

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A WELL-WRITTEN SAFETY PLAN

- ❑ Identification of the **SDM® safety threats** that would prompt protective placement unless immediate actions are taken to protect the child in the home.
- ❑ A clear and specific description of the actions or inactions of a **legal** caregiver resulting in a specifically described **impact** on the child that needs to be controlled.
- ❑ A specific set of actions/change in location that will occur **immediately** so that the present danger to the child is controlled.
- ❑ Involvement of a safety **network** beyond the legal caregiver(s) and children. No Network, No Plan.
- ❑ A way to **monitor** whether the plan is working, and a back-up action that will be taken if the plan is not working.
- ❑ A specific **time limit** (no more than 30 days) for the plan to remain in effect, or a specific date on which it will be reviewed and either renewed or allowed to expire.
- ❑ **Signatures that indicate agreement.** These always must include at least one *legal* caregiver, the child welfare worker, and any person from the support network who agrees to be responsible for an action or task. Verbal approval must be obtained from the child welfare worker's supervisor.

SAFETY PLAN HOTSPOTS AND CHECKLIST

HOT SPOTS	SOLUTIONS	COVERED?
The only intervention is that the perpetrator promises not to repeat a behavior.	Network/other caregiver will monitor behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is jargon in the harm or worry statements.	Craft family-friendly harm and worry statements with the family using their own words.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Network agrees to help, but no legal caregiver is included in plan.	At least one caregiver agrees to the interventions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The caregiver is coerced into agreeing with the threat of a child's separation.	Explain planning process to caregiver/network. Include them in planning so they freely consent to the plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The victim is left to keep an aggressor out of the home without the aggressor's consent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggressor agrees to the plan. The victim and children leave to be safe and together. A network member comes to stay in the home to monitor. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
The only intervention is a temporary restraining order.	Any restraining order is augmented with one of the three options above.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A victim is expected to protect the children when they are not demonstrating their own protection.	More mature children and network members contribute to keep young children safe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A caregiver's constitutional rights (Fourth and 14th amendments) are violated: Caregiver is forced to leave home or is deprived of visits with child; non-caregiver is given custody without consent or knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain informed consent for interventions. Consider that a protective caregiver may have to leave with the children to be safe and together. If no caregiver is available to help with a safety plan, custody is probably the only option. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
A safety plan is written when protective custody is not really being considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carefully review danger indicator definitions. Document efforts to gain agreements with the family for future safety and write a "referral closing" letter or promote to a case for ongoing services. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
The safety plan does not have a meaningful time limit.	A Child and Family Team meeting should be convened to review effectiveness and make improvements as soon as possible after the plan is developed. Safety plan should be put in place for no more than 30 days.	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is no <i>clear</i> way to monitor whether the safety plan is working, and there is no fail-safe behavior if it is not working.	Clearly describe the behavior that will affirm that the plan is working and who will do what if it is not (e.g., whom they will contact, how they will intervene). If this is not possible, the household may be found unsafe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The voice of the child is missing.	Remember to include the voice of the child for both impact and keeping the child safe as age appropriate! Using the Three Houses or Safety House can help.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes and Details for Next Steps:

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