

Child Safety Decision-Making

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Goal

Increase the capacity for the Social Work and Legal System to collaboratively address child safety through the Child Safety Decision-Making Model.

Objectives

Participants will:

- * Recognize child safety as an issue to be assessed and addressed throughout the entirety of the case.
- * Gain knowledge of key safety terminology used in CPS.
- * Broaden understanding of how CPS creates plans for child safety with families.
- * Be able to articulate the components of the Safety Equation.

Child Welfare Systemic Issues

- * CHIPS Court does not fit typical adversarial nature of other court systems.
- * Serious decisions are made with potential for unintended consequences.
- * Social Workers, Attorneys and Court Speak Different Languages.

Child Welfare Systemic Issues

INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION

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POOR DECISIONS

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POOR OUTCOMES

Child Welfare Two Systems

Social Work Guiding Principles:

- Initial Assessment Standards
- Ongoing Standards

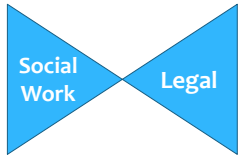
Legal Guiding Principles:

- Chapter 48
- Case Law
- Federal law
- Due process

The Focus of Two Systems

Social Work Focus

- * Safety
- * Behavior Change



Legal Focus

- * Contrary to Welfare to remain in the home
- * Best Interests

Child Welfare Guides

Social Work



http://hrccps.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/The_Guide.pdf

Legal



http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/CPS/PDF/safety_intervention_standards.pdf

Safety Intervention Standards

Decisions and actions required through CPS involvement with the family to:

- * Assure an unsafe child is protected.
- * Respect the constitutional rights of each family member.
- * Utilize the least intrusive intervention to keep a child safe.

Child Safety Decision-Making Model Foundations

- * Informs Professional Judgment through Analytical Process
- * Promotes Consistent Practice
- * Educates Legal System About Social Worker Practice
- * Provides Common Language

Key Concepts in CPS Safety Intervention

- Present Danger Threats
- Impending Danger Threats
- Vulnerable Child
- Parental Protective Capacities
- Protective & Safety Plan

Child Safety Decision-Making Safety Equation

Present or Impending Danger

+ Vulnerable Child

- Sufficient Parental Protective Capacities

= Unsafe Child

Present Danger Threat

* **Immediate, significant and clearly observable** family condition that is actively **occurring or “in process”** of occurring at the point of contact with a family and **will likely result in severe harm to a child.**

Impending Danger Threat

* A foreseeable state of danger in which family behaviors, attitudes, motives, emotions and/or situations pose a threat which may not be currently active, but can be anticipated to have severe effects on a child at any time in the near future and requires safety intervention.

Present and Impending Dangers

Present Danger Threats

- Now
- Immediate
- Requires Protective Plan

Impending Danger Threats

- Near Future
- Imminent
- Requires Safety Plan

What Characteristics Does a Vulnerable Child Have?

Child Vulnerability Characteristics

Benchmark C

- * Age (0-6 Always Vulnerable)
- * Powerless
- * Invisible
- * Physical Disability
- * Mental disability
- * Provoking Behaviors
- * Illness
- * Defenseless
- * Non-assertive

What Characteristics Does a Protective Parent Have?

Parent Protective Capacities

Benchmark D

- * **Cognitive**
 - * Knowledge, understanding, and perceptions contributing to protective vigilance.
 - * Parent's ability to recognize and be responsible for the child.
- * **Behavioral**
 - * Actions, activities, and performance that result in protective vigilance
 - * Parent's ability recognize a dangerous situation AND act
- * **Emotional**
 - * Feelings, attitudes and identification with the child and motivation resulting in protective vigilance
 - * Parent-child attachment and parent's emotional strength

Safety Equation

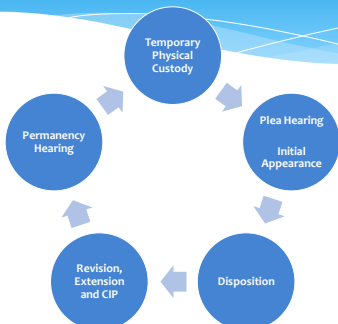
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Child Safety Applies at Every Stage of the Case



Types of CPS Plans

- * Protective Plan – manage present danger threat
- * Safety Plan – manage impending danger threat
- * Case Plan – manage a behavior change

	Protective Plan	Safety Plan	Case Plan
Based on the Assessment of:	Present Danger Threats	Impending Danger Threats	Impending Danger Threats, Parental Protective Capacity and Risk
When in Case Process?	At 1 st Contact; Anytime	End of Initial Assessment	End of Family Engagement and Assessment; 60 Days After Supervisory Approval of Initial Assessment
How Long Will The Plan Last?	Until the Assessment for Impending Danger Threats is Completed	Until no Impending Danger Threats or Enough Parental Protective Capacity	Until Case Closure
What Does The Plan Accomplish?	Assure Safety While Gathering More Information	Assure Safety Until Parents Can Resume That Role	Change Conditions and Behaviors so That They Have A Safe Home

Hallmarks of Effective Safety Plans

- Sufficient, feasible, and sustainable
- Manages danger threats and promotes behavior change
- Immediate effect
- People and services available and accessible
- Action oriented
- Does NOT rely on promises

Integrate

Social Worker Assessments/Determinations

AND

Court Findings/Decisions

USING

Child Safety Decision-Making Model

Review

- * SAFETY first and throughout the case.
- * Social Work and Legal Systems have different focus, guiding principles, decisions, assessments and determinations and approach to child safety.
- * Child Safety Decision-Making Model is a method for shared communication about child safety throughout the case.

Safety Equation

Present or Impending Danger

+ Vulnerable Child

- Sufficient Parental Protective Capacities

= Unsafe Child

Review

BETTER INFORMATION
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BETTER DECISIONS
=
BETTER OUTCOMES

Thank You!

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