

# SAFETY FRAMEWORK PRACTICE MODEL

Safety Framework Practice Model (SFPM) was implemented December 2020 per Social Services Redesign (SB 2124, 2019).

SFPM brings *consistent child welfare practice* for all Human Service Zones whereby they intervene in families with children who are unsafe based on the presence of uncontrolled danger threats. SFPM uses standardized tools and decision-making criteria to make *well-founded child safety decisions* to ensure we intervene in families' lives only when necessary. Caseworkers must consider specific, key questions to determine the least intrusive and most appropriate level of intervention.

SFPM reinforces safety planning within the home to *reduce further trauma to the child*. Removing children from their parents/caregivers and family home occurs only after a comprehensive assessment indicates in-home safety planning is not possible. When **1**) the family has made significant progress in achieving the expected outcomes of the case; **2**) child safety is being sustained in the child's home; and **3**) the child's safety can be maintained without the ongoing intervention of safety service providers, the case is closed.

## IMPACT/OUTCOMES

CFS tracks whether SFPM is having the intended impact and data trends since implementation are encouraging:

- Reduction in the use of paid foster care;
- Increase in the use of kinship caregivers; and
- Progressive approaches for managing child safety, supporting parents in becoming protective and receiving needed services, and ensuring family well-being.

## TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

100% of Human Service Zone staff must complete Child Welfare Certification Training within the first year of employment. SFPM practice requirements are woven throughout the 6-week curriculum.

[607-05 Child Welfare Practice Policy Manual](#) includes the SFPM requirements for child welfare workers and supervisors.

The [ND SFPM Field Guide](#) was published and disseminated to the workforce in March 2024 to provide further procedural guidance. In addition, tools, forms, and technical assistance opportunities that are consistently offered to the child welfare workforce.

## FIDELITY SUPPORT

In July 2023 CFS implemented Courageous Case Management Site Visits (CCMs). CCMs involve Field Service Specialists and the SFPM Statewide Administrator traveling onsite to meet with Human Service Zone case managers, supervisors, and directors to build on their strengths, address any challenges or barriers to implementing SFPM with fidelity, and foster collaborative relationships.

During CCMs, the CFS team meets with zone staff about case situations that are particularly challenging with the end goal of determining which children continue to require our services and which can move/remain home safely with no further agency intervention.

CCMs have been well-received. In 2023, CFS completed seven CCM Site Visits from July-December 2023. Nine additional Human Service Zones have requested CCMs in 2024.