

**SUBJECT OF EMAIL: Protecting Pennsylvania's Children - A Call to Action for Medical Professionals from the Medical Director of the Office of Children, Youth and Families**

Dear Colleagues,

The child maltreatment statistics in Pennsylvania are alarming. In 2023, there were

- Over 40,000 reports of suspected abuse made to Childline
- Nearly 200 children who died or nearly died due to child abuse or neglect

Medical professionals were key mandated reporters in many cases.

These numbers aren't just statistics; they represent children whose lives may depend on you.

A few months ago, I started as the new Medical Director for Pennsylvania's Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF). This letter marks the beginning of a crucial dialogue between OCYF and you, the medical professionals at the forefront of child protection.

**My Mission**

With over 25 years of experience as a child abuse pediatrician at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh and a clinical researcher, I aim to:

1. Improve identification, evaluation, and the quality of reporting of suspected maltreatment
2. Enhance collaboration between medical professionals and Child Protective Services (CPS) system
3. Ensure CPS has the medical expertise needed for critical decision-making
4. Address racial disproportionality in the CPS system

**What to Expect**

I plan to communicate regularly with you to:

- Provide insights into Pennsylvania's CPS system from a physician's perspective
- Answer your questions about CPS system processes and responsibilities
- Update you on legal and regulatory changes which may affect you

**Let's Connect**

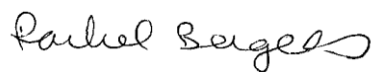
I invite you to share your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions:

- Email: [c-raberger@pa.gov](mailto:c-raberger@pa.gov)
- Phone: 717-703-6657

Your input will determine future topics for this newsletter, shape our priorities, and improve our child protection strategies.

Thank you for your dedication to the health and safety of Pennsylvania's children. I look forward to working alongside you in this critical mission. Together, we can create a safer Pennsylvania for our children.

Sincerely,



Rachel Berger MD, MPH  
Medical Director Office of Children, Youth and Families Commonwealth of Pennsylvania