**Understanding Safety, Risk and Protective Factors**

**It is important to have a good understanding of the differences between safety and risk and how protective factors can help to diminish the safety or risk we find when we conduct investigations. Please consider the examples below:**

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| Safety Issue *(immediate issue that* ***has*** *happened)* | Risk Issue *(something* ***MIGHT*** *happen)* | Protective *Factors (strengths and positives that minimize the risk or safety issues)* |
| 5 year old child is found at his home alone asleep while mom ran to the grocery for milk. | Mom has one prior substantiated report of leaving the child with an inappropriate caretaker one year ago. | Parent admits it was a mistake to leave the child alone and is remorseful. No CPS history and no AOC history. |
| Police pulled over dad for driving drunk with his children 8 and 6. | Dad was in treatment 2 years ago for alcohol abuse due to a DUI and having his kids in the car. | Dad admits he has relapsed and needs to go back to inpatient treatment and AA meetings. Mom understands the children cannot be cared for by dad right now, and is agreeable to negotiate a supervision plan. |
| A parent is telling relatives that her toddler is possessed by the devil and she is threatening to do something drastic to save the child.  | Mom is schizophrenic but when she regularly takes her medication and is able to work and care for her child. | Grandparents are very involved in the life of their daughter and grand-daughter and have agreed to check in with her daily either by phone or by dropping by to ensure she continues to take her medications. Mom is regularly seeing a therapist. |
| 8 year old intervened in an incident of domestic violence by jumping between his mom and stepdad. As a result he was hit in the face. | Agency history of domestic between step-dad and a previous spouse and one prior Assault IV conviction per AOC. | Child’s mother developed a safety plan with the worker to protect herself and her child. Mom has a stable job and her family lives close by. |
| A parent of an infant is found passed out in her home due to substance use. | Four prior unsubstantiated CPS reports alleging substance use by the parent. Mom has had two alcohol intoxication charges in the last couple of years. | Mom realizes she is struggling with her sobriety, but asks her mother to come and stay with her and her baby, and admits she needs to go to back to AA. |
| Child age 3 has sustained an unexplained injury to the head and ear. | Prior agency history of domestic violence between the parents (2 no findings). Dad’s AOC check showed assault and terroristic threatening charges. Mom’s check revealed a DUI charge 6 months ago. | Both parents are working and have a stable housing. No prior CPS history. Both are very concerned about the child and not minimizing his injuries. Child’s pediatrician related no past concerns for the child. Lots of relative support for the child and parents. |
| Child age 11 admits to being sexually abused by her father. Her mother is afraid of her dad as he controls everything in their house(money, the car etc). | Dad is currently on the sexual offender registry for having sex with a 13 year old when he was 19. He did complete a sexual offender treatment program 3 years ago and has had no further criminal charges. | Mom believes her daughter was sexually abused, immediately took her to the doctor, and after talking to the SSW, agreed to file an EPO to removed dad for their household. She has already contacted an agency to start counseling for her daughter. |
| Children 11, 9, 6, and 3 are living in a condemned home, holes in the floor, faulty wiring, no air conditioning/fans or running water, and there are re-occurring lice problems. Dad recently lost his job. Minimal food in the house and children are asking to stay at a relative’s house. | Mom is bipolar and receives SSI. She is prescribed medication but does not take it regularly. Two prior unsubstantiated hygiene reports and one prior substantiated supervision report from three years ago. | Dad is concerned about his family’s living situation and realizes things cannot continue as they are. He recently filed for unemployment, and has been looking for other housing for the family. Mom is currently taking her medication and both parents are willing to work with FPP. Neither parent has a criminal history. Children have been going to school regularly and a family member watches the 3 year old several days a week to help out the family. |

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