



# Practice Points

## Child Abuse/Neglect Present, Perpetrator Unidentified Conclusions

This practice point is to clarify how conclusion summaries should be written when concluding an Investigation as ‘Child Abuse/Neglect Present, Perpetrator Unidentified’.

The template for this conclusion type can be found in [Section 2, Chapter 5.3.8.4](#) of the Child Welfare Manual. It varies slightly from the Preponderance of Evidence conclusion templates:

### *Abuse*

“The Investigation has been completed under Sections 210.108-210.183 RSMo. and the Division has determined that (Alleged Victim Child) was the victim of (physical abuse, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse) **but was unable to determine the identity of the alleged perpetrator.**”

This determination of (physical abuse, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse) by an unidentified perpetrator was made after weighing all of the evidence and based upon the following:

1. (Alleged Victim Child) was under the age of 18 at the time of the incident in that...;
2. **The Children’s Division could not determine who was responsible for care, custody and control of the alleged victim child at the time of the incident because...;**
3. There was (physical, sexual, or emotional) abuse to (Alleged Victim Child) in that...;
4. The (physical, sexual, or emotional) abuse was caused other than by accidental means in that...;
5. The (physical, sexual, or emotional) abuse was not the result of spanking or other forms of discipline administered in a reasonable manner in that...”

### *Neglect*

“The Investigation has been completed under Sections 210.108-210.183 RSMo. and the Division has determined that (Alleged Victim Child) was the victim of neglect **but was unable to determine the identity of the alleged perpetrator.**”

This determination of neglect by an unidentified perpetrator was made after weighing all of the evidence and based upon the following:

1. (Alleged Victim Child) was under the age of 18 at the time of the incident in that...;

2. **The Children’s Division could not determine who was responsible for care, custody and control of the alleged victim child at the time of the incident because...;**
3. There was a failure to provide the proper or necessary support, education as required by law, nutrition or medical, surgical, or any other care necessary for the child’s well-being in that....”

In the second element of the conclusion, staff should summarize why the investigator was unable to determine the identity of the perpetrator.

Example: The Children’s Division could not determine who was responsible for care, custody and control of the alleged victim child at the time of the incident because all individuals who had care, custody, and control of the victim at the time of the incident were interviewed and denied causing the physical injury to the child. The child’s natural parents were interviewed, as well as the mother’s live-in boyfriend. The Division was able to determine, based on the timeline given, that the child was being cared for by both her mother and her mother’s boyfriend at the time of the incident. Further, the victim was too young to give a statement in regards to how she obtained her injuries and there were no other witnesses.

A FACES change has been made to the CA/N Disposition Form Letter (CS-21) to reflect the correct template for this conclusion.

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