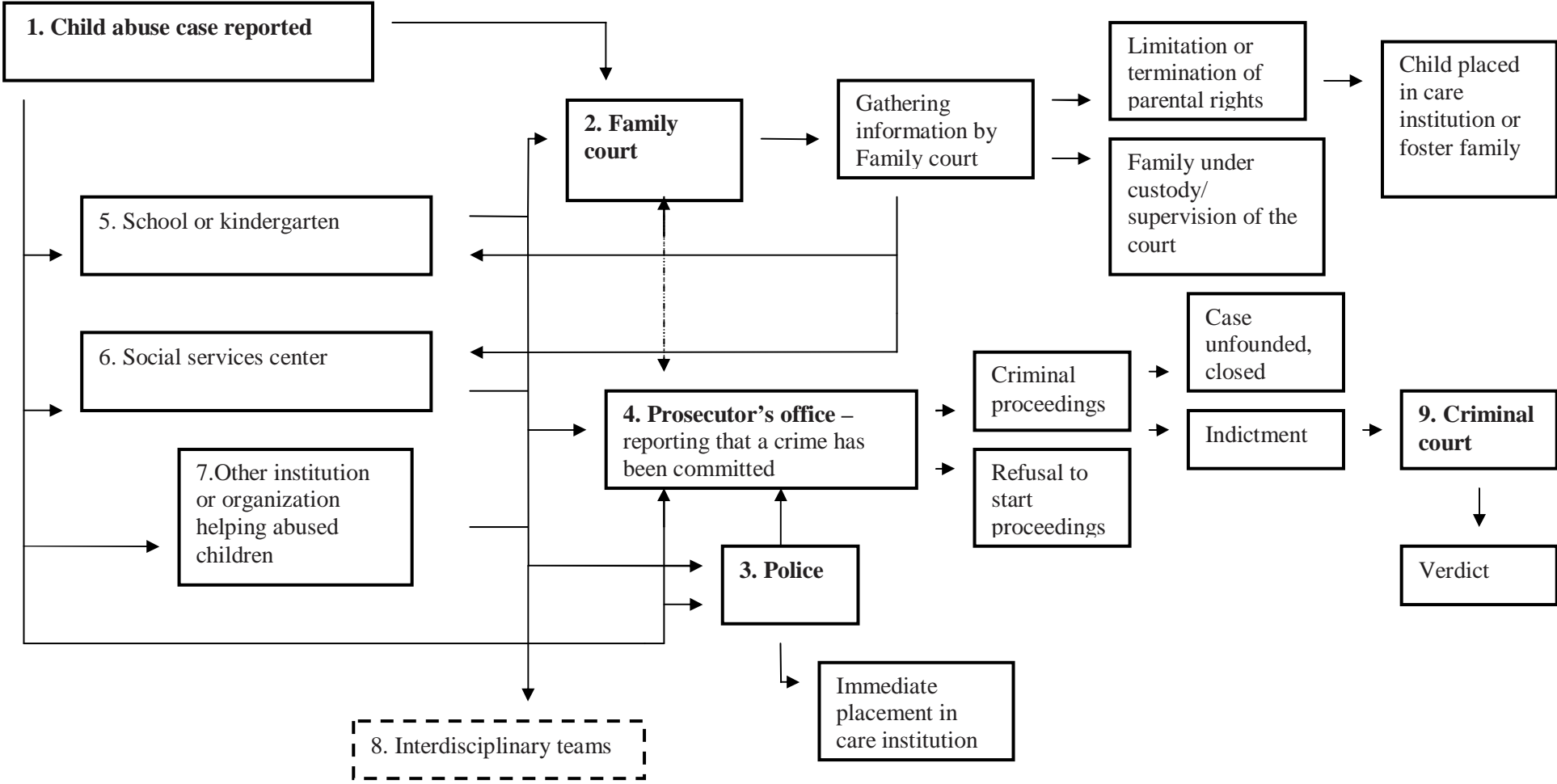


POLAND



A case of child abuse can be reported by a parent, a caretaker or any other person in a profession involving supervision or care of children, as well as any other person witnessing a child being abused or neglected. Mandatory reporting of child abuse cases to family courts, police or prosecutor's office refers in particular to health care, education, social services, and care institutions employees.

1. A person witnessing a child being abused can address directly:
2. Family court – a court dealing with cases where minors are involved. After inspecting the situation of a child and acting in its best interest the court can, among others, hold an interview with the parents, limit parental rights by appointing a custody officer to the family, place a child in a residential care or foster family. Depending on the seriousness of the abuse committed by the parents the court can also terminate parental rights.
3. Police – in cases when child's life or health is at immediate risk. If a child is at serious threat the police can decide on immediate placement in care institution.
4. Prosecutor's office – to report suspicion that a crime has been committed. This information can be also submitted at the police station, that is responsible for forwarding it to the prosecutor's office. If a criminal case involving a child is being investigated, the prosecutor should inform the family court so that the court can take appropriate measures to protect the child.

A witness of child abuse can also turn to school or kindergarten where a child is enrolled (5), social care (6) or other institutions and organizations helping abused children (7). After screening the situation of the family within their duties, employees of these institutions can decide to inform the family court, the police or the prosecutor's office. Representatives of different institutions can work together in a form of interdisciplinary teams (8).