



## Safety Plan Guidelines

### General considerations for the development of a safety plan

- The safety plan is a written document created by the client with the assistance of the therapist.
- The safety plan documents how threats to safety of the child(ren) and/or non-offending parent will be managed.
- Safety planning should be individualized for each client with the goal of reducing immediate and long-term risks.
- The safety plan must specify in behavioral terms how the case-specific risk factors will be addressed.
- The safety plan should be regularly reviewed and refined over the course of therapy as new risks, safety goals, or risk management strategies are identified.

### Domestic Violence Safety Plan

- A. The following guidelines are intended to provide assistance with safety planning in Child Welfare Services cases involving domestic violence.
- B. **Submission of written domestic violence safety plans to Child Welfare Services is not required. For client protection, please do not release this information.**
- C. The domestic violence safety plan is intended to facilitate empowerment of the victim or non-offending parent by providing concrete steps for preventing exposure to future acts of physical or emotional abuse through proactive behaviors.
- D. The domestic violence safety plan should address the emotional as well as physical safety and well-being of the child(ren) and identified victim(s). The identified action steps and behaviors must be very specific and must incorporate the case-specific risks identified in the Therapy Referral that the client and therapist are addressing.
- E. Protective actions include identification of specific triggers or conditions under which the child and client may be put at risk. These triggers may be external or internal to the non-protecting parent AND/OR to the offending parent that signal danger. These are best organized on a continuum from earliest warning signs to signs of imminent danger.
- F. The safety plan should identify what the victim or non-protecting parent will do if the identified triggers or "red flags" occur, including detailed information for each planned safety intervention.
- G. The plan should identify a safety network and community resources to develop connections and skills for independence.
- H. The plan should consider and address client strengths, support system, and access to specific resources such as:
  - a. Emergency phone numbers (police, crisis lines, battered women's hotlines, safe individuals in their support system)
  - b. List of available resources (legal guidance, medical, advocacy)
  - c. List of phone numbers to shelters, safe houses, or other safe places where the client can go
  - d. Temporary Restraining Order information



- e. Concrete behavioral steps to take in an emergency
- f. Rehearsal of safety plan steps when appropriate
- g. A description of how the safety plan will be monitored and the person responsible for each action
- I. A sample personalized safety plan for domestic violence survivors can be found online at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK25890> (Accessed November 2011).
- J. A sample Child Abuse Prevention safety plan can also be found in the [TERM Treatment Plan Documentation Resources](#) (Optum website under Manuals tab) pages 57-60.