

SAFETY ASSESSMENT SCENARIOS

- Complete the SDM Safety Assessment Tool for each scenario to determine if the child/children are safe, conditionally safe or unsafe.
- Things to consider when completing the Safety Tool:
 - What are the Safety Factors you have identified so far?
 - What Strengths have you identified that can assist with ensuring safety?
 - What Protective Factors have you identified or plan to explore?
 - What other information could the worker have gathered to assist in ensuring safety?
 - Based on the outcome of the Safety Assessment (Safety Tool) do you think that a Safety Plan is needed? If so, what will be included in the plan?
- Email your safety decisions to the trainers.
- You do not need to attach the entire SDM tool, just your final decision for each situation (Safe, Conditionally Safe, or Unsafe)

SITUATION 1

The complainant (a neighbor) stated that this family just moved here from a neighboring county. There are three small children and the parents yell all the time at each other and the children. Today the police were called because the father hit the mother as she was running out the front door with a baby in her arms. The police arrested the father while the mother continued to yell at him, and the children were all crying. The family moved in approximately three weeks ago, and the neighbors have seen both parents with beers in their hands and acting “drunk” while the children were around them.

A search of OASIS revealed that this family had an unfounded “Physical Neglect: Inadequate Supervision” complaint 10 months ago. Then, they moved to the next county with relatives and a “Substance Exposed Infant” report was received. As

a result, a Family Assessment was completed and services were offered, but the documentation stated the family refused services.

In a quick call to local law enforcement, you learn the police did not call CPS when they arrested the father, because the children did not seem to be hurt, and the mother said she was going to call her sister and move back with her in the next county.

When you arrive, the mother and children seem calm. In fact, the baby (about three months old) and the 18 month old are both asleep. The three year old is lying on a blanket on the floor watching TV. The house has very little furniture and is messy, but not dirty, and there is a smell of urine and possibly alcohol.

After letting the mother vent about what happened earlier, you verify that none of the children are hurt. However, there are indicators that the baby was placed at risk of harm. You learn that there is a history of domestic violence in the family. The mother states the father is always remorseful afterwards and she always allows him to come back home. Currently neither parent is working, but relatives have assisted with finances to allow them to continue renting this house. Additionally, his brother, a house painter, has offered her husband a job. They receive SNAP benefits and Medicaid for the children. She admits they both drink “some” but the “real problem” is the husband’s angry outbursts. She says he does not hit the children, but does yell at them.

SITUATION 2:

A guidance counselor has called in a report that a 13 year old student (Cindy) came to school upset and said that her mother slapped her and “threw her into her room.” Cindy appears to have the beginnings of a small bruise and an abrasion near her right temple, a swelling of the right side of her nose, and some scratches on both her arms near the wrists. The counselor has Cindy in her office. The counselor states that Cindy’s mother is at home, but Cindy does not appear to be frightened to go home on the school bus to her house.

You arrive at the home just before Cindy gets off the bus. You tell the mother (Ms. Snow) that you received a complaint regarding bruises and scratches on Cindy and are there to ensure her safety. Upon Cindy's arrival, her injuries are very apparent. You ask the mother to tell you what happened. Then you ask Cindy to tell you what happened. The versions are essentially consistent with minor discrepancies.

You discover that Cindy blames her mother for her parents' divorce two years ago, and the need to move from their old neighborhood and Cindy's friends. They argue often about school, boys, phones, chores, etc. the loss of relationship with her father and the old friends she never sees.

Last night Cindy called her mother the "B" word in front of her two younger brothers, who are present during your conversation and confirm the story. Ms. Snow says she "saw fire" and slapped Cindy (maybe twice) and grabbed her arms and pulled her into her room and shut the door. Cindy was yelling and resisting going into her room.

Through further discussion you learn the children's father has remarried, moved further away, and has not been as attentive in the past few months. Cindy is in a new school and has had to take on more responsibilities around the house "since she is a teen now." The daughter's perception is that her world is "crap," and her mother caused it all. Ms. Snow's perspective is that she is doing the best she can; she has not hit her child before, but she is stressed to the maximum. The children's father used to at least give some relief by taking the kids on weekends but since his remarriage, visits with the children are few and far between. Ms. Snow has a new job she thinks will be a great benefit to the family, but she cannot concentrate due to worrying about the children.

Ms. Snow says there are some relatives in the area, but she does not believe in "airing her dirty laundry." The family is not involved in church or other activities except school.

SITUATION 3:

An anonymous caller states that a four-year-old boy has been left alone in his apartment several times in the past couple of weeks. She hears the two adults who live there with the child go out without him. She said she could not be certain how long he is alone. When it happened again last night, the caller decided to make a report today. She thinks people are “doing drugs” in the apartment and there are people “in and out” all the time, but she is sure that sometimes there is no one there, but the boy, and she hears him crying. The one time the caller offered to help with the boy, she was told to mind her own business.

When you repeatedly knock on the door, a man finally opens it a crack. At first he does not want you to come in, so you state that you have received a call about a boy in the home and you must see if he is okay. In the apartment you see a boy lying on the couch and he does not sit up. The man says his name is Vince and the boy is “Teeny” (he has never heard the child called anything else). In further conversation you learn that Vince “dates” Teeny’s mom, who has gone to the store, and he often stays with Teeny while she is out. He does not think Teeny is ever left alone, and he is sure the “old bag” across the hall called because she doesn’t like them.

While you are talking, Teeny’s mother comes home. She is angry and orders you out of her apartment. She is very agitated and nothing you say seems to calm her down, so you leave. What you notice about Teeny while all this has been going on is that he watched everything but never spoke or reacted to any of the adults in the room, including his mother when she entered. You did not have an opportunity to interact with him.