



Child Safety: A Guide for Judges and Attorneys: [www.americanbar.org](http://www.americanbar.org)

safe children | strong families | supportive communities

# Worksheets to Accompany Safety Guide Training Materials



**Threats:**  
**Specific, observable, out of control,  
immediate or imminent, and severe**



**Vulnerability:**  
**Is this child vulnerable to this threat?**



**Protective factors:**  
**Behavioral, cognitive,  
and emotional characteristics**

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***Safe = no threats, child is not vulnerable to threat, or there is sufficient protective capacity to control threats***

***Not safe = threats exist to which child is vulnerable,  
and parents have insufficient protective capacity to control threats***

## **Safety Planning and Conditions for Return**

- A. This family consists of two children, Jasmine, age 4, and James who is three months old, Mother Margaret, and Father Frederick Smith.
- B. The department received a referral regarding 4-year-old Jasmine. The referent, who is known to Jasmine, found Jasmine walking in the street, and called out to Jasmine to come out of the street. It took referent approximately 20 minutes to convince Jasmine to come to her. When asked why she was out in the street Jasmine said her father was on the couch asleep, and her mother was “scary”, so she decided to leave. Asked what Jasmine meant by “scary” Jasmine could not give details. Referent walked Jasmine back home. The mother was at the door calling Jasmine’s name as referent and Jasmine walked up. The mother yelled at Jasmine to “get in the house” and swatted her bottom on the way by as Jasmine entered the house. Jasmine was not injured by the swat, but seemed clearly afraid of going inside. Referent attempted to talk to the Mother, but she just said “thanks for bringing her back” and slammed the door.
- C. The following day the department received a referral from the office of Dr. Friendly, pediatrician for both children. This appointment was supposed to occur when the baby was two weeks old. The mother had scheduled and then canceled the appointment three times. The baby had gained only four ounces of weight since birth, showed signs of excessive time spent on his back (no hair growing on back of head, head appeared flattened, no progress in neck muscle control, no reaction to efforts to stimulate or interact). Mother explained that her 4-year-old was acting out and causing her tremendous stress and that her husband was “not at all helpful”.
- D. This social worker went to The Daisies and Sunshine daycare approximately two blocks from the family home. The owner informed the worker that Jasmine was not at daycare on this day, and that her attendance was “sporadic, to put it generously”.
- E. On the social worker’s visit to the home, it was very dark (2 pm on a sunny day), as all window coverings were closed and few lights were on. The father was asleep on the couch and Jasmine was at the table near the kitchen writing on paper. The mother was in her nightgown and bare feet, and appeared just to have come out of bed. The worker asked to see the baby. The worker approached the crib and observed the baby laying on his back, eyes open, but lying quietly. His diaper smelled strongly, he clearly needed to be changed.
- F. The mother said she was having trouble getting food consistently for the baby, but that she was feeding him at least every day. She did not voluntarily discuss providing any other type of care for the child. The mother restated that she had her hands full with Jasmine, and that the father “as you can see is worthless – he

finds money to drink or whatever every day, but can't find the time or money to help me out". When this worker asked if she'd confronted the father about his lack of assistance, she said he just grabbed her arm and pulled her close to his face and said "a good mother doesn't need help raising her kids" and then threw her back against the wall. She showed this worker a bruise on her arm from where he recently grabbed her. The social worker asked the mother if the father ever mistreated the children. She was reluctant to answer, and then just shrugged her shoulders and said "I don't think so".

- G. The social worker spoke to the Margaret about family and other supports in their life. She reported she has a sister who lives about an hour away, and she knows the children well, and they like her. She also said Mr. Smith's brother lives in town and comes over sometimes, mostly for holidays. Mostly, Mr. Smith sees his brother out when they play softball or spend time at their mother's home across town. His mother is good with kids but is getting old and Margaret was not sure whether their grandmother could handle both kids full time. Margaret didn't think any of the relatives had ever been to jail. She did not endorse active friendships.

**How do you assess safety for each child in the parents' home?:**

**Threats:**

**Vulnerabilities:**

**Protective Capacity:**

**Safety Plan – In Home:**

**Use the formatting below to build the necessary components for a safety plan:**

In order to address the threat of \_\_\_\_\_,  
circumstances in the home need to change as follows:

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and the specific action that will control the threat will be:

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**Conditions for Return:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_