

## Enhancing Child Safety Decision Making 2014

### Child and Family Services (CFS)

#### **Summary**

The Idaho Child and Family Services Program is enhancing their practice with families to further refine child safety decision making practice with the goal of understanding how family conditions contribute to child safety and ultimately keeping children safe in our community.

#### **Issue**

Child safety is a community issue whereas everyone plays a part in keeping children safe by promoting the strengthening of the family. The role of CFS is to intervene with only those families where a dangerous family condition is present and clearly threatens the safety of the child(ren) in the home.

#### **Background**

CFS perpetually works towards improvement in practice by conducting on-going quality assurance. In the summer of 2012 the program developed a workgroup comprised of child welfare staff from across the state to make recommendations specifically regarding child safety. This workgroup spent many hours working with the National Resource Center for Child Protection. The workgroup has made several recommendations for standards of practice which include the adoption of enhancements to the current practice model. These enhancements are currently being implemented at all levels of child welfare practice.

#### **Rationale**

To meet the ever changing needs of Idaho's children and families CFS continually works towards the use of best practices in the field of child welfare. The enhancements to the current model will:

- Provide consistency in core concepts and definitions
- Require a robust information collection process
- Utilize standardized criteria for differentiation between safe and unsafe children
- Provide clarity in articulating the family conditions which contribute to child safety
- Allow workers to better understand how threats to child safety operate within a family and therefore be able to provide targeted services to assist families in providing for the safety of their children.

#### **Conclusion**

Child and Family Services is committed to their role of assessing child safety in the community and providing services to families and children where threats to child safety are present. Child and Family Services continues to rely on the support from their many community partners to help strengthen families and keep children safe.

#### **Contact**

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