

Common Questions

Do I have to call you?

By law, CPS has to make contact with you and your children by _____. I would like it to be a time that is convenient for you. Please call me at _____.

What happens if I don't call?

I have to meet with you and your children. If you do not call me back, I will have to see your children at school or daycare, or contact others to find a better way to reach you.

What happens if I don't want to participate in Alternative Response?

If you prefer, you can ask CPS to conduct a traditional investigation rather than Alternative Response. CPS is required to assess child safety in both options.

What happens if I don't want the services the CPS worker is suggesting?

You are only required to engage in services related to active safety threat(s). We encourage you to talk to your CPS worker about your needs. With Alternative Response, DCBS is striving to find community resources to meet your needs.

How long will I be involved if I say "yes" to Alternative Response?

You will be involved with CPS for a relatively short period of time. Your CPS worker will work with you for up to 45 working days, and can request two, 30-day extensions to meet your needs. If you need ongoing services beyond 90 days, your case will be switched to an investigation.

Benefits and Resources

How might this help me and my family?

Through this new way of working, DCBS is trying to provide effective services and resources your family actually needs to help you. We know children who can reside safely with their parents and extended family do better. Through Alternative Response, we want to help you move forward with your life, without CPS involvement.

Are there community resources I might be able to access?

Kentucky 2-1-1 is your easy-to-remember access number for this information and referral service provided by United Way. Get help paying bills, finding food, and locating other resources near you. Call 211 now for confidential help from a caring expert. Also online at <https://kynect.ky.gov/resources>

Individuals with child welfare lived experience—particularly from KY SEAT, the statewide parent advisory council, and the Department for Community Based Services' Trusted Advisor Council—helped develop this brochure.

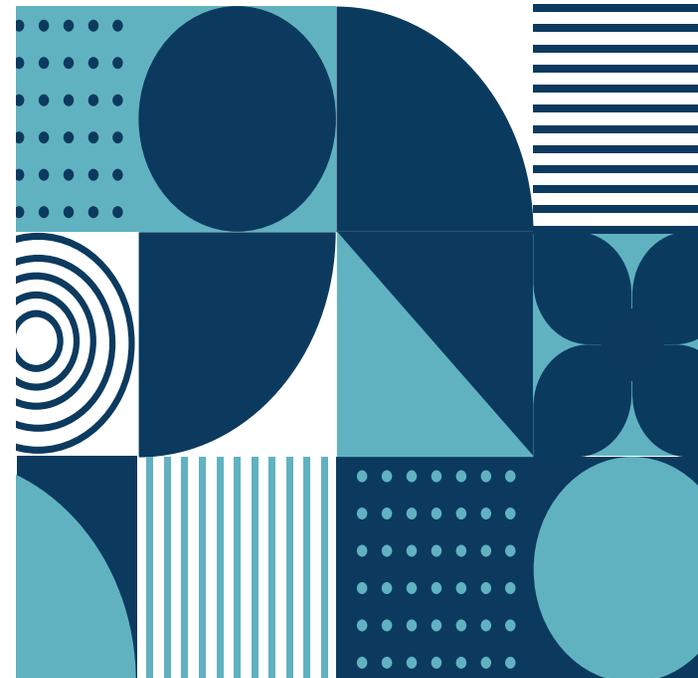
TEAM KENTUCKY.
CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE

AN INTRODUCTION

Child Protective Services (CPS) received a child abuse and neglect report about a child in your household. We know that being contacted by CPS can feel scary or make you worried.

We want to talk to you about how we can meet your family's needs. We're not here to investigate. You initially qualify for a different program called **Alternative Response.**



Please do not throw away! Your response is required.

What Is Alternative Response?

Many years ago, CPS was designed to respond to reports of **serious** physical abuse of children. Today, most children are reported to CPS for reasons of neglect or not having their basic needs met. What we know now is some families need support or resources to be able to fully provide for their children. Alternative Response is a way to meet these needs and keep children and families safe.

To qualify for Alternative Response, the report contained a concern of child abuse or neglect that did not require an urgent response. Our hope is to partner with you to focus on your family's strengths and work together to connect you to resources. CPS wants to support children and families staying together, in their own homes, without child welfare system involvement if possible.

“ With my Alternative Response worker, I felt comfortable to ask for help and support. ”

— Kentucky parent

Comparing Alternative Response and Investigation

This table explains what you should expect to happen if you participate in Alternative Response or an Investigation.

	Alternative Response	Investigation
Initial risk level	DCBS has initially assessed the situation to require a less urgent response.	DCBS has initially assessed the situation to require an urgent response.
First meeting with CPS	Your CPS worker will set a time to meet with you and your child(ren) together.	Your CPS worker will show up unannounced at your home and/or at your children's school.
Talking to your child(ren)	Your CPS worker will likely meet you, your child(ren) and other members of your household at the same time. On occasion, the worker may ask to meet with your child without you.	Your CPS worker will likely talk to your child(ren) without you, many times at school.
Talking to others	With your permission, your CPS worker may contact individuals who may support you.	Your CPS caseworker will talk with whomever made the report, your neighbors, other family members, school personnel and others as needed to assess child safety and determine if abuse or neglect occurred.
Child Abuse Registry	Alternative response cases are not part of the child abuse registry.	The CPS agency will determine whether abuse or neglect happened, and that decision will be recorded in the child abuse registry.
Plan	You and your CPS worker will only develop a safety plan if there is an active safety threat in your home.	You and your CPS worker may develop a prevention plan to address future risk and/or a safety plan to address current safety threats.
Court	DCBS will not initiate court action.	You may get involved with court, if a safety threat can't be addressed without a court order or temporary placement of your child.
Service completion	You and your caseworker will have a conversation about your needs to identify resources that may help you. Unless there is an active safety threat, you can decline services and your case will be closed.	You may be required to complete services or your case may transfer to ongoing services to complete services.