



Child Safety: A Guide for Judges and Attorneys: www.americanbar.org

safe children | strong families | supportive communities

Quick Sheets



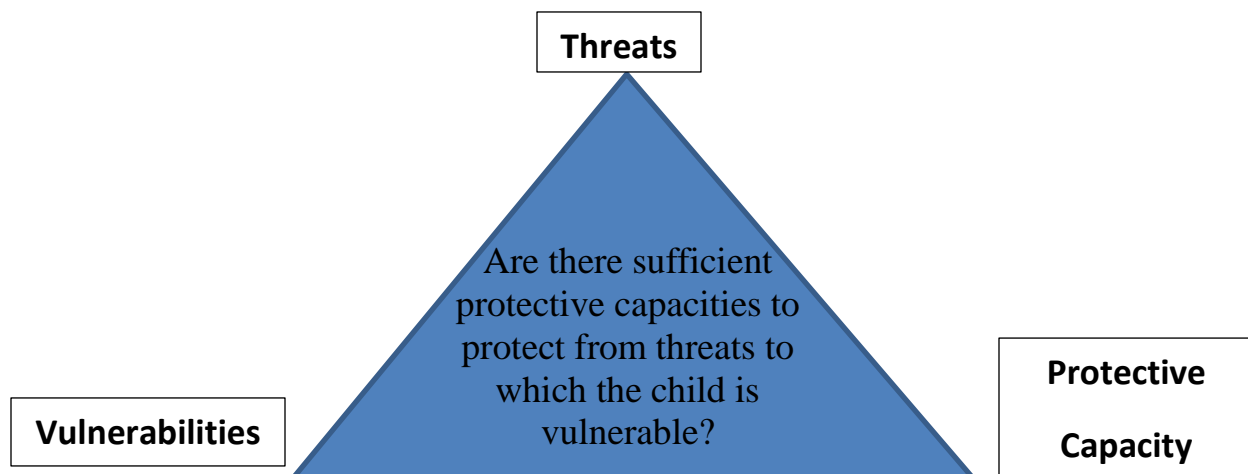
Threats:
Specific, observable, out of control, immediate or imminent, and severe



Vulnerability:
Is this child vulnerable to this threat?



Protective factors:
Behavioral, cognitive, and emotional characteristics



Safe = no threats, child is not vulnerable to threat, or there is sufficient protective capacity to control threats

Not safe = threats exist to which child is vulnerable, and parents have insufficient protective capacity to control threats

Assessing Safety: **Key questions for gathering information**

Who do I need information from?

What is the nature and extent of the alleged maltreatment?

What are the circumstances surrounding the maltreatment?

How does the child function on a daily basis?

How is the child disciplined in the home?

What are the overall parenting practices like in the home?

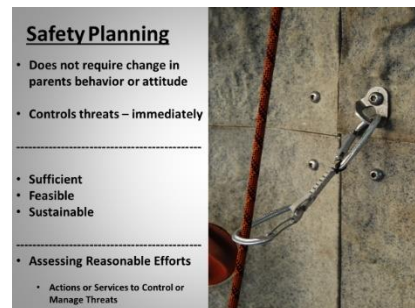
How are the parents functioning outside their role as parent?



Safety Planning and Case Planning

Safety Plan – In Home:

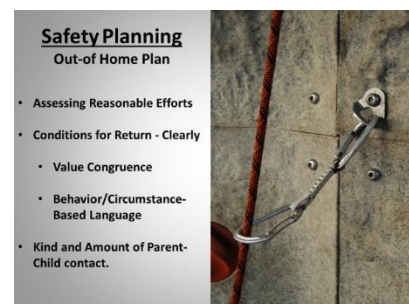
- Sufficient
- Feasible
- Sustainable



Safety Plan – Out-of-Home (Conditions for Return)

Express conditions of Return:

- Clearly
- With Value Congruence (based on Assessment of Safety)
- Behavior/Circumstance based language



Case Planning

- Use Safety Framework to design case plan
- Looking toward the court and department exiting the family
- Usually requires changes in parental behavior



Visitation Plans

- Assess – Learn – Practice – Demonstrate
- Quick to start
- Include siblings
- Alternative Contact
- Written Plan – Court Order
- Right of Family – Not a carrot-and-stick
- Explain supervision
 - How will it progress?
 - If-then statements.



Assessing for Reunification: “Why can’t the child(ren) go home today?”

- Have conditions changed enough to support and In-Home safety plan?
 - Can the plan be put in place; and can it work until it is no longer needed?
- Observe visits for information to support assessment of parenting progress.
- Parent attitudes re: threats and protective capacity.
- Is team preparing care provider to support reunification?
- Recommendation independent and supported?
- Reunification is a Plan, not an event.



Evaluating Progress on case plan

- Reduction of threats? Emergence of new threats?
- Status of parents' protective capacity?
- Current information for answers?
- Challenge parties to resolve conflicts in understanding
- In no progress, why?
 - Seek information from the parents.



Terminating Jurisdiction

- Threats eliminated
- Protective capacity enhanced to control threats
- Combination of both

