

Court System For Dependency & Neglect Task Force  
Child and Family Services Division Presentation  
Prevention Plans & CFSD Interactions Prior to Legal Action  
March 14, 2024



DEPARTMENT OF  
**PUBLIC HEALTH &  
HUMAN SERVICES**

# Understanding the CPS Role with Children and Families

- Montana Child and Families Services Division (CFSD) receives reports of alleged Child Abuse and Neglect every day
  - All allegations must be made against a person responsible for a child's welfare in order to be assessed by CFSD
    - These persons include (41-3-102 MCA):
      - Parents, guardians, foster parent, adults who reside in the same home as the child, day-care providers, staff at residential facilities
  - All allegations must meet the statutory definitions for maltreatment in order to be assessed
    - Physical Abuse
    - Physical Neglect
    - Psychological Abuse or Neglect
    - Sexual Abuse

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/cfsd/cfsdcaseloadaddata>



# Report Definitions

- **CPI- Child Protective Services Information**
  - Information reported about a family does not meet the criteria of potential risk of harm to a child. These requests require no follow-up activity, and no agency action.
- **CFS- Request for Services**
  - Information reported does not meet the criteria for child abuse or neglect by Montana state statute but requires a response due to a request for services.
- **CPS- Child Protective Services**
  - Information reported of suspected abuse and neglect meets the criteria to be investigated and is assigned a response time.



# Interview Protocol for Child Protective Services Report

- Reporter
- Interview with identified child(ren)
- Interview with siblings
- Interview with both parents
- Collateral sources



# Investigation Process

## Immediate Danger Assessment

Assessment of safety threats that are actively occurring or in process of occurring and will likely result in an actual or substantial risk of physical or psychological harm to the child.



# Protection Plan

## Protection Plans (short term)

A plan that describes an immediate, short term, sufficient protective action(s) from identified safety threats in order to allow for completion of the Family Functioning Assessment.

- In-home Protection Plans (60 days)
- Out of home Protection Plans (30 days)  
Parents must agree  
ICWA – must be signed in front of Judge



# Investigation Process

## Family Functioning Assessment

Wholistic assessment of the family including impending dangers, vulnerability of children and protective capacities of parents.

**Impending Danger** refers to a child in continuous state of danger due to parent/caregiver behaviors, attitudes, motives, emotions and/or situations posing a specific threat of actual or substantial risk of harm to a child.



# Investigation Process

## Safety Plan Determination

- Is there a homelike setting where the parent(s) and child(ren) live?
- Is the home calm enough to allow safety service providers and activities to occur?
- Is at least one parent willing to cooperate with the safety plan?
- Are the necessary safety activities and resources available to implement the plan?

## Conditions for Return

- Written statement of specific, *behaviors, conditions, or circumstances* that must exist in the home before a child can safely return and remain in the home under and In-Home Safety Plan
- Essential for parent(s) to participate in the development of Conditions For Return





# Safety Management Plan

## Safety Management Plan (life of case)

### *In-home Safety Plan*

A plan with safety services, actions and responses that assure a child can be kept safe in his/her home.

### *Out of home Safety Plan*

A plan that depends primarily on a separation of the child from his/her home to separate from impending danger and caregivers who lack sufficient protective capacities.



# Service Delivery

## Prevention Plans

- In-home Safety Plan Determination met
- Parents agree and are engaged with services

## Court Ordered Treatment Plans

- Out of home Safety Plan
- Conditions for Return are not met
- Parents are not engaged or need judicial oversight for continued engagement

***Engagement in Services to Create Behavior Change***



# Prevention Plan Purpose

- Improved parenting behaviors.
- Improved parenting knowledge.
- Improved emotional responsiveness.
- Improved parent/caregiver collaboration.
- Reduction in family conflict and improved skills in resolving family conflict.
- Reduction in symptomatic problem behavior exhibited by children and adolescents.
- Reduction in substance abuse.
- Reduction in child maltreatment.
- Reduction in other mental health symptoms, including trauma, anxiety, and depression.

***Engagement in Services to Create Behavior Change***



# Prevention Plan Service Types

## Behavioral Health

- Mental Health Therapy
  - Individual and Family
- Substance Use Treatment
- Home Support Services

## Home Visiting

- Parents As Teachers
- SafeCare

## Parent Education

- Circle of Security
- Love and Logic
- Nurturing Parenting

## Support Services

- Youth Case Management
- Family Based Services

***Engagement in Services to Create Behavior Change***



# Prevention Plan Payment Types

**Medicaid  
Title IV-B  
General Fund**



# Prevention Plan Closure

- Impending danger has been mitigated.
- Parents' protective capacities are strengthened to remedy the impending danger.
- Parent, or kin caregiver, can safely care for the child.
- Child no longer is at risk of entering foster care based on the circumstances and characteristics of their parent, or kin caregiver.

*(Length of time of services 3 months to 12 months)*



# Prevention Plan

QUESTIONS

