



South Carolina Department of Social Services

Work Aid 3.6: Safety Services and Planning

Supplemental to DSS Policy: Chapter 3: Investigations

A. Safety Plans, Kinship Caregiver Agreements and Safety Services	A safety plan and kinship agreement are: • Specific and concrete strategies for controlling threats of imminent harm to a child or youth. • Short-term solutions to ensure child or youth safety. • Voluntary written agreements between a parent (birth or adoptive), a legal custodian for a child or youth, a protector, and DSS. • Plans that outline safety services implemented to protect the child or youth. Safety Services are actions, activities, tasks, or imposed situations that may be informal or formal; provided by nonprofessionals and professionals for the purpose of managing or controlling impending danger threats. Safety services must be capable of having an immediate effect; must be immediately available; must always be accessible; and must be sufficient to control impending danger. Safety services are grouped according to five objectives: behavior management; crisis management; social connection; separation; and resource support.
B. Initial Safety Decision	1. In identifying safety interventions, case managers must make reasonable efforts to preserve families. The case manager should conduct the Family Assessment and Support Tool (FAST) jointly with the family, but it may not be safe to include the perpetrator. 2. If immediate intervention is recommended, the case manager should consider the need for a safety service listed here in order from least intrusive to most intrusive: a. In-home safety action

	I. An in-home safety action allows the child or youth to remain in the home with safety services. This type of safety action is the least restrictive. Ex. A single mother suffers from intermittent depression during which she is unable to get out of bed to get her children ready for school. The in-home safety actions could be to increase the children's capacity, increase a neighbor's support, strengthen support system for the single mother. II. Is an evidence-based practice or in-home service available for the family and would be sufficient to control the safety threat? III. Is an in-home safety action sufficient to control the safety threat? a) If yes, document the in-home safety action within the box titled "In- home Safety Action" in the FAST assessment in CAPSS b) If no, select from one of the following reasons: • Caregiver declined or refused to participate • Resources are not available • Parent/legal guardian incapacity to implement safety actions • This would not adequately control the safety concern • Other (must provide typed response) b. In-home Protector (In-home safety plan) Is an in-home protector sufficient to control the safety threat? I. If yes, document the in-home protector within the box titled "In- home Protector" in the FAST assessment in CAPSS II. If no, select from one of the following reasons: • Parent/legal guardian or protector declined/refused to participate • Resources are not available • Parent/legal guardian or protector incapacity to implement safety actions • This would not adequately control the safety concern • Other (must provide typed response) c. Kinship Caregiver (Out-of-home Placement) Is a removal to Kinship caregiver sufficient to control the safety threat I. If yes, document the use of a Kinship caregiver in the box titled "Kinship Caregiver" in the FAST assessment in CAPSS and complete the Kinship caregiver tab • For Kinship caregiver details refer to Investigations Policy Work Aid 3.5: Kinship Care During Investigations. • Out of-home placement of a child/children with a kinship caregiver, is to last no longer
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	than 90 days after the opening of a Family Preservation Services line. - Because a placement involving a kinship caregiver is intended to be a short-term arrangement, if the safety concern cannot be resolved within 90 days of a Family Preservation Services line opening, then DSS will consult with the agency's legal department on appropriate action. II. If no, select one of the following reasons: - Parent/legal guardian or kinship caregiver declined or refused to participate - Resources are not available - Parent/legal guardian or kinship caregiver incapacity to implement safety actions - This would not adequately control the safety concern - Other (must provide typed response) d. Foster Care (by placement into emergency protective custody or ex-parte) If no other safety action is sufficient to control the safety threats, foster care placement is permissible. Note: The case manager will seek the assistance of law enforcement to initiate the removal of a child whose life, health, or physical safety is in imminent and substantial danger and all other safety actions were not sufficient to control the safety threat.
C. Types of Placement Intervention	1. In-home safety plan allows the child or youth to remain in the home with safety services and a protector. This type of safety action is the least restrictive placement intervention. 2. Kinship caregiver placement may be necessary when an in-home safety plan cannot adequately control the safety threat. A kinship caregiver placement requires the child or youth to move to a relative or fictive kin's home. Note: Kinship caregiver placements require kinship paperwork to be completed as well as all Kinship Caregiver procedures to be completed. Refer to Investigation Work Aid 3.5: Kinship Care During Investigations.
D. Identifying Protectors	1. The child or youth's legal custodian must agree to the identified protector. 2. The protector must be willing to meet the needs of the child or youth and abide by the terms of the safety plan or kinship caregiver paperwork. 3. The protector must be suitable as determined by Section E of this Work Aid.
E. Assessing Protectors	Before the implementation of an in-home safety plan or kinship caregiver placement: 1. The case manager conducts a face-to-face visit with the protector to assess the protector's emotional, behavioral, and cognitive protective capacity.

2. The case manager conducts a walkthrough of the home to assess for safety concerns, if an out of home placement is occurring.
3. The case manager obtains supervisory approval before enacting a safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement. The team leader and the case manager must clearly articulate the behavioral, cognitive, and emotional protective capacities the protector possesses which gives the DSS confidence that they can protect the child or youth while the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement is active. The team leader and case manager must discuss plans to ensure the provision of resources and support necessary to keep the children or youth safe throughout the duration of the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement.
4. The case manager conducts the following safety checks using CAPSS, [National Sexual Offender Registry](#), and law enforcement databases, allowing the results to guide decision-making using the following table:

Searches	*Placement/Protector MUST Be Denied	Placement/Protector Requires Consideration
CAPSS Search all household members 18 years and older by name, social security numbers, and address National Sexual Offender Registry Search for all household members over the age of 12 via the following link: https://www.nsopw.gov/ Law Enforcement Search or request searches for all household members 18 years and older in all counties in South Carolina where household members have previously resided or currently reside: Search the South Carolina Public Index using the following link:	Any household member on Central Registry If matching results are found for any household member (check for ages 12 and older) Has pled guilty or nolo contendere to or has been convicted of any of the following within the past five years: • An offense against the person, • An offense against morality or decency, • Contributing to the delinquency of a minor, • The common law offense of assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature when the victim was a person seventeen years of age or younger, • Criminal domestic violence of high and aggravated nature, • A felony drug-related offense,	An indicated CWS case that closed If no matching results are found for any household member (check for ages 12 and older) Any pardons (any offense that has been forgiving or excused) If the person has been convicted or pled guilty to a crime, the crime is non-violent and not against a child, and it is more than five years old, they could be considered for a placement. *Note that if a potential protector does have an indicated CWS case, a case consultation with

	www.sccourts.org/caseSearch Fax the CHRI request (DSS Form 30261: Request for Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) and/or Local Law Enforcement Records - Child Protective Services) within 24 hours of the placement occurring Complete a CLEAR Search to review criminal history	• Unlawful conduct toward a child, • Cruelty to children, • Child endangerment, and • Criminal sexual conduct with a minor. *Nothing in the background check automatically excludes a person with parental rights from being considered to serve as a child protector. If a parent's rights were terminated by the court, you would consider them as you would any other fictive kin.	the County Director is required for placement approval.
F. Monitoring the Safety Plan and Kinship Caregiver Agreement	1. The case manager monitors the home of origin, and the protector's home if different, and documents the assessment of the homes using the FAST. 2. The case manager documents within the safety plan or the kinship caregiver agreement how and how often the protective actions of the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement will be monitored. 3. The case manager monitors the progress of the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement at a minimum of once a week in the following ways: a. Face-to-face follow-ups with the family to ensure protective actions outlined in the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement are being followed to include interviewing age-appropriate children or youth. b. Collateral contacts, who can confirm protective actions outlined in the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement are being followed. c. Telephone conversations with the family on a consistent basis to ensure protective actions outlined in the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement are being followed with the specific interval outlined in the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement. 4. The case manager in conjunction with the team leader and family makes changes to the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement as necessary, documenting changes to the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement in CAPSS. This includes responding to increased safety concerns, decreased safety concerns, or the resolution of safety concerns. When safety concerns are resolved, see Section G of this work aid. 5. The effectiveness of and any changes to the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement should be discussed at		

	supervisory case consultations, as well as any face-to-face contact with the family. 6. When the case manager determines the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement has been violated, the case manager immediately consults with the team leader to discuss possible changes to the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement and whether a new intake referral is needed.
G. Ending the Safety Plan and Kinship Caregiver Agreement	1. When the safety concern in the home of origin is no longer present, as documented on the FAST, the safety plan or kinship caregiver agreement should end. 2. A safety plan and kinship caregiver agreement have identified expiration dates; therefore, if a safety concern continues to exist at the time that the agreement is set to expire a review of the case will occur to identify next steps needed for Family Preservation Services cases, to ensure the safety and well-being of the child(ren). Note: A safety plan and kinship caregiver agreement must be formally terminated before case closure through direct communication with the parent and the protector and/or kinship caregiver which is documented in CAPSS.