

# **Eastern Service Area**

## **Initial Safety Assessment 3rd Round - Safety Model QA Review**



**Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services  
Quality Assurance**

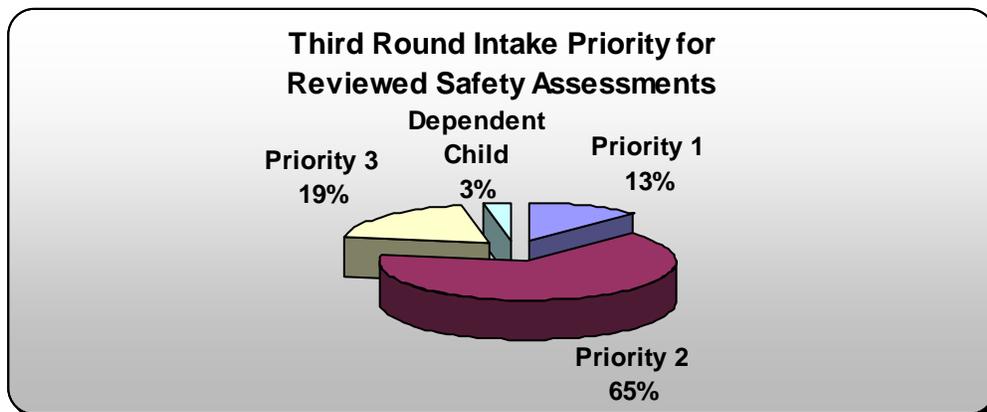
**December 2009**

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

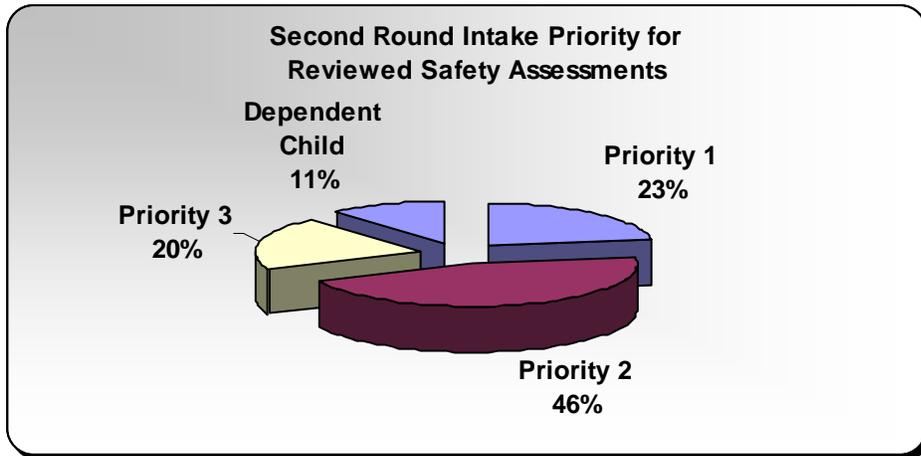
Second round reviews of Initial Safety Assessments were completed in December 2008 through February 2009. A total of 35 finalized Safety Assessments were randomly selected by QA staff from seven Children and Family Services Supervisors. Review consisted of five assessments from each ESA Supervisor; Stephanie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

First round reviews of Initial Safety Assessments 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 Children and Family Services Supervisors; Stephanie Anderson, Roxanne Jackson, Tamera Keller, Kris Kircher, Diane Martig and Kari Pitt.

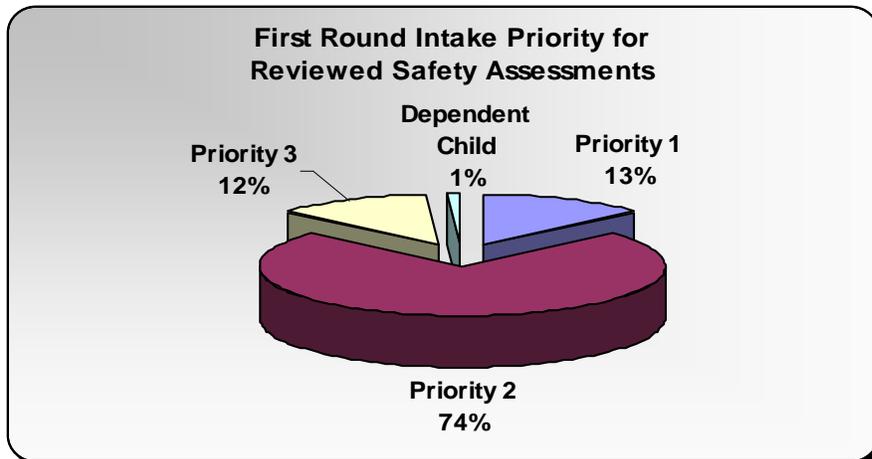
**Third Round: 35 assessments reviewed; 4 were Priority 1, 24 were Priority 2 and 6 were Priority 3. 1 assessment was a dependency and did not have a priority listed on the intake or the assessment.**



**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 is a summary of Third 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 3rd Round*. Charts in these attachments, compare all Rounds of Initial Safety Assessment Reviews.**

***Initial Response/Contact Information (Chart 1):***

- Initial contact with child victim was made within required time frame in 77.1% of the Safety Assessments (27 out of 35 instances).
- Other children in the household were present in 12 out of 35 (34.3%) reviewed assessments. Other children in the home were interviewed in 9 out of 12 instances (75%). For the three children that were not interviewed, reviewers were unable to locate documentation to justify the lack of contact.
- 13 out of 35 reviewed assessments had a non-maltreating caregiver listed in the intake. The non-maltreating caregiver was interviewed in 92.31% or 12 out of 13 instances.
- Other adults were present in 10 of the reviewed assessments. 80% or 8 out of 10 of these adults were interviewed by workers.
- Interviews with the maltreating caregiver occurred in 87.9% or 29 out of 33 assessments where a maltreating caregiver was identified. Two reviewed assessments were not applicable to this item.
- Interview protocol was followed in 28.6% or 10 out of 35 assessments. For those 25 assessments that did not follow protocol, reviewers were able to find documentation to indicate the reason for the deviation from protocol in 7 out of 25 assessments (28.0%).

***Present Danger (Chart 2 & 3):***

- Present danger at the initial contact with the child victim and/or family was not identified in the reviewed assessments (0.0%).
- Reviewers agreed with the worker's assessment of Present Danger in 34 out of 35 instances (97.1%).

***Domains (Chart 5):***

- **Maltreatment** – Sufficient information was collected in 82.9% (29 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 77.1% (27 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 62.9% (22 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 48.6% (17 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 54.3% (19 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 45.7% (16 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 5):**

- 30 out of the 35 assessments indicated that information should have been collected from a collateral source. Collateral information was collected in 53.3% or 16 out the 30 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 5):** In October 2008, clarification regarding the identification of relatives regardless of the safety determination was provided to the Children and Family Service Administrators and the Service Area Administrator's. All cases will have relatives identified.

- Maternal relatives were identified in 57.1% of the assessments (20 out of 35).
- Paternal relatives were identified in 51.4% of the assessments (18 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 5):**

- 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 4 & 6):**

**Impending Danger at the initial contact with the youth and/or family (Chart 4):** The worker identified impending danger at the initial contact with the child or family in 45.7% or 16 out of the 35 reviewed assessments. **The reviewer agreed with the worker's decision in 91.4% or 32 out of the 35 reviewed assessments.**

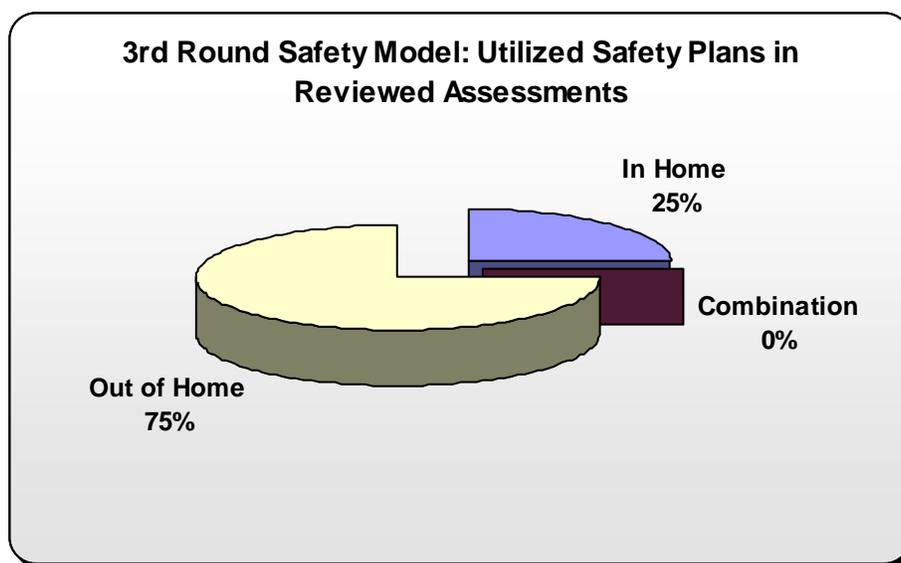
- Although there was not enough information initially to determine impending danger, these Safety Assessments did not rise to the level of Service Area Administrator notification.

**Impending Danger at the end of the Initial Assessment (Chart 6):** The worker identified impending danger at the end of the initial assessment in 16 out of the 35 cases reviewed.

- 18 out of 35 (51.4%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information to provide a reasonable understanding of family members and their functioning.
- 18 out of 35 (51.4%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information to support and justify decision making.
- 18 out of 35 (51.4%) of the reviewed assessments contained sufficient information in the six domains to accurately assess the 14 factors.
- Safety threats were identified in 16 of the reviewed assessments.
  - In 75.0% or 12 out of 16 of the instances the reviewer agreed with the worker on all of the safety factors identified “yes”.
  - Within the safety factors identified “yes”, 14 out of 16 (87.5%) contained threshold documentation for identification/justification of impending danger.
- In 51.4% or 18 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 16 out of 35 (45.7%) of the reviewed assessments. The reviewer agreed with the worker’s decision that the child was UNSAFE in 15 out of the 16 (93.8%) assessments.
  - The worker determined that the child was SAFE in 19 out of 35 (54.3%) of the reviewed assessments. The reviewer agreed with the worker’s decision that the child was SAFE in 8 out of the 19 assessments (42.1%).

### **Safety Plan (Charts 7, 8 & 9):**

- Worker determined that the child was unsafe in 16 out of the 35 (45.7%) reviewed assessments. Safety plans were established at the conclusion of the safety assessment in 16 out of 16 (100%) of the reviewed assessments.
  - 25% or 4 out of 16 safety plans were in-home safety plans. Reviewers thought in 1 out of 12 instances or 8.3% in home safety plan would have been appropriate.
  - No combination safety plans were utilized. Reviewer thought in 3 out of 16 instances or 18.75%, combination safety plans would have been appropriate.
  - 75% or 12 out of 16 of the safety plans were out of home safety plans. Reviewers thought in 1 out of 4 instances or 25% out of home safety plan would have been appropriate.



- 16 out of 16 (100%) safety plans contained a contingency plan; reviewer judged the contingency plan to be appropriate in 3 out of 19 (18.8%) 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 16 (87.5%) 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 14 out of 16 (87.5%) 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.*
- 12 out of 16 (75.0%) safety plans addressed who was going to make sure the child was protected.
- 13 out of 16 (81.3%) safety plans addressed what action is needed.
- 12 out of 16 (75.0%) safety plans addressed where the plan and action are going to take place.
- 0 out of 16 (0%) safety plans addressed when the action will be finished.
- 6 out of 16 (37.5%) safety plans addressed how it is all going to work and how the actions are going to control for safety.
- 12 out of 16 (75.0%) safety plans did not contain caregiver promissory commitments.
- 6 out of 16 (37.5%) safety plans involved in home services.
- 15 out of 16 (93.8%) 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 5 out of 16 (31.3%) of the reviewed safety plans.
- 15 out of 16 (93.8%) safety plans adjusted as threats increased or decreased.
- Overall, 0% (0 out of 16) safety plans were judged to be appropriate by Reviewers.

**Reviewer's Overall Analysis and Conclusion of the Work:**

Category	ESA 1	ESA 2	ESA 3	Anderson 1	Anderson 2	Anderson 3	Jackson 1	Jackson 2	Jackson 3	Keller 1	Keller 2	Keller 3	Schiermeister 2	Schiermeister 3
The Nebraska Safety Assessment Instrument was completed correctly and completely	30%	17.1%	31.4%	13.3%	20%	40%	40%	0%	40%	46.7%	20%	40%	20%	20%
Documentation is on N-FOCUS	98.9%	100%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Required Time Frames were met	73.3%	73.5%	80%	60%	80%	100%	86.7%	60%	80%	60%	60%	80%	60%	60%
A reasonable level of effort was expended given the identified safety concerns.	83.1%	54.3%	54.3%	86.7%	40%	60%	73.3%	60%	60%	73.3%	60%	60%	40%	40%
Safety of the child/youth was assured during the assessment process.	96.7%	71.4%	77.1%	100%	80%	80%	86.7%	80%	60%	100%	80%	100%	60%	60%
Sufficient information was gathered for informed decision making	60.2%	29.4%	45.7%	53.3%	20%	60%	64.3%	20%	40%	73.3%	40%	60%	10%	40%
Available written documentation was obtained from law enforcement and others as appropriate.	68.8%	N/A	100%	100%	N/A	100%	33.3%	N/A	N/A	50%	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%
ICWA information was documented	83.3%	68.6%	65.7%	80%	80%	80%	86.7%	80%	100%	80%	40%	40%	60%	100%
Information was obtained about non-custodial parent, relatives, and other family support.	48.9%	25.7%	31.4%	13.3%	20%	40%	60%	20%	60%	26.7%	20%	40%	20%	20%
An Immediate Protective Action was appropriately implemented to assure child safety.	55.0%	0%	0%	25%	N/A	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	0%
A Safety Plan was appropriately completed and implemented to assure child safety.	32.6%	26.3%	20%	37.5%	50%	50%	16.7%	0%	0%	33.3%	0%	100%	0%	0%
A Safety Assessment was documented in accordance with required practice.	33.7%	25.7%	40%	13.3%	20%	40%	40%	0%	60%	53.3%	40%	40%	40%	20%
A Protective Action was documented in accordance with required practice.	5.26%	0%	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
A Safety Plan was documented in accordance with required practice.	23.9%	5.3%	25%	25%	0%	50%	16.7%	0%	0%	16.7%	0%	50%	0%	0%
The family network and others were appropriately involved in the gathering of information.	63.1%	52.9%	64.5%	28.6%	40%	80%	53.3%	25%	60%	66.7%	60%	75%	40%	40%
The family networks and others were appropriately involved in developing Safety Plans.	52.4%	47.3%	50%	25%	0%	100%	50%	0%	50%	50%	50%	50%	100%	100%
Policy and procedures related to safety intervention were followed.	52.2%	42.9%	60%	20%	60%	100%	73.3%	40%	40%	46.7%	40%	60%	20%	40%
Safety plan is sufficient to protect child from threats of severe harm.	51.1%	26.3%	25%	25%	0%	50%	33.3%	0%	0%	33.3%	50%	50%	0%	0%
Efforts to coordinate with law enforcement were documented.	89.1%	100%	87.8%	81.8%	N/A	100%	100%	N/A	100%	100%	100%	0%	N/A	100%
Interview protocols were followed or reason for deviation were documented.	59.6%	47.1%	45.7%	46.7%	20%	80%	71.4%	25%	40%	53.3%	80%	20%	60%	20%
The appropriate definition was used in making the case status determination.	91.1%	100%	97.1%	86.7%	100%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
The finding was correctly documented in N-FOCUS	96.7%	96.9%	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Factual information supports the selected finding.	92.1%	93.8%	94.3%	100%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%	100%	80%
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	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Category	ESA 1	ESA 2	ESA 3	Kircher 1	Kircher 2	Martig 1	Martig 2	Martig 3	Pitt 1	Pitt 2	Pitt 3	Maystrick 3	
The Nebraska Safety Assessment Instrument was completed correctly and completely	30%	17.1%	31.4%	40%	40%	20%	20%	20%	20%	0%	20%	40%	
Documentation is on N-FOCUS	98.9%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Required Time Frames were met	73.3%	73.5%	80%	66.7%	75%	86.7%	100%	60%	80%	80%	80%	100%	
A reasonable level of effort was expended given the identified safety concerns.	83.1%	54.3%	54.3%	86.7%	80%	100%	40%	40%	80%	60%	60%	60%	
Safety of the child/youth was assured during the assessment process.	96.7%	71.4%	77.1%	100%	80%	93.3%	60%	80%	100%	60%	80%	80%	
Sufficient information was gathered for informed decision making	60.2%	29.4%	45.7%	64.3%	40%	66.7%	25%	40%	40%	20%	20%	60%	
Available written documentation was obtained from law enforcement and others as appropriate.	68.8%	N/A	100%	50%	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	50%	N/A	N/A	N/A	
ICWA information was documented	83.3%	68.6%	65.7%	80%	80%	93.3%	100%	20%	80%	40%	60%	60%	
Information was obtained about non-custodial parent, relatives, and other family support.	48.9%	25.7%	31.4%	66.7%	80%	73.3%	20%	0%	53.3%	0%	40%	20%	
An Immediate Protective Action was appropriately implemented to assure child safety.	55.0%	0	0%	50%	0%	62.5%	N/A	N/A	100%	0%	N/A	N/A	
A Safety Plan was appropriately completed and implemented to assure child safety.	32.6%	26.3%	20%	50%	25%	38.5%	33.3%	0%	14.3%	50%	0%	33.3%	
A Safety Assessment was documented in accordance with required practice.	33.7%	25.7%	40%	46.7%	40%	28.6%	40%	20%	20%	0%	40%	60%	
A Protective Action was documented in accordance with required practice.	5.26%	0	N/A	0%	0%	12.5%	N/A	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	
A Safety Plan was documented in accordance with required practice.	23.9%	5.3%	25%	28.6%	25%	33.3%	0%	0%	14.3%	0%	33.3%	33.3%	
The family network and others were appropriately involved in the gathering of information.	63.1%	52.9%	64.5%	84.6%	80%	71.4%	60%	66.7%	76.9%	60%	60%	75%	
The family networks and others were appropriately involved in developing Safety Plans.	52.4%	47.3%	50%	80%	50%	45.5%	66.7%	0%	83.3%	25%	0%	33.3%	
Policy and procedures related to safety intervention were followed.	52.2%	42.9%	60%	60%	60%	53.3%	40%	40%	60%	40%	60%	80%	
Safety plan is sufficient to protect child from threats of severe harm.	51.1%	26.3%	25%	83.3%	25%	75%	33.3%	0%	42.9%	50%	33.3%	33.3%	
Efforts to coordinate with law enforcement were documented.	89.1%	100%	87.8%	80%	N/A	100%	100%	N/A	75%	N/A	100%	100%	
Interview protocols were followed or reason for deviation were documented.	59.6%	47.1%	45.7%	73.3%	40%	60%	20%	40%	53.3%	80%	60%	60%	
The appropriate definition was used in making the case status determination.	91.1%	100%	97.1%	86.7%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%	86.7%	100%	100%	80%	
The finding was correctly documented in N-FOCUS	96.7%	96.9%	100%	93.3%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%	93.3%	100%	100%	100%	
Factual information supports the selected finding.	92.1%	93.8%	94.3%	93.3%	100%	86.7%	80%	100%	78.6%	100%	100%	80%	
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	N/A	N/A	N/A	