

**Is OKDHS Child Protective Services for You?**

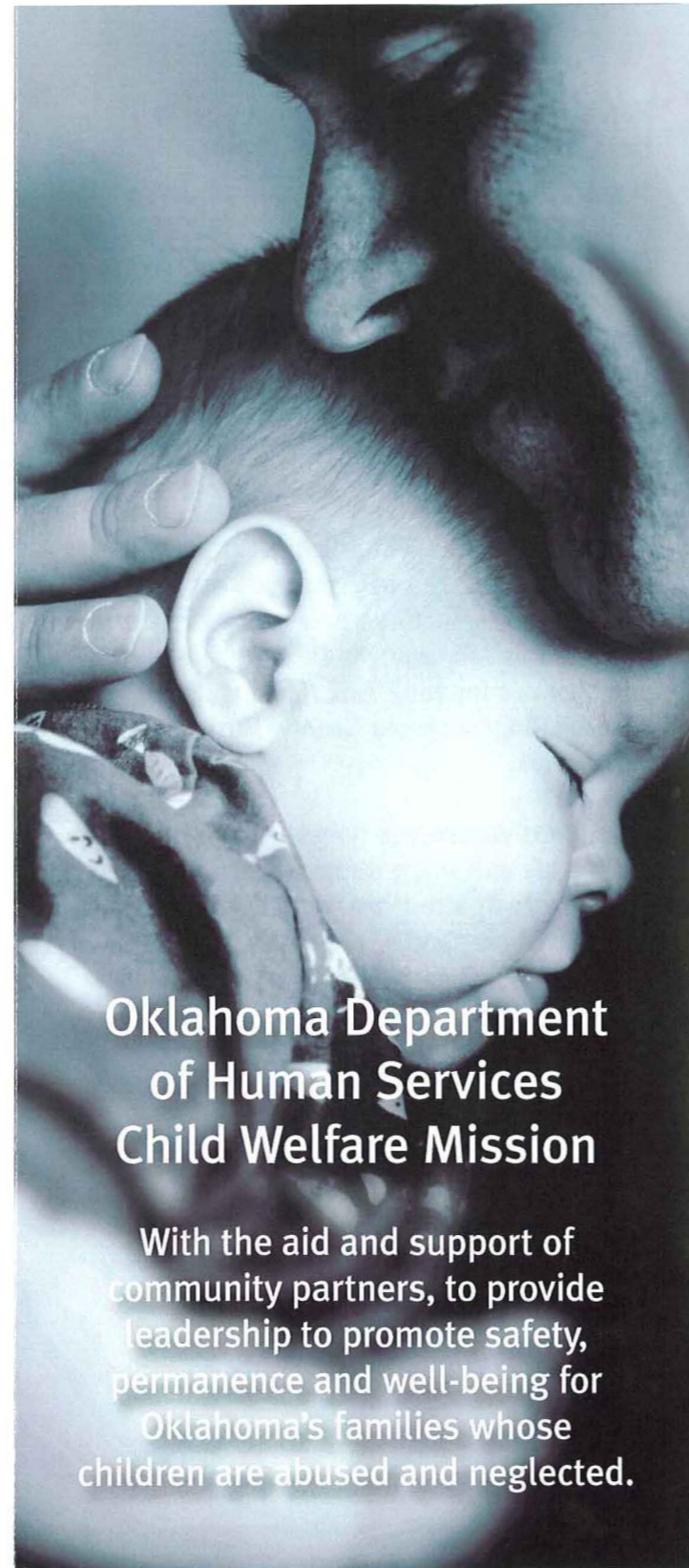
The Oklahoma Department of Human Services Child Protective Services program offers a unique opportunity to those desiring a challenging, important career. Child Welfare Specialists receive extensive training, as well as supervision by qualified Child Welfare Supervisors.

Child Welfare Specialists work at Human Services Centers in each county statewide. Metro areas have multiple Human Services Centers and Child Welfare Specialists specialize in providing services. Rural counties may have fewer staff allowing Child Welfare Specialists to become comprehensive workers, dealing with investigations and permanency planning issues.

**Child Welfare Specialists list the advantages of working for a state agency:**

“Supervisors are extremely helpful and knowledgeable and treat their employees with a great deal of respect, which is something I have not necessarily encountered in the private sector. I have also never had a job that is so family friendly.” C.H., Child Welfare Specialist III, Oklahoma County, bachelor’s degree, psychology.

“OKDHS provides workers with an insurance allowance that pays for my entire family to have excellent medical coverage, dental and vision benefits and the time off to use these services.” M.T.



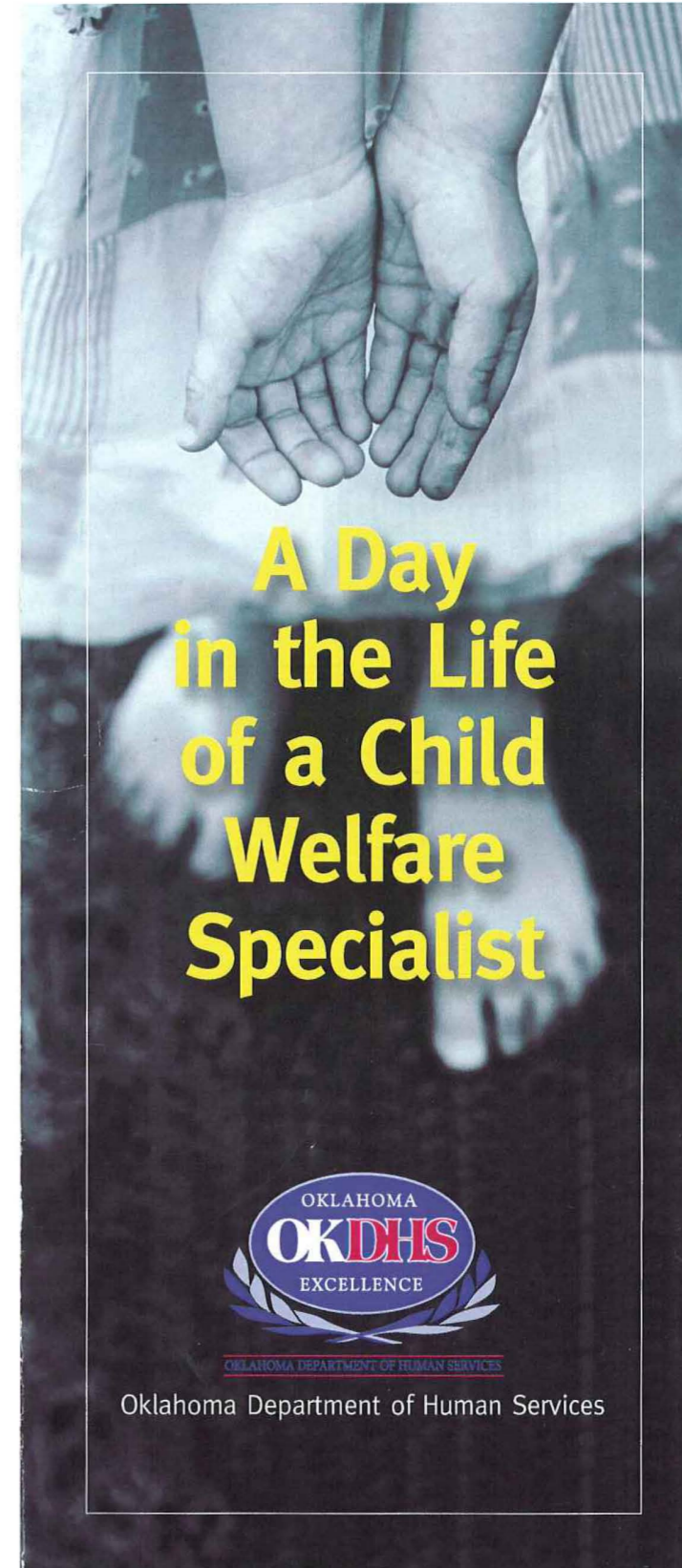
**Oklahoma Department  
of Human Services  
Child Welfare Mission**

With the aid and support of  
community partners, to provide  
leadership to promote safety,  
permanence and well-being for  
Oklahoma’s families whose  
children are abused and neglected.

For more information about joining the Oklahoma Department of Human Services as a Child Welfare Specialist, go to [www.okdhs.org](http://www.okdhs.org), e-mail [jobs@okdhs.org](mailto:jobs@okdhs.org) or call OKDHS Employment Services at (405) 521-3613



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**A Day  
in the Life  
of a Child  
Welfare  
Specialist**



Oklahoma Department of Human Services

**T**he mission of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services is to help individuals and families in need help themselves lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives.

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services hires hundreds of Child Welfare Specialists to implement the Child Protective Services program each year. These compassionate, self-motivated professionals help fulfill the mission of Oklahoma's largest state agency.



### What Does a Child Welfare Specialist Do?

#### Intake

Intake Child Welfare Specialists identify and assess allegations of child abuse and neglect. They ensure that reasonable efforts are made to maintain and protect children in their own homes as long as their safety is not at risk. The day-to-day activities include managing a caseload of children and families, receiving referrals for possible abuse and neglect and completing assessments and investigations. Investigations include interviewing children and families, assessing home conditions and recommending appropriate interventions. Child Welfare Specialists also complete reports for the District Attorney, attend court hearings, as well as testify in court cases. In addition, Child Welfare Specialists make referrals to community providers and help locate community services for children and families in need.

#### Permanency Planning

Permanency Planning Child Welfare Specialists provide services to children who are in the legal custody of OKDHS. These Child Welfare Specialists assist the child's family in correcting the conditions that led to the child's removal from their home. Child Welfare Specialists work with families to develop and implement treatment plans, complete court reports, attend court hearings and testify in court cases. They also make referrals for needed services, transport children to appointments and visit children in their foster care homes monthly.

### Here's what some Child Welfare Specialists have to say about their work days:

"I average being in court two to three days a week." J.D., Child Welfare Specialist III, Oklahoma County, bachelor's degree, management.

"Each day brings a different crisis or situation. Time management and thinking on your feet are crucial in this job." M.T., Child Welfare Specialist II, Craig County, bachelor's degree, business administration.

"It's great to work with a family and have them really appreciate the help that you are giving them. If you feel that you are going to save the world in this job, though, Child Welfare is probably not for you." S.S., Child Welfare Specialist III, Oklahoma County, Master's of Social Work.

"With Child Welfare you have the opportunity to touch a life and shape a future, even if you never see it. So even with the pager going off at 2 a.m. or on Christmas Day, it is all worth it in the life of a child." K.M., Child Welfare Specialist III, Haskell County, bachelor's degree, social work.

"Child Welfare is fast paced and exciting. No two days are alike, and rarely are two problems similar. The families we work with expect high levels of dedication because we are dealing with their children and their lives. The appeal of this job is that you are asked to do something very difficult and then are given a great deal of autonomy." J.H., Child Welfare Specialist III, Oklahoma County, bachelor's degree, education.

### What OKDHS Child Welfare Specialists Need to Know

OKDHS Child Welfare Specialists serve children and families with severe problems – poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, domestic violence, illness – and multiple needs. Child Welfare Specialists deal with complex, painful and often life-threatening situations that require sound judgment and timely decisions.

### Here's what Child Welfare Supervisors say make successful Child Welfare Specialists:

"Good time management skills are a must, as are workers who are self motivated. Workers need to have good communication skills and be able to communicate effectively both verbally and in written form. Organization is important, but so is flexibility. This job is emotionally taxing. Workers must have outside interests and personal care habits." D.K., Child Welfare Supervisor, Oklahoma County.

"Confidence is crucial." J.K., Child Welfare Supervisor, Payne County.

### Skills needed also include:

- Bachelor's degree
- Positive attitude
- Good analytical skills
- Compassion
- Professionalism
- Ability to work cooperatively with parents, court system, foster parents, law enforcement and the community
- Honesty
- Basic computer skills