Principles That Guide Child Abuse & Neglect Laws and Regulations

Federal laws and regulations shape delivery though policies and dollars. States are responsible for the child protection function.

Current federal regulations establish the policies for states when responding to child abuse and neglect:

- Children are first, and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
- Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.
- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
- The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.
- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their education needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

From the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children’s Bureau