

KEEPING FAMILIES SAFE

Assessing and Managing Risk

This series will explore 6 areas of practice that will support good case management in Family Social Work.



Risk : the likelihood of undesirable events or outcomes occurring in a given situation.

For families, this can mean



1. Harm towards or by Family Members
2. Harm towards Self
3. Harm towards or by the Community

Examples of risk include:

- Family Violence
- Self Harm
- Exploitation by members of the community

Workers can **Gauge** how likely the family will be in harm's way by conducting good and comprehensive **Risk Assessments**



This is done by examining both behaviours and circumstances that contribute to the likelihood of risk.

Using multiple assessment frameworks with **different** risk considerations will allow us to sufficiently consider the range of the subject.

For Example,

For families with eldercare responsibilities, workers might want to use a risk assessment specifically designed to assess elder vulnerability issues and a separate risk assessment for the caregiver assessing likelihood of burnout, to have a better understanding of the situation.



After the worker has completed the assessment, they can proceed to **MANAGE** the situation with a **SAFETY PLAN**.

One framework workers can take inspiration from is the **Signs of Safety Approach**

- How safe is the family (on a scale of 1 to 10)?
- What are we worried about?
- What's working well and what's not?
- What needs to change to make things better?

These questions provide a simple framework for workers to consider both the protective and risk factors when planning for safety.