

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I make a referral to the agency?

Referrals may be made to the agency by calling (570) 374-4570 during normal working hours (8:00am - 4:00pm, Monday through Friday). During hours the agency is closed, emergency referrals may be made by contacting Emergency Services at (570) 372-0826. Referrals may also be made 24-hours a day to Childline, the Pennsylvania Child Abuse Registry, by calling 1-800-932-0313.

If I make a referral to the agency, will my name be kept confidential?

Yes, referral sources are guaranteed confidentiality regardless of whether or not they request it. However, when cases of severe physical abuse and/or sexual abuse are reported by the agency to law enforcement, the law requires that the referral source be identified in the law enforcement report. Law enforcement officers are expected to treat the referral source identity in the same manner they treat confidential informants.

How old do my children have to be before they can be left without supervision?

There is no age noted in law that identifies this. Parents and other caregivers must determine when their child is mature enough to stay home alone. Children under the age of 10 certainly need adult supervision.

What is the legal age to be a babysitter?

Again, the law establishes no age. However, factors to consider when determining if a child is appropriate to babysit include the child's level of maturity, number and ages of children, special behavior problems, length of time, and accessibility of a responsible adult.

How can I get custody of my grandchildren?

All custody matters are handled by Family Court. For more information, contact an attorney.

When is physical discipline child abuse?

When physical discipline results in a serious physical injury, which causes a child severe pain or significantly impairs a child's physical functioning, either temporarily or permanently, it is considered child abuse.

SNYDER COUNTY CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVICES

SCCYS is the county's public agency mandated by state and federal law to protect children from abuse and neglect. We provide a wide range of protective and supportive services – through a network of contracted agencies – to children and families in Snyder County. We are an agency committed to providing the highest quality of service to the victims of child abuse/neglect and their families. Above and beyond that commitment is our belief that “prevention efforts” will create the strongest foundation for the future well-being of our children, families, and community. To that end, we continue to embrace and support numerous community efforts to assist children and families.

SNYDER COUNTY CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVICES



**Suite 15, 713 Bridge Street
Selinsgrove, PA 17870**

**OFFICE HOURS:
8:00am – 4:00pm
Monday through Friday**

**(570) 374-4570 phone
(570) 374-4351 fax**

<http://www.snydercounty.org/sccy>

**911
in county emergency**

**(570) 372-0826
out of county emergency**

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS)

Allegations of child abuse and neglect are investigated by an agency caseworker. All investigations are handled within the guidelines of Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law and in a timely and professional manner with regard to the best interests of the child and the family. Investigations should be completed within 30 days, but may be extended to 60 days in certain circumstances. The Agency is required to refer some abuse reports to local law enforcement for criminal investigation. In such cases, the Agency and law enforcement will coordinate their investigations and share information.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

PHYSICAL ABUSE: Any recent act or failure to act, which causes non-accidental serious physical injury to a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: An act or failure to act, which causes non-accidental serious mental injury to a child.

SEXUAL ABUSE or EXPLOITATION: An act or failure to, which causes sexual abuse or exploitation of a child.

SERIOUS PHYSICAL NEGLECT: Prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide the essentials of life, which endangers a child's life/development or impairs a child's functioning.

IMMINENT RISK: Any recent act, failure to act, or series of such acts or failures to act, which creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury to or sexual abuse or exploitation of a child.



INTAKE & REFERRAL SERVICES

Casework staff are always available to take reports and provide information & referral services. Caseworkers conduct assessments of general concerns or requests for services. In addition to reports of suspected child abuse and neglect, other concerns for children and their families may include the following:

- Inadequate supervision
- Inappropriate punishment
- Poor home conditions, which pose health and/or safety hazards to the child
- Parent/child conflict
- Inadequate medical care
- Drug/alcohol abuse of the child's parent/caregiver, which poses a direct threat of harm to the child

Requests for supports services may also be made to the Agency in cases where the family is in need of assistance in resolving issues, establishing supports, and arranging services.

Such cases may include the following:

- First-time parents
- Families of special needs children
- Parents who are having difficulty providing for their children's basic needs
- Families who are interested in getting involved in counseling, parenting, or other services
- Alternative caregivers
- Parents of children with issues relating to mental health, substance abuse, behaviors, etc.

GENERAL PROTECTIVE SERVICES (GPS)

Casework and support staff provide ongoing, in-home services to families for whom an area of abuse, neglect, or other child welfare issue has been identified. Caseworker staff are responsible for providing ongoing supervision and support to children remaining in their own homes or in the homes of family members or friends. When necessary to assure child safety, Court involvement mandates services or results in placement of children outside the home.



PLACEMENT SERVICES

Foster care is a service designed to provide a substitute family life experience for a child in an agency approved household, who needs care for a temporary or extended period of time. The primary goal of foster care is to reunite families. If a child cannot be returned to the birth parents, permanency options among existing relatives and friends are explored.

Other placement arrangements, including therapeutic foster care and residential care, are also available, but must be warranted.

ADOPTION

SCCYS provides adoption services for families who currently provide foster care to the Agency's foster children and who are adopting children from the Agency. SCCYS does not have a separate adoption unit. The Agency is not able to conduct adoption home studies for private adoptions. It is suggested that persons seeking private adoptions utilize private adoption agencies that serve Snyder County. Families may also contact the Statewide Adoption Network at 1-800-585-SWAN for more information.

INDEPENDENT LIVING & AFTERCARE SERVICES

SCCYS' Independent Living program serves youth ages 16 -21, who are or have been in the custody of SCCYS or Snyder County Juvenile Probation at their 16th birthday. The mission of the Independent Living program is to assist youth in developing the various skills, tools, resources, and personal enrichment to help them achieve independent living within the community.