

## What types of services does the DR-PSSF program provide for families?

The family determines what type of services they need. The SSF worker will provide the family with all identified services, information about community resources and also support and advocacy.



## What does a Strengths-Based, Family-Centered Approach mean?

DR focuses on partnering with families to provide necessary services that meet their identified needs. The SSF worker listens to the family, and works with them to identify their strengths and needs and also their goals and aspirations for the future.

This program believes that families can resolve issues more successfully when they are engaged in services and solutions voluntarily.

## Are families required to participate in the DR-PSSF program?

Each families' participation in the DR-PSSF program is completely voluntary. A family can terminate their participation at any time.



For additional information,  
families should feel free  
to contact their  
Differential Response  
Strengthening and Supporting  
Families Worker.

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## Differential Response: *Pathways to Strengthening and Supporting Families*



## Important Questions Families Frequently Ask



### What is Differential Response?

Differential Response (DR) is alternative way of responding to reports of child neglect. Through the Differential Response: Pathways to Strengthening and Supporting Families (DR-PSSF) track, families are serviced with a strength-based, family centered approach. This approach is designed to engage families in services needed to strengthen and support each family to prevent future involvement with the child welfare system. The DR approach is not the same as the traditional investigation approach used by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). There will be no investigation and no finding entered into the State Central Register system.

### How was my family chosen for this program?

You were randomly selected to participate in this program after a hotline call was made to DCFS regarding concerns within your family.

### Why are there two workers at the family assessment visit?

A DR Specialist (from DCFS) will assess the safety of all children in the home, and the SSF worker (from a private agency) will assist your family with those needs and services you identify if you decide to participate in the program.

### What happens if at the initial visit it is determined that my child may not be safe?

The case will be immediately transferred to the investigation track.

### What happens if the situation is determined safe but I refuse to participate?

The case will be closed and no further action will be taken.

### How long will the SSF worker assist my family?

On average, the SSF worker will work with families for up to three (3) months.

### What if my family needs more than the usual (3) three months of assistance?

Additional time is allowed if requested by the family.

### How many times can my family participate in the DR-PSSF program?

A family can only participate in the DR-PSSF program one time.

### What if another report is accepted by the DCFS hotline while I am participating in the DR-PSSF program?

The DR case will be closed. An investigation will have to be conducted on the new report.



### Can I find out who made the report?

DCFS must operate according to federal and state laws, therefore, the name of the reporter cannot be released.

### How much will it cost my family to participate?

It's FREE! There is no charge for this voluntary service which is offered to strengthen and support families.

### What is a family assessment visit?

It is the initial visit conducted by DR staff after a hotline call is accepted. Two workers - the DR Specialist and the Strengthening & Supporting Families worker (SSF) - will visit your home to assess the safety of your children and ask you if you would like to participate in the DR-PSSF program.

### Can I think about the program and contact the workers later if I am interested?

A decision regarding your participation must be made by the end of the initial visit. If you are not willing to participate or no decision is made at that time, your case will be closed if no child safety concerns exist.

### Why am I asked to sign a Family Assessment Consent form?

It verifies that you understand the DR-PSSF program and would like to participate.

### How many times will the SSF worker make visits to my home?

The frequency of the visits will be determined by the family.

### Is it possible to refer a family that I feel could benefit to the DR-PSSF Program?

This is not possible because all families are randomly selected when a hotline call is made and accepted.

### What are the main benefits of the DR-PSSF program?

Our aim is to work together with families to identify their strengths and needs, and to assist in finding resources, education, and support. It is our hope that these efforts will strengthen families so they will have no future involvement with the child welfare system.