

Safety Assessment Worksheet & Instructions

Overview:

The following strengths based Safety Assessment Worksheet has been developed to guide workers through the Safety Assessment Process. The worksheet is comprised of sixteen factors that relate to safety, including four safety threats and twelve protective factors. The worksheet also includes space to document the safety determination for each child in the home and the space to develop the safety plan. Definitions of the key terms used within the Safety Assessment Worksheet as well as directions for each part of the worksheet have been provided.

Definitions

Safety Assessment Process: The on-going method of determining the immediate safety of the child based on the presence of any of the sixteen safety factors. There are three phases to this process: Safety Assessment, Safety Decision and Safety Plan:

- **Safety Assessment:** The process by which a social service professional systematically evaluates, at every contact, the conditions in which a child resides in order to determine whether or not it is safe for the child to remain in those current conditions. When conducting a safety assessment, the assessor will determine the presence of safety threats and/or protective factors currently in operation within the family.
 - **Safety Threats:** The conditions or actions within the child's current living situation that represent the likelihood of immediate physical or emotional harm to the children.
 - **Protective Factors:** Factors or resources within the child's current living situation that promote children's safety by directly mitigating the threat to safety. In order for protective factors to be effective, the person responsible must be willing and able to act to ensure the safety of the children.
- **Safety Decision:** a determination that is made as to whether or not a child is safe, conditionally safe, or unsafe in their current living environment.
 - **Safe:** A determination that is made when there are no apparent threats of immediate harm present to the child at this time. No safety plan is required.
 - **Conditionally Safe:** A determination that is made when there are protective factors identified and in operation for each safety threat present. When a child is determined to be conditionally safe, a safety plan must be developed.
 - **Unsafe:** A determination that is made when there are safety threats present that cannot be mitigated by protective factors. Arrangements for substitute care must be made immediately.

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- **Safety Plan:** The written document that identifies the immediate steps that must be undertaken in order for a child to remain safe in the current living situation (in home or out of home). A safety plan must be specific, measurable and agreed upon by all parties with a role in assuring the child's safety.
 - **Initial Safety Plan:** The first safety plan that is developed to ensure the safety of the child. The initial plan is amended as needed, based on any changes to the safety of the child. If changes are not needed, that plan may remain the same.
 - **Responsible Persons:** Any individual(s) who have a role and responsibility to assure the child's safety for compliance with the plan; types of Responsible Persons could include family, caregivers, kin, household members, service providers, resource families, agency staff, and/or any other identified resources. Action steps identified in the safety plan must be agreed upon by all of the identified responsible persons prior to the plan going into effect.
 - **Effective Date:** A developed safety plan becomes effective when all persons responsible have agreed to the conditions outlined in the safety plan. This date should be included in documentation within the case record and on the safety assessment worksheet.

Directions for Completion of the Safety Assessment Worksheet

Step 1:

- Factors 1 through 4 - Safety Threats - Consider every safety threat for each child in the home. If a threat to safety is present, check "yes," then complete the process for identifying a protective factor found below.

Protective Factor –

- A. Determine if Protective Factor is present.
- B. If there are Protective Factors present, indicate what the protective factor is, the person associated with it; and how that protective factor mitigates the threat to safety. If a safety threat is identified for multiple children in the home, the worker must make an additional assessment to discern if multiple protective factors need to be in place to assure the safety of every child. Once this additional assessment is complete and all necessary protective factors have been recorded, proceed to step 3.
- C. If there are no Protective Factors present, document accordingly in the space provided.

Step 2:

- Factors 3 – 15 – Protective Factors – Consider each protective factor for each child in the home. If a Protective Factor is present, check "yes." If a protective factor is not present, check "no" then complete the process for documenting the existing safety threat found below.

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If a protective factor checked no, this indicates that a safety threat is present. Workers should assess for the presence of an alternative protective factor that could mitigate the safety threat. Both the nature of the safety threat and the additional protective factor should be documented in the space provided.

Step 3:

- Factor 16 – Other – This factor could be used to identify additional protective factors or safety threats operating within the family. As with the factors listed above, if a safety threat is identified effort should be made to also identify a protective factor to mitigate that threat.

Step 4:

Use the information found in Step 1 e.g. any safety threat checked yes or protective factor checked no, and the definitions of safe, conditionally safe and unsafe found above to determine the level safety for each child within the home. Safety decisions should be child specific. Indicate the safety decision by recording an S, C or U in the space provided for each child. Additional space has been provided to include the rationale behind each safety decision.

Step 5:

Identify the immediate steps that need to be in place to ensure safety of each child in the living situation. Each action should be specific and measurable and must be able to be in place within 24 hours. Further, a Responsible Person must be identified for each action listed within the safety plan. Note: Responsible Person's agreement to the safety plan must be documented in the case record. Agencies may opt to have Responsible Persons initial next to their identified action steps to indicate their agreement.

Note: It is possible for the safety plan to address the safety concerns for multiple children. In this instance, all of the children's names would be included in the identifying information section of the Safety Plan. If one safety plan cannot effectively meet the children's safety needs, multiple safety plans should be developed. In this instance, only the applicable child's name would be included in the identifying information.

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Assessment Safety Factors

Child Name:						
Threats to Safety	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Protective Factor
1. There is reasonable cause to suspect that an act of maltreatment has occurred.						
2. Child sexual abuse is suspected and circumstances suggest continued abuse is likely to occur.						
3. Caregiver and/or household member has threatened to harm the child.						
4. Caregiver has known history of child maltreatment or of violence toward others.						
Protective Factors	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Threats to Safety
5. Caregiver describes and acts positively toward child.						
6. Caregiver and/or household member abstains from drug or alcohol use, or uses alcohol or drugs responsibly.						
7. Caregiver and/or household member addresses their own mental and physical health as well as support needs.						
8. Caregiver provides a safe environment for the child.						
9. Caregiver acknowledges their harmful behaviors towards the child.						

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Safety Assessment

Child Name:							
Protective Factors	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Threats to Safety
10. Caregiver plans for and provides appropriate supervision.							
11. Caregiver and/or household member safely manages conflict in relationships, without physical, emotional, or sexual violence.							
12. Caregiver meets immediate needs for food, safe shelter, hygiene, and clothing.							
13. Caregiver meets the child's behavioral, medical and/or special needs.							
14. Family whereabouts are known; family allows access to child; no concern the family will flee.							
15. Child is willing to remain in their current living situation with the caregiver.							
16. Other factors (specify):							
Safety Determination: Safe = S Conditionally Safe = C Unsafe = U							Rationale:

Other facts/comments supporting above determination: _____

The safety determination and rationale must be included in the case record for every contact. If a safety plan exists, this must also be documented in the case record. If the assessment requires no change to the safety decision or plan, this must also be documented in the case record as well as any changes.

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Safety Plan

Case Number: _____

Date of Plan: _____

Child(ren) Name: _____

#	Immediate Steps to Ensure Safety	Person Responsible

Note: If any of the Responsible Persons find themselves unable to fulfill the obligations as detailed by this Safety Plan, they are responsible for contacting the County Children and Youth Agency Immediately.

Signatures

Note: The safety assessment, plan and determination were based on the information known at the time of the assessment and were made in good faith. Supervisor date will be based on when they reviewed, not necessarily when the plan went into place.

Caregiver	Date	Caregiver	Date
Child's (When Appropriate)	Date	Other	Date
Other	Date	Other	Date
Caseworker	Date	Supervisor's	Date

