Confirming Safe Environments

ASSESSING SAFETY IN KIN AND FOSTER HOME PLACEMENTS

Case Name:

Case #

Home Assessed:

Date:

Permission to Copy Granted

Confirming Safe Environments-Instructional Guide

As outlined in the Statewide Child contact policy, 0205A.0 the confirming safe environment instrument must be completed at a minimum of 5 months post placement and then every six months thereafter. The information collection for the completion of the tool must be gathered incrementally during each monthly contact with the placement provider.

There are blank lines available at the end of each section to provide explanation.   When completing the document, explanation must be provided if the selection is 0 or 1. The explanation must outline what is being done to address that specific deficiency.

Explanation must also be provided at the conclusion when the overall score is 1.4 or lower. The verbiage should detail the plan of action to remediate the safety concerns in the placement. If the overall score is 1.4 or lower an immediate staffing with your supervisor is required, as well as a mandatory referral to Foster Care Stability (WCDSS) or Placement Review Team (DCFS).

At the tools conclusion, print a hard copy for the file that contains the date and signature of both the worker and the supervisor.

Safe Environment: Kin and Foster

1.   Children: *What are the indicators of safety in the children currently living in the home?*

(This question considers the family's own children; unrelated children who have been living with the family. Foster children may be included when studying foster homes with due respect to the status of their functioning. Judgments are based on considering all the children generally. If one child is remarkably different than the other children, an explanation should be made specifically indicating the extent to which this raises any concern for the quality of parenting or the presence of threats.

○   4.   Openly assertive; comfortable speaking mind; self-protective; indignant at being threatened; describes environment as safe; supportive siblings; no indication of maltreatment; very low vulnerability.

○   3.   Somewhat assertive; with encouragement speaks mind; generally self-protective; describes environment as generally safe; siblings may or may not be supportive of each other; no indication of maltreatment; low vulnerability.

○   2.   Reserved; uncomfortable speaking mind freely; ability to protect self questionable; limited ability to make needs known to others; uneasy about describing environment; siblings seem detached from each other; behavior may be consistent with being maltreated; somewhat vulnerable.

○   1.   Withdrawn; verbally inaccessible; cannot protect self; reluctant to seek assistance or protection; avoids discussing environment; behavior is consistent with being maltreated and feeling threatened; vulnerable.

○   0.   Intimidated; afraid; avoids communicating with others; avoids direct communication with anyone; not self-protective; behaves in ways suggesting presence of threatening environment: alert for danger; siblings may be antagonistic, blaming, or overly dependent; indications of maltreatment; very vulnerable.

○   N/A

Explain:

2. Care Givers: *What are the indicators of safety in the adult care givers currently living in the home?*

(This question considers parents, step-parents, grandparents or other adults in the home who take an active role in caring for and supervising the family's children.)

○ 4. Very open; shows conscience and empathy; general history of concern for children's well-being; closely bonded to own children; self-aware; highly motivated; examples of protective behavior; products of nurturing environments; acknowledges and takes responsibilities; accurate viewpoint of placed child; has personal support for caregiver role.

○ 3. Generally open; acceptable conscience and empathy; a history of protectiveness for own children; attached to own children; generally motivated; limited self-awareness; no indications of negative history; generally acknowledges and takes responsibility; acceptable viewpoint of placed child; has some support for caregiver role.

○ 2. Reserved; displays conscience and minimal empathy; some evidence of previous parenting difficulties; minimally attached to own children; minimally motivated; limited self-awareness; few examples of protective behavior; product of unhappy histories; varies in acknowledging and taking responsibility; detached viewpoint of placed child; no support for caregiver role.

○ 1. Manipulative; avoiding; difficult to determine conscience, empathy or history of protectiveness; questionable attachment to own children; somewhat unmotivated; poor self-awareness; history as child uncertain; tendency toward blaming others for difficulties; no specific empathy or individualized viewpoint of placed child; some support against caregiver role.

○ 0. Closed; indifference/lack of empathy apparent in manner; poor parenting history; lack of concern for own children's well-being; somewhat detached from own children; unmotivated; distorted self-awareness; no evidence of protective behavior; likely maltreated/unsafe as child; does not take responsibility; possesses an inaccurate viewpoint of placed child; considerable support against caregiver role.

Explain:

3. Family: *What are the indicators of safety within the kin or foster family?*

(This question considers all household residents with a bit more attention given to care givers.)

○ 4.   Members possess excellent physical, emotional, cognitive capacity; reality oriented; clear roles and positive relationships; value and practice honesty; coping and/or experiencing low stress; available protection and supervision; sufficient health and other resources; accessible: transportation/phones; can meet unusual and specific child needs; excellent living arrangements; socially integrated into community.

○ 3.   Members possess adequate physical, emotional, cognitive capacity; generally accurate reality testing; general role clarity and acceptable relationships; honest; protective; coping adequately while stress varies; safe living arrangements; some social integration.

○ 2.   Members' physical, emotional, cognitive capacity in need of support; limited accuracy in reality testing; imprecise role clarity and unsatisfying relationships; generally honest; some examples and history of protectiveness; coping varies or moderate stress; generally safe living arrangements; casual social integration.

○ 1.   Members possess limited physical, emotional, cognitive capacity; often view reality inaccurately; varied role effectiveness and tense relationships; sometimes deceptive; limited evidence of protectiveness; limited coping or experiencing moderate to high stress; questionable living arrangements; superficial or conflictual involvement with community.

○ 0.   Members possess deficient physical, emotional, cognitive capacity; inaccurate reality testing; ineffective roles and hostile, neglectful or manipulative relationships; some history of maltreatment; poor coping or experiencing high stress; unsafe living arrangements; closed and avoids community.

Explain:

4. Community: *What are the indicators of safety within the placement family's community?*

(This question considers formal and informal aspects of the community, other extended family, friends, neighbors, clubs, organizations, non child welfare and child welfare agencies and providers, other professionals.)

○   4.   Family/children have daily to weekly contact with others in community; friends, neighbors, relatives or others routinely provide support and assistance; family/children involved with professionals or agencies currently working under a planned agreement or involvement and contact is routine and frequent.

○   3.   Family/children have weekly to bi-weekly contact with others in community; generally family receives support from friends, neighbors, relatives and others; family/children involved with professionals or agencies currently working under a planned agreement or involvement and contact is occasional.

○   2.   Family/children have bi-weekly to monthly contact with others in the community; friends, neighbors, relatives or others occasionally provide support and assistance; family/children sporadically involved with professionals or agencies but are not currently working under a planned agreement or involvement.

○   1.   Family/children have monthly or less contact with others in the community; friends, neighbors, relatives or others do not provide support and assistance; family/children are not involved with professionals or agencies.

○   0.   Family/children have virtually no contact with others in the community; friends, neighbors, relatives or others are antagonistic; family/children avoid professionals or agencies.

Explain:

5. Acceptance: *Do/will kin or foster family members accept the child into the home?*

(This question considers the family's children as well and other non relatives who may reside in the home.)

○ 4. Placed child is fully embraced as part of the household; positive/fulfilling interaction/relationship exists between the placed child and others in the home; placed child helped to fit in; is always included in activities and provided for the same as others; placed child is cherished; other children - placed child attachment; placed child is not held accountable for circumstances requiring placement.

○ 3. Placed child accepted as part of the household; acceptable interaction/relationship between the placed child and others in the home; the placed child is encouraged to participate in activities and provided for the same as others; other children - placed child acceptance; the placed child is highly valued personally.

○ 2. Placed child is accommodated as part of the household; casual/courteous interaction/relationship exists between the placed child and others in the home; minimal attempts in assisting placed child to fit in; placed child sometimes not included in activities; may be provided for differently from others; the placed child is generally valued personally; other children - placed child indulgence; may be some reservations about placed child's responsibility for need for placement.

○ 1. Placed child is tolerated; likely not viewed as part of family; strained/difficult interaction/relationship exists between the placed child and others in the home; little effort to assist placed child to fit in; placed child frequently excluded from activities; clearly provided for differently than others; other children - placed child antagonism; the placed child is valued generally as a relative; consider placed child somewhat responsible for placement.

○ 0. Intolerant toward placed child; do not accept placed child; conflicted interaction/relationship exists

between placed child and others in home; not allowed to fit in; segregated from activities; does not receive the same provisions as others; other children - placed child hostility; the placed child is not valued; blamed for placement

Explain:

6. Plan: *Is the kin or foster family's plan sufficient to assure the child's safety?*

(This question considers specific plans and intentions, methods, assurances, feasibility, commitment.)

○   4.   Caregivers fully understand/are attentive to the placed child's vulnerability/need for protection; a very effective general plan for caring for the placed child exists/will meet the child's needs; an acceptable, specific protective/ supervision plan exists including responsibilities, timing, activity, acceptable effective means for child management and discipline; high commitment/capability for carrying out plans

○   3.   Caregivers generally understand/are respectful of placed child's vulnerability/need for protection; a reasonable plan for caring for the placed child exists, likely will meet child's needs; an acceptable protective/supervision plan exists; care givers are generally committed to and capable of carrying out plans; plans include an acceptable means for child management and discipline.

○   2.   Caregivers partially understand placed child's vulnerability/need for protection; a vague/non specific plan for caring for placed child exists; a vague/non specific protective/supervision plan exists; caregivers are moderately committed to/somewhat capable of implementing plans; plans do not include references to child management and discipline. Plans do not take into account the demands of having several children in the home.

○   1.   Caregivers do not understand placed child's vulnerability/need for protection; an inadequate plan for caring for placed child exists; an inadequate protective/supervision plan exists; caregivers' commitment to and capacity for implementing plans are uncertain; plans include undesirable means for child management and discipline. There may be too many children in the home.

○   0.   Caregivers do not believe and/or care about placed child's vulnerability/need for protection; no or an unacceptable general plan for caring for placed child exists; no or an unacceptable protective/supervision plan exists; caregivers are not committed to and capable of creating or implementing plans. There are too many children in the home to assure safety.

Explain:

7. **Oversight:** *Are kin or foster family and home conditions amenable to CPS oversight?*

(This question considers tendencies toward inclusion; examples of cooperation with outsiders; access; proximity.)

○   4.   Family very open/routinely include/involved with non family entities; eager to work actively; guarantee and seek out CPS home visits; readily make child available at home/other locations; always accessible in person/by phone; go out of way to be available; will seek help from CPS and other appropriate persons.

○   3.   Family generally open/often include/involved with non family entities; willing to work on case issues; agreeable to CPS home visits; will make child available at home/other locations; usually accessible in person/by phone; generally available; likely to seek help from CPS and other appropriate persons.

○   2.   Family somewhat cautious/sometimes include/involved with non family entities; place limits on working on case issues; accept CPS home visits; will make child available at home; sporadically accessible in person/by phone; availability often a matter of convenience; may seek help from CPS.

○   1.   Family guarded/seldom include/involved with non family entities; hedges making commitment to work with CPS or superficial agreement; avoid CPS home visits; do not always make child available at home/other locations; seldom accessible in person/by phone; generally not available; unlikely to seek help from CPS/may seek other appropriate persons as a first option.

○   0.   Family closed and/or manipulative/do not include/not involved with non family entities; want to work independent of CPS; refuse or protest need for CPS home visits; do not make child available at home/other locations; not accessible in person/by phone; not available; will not seek help from CPS/other appropriate persons.

Explain:

8K. Natural Family - Kin: *What is the nature of the relationship among these kin?*

(This question considers the extent to which relationships can contribute to or detract from the placed child's safety and the capacity of the kin to follow through.)

○ 4. Natural parents - kin relationships respectful/accepting/mutual affection. Natural parents accept/support kin's

caregiver role/will not interfere/intrude/inappropriately become involved with kin's home/responsibilities/view kin as best place for child; kin caregivers share CPS' view of the natural parents' capacity to care for their children. Kin caregivers strongly believe the child should be placed; can effectively/independently fend off natural parents' attempts to countermand placement plans; kin fully collaborating with CPS with respect to natural parents.

○ 3. Natural parents - kin relationships generally respectful/accepting/mutual affection. Natural parents generally accept/support kin's caregiver role; natural parents unlikely to interfere/intrude/attempt to inappropriately/become involved with kin's home/responsibilities; accepting of kin as best place for child. Kin caregivers generally share CPS' view of the natural parents' capacity to care for their children; agree with placement; can effectively gain assistance to fend off natural parents' attempts to countermand placement plans; fully cooperating with CPS with respect to natural parents.

○ 2. Natural parents - kin relationships generally passive/detached/minimal involvement. Natural parents question kin caregiver role; likely to manipulate, interfere, intrude or attempt to inappropriately become involved with the kin's home or responsibilities; not accepting of kin as best place for child. Kin caregivers not certain of CPS' view of the natural parents' capacity to care for their children; accept the child should be placed; cannot effectively gain assistance to fend off natural parents' attempts to countermand placement plans; minimally cooperating with CPS while being influenced by natural parents.

○ 1. Natural parents - kin relationships generally tense/conflicted/suspicious. Natural parents challenge kin caregiver role; will manipulate/interfere/intrude/attempt to inappropriately become involved with the kin's home or responsibilities; adamantly disapprove of kin placement. Kin caregivers generally do not share CPS' view of natural parents' capacity to care for their children; not certain of need for placement; avoiding CPS in favor of the natural parents.

○ 0. Natural parents - kin relationships hostile/reinforce dysfunction. Natural parents support kin caregiver role for self-interest; connive with kin; view kin as place for child for own purposes. Kin caregivers do not share CPS' view of the natural parents' capacity to care for their children; do not believe child should be placed; kin and natural parents are in collusion.

Explain:

9K. Placed Child - Kin: *What is the nature of the relationship between the placed child and the kin family?*

(This question considers history, familiarity, attachment, level of affection, current or most recent involvement.)

○   4.   Warm/belonging/affectionate relationship between placed child/kin; placed child very close to kin children; kin caregivers have life-long involvement with placed child, are very familiar with placed child and his/her uniqueness/ needs; placed child experiences comfort and security with kin.

○   3.   Generally warm/accepting/familiar relationship between placed child/kin; placed child gets along well with kin children; kin care givers have months of involvement with placed child, are generally familiar with placed child and his/her uniqueness/needs; placed child generally feels relaxed with kin.

○   2.   Casual/cordial/not well-developed relationship between placed child/kin; placed child and kin children not familiar with each other; kin caregivers have short-term involvement with placed child, are minimally familiar with placed child and his/her uniqueness and needs; placed child apprehensive with kin.

○   1.   Tense/detached/unfamiliar relationship between placed child/kin; placed child feels intimidated by, out-of-place with or is scapegoat of kin children; kin caregivers have unpleasant or no involvement with placed child, are unfamiliar with placed child's uniqueness/needs; placed child experiences tension and dread with kin.

○   0.   Distrustful/disliking/hostile/un-accepting relationship between placed child/kin; placed child is fearful of kin children; kin caregivers have established negative involvement with placed child, are unconcerned with or non accepting of placed child's uniqueness and needs; placed child is fearful with kin.

Explain:

8F. Fostering Experience: *Is there anything within the foster care history/experience that could affect the placed child's impending safety?*

(This question considers history prior to fostering; the original study; preferences; background; pertinent training and other forms of preparation.)

○ 4. Original study and updates or addendums indicated excellent foster home prospect; foster parents' child preference similar to placed child; fostering experience excellent; successfully cared for children for long period; very successful current placements; foster parents specifically prepared for placed child; have accurate knowledge of maltreatment victims; appropriate perceptions of maltreating parents/maltreatment victims.

○ 3. Original study and updates or addendums indicated good foster home prospect; foster parents' child preference accommodates placed child; fostering experience good; successfully caring for children for a limited period; successful current placements; generally prepared for placed child; have some knowledge of maltreatment victims; have acceptable perceptions about maltreating parents/maltreatment victims.

○ 2. Original study and updates or addendums indicated acceptable foster home prospect; foster parents expressed no child preference; fostering experience acceptable; has been satisfactorily caring for children for a long period; acceptable placements; minimally prepared for placed child; limited knowledge of maltreatment victims; limited perceptions about maltreating parents/ maltreatment victims.

○ 1. Original study and updates or addendums indicated concerns about foster home prospects; foster parents' child preference somewhat different than the placed child; fostering experience questionable; has been acceptingly caring for children for a limited period; current placements minimally acceptable; not prepared for the placed child; have inaccurate knowledge of maltreatment victims; have inaccurate perceptions about maltreating parents/maltreatment victims.

○ 0. Original study and updates or addendums indicated reservations about foster home prospect; foster parents' child preference very different than placed child; fostering experience problematic; has been unsatisfactorily caring for children for a limited period; current placements under scrutiny; not prepared for the placed child; have distorted knowledge of maltreatment victims; have distorted perceptions about maltreating parents/maltreatment victims.

Explain:

9F. Interaction Dynamics: *What interaction dynamics could potentially affect the placed child's impending safety?*

(This question considers what is known about children who are currently placed with foster home; interaction dynamics prior to placed child; needs of placed child, other placed children, family's own children; how foster parents address and manage different child needs; the general family dynamics - adults and children.)

○ 4.   Previously placed children interact very well; interact very well with family's own children. Needs/behaviors of placed child/previously placed children/family's own children non competitive/mutually compatible. Foster parents aware of all children's differences/needs/ behaviors; effective at managing/meeting needs; warm/nurturing interaction with placed child.

○ 3.   Previously placed children interact in acceptable ways; interact in acceptable ways with the family's own children. No indication needs/behaviors of placed child/previously placed children/family's own children conflict/create vulnerability. Foster parents generally aware of all children's differences/needs/behaviors; are able to manage and meet needs; accepting/supportive interaction with placed child.

○ 2.   Previously placed children interaction includes tension, teasing, harassing, bickering; interact with family's own children in suspicious/ challenging/anxious ways. Needs/behaviors of placed child/previously placed children/family's own children stimulate unrest/conflict/ disturbance. Placed child susceptible to influence of previously placed children/family's own children. Foster parents have a limited awareness of all children's differences/needs/behaviors; with support/assistance are able to manage/meet needs/behaviors of children; interaction with the placed child is tense or superficial.

○ 1.   Previously placed children interaction distant, scapegoating, blaming, etc.; interaction conflicted, tense with the family's own children. Needs/behaviors of placed child/previously placed children/family's own children create competition and "in fighting" for attention/ satisfaction. Placed child vulnerable to acting out by placed children or family's own children. Foster parents have difficulty managing/meeting needs/behaviors of all children; interaction with placed child is contentious.

○ 0.   Previously placed children interaction includes fighting/other acting out; interact in hostile/aggressive ways with family's own children. Needs/behaviors of all children will stimulate hostility and aggression. Placed child vulnerable to aggression/assault. Foster parents unable to effectively manage/meet needs/behaviors of all children; interaction with placed child conflicted.

Explain:

10F. Current Status: *What current issues within the home could affect the child's impending safety?*

(This question considers foster parents' objectives in caring for children; present demands the home is experiencing.)

○   4.   Foster parents fully believe they are currently caring for children meeting their preference; placed child also fits their child preference; have had successful experience caring for a child very similar to placed child; caring for placed child is consistent with foster parents' motivation/intent; no demands with current placements; no unusual stress.

○   3.   Foster parents believe they are caring for children similar to their preference; placed child generally fits their child preference; have had acceptable experience caring for a child similar to placed child; caring for placed child is generally consistent with foster parents' motivation/intent; minimal demands with current placements; no unusual stress.

○   2.   Foster parents believe they are caring for some children different than their preference; placed child does not fit their child preference; have limited successful experience caring for a child similar to the placed child; caring for placed child inconsistent with foster parents' motivation/intent; moderate demands in the home with current placements; some stress.

○   1.   Foster parents believe that all children they are caring for are different from their preference; placed child does not fit their child preference; have had no experience caring for a child similar to the placed child; caring for placed child challenges foster parents' motivation/intent; significant demands with current placements; unusual stress.

○   0.   Foster parents prefer not to be caring for the children placed with them; placed child is very different than their child preference; have had unsuccessful experience caring for a child similar to the placed child; not motivated or have wrong intentions for caring for placed child; current placements create unusually high demand; experiencing significant stress.

Explain:

Confirming Safe Environments

Please click this button to calculate your score: Calculate Totals

Conclusion: Enter the rating values from the previous checked assessments, total them and divide by 9 if it is kin home and by 10 if it is a foster home.

Family: Kin or Foster   **Kin**   **Foster**   **TOTAL RATINGS**

	Children		Acceptance		Natural Family – Kin		Fostering Experience	Kin =	
	Care Givers		Plan		Placed Child - Kin		Interaction Dynamics		
	Family		Oversight				Current Status	Foster =	
	Community								

3.1 - 4.0   **Child Safety = High Degree of Confidence in Safe Environment**
Abundance of signs demonstrating capacity to provide safe and protective care; placed child valued; collaborative with agency; positive history; life success; child rearing success.

2.3 - 3.0   **Child Safety = Significant Degree of Confidence in Safe Environment**
Significant signs demonstrating capacity to provide safe and protective care; supportive of the placed child; will work with agency; acceptable history; satisfaction in life and child rearing generally.

1.5 - 2.2   **Child Safety = Moderate Degree of Confidence in Safe Environment**
Moderate signs demonstrating capacity to provide safe and protective care; generally accepting of placed child and cooperative with agency; some difficulties and adjustment problems in adult and family life and in child rearing; alternative placement may be indicated.

0.8 - 1.4   **Child Safety = Low Degree of Confidence in Safe Environment**
Significant signs demonstrating a lack of capacity to provide a wholesome environment; ambivalent about placed child and/or questionable objectives; avoid agency involvement/oversight; generally a negative history/life adjustment/child rearing; risk of maltreatment. Concern about or evidence of child maltreatment. Concern should exist for other children in the home; alternative placement should be pursued.

0 - 0.7   **Child Safety = No Confidence in Safe Environment**
Abundance of negative conditions; a threat to placed child's safety; antagonistic toward placed child, in collusion with the child's parents/ resistant/manipulative history of criminal behavior, family violence, child maltreatment; concern should exist for other children in the home. Immediately remove placed children; consider safety of other children in the home

Explain:

_____   _____
Worker Signature   Date

_____   _____
Supervisor Signature   Date