

Chapter 8

SAFETY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

8-1. **Purpose.** Safety management services manage or control the condition(s) that make a child unsafe. The child welfare professional responsible for the case is responsible for overall management and monitoring of the plan. Providers of safety management services are responsible for specific safety actions in a safety plan. A safety management service manages caregiver behavior and/or emotions or replaces caregiver responsibilities when caregivers are not able to protect or care for their children.

8-2. **Safety Management Service Categories and Types.**

a. The child welfare professional is responsible for:

(1) Knowing which category and type of safety management service is necessary to manage the danger.

(2) Explaining to a safety management service provider the specific family conditions and circumstances that the service will manage and ensuring that the provider's actions on the safety plan will sufficiently manage the danger.

b. All of the following are different categories and types of safety management services. They may be used alone or in combination. The provider may be from the family's resource network or a formal agency. There may be local variation in the availability of formal safety management services.

(1) **Behavioral Management Category.** This category is concerned with applying action (activities, arrangements, services, etc.) that controls (not treats) caregiver behavior that is a threat to a child's safety. While behavior may be influenced by physical or emotional health, reaction to stress, impulsiveness, or poor self-control, anger, motives, perceptions and attitudes, the purpose of this action is only to control the behavior that poses a danger threat to a child. This action is concerned with aggressive behavior, passive behavior or the absence of behavior – any of which threatens a child's safety. The following are safety management service types associated with the behavioral management category.

(a) **Supervision and monitoring** is the most common safety service in safety intervention. It is concerned with supervising caregiver behavior, children's conditions, the home setting, and the implementation of specific activities in an in-home safety plan.

(b) **Stress Reduction.** In-home safety service provider (relative, friend, or formal provider) comes to the home to engage in activities that relieve family stress or funds are provided for immediate, concrete needs. The in-home presence also allows for continuous monitoring of family conditions and dynamics.

(c) **Behavior modification** as a treatment modality is concerned with the direct changing of unwanted behavior by means of biofeedback or conditioning. Behavior modification as a safety management service is concerned with monitoring and seeking to influence behavior that is associated with present danger or impending danger and is the focus of an in-home safety plan. This safety management service attempts to:

1. Limit and regulate caregiver behavior in relationship to what is required in the in-home safety plan.

2. Influence caregiver behavior to encourage acceptance and participation in the in-home safety plan and to assure effective implementation of the in-home safety plan.

(2) **Crisis Management Category.** The purposes of crisis management are crisis resolution and prompt problem solving in order to control present danger or impending danger. Crisis is a perception or experience of an event or situation as horrible, threatening, or disorganizing. The event or situation overwhelms the caregiver's and family member's emotions, abilities, resources, and problem solving. A crisis is an acute matter to be addressed so that present danger or impending danger is controlled and the requirements of the in-home safety plan continue to be carried out. Crisis management is specifically concerned with intervening to:

- (a) De-escalate and halt a crisis.
- (b) Mobilize problem solving.
- (c) Control present danger or impending danger.
- (d) Reinforce caregiver participation in the in-home safety plan.
- (e) Reinforce other safety management provider/resource's participation in the in-home safety plan.
- (f) Avoid disruption of the in-home safety plan.

(3) **Social Connection Category.** Social connection is concerned with present danger or impending danger that exists in association with or influenced by caregivers feeling or actually being disconnected from others. The actual or perceived isolation results in non-productive and non-protective behavior. Social isolation is accompanied by all manner of debilitating emotions: low self-esteem and self-doubt, loss, anxiety, loneliness, anger, and marginality (e.g., unworthiness, unaccepted by others). Social connection is a safety category that reduces social isolation and seeks to provide social support. This safety category is versatile in the sense that it may be used alone or in combination with other safety categories in order to reinforce and support caregiver efforts. Keeping an eye on how the caregiver is doing is a secondary value of social connection (see Behavior Management – Supervision and Monitoring, paragraph 8-2b(1)(a) of this operating procedure). The following are safety management services associated with the social connections category:

(a) **Friendly Visiting.** Friendly visiting is directed at reducing isolation and connecting caregivers to social support. Friendly visiting can include professional and non-professional safety management providers/resources or support network. The child welfare professional will direct and coach any person responsible for friendly visiting in terms of:

- 1. The purpose of the safety management service.
- 2. How to set expectations with the family.

(b) **Basic Parenting Assistance.** Basic parenting assistance is a means to social connection. Socially isolated caregivers do not have people to help them with basic caregiver responsibilities. The differences between friendly visiting and basic parenting assistance is that basic parenting assistance is always about essential parenting knowledge and skills and whomever is designated to attempt to teach, model, and build skills. Basic parenting assistance is concerned with specific, essential parenting that affects a child's safety. This safety management service is focused on essential knowledge and skill a caregiver is missing or failing to perform. Typically, this is related to children with special needs (e.g., infant, disabled child) and the caregivers are in some way

incapacitated or unmotivated. Someone brought into the in-home safety plan becomes a significant social connection to help the caregiver(s) with challenges they have in basic parenting behavior, which is fundamental to the children remaining in the home.

(c) Supervision and Monitoring as Social Connection. Supervision and monitoring occurs through conversations occurring during routine safety management service visits (along with information from other sources). Within these routine in-home contacts, the social conversations can also provide social connection for the caregiver.

(d) Social Networking. In this safety management service, the child welfare professional is a facilitator or arranger. Social networking, as a safety management service, refers to organizing, creating, and developing a social network for the caregiver. The term “network” is used liberally since it could include one or several people. It could include people the caregiver is acquainted with such as friends, neighbors, or family members. The network could include new people that the child welfare professional introduces into the caregiver’s life. The idea is to use various forms of social contact, formal and informal; contact with individuals and groups; and use contact that is focused and purposeful.

(4) Resource Support Category. Resource support refers to the safety category that is directed at a shortage of family resources and resource utilization, the absence of which directly threatens child safety. Activities and safety management services that constitute resource support include such things as the following.

(a) Resource acquisition related specifically to a lack of something that affects child safety.

(b) Transportation services particularly in reference to an issue associated with a safety threat.

(c) Financial/Income/Employment assistance aimed at increasing monetary resources related to child safety issues.

(d) Housing assistance that seeks a home that replaces one that is directly associated with present danger or impending danger to a child’s safety.

(e) General health care as an assistance or resource support that is directly associated with present danger or impending danger to a child’s safety.

(f) Food and clothing as an assistance or safety management service that is directly associated with present danger or impending danger to a child’s safety.

(g) Home furnishings as an assistance or safety management service that is directly associated with present danger or impending danger to a child’s safety.

(5) **Separation Safety Category.** Separation is a safety category concerned with danger threats related to stress, caregiver reactions, child-care responsibility, and caregiver-child access. Separation provides respite for both caregivers and children. The separation action creates alternatives to family routine, scheduling, demand, and daily pressure. Additionally, separation can include supervision *and monitoring* function. Separation refers to taking any member or members of the family out of the home for a period of time. Separation is viewed as a temporary action, which can occur frequently during a week or for short periods. Separation may involve any period from one hour to a weekend to several days in a row. Separation may involve professional and non-professionals and can involve anything from babysitting to temporary out-of-home family-made arrangements to care for the child or combinations. Separation services include:

- (a) Planned absence of caregivers from the home.
- (b) Respite care.
- (c) Day care that occurs periodically or daily for short periods or all day.
- (d) After school care.
- (e) Planned activities for the children that take them out of the home for designated periods.
- (f) Any arrangements to care for the child out of the home; short-term, weekends, several days, or a few weeks.