



Understanding Major Unusual Incidents

March 29, 2022

The Reality

- 1 in 3 children with an identified disability (for which they receive special education services) are victims of some type of abuse or neglect whereas 1 in 10 non-disabled children experience abuse.
- Children with any type of disability are 3.44 times more likely to be a victim of some type of abuse compared to children without disabilities. (Sullivan & Knutson, 2000).
- One study found that children with intellectual disabilities were at twice the risk of physical and sexual abuse compared to children without disabilities (Crosse et. al., 1993).

The Reality

- The United States Department of Justice reports that as many as one out of three girls and one out of five boys, will be sexually abused by the time they're 18; this rate is even higher among children with disabilities.
- Individuals with intellectual disabilities are 4 to 10 more times as likely to be victims of crime than others without disabilities (Sobsey, et al., 1995).

The Reality

Compared to the general population, people with developmental disabilities are at greatest risk of abuse

- Tend to be abused more frequently.
- Are abused for longer periods of time.
- Are less likely to access the justice system.
- Are more likely to be abused by a caregiver or someone they know; many are repeatedly abused by the same person.
- Are more likely to remain in abusive situations.

A close-up photograph of a pair of hands, palms up, holding a small, rectangular piece of torn, off-white paper. The paper has a rough, deckled edge and the words "THANK YOU" are printed on it in a bold, dark brown, sans-serif font. The hands are light-skinned and the background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

THANK YOU

The work you do is so important

It's More Than a Critical Incident
Report System...It's a
Health and Welfare Quality
Improvement Process

Ohio's Developmental Disabilities System

- Serve approximately 97,000 individuals in a variety of settings
- About 70% of those supported live with a family member
- Services range from employment services, Service and Support Administration supports, residential services, transportation and much more.

Ohio's Support System

Providers

- Take immediate actions to protect individuals from further harm when incidents occur in their setting.
- Report possible incidents to the County Board of DD
- Notify the police immediately when there is an alleged crime.
- Notify CSB for children underage of 21
- Report all other MUIs within 24-hours of awareness.
- Implement preventive measures to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring.
- Other duties such as analysis, unusual incident logs, training

Ohio's Support System

County Boards

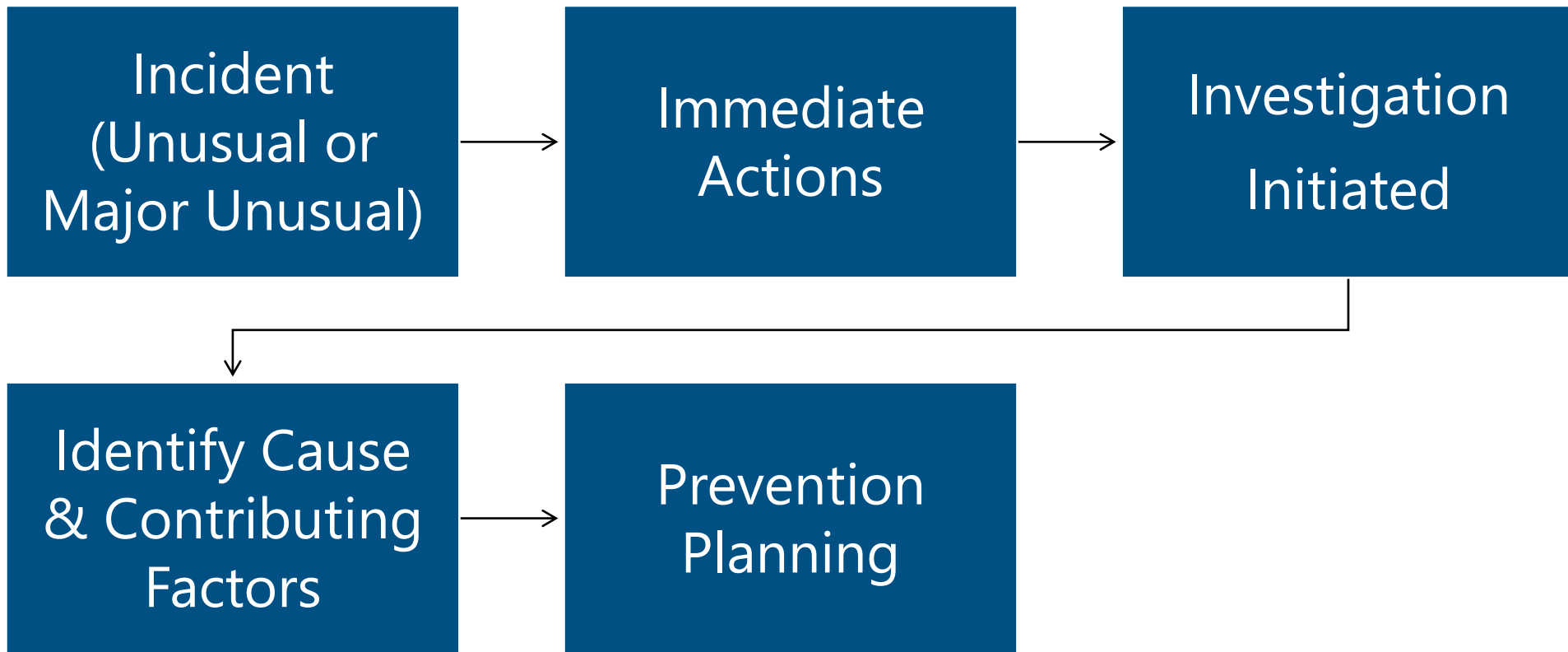
- Provides a 24 hour on-call system
- Investigative Agents (IA) conduct MUI investigations
- Coordinate with local law enforcement, CSB and other agencies
- Ensure notifications made
- Provide training and technical consultation to providers
- Review providers unusual incident log
- Conduct County-wide Analysis
- Hold annual Stakeholders

Ohio's Support System

DODD's Oversight:

- Incident Tracking System (ITS)
- Intake
- Regional Managers
- Investigators
- Abuser Registry
- Providing Ongoing Statewide MUI Trainings
- Abuser Registry Committee Meetings
- Centralized Complaint Hotline
- Issuing Health and Safety Alerts
- Providing Information Notices to Stakeholders
- Conducting Statewide Mortality Review Meetings
- Steering Statewide Patterns and Trends Meeting
- Responding to public record requests
- Attending Stakeholder Meetings on request

Ohio's Health and Welfare System



What is a MUI?

- MUI means the alleged, suspected, or actual occurrence of an incident when there is reason to believe the incident has occurred.
- There are 19 categories.
- These are administrative investigations.

MUIs involving children

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Accidental Deaths (choking, drowning, suffocation)
- Non-Accidental Deaths



Who conducts MUI investigations?

O.R.C. § 5126.221. Investigative agents (IA)

- Each county board of developmental disabilities is required to employ at least one investigative agent or contract with a person or government entity.
- IAs should not have any other responsibilities which interferes with their objectivity.

Who conducts MUI investigations?

O.R.C. § 5126.221. Investigative agents (IA)

- All investigative agents are certified by the DODD and are required to take civil and criminal investigatory training.
- IAs are have continuing professional development standards for renewal which includes training in trauma informed practices, forensic interviews, and investigation techniques.

Investigations

1. Focus on outcomes
2. Identify root cause and other contributing factors to aid in developing a prevention plan that addresses:
 - How can we decrease the chances of this incident occurring again?
 - How can we prevent injury for all involved?
 - Improve outcomes for individuals served

Investigations

- IAs are trained and certified, in accordance with the requirements listed in ORC §5126.221 and have expertise and knowledge regarding the service system and working with individuals with disabilities.
- IAs conduct interviews, photograph the scene of the incident, review documentation, and identify causes and contributing factors relevant to the allegation.

Identifying Causes and Contributing Factors

Process

Lack of policies,
procedures not
followed, or
ineffective policy

People or Human Factors

like training,
communication,
scheduling, and other
factors lead to incident

Equipment

required tools to support
individuals or carry out job
tasks are not available or
operational

Environment

may contribute to
incident due to line-of-
sight issues, etc.

Materials

needed to provide
support are not available
such as medications and
depends

Prevention Planning

- Collaborate with the team on the development of the prevention plan that addresses the causes and contributing factors to the incident.
- Implement the plan
- Document the actions taken and revise as necessary

Investigations

- IAs enter information obtained from their investigation into a computerized database, which is maintained by DODD.
- DODD monitors the IA's investigation, ensures that timelines are met, and confirms that a prevention plan is created to address the safety needs of the victim with a disability.

Investigations involving minors



The focus of MUI investigations is prevention.
Partnering with CSBs, County Board IAs work to promote health, safety and wellness.

Investigations involving minors

- Children's Service Boards are the lead investigative entity, however, IAs often offer support and assistance.
- The MUI Rule allows the county board to accept investigations completed by the police and/or Children's Service Boards.
- Data is collected on the findings of CSB led investigations.

Children's Services Notifications

O.A.C. 5123-17-02 (F) Abused or neglected children

All allegations of abuse or neglect as defined in sections 2151.03 and 2151.031 of the Revised Code of an individual under the age of twenty-one years shall be immediately reported to the local public children's services agency. The notification may be made by the provider or the county board. The county board shall ensure that the notification has been made.

Reporting Requirements of EI Staff

County board employed EI staff are required to notify CSB and follow the MUI rule. ORC 5123.61 would apply.

If EI staff is not employed by a board or certified provider, they are still required to report abuse/neglect under ORC 5121.421. So, they would report to CSB and communicate with the board, who would seek additional information and determine if an MUI should be filed.

Either way there should be communication with the SSA and MUI team in the child's best interest.

Differences in Investigations

- Different investigation protocols, terminology, and findings.
- For example, county boards utilize the investigation protocols outlined in Ohio Administrative Code 5123-17-02 and the appendices
- Children's Service uses a Differential Response system which includes two different pathways for responding to accepted reports of abuse and neglect.



MUI Cases

Knowing the signs of abuse

- Bruising
- Bleeding, soreness, redness, irritation, itching, and unusual discharges
- Torn or stained underwear or linens
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- New sexual knowledge or sexual behavior
- Sudden difficulty walking or sitting
- Suddenly frightened or certain people or situations

What can you do?

- Get the individual help right away (medical, emotional, financial).
- Help the person feel safe, set judgements aside.
- Remember to NOT imply blame on the victim.
- Ask questions like “were you able to?” Instead of “why didn’t you?” when talking to the individual.
- Emotionally support the victim.
- Remember to refer the individual for counseling and victim’s assistance as appropriate.

Who can you report to?

An MUI contact person has been identified at each County Board of DD to receive reports of possible MUIs.

Incidents may be reported to that person or to any County Board of DD employee.

For listing of County Boards Reporting Lines
<https://dodd.ohio.gov/your-family/locations>

Resources



Understanding Major Unusual Incidents

What families need to know about the MUI/UI Reporting System

The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) has a Major Unusual Incidents Registry Unit which is charged with providing oversight to Ohio's health and welfare quality improvement system.

The MUI unit strives to work cooperatively with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, families, county boards, and providers to protect Ohioans, highlighting that all incidents are important and investigated.

Unusual incidents (UIs) are investigated by providers, and major unusual incidents (MUIs) are investigated by county boards of developmental disabilities or developmental center investigators.

What is an MUI

An MUI is an incident that someone says happened or says someone told them about that puts a person's health and welfare at risk.

What is a UI

A UI is an incident that is not consistent with a person's care or service plan and is not an MUI.

Why are MUIs Reported

MUIs are reported so they can be investigated. The investigation will help find out why the incident happened and what can be done to keep it from happening again. The goal is to help people be safe.

When are MUIs Reported

MUIs are reported immediately or within 24 hours based on MUI type.

MUIs and UIs Differences

UIs are not as serious as MUIs but

Quality Improvement Process



All MUIs have to be investigated by county boards or developmental centers, but some require law enforcement and other agencies to be involved.

Types of MUIs

Ohio Administrative Code [5123-17-02](#) states the 19 MUI classifications:

Accidental or Suspicious Death
Attempted Suicide
Exploitation
Failure to Report
Law Enforcement
Medical Emergency
Misappropriation
Missing Individual
Neglect
Non-Accidental or Suspicious Death
Peer-to-Peer Act
Physical Abuse
Prohibited Sexual Relations
Rights Code Violation
Sexual Abuse
Significant Injury

Who Must Report MUIs

All providers who are contracted, certified, or licensed to serve people with developmental disabilities are required to report MUIs to the person's county board.

All county board staff and DODD staff are required to report MUIs.

Anyone paid to provide Medicaid waiver services must report MUIs.

Who Receives MUIs

An MUI contact person at a county board or developmental center can receive the report.

DODD has a hotline: 1-866-313-6733.

Role of Family Members

Family members should report things that affect the health and safety (such as abuse, neglect, theft) of a person with developmental disabilities to the

- service and support administrator (SSA),
- MUI contact,
- or DODD MUI hotline.

Frequently Asked Questions about MUIs

What families need to know about the MUI/UI Reporting System

QUESTION: How do I report a Major Unusual Incident (MUI)?

ANSWER: The best way to report an MUI is to contact your [county board of developmental disabilities](#). They can be contacted 24-hours a day to report abuse and neglect, or contact the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) at the Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-313-6733 (option 1). You can [Report Abuse and Neglect](#) through DODD's online reporting application. If someone is in danger, call 911 immediately.

QUESTION: If there is an allegation of abuse involving my child, which is under investigation, will it also be considered a Major Unusual Incident (MUI)?

ANSWER: Yes, allegations of abuse are one of the 19 [MUI Categories](#) that will be filed and investigated as an MUI if your child is receiving services from a county board under [Ohio Administrative Code 5123-17-02](#).

QUESTION: What is the point of an MUI?

ANSWER: The purpose of the MUI system is to protect Ohioans with DD and prevent incidents that could have a negative impact on their physical and mental well-being, if possible.

QUESTION: As a parent, why do I sometimes get different notifications from the county board and Children's Services during an investigation?

ANSWER: Parents may receive different notifications from different agencies who were involved in the investigations regarding their child. Some letters may come from the county board while other notifications may come from the Children's Service Board. When an incident of abuse or neglect involves a child, the provider or county board is required per (5123-17-02 (F), to ensure, "All allegations of abuse or neglect as defined in sections 2151.03 and 2151.031 of the Revised Code of an individual under the age of twenty-one years shall be immediately reported to the local public children's services agency." When the Children's Service agency is involved and investigating, they are the lead investigating entity. The county board, developmental center, or DODD investigator must wait for the Children's Services and other entities to conclude their investigation prior to moving forward, which may result in a delay and numerous reports. The county board investigating entity will continue to follow up with the Children's Services entity on the investigation and ensure all required notifications occur. Below is some information about the different notifications and what information you might receive. Any specific questions should be directed to the investigating agency.

OAC 5123-17-02 (G)(1) (A-D) is the initial notification by the county board and/or provider. When a major unusual incident occurs, the provider and the county board should ensure the appropriate persons have

Health and Welfare Alert



Drowning Prevention #36-6-21

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) play a powerful role in water safety and drowning prevention.

What is Drowning?

Drowning is a form of death by suffocation. Death occurs after the lungs take in water. This water intake then interferes with breathing. When the lungs become heavy, oxygen stops being delivered to the heart. Without the supply of oxygen, the body shuts down.

Who is at an Increased Risk of Drowning?

- Young children.
- People with epilepsy or other medical conditions.
- People who are drawn to or fascinated with water and may not understand the dangers.
- People who cannot swim.
- People with mobility challenges or poor muscle control.



Understanding Drowning Hazards

Any source of water is a potential drowning hazard. This includes pools, rivers, lakes, hot tubs, bathtubs, and other bodies of water.

It is important that you know about a person's ability to safely navigate different environments, the risks, and what supports the person needs to be safe.



Listen to these parents tell how drowning impacted their families

Drowning Deaths

- One afternoon, a 19-year-old man with controlled seizures, who often relaxed in the tub for hours, had a seizure. Within a matter of minutes, he was found underwater by his long-time and caring staff. He could not be saved.
- A three-year-old boy left his family home. Within minutes, his parents were searching for him and found him dead in the neighbor's pool.
- A 58-year-old man went into the bathroom, got into a walk-in tub, and turned on the water. He was later found submerged by staff. Despite administering CPR, he died.

Fast Facts:

- Eight Ohioans with IDD died of drowning last year.
- Sixty-three percent of those who drown in 2020 were younger than five years old.
- Of those, 75 percent were males and 25 percent were females, while 88 percent lived with their families.
- Bathtub drowning resulted in 25 percent of all drowning deaths in 2020.
- According to the CDC, drownings are a leading cause of injury or death for young children ages one to 14. Three children die every day because of drowning.
- Drowning is fast and silent. It can happen in as little as 20-60 seconds. Drowning does not always look like we would expect.
- Some studies indicate that a person can drown in one milliliter of fluid for every kilogram they weigh. So, a person weighing around 140 pounds (63.5 kg) could drown after inhaling only a quarter cup of water.
- A large number of drownings occur in the summer.



Outdoor Water Safety

By providing the right supports and supervision, you can help someone enjoy the great outdoors. Swimming, boating, and other outdoor activities can be a lot of fun when planned. By knowing the environment, the person, their needs, and the environment, you can create a great experience.

Environmental Considerations

- Identify possible drowning hazards such as ponds, pools, reservoirs, and rivers.
- Ensure that safety mechanisms are in place including locks, fencing, and other measures to secure water hazards.
- Be sure to address environmental risks with caregivers, neighbors, and during the person's service plan meeting.

Prevention

- Enroll the person in swimming lessons. Learning to swim can save a life.
- Never leave someone with mobility challenges alone near a body of water.
- Participate in water safety, first aid, and CPR courses.
- Always have a child wear a life jacket when on a boat, raft, dock, close to water, or in the water.
- Stay far back from the water's edge to avoid accidentally falling in.
- Provide constant supervision and remain within arm's reach. Always have someone in the water with the person, even if a lifeguard is on duty.
- Provide 1:1 supervision for individuals with a seizure disorder when near water.
- Have a cell phone near in case of emergency.

Responding to a Water Emergency

- If someone is missing, check the water first.
- Only enter the water if you have strong swimming skills and it is safe to do so. It is better to use a rope or other object to pull a person to shore.
- Call 911 and call out for help.
- If the person has stopped breathing, follow your CPR/First Aid training once they are safe onshore.
- Assist the person to seek medical attention if they seem okay, as there could be complications that are not visible right away.



Health and Welfare Alert Drowning Prevention #36-6-21



Bathtub Safety

- You can take simple steps to make sure people are safe in their homes. It starts with planning and providing the right supports (bathing equipment, supervision, etc.).

Walk-in Tubs

DODD has identified incidents of drowning directly related to "walk-in" tubs. The use of walk-in tubs could place individuals at risk in terms of scalding, inability to open the inner tub door in an emergency if water-filled, slipping under the water either from the "seat", or slipping on the inner tub floor. Most walk-in tubs have high walls, mostly narrow doorways, and inward opening doorways. These features may be a concern at times of any medical incident or fall inside the tub. The features make it difficult for the family members to open the door and get the person inside the tub out for emergency medical help. People who are prone to seizures, lack upper body strength, have mobility issues, or are unable to verbalize are often at greater risk when using this particular tub. One study shows a standard bathtub has a max depth of 13-14 inches whereas walk-in bathtubs can have nearly 40-48 inches of water depth (that can be as much as 80 gallons of water). Seats are placed 17 inches above, leaving nearly almost 20 inches of depth to immerse yourself in water.

Prevention

- At-risk children or adults should never be left unattended in the bathtub for any reason.
- If an individual has a seizure disorder, provide 1:1 supervision around any water source.
- Get all of your supplies (i.e., towels, clothing, hygiene products, etc.) ready before entering the bathroom.
- Provide the necessary supports.
- Do not run to answer the phone or check the door.
- Never leave siblings or unfamiliar caretakers to watch people while bathing.
- Do not rely on bathtub seats or rings. They create a false sense of security.

[DODD's Health and Welfare Toolkit https://dodd.ohio.gov/health-and-welfare/toolkit](https://dodd.ohio.gov/health-and-welfare/toolkit)

Subscribe to Health and Welfare Alerts and other DODD publications

<https://dodd.ohio.gov/your-family/all-family-resources/Subscribe>

Thank you

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