



Practice Points

MANDATORY REFERRAL TO THE FIRST STEPS PROGRAM FOR ALL CA/N VICTIMS UNDER 3 YEARS

The purpose of this Practice Point is to remind staff of the requirement to make a referral to the First Steps program for any child under the age of three (3) years who has been determined abused or neglected by a preponderance of evidence in a child abuse/neglect investigation. This requirement is pursuant to the federal mandate **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)** (42 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.), and is a collaborative effort to facilitate early intervention services for children in need.

Referrals to First Steps can be made by submitting a paper referral via mail, fax, email, or online. First Steps contact information is online at: [Regional Map](#).

For Paper Referrals: The First Steps referral form is online at: [Paper Referral Form](#). Staff must indicate CAPTA under “Reason for Referral.” Submitting a paper referral is helpful when attaching supporting documentation to expedite the First Steps intake and eligibility process. The CD-21c cover letter must be included and can be accessed on E-Forms.

For Electronic Referrals: The First Steps referral page is at: [Online Referral Page](#). Staff must complete the following steps:

- Select **Refer a Child**.
- On the screen select **Social Service Agency/Children’s Division**. (see graphic below)

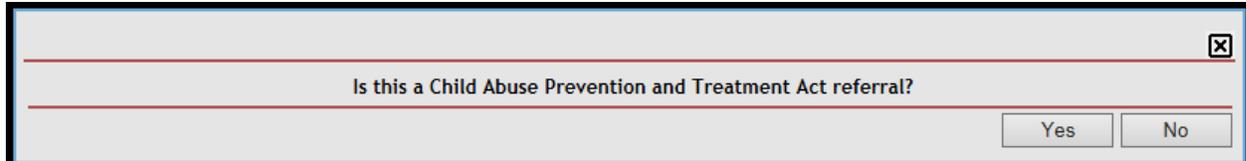
Refer A Child

Who is making this referral?

<p>Parent/Guardian</p>  <p>* Parent * Foster Parent</p>	<p>Social Services</p>  <p>* Social Service Agency/Children's Division * Dept. of Mental Health-DMH * Dept. of Hlth & Senior Serv-DHSS * Homeless Family Shelters * Domestic Violence Shelters/Agencies</p>	<p>Medical</p>  <p>* Neonatal Intensive Care Unit * Hospital (other than NICU) * Physician * Other Health Care Provider * Public Health Facilities</p>	<p>Education/Early Childhood</p>  <p>* Head Start/Early Head Start * Parents as Teachers * Other LEA Program * Child Care Program * Mo. School for the Blind-MSB * Mo. School for the Deaf-MSD</p>
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For Assistance Call 1-866-583-2392

- On the pop-up window asking if this is a CAPTA referral, select **Yes**.



Is this a Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act referral?

Yes No

- Complete the **Child** section with requested identifying information. All fields denoted with a red asterisk must be completed.
 - Complete the **Parent/Primary Contact** section using information for the person with whom the child is residing (i.e., foster parent, parent/guardian). Select this individual's relationship to the child in the **Relationship** field.
 - The **Alternate Contact** section is optional, but may be used to identify CD staff or another individual who could assist First Steps in locating the Primary Contact, if needed.
 - The **Referral** section is completed using contact information for the staff making the referral (i.e., Children's' Division worker)
- The **Reason for Referral** section should indicate this is a CAPTA referral and any known concerns with the child's development.
- Press **Save**. A green message bar will appear at the top of the screen indicating the referral has been successfully saved and received by First Steps.

First Steps staff will review the paper or electronic referral and notify the primary contact to initiate the intake and evaluation process.

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