

Action Child Protection

Florida Department of Children and Families Case Review July 2015

Review Completed by Action for Child Protection

Southeast Region Overview

Date: 7/1/2015

Overview and Method

Action for Child Protection, Inc. completed a case record review requested by the Florida Department of Children and Families to assess the implementation of the Florida Safety Methodology. Cases were randomly selected from three regions in Florida and the sample was provided to Action for Child Protection. Cases were reviewed off-site by Action staff utilizing Qualtrics survey software and FSN access provided by the Department.

This report provides:

- Summary of key findings for the five main focus points of the review: Present Danger, Information Collection, Impending Danger, Safety Determination and Safety Planning.
- Data profile for cases reviewed within the South East Region for CPI.

Sample Size: 31 Assessments

Present Danger Assessment

Data Summary

- Total of 5 (16%) cases were identified by the review team case information indicated present danger.
- Total of 7 (23%) cases were identified by the worker indicated present danger.
- This resulted in a difference of 2 (7%) cases between the review teams identification of present danger and the worker identification of present danger.
- Total of 6 (19%) cases were identified as not having information in the present danger assessment or case record to indicate an assessment of present danger was concluded.

Strengths

- There were several cases where the present danger assessment provided specific detail regarding the workers assessment to support the assessment.
- There were several cases where domestic violence was alleged and the worker assessment reflected good quality and understanding regarding domestic violence.

Areas for Consideration

- There was one case where the present danger assessment concluded that there was no present danger, yet there was a subsequent present danger plan developed.

- There were several cases with multiple reports where present danger assessments were not conducted.
- In some cases, present danger safety plans were developed despite the workers assessment that there was no present danger identified.

Information Collection

Data Summary

- 62% of the cases reviewed were found to have sufficient information collection.

Strengths

- Information collection for child functioning, adult functioning, maltreatment, and nature of maltreatment were similarly rated for sufficiency.
- Several cases were found to have sufficient information for all domains.
- Several cases reviewed were found to have adequate and good quality information.

Areas for Consideration

- Information collection for adult functioning was determined to be the lowest and often found to be associated to lack of further engagement or contact with families after initial contact, regardless of if there was or was not present danger.

Impending Danger Assessment

Data Summary

- Total of 5 (16%) cases were identified by the review team as impending danger.
- Total of 3 (10%) cases were identified by the worker as impending danger.
- This resulted in a difference of **2 (6%)** cases between what the review team identified as impending danger and the worker identified as impending danger.
- Total of 7 (23%) cases were identified by the review team as not containing sufficient information to determine impending danger.

Strengths

- Cases where information was determined to be of good quality and sufficient supported the identification of caregiver protective capacities and the danger threats.
- When danger threats were identified, high degree of consistency with review team in the identification of an accurate danger threat.

Areas for Consideration

- The assessment of impending danger, including information collection, in several cases was not indicated. Often times these cases were cases where the worker had identified preset danger and the FFA and danger threat identified were based upon information at present danger.
- In cases where there was substantial history, the analysis of the history and the current family conditions, was absent.

Safety Decision

Data Summary

- For all cases reviewed the reviewers found that *62% of the cases that were identified as safe by the worker were accurate.*
- In 23% of the total cases reviewed, the review team was not able to identify if the safety decision (either safe or unsafe) was accurate based upon the information in the case record.
- The review team identified 4 cases where children were determined to be unsafe. The workers identified 1 case where children were determined to be unsafe.

Strengths

- Several cases where information was sufficient, the safety decision was accurate.
- When children were found to be unsafe by the worker, there was a high degree of consistency with the review team safety determination.

Areas for Consideration

- Several cases lacked information to inform the safety decision for impending danger.
- Several cases where the worker identified the children as safe, despite there being a safety plan in place or other measures, such as a relative caring for the children.

Safety Planning

Data Summary

- A total of 1 case was reviewed for safety plans. In those cases, 100% were identified as having detail and sufficiency to control for danger threats.
- For applicable cases, conditions for return were logical, attainable, and relevant 100% of the time.

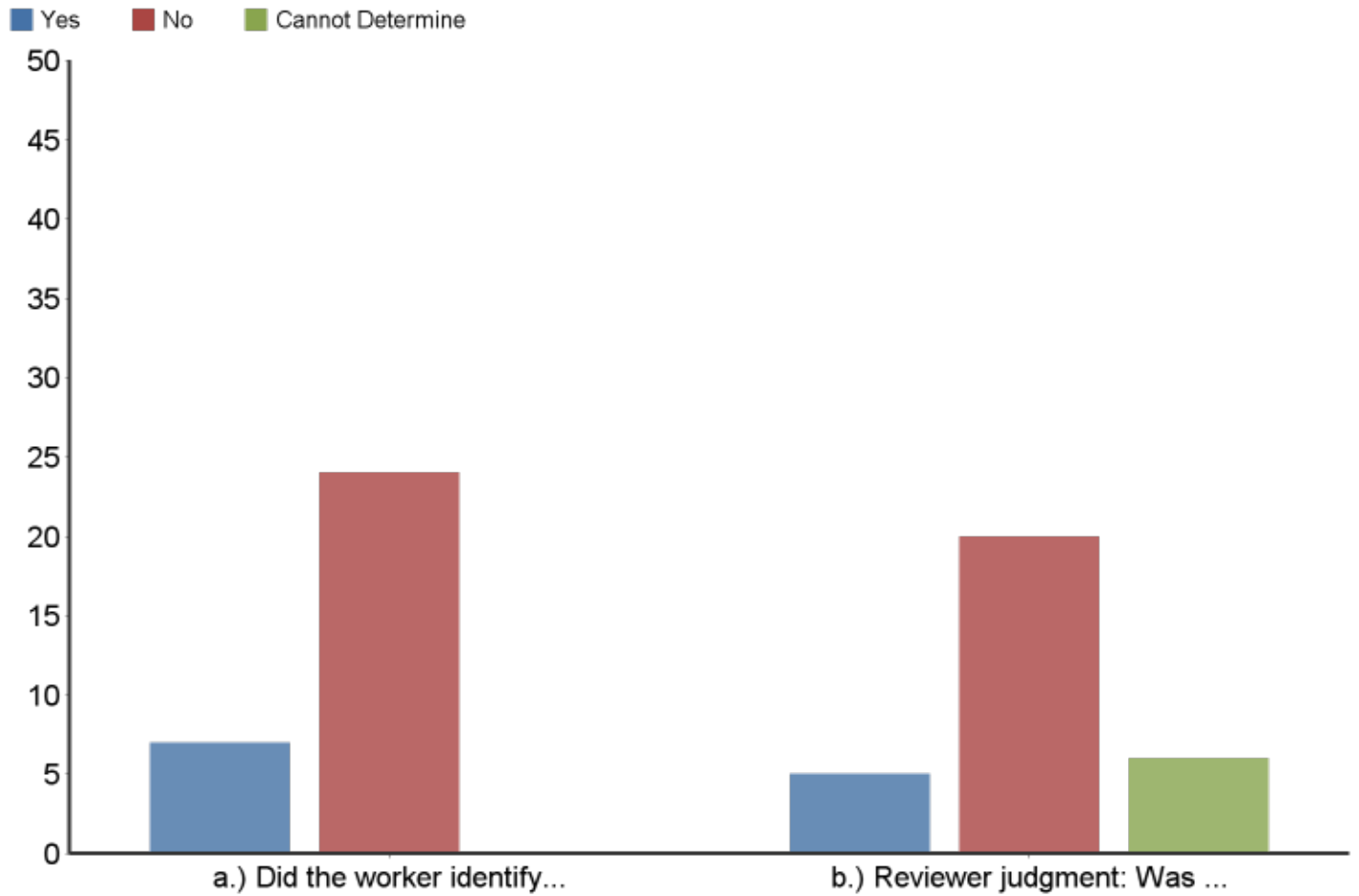
Strengths

- For cases where information was available, the safety planning analysis were supported.

Areas for Consideration

- Conditions for return were often treatment focused and not related to the safety planning analysis.

Present Danger Assessment





#	Question	Yes	No	Cannot Determine	Response	Average Value
1	a.) Did the worker identify present danger at any point in the investigation process?	7	24	-	31	1.77
2	b.) Reviewer judgment: Was there information to indicate present danger in this case?	5	20	6	31	2.03



Which of the following Safety Threats were identified due to present danger? Check all that apply. If present danger has not been identified, leave Worker Identified column blank. Identify any present danger safety threats you believe existed in the case.

#	Question	Reviewer Identified	Worker Identified	Response	Average Value
1	Parent/Legal Guardian's intentional and willful act caused serious physical injury to the child or the caregiver intended to seriously injure the child.	1	2	3	1.67
2	Child has a serious illness or injury (indicative of child abuse) that is unexplained, or the parent/legal guardian/caregiver explanations are inconsistent with the illness or injury.	1	1	2	1.50
3	The child's physical living conditions are hazardous and a child has already been seriously injured or will likely be seriously injured. The living conditions seriously endanger a child's physical health.	-	-	-	-
4	There are reports of serious harm and the child's whereabouts cannot be ascertained and/or there is reason to believe that the family is about to flee to avoid agency intervention and /or refuses access to the child and the reported concern is significant and indicates harm.	-	-	-	-
5	Parent/Legal Guardian is not meeting the child's essential medical needs and the child is/has already been harmed or will likely be seriously harmed.	-	-	-	-
6	Child shows serious emotional symptoms requiring intervention and/or lacks behavioral control and/or exhibits self-destructive behavior that the parent/legal guardian is unwilling or unable to manage.	-	-	-	-
7	Parent/Legal Guardian is violent, impulsive, or acting dangerously in ways that seriously harmed the child or will likely seriously harm the child.	5	5	10	1.50
8	Parent/Legal Guardian is not meeting child's basic and essential needs for food clothing and/or supervision and the child is/has already been seriously harmed or will likely be seriously harmed.	1	1	2	1.50
9	Parent/Legal Guardian is threatening to seriously harm the child; is fearful he/she will seriously harm the child.	2	3	5	1.60
10	Parent/Legal Guardian views child and/or acts toward the child in extremely negative ways and such behavior has or will result in serious harm to the child.	-	-	-	-
11	Other	-	-	-	-

Did the worker initiate a present danger safety plan when present danger was identified?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		5	71.43%
2	No		2	28.57%
	Total		7	100.00%

Reviewer judgment: Was the present danger safety plan sufficient to control the present danger threats identified?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		3	60.00%
2	No		2	40.00%
	Total		5	100.00%

Reviewer Comments: Present Danger and Present Danger Safety Plan: Include areas of strengths and areas needing attention.

Text Entry

Area of Need: A present danger plan was not needed. The child was in foster care and the visitation was removed as being unsupervised prior to the report being received. The child was at the foster placement and the need was for a change in the impending danger safety plan versus a present danger plan.

Sufficient information provided to justify decision.

Children sheltered with maternal grandparents

Strength: There is good narrative to support the decision regarding no present danger.

There was sufficient information to address present danger.

There was not enough information to determine present danger. The mother was known to the agency so it may be that more information was available but it was not documented.

There seemed to be some conflicting information in the documentation so it was not clear if there was present danger.

Area of Need: The PDA does not provide detail regarding the assessment of present danger and case notes do not address the allegations, in particular the condition of the home-which is reported to be deplorable and to have no food for the children. In addition, the mother and significant other are not tested for substances, yet eventually test positive for substances later in the case with no action taken by the agency.

Initial need was to separate child from mother and father did this.

The present danger determination and present danger safety plan were appropriate.

Present danger assessment does not detail the behavior and parenting which support the lack of present danger.

It appears that the present danger was addressed but it is not clear how it was determined and why no safety plan was put in place.

Documentation was appropriate and provided justification for the present danger assessment.

Children are with mother for at least a week at time of present danger assessment

Strength: Present danger assessment was nicely completed by the worker and supported the PDA.

There was not enough information to determine present danger. It wasn't clear where the mother was living and while there was a guardian who was consulted and who regularly saw the mother, it was unclear about the immediate plan to assure the mother's care of the child.

There was sufficient information to determine that there was no present danger.

Area of Need: The worker indicated that there was no present danger, however in the narrative and in case file the worker proceeded to develop a safety plan for the family. However, the safety plan that was dated the same day as the initial contact is identified as an impending danger safety plan. If the worker felt the need to place a safety plan in place that may indicate that there was present danger. Review of case notes did not indicate present danger, nor the justification of a safety plan at present danger

Area of Need: The contact notes support the determination of no present danger, however the present danger assessment does not provide enough detail to determine if there was or was not present danger for the children.

Present danger assessment should reflect the information in a case note which supports the lack of present danger (mother has a friend and she will go to friend's home if father gets out of jail and goes home).

Sufficient information to make present danger determination.

Area of Need: PD threat was not supported as identified by the worker. Information would indicate a different danger threat. In addition the present danger safety plan created by the worker in the file does not control for the danger. There are case notes that indicate the use of the relative in the home, however that is not captured on the present danger plan and the present danger plan that was agreed upon has a referral for services as the controlling factors.

Present danger assessment was appropriate.

Area of Need: Based upon case contact notes it would indicate that there was no present danger identified and the PDA does not have present danger identified, however the worker notes that a safety plan was put into place as the justification for no present danger. Unclear the safety plan, as none is contained in the case record.

Good use of family resources for PD plan

Area of Need: Worker identified present danger threat of intentional harm. There are no case notes to support this determination and the PDA contained little information regarding supporting the threat. In addition there is no PDP created, either in FSN or created through case notes that were observed.

The interview protocol was followed while collecting information relevant to the investigation, including:

- **"Yes" indicates the individuals were interviewed at any point in the investigation process**
- **"Yes, Unclear if Separate/Private interview was conducted" indicates the individuals were interviewed during the investigation, but it is unclear if they were interviewed separate/private (Applies for family/household members)**
- **"No" indicates the individuals were relevant to the case, but not interviewed at any point in the investigation process**
- **"NA" indicates that individuals are Not Applicable to the case**

#	Question	Yes	Yes, Unclear if Separate/Private	No	Response	Average Value
1	a.) Alleged child victim	23	7	-	30	1.23
2	b.) Siblings/Other children in the household	12	2	-	14	1.14
3	c.) Non-Maltreating Parent/Caregiver	15	5	-	20	1.25
4	d.) Maltreating Parent/Caregiver	19	8	4	31	1.52
5	e.) Other Household Members	6	3	3	12	1.75
6	f.) Relevant Collaterals	27	2	2	31	1.19

This section is concerned with evaluating the sufficiency of information for the six domains of information collection. Reviewers should be evaluating the information in the FFA in regards to the sufficiency criteria for each domain.

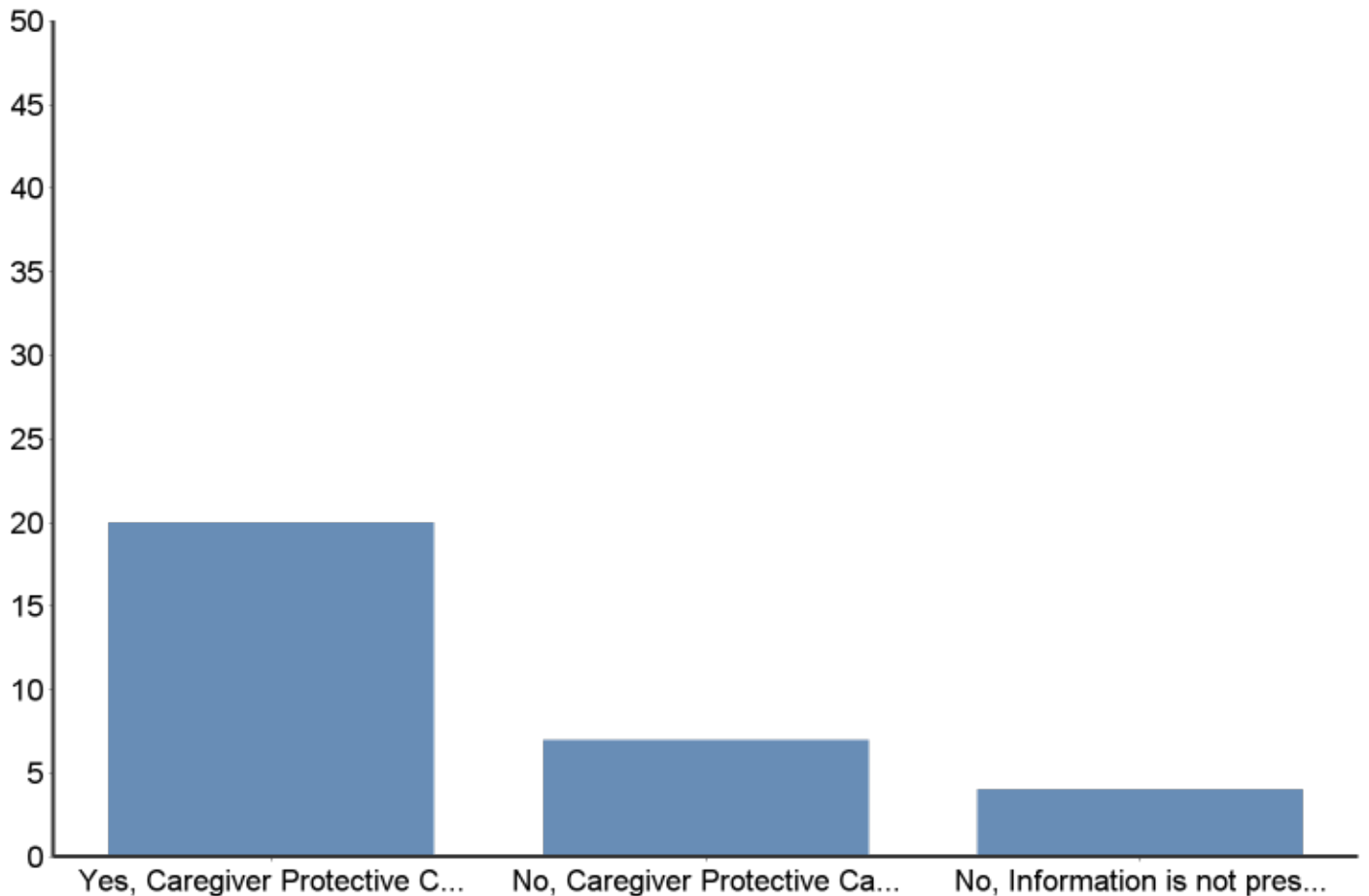
Reviewer should select “YES” if information is clearly documented and sufficient for decision making. Reviewer should select “NO, information is present but not sufficient” if the concepts are noted in the investigation but the information is not sufficient to support decision making.

Reviewer should select “NO, information not present” if the worker did not include the concepts in the investigation.

#	Question	YES, Information is Sufficient	NO, Information is present but not sufficient	NO, Information is not present	Response	Average Value
1	a. Extent of alleged maltreatment (What is the extent of the maltreatment?)	20	7	4	31	1.48
2	b. Nature of maltreatment? (What surrounding circumstances accompany the maltreatment?)	20	9	2	31	1.42
3	c. Parenting disciplinary practices (What are the disciplinary approaches used by the parent, including the typical context?)	18	10	3	31	1.52
4	d. General parenting (What are the overall, typical, pervasive parenting practices used by the parent? Do Not Include Discipline.)	18	12	1	31	1.45
5	e. Adult functioning (How does the adult function on a daily basis? Include behaviors, feelings, intellect, physical capacity and temperament).	16	14	1	31	1.52
6	f. Child functioning (How does the child function on a daily basis? Include pervasive behaviors, feelings, intellect, physical capacity and temperament.)	22	8	1	31	1.32

This question is concerned with evaluating the assessment of caregiver protective capacities.

Reviewer should select "YES" if information supports the identified caregiver protective capacities. Reviewer should select "NO, information is present but identified Caregiver Protective Capacities are not supported by the information. Worker may have selected caregiver protective capacities that are accurate, however may have selected others that are inaccurate or not supported by the information as being present, but rather absent.
Reviewer should select "NO, information not present" to support the assessment of caregiver protective capacities when information is absent from the record to inform the caregiver protective capacities.



Reviewer Comments: Information Collection: Include areas of strength and areas needing attention.

Text Entry

Area of Need: Family has been open to CM for a significant period of time and this is not reflected in the FFA. There is limited to no information regarding the assessment.

There was not sufficient information about the child and parent's living situation plus another referral was added as a supplement to the original report which further complicated the living situation.

It would have been helpful to have gathered information from an additional collateral concerning the maltreating parent.

Strength: Assessment had good information for the adult functioning and parenting aspects. Area of Need: Maltreatment domain is absent. Child functioning needed further exploration for one child with reported behaviors and mental health needs.

rather superficial information in all areas. Not able to judge protective capacity.

There was sufficient information collection.

Area of Need: Information in the FFA is limited and there is minimal engagement with collaterals in regards to the prior history with the family and the current allegation that there is a restraining order against the mother was not fully explored. In addition, the FFA appears to be focused more on the incident rather than understanding the parent's relationship and current functioning.

Strength: Overall the narratives in the FFA were nicely completed. Area of Need: For the victim child, the child functioning appears to be missing key information as to her functioning and her overall mental health and educational needs. The child is mentioned as potentially being developmentally delayed, yet this is not fully explored for child functioning.

Sufficient information. Also a companion case because other allegations of sexual abuse

Father is in jail and is not interviewed. There is note from sup to interview him but cannot see that it was done.

Area of Need: There is a lot of good information, however what is significantly missing is the prior history with the family to include services that the family received and no information regarding these events. In addition, the mother's functioning appears to be out of control and this is not indicated in the FFA.

Adequate information collection.

Good information collection.

Area of Need: CPC's are identified as strengths, despite the information contained in the FFA.

Although there was information about the adult functioning and parenting for both parents, protective capacities were only documented concerning the maltreating parent.

There was insufficient information documented to assess safety. There may have been more information available but it was not sufficiently documented. There was also a supplemental report tied to the original report and it was difficult to separate the information that was gathered for each part of the report.

Area of Need: Child functioning section is repeated for each child-exact language for several children. The nature and maltreatment are a running narrative of the assessment events rather than an understanding of the maltreatment and nature. Case should not have been an FFA but an other.

It was still not clear from the documentation, the nature and extent of the maltreatment. It appeared that situation was stable during investigation but difficult to assess fully based on documentation.

Area of Need: Maltreatment and Nature are cut and paste of FSFN notes of interviews with parties. There is no additional information provided in regards to the history or the maltreatment that is or is not occurring in the home. Child functioning is lacking detail in regards to the child who is diagnosed with bi-polar and the mother's information is insufficient in regards to the current functioning of the mother, including her testing positive for cocaine. For parenting there is no information regarding the mother being aware of the child with needs and how she is responding to those needs.

Two FFA's in short period of time. Clear custody and parental conflict issues.

Good information gathering that supports decision-making.

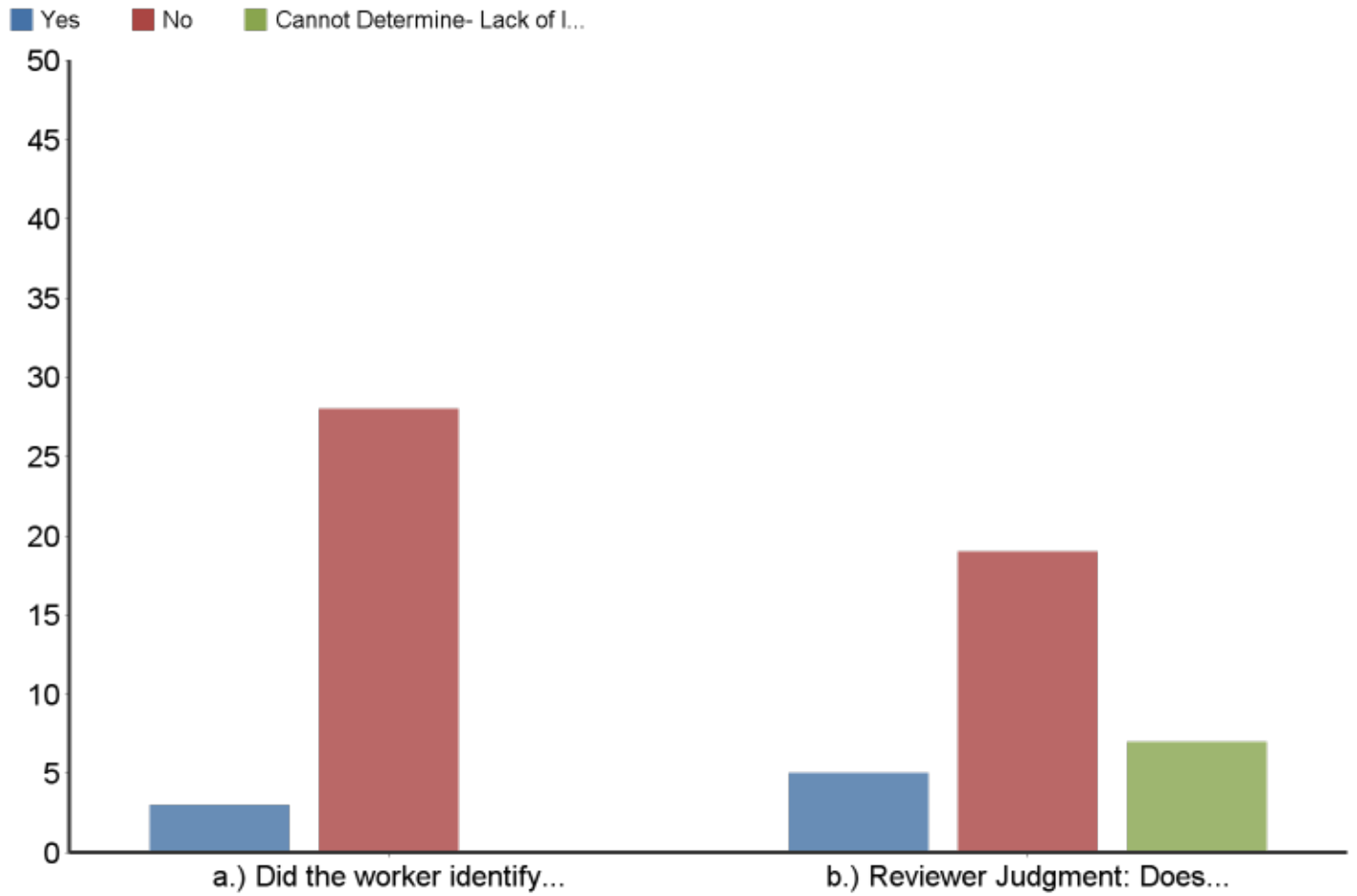
The FFA on this case is rather superficial.

There was an attempt to interview the maltreating parent but he refused to be interviewed.

More information was needed about general parenting and discipline by the alleged maltreating parent .

Sufficient information

Impending Danger





#	Question	Yes	No	Cannot Determine- Lack of Information	Response	Average Value
1	a.) Did the worker identify impending danger at the conclusion of the Family Functioning Assessment?	3	28	-	31	1.90
2	b.) Reviewer Judgment: Does the information collected indicate impending danger in this case?	5	19	7	31	2.06

Which of the following Safety Threats were identified due to impending danger? Check all that apply. If impending danger has not been identified, leave Worker Identified column blank. Identify any impending danger threats you believe exist in the case.



#	Question	Reviewer Identified	Worker Identified	Response	Average Value
2	Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver's intentional and willful act caused serious physical injury to the child, or the caregiver intended to seriously harm the child.	-	-	-	-
3	Child has serious illness or injury (indicative of child abuse) that is unexplained or the parent/legal guardian/caregiver explanations are inconsistent with the illness or injury.	-	-	-	-
4	The child's physical living conditions are hazardous and a child has already been seriously injured or will likely be seriously injured. The living conditions endanger a child's physical health.	-	-	-	-
5	Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver is not meeting the child's essential medical needs and the child is/has already been seriously harmed or will likely be seriously harmed.	-	-	-	-
6	Child shows serious emotional symptoms requiring intervention and/or lacks behavioral control and/or exhibits self-destructive behavior that the parent/legal guardian/caregiver is unwilling or unable to manage.	-	-	-	-
7	Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver is violent, impulsive or acting dangerously in way that seriously harmed the child or will likely seriously harm the child.	5	3	8	1.38
8	Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver is not meeting child's basic and essential needs for food, clothing, and/or supervision and the child is/has already been seriously harmed or will likely be seriously harmed.	2	1	3	1.33
9	Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver is threatening to seriously harm the child; is fearful he/she will seriously harm the child.	-	-	-	-
10	Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver views child and/or acts toward the child in extremely negative ways and such behavior has or will result in serious harm to the child.	-	-	-	-
12	Other.	-	-	-	-
17	There are reports of serious harm and the child's whereabouts cannot be ascertained and/or there is reason to believe that the family is about to flee to avoid agency intervention and/or refuses access to the child and the reported concern is significant and indicates serious harm.	-	-	-	-

Does the documentation in the FFA clearly describe how impending danger threats are occurring in the family?

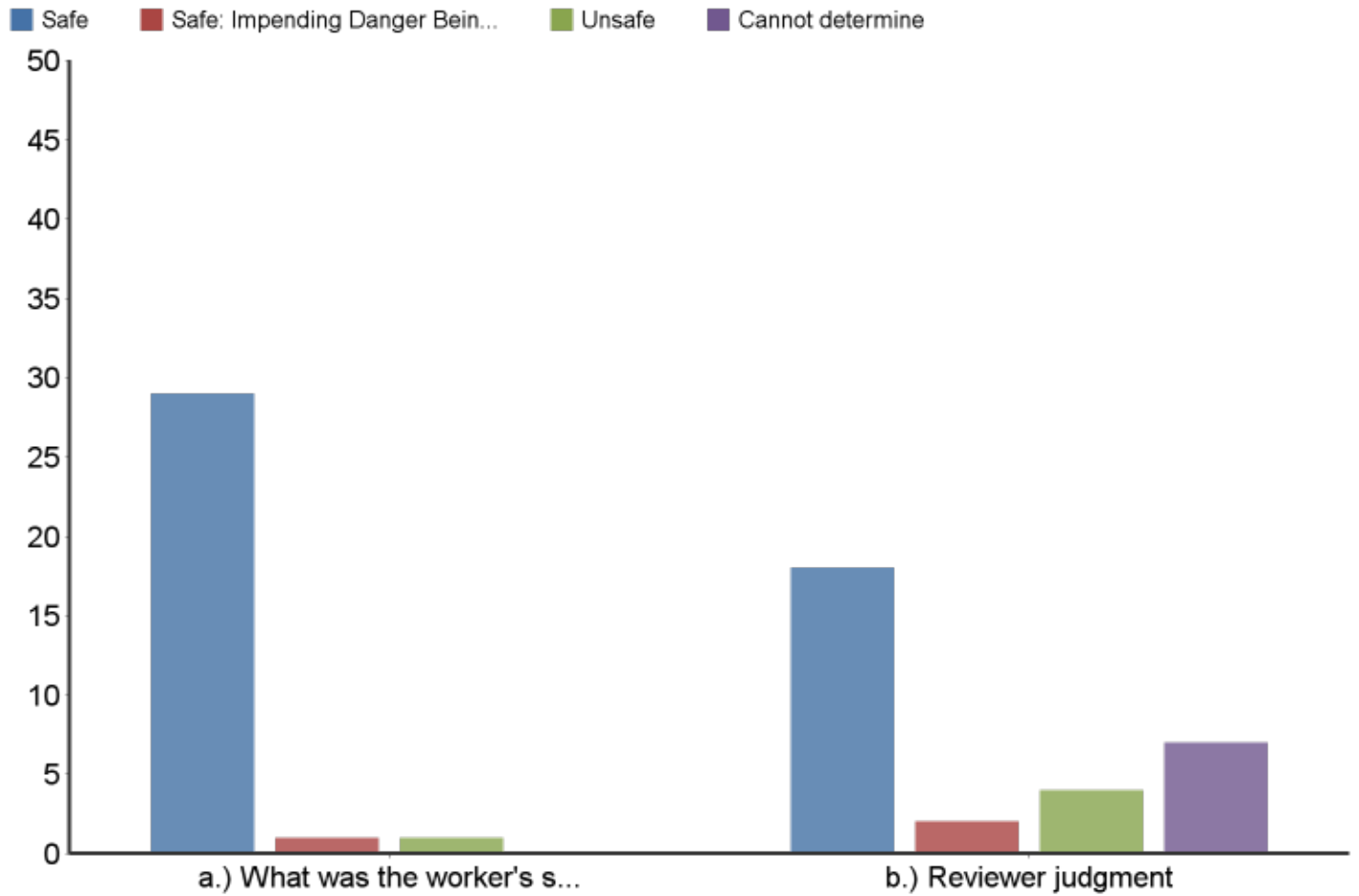
#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		3	60.00%
2	No		2	40.00%
3	NA-No Impending Danger Identified by Worker or Reviewer		0	0.00%
	Total		5	100.00%

Reviewer judgment: the information collected is adequate and reflects good quality?

Was there enough depth and breadth in all information collection a) to provide a reasonable understanding of family members and their functioning and b) to support and justify decision making. For safety intervention decisions, the information must be enough to identify, support, reconcile and justify the presence or absence of threats to safety and to inform and justify the kind of safety plan/safety management that occurs or that a safety plan or safety management is unnecessary.

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		19	61.29%
2	No		12	38.71%
	Total		31	100.00%

Safety Decision



#	Question	Safe	Safe: Impending Danger Being Managed by Protective Parent/Legal Guardian	Unsafe	Cannot determine	Response	Average Value
1	a.) What was the worker's safety decision?	29	1	1	-	31	1.10
2	b.) Reviewer judgment	18	2	4	7	31	2.00

Reviewer Comments: Impending Danger and Safety Decision: Include strengths and areas needing attention.

Text Entry

Area of Need: The child is in out of home care due to being unsafe. The conditions in the home, based upon case notes, remains unchanged for impending danger. The worker identified the child as safe, which would indicate that the child's home is safe for the child to reside within-which is not the case.

There may have been enough information about impending danger but it was not well documented. There was mention of a guardian and arrangements for someone to oversee the care of the baby but it was not clear whether that was in place. It appears the mother was known to the agency so it may be that more information informed the safety decision, it just was not documented.

There was an identified safety threat that was being managed by the protective parent so question the safety decision of safe.

Area of Need: The worker identified the child as safe, however there is an impending danger safety plan completed within the case. It is unclear the rationale for the safety plan. Appears to be the old style of safety planning with promissory notes.

Need more information to know mother's capacity.

There was sufficient information to make safety decision.

Area of Need: The boyfriend is also father to the two youngest children and he was never seen during the assessment and there are no contact notes to support diligence in locating and assessing the boyfriend who is the alleged maltreater. In addition, the exploration with the mother regarding her plans for future contact and the relationship between the father and his two children in her home. The family did relocate and was living with relatives at the conclusion of the FFA, which is indicative of the mother demonstrating her CPC's.

Area of Need: At closure there is a no contact order for the mother towards the children. The children are with a relative, that the mother does not want to have her children and who the violence occurred between. There is information regarding the mother's overall functioning that is missing in regards to making a final safety determination. In addition, how do the children go home when there is a no contact order in place?

Sufficient information to make safety decision.

Good support for decision-making.

Area of Need: Child was identified as safe, despite information supporting the danger threat identified by the worker. A safety plan was put into place, however it is exactly the same as the insufficient present danger safety plan.

There was good documentation to support the safety decision.

There was information about guardians for the mother and possibly persons available to provide oversight but the specifics were not documented and verified.

Area of Need: Justification for safe decision was supported by worker's identification of a safety plan and services being put into place for the family. Information in the assessment would not indicate a safety plan or services would be needed for the family. Unclear the danger that the safety plan was attempting to control. There is no safety plan contained in the case record.

Although there was some information to indicate the children were safe, it was not clear if there was impending danger.

Decision supported by information documented

Area of Need: Appears that the workers decision to find the children safe was in part due to the parent being involved with services. The assessment is not completed and case notes are minimal to support the decision making process.

FFA could be more descriptive of parent functioning, somewhat superficial.

Family made a lot of progress to address mother's prescription drug addiction. Good support system for family

Good information concerning impending danger and the safety decision.



There are service providers in the home on a regular basis, so this is good. Information is not reconciled related to mother's current drug usage.

Mother is receptive to ongoing supports, children are safe.

Appropriate impending danger and safety decision.

There was enough information to make the impending danger and safety decision.

Reviewer: Does the family proceed to case management services due to an unsafe child or child that is safe with impending danger being managed?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		1	3.23%
2	No		30	96.77%
	Total		31	100.00%

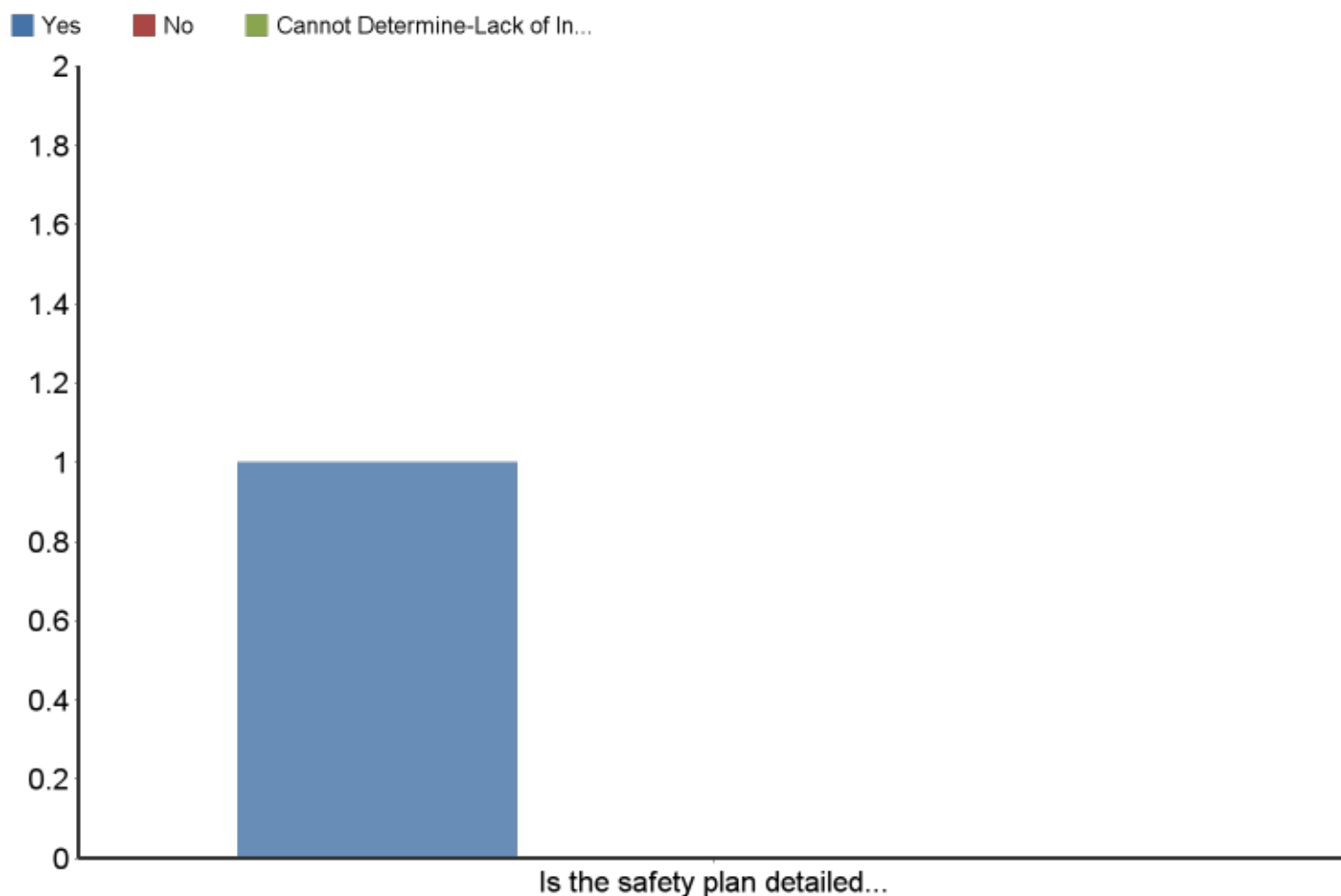
Safety Plan:

#	Question	No	Yes, In-Home Safety Plan	Yes, Out-of-Home Safety Plan	Cannot Determine-Lack of Information	Response	Average Value
1	a.) Was a Safety Plan developed in this case?	-	-	1	-	1	3.00
2	b.) Reviewer judgment: Was a safety plan necessary in this case?	-	-	1	-	1	3.00

Safety Planning Analysis Safety Plan Justification: Accurate, logical and understandable to inform the type of safety plan developed.

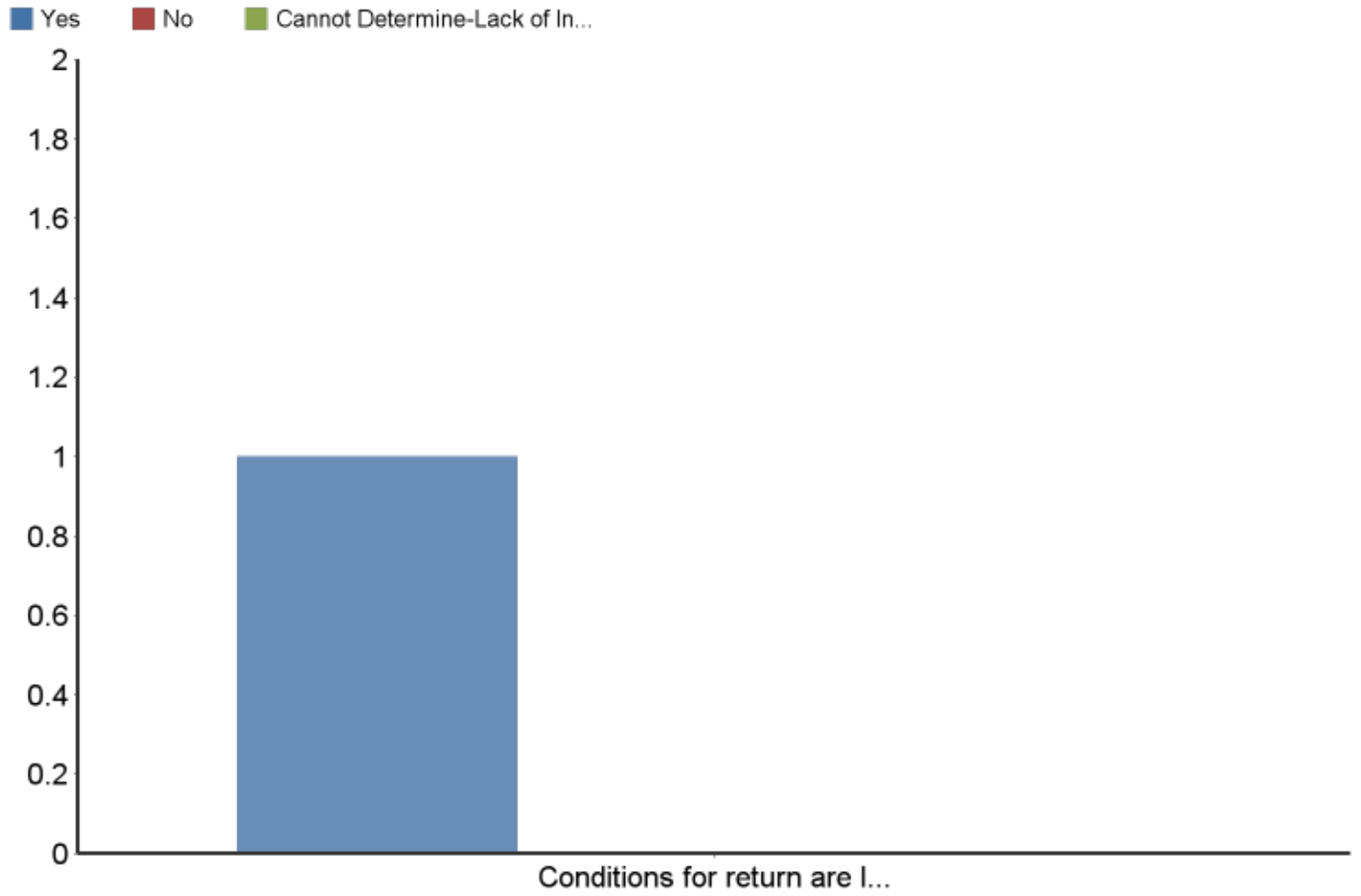
#	Question	Yes	No	Cannot Determine- Lack of Information	Response	Average Value
1	Does the safety planning analysis and justification clearly support the type of safety plan developed.	1	-	-	1	1.00

Safety Plan: Safety plan is able to control for danger. Services and level of effort are detailed to include persons responsible for safety services.



#	Question	Yes	No	Cannot Determine-Lack of Information	Response	Average Value
1	Is the safety plan detailed and sufficient level of effort to control for danger threats?	1	-	-	1	1.00

Conditions for Return: Conditions address the safety planning analysis determinations that were keeping the child from remaining in the home and the conditions for return are realistic and will allow for an in home safety plan to be implemented.



#	Question	Yes	No	Cannot Determine-Lack of Information	Response	Average Value
1	Conditions for return are logical and attainable and relevant to the safety planning analysis and justification.	1	-	-	1	1.00

Text Entry

Safety planning was appropriate and conditions for return were relevant.