

In-Home Criteria & Conditions for Return

There is a home like setting where the parent(s) and child(ren) live?

This involves judgment around determining if where a parent lives is suitable to putting an in-home safety plan in place. The critical issue has to do with sustainability. In other words, is there confidence that the place where a parent is residing is stable enough to be able to establish and sustain an in-home safety plan over a reasonable period of time?

This does not necessarily preclude motels or shelters from potential in-home safety planning locations. However, there needs to be a reliance that the place where a parent is staying is not so temporary – that there is a reasonable way to sustain the use of an in-home safety plan in that location.

A parent may be living with relatives or others – this same scrutiny is necessary about the likelihood that the parent will be able to, and will live, in this residence. There must be some established arrangement that would allow for the ability to manage an in-home safety plan.

Justification for Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

- Residence has been established for sustained period;
- Parents have history of being able to maintain a place to live;
- Parents may have housing difficulties BUT there is no indication that repeated difficulties with maintaining housing is characteristic of larger adult functioning issues;
- Parents can be counted on to continue residing in current location;
- No indication that parents will flee;
- Residence (e.g home, trailer, apartment, hotel, shelter situation- in specific cases) is sufficient to support the use of an in-home safety plan;
- Co-habitable situation (friends, immediate, or extended family) acceptable depending on who others are who reside in the home

- The home is adequate in terms of space, conditions, utilities, etc.

Justification for Use of an Out of Home Safety Plan:

- No stable residence
- Living situation clearly transitional and unpredictable
- Temporary arrangement with relatives or others that is likely to change;
- Residence is dangerous, unfit home, structurally hazardous;
- There is insufficient financial resources to provide and maintain living environment, and the lack of resources cannot be quickly compensated for with in-home safety services; and
- Parents are unable or unwilling to use family financial resources to provide a safe home and necessary protection and care for their children.

Conditions for Return:

CFR statements associated with a parent's residence should reflect what would need to exist in comparison to what was determined to be the justification for an out of home safety plan. Consider the following as a starting place. CFR must be applicable to the family you are working with.

- Parent [name] has a stable residence in which to put an in-home safety plan in place;
- Parent [name] maintains a permanent residence and there is confidence that the living situation is stable;
- The condition of the residence is structurally adequate [describe what specifically about the condition of residence must be different] to safely put an in-home safety plan in place; and
- Parent [name] is able to discuss having a reasonable plan for how his/she will use resources to maintain a stable residence.

The home is calm enough to allow safety service providers & activities to occur?

The specific judgment is about whether the home is such that it is reasonable to expect and conclude that an in-home safety plan and safety service providers would not be interfered with; impeded in being able to carry out planned activities. To have confidence in establishing and sustaining an in-home safety plan, the home environment needs to have some semblance of routine and predictability.

The home environment must be absent from a high frequency of people coming and going; people are not aggressively arguing or physically fighting; there are not day to day crises that disrupt home life. There is some understanding about each day being somewhat the same and without uproar or circumstances that would impede the safety plan and safety service providers.

Justification for Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

- The home environment may have aspects that are out of control BUT the circumstances are calm enough to be amenable to being organized, and can be sufficiently controlled and managed by in-home safety services;
- The apparent crisis is situational and acute and in-home safety services are sufficient to address/ decrease crisis;
Overall home environment is stable enough to accommodate in-home safety services at the required level and assure the personal safety of safety service providers;
- Behavior and emotions may be out of control but generally calm enough (not aggravated, extreme, all consuming) to be controlled and managed by in-home safety services.
- Some semblance of overall family and individual family member routines, schedules, daily life that supports the ability to develop an in-home safety plan targeting specific days and times;
- Family situation is generally predictable from week to week;
- While parent functioning may be out of control in certain areas affecting child safety, there is a reasonable understanding of how the family operates/manages on a routine basis;

- A reasonable level of reliability in the day to day dynamics of the home situation and interaction among family members.

Justification for Why an In-Home Safety Plan could NOT be Used:

- The home is chaotic; disruptive; unpredictable; has no routine and organization;
- There are numbers of other people or families living in the home, or other home environment issues which compromise use of safety service providers
- Parent or other person in the home is directly threatening, abhors the child, blames the child for CPS involvement and indicates taking revenge or punishing the child;
- Parent or other person in the home demonstrates bizarre, cruel, aggressive or threatening actions or behaviors toward other household members or children in particular;
- Violence in the household is completely unchecked and/or fighting among family members/ others in the household is pervasive OR totally unpredictable and therefore uncontrollable. In-home safety services cannot sufficiently control this behavior OR there is a belief that safety service providers would not be safe;
- A child is extremely fearful of the home situation or people in the home or frequenting the home and this fear can be observed;
- Parent behavior is extreme and so out of control (constant/ completely unmanaged substance use, overwhelming depression, etc.) that in-home safety services cannot sufficiently control and manage the behavior as required to assure safety;
- A child's injury has not been explained. There is firm belief that someone in the home or associated with the home caused the injury and the parents' are not engaged in the assessment process;
- Parent or someone else in the home hates the child; is constantly angry with the child; is routinely provoked by the child; sees the child in such extremely negative ways that anything the child does can result in a physical reaction toward the child. In this situation, emotional abuse is active. This attitude is so extreme that any time the child is with the person in a supervised or unsupervised situation, a reaction toward the child could occur.
- Unknown or questionable people having access to the household at any given time;

- Individuals who may be residing off and on in the home but who cannot be confirmed and/or accounted for because they have been avoiding contact;
- There is no apparent structure or routine in the household that can be established on a day to day basis, and therefore an in-home safety plan cannot be developed to accommodate the inconsistency;
- There is no clear sense about how danger is occurring in the household generally on a day to day basis, and therefore in-home safety services cannot sufficiently target specific days and times when threats may become active; and
- The interactions among family members are so unpredictable that in-home safety services cannot sufficiently control and manage behaviors on a consistent basis.

Conditions for Return:

CFR statements associated with the home environment should reflect what would need to be different in comparison to what was determined to be the justification for an out of home safety plan. Consider the following as a starting place. CFR must be applicable to the family you are working with.

Examples:

- The home environment is stable and calm [describe what would be different] enough for in-home safety services to be put into place;
- Specific individuals [identify and describe what was problematic about them being in the home] are no longer residing in the home and the parent's [name] commitment to keeping them out of the home can sufficiently be supported by in-home safety services;
- Parent [name or other individual in the home] is no longer expressing or behaving in such a way that is actively threatening toward the child [describe specifically what would be different that was preventing in-home safety plan], expresses acceptance and concern for child; and safety services are sufficient for monitoring and modifying caregiver behavior as necessary;
- Specific triggers for violence in the home are understood and recognized by the parent, and there is a judgment that in-home safety services can sufficiently monitor and manage behavior to control impulsivity and prevent aggressiveness;
- Parent [name] acknowledges the need for change and is demonstrating progress toward addressing impulsivity and aggressive behavior, and there is a judgment that in-home safety services can provide sufficient monitoring of family member interactions [describe specific what

would be monitored in terms of situations and interactions] and manage behavior [describe what specific behavior must be managed];

- Child [name] no longer expresses fear of the home situation and this change is believable and in relation to other changes in the home;
- Child [name] no longer expresses fear being around the parent, and in-home safety services can be a sufficient social connection for the child to monitor his/her feelings and/or emotional reactions;
- Parent [name] acknowledges the needed change, is actively taking steps to make changes and is making progress toward gaining control [describe specifically what at a minimum would need to be seen for in-home safety planning], and in-home safety services can sufficiently manage the behavior [describe specifically what behavior must be managed];
- There is an acknowledgment from parents that a child's injury was not accidental; parents express remorse and are actively engaged in intervention;
- Parents are open to discussing the circumstances surrounding the child's injury, they are cooperative and actively engaged in intervention, and are demonstrating progress toward achievement of the expected outcomes.
- There is enough of an understanding regarding the home environment, dynamics of family interactions and caregiver functioning that in-home safety services can sufficiently supervise and monitor the situation and/or manage behavior and/or manage stress and/or provide basic parenting assistance [describe specifically what safety services would be necessary];
- Parent [name] interactions with a child during visitation reveals a positive change in perception and attitude toward the child [describe specifically what change would be necessary to implement an in-home safety plan]; and
- Parent [name] has expressed a desire to improve the quality of the relationship with his/her child, and is demonstrates enough notable progress toward having a change in perception and more positive interactions that in-home safety services and sufficiently assure safety.
- The home environment is reasonable consistent on a day to day basis;
- There is an increased structure in the home environment and a general routine that makes it possible to plan for the use of in-home safety services;
- There is no indication that there are unknown, questionable or threatening people in and of the home on an inconsistent basis;

- All individuals residing in the home are known to the agency, cooperative and open to intervention;
- There is an increased understanding how impending danger is manifested on a day to day basis, and there is a judgment that in-home safety services can be put into place at the times and level of effort required to assure child safety; and
- There is an understanding regarding when impending danger is more likely to become active and in-home safety services can be put into place at the times and level of effort required to sufficiently control and manage out of control emotions, perceptions and/or behavior [describe specifically what would need to be controlled].

At least one parent is willing to cooperate with the safety plan?

Willingness to accept and cooperate with the use of an in-home safety plan should be understood in relationship to a caregiver participating in safety planning and allowing – not interfering - with the safety services and those who are a part of safety plans.

Willingness can exist when agreement with reasons for safety plans do not.

Willingness is qualified by parent understanding what the safety plan will entail; acceptance of who will be involved; the frequency and intrusiveness during daily and weekly home life that is necessary; and acceptance of the plan and people involved with no intent to disrupt the plan. There must be confidence that a parent is willing to cooperate with a safety plan to assure sustainability.

Justification for Use of an In-home Safety Plan:

- Agrees to and cooperates with an in home plan;
- Understands what is required and agrees to allow others into the home at the level required;
- Avoids interfering;
- Open to exploring in-home safety options;
- Can participate in discussions;
- Does not reject or avoid involvement;
- Willing to consider what it would take to keep the child in the home;
- Is believable when communicating a willingness for cooperating with an in-home safety plan;
- Is open to the parameters of an in-home safety plan, arrangements and safety service providers;
- Parent demonstrates an investment in having the child remain in the home.

Justification for Why an In-Home Safety Plan could NOT be Used:

- Argumentative and confrontational during discussions regarding the use of an in-home safety plan – is unwilling to discuss what it would take to keep the child in the home;
- Demonstrates signs of fake cooperation;
- Not accepting when confronted with the realities of what an in-home plan would

involve;

- Open and assertive hostility regarding the use of an in-home safety plan;
- Assertively justifies behavior and openly and adamantly rejects need for safety plan;
- Refuses access and/or only interacts minimally to avoid trouble;
- Expresses no willingness to do anything for the child;
- Expresses a desire to hurt the child and does not want the child around;
- Does not want to care for the child and feels no attachment; and
- Feels that he or she may or will hurt the child and requests placement.

Conditions for Return:

CFR statements associated with a parent’s lack of willingness should reflect what would be different in comparison to what was determined to be the justification for why an in-home safety plan could not be used. Consider the following as a starting place. CFR must be applicable to the family you are working with.

Examples:

- Parent [name] is open to having candid discussion about the reason for a safety plan and what the safety plan would involve regarding child [name] safety and the need for a safety plan;
- Parent [name] expresses genuine remorse about [specific maltreatment] toward child [name] and is willingness to discuss the need for a safety plan;
- Parent [name] expresses a genuine interest in doing what is necessary to have the child [name] return to the home; and
- Parent [name] is willing to allow for safety services in the home and demonstrates openness to cooperate with whatever level of involvement from safety service providers is required to assure child safety.
- Parent can talk about how he/she felt before when not being willing to cooperate with an in-home safety plan, and why/how he/she feels different.

The necessary safety activities and resources are available to implement the plan?

Sufficient resources relates specifically to having adequate safety services and safety service providers at the level required to sufficiently manage child safety in the home.

Sufficient resources include having access to safety services that are appropriate for how impending danger is occurring. This judgment requires that safety service providers are committed to participating in a safety plan and have been verified as suitable.

Safety service resources (providers) must also be available and accessible at the specific times and for the duration necessary for managing child safety.

Justification for Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

- There are adequate resources for an in-home safety plan;
- Identified safety services that are available, match up with how impending danger is occurring;
- Safety Services and corresponding providers are logical given family circumstances and what specifically must be controlled and managed to assure child safety;
- There is confidence that safety service providers are open and understand their role for assisting in an in-home safety plan;
- There is confidence that safety service providers will be committed to assisting with an in-home safety plan;
- Safety service providers can be verified as suitable , and;
- Safety services are immediately available and accessible in time and proximity.

Justification for Why an In-Home Safety Plan could NOT be Used:

- There are insufficient in-home safety service resources available;
- Some safety service resources are available BUT the service that can be provided does not logically match up with the impending danger, and;
- Safety services are not fully accessible at the time necessary to sufficiently control and manage impending danger.

Conditions for Return and Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

CFR statements associated with the sufficiency of resources should reflect what would need to exist in comparison to what was determined to be the justification for an out of home safety plan. Consider the following as a starting place. CFR must be applicable to the family you are working with.

Examples:

- There are sufficient safety service resources at the level of effort necessary to manage behavior and/or provide social connections and/or provide basic parenting assistance etc. [identify what specific safety service you would need to manage safety in the home].

Understanding how Safety Threats Operate in the Family/Basis for Child Safety Planning

People in the Family

- Who is creating or allowing the safety threat?
- What are they doing or not doing?
- Which children are affected?
- When is the behavior or safety threat occurring? (specific times, days, etc?)

Conditions in the Family

- What is contributing to the behavior or safety threat? (precipitants or family condition)
- How often is the threat occurring?
- How long has the family condition or safety threat been occurring?
- How pervasive or persistent is the family condition or safety threat?

Safety Services and Activities

Actions or Services to Control or Manage Threatening Behaviors

These services address all behaviors including aggressive, passive or the absence of behavior. Examples:

- Out-patient or in-patient medical treatment
- Substance abuse intervention, detoxification
- Emergency medical care
- Emergency mental health care

Actions or Services Providing Social Support

These services are useful with parents failing to meet basic protective responsibilities, parents overwhelmed with parenting responsibilities, and developmentally disabled parents.

Examples:

- Neighbor or Relative Visiting
- Basic parenting assistance and teaching
- Homemaker services
- Supervision and monitoring
- Churches and neighborhood associations

Actions or Services that Can Briefly Separate the Parent and Child

These services provide respite for both parents and children.

Examples:

- Planned parental absence from home
- Respite care
- Daycare
- After school care
- Planned activities for the children
- Short term out-of-home placement of child: weekends; several days; few weeks

Actions or Services that will Manage Crises

These services are intended to halt a crisis and return a family to a state of calm.

Examples:

- Crisis intervention
- Counseling
- Resource acquisition, obtaining financial help; help with basic parenting tasks

Actions or Services to Provide Resources

These services provide practical help to the family and without it the child's safety is threatened.

Examples:

- Resource acquisition, obtaining financial help, help with basic needs
- Transportation services
- Employment assistance
- Housing Assistance

Adapted from: http://www.actionchildprotection.org/documents/2009/pdf/The_Guide.pdf
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