

APPENDIX 15

Multi-Agency Response Team (MART)

A demonstrated need existed to forge a better partnership between DCFS and Law Enforcement to protect abused and neglected children through shared guidelines, established protocols, on-going training and the sharing of information. A critical part of this new partnership between both entities is the need to develop a plan to consistently respond to at risk children in narcotic and/or gang related warrant executions, parole/probation search investigations and in other high profile “intelligence sensitive” investigations.

As a result of the need to form a partnership between DCFS and Law Enforcement, the Department initiated and implemented the development of the Multi-Agency Response Team (MART) on January 5, 2004. MART works in collaboration with law enforcement to provide emergency protective services to children identified in homes associated with high levels of illegal gang, firearm and narcotic activity; as well as investigating other high profile “intelligence sensitive” child endangerment cases. The goal of MART is to provide an expedited and trained response to law enforcement referrals to minimize the traumatic effect these crimes have on children and families.

MART is comprised of highly trained and countywide case-carrying Emergency Response Children Social Workers who have SPA specific out-stations at both DCFS Regional Offices and within Law Enforcement Stations, however, MART maintains a Compton/MART Office Headquarters. MART CSWs adhere to Emergency Response Policy and they utilize Team Decision-Making (TDM). The team responds to countywide requests, 24 hours a day from Law Enforcement Agencies (i.e. Specialized Task Forces). In most instances, advance intelligence gathered by law enforcement field agents has determined that children are present and/or are likely to be present in volatile environments where weapons and narcotics are readily accessible.

The Multi-Agency Response Team will provide expeditious, countywide response with Law Enforcement under the following circumstances when children are present:

1. Warrant Service-Tactical entries into homes by fully trained and armed L.E. Task Forces. Higher Profile Operations that involve more dangerous felons will have SWAT or SEB flash-bang entries.
2. Parole/Probation Sweeps-Multiple agency participation conducting search conditions/compliance checks on known criminal offenders under supervision by Parole or Probation. Go from one address to another taking parents into custody for violations, giving citations and/or giving warnings.
3. HUD/BOS/City – Nuisance Abatement Teams (NAT)-Multiple agency participation conducting Housing Authority checks. Target loitering tenants, gang/narcotic/weapons affiliated residents and violation of regulation occupants.

4. Intelligent Sensitive Investigations-Majority are long-term investigations with requests from Homicide Divisions and those coming from State and Federal L.E. /Prosecution Agencies with a nexus to: human smuggling, child porn rings, terrorism, and organized crime.

MART Investigations Outcomes: 43% are 30-day disposition for closure, 10% are VFM/VFRs, 47% result in detentions, 54% have active/prior DCFS services and 52% of children identified are under the age of 5.