



State of South Carolina

Department of Social Services

Policies and Procedures: Child Welfare Services

Subject:	1640 Safe Systems Analysis
Authority:	N/A
Standards:	Guiding Principles and Standards Practice Model (GPS)
Application:	All Child Welfare Staff (CWS)
Purpose:	
To provide the rules and guidelines for conducting a Safety Systems Analysis Review to address how cases meet criteria for a review, how reviews are conducted and how information is tracked and case trends identified following their completion. This data will be gathered and compiled for the purpose of improving the SCDSS Child Welfare system.	
Policy Statement:	
The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) conducts Safety Systems Analysis on select child death cases and other identified cases as referred by the SCDSS Director or Deputy Director of Child Welfare.	
Policy Administration:	
The Office of Family Engagement and System Alignment, in the Child Welfare Services Division, is the owner of this policy.	
Policy Guidelines:	
A. Safe Systems Analysis Review Case Selection Criteria	This section describes the methodology employed when selecting cases for review. Cases selected for the Safe Systems Analysis (SSA) review process represent a sample of cases within the Department of Social Services. The Cross Systems Performance team will not review every case that meets the defined criteria below but aim to review a representative sample that yields meaningful results. 1. Child Fatalities that meet the following criteria may be reviewed utilizing the Safe Systems Analysis Review process: a. Child Fatalities investigated for child maltreatment with anyone in the household having history with SCDSS within a year. 2. Out of Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN) cases that meet the following criteria may be reviewed utilizing the Safe Systems Analysis process: a. Licensed providers who have received three (3) or more accepted intake reports within a 60-day period. 3. Occurrences of Placement Instability that meet the following criteria may be reviewed utilizing the Safe Systems Analysis process:

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	a. Children that have experienced five (5) or more overnight stays in DSS county offices or their equivalent; and/or b. Children that have repeated foster care placements of seven (7) or less days. 4. Any case may be reviewed by the Cross Systems Performance team utilizing the Safe Systems Analysis process if requested by the DSS Deputy Director of Child Welfare Services or their designee.
B. Safe Systems Analysis Goals and Objectives	1. During Safe Systems Analysis, the following tasks will occur: a. The Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator will complete a desk review including, but not limited to the following items: i. CAPSS review of all relevant SCDSS history; ii. Physical case file review; iii. Review of applicable facility records (e.g. communication logs, progress notes, video recordings, etc.); iv. Review of applicable SCDSS Policies and Work Aids. b. The Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator will request to meet with and debrief SCDSS staff who have engaged in current or historical work with the family. The analyst will provide the following information: i. The specific case identification number(s) under review ii. A copy of Safe Systems Analysis Information prior to the debrief. Note: Any staff requested to debrief with the Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator may voluntarily consent or decline the entire debriefing process or individual questions asked during debriefing. c. At the discretion of the Cross Systems Performance Manager, the Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator may request to debrief external partners involved with the case. This may include: i. Mental Health Professionals, Medical Professionals, and Law Enforcement. d. During the debrief process, the Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator will: i. lead the interviewee through the case timeline(s), ii. examine all circumstances surrounding the case, iii. seek to uncover and understand important systemic issues surrounding the case work (e.g., understanding why and/or how decisions were made, identifying environmental cues and cognitive factors, etc.). iv. provide information on access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all SCDSS staff who participate.

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	2. The Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator is responsible for notifying the Cross Systems Performance Manager of any imminent concerns that become apparent from desk reviews or debriefs within one (1) business day of becoming aware of the imminent concern. The Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator and Cross Systems Performance Manager will complete a supervisory consultation to determine next steps. 3. The Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator is responsible for the completion and closing of the Safe Systems Analysis by: a. Compiling and completing the abbreviated Safe Systems Improvement Tool; b. Inputting all relevant outcomes into the SSA database for storage and retrieval; and c. Linking the relevant information to the SSA strategic Dashboard.
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Forms:	N/A
Related Management Reports:	N/A

Glossary:
Improvement Opportunities: significant facts learned from a case review including misses, oversights, and general case deficits Safe Systems Analysis: a process by which SCDSS examines child fatality cases for systems learning to be applied to future policy and practice guidance Cross Systems Performance Program Coordinator: SCDSS staff who reviews child fatality cases using the Safe Systems Analysis process Safe Systems Improvement Tool (SSIT): a multi-purpose information integration tool whose purpose is to support a culture of safety, system improvement, and resilience. Completion of the instrument is accomplished in order to allow for the effective communication of influencing factors on a case at all levels of the system