview will take about 45 to 60 minutes of your time.

- You will not be paid for your participation in this study. However, as an appreciation of your time and contribution to this project, a $25.00 gift card will be given to you at the conclusion of the interview process.

- Would you like to participate in this study?

- Would it be convenient for me to schedule a date, time, and place for interviews for this study right now? (If not, set time for re-call.)

- Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW GUIDE – CHILD WELFARE

Interview Guide – Child Welfare

1. Describe how reports of suspected child abuse are referred to you.

2. Once you receive a report of suspected child abuse, take me through the steps of what happens.

3. Describe for me how you decide which child abuse allegations do not need to be investigated.

4. Describe what circumstances you and law enforcement join together to investigate child abuse.

5. How frequently do you go out with the same law enforcement officer? [Revised]

5. How often do you meet up with the same child welfare (CPS) social worker?

> [Probe: When you work with the same officer, what is that relationship like?]

> [Probe: When you work with a new officer, what is that relationship like?]

6. Describe how well you think law enforcement officers are prepared to do child abuse investigations?

> [Probe: What problems do you see in their performance or understanding?]

> [Probe: What strengths do you see in their performance or understanding?]

7. Both CPS and law enforcement talk about ensuring the well-being of children. What   does that mean to you?]

> [Probe: Describe for me how that meaning is the same or different for law enforcement]

8. Describe some of the challenges encountered when working with law enforcement.

9. Tell me what's positive about working jointly with law enforcement.

10. If you could provide some recommendations for enhancing or improving the working relationships between you and law enforcement, what would be some of your recommendations?

Added
11. Some researchers suggest that social workers who work in the same office or unit as police officers relinquish their roles as social workers and start to behave like police officers. How do you feel about social workers and law enforcement officers working in the same office or unit?
12. Is there anything else about conducting joint child abuse investigations with law enforcement that you would like to share with me? [Revised]

12. Is there anything else about conducting joint child abuse investigations with law enforcement that I didn't ask you, but should have asked you, that would have given me a better understanding of how the two agencies work together?

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW GUIDE – LAW ENFORCEMENT

Interview Guide – Law Enforcement

1. Describe how reports of suspected child abuse are referred to you.

2. Once you receive a report of suspected child abuse, take me through the steps of what happens.

3. Describe for me how you decide which child abuse allegations do not need to be investigated.

4. Describe what circumstances you and child welfare join together to investigate child abuse.

5. How frequently do you go out with the same child welfare social worker? [Revised]

5. How often do you meet up with the same child welfare (CPS) social worker?

　　　[Probe: When you work with the same social worker, what is that relationship like?]

　　　[Probe: When you work with a new social worker, what is that relationship like?]

6. Describe how well you think child welfare social workers are prepared to do child abuse investigations?

　　　[Probe: What problems do you see in their performance or understanding?]

　　　[Probe: What strengths do you see in their performance or understanding?]

7. Both law enforcement and CPS talk about ensuring the well-being of children. What does that mean to you?]

　　　[Probe: Describe for me how that meaning is the same or different for child welfare social workers]

8. Describe some of the challenges encountered when working with child welfare social workers.

9. Tell me what's positive about working jointly with child welfare social workers.

10. If you could provide some recommendations for enhancing or improving the working relationships between you and child welfare social workers, what would be some of your recommendations?

Added
11. Some researchers suggest that social workers who work in the same office or unit as police officers relinquish their roles as social workers and start to behave like police officers. How do you feel about social workers and law enforcement officers working in the same office or unit?
12. Is there anything else about conducting joint child abuse investigations with child welfare social workers that you would like to share with me? [Revised]

12. Is there anything else about conducting joint child abuse investigations with child welfare social workers that I didn't ask you, but should have asked you, that would have given me a better understanding of how the two agencies work together?

APPENDIX I

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

ℒOMA ℒINDA UNIVERSITY

School of Science and Technology
Department of Social Work & Social Ecology
1898 Business Center Drive, San Bernardino, CA 92408

(909) 379-7570
FAX: (909) 379-7594
Email: sowk@llu.edu

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

"Joint Child Abuse Investigations:
Engaging CPS and Law Enforcement to Understand Collaboration Processes"

Purpose and procedures
You are invited to participate in a research study because you have been identified as someone who possesses expert knowledge about the working relationship between Child Welfare Social Work and Law Enforcement professionals. I am interested in interviewing you to learn about your views on the subject. In addition, I would also like to ask your assistance in identifying and referring others who are experts on the subject as well.

The purpose of this study is to gain understanding of how child welfare social workers and law enforcement officers collaborate during child abuse investigations to meet their overlapping and competing goals. At issue is an understanding of how these two agencies balance the support for families that enable parents to effectively meet the needs of their children, while at the same time protecting children from further harm.

Participation in this study will take about 45-60 minutes, and involves filling out a demographic survey, and answering some open ended interview questions. The interview will be audio taped for the purpose of capturing all of your answers, and will be transcribed for analysis. Within 10 working days of our first face-to-face interview a second meeting may be necessary to add or clarify any points that you wish. Interviews will take place at a time and place that is convenient for you.

Risks
The committee at Loma Linda University that reviews human studies (Institutional Review Board) has determined that participating in this study exposes you to minimal risk. That risk is limited to possible, though unlikely, breaches in confidentiality. Several procedures have been put in place to minimize this risk and are discussed in the confidentiality section below.

Benefits
Although you will not benefit personally, we expect that results of this study will enhance the collaborative relationship between child welfare staff and law enforcement agencies, and will lead to more positive outcomes for families and children experiencing child abuse matters.

Participant Rights
Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions and/or stop at any time. You can choose to discontinue with the interview at anytime without any consequences or penalties to you, and your information will not be used in the study.

Initial _____   Date _____

Confidentiality
Your individual privacy will be maintained in all publications or presentations resulting from this study. The information you give will be analyzed and studied in a manner that protects your identity. This means that all information identifying you as a participant, or the names of anyone you may mention will be removed and will not appear on any of the study materials. Your information, including demographic material, questionnaire/interview transcripts and audiotape will remain confidential and locked in a file cabinet in the researcher's office at Loma Linda University. Data will be entered in a password protected computer and only members of the research team (Vi Lindsey, Dr. James and Dr. Leap) will have access to these data.

Compensation
As an appreciation of your time and contribution to this study, a $25.00 gift card from Jamba Juice, Juice-It-Up or Starbucks will be awarded to you at the conclusion of our first face-to-face interview.

Impartial Third Party Consent
If you wish to contact an impartial third party not associated with this study regarding any questions or complaints you may have about this study, you may contact the Office of Patient Relations, Loma Linda University Medical center, Loma Linda, California 92354, phone (909) 558-4647, or their e-mail address at patientrelations@llu.edu for information and assistance.

Informed Consent Statement
I have read the content of the consent form and have listened to the verbal explanation given by the investigator. My questions concerning this study have been answered to my satisfaction. I hereby give voluntary consent to participate in this study. Signing this consent document does not waive my rights nor does it release the investigator, institution or sponsors from their responsibilities. I may call Dr Sigrid James at (909)379-7591, e-mail address ssjames@llu.edu and/or Dr Leap at (310) 206-6170, e-mail address jleap@ucla.edu during routine office hours if I have additional questions or concerns.

I have been given a copy of this consent form.

Participant Signature   Date

I have reviewed the contents of this consent form with the person signed above. I have explained potential risks and benefits of this study

Investigator Signature   Date

Initial   Date

Loma Linda University
Adventist Health Sciences Center
Institutional Review Board
Approved **4/10/09** Void After **4/9/2010**
59057 Chair R. J. Giglione MD

NVIVO MATRIX CODING STRUCTURE TABLES AND FIGURES

PARENT NODE I: CHALLENGES IN COLLABORATING	
Children Nodes:	Coding by VWL
1. Clients bailing out and getting their kids back	1
2: Communication issues	3
3. CPS and law enforcement have different standards, different laws and statutes	12
4. CPS releases information to the suspect while the investigation is still in progress	5
5. Cross-jurisdictional issues	6
6. Different evidence requirement	4
7.Different investigative techniques, different styles	4
8. Different timelines: CPS must close case within 30 days, statutory timelines	14
9. Difficulty sharing information	1
10. Disclosing confidentiality of reporting party	3
11. Each entity looking at own issue; not thinking collaboratively	2
12. Handoff issues; disconnect between patrol, deputy, CPS	6
13. Inexperienced officers, rookie cops, job rotations. Have to tell new officers what to do	9
14.Law enforcement don't understand psychosocial dynamics	2
15.Lack of understanding what CPS does; lacks understanding of child abuse	16
16.No working protocol; don't understand each other's Roles	
17. personality differences; poor attitudes, some officers have a negative view of CPS	
18. Power and authority	
19. Removing versus keeping child	
20. Resolving differences	2
21. Response time; Wait time	6
22. Shift changes	5
23. Some officers don't know they are suppose to investigate when CPS calls	1
24.Too many changes in social workers, worker turnover	2
25. Undermine social worker	3
PARENT NODE II: Co-location	
Children Nodes:	Coding by VWL
26. A lot more integrated	1

27. Bad idea	1
28. Blurring of the roles	1
29. Builds trust	2
30. Facilitates collaboration, we get information faster,opportunity to educate new officers	1
Children Nodes/Co-location cont'd	Coding by VWL
31. Ideal to co-locate a social worker at every sheriff station	1
32. Important to select the right person	1
33. Make them…social workers more aggressive, that would be a benefit	1
34. No longer constant struggle to get information	1
35. Positive effect	1
36. Reservations about law enforcement co-located in CPS office	1
37. We work very closely together	1
38. Work with each other on a case-by-case basis whenever needed	1
PARENT NODE III: Complementary Roles	
Children Nodes	
39. Another set of eyes	1
40. Authority of the badge	1
41. Detective made a point to call me every time there was progress regarding the perpetrator	1
42. Explain to parents the law regarding spanking	1
43. Investigations go a lot smoother when we work well together	1
44. Provide safety	4
45. Resource interdependence; access to services for clients	1
46. Some are more interested in your input. Some are less interested. So there is really not a protocol	1
47. Strategize about how to handle the interview	1
48. They get information we can't get; share information	3
49. We have a job to do; they have a job to do; we try to work with them so we both get what we want	1
50. We have more successful investigations when we work well together	1
51. We work well together because I shut up and listen	1
52. We work well together when both CPS and detective are open	2
53. Well-being means keeping the child safe, even after an arrest; he could bail out the next day	1
54. When we do get to go out together we meet up; it reduces redundant interviews	1

PARENT NODE III: Engagement Practices	
Children Nodes:	Coded by VWL
55. Always go out with law enforcement especially when they call us	2
56. Detectives never go out with CPS	1
57. Don't go out on cases better handled by CPS	1
58. Going out without the other	8
Children Nodes/Engagement Practices cont'd	Coded by VWL
59. Inconsistent joining; inconsistent cross-reporting, should join on all cases with a criminal element; making arbitrary decisions whether to call CPS/law enforcement	16
60. Join together on warrants; exigent circumstances	3
61. We don't go out together; we meet up	
PARENT NODE IV: Investigative Approaches	
Children Nodes:	Coded by VWL
62. Evaluating out	9
63. Responding to every referral	10
64. Some officers only take reports from mandated reporters	2
PARENT NODE V: Law Enforcement Views of Social Workers	
Children Nodes:	Coded by VWL
65. Burnout	1
66. CPS doesn't understand what's criminal	3
67. CPS overzealous about making arrests	1
68. Lack of understanding of what law enforcement does, is trying to accomplish	4
69. lack patience	2
70. New social workers not prepared	3
71. No value in degrees; too much emphasis on college degrees vs. training; book learning	3
72. Road blocks	2
73. Social workers too passive	2
74. Social workers naïve; shortsighted	3
PARENT NODE VI: Need for Building Relationships	
Children Nodes:	Coded by VWL
75. Being able to go out with the same officer more	1
76. Co-location and specialized units	3
77. Different person handling the case	1
78. Different social worker on every call	1
79. Going out with different officers; infrequent contact with same officer	9
80. Styles, trust, professionalism	2
81.They are very nice because we are helping them	1

82. They don't like working with us	1
PARENT NODE VII: Social Workers Views of Law Enforcement	
Children Nodes:	Coded by VWL
83. Child abuse less interesting; low priority	4
84. Detectives better prepared	2
85. Held in higher esteem; can be empowering for kids	1
86. Impatient	7
87. Intimidating presence	1
88. Lacks sensitivity and tactfulness	4
Children Nodes/Social Workers Views of Law Enforcement cont'd	Coded by VWL
89. Law enforcement does not understand court processes; procedures	2
90. Law enforcement have tunnel vision; only see what's in front of them	4
91. Predisposed to expecting violence	1
92. Punitive; more interested in putting the person in jail	7
93. Some helpful; some jerks; some escalate the problem	4
94. Some of them think of me as a bleeding heart social worker	1
95. Unaware of impact of trauma on children	2

Figure 4

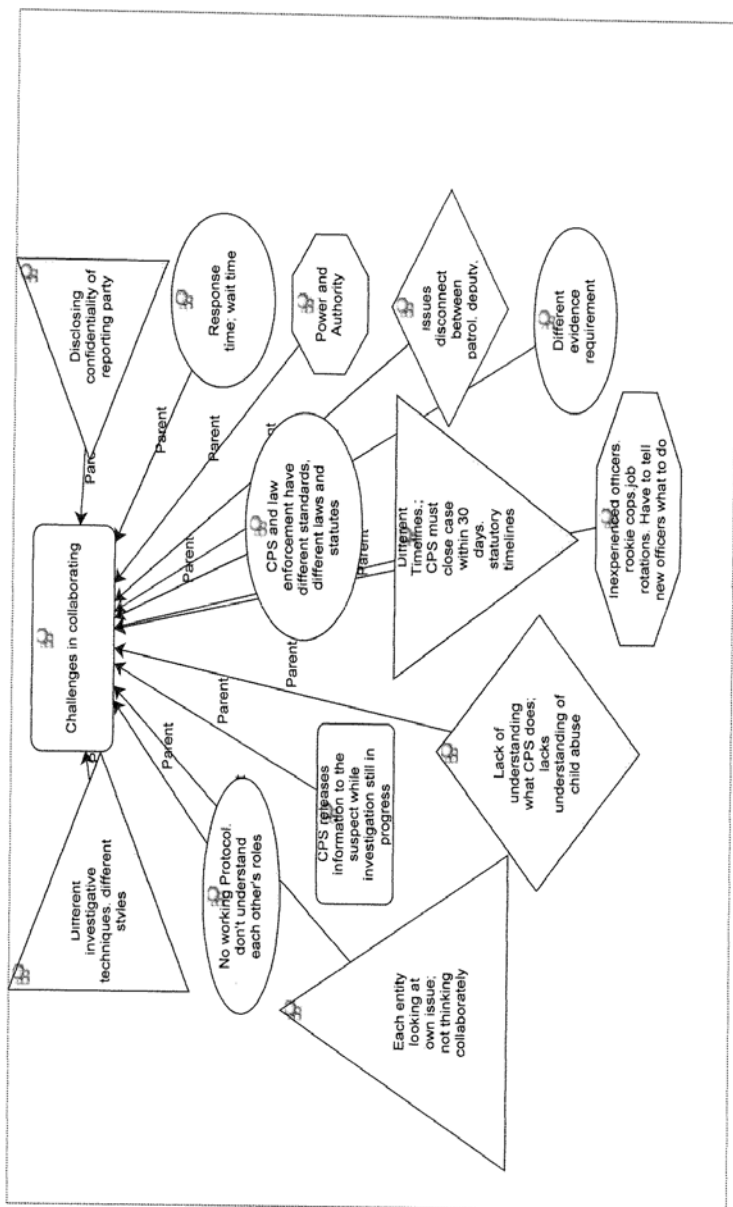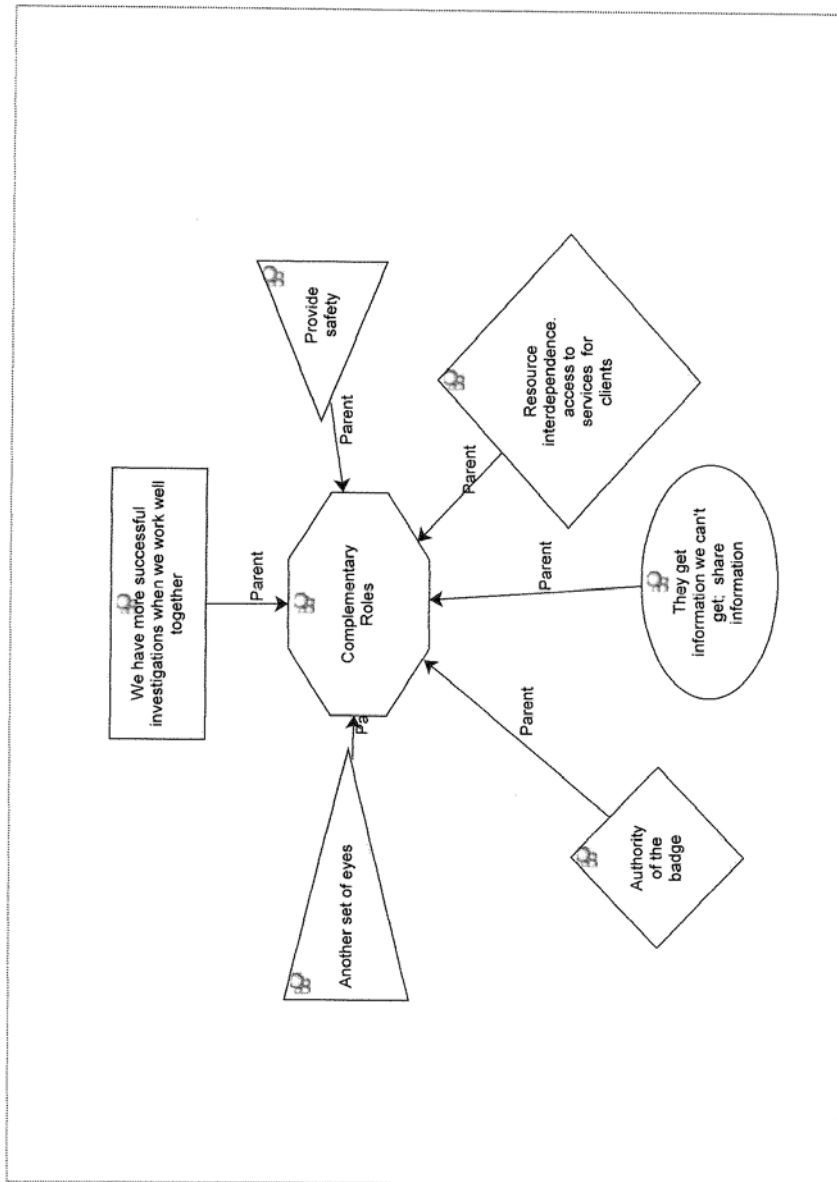## NVivo Sample Relationship Model

Figure 4. NVivo sample relationship model

Figure 5

NVivo Sample Relationship Model

Figure 4. NVivo sample relationship model.