Eastern Service Area

Initial Safety Assessment
2nd Round - Safety Model QA Review

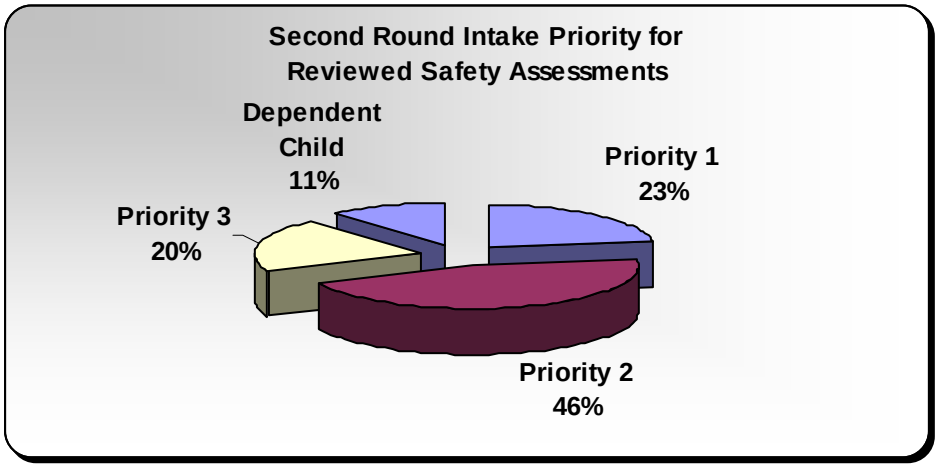
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Quality Assurance

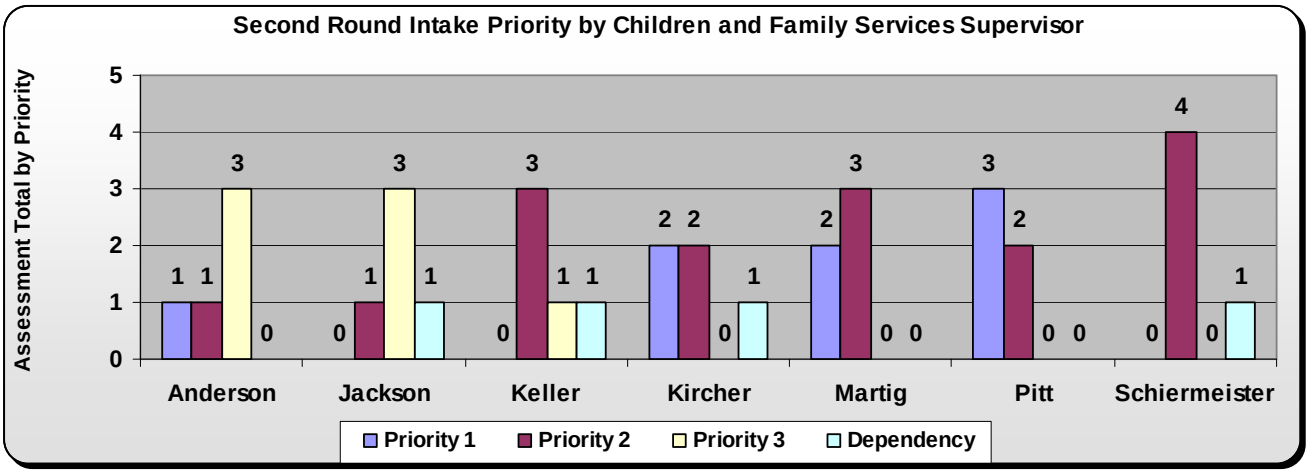
March 2009

Quality Assurance Team completed second round of Initial Safety Assessment Reviews in December 2008 through February 2009. A total of 35 finalized Safety Assessments were randomly selected by QA staff from seven Children and Family Services Supervisors (CFSS). Review consisted of five assessments from each ESA Supervisor; Stephanie Anderson, Tamera Keller, Kris Kircher, Roxanne Jackson, Diane Martig, Kari Pitt and Shayne Schiermeister.

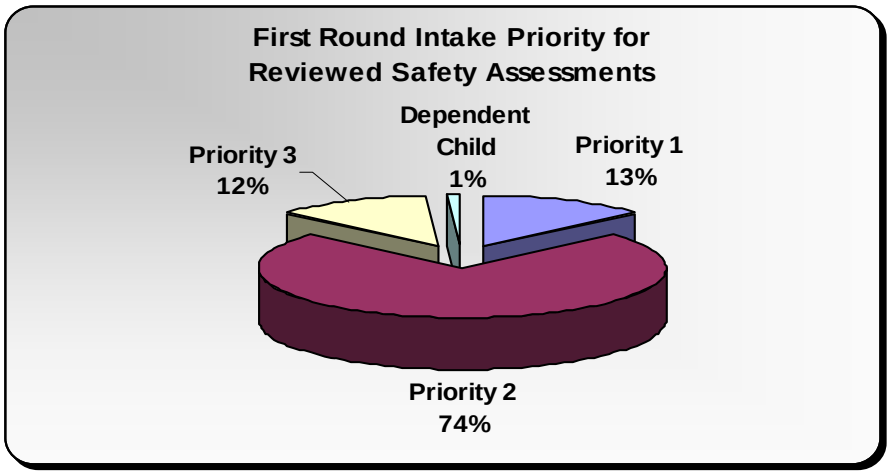
First round reviews of Initial Safety Assessments for Eastern Service Area (ESA) were completed in April 2008. A total of 90 finalized Safety Assessments were randomly selected from finalized assessments on N-FOCUS during January 2008-April 2008. The reviews consisted of 15 cases from each of the following Protection and Safety Supervisors; Stephanie Anderson, Roxanne Jackson, Tamera Keller, Kris Kircher, Diane Martig and Kari Pitt.

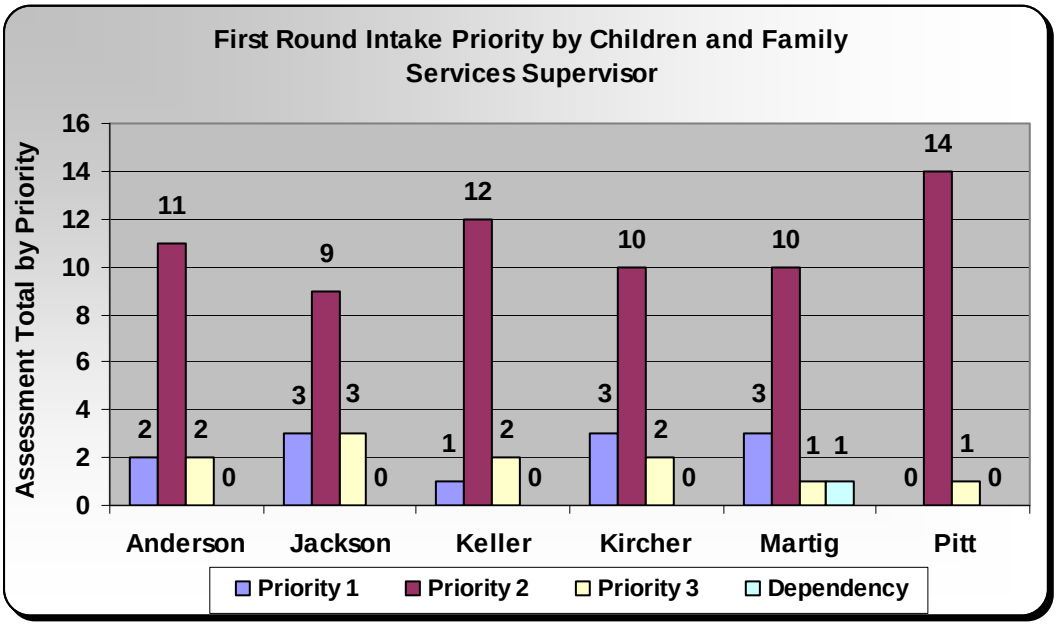
Second Round: 35 assessments reviewed; 8 were Priority 1, 16 were Priority 2 and 7 were Priority 3. 4 assessments were dependency and did not have a priority listed on the intake or the assessment.



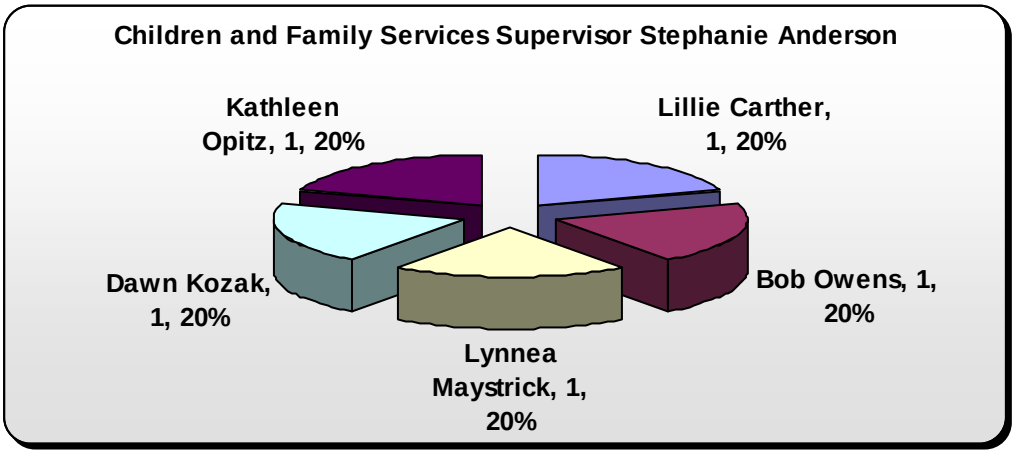


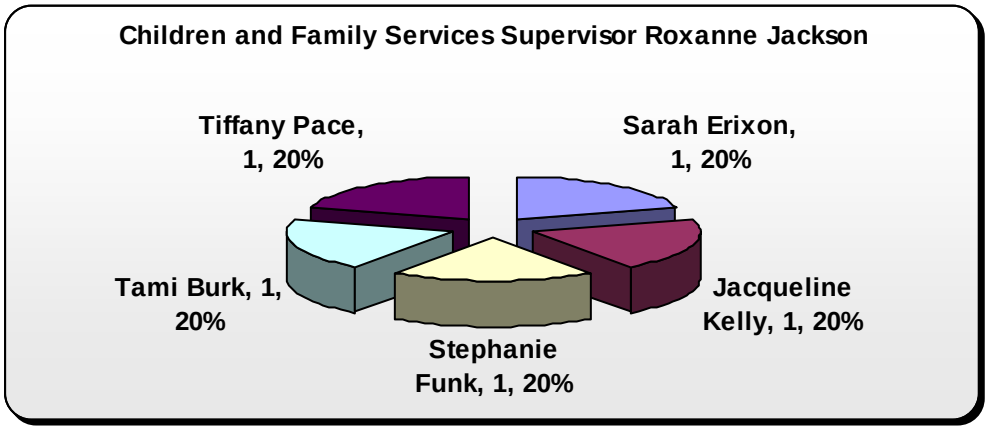
First Round: 90 assessments reviewed; 12 were Priority 1, 66 were Priority 2, 11 were Priority 3 and 1 intake was dependency and did not have a priority listed on the intake or the assessment.

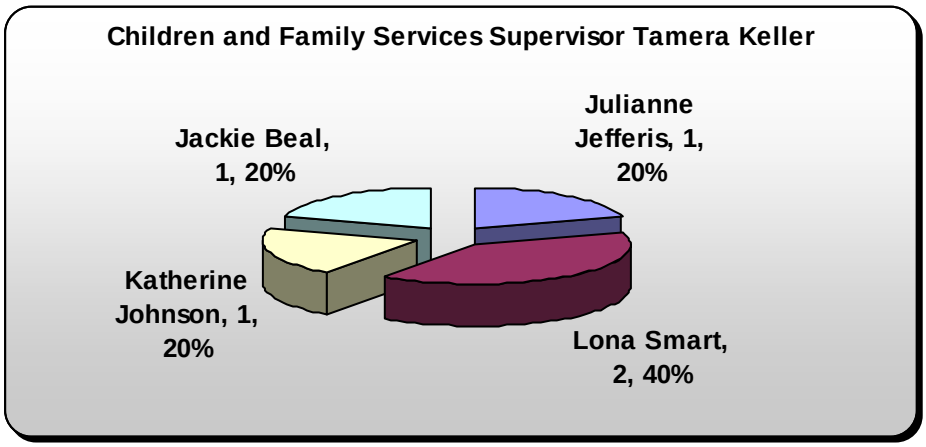


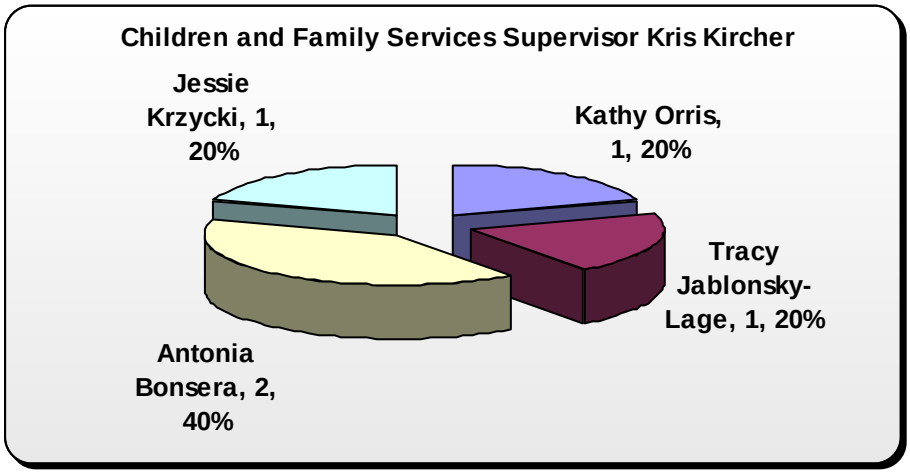


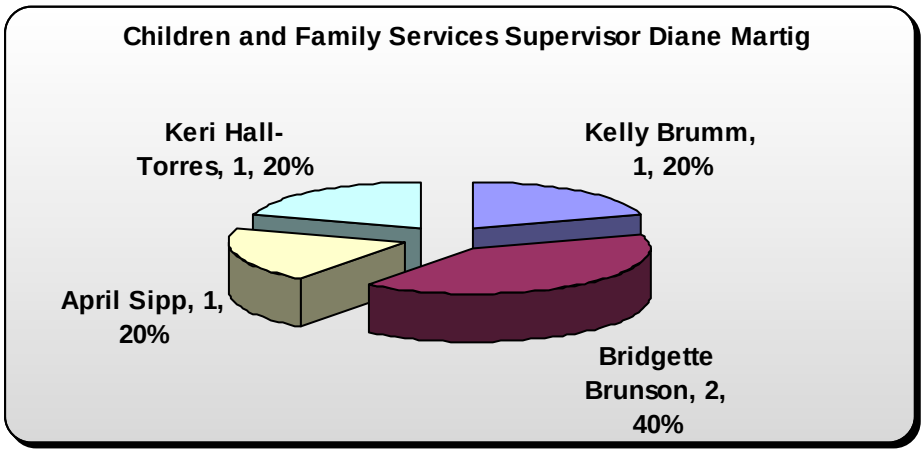
The following charts contain a breakdown of reviewed assessments per worker for each Children and Family Services Supervisor:

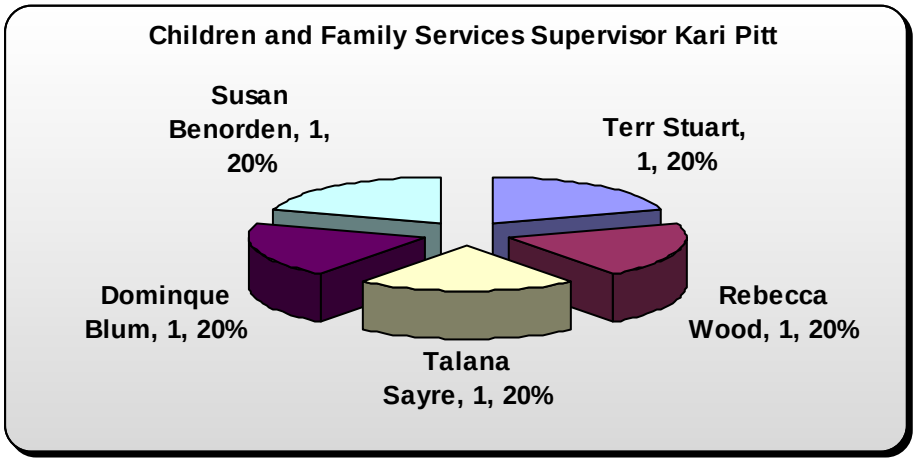


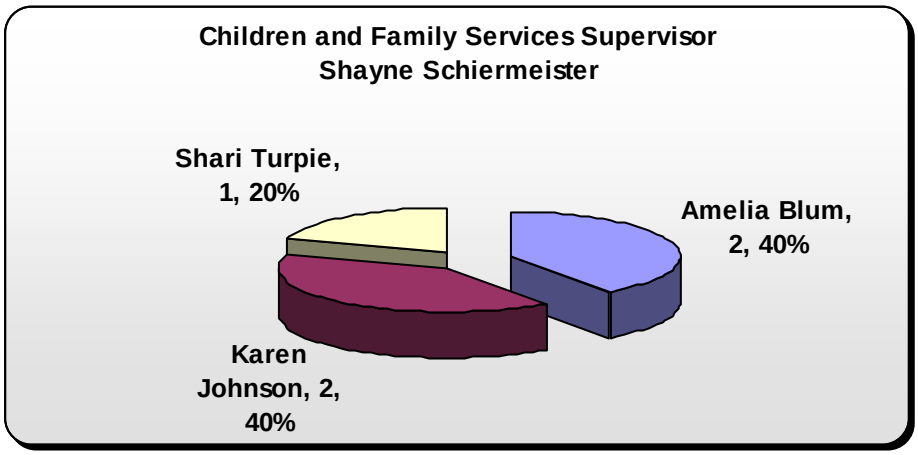





Children and Family Services Supervisor Kris Kircher
Jessie Krzycki, 1, 20%
Kathy Orris, 1, 20%
Tracy Jablonsky-Lage, 1, 20%
Antonia Bonsera, 2, 40%


Children and Family Services Supervisor Diane Martig
Keri Hall-Torres, 1, 20%
Kelly Brumm, 1, 20%
April Sipp, 1, 20%
Bridgette Brunson, 2, 40%


Children and Family Services Supervisor Kari Pitt
Susan Benorden, 1, 20%
Terr Stuart, 1, 20%
Dominque Blum, 1, 20%
Rebecca Wood, 1, 20%
Talana Sayre, 1, 20%


Children and Family Services Supervisor Shayne Schiermeister
Shari Turpie, 1, 20%
Amelia Blum, 2, 40%
Karen Johnson, 2, 40%

The following is a summary of Second Round Data from ALL 35 Initial Safety Assessment reviews. Charts for these overall data can be found in the attached excel file: *ESA Safety QA Report.CHARTS.Overall 2nd Round*. **Charts in these attachments, compare 1st Round and 2nd Round Initial Safety Assessment Reviews.**

Initial Response/Contact Information (Chart 1):

- Initial contact with child victim was made within required time frame in 65.6% of the Safety Assessments (21 out of 32 instances).
- Other children in the household were present in 13 of the 35 (37%) of the reviewed assessments. Other children in the home were interviewed in 11 out of 13 instances (84.6%). For the two children not interviewed, reviewers were unable to locate documentation to justify the lack of contact.
- 10 out of 35 reviewed assessments had a non-maltreating caregiver listed in the intake. The non-maltreating caregiver was interviewed in 100% of the instances.
- Other adults were present in 10 of the reviewed assessments. 40% or 4 out of 10 of these adults were interviewed by workers.
- Interviews with the maltreating caregiver occurred in 89.7% or 26 out of 29 assessments where a maltreating caregiver was identified. Six reviewed assessments were not applicable to this item.
- Interview protocol was followed in 38.2% or 13 out of 34 assessments. For those 21 assessments that did not follow protocol, reviewers were able to find documentation to indicate the reason for the deviation from protocol in 3 out of 21 assessments (14.3%).

Present Danger (Chart 2):

- Present danger at the initial contact with the child victim and/or family was identified in 1 the reviewed assessments (2.9%).
- Reviewers agreed with the worker's assessment of Present Danger in 32 out of 35 instances (91.4%).
- One Safety Assessment had an Immediate Protective Action (IPA) taken.
    - Reason for the protective action was explained to the parent/caregiver in 1 out 1 instance (100%).
    - Protective Action included a provision for oversight in 1 out of 1 instance (100%). However, oversight requirement was <u>not</u> sufficient to assure that the Protective Action was implemented in accordance with expectation and assured child safety in 0 out of 1 (0.0%).
    - Protective Action contained parent's willingness to cooperate in 0 out 1 instance (0.0%).
    - Protective Action contained a description of the persons responsible for the protective action in 1 out of 1 (100%).
    - Protective Action contained confirmation of person responsible for Protective Action (trustworthiness, reliability, commitment, availability, alliance to plan) in 1 out of 1 instance (100%).
    - Descriptive of how Protective Action will work was reflected in 0 out of 1 instance (0.0%).
    - Timeframes of the Protective Action was documented in 0 out of 1 instance (0.0%).
- Overall, 0.0% Protective Action Plans were judged to be sufficient by Reviewers.

Domains (Chart 4):

- **Maltreatment –** Sufficient information was collected in 74.3% (26 out of 35) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Interview or include information for everyone listed as perpetrators. Include findings/conclusions and evidence to support findings, include removal of child, address all areas of concern in the intake. Caution run on narratives, information needs to be separated into other domain areas.*
- **Nature –** Sufficient information was collected in 57.1% (20 out of 35) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Information contained in domain is evidence and goes to supporting the finding, therefore should be contained in maltreatment. Include analysis of events/factors surrounding the abuse and neglect. Include pattern of why the abuse and neglect is occurring in the home.*
- **Child Functioning –** Sufficient information was collected in 65.7% (23 out of 35) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments**:** Parents and/or caregivers perceptions of the child. What conclusions can be drawn from the worker's contact with all parties regarding the child's behavior and development? Discuss nature of peer interactions. Worker observation of child (ren), description of overarching statements surrounding child's development or behavioral difficulties. Need to assess all children living in home.*
- **Disciplinary Practices –** Sufficient information was collected in 34.3% (12 out of 35) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Include situation/purpose and detailed information in which the parent implements discipline for the child(ren), future discipline plans in assessments involving infants, children's statements of discipline in home, patterns of discipline with older children.*
- **General Parenting –** Sufficient information was collected in 40% (14 out of 35) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Routines within the home, include past parenting of children that may have been relinquished or terminated, family activities, parental roles, include parenting for all individuals living in the home if they take role in caring for the children, include how parents have attempted to assist or sought services for a child or children with medical, developmental, educational, behavioral and/or mental health needs.*
- **Adult Functioning –** Sufficient information was collected in 31.4% (11 out of 35) of the assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Need to include all adults living in the home, employment history, community or family supports, Mental Health, Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse information. Discuss the nature of adult relationships within the home (marriage and other relationships).*

Collateral Source (Chart 4):

- 31 out of the 35 assessments indicated that information should have been collected from a collateral source. Collateral information was collected in 45.2% or 14 out the 31 assessments.
  - *Reviewer Comments: Incorporate the information gained from collaterals into the assessment. Many times a contact is recorded on the contact sheet but the information gained is not incorporated into the assessment. Suggest workers utilize the narrative portion in the contact sheet to document the family's relationship to the contact.*

Maternal/Paternal Relatives (Chart 4): *In October 2008, clarification regarding the identification of relatives regardless of the safety determination was provided to the CFS Administrators and the SAA's. All cases will have relatives identified.*

- Maternal relatives were identified in 62.9% of the assessments (22 out of 35).
- Paternal relatives were identified in 28.6% of the assessments (10 out of 35)**.**
  - *Reviewer Comment: Documentation needs to contain at a minimum first name, last name, and location (city & state). Include in documentation parents' refusal to provide extended family information during assessment.*

ICWA (Chart 4):

- Information regarding ICWA was obtained in 65.7% of the assessments (23 out of 35).
  - *Reviewer Comments: Workers need to utilize the kinship narrative and include a statement as to how ICWA information was obtained by CFS Specialist. For example, ICWA does not apply to family or N/A. Need to include statement of how the worker learned that it did not apply.*
  - *Examples*:
    - *Per mother/name and father/name child does not meet criteria for ICWA because of the following reason.*
    - *Father was asked about enrollment or qualification he may meet in Native American Tribe in which he denied eligibility for him or his son.*
    - *According to (parents/name), no Native American Tribal heritage exists within the family.*

Impending Danger (Charts 3 & 4):

Impending Danger at the initial contact with the youth and/or family (Chart 3): The worker identified impending danger at the initial contact with the child or family in 54.3% or 19 out of the 35 reviewed assessments. **The reviewer agreed with the worker's decision in 85.7% or 30 out of the 35 reviewed assessments.**

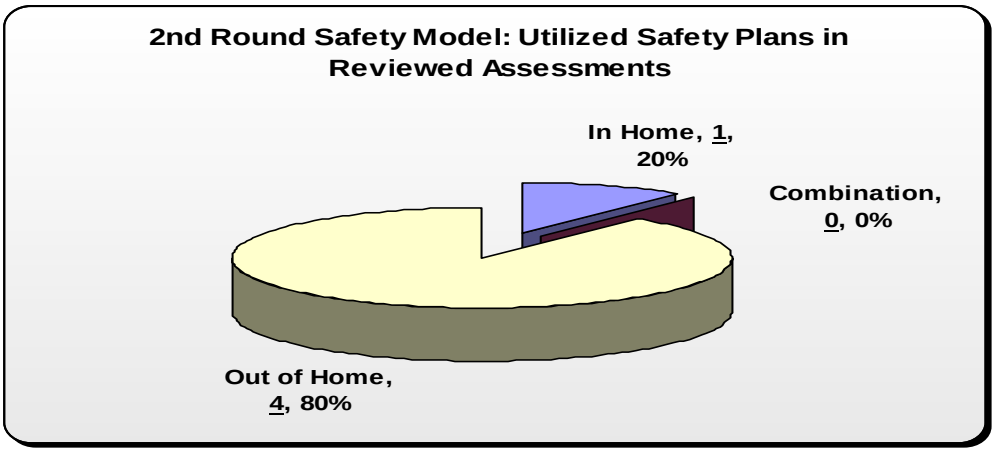
- Reviewer disagreed with the worker in 5 of the assessments, where the worker indicated that there was NO impending danger at the initial contact with the youth and family. The reviewers determined that there was not enough information in the assessment to determine if impending danger was present initial contact with the child and/or family.
- Although there was not enough information initially to determine impending danger, these Safety Assessments did not rise to the level of Service Area Administrator notification.

Impending Danger at the end of the Initial Assessment (Chart 4): The worker identified impending danger at the end of the initial assessment in 19 out of the 35 cases reviewed.

- 14 out of 35 (40%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information to provide a reasonable understanding of family members and their functioning.
- 12 out of 35 (34.3%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information to support and justify decision making.
- 12 out of 35 (34.3%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information in the six domains to accurately assess the 14 factors.
- Safety threats were identified in 19 of the reviewed assessments.
  - In 78.9% or 15 out 19 of the instances the reviewer agreed with the worker on all of the safety factors identified "yes".
  - Within the safety factors identified **"yes",** 15 out of 19 (78.9%) contained threshold documentation for identification/justification of impending danger.
- In 45.7% or 16 out of 35 assessments, the reviewer agreed with the worker on all of the safety factors identified "no".
- Safety Assessment Conclusion:
  - The worker determined that the child was UNSAFE at the conclusion of the safety assessment in 19 out 35 (54.3%) of the reviewed assessments. The reviewer agreed with the worker's decision that the child was UNSAFE in 19 out of the 19 (100%) assessments.
  - The worker determined that the child was SAFE in 16 out of 35 (45.7%) of the reviewed assessments. The reviewer agreed with the worker's decision that the child was SAFE in 6 out of the 16 assessments (37.5%). Reviewer determined that the child was unsafe or that the information in the assessment was not sufficient to make determination of safe or unsafe in 10 out of the 16 assessments (62.5%) in which the worker determined the child to be SAFE.

Safety Plan (Charts 5 & 6):

- Worker determined that the child was unsafe in 19 out of the 35 (54.3%) reviewed assessments. Safety plans were established at the conclusion of the safety assessment in 19 out 19 (100%) of the reviewed assessments.
  - 100% or 1 out 1 Immediate Protective Action Plans remained in effect to conclusion of Initial Assessment.
  - 10.5% or 2 out of 19 of the safety plans were in-home safety plans.
  - No combination safety plans were utilized. Reviewer thought in 3 instances or 15.8%, combination safety plans were appropriate for Intakes;
  - 89.5% or 17 out of 19 of the safety plans were out of home safety plans. Reviewer agreed that the worker used the appropriate safety plan in all cases where an out of home safety plan was implemented with the family. Reviewer recommended that out of home safety plans should have been implemented following completion of 2 or 100% assessments.



- 19 out of 19 (100%) safety plans contained a contingency plan; reviewer judged the contingency plan to be appropriate in 7 out of 19 (36.8%) of the reviewed assessments.

Examples of sufficient contingency plan:

Note: The intent of having a sufficient contingency plan is to have staff think ahead, anticipate situations that might come up and make a plan to deal with them. A good contingency plan is an actual backup plan with names and information of individual(s) that will take over or complete safety actions if the original safety plan participant is unable to do so. A good contingency plan is one that can prevent the need for immediate caseworker notification or action.

For Out of Home Safety Plans:

1.) If (NAME) approved relative provider is unable to care for the (child/youth), the relative care provider will contact the child's caseworker and the child will be placed with (NAME) another identified and approved relative provider.

2.) If (NAMES) foster parents are unable to care for the (child/youth), the foster parents will contact the child's caseworker and the child will be placed with (NAME) identified respite care provider or (NAME) identified traditional or agency foster care provider.

For IN Home Safety Plans:

1.) If (NAME) relative safety plan provider is unable to be at (NAME) family home as expected from 4-6pm. Then (NAME) will contact (NAME) another relative safety plan participant who will substitute for them during that time. If both are unavailable due to a family emergency then (NAME) the pastor's wife will substitute for them during that time.

2.) If (NAME) a contractor providing safety services for the family is unable to do what they agreed to do, they will notify the caseworker and (NAME) another safety service contractor will be utilized.

Examples of insufficient contingency plan;

1) *The placement unit will need to find another placement.*
2) *Child will be made a state ward and placed into foster care.*
3) *This is an out of home safety plan and there is not a need for a backup plan.*
4) *The assigned caseworker should be contacted.*
5) *Their designee will take over*
6) *None*

- Suitability of the safety plan participants was completed in 14 out of 19 (73.7%) of the assessments.
    - Reviewer judged that there was sufficient information to support the decision made with regards to the suitability of the safety plan participants in 13 out of 19 (68.4%) of the safety plans.
        - *Reviewer Comments: Need to ensure suitability is completed for all participants including two-parent foster families, providers and informal supports. When appropriate, suitability must include background checks on suitability.*
- 14 out of 19 (73.7%) safety plans addressed who was going to make sure the child was protected.
- 11 out of 19 (57.9%) safety plans addressed what action is needed.
- 13 out of 19 (68.4%) safety plans addressed where the plan and action are going to take place.
- 0 out of 19 (0%) safety plans addressed when the action will be finished.
- 9 out of 19 (47.4%) safety plans addressed how it is all going to work and how the actions are going to control for safety.
- 17 out 19 (89.5%) of safety plans did not contain caregiver promissory commitments.
- 8 out of 19 (42.1%) safety plans involved in home services.
- 19 out of 19 (100%) safety plans contained a plan for oversight.
    - Reviewers determined that the oversight requirements were sufficient to assure that the safety plan was implemented in accordance with expectation and was assuring child safety in 8 out of 19 (42.1%) of the reviewed safety plans.
- 17 out of 19 (89.5%) safety plans adjusted as threats increased or decreased.
- Overall, 0% (0 out of 19) Safety Plans were judged to be appropriate by Reviewers.

Reviewer's Overall Analysis and Conclusion of the Work:

For the purpose of a case review, the reviewer assessed the following information based on their review of the case. This part of the review contains the same information as those included in the Supervisory Review of Nebraska Safety Assessment.

Category	ESA 1	ESA 2	Anderson 1	Anderson 2	Jackson 1	Jackson 2	Keller 1	Keller 2	Schier-meister 2
The Nebraska Safety Assessment Instrument was completed correctly and completely	30%	17.1%	13.3%	20%	40%	0%	46.7%	20%	20%
Documentation is on N-FOCUS	98.9%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Required Time Frames were met	73.3%	73.5%	60%	80%	86.7%	60%	60%	60%	60%
A reasonable level of effort was expended given the identified safety concerns.	83.1%	54.3%	86.7%	40%	73.3%	60%	73.3%	60%	40%
Safety of the child/youth was assured during the assessment process.	96.7%	71.4%	100%	80%	86.7%	80%	100%	80%	60%
Sufficient information was gathered for informed decision making	60.2%	29.4%	53.3%	20%	64.3%	20%	73.3%	40%	10%
Available written documentation was obtained from law enforcement and others as approp.	68.8%	N/A	100%	N/A	33.3%	N/A	50%	N/A	N/A
ICWA information was documented	83.3%	68.6%	80%	80%	86.7%	80%	80%	40%	60%
Information was obtained about non-custodial parent, relatives, and other family support.	48.9%	25.7%	13.3%	20%	60%	20%	26.7%	20%	20%
An Immediate Protective Action was appropriately implemented to assure child safety.	55.0%	0	25%	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	0%	N/A
A Safety Plan was appropriately completed and implemented to assure child safety.	32.6%	26.3%	37.5%	50%	16.7%	0%	33.3%	0%	0%
A Safety Assessment was documented in accordance with required practice.	33.7%	25.7%	13.3%	20%	40%	0%	53.3%	40%	40%
A Protective Action was documented in accordance with required practice.	5.26%	0	0%	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
A Safety Plan was documented in accordance with required practice.	23.9%	5.3%	25%	0%	16.7%	0%	16.7%	0%	0%
The family network and others were appropriately involved in the gathering of information.	63.1%	52.9%	28.6%	40%	53.3%	25%	66.7%	60%	40%
The family networks and others were appropriately involved in developing Safety Plans.	52.4%	47.3%	25%	0%	50%	0%	50%	50%	100%
Policy and procedures related to safety intervention were followed.	52.2%	42.9%	20%	60%	73.3%	40%	46.7%	40%	20%
Safety plan is sufficient to protect child from threats of severe harm.	51.1%	26.3%	25%	0%	33.3%	0%	33.3%	50%	0%
Efforts to coordinate with law enforcement were documented.	89.1%	100%	81.8%	N/A	100%	N/A	100%	100%	N/A
Interview protocols were followed or reason for deviation were documented.	59.6%	47.1%	46.7%	20%	71.4%	25%	53.3%	80%	60%
The appropriate definition was used in making the case status determination.	91.1%	100%	86.7%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%	100%	100%
The finding was correctly documented in N-FOCUS	96.7%	96.9%	100%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Factual information supports the selected finding.	92.1%	93.8%	100%	80%	100%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%
Proof of certified notice to the alleged perpetrator is located in the file.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Category	ESA 1	ESA 2	Kircher 1	Kircher 2	Martig 1	Martig 2	Pitt 1	Pitt 2
The Nebraska Safety Assessment Instrument was completed correctly and completely	30%	17.1%	40%	40%	20%	20%	20%	0%
Documentation is on N-FOCUS	98.9%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Required Time Frames were met	73.3%	73.5%	66.7%	75%	86.7%	100%	80%	80%
A reasonable level of effort was expended given the identified safety concerns.	83.1%	54.3%	86.7%	80%	100%	40%	80%	60%
Safety of the child/youth was assured during the assessment process.	96.7%	71.4%	100%	80%	93.3%	60%	100%	60%
Sufficient information was gathered for informed decision making	60.2%	29.4%	64.3%	40%	66.7%	25%	40%	20%
Available written documentation was obtained from law enforcement and others as approp.	68.8%	N/A	50%	N/A	100%	N/A	50%	N/A
ICWA information was documented	83.3%	68.6%	80%	80%	93.3%	100%	80%	40%
Information was obtained about non-custodial parent, relatives, and other family support.	48.9%	25.7%	66.7%	80%	73.3%	20%	53.3%	0%
An Immediate Protective Action was appropriately implemented to assure child safety.	55.0%	0	50%	0%	62.5%	N/A	100%	0%
A Safety Plan was appropriately completed and implemented to assure child safety.	32.6%	26.3%	50%	25%	38.5%	33.3%	14.3%	50%
A Safety Assessment was documented in accordance with required practice.	33.7%	25.7%	46.7%	40%	28.6%	40%	20%	0%
A Protective Action was documented in accordance with required practice.	5.26%	0	0%	0%	12.5%	N/A	0%	N/A
A Safety Plan was documented in accordance with required practice.	23.9%	5.3%	28.6%	25%	33.3%	0%	14.3%	0%
The family network and others were appropriately involved in the gathering of information.	63.1%	52.9%	84.6%	80%	71.4%	60%	76.9%	60%
The family networks and others were appropriately involved in developing Safety Plans.	52.4%	47.3%	80%	50%	45.5%	66.7%	83.3%	25%
Policy and procedures related to safety intervention were followed.	52.2%	42.9%	60%	60%	53.3%	40%	60%	40%
Safety plan is sufficient to protect child from threats of severe harm.	51.1%	26.3%	83.3%	25%	75%	33.3%	42.9%	50%
Efforts to coordinate with law enforcement were documented.	89.1%	100%	80%	N/A	100%	100%	75%	N/A
Interview protocols were followed or reason for deviation were documented.	59.6%	47.1%	73.3%	40%	60%	20%	53.3%	80%
The appropriate definition was used in making the case status determination.	91.1%	100%	86.7%	100%	93.3%	100%	86.7%	100%
The finding was correctly documented in N-FOCUS	96.7%	96.9%	93.3%	100%	93.3%	100%	93.3%	100%
Factual information supports the selected finding.	92.1%	93.8%	93.3%	100%	86.7%	80%	78.6%	100%
Proof of certified notice to the alleged perpetrator is located in the file.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A