

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services	Effective Date: March 1, 2011
	Section 43: Meaningful Visits	Version: 1

POLICY [NEW]

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will observe and evaluate the parent-child relationship during all visits. DCS will always address child safety. The observation and evaluation must be documented in the Indiana Child Welfare Information System (ICWIS). Any and all safety concerns must be reported immediately. Safety provisions will be developed to address all identified safety concerns.

Throughout the life of the case, DCS will assess safety and risk when visiting with the parent, guardian, or custodian and the child(ren) who are placed in out-of-home care. DCS will identify the parent, guardian, or custodian’s functional strengths and underlying needs through the Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM).

Code References

N/A

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Address and assess safety and risks, stability, well-being, and permanency during all visits with the parent, guardian, or custodian and the child(ren) placed in out-of-home care;
2. Ensure that sufficient time and opportunity is given to observe and evaluate the parent-child relationship during all visits;
3. Identify the parent, guardian, or custodian’s functional strengths and underlying needs;
4. Partner with the parent, guardian, or custodian to utilize their functional strengths and underlying needs to identify formal and informal supports;
5. Report any and all safety concerns to the Supervisor immediately
6. If a safety concern is identified, collaborate with the parent, guardian, or custodian and the child(ren), if age appropriate, to develop safety provisions;

7. Follow up at the Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting regarding adherence to the documented safety provisions. See separate policy, [5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings](#); and
8. Accurately document in ICWIS within 'Contacts', the observation, evaluation and outcomes of visits with the parent, guardian, or custodian and the child(ren). It is important to reflect in the 'Contact' that the parent, guardian, or custodian was actively involved during the visitation and if any barriers were identified by the parent, guardian, or custodian or FCM to prohibit the completion of activities or objectives agreed upon by the CFT.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Family Functional Assessment \(FFA\) Field Guide](#) – Available in ICWIS

RELATED INFORMATION

Use of the Family Functional Assessment (FFA) Field Guide

The FCM is strongly encouraged to utilize the [FFA Field Guide](#) for suggested questions to assist in gathering the parent, guardian, or custodian's functional strengths and underlying needs.

DCS will utilize the family's functional strengths along with assessed protective factors to assist in the identification of informal and formal support systems that may decrease the possibility of future risk of child abuse and/or neglect (CA/N). Over time, ideally, the parent, guardian, or custodian's functional strengths should increase with the completion of identified services, which address underlying needs. Each individual case should be evaluated independently based upon its own unique conditions.