

Safety Plan Workshop

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Quality safety plans
require quality safety
assessments



Sufficient information is a prerequisite for sound decision making



Safety Assessment Components

- Safety threat
- Child vulnerability
- Protective capacities
- Need for safety intervention
- Safety decision

Safety Threat

Behaviors or conditions that may place a child in immediate danger of serious harm



Control


“The ability to manage immediate safety threats that place a child in danger of serious harm.”

The children will live with their uncle while their mother is incarcerated, after she posts bail, and at least until the investigation is concluded.

(limits access and establishes an estimated timeframe)



Caregiver Self-Control

- Maltreating caregiver promises not to do it again or promises to “go get help”
 - Problematic for two principle reasons:
 1. Caregiver may not be in control. (ex., personality disorder, mental illness, competing priorities, addiction, etc.)
 2. Getting help does not immediately control safety threats or immediately supplement protective capacities
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Protective Capacities

Family strengths or resources that reduce, control, or prevent threats of serious harm from arising or having an unsafe impact on a child



Supplementation of Protective Capacities

- Safety plans may supplement missing or insufficient protective capacities
- Supplementation refers to “the addition of protective capacities to the family system without the removal of the child”
 - Mom’s friend from her church agrees to watch the kids for three hours after school each day so mom can find a job and the kids won’t be left unsupervised

Vulnerability

The degree to which a child can avoid or modify the impact of safety threats or risk concerns



What's a Safety Plan?

Specific and concrete strategy for:

- Controlling threats of serious harm to a child(ren) or
- Supplementing protective capacities that are not presently sufficient to manage immediate safety threats for at least one child in the family




What's Not a Safety Plan?

- Interventions expected to resolve or significantly diminish safety threats
- Interventions that rehabilitate or address the conditions that must change to reduce the risk of future maltreatment or improve child well-being
- Interventions that are not capable of immediately controlling and mitigating the threat of serious harm

Safety Plan Guidelines

- Specific and concrete control strategy
- Implemented immediately
- When a family's protective capacities are not sufficient to manage immediate threats of serious harm to a child

Safety Plan Guidelines

- Employ the least restrictive (least disruptive and traumatic to the child) strategies possible while assuring the child's safety
 - Supplement or introduce protective capacities within the family system
 - Assess willingness, capacity & understanding
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Safety Plan Interventions

Examples of controlling activities/interventions may be:

- Voluntary kinship placements
- Restrict access of the alleged perpetrator to the child(ren)
- Alleged perpetrator leaves the home (voluntarily or court order)
- Protection orders
- Protective day care (only if to protect the child)
- Respite care


Safety Plan Interventions

Examples of controlling activities/interventions may be:

- Detoxification
 - Home health nurse/parent aide/homemaker
 - Competent adult caretaker moves into the family home
 - Emergency supply of food, supplies, clothing, etc.
 - Obtaining medical or psychological crisis intervention
 - Concrete material/fiscal assistance
 - Intensive monitoring
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Safety Plan Weaknesses

Actual examples:

- “close monitoring”
 - “continue to provide services”
 - “casework counseling”
 - “needs to adjust to new living situation w/her children”
 - “will continue to work with the mother”
 - “mother was spoken to and she states she will do better”
 - “follow the case plan”
 - “get her act together”
 - “will understand how to protect child”
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Safety Plan Modification

- Modify the safety plan if safety interventions need to be changed or amended to ensure child protection
- Why would a modification be needed?
- How is a safety plan modified?

Discontinuing the Safety Plan

- When the threat of serious harm no longer exists
- Control within the family is probable and can be maintained without safety focused interventions or active monitoring
- How is a safety plan discontinued?