

**Intake: Determining Child Safety****22-2-2.1****Policy**

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) will utilize the Child Safety Practice Model to conduct all abuse/neglect intakes, inclusive of an investigation and Family Assessment Response (FAR), by gathering information to assess and determine child safety and identify risk.

**Cross Reference:** DCF Policy 22-2, Intake; Child Safety Practice Model/Safety Planning Practice Guide

**ABCD Paradigm**

The ABCD Paradigm is a component of our Child Safety Practice Model. It provides a standardized framework for assessing child safety and shall be utilized on an ongoing basis in our interactions with families as new information becomes available.

The ABCD Paradigm consists of the following areas:

- Adult protective capacity - parents understand their protective role and take action to keep the child safe
- Behaviors that are harmful - harmful behaviors that impact child safety are reduced, controlled, or managed
- Child Vulnerabilities - child vulnerability is understood and parents take action to keep them safe
- Dangerous Conditions - conditions in the home or community that are imminent, out of control or severe are addressed to mitigate danger to the child.

**Cross Reference:** Child Safety Practice Model/Safety Planning Practice Guide

**Structured Decision-making (SDM) Safety Assessment**

The Social Worker (SW) shall assess the safety of all the children in the home during the initial and ongoing face-to-face contact with the child(ren) and family. The information gathered through interviews, observations, case record review, and collateral contacts must be assessed and utilized to complete the initial Structured Decision Making (SDM) Safety Assessment Tool.

The SDM Safety Assessment results shall be documented in the computer system within five days of the initial face-to-face contact with the family.

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making  
(SDM)  
Safety  
Assessment  
Continued**

The Social Work Supervisor (SWS) shall approve the SDM Safety Assessment no later than five days after its completion.

A new SDM Safety Assessment shall be completed whenever new information (circumstances or conditions) becomes available that suggests a change to the child(ren)'s safety. The case shall not be closed unless the SDM Safety Assessment is "Safe."

When completing the SDM Safety Assessment, there are three safety decision options:

- Safe - children are safe - no safety concerns noted
- Conditionally Safe -safety factors are present, but children can remain in home with protective safety interventions in place
- Unsafe -safety factors are present, but no interventions are available that can provide appropriate protection. Removal/ placement is pursued.

A track change to investigations shall occur for all FAR cases with an SDM Safety Assessment decision as conditionally safe or unsafe.

SWS and Program Supervisors (PS) must be consulted when a safety factor is identified, including use of an alternate caregiver arrangement when appropriate.

A Considered Removal-Child and Family Team Meeting (CR-CFTM) is required when safety factors are identified and must be held within two days of the identification of a safety factor and preferably before a safety plan is created. Reasons for not conducting a CR-CFTM must be documented in CT-KIND.

**Cross Reference:** CR-CFTM Policy, Alternative Caregiver Arrangement (Policy 21-21)

**Safety  
Planning**

When DCF is considering implementing a safety plan, DCF shall utilize the Child Safety Practice Model Framework and the ABCD Paradigm in determining the following:

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- adult protective capacity for all household members and caregivers. Ongoing assessment is required as circumstances within the family change
- whether parental protective capacity is present and sufficient to engage in safety planning efforts

If it is determined there is sufficient protective capacity to engage in safety planning efforts, DCF will:

- engage the family and their supports (formal/informal) to identify safety interventions that would allow the child(ren) to remain safely in the home

Following SWS and PS approval, the interventions shall be documented in the DCF-2180, Safety Plan and signed by all parties.

The content of the safety plan shall be documented in CT-KIND.

All safety plans shall be reviewed and monitored to ensure that the planned interventions are effective in mitigating the safety factors and that all parties involved in the safety plan are following through and cooperating.

All safety plans shall be reviewed and monitored as follows:

- the SW will maintain ongoing contact (face-to-face) with the family (inclusive of children and parent(s)) to assess child safety and review the plan
- frequency and type of visit (announced/unannounced) will be determined in supervision
- the SWS shall conduct biweekly supervision
- all active safety plans will be discussed in supervision with the PS
- no plan shall be resolved without PS review and approval
- the PS shall document the resolved safety plan in CT-KIND
- any safety plan approaching 30 days shall be reviewed by the office director

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Continued**

Safety plans may be revised as necessary to ensure the child's continued safety and may end when safety factors have been addressed or DCF has determined that removal is in the child's best interest.

If the family is not cooperating with the terms of the safety plan, the SWS shall consult with the PS to assess need for court intervention and/or legal consult. If there are changes in the SDM Safety Assessment decision, an updated SDM Safety Assessment is required.

**Cross-reference:** CR-CFTM, Child Safety Practice Model and Safety Planning Practice Guide

**Out of  
Home  
Placement**

If, at any time during DCF involvement, it is determined that a child is at imminent risk of physical harm from the child's surroundings and that immediate removal from such surroundings is necessary to ensure the child's safety, the investigations staff (or ongoing services staff if the case is already opened for child protective services) shall initiate appropriate legal proceedings.

**Legal reference:** C.G.S. section 17a-101g(e)