

# Montana State Legislature

**Exhibit Number:** 1

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**CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES  
DIVISION**

**Program 03**

**January 31, 2005**

EXHIBIT 1  
DATE Mon Jan 31 2005  
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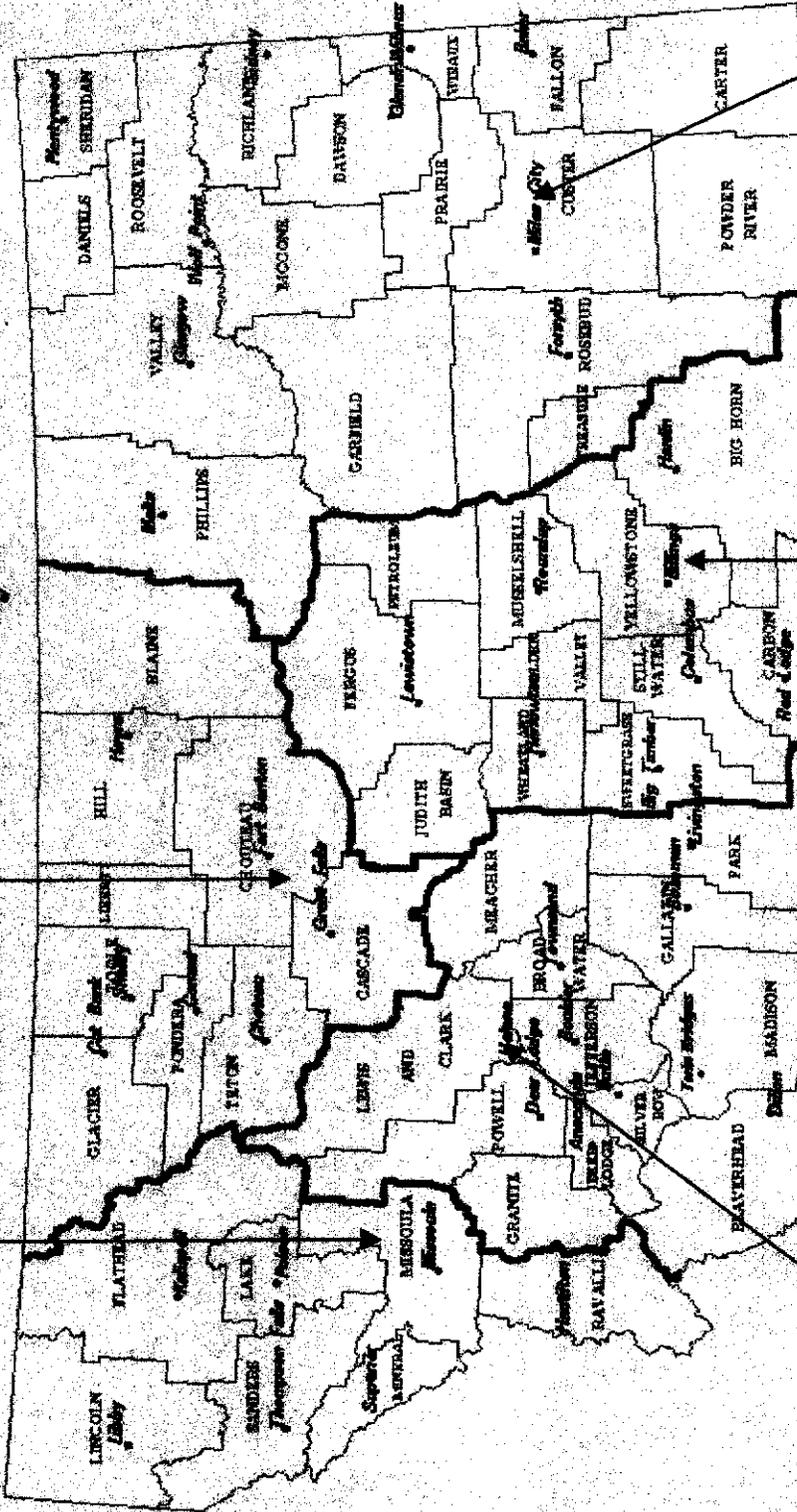
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# Child Protective Services Continuum

Report → Investigation → Determination of child's safety



No further involvement with the family

Referral to community resources (no subsequent social worker involvement)

In-home services when child can safely remain in home (reasonable efforts to prevent placement)

Out-of-home placement (child cannot safely remain in home)

If child placed in out-of-home care → Reasonable efforts to reunite family are required

If reunification is not possible → Reasonable efforts to place the child in a permanent placement are required

Permanency Options → Adoption

(other than reunification)

Guardianship

Placement with a fit and willing relative

Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

# **Child Protection: A System of Checks and Balances**

- **Informal elements:**
  - Investigation (Internal): Substantiation Review Panel
  - General Internal: Supervisory Reviews  
Unit Staffings  
Permanency Team Meetings
  - External: Child Protection Teams  
Family Group Decision-making Meetings  
Parents and Foster Parents
  
- **Formal elements:**
  - Investigation/Substantiation: Fair Hearing Process
  - Foster Care Oversight: County Attorney  
District Court  
Parent(s)' Counsel  
Guardians ad Litem (GAL)

## **Foster Care "Myths"**

- **Social workers have huge power but no oversight.**
- **With reductions in school enrollment, foster care caseloads should go down.**
- **The Division intrudes in families when it shouldn't.**
- **The Division doesn't intrude in families when it should.**
- **The Division should provide services to all children in need, not just those who are at risk of or being abused, neglected, or abandoned.**
- **The Division or social worker receives a "bounty" for every finalized adoption.**