



High Risk Protocol

Supplemental to DCS Policy: 31.18 Safety Planning for High Risk Behaviors in Children and Youth in DCS Custody & Policy 11.1 Assessment Process and Tools

The Department seeks to ensure that all children/youth are safe, healthy and on track for success. DCS works closely with foster homes and contract providers to ensure that children in their care are safe. This protocol applies to youth placed in foster care and residential settings.

A child/youth is deemed high risk when his/her behavior presents a risk to themselves or others or significantly impairs daily functioning and scores a "2" or a "3" on any of the following CANS high risk items:

1. Danger to Others
2. Sexually Reactive
3. Sexual Aggression

High Risk Notifications:

In order to ensure all parties associated with high risk children/youth are aware of that child/youth's status, formal high risk notifications are sent as follows:

- The COE Assessment Consultant notifies regional staff (FSW, TL and appropriate Regional High Risk Team members) and Network Development of all children/youth that score high risk on the CANS assessment. These notifications are sent within (1) business day of their awareness of the youth scoring high risk.
- Network Development sends all notifications to the appropriate Regional High Risk Team. If the child/youth is placed with a Contract Agency or DCS foster home, Network Development sends a notification to the agency and/or Foster Parent Support. These notifications are sent within (1) business day of receipt of the high risk notification from the COE.
- The notification requires that an immediate safety plan be put into place for all high risk children/youth residing in foster homes.
- Contract Agencies and/or FSWs are required to submit the written safety plan to the Regional High Risk Team within 5 business days.
- If the child/youth is placed in a residential setting, Contract Agencies are notified and asked to complete a safety plan when the child/youth is ready for step down into a foster home. This safety plan is completed prior to or at the time of step down.

Safety Plans:

DCS and Contract Agencies share responsibility in the development and monitoring of safety plans (refer to [Policy 11.1 Assessment Process and Tools](#) and [31.18 Safety Planning for High Risk Behaviors in Children and Youth in DCS Custody](#) for more information on expectations).

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- All children/youth deemed high risk and placed in foster homes have a safety plan.
- All safety plans are clearly defined and specific to that child/youth.
- All safety plans are developed and shared with the high risk team within five (5) business days of the notification sent from central office.
- Child(ren)/youth placed in residential settings are required to have a safety plan implemented and shared with that region's High Risk Team prior to or at the time of placement in a foster home.
- The Contract Agency and FSW are responsible for ensuring the child's foster home has reviewed the safety plan, understand what is expected and agree to follow the safety plan. They must also work with the foster parent to develop a respite plan for the youth, which includes identifying appropriate respite placements for the youth at the time the safety plan is created and signed by the foster parent.
- If a high risk child/youth is eligible for respite placement, the foster parent is obligated to go over the youth's safety plan with the respite foster parent, prior to the placement.
- Contract Agencies notify the Regional High Risk Team when a high risk child/youth moves to any new placement, including respite placements.

Responsibilities:

Regional High Risk Teams:

- Meet at least one time per month.
- Ensure all high risk children/youth placed in foster care, receive an initial review and have a safety plan developed and approved.
- Each quarter, ensure all high risk children/youth (regardless of placement setting) receive a high risk review until the youth is no longer deemed high risk.
- Monitor and track the high risk child(ren)/youth reviewed on the regional high risk spreadsheet on the Central Office shared drive.
- Review the the regional high risk spreadsheet twice per month to ensure the high risk team is aware of the newly added high risk children/youth.
- Ensure all high risk reviews are documented in TFACTS under Case Conference.

Central Office/Network Development:

- Ensures that high risk notices are sent to appropriate Regional and Contract Agency staff within one (1) business day of receipt from the COE.

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- Ensures all region's high risk spreadsheets are updated twice per month to include the newly identified high risk youth.
- Ensures Contract Agencies receive the High Risk report twice a month.
- Conducts regular spreadsheet reviews to ensure child(ren)/youth that should have received a high risk review, were completed.
- Conducts random sample reviews of case conference notes of high risk reviews.

FSW:

- Ensures that safety plans for children/youth in foster homes are developed, reviewed and signed off by all appropriate parties as quickly as possible and are documented in TFACTS.
- Ensures the DCS foster parent has reviewed the safety plan, understands their obligations and agrees to follow the plan. They also work with the DCS foster parent to develop a respite plan for the high risk youth and ensures this is documented in TFACTS.
- Ensures all safety plans are shared with the Regional High Risk Team within five (5) days of the placement.
- Ensures the youth receives an updated CANS assessment according to [Policy 11.1 Assessment Process and Tools](#).
- Provides ongoing reminders to DCS foster parents and Contract Agency foster parents to share the safety plan with any respite foster parent or relative placement.

Foster Parent Support Staff:

- At each visit with the family, ensure DCS foster parents with high risk placements understand their responsibilities and action steps outlined in the safety plan and monitor to ensure the plan is being followed.
- Provides ongoing reminders to DCS foster parents of their obligation to share the safety plan with any respite foster parent or relative placement.

Contract Agencies:

- Ensure that safety plans are developed immediately and are shared with the high risk team within five (5) days of the placement of the youth.
- Ensure the foster parent has reviewed the safety plan, understands their obligations, signs and agrees to follow the plan. They must also work with the foster parent to develop a respite plan for the high risk youth. This must be documented on the safety plan and shared with DCS.

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- Ensure the respite will not result in an unsafe placement and that respite foster parents have reviewed the safety plan and signed off, agreeing to follow the rules of the plan. This is documented in TFACTS.
- Provide ongoing reminders to foster parents of their obligation to share the safety plan with any respite foster parent or relative placement.
- Discuss safety plans at each monthly visit with the foster parent. This must be documented in the youth's monthly summary in TFACTS.
- Review and closely monitor the High Risk Report to track their agency's high risk population.