Better Decisions and Stronger Engagement with Families to Keep Children Safe

An Integration of Evidence-Based Structured Decision Making Tools and Partnering For Safety Framework in Child Protection

Child Protective Service
27 Nov 2018
1. Understand how CPS uses the SDM and PFS integrated approach to guide workers in making decisions and engaging families to keep children safe;

2. Apply relevant elements of the SDM and PFS integrated approach for community agencies’ work with families to assess safety in cases with child protection concerns
OVERVIEW

- Introduction to SDM and PFS integrated approach in CPS’ work
- Benefits of the integrated approach
- Keeping children safe in the community using the integrated approach
- Case Study: Engaging families; Working with children to ensure safety
What key challenges do you face in keeping children safe?

https://pigeonhole.at/CPS2018
### Key Challenges in Keeping Children Safe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should this case be reported to my supervisor or MSF CPS? (For community partners)</th>
<th>How do I engage my clients more easily to gather more information?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can I involve my clients and other partners in safety planning?</td>
<td>How does MSF decide to accept a referral?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTEGRATION OF SDM & PFS IN A CASE LIFE CYCLE

SDM pinpoints the decisions that have to be made in a case lifecycle, guides those decisions and points out the key information for workers to look out for

SDM Decision Points

Case life cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSSG/CARG</th>
<th>Intake</th>
<th>Investigation</th>
<th>Ongoing Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

PFS

Good practice skills and professional wisdom are necessary to build rapport and engage families to effectively gather information and take ownership of cooperative safety plans and case plans
Structured-decision making (SDM) tools

A research & evidence-based decision support system that consists of a suite of tools to guide decision-making at key points in the management of a child protection case.

How do I know what decisions to make while managing a case?

What can I base my decisions on?

When do I make these decisions?
### Structured-Decision Making (SDM) Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Community Partners</th>
<th>For MSF CPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Should this incident be reported?</td>
<td>Should this concern be investigated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can the child safely remain in the home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What level of intervention should be provided?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What goals should be addressed in the case plan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can the child return home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Should this case be closed?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information gathered at each decision-making point has to meet the definition.
Partnering for Safety (PFS) Approach

- Collaborative, family-centered, safety and solution-focused practice framework
- Help key stakeholders (including families) focus on and concretely articulate issues surrounding child safety at all points in the case process, using simple and direct language and concepts.

How can I help my clients be more involved in safety planning?

How do I simplify concepts for my clients?

How do I engage my clients more easily?
Partnering for Safety (PFS) Principles

“Nothing about us, without us.”

- Families are resourceful & can significantly contribute to the solutions
- Encourage carers and children to own and participate in case plans to facilitate sustainable change
Benefits of the integrated approach

- Co-creating solutions
- Minimise risk of an incident
- Reliable & consistent assessment
- Transparent & clear decisions
- Sustainable change
How to keep children safe in the community - A PFS Approach

Gather Information about the harm & danger items

Three Houses

Clear worry statements & non-negotiables

Explore network (informal and formal)

Circles of Safety

Assess safe carers

Developing and monitoring safety plan

Safety House

Immediate Safety Plan

Collaborative engagement

Home visits & phone calls by network
Types of Tools used in PFS Approach

Three Houses Tool
- A tool for involving children / youths in assessment and planning
- Keeping the child’s voice heard

Circles of Safety
- Helping families build / strengthen a safety and support network
- Visual tool to help identify people for families’ safety and support network

Safety House
- Involving families in creating safety plans for child to be safe at home
IMMEDIATE SAFETY PLAN

Objectives:

- Establishing safety by changing environment
- Monitoring family’s ability to follow through plans
- Sustaining enduring safety through building networks
  - Strengthening informal network
SAFETY ASSESSMENT
A SDM AND PFS INTEGRATED APPROACH

Identify danger items

PFS
Gathering information through interviews with all parties

SDM
Clarifying safety threshold against SDM definition

Explore network

PFS
Identifying family’s support network & protectiveness over child

SDM
Establish acts of protection that have already been demonstrated

Plans for safety

PFS
Involving the families in creating their own safety plans

SDM
Identifying safety interventions that family and safety network agree to follow

Develop immediate safety plan
Identifying Harm

**PFS Engagement with Families**

- ‘Starting from a rigorous and balanced assessment’
  - Establishing the type, frequency, extent of harm on the CYP
  - Child-friendly tools: Three Houses

**SDM Clarify the harm and the appropriate next steps**

- Identify harm to child and decide on the next step
- Information gathered at the point of assessment completion has to meet the definition of the SDM tools
‘It takes a village to raise a child’

- Identifying family’s support network & protectiveness over child
- Child-friendly tools: Circles of Safety

Establish acts of protection that have already been demonstrated
Plans for Safety

**PFS**
Engagement with Families

‘Practicing from a spirit of inquiry’

- Involving the families in creating their own safety plans
- Child-friendly tools: Safety House

**SDM**
Identify safety intervention

Identifying safety interventions that family and safety network agree to follow
A Case Study: Engaging Families; Working with Children to Ensure Safety
Anna (F/10 years) was discovered to have bruises on her arms by her form teacher in October 2018.

Anna’s form teacher used the SSSG tool to guide her decision on whether to raise the concern.

From the result of the SSSG tool, Anna’s school counsellor was informed.

Anna’s school counsellor used the CARG tool to guide her decision on whether to report the case to MSF CPS.

From the result of the CARG tool, school counsellor made the decision to report to MSF CPS.
Anna (F/10 years) was referred to CPS in October 2018.

She sustained injuries such as a cut on her left eye, and bruises on her arms and back.

She shared with her form teacher that while her parents were fighting, her stepfather threw a rice-cooker at her mother and Anna was in the way.

Anna also shared that her mother would kick her in her stomach, and not let her go to school because she was expected to do chores at home.

Anna’s aunty will sometimes check in on Anna to see if she is doing alright.
#3 Identifying Harm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Danger Item</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent/carer cause serious physical harm to the CYP or is likely to cause serious physical harm to the CYP. <em>Select all that apply.</em></td>
<td>Serious physical harm refers to harm inflicted on CYP’s body that required medical treatment e.g. broken bones, sprains, concussion or other brain injury, internal injury, burns, bites, cuts that require closure, ingestion requiring medical care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Excessive use of physical force on CYP</td>
<td>The parent/carer used physical force on a CYP that could reasonably result in a serious physical harm; OR parent/carer injure or nearly injure a CYP by using physical force for reasons other than discipline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Family violence places the CYP in danger of physical harm</td>
<td>There is evidence of family violence involving adult (s) in the home, AND CYP has been or could be physically harmed. For e.g. Throwing objects in the presence of the CYP, without consideration of whether CYP will be seriously injured in the process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THREE HOUSES

House of good Things:
- Go to East coast with mother
- Go shopping at Park
- Go fishing at East coast park
- Go to the Playground
- Play XBOX: Halo & wrestling
- Spend time with my siblings
- Playing with my siblings
- Eating in Seoul Garden
- Drawing
- Talking with Ashley Lohoe
- Do experiments
- Go to school
- Friends are good
- Go to museum - visit museum
- History very good
- History very interesting

House of worries:
- Seeing my mother get angry - felt scared
- My mom forcing me to eat or do something
- Eating food that I don’t like
- Disgusted
- Getting scared by my parents
- Problem that’s small become bigger just because of my parent
- Bole Get scared because of my sibling even though I didn’t do it
Three Houses

House of DREAMS

- My parents stop quarrelling.
- Being a scientist & help people cure diseases.
- My parents is always there when it's my birthday even though there's no cake.
- Have a cat or a rabbit.
## Establish Protective Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective factor</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td>Other actions of protection taken by a parent/carer, household member, safety network member or CYP which reduces one or more of the dangers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Circles of Safety

- Aunty
- Mummy
- ME
- Dad
- Mr.
- Grandmother
- Grandfather
- Friends
- My cat
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate Safety Interventions to remain at home</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Safety network will act to protect the CYP      | Individuals (family members, neighbours, friends or professionals) do all of the following:  
  • Acknowledge the danger  
  • Are engaged and willing to participate as safety network members  
  • Have the ability and capacity to perform or support the specific responsibilities detailed in the immediate safety plan |
SAFETY HOUSE

1. **RULES OF THE HOUSE**
   1. Only 1 person talk at 1 time
   2. Cannot run at home
   3. Must talk softly and not shout

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- **AuntY**
- **Uncle**

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- **Papa**
- **Mummy**
#6 IMMEDIATE SAFETY PLAN

Role

Play
**Immediate Safety Plan**

**Worry Statement(s):**

- CPS and school are worried that when Mom and Dad are angry at each other (e.g., when suspecting the other of having affairs), Dad and Mom would throw objects at each other in the presence of Anna. Mom and Dad may also hit each other and swear at each other in the presence of Anna. This would result in Anna being injured if she is standing too close to them, and Anna would feel scared, worried and sad.

- CPS and school are worried that when Mom is upset with Anna (e.g., for not listening to instructions), she would hit, kick and punch Anna. Anna may then sustain injuries such as bruises and cuts, and feel scared and unloved.

**Non-Negotiable:**

- Mom and Dad cannot be alone with the children (one or both of them). Another safe adult needs to be there.

**‘What If’ Questions:**

- What if safe adult cannot be there sometimes?
# Immediate Safety Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action to be taken?</th>
<th>Who will do this?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>How will CPS know it has happened?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(\textbullet) Aunty will come to stay in the family home for the next week and provide continuous supervision of Anna to help Mom and Dad ensure that neither of them use physical discipline on Anna or expose her to their conflicts.</td>
<td>Aunty, Mom, Dad</td>
<td>Immediately after this meeting.</td>
<td>CPO will call the home 3 times during the week to talk to Mom, Dad, Aunty, Uncle, and Anna to make sure that everything is okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\textbullet) If either Mom or Dad start to get angry with each other or at Anna, Aunty will remind them to go for a walk and calm down.</td>
<td>Aunty, Mom, Dad</td>
<td>Any time Mom or Dad are angry.</td>
<td>CPO will also do announced and unannounced visits to the home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\textbullet) If Mom or Dad won’t go away to calm down, or if Aunty is worried about Anna’s safety, she will put Anna in her car and take them to her house. Aunty will then call CPO (number) or police (999).</td>
<td>Aunty, Uncle</td>
<td>Any time this happens.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\textbullet) If Aunty gets sick or can’t be there for other reasons, she will call her husband, Uncle, who will come and pick up Aunty and Anna and take them to their house until Aunty is able to go back with Anna.</td>
<td>Aunty, Uncle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### When will the immediate safety plan be reviewed?

**When:** 1 December 2018  
**Who will be involved (parents, network and CPS):**  
CPO, Mom, Dad, Aunty, Uncle

### What will people do if they are worried or if the immediate safety plan isn’t working?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Call CPO. Call police if necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network</td>
<td>Take children to her home. Call CPO. Call police if necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child/Young person</td>
<td>Talk to Aunty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPS</td>
<td>Review safety plan. Assess whether Anna needs to stay somewhere else while strengthening plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Agreement to implement Immediate Safety Plan
(By signing here, I agree to this immediate safety plan).

- **Parent/Caregiver Signature(s)**
- **CPO Signature**
- **Supervisor Signature**
- **Other (please specify)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Member/Network Person</th>
<th>Contact details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone</strong></td>
<td><strong>Email</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
'IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD'
QUESTIONS?
Thank you!