

Action Child Protection

Florida Department of Children and Families Case Review July 2015

Review Completed by Action for Child Protection

Southern 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 Southern Region for CPI.

Sample Size: 30 Assessments

Present Danger Assessment

Data Summary

- Total of 5 (17%) 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 (6%) cases between the review teams identification of present danger and the worker identification of present danger.

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.
- In two cases the worker identified other as the danger threat and information in the assessment and case notes do not reflect that the danger threat is supported.

- The use of danger threat regarding parents intentional and willful actions was used on two occasions, without justification for the danger threat.

Information Collection

Data Summary

- 66% 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 parenting general and parenting discipline were 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 4 (13%) cases were identified by the review team as impending danger.
- Total of 5 (17%) cases were identified by the worker as impending danger.
- This resulted in a difference of **1 (4%)** cases between what the review team identified as impending danger and the worker identified as impending danger.
- Total of 8 (27%) 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.
- The use of other was not used for impending danger determinations.

Areas for Consideration

- The assessment of impending danger, including information collection, in several cases was not indicated.
- In cases where violence was occurring the assessment of impending danger was often focused on the actions of the actions such as Chapter 39 or no contact order to determine safety, despite information that there was impending 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 *78% of the cases that were identified as safe by the worker were accurate.*
- In 27% 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 2 cases where children were determined to be unsafe. There was a high number of cases where safe with impending danger being managed was identified, 17% (5).

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.
- There were several cases where the worker identified safe with danger being managed, and information indicated that children were unsafe and that the intervention of services or family arrangements were being used to control for the danger.

Safety Planning

Data Summary

- A total of 2 cases were reviewed for safety plans. In those cases, 100% were identified as having detail and sufficiency to control for danger threats.
- and detail due to either the plan not being developed or the plan lacking information.
- For applicable cases, conditions for return were logical, attainable, and relevant 0% of the time.

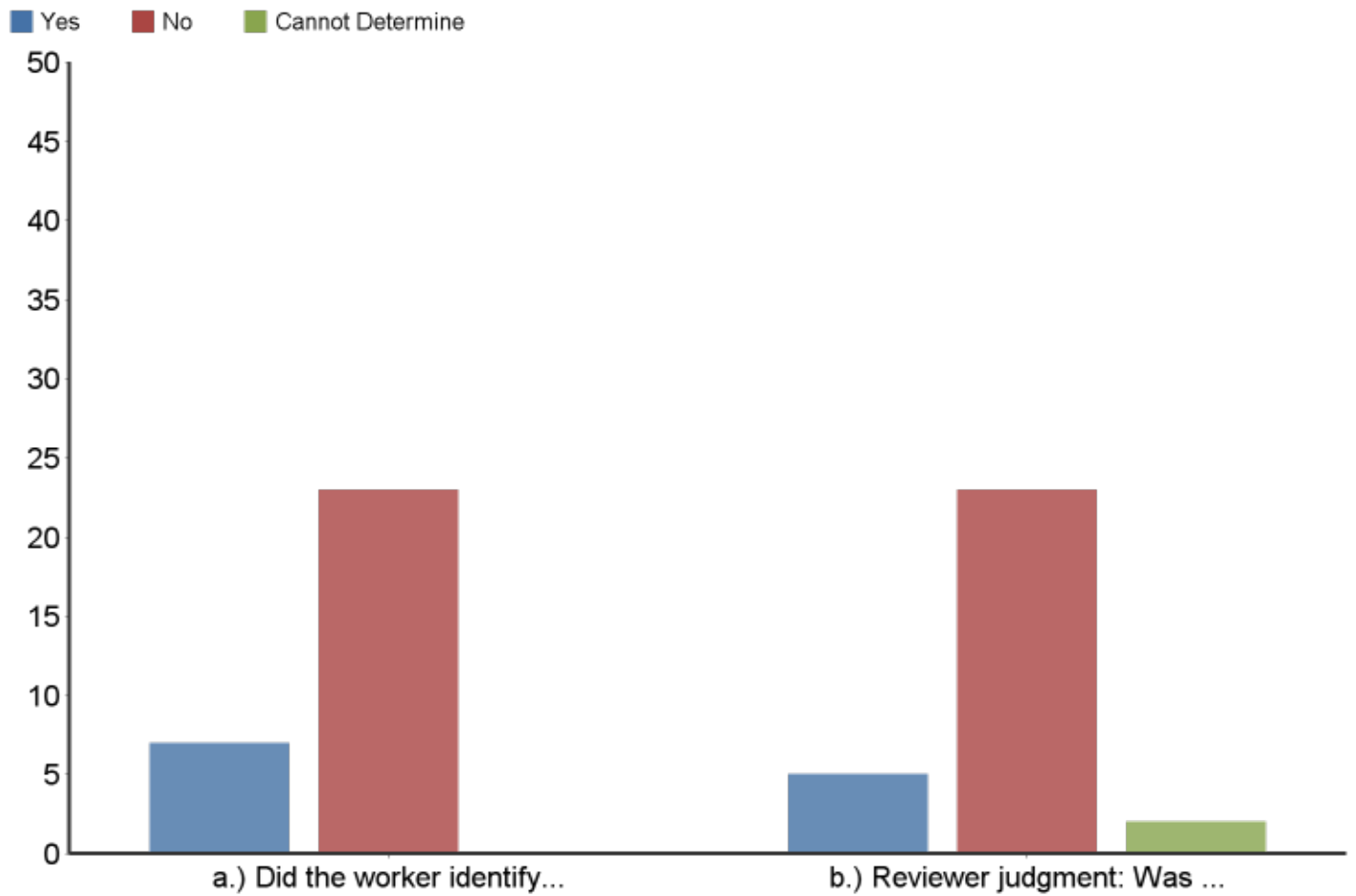
Strengths

- 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 | 23 | - | 30 | 1.77 |
| 2 | b.) Reviewer judgment: Was there information to indicate present danger in this case? | 5 | 23 | 2 | 30 | 1.90 |



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. | - | 2 | 2 | 2.00 |
| 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 | 1.00 |
| 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. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.50 |
| 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. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.50 |
| 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. | - | 1 | 1 | 2.00 |
| 7 | Parent/Legal Guardian is violent, impulsive, or acting dangerously in ways that seriously harmed the child or will likely seriously harm the child. | 3 | 3 | 6 | 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. | - | - | - | - |
| 9 | Parent/Legal Guardian is threatening to seriously harm the child; is fearful he/she will seriously harm the child. | - | - | - | - |
| 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 | - | 2 | 2 | 2.00 |

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

| # | Answer | Bar | Response | % |
|---|--------|---|----------|---------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 7 | 100.00% |
| 2 | No | | 0 | 0.00% |
| | 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 |  | 5 | 71.43% |
| 2 | No |  | 2 | 28.57% |
| | Total | | 7 | 100.00% |

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

Text Entry

Area of Need: There are two present danger assessments in the case record. The PDA's and case notes do not provide sufficient information to determine the decision making of the worker in regards to present danger. It appears based upon one contact that there may have been concerns for present danger based upon the fact that the mother tested positive for spice and THC at a contact. These results do not appear to have been assessed or explored with the mother.

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

Present danger well established; child was removed.

Good documentation concerning present danger.

Area of Need: There were two present danger assessments, one with present danger and the other that does not have present danger. The second present danger assessment was not needed and was done not with contact with the family. The worker in the case notes indicates that they initiated a present danger plan, however there is not present danger plan completed in the case record. The present danger plan that is in the record is noted as being created due to a FSFN functionality and was identified that BSO did not complete the present danger plan, so when transferred to Miami, they created one in the case record with no information.

Strength: There is good justification regarding the lack of present danger provided by the worker.

There was sufficient information to determine present danger.

There was sufficient information about present danger.

Good to see consult with DV advocate for advice.

Area of Need: Reviewing the PDA and the case notes did not support the decision regarding no present danger. The information in the case notes do not provide the detail to support the decision and the PDA states that the family had a prior that was no indicators as the justification of the no present danger.

Second Present danger assessment done and changed danger threat to correct one, not other.

Strength: The PDA is well documented and justifies the no present danger in regards to the children and the alleged maltreater.

Strength: The worker provided good detail regarding the absence of present danger at the time of the initial contact for all the children.

Sufficient information to justify present danger decision.

Strength: Present danger assessment was supported by the case information and was nicely completed by the worker to support the decision making.

Strength: While the PDA was not supported by the case notes or the PDA-the plan that the worker put into place did identify additional supports in the home to control for danger that may occur. Area of Need: While the incident did occur, the information did not support the present danger identified, in particular the intentional harm towards the child.

Appropriate assessment of present danger and present danger safety plan was reasonable.

Good documentation.

There was sufficient information about present danger.

The child could not be located so the present danger plan involved law enforcement and court intervention.

Area of Need: The PDA in the case record does not articulate PD and further the case notes indicate that there is no present danger based upon interviews with the collaterals who were witness to the incident and the mother being present at the time when the CPI responded and had collected the child from the police station.

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 | 26 | 3 | - | 29 | 1.10 |
| 2 | b.) Siblings/Other children in the household | 15 | - | 1 | 16 | 1.13 |
| 3 | c.) Non-Maltreating Parent/Caregiver | 16 | 2 | - | 18 | 1.11 |
| 4 | d.) Maltreating Parent/Caregiver | 20 | 1 | 7 | 28 | 1.54 |
| 5 | e.) Other Household Members | 11 | 1 | - | 12 | 1.08 |
| 6 | f.) Relevant Collaterals | 23 | - | 7 | 30 | 1.47 |

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.

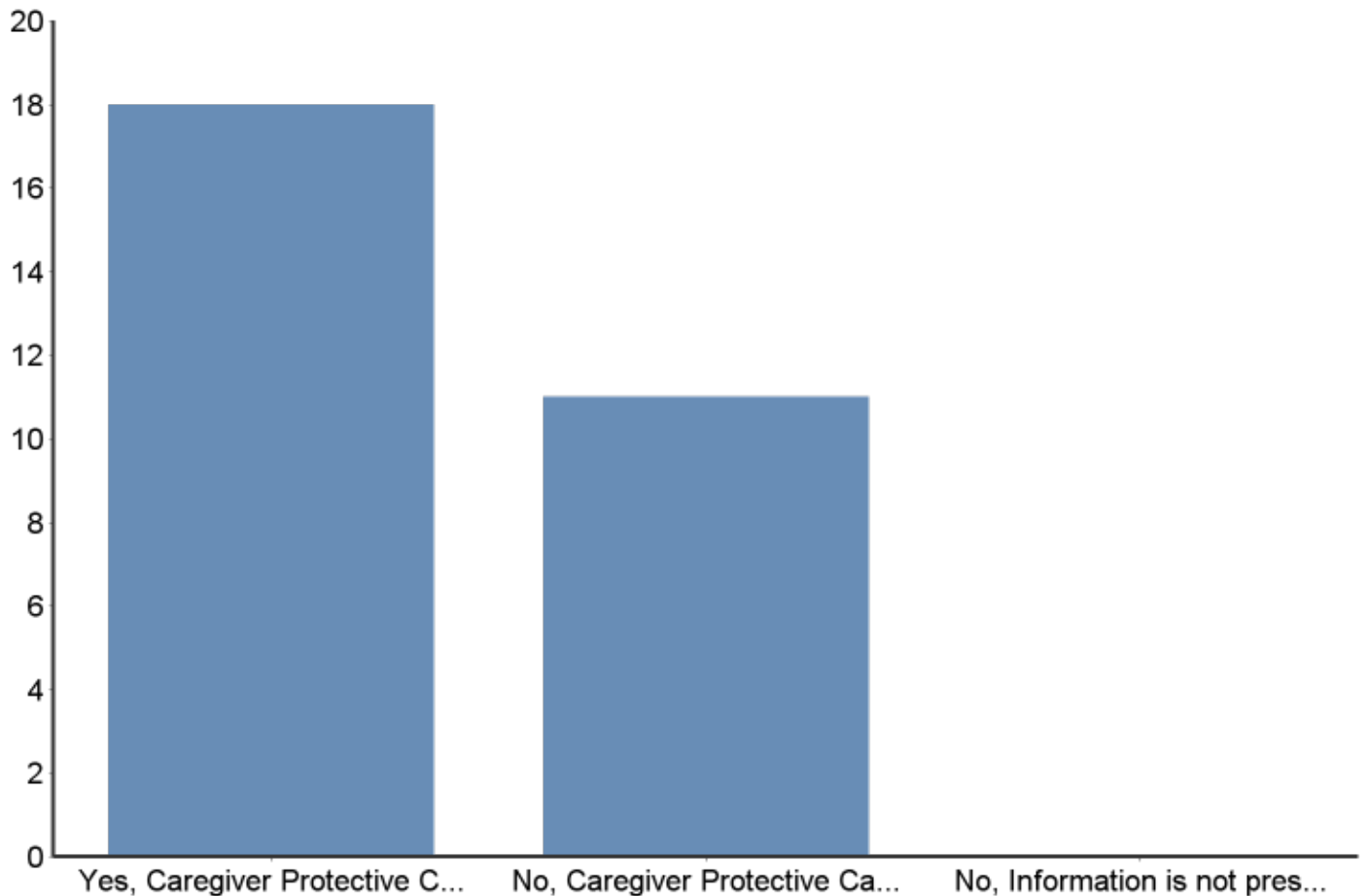
Reviewer should select “YES” if information is clearly documented and sufficient for decision making. Reviewer should select “NO, information is present but not sufficient” if the concepts are noted in the investigation but the information is not sufficient to support decision-making.

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 | 8 | 2 | 30 | 1.40 |
| 2 | b. Nature of maltreatment? (What surrounding circumstances accompany the maltreatment?) | 20 | 10 | - | 30 | 1.33 |
| 3 | c. Parenting disciplinary practices (What are the disciplinary approaches used by the parent, including the typical context?) | 19 | 10 | - | 29 | 1.34 |
| 4 | d. General parenting (What are the overall, typical, pervasive parenting practices used by the parent? Do Not Include Discipline.) | 19 | 10 | - | 29 | 1.34 |
| 5 | e. Adult functioning (How does the adult function on a daily basis? Include behaviors, feelings, intellect, physical capacity and temperament). | 20 | 9 | - | 29 | 1.31 |
| 6 | f. Child functioning (How does the child function on a daily basis? Include pervasive behaviors, feelings, intellect, physical capacity and temperament.) | 21 | 9 | - | 30 | 1.30 |

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: The FFA is a repeat of the case notes, lacking depth and breadth to understand conclusions made by the worker. In addition all the CPC's are identified as yes, despite there being insufficient information.

There was sufficient information gathered but relevant collaterals were not interviewed i.e. grandmother with whom children and mother were staying. Maltreating caregiver was not interviewed. It was not documented if there was no interview because he was unavailable.

Sufficient information gathered.

Good and thorough information collection.

Area of Need: The FFA is lacking in information in all domains. There are significant concerns regarding the child in the home, including her being Baker Acted in the middle of the assessment that is not captured in the FFA. In addition, her needs indicate potential danger threat for emotional symptoms that the parents are unable to manage. In addition, there is a second child that is not mentioned or explored during the assessment or in the FFA.

Area of Need: The FFA appears to be focused on the mother's home, despite the concerns being raised with the father's behaviors. There is little to no information regarding the father and little engagement with the father to assess his home. In addition the lack of engagement with collaterals to inform the father's domains.

There was some indication of concerns about the mother's parenting ability since she is very young. It was difficult to determine if she could parent if she left her mother's home

Area of Need: The concerns regarding safety for the children are with the father, not the mother's home. The focus of the FFA appears to be centered on the mother's home where there are no allegations regarding the mother and her care of the children. There was little engagement with the father or engagement with collaterals to inform the assessment for the father's home-who resides with his parents.

All information indicated that protective capacities were sufficient to manage threats of danger (and none had been identified) but the box was checked "no"; perhaps in error.

Very little information in FFA.

Area of Need: The concerns are in regards to the father's household and the allegation of sexual abuse occurring in the father's household. The worker does not due to various reasons, engage the father in the assessment and bases the safety decision not on the conditions within the father's home but rather the location of the children with the mother.

Area of Need: The information in the FFA is focused on the mother being open to services rather than reconciling the information regarding the pattern of behavior and violence that has occurred throughout the relationship with the parents.

There was good information gathered from collaterals.

Strength: Worker identified that this case was not appropriate for an FFA as there are no allegations regarding the caregiver and the allegations are in regards to child on child sexual abuse that the parent is aware of and has and continues to take action to protect and address with the children through services.

Area of Need: The child does have behavioral concerns and they are partially identified, but not fully explored. The contact with the service provider for the child does not appear to have occurred and the reconciliation of how the parent is or is not meeting the child's emotional needs is not provided by the worker.

There was some information gathered from the mother concerning the father, but the father refused to be interviewed. Later there was contact with the father but there was not a lot of detail about his parenting or adult functioning.

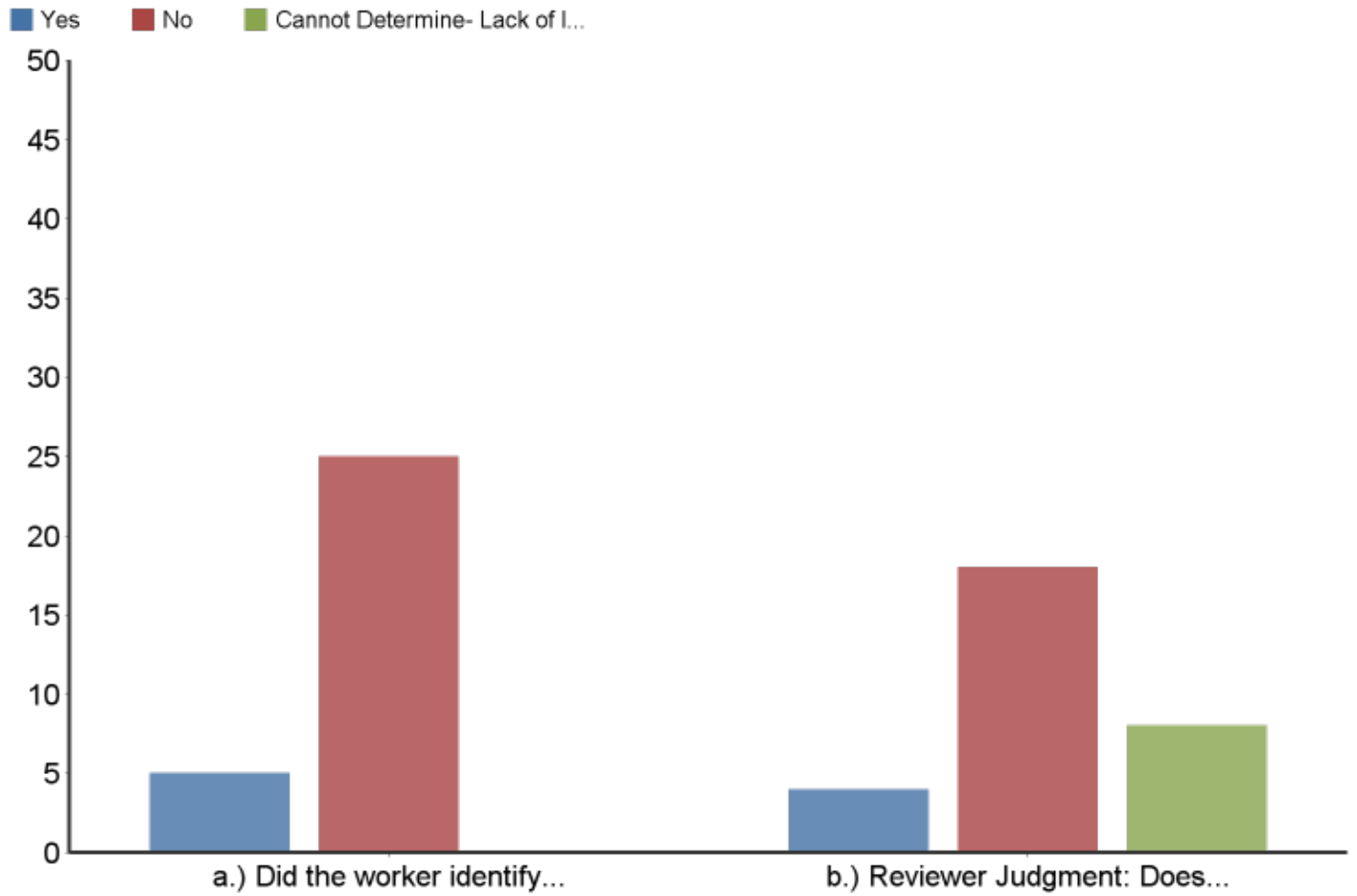
Good documentation.

There was generally good information collection. There was not an interview with the adult half-brother.

There was sufficient information collection particularly since this was case that was already known to the agency.

Area of Need: The information in the FFA is limited in depth and breadth. The information appears to have ceased once the present danger assessment and decision to shelter was made by the worker. The information does not support the identified danger threats and there is no engagement or contact with the alleged maltreater.

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? | 5 | 25 | - | 30 | 1.83 |
| 2 | b.) Reviewer Judgment: Does the information collected indicate impending danger in this case? | 4 | 18 | 8 | 30 | 2.13 |

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. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1.67 |
| 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. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1.67 |
| 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. | 3 | 4 | 7 | 1.57 |
| 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. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.50 |
| 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?

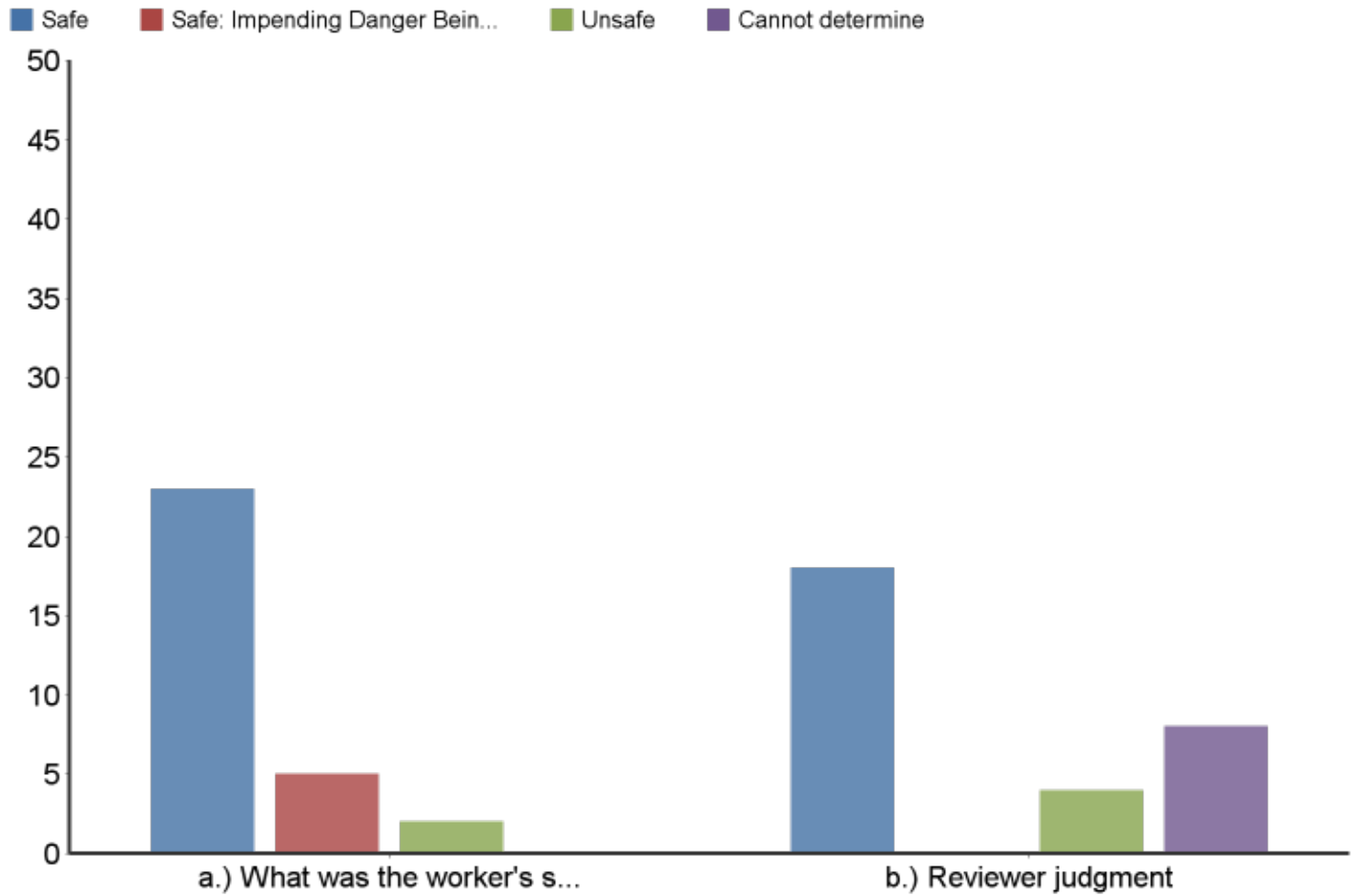
| # | Answer | Bar | Response | % |
|---|---|--|----------|---------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 2 | 33.33% |
| 2 | No |  | 4 | 66.67% |
| 3 | NA-No Impending Danger Identified by Worker or Reviewer | | 0 | 0.00% |
| | Total | | 6 | 100.00% |

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 |  | 20 | 66.67% |
| 2 | No |  | 10 | 33.33% |
| | Total | | 30 | 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? | 23 | 5 | 2 | - | 30 | 1.30 |
| 2 | b.) Reviewer judgment | 18 | - | 4 | 8 | 30 | 2.07 |

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

Text Entry

Although there were some missing interviews, there was sufficient information to make safety decisions.

There was sufficient justification for safety decision.

The safety decision was supported well by the documentation.

Area of Need: The worker does not identify any impending danger threats for the father's home. The father has a no contact order in place due to the incident with the daughter. The information regarding the child in the case notes indicates that not only is the father struggling with the child, but also the mother. The threat for the father appears that he is unable to manage the child's emotions and behaviors and this has resulted in physical violence in the home between him and his daughter. This is not captured by the worker, however the decision is made to shelter the child from the father for unknown reasons. The mother-seperate household-is the safety plan participant (however no safety plan was created). There are no records that the father was engaged in developing an impending danger safety plan or that the need for judicial action was warranted to engage the family in services-as both were willing and open to assistance per case notes.

While the child appeared to be in good condition, it was difficult to determine if the mother was able to parent without the support of her mother and that relationship appeared to be very strained.

Area of Need: The children were determined safe due to a Chapter 39 being filed. The children are unsafe in the father's home and the mother should be used as the safety plan participant and the focus of interventions should be on the father-which does not appear to have occurred, even when the family moved onto case management.

The information collected was sufficient to making the safety decision.

Child sexually abused. Mother very protective and taking action. Perpetrator incarcerated and being prosecuted.

Area of Need: The safety decision is made prior to the LE investigation being completed and the full assessment for the father's home being conducted. The end result appears to be made as a result of the children being with the mother and not based upon an assessment for safety of the children with the father-who has shared custody of the children.

Area of Need: The assessment appears focused on the location of the alleged maltreater and the mother's reception to services, rather than an assessment for impending danger.

There were some family issues and the family was referred for appropriate services.

Area of Need: The worker identified a danger threat based upon the child's needs, that were not fully explored in relation to the parenting abilities. The decision to move the family to CM was made at present danger, as documented by the case information. It appears that post present danger that information did not occur.

Although there was sufficient information to determine that the child was unsafe, the lack of access to the father did impede complete gathering of information.

Good documentation to support decision-making.



Services were needed in the home but they were not necessarily related to safety and they were referred.

The child's safety was addressed.

Child conflict issues, family is involved with services.

Area of Need: Impending danger threats were identified by the worker, despite there being identified CPC's by the worker for the mother. The information collection is limited and there is no information to support the impending danger threats or the 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 |  | 6 | 20.00% |
| 2 | No |  | 24 | 80.00% |
| | Total | | 30 | 100.00% |

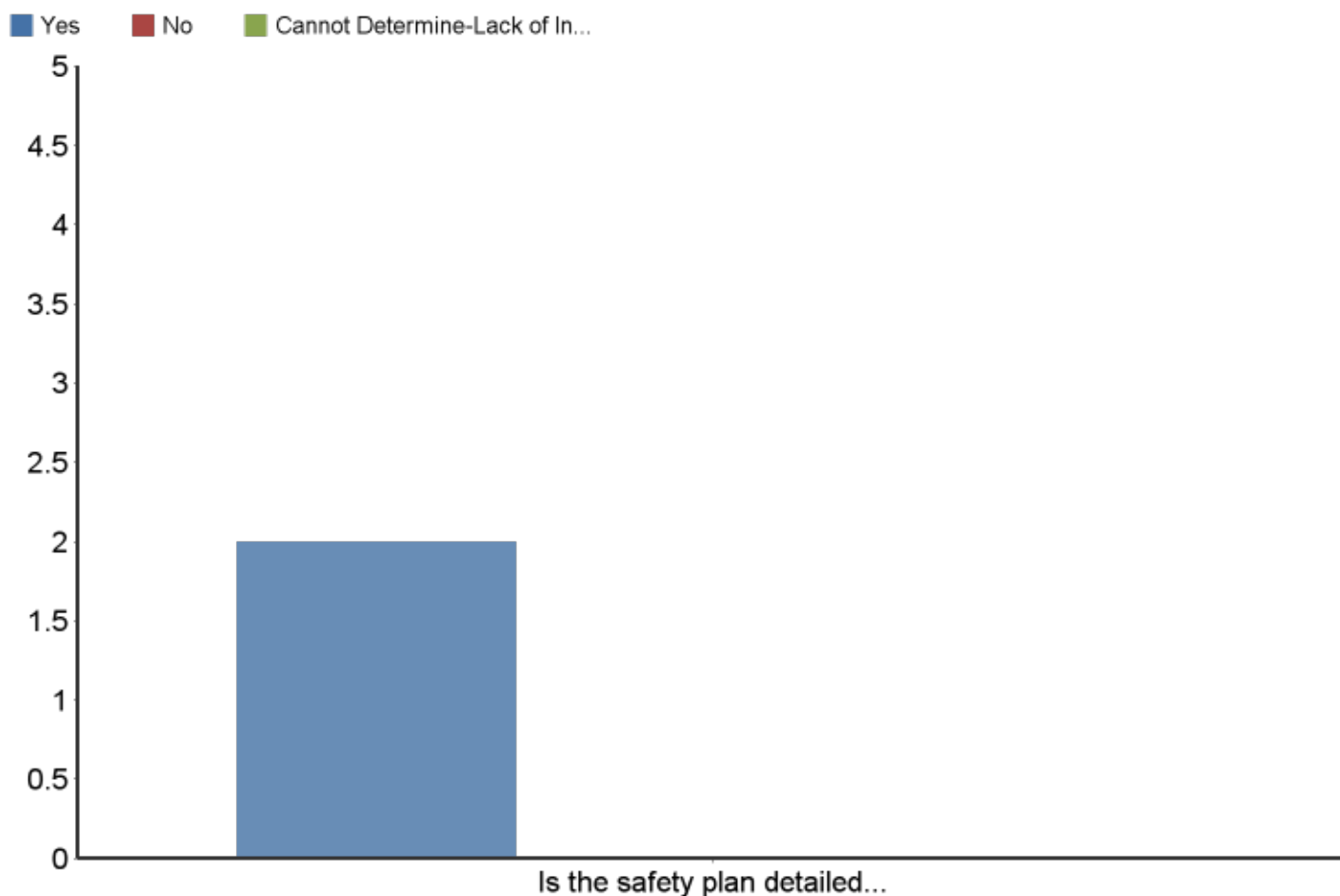
Safety Plan:

| # | 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 | - | 2 | 2.50 |
| 2 | b.) Reviewer judgment: Was a safety plan necessary in this case? | - | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 2.50 |

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

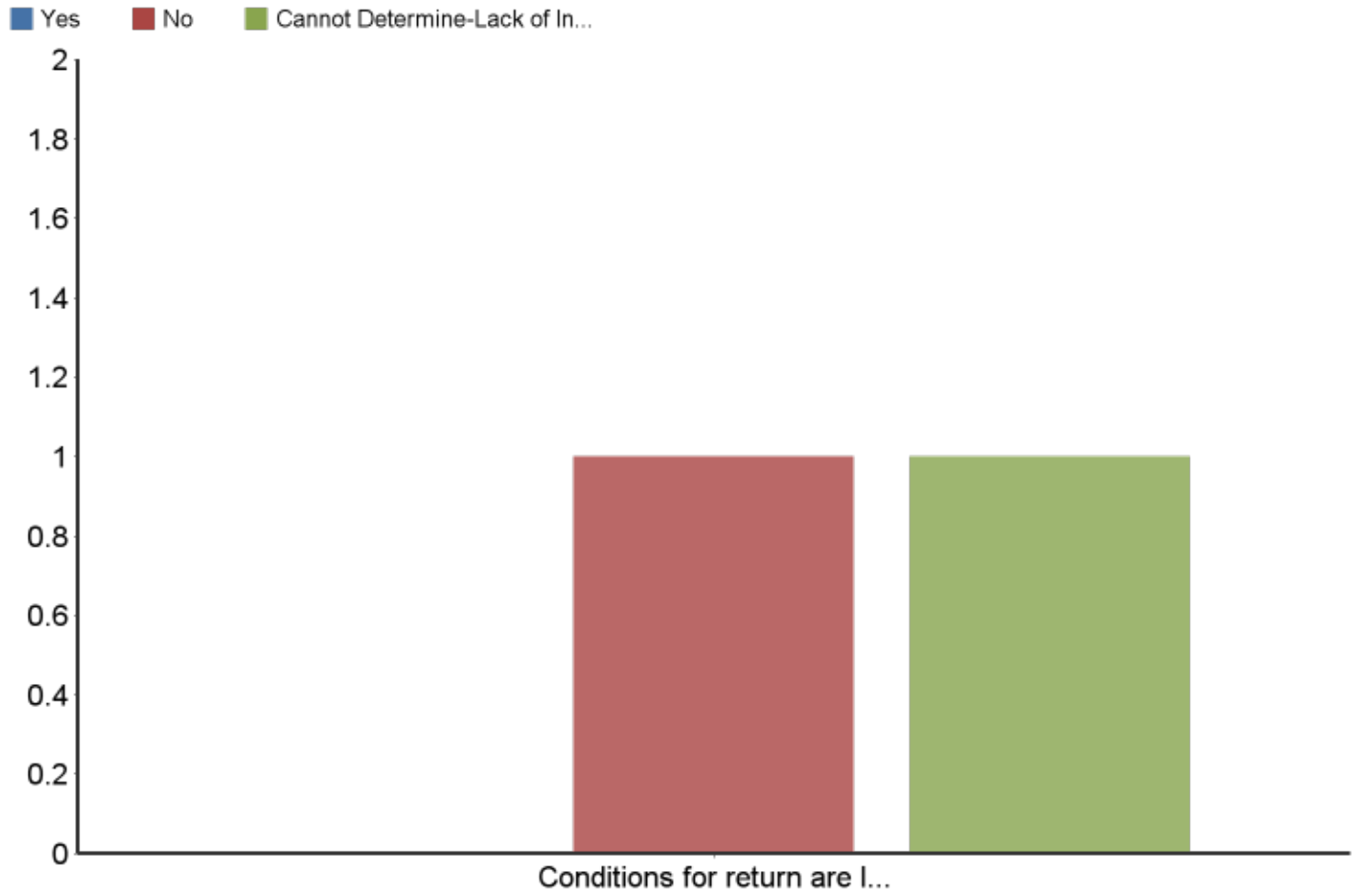
| # | Question | Yes | No | Cannot Determine- Lack of Information | Response | Average Value |
|---|--|-----|----|--|----------|------------------|
| 1 | Does the safety planning analysis and justification clearly support the type of safety plan developed. | 2 | - | - | 2 | 1.00 |

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? | 2 | - | - | 2 | 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 | 2 | 2.50 |

Text Entry

There were services indicated but were not specifically conditions for return.

There was no information about conditions for return.