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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Report Published on Intake and Assessment of Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect**

*Austin, TX - June 11, 2014* - Child abuse and neglect is an issue that affects every state and every local community.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have laws that require certain professionals and organizations to report potential cases of child abuse and neglect to the appropriate Child Protective Services (CPS) office. Concerned citizens may also report child maltreatment.

The systems through which states conduct intake and assessment of reports of child abuse and neglect vary across the United States. According to research conducted by Morningside Research and Consulting (Morningside), half of the states in the U.S. have a statewide intake system where all reports are received through a single, centralized call center staffed by trained intake workers. Referrals that are "screened in" are sent to local CPS staff for investigation. The other half of the states have a decentralized intake system where referrals are received and assessed at the regional or local level.

While many similarities are seen between statewide intake states and decentralized states in foster care entry rates, placement stability, and the timeliness and permanency of reunification, data show differences in the rates of referrals, investigation response time, percentage of referrals screened in, and total child welfare expenditures.

"Answering the Call: How States Process Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect" is the first report to study the child welfare intake system for all 50 states. To access the report, please go to:  
<http://www.morningsideresearch.com/selected-projects/>

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**About Morningside Research and Consulting**

Morningside assists government agencies with planning, analysis, and evaluation. Morningside has been in operation for 15 years and is committed to the success of publicly funded health and human services programs.

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