



## 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.
- 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.

### Child Sexual Abuse Safety Plan

- A. The following guidelines are intended to provide assistance with safety planning in Child and Family Well Being (CFWB) cases involving non-protecting parent child sexual abuse.
- B. The safety plan documents both *prevention* strategies, or rules that the family will follow in the home to promote healthy boundaries and safety, and *intervention* strategies, or steps the client will take if the prevention strategies are not working, “red flags” occur, or if sexual abuse recurs.
- C. The client and therapist should discuss potential obstacles to being consistent with the safety plan and how the client will address those if they arise.
- D. The 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 CFWB Therapy Referral Form 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, victim, 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 plan should identify a safety network and community resources to develop connections and skills for independence.
- G. 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, and 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

Additional information for developing a Safety Plan in Sexual Abuse cases:

Levenson, J.S. & Morin, J.W. (2001). *Treating Nonoffending Parents in Child Sexual Abuse Cases*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.