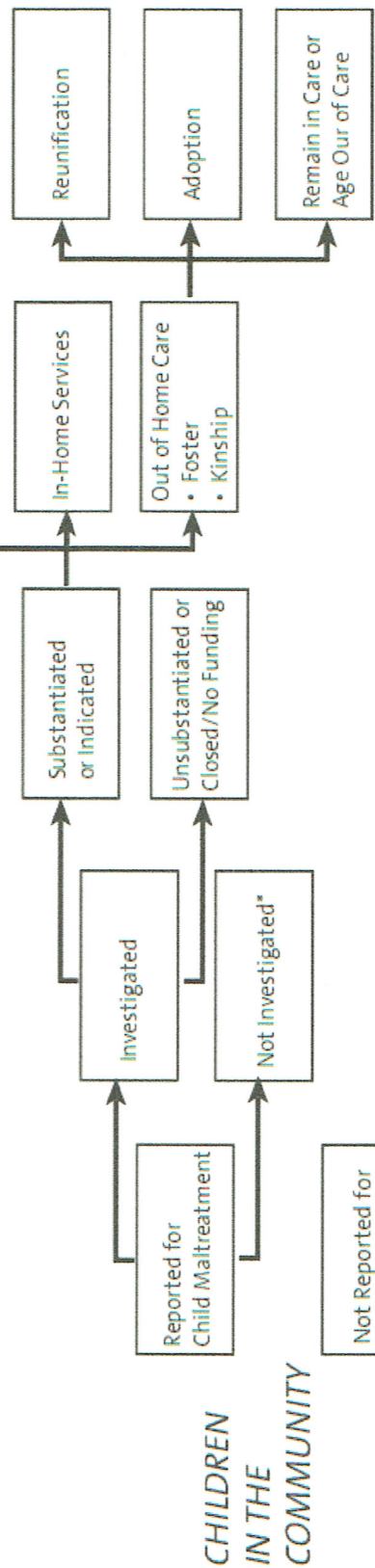


**FIGURE 1: Simplified Model of Case Flow of Children in the Child Welfare System**



\* Nearly half of all states have policies that allow for "alternative response"—no requirement that determination of maltreatment has or has not occurred. Despite the variability among states, these differential responses address the service needs of families who may be at risk and avoid labeling the caregiver as a perpetrator of maltreatment. The screening and investigation function are altered by the presence of alternative response systems in the child welfare agency.