



Washington Baseline Safety Decision-Making Practice

March 20201

Introduction

Washington Court Improvement Program (CIP) is working with the child welfare agency to improve practice in the state. Goal 4 of Washington's Program Improvement Plan (PIP) is focused on improving permanency in the state. Strategy 4.2 states that "DCYF staff and court partners will develop, understand, and articulate consistent language regarding DCYF's Safety Framework and implement changes in caseworker and court practice related to the Safety Framework." As part of this effort, a multidisciplinary group, including CIP, DCYF, AGO, and the Court Improvement Training Academy, and the Office of Public Defense (OPD), with support from the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) developed an evaluation plan for a Hearing Quality Project related specifically to the safety framework. The intent of the evaluation was to provide baseline data to the PIP workgroup on practice within the courts on safety decision-making to inform planning for trainings and practice change efforts for the state. The hearing quality evaluation plan included a multi-method approach to assess current practice related to safety decision-making in child welfare. The evaluation plan was designed based on conversations with the Court Improvement Program and other systems stakeholders related to a theory of change regarding how safety decision-making may impact the case process and outcomes. This report presents the methods and findings from that evaluation. The findings should be used by the multidisciplinary group to identify opportunities for increasing a shared understanding of safety and improvements in practice.

Method

The evaluation plan and instruments were vetted by the multidisciplinary team and refined by expert consultation with Jennifer Renne, author of the Safety Guide, and Director of CBCC. The plan included a multi-method approach to learning about current understanding of safety decision-making and practice. This included a stakeholder survey, parent survey, court observation, case file review, and review of administrative data. Each of these methods is described in more detail below. CBCC worked with the CIP, DCYF, and court contacts at each site (primarily court clerks) to gain access to the necessary data. Challenges with obtaining access occurred in several sites, particularly with regarding to the remote case file review. However, these obstacles were overcome and all data were available for the baseline assessment of practice. Data collection instruments are described below and included as an appendix.

Court observation. A structured court observation instrument was designed to capture data elements, such as what specific language regarding safety is used at hearings, how often there



is discussion related to safety threats, vulnerabilities, protective capacities, safety planning, conditions for return home, and what is preventing the child from returning home today. The court observation tracked the judge and jurisdiction (see Appendix A).

Case file review. A structured case file review instrument was designed to assess language provided to the court regarding safety decision-making, including safety planning, parent's protective capacities, threats, and vulnerabilities. The case file review instrument was also designed to capture details about family time, including whether language about family time includes the safety threat and rationalization for why a visit should be supervised. The case file review allows an opportunity to determine how information changes over time with updates that demonstrate ongoing safety assessments for the family (see Appendix B).

Stakeholder Surveys. An online survey was designed to gather professional stakeholders' perspectives on safety decision-making in child abuse and neglect cases (see Appendix C for a copy of the survey instrument). The survey asked stakeholders for their current county of primary practice, role, safety decision-making training experience and how their individual practice may have changed as a result of attending safety decision-making training. The survey also asked stakeholders to define safety decision-making key concepts (to assess understanding) and for their assessments of how often they hear specific safety language in hearings. Parent attorneys and caseworkers were asked for their opinion about parents' understanding of case plan requirements, how to demonstrate progress, and the conditions for return

Parent Surveys. An online survey of parents was developed to gain insight into their child abuse and neglect case experience. The survey asked parents about their understanding of the case plan requirements, whether they understand what they need to do to show progress and if they understand what conditions need to be in place for their child to return home (see Appendix D for a copy of the survey instrument). Judges or attorneys invited parents to complete the online survey at the conclusion of their disposition or review hearing. While other strategies could have been used to obtain the input of parents, recruitment strategies were hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

Administrative Data. DCYF provided administrative data for seven counties (six that are CFSR counties) and Washington statewide for safety planning practice, including the percentage of cases with an in-home safety plan that result in removal within 6 month or 12 months.

Sampling Strategy

The sample focuses on six of the 11 counties involved in the CFSR (Chelan, Grays Harbor, King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Spokane) and one additional county (Mason). Not all counties nor all judges could be included in all data collection activities. Therefore, a purposive sampling strategy was used for the court observation and case file review. The sample included cases opened in 2020 to ensure that it was reflective of current practice. For court observation, CBCC explored a minimum of 10 shelter care hearings for each of the seven sites, to explore current practice related to safety threats, in addition, for four select sites (Grays Harbor, King, Mason, and Spokane), CBCC also conducted court observation at the first review hearing on the case (if there was one), in order to allow an opportunity to examine discussion at two points in time. For the four intensive

sites, CBCC also conducted a structured case file review of the court case management system to review agency documentation (e.g., reports, petitions, case plans) and court orders related to the early case process, including shelter care through the review process. The stakeholder survey was disseminated statewide and the request for parent surveys was also disseminated statewide.

Data Analysis

CBCC worked with the sites to collect data in a timely manner so that reporting could occur back to the Washington PIP Team by early 2021. All data collected was aggregated into multiple datasets in Excel that were exported to statistical packages for more robust analysis. There were some limitations to the data collection that impacted both the collection of data and ability for further analysis. The case file review was limited to the documents provided to the court and included in the court case management system as part of the record. That means that many of the agency documents were not included as part of the review. Case plans, for example, were never included in the court case file, although petitions and some reports were provided and reviewed for this analysis. In addition, some of the case numbers randomly selected were not in frame for the current study. For example, there may be a transfer case that did not have the Shelter Care process in the county of interest or may not have any documentation relevant to the questions of interest. This rarely occurred, but it did impact numbers for the sample. Finally, not all cases had made it to review. In one of the four sites in particular, the majority of cases only had a Shelter Care hearing and had not reached disposition or review during the study timeframe.

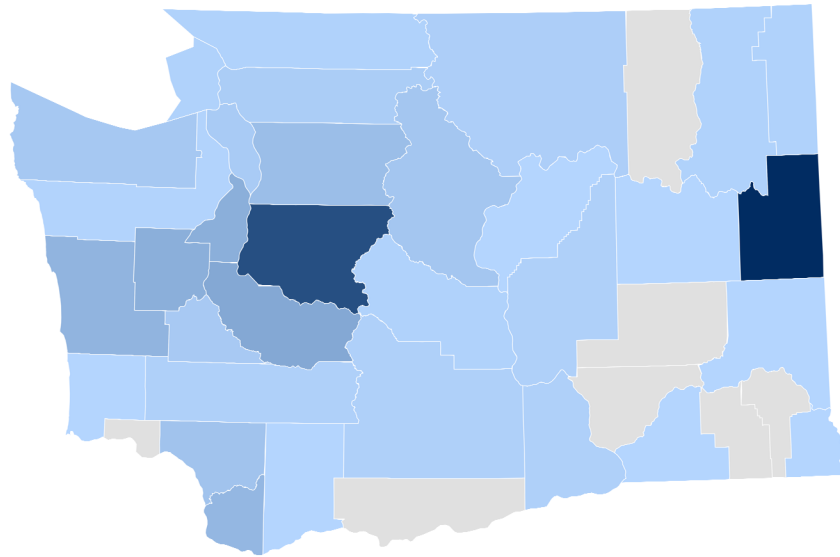
Samples

The court observation sample included 120 hearings, primarily Shelter Care from each of the seven sample counties identified. In addition, Spokane and King County samples included review hearings. In addition the case file review sample included 61 cases, with 21 from King, 20 from Spokane, and 10 each from Mason and Grays Harbor. Stakeholders from each of the these counties also participated in the statewide stakeholder survey. Table 1 below illustrates the total number of observations. Only 6 responses were gathered from the parent survey.

Table 1. Total Number in Sample fo Each Site and Data Collection Method			
	Case File Review	Court Observations	Stakeholder Survey
Grays Harbor	10	8	3
King	21	39	21
Mason	10	11	3
Spokane	20	32	50
Chelan	--	11	6
Kitsap	--	10	14
Pierce	--	10	18

Findings from the statewide stakeholder survey included additional counties. Figure 1 below identifies the reach of the study. Gray counties did not participate. Darker blue indicates more participation (e.g., survey, court observation, case file review). Administrative data included all counties in the state.

Figure 1: Evaluation Plan Reach



Findings

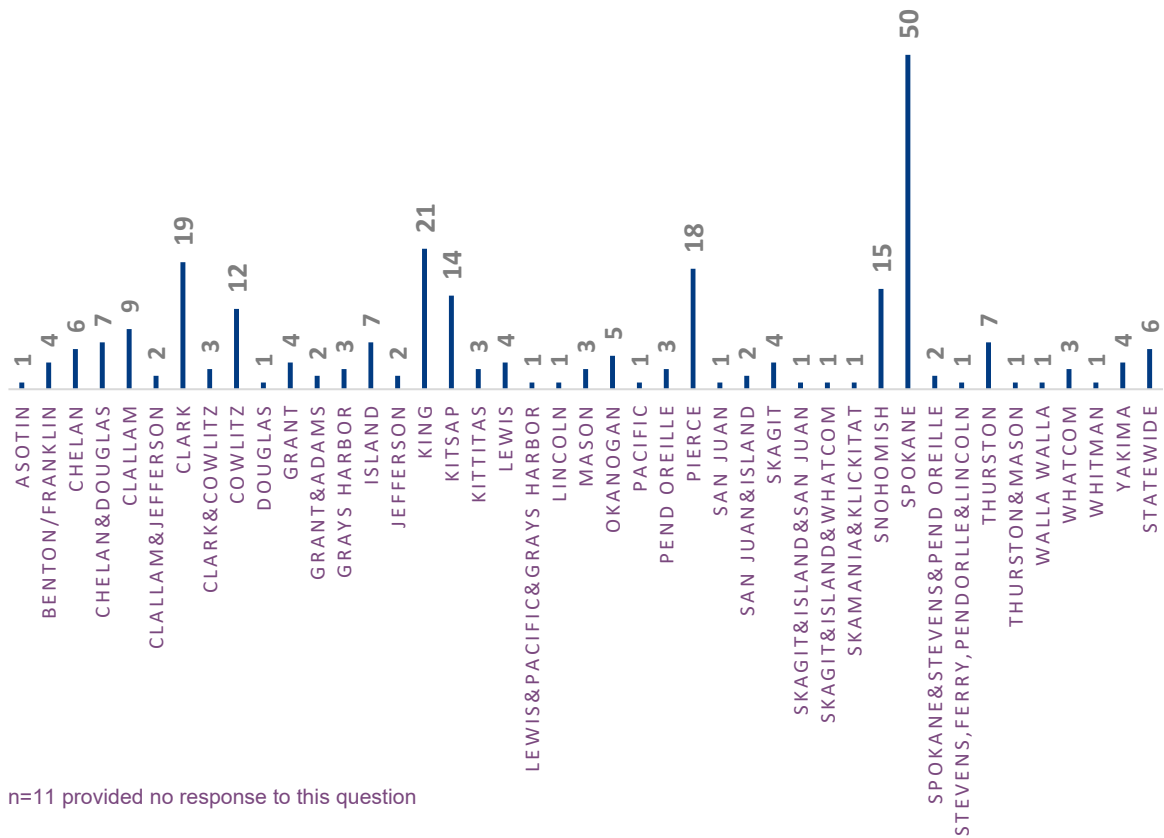
Results are presented below by data collection method. It is important to consider the findings in the context of the available information. Findings are not meant to indicate “good” or “bad” practice. They are meant to provide some baseline information about how stakeholders understand the safety decision-making framework and what current practice looks like, including what is discussed at hearings and what information is presented to the court.

Professional Stakeholder Surveys

A total of 268 professional stakeholder surveys were received (N=268). Of the survey respondents who answered a question about their primary county of practice (n=257), most practiced in Spokane County (19%; n=50), followed by King County (8%; n=21), Clark County (7%; n=19), Pierce County (7%; n=18), Snohomish County (6%; n=15), Kitsap County (5%; n=14) and Cowlitz County (5%; n=12).¹ Some respondents noted that they practiced in multiple counties or statewide. See Figure 2 for respondents’ primary county of practice.

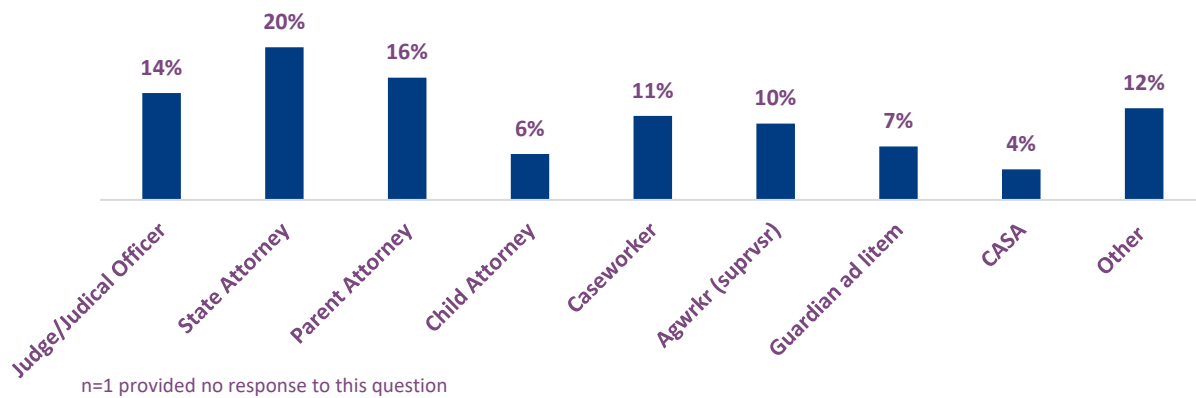
¹ “N’s” in this report indicate the size of the sample for that question. For example, “n”’s provided indicate the total number of respondents for that question or for that finding (e.g., n=5 means there were 5 responses in total for that question/finding).

Figure 2: Survey Respondents' Primary County of Practice (n=257)



Most survey respondents represented social services, identifying their role as either a caseworker or an agency worker/supervisor (21%; n=56). The next most represented stakeholders in the survey were State attorneys (20%; n=53), parent attorneys (16%; n=43), and Judges or judicial officers (14%; n=37). See Figure 2 below. Twelve percent of respondents identified their role as “other” (12%; n=31), such as contracted social workers with the Office of Public Defense (OPD), family treatment court coordinators, attorneys who represent both parents and children, probation, tribal representatives, and court administration.

Figure 3: Percent of Survey Respondents by Role (N=267)



Safety Decision-Making Training

Training Experience

When asked if they had ever been to a safety decision-making training, 44% (n=118) of all survey respondents reported that they had and 56% (n=149) reported they had not. The County with the most respondents having been to a safety decision-making training was Spokane County (54%; n=27), followed by King County (48%; n=10). Looking at training participation by role, most of the judges (65%; n=24) reported that they had safety decision-making training. While the majority of agency workers (supervisor or other) had training on safety decision-making (78%; n=21), more than half of caseworkers reported that they had *not* had such training (55%; n=15). Most State attorneys (60%; n=32), parent attorneys (67%; n=29), children’s attorneys (71%; n=12) and guardian ad litem (63%; n=19) reported that they had *not* been to a safety decision-making training. See Table 2 for experience with safety decision-making training by role.

Table 2: Experience with Safety Decision-Making Training (n=267)

Role in Child Welfare Cases	Have you ever been to a safety decision-making training?		Total
	Yes	No	
Other	35% (11)	65% (20)	31
Judge/judicial officer	65% (24)	35% (13)	37
State attorney	40% (21)	60% (32)	53
Parent attorney	33% (14)	67% (29)	43
Child attorney	29% (5)	71% (12)	17
Caseworker	45% (13)	55% (16)	29
Agency worker (supervisor or other)	78% (21)	22% (6)	27
Guardian ad litem	37% (7)	63% (12)	19
Court Appointed Special Advocate	18% (2)	82% (9)	11
Total	118	149	267

Safety Decision-Making Trainings Attended

When asked to identify the specific safety decision-making training they had attended, most respondents had participated in the *2019 Local Permanency Summit* or the *2018 and 2019 Local Multidisciplinary Safety Training* sponsored by CITA/Rob Wyman. Other safety trainings attended by survey respondents included DCYF trainings such as “Safety Bootcamps,” and reasonable efforts symposiums. Not surprisingly, the annual dependency trainings for judicial officers were primarily attended by judges. See Table 3.

Table 3: Safety Decision-Making Trainings Attended by Survey Respondents	
Training	Number of Survey Respondents Who Attended [Respondents could check all that apply]
<i>Annual Dependency Training for Judicial Officers</i>	
<i>2016</i>	4% (5)
<i>2018</i>	7% (8)
<i>2019</i>	10% (12)
<i>2020</i>	11% (13)
<i>2019 Local Permanency Summit</i>	38% (45)
<i>2018-2019 Local Multidisciplinary Safety Training Sponsored by CITA/Rob Wyman</i>	19% (23)
<i>DCYF Safety Trainings (e.g., Safety Bootcamps)</i>	17% (20)
<i>Other (e.g., Reasonable Efforts Symposium, OPD Trainings, Earlier Permanency Summits)</i>	12% (14)

Post-Safety Decision-Making Training Practice Changes

Survey respondents were asked what they had done differently to improve their safety decision-making practice since attending trainings. Responses were analyzed for emergent themes and the following common themes emerged: changes related to implementing the safety decision-making guide/framework, asking parties to address specific safety concerns in hearings/cases, engaging in safety analysis, considering safety planning and visitation practice, and engaging parents. Findings are presented by respondent role with examples below:

Judges

- **Implement the safety decision-making framework**
 - “Use language, questions based on the safety guide”
 - “Try to utilise the [safety guide] framework at every hearing”
 - “We have implemented the safety triangle (threat, vulnerable, protective factors) in all decisions regarding safety and placement with kids on our docket.”
 - “Use the language of threat, vulnerability, and protective factors”
- **Ask parties to address specific safety concerns**
 - “Ask parties to case to address safety of children in specific terms - what is needed or what is missing that presents or addresses safety risk”
 - “Ask more specific questions about safety of the department”
 - “Ask more questions of the social workers”

- **Engage in safety analysis**
 - *“Asked myself what safety issues existed that required removal of child; what is being done to alleviate those concerns; if concerns are removed when can child go home?”*
 - *“Attempted to focus more on safety factors in my decision-making”*
- **Consider safety planning and visitation practice**
 - *“I have started with the presumption of unsupervised, in-home visits and safety planned from that focus. I have also looked at what services could make visits or extended family time feasible.”*
- **Engage parents**
 - *“Worked harder to ensure parents understand what is occurring at each and every hearing and also what is expected of them.”*

State Attorneys

- **Implement the safety decision-making framework**
 - *“Been more cognizant of the DCYF’s safety decision-making protocols”*
 - *“Considered the Department safety risk matrix”*
 - *“Being familiar with the framework and to use the correct language about safety decision-making”*
 - *“Reminders to DCYF on using the safety decision making framework for court reports, declarations, and oral updates in court”*
- **Ask parties to address specific safety concerns**
 - *“Ask more questions of my clients (social workers)”*
 - *“Make sure we tell the court all we know and don’t know about safety in hearings”*
- **Engage in safety analysis**
 - *“Working to identify the specific risk to in home placement and what services could be identified to ameliorate risks in the home, if at all possible.”*

Parent Attorneys

- **Implement the safety decision-making framework**
 - *“Tried to get DCYF to follow safety decision framework when making decisions about removal.”*
 - *“Hold the department accountable to their own safety decision making standards for removal and return homes.”*
 - *“Advocate for following DCYF policy.”*
 - *“Remind DCYF ... about their own safety framework ...”*
 - *“I review and cite the safety framework at case staffings and at court, when necessary.”*
 - *“Bring up the criteria in court hearings, in dept meetings, review criteria with clients.”*
 - *“Tried to apply safety framework to cases.”*
- **Ask parties to address specific safety concerns**
 - *“Asked more questions at shelter care hearings.”*
- **Engage in safety analysis**
 - *“Try to get safety plans from social workers .. and try to have Commissioners look at current safety threats.”*

Children’s Attorneys, Guardians ad Litem and CASA

- **Implement the safety decision-making framework**
 - *“I have tried to utilize the CITA/Roby Wyman safety framework arguing in court.”*

- *“I advocate for my client based on the safety standards”*
- *“I refer to the [safety] list when making tough decisions and before court hearings to see what applies where”*
- **Engage in safety analysis**
 - *“Looking at threat vs. risk”*
 - *“Try to directly identify the safety threat that needs to be remediated so the child can go home or the visits can be expanded”*
 - *“Work harder to actually identify the safety threats and work towards addressing those on behalf of the child”*

Caseworkers, Agency Workers and Supervisors

- **Implement the safety decision-making framework**
 - *“Applied the use of specific safety language in court reports ...”*
 - *“I have provided the tool for all individuals in a Shared Planning Meeting to assess safety. This has helped communicate and prioritize barriers to return home.”*
 - *“Articulating safety concerns using the DCYF Safety Framework in language accessible to all parties.”*
 - *“... use the safety framework in all (FTDM) meetings.”*
 - *“Continual promotion of the safety framework in practice”*
- **Ask parties to address specific safety concerns**
 - *“Encouraged Parents Attorneys to utilize and reference the guidances in court hearings and FTDMs”*
- **Engage in safety analysis**
 - *“Learned to pay close attention to risk v. active safety threat ...Sometimes that line gets blurred by perspective.”*
 - *“Worked with my staff to help them better articulate the safety threat and use the language the court uses or to break it down in such a way that all parties understand. Also discussions with them to walk through whether not they have a safety issue or high risk.”*
 - *“Doing more thorough assessments”*
 - *“Using a framework, per policy, and computer modeling that tells if a child is safe or not”*
 - *“Relying on the safety framework/safety analysis to inform decision making.”*
 - *“This training made me understand clearly the difference between something being risky versus an immediate threat to a child being harmed.”*
- **Engage parents**
 - *“Had more focused discussions with parents regarding the safety concerns that brought their children into care, and how to alleviate those concerns.”*

Current Safety Decision-Making Practice

The survey asked professional stakeholders to consider current safety decision-making practices in the courts they primarily work in. Stakeholders were asked, for example, how often specific language was used in discussions of safety in child abuse and neglect cases (i.e., safety threats, parental protective capacities, vulnerabilities, and conditions for return). Stakeholders assessed the frequency with which specific language was used on the following scale: “never/almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always/always.” Stakeholders responding to this question believed that “safety threats” was “sometimes” used (18%; n=48), “vulnerabilities” was

“sometimes” used (18%; n=48) and “parental protective capacities” language was also “sometimes” used (17%; n=46). Stakeholders reported that “conditions for return” language was “often” used in child abuse and neglect hearings (22%; n=60). Overall, “safety threats” and “conditions for return” language was used more frequently than “vulnerabilities” and “parental protective capacity” language according to stakeholders. See Table 4 below.

Table 4: Frequency of Language Used in Safety Discussions in Hearings

Language Used	Never/Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always/Always	Total	Weighted Average
Safety Threats	6% (15)	12% (33)	18% (48)	12% (33)	10% (26)	155	4.1613
Parental Protective Capacities	6% (15)	12% (31)	17% (46)	13% (35)	10% (27)	154	3.1818
Vulnerabilities	6% (15)	12% (33)	18% (48)	12% (33)	10% (26)	155	3.1419
Conditions for Return	1% (2)	4% (12)	11% (29)	22% (60)	20% (53)	156	3.9615

Survey respondents were also asked for their opinion of how often specific discussions about safety occur in child abuse and neglect hearings. Using the same rating scale, stakeholders considered how often discussion occurred about the conditions for return, what is preventing the child from returning home today, and the safety reasons why family time is supervised. For disposition and review hearings, stakeholders considered how often discussion occurred about clear expectations of parents, how services match safety threats, and how services enhance protective capacities.

Stakeholders responding to this question were equally split between ratings of “rarely” (17%; n=45) and “sometimes” (17%; n=45) when considering how often there was discussion in hearings about how services enhance protective capacities. Stakeholders reported that hearings “sometimes” discussed what is preventing the child from returning home today (20%; n=53), the safety reasons why family time is supervised (21%; n=57) and, in disposition and review hearings, how the services match safety threats (17%; n=46). Discussion topics that were rated as occurring “often” in hearings were the conditions for return (23%; n=63) and clear expectations for parents in disposition and review hearings (18%; n=49). Overall, how services enhance protective capacity was the safety topic discussed least frequently and conditions for return was the safety topic discussed most frequently according to stakeholders. See Table 5 below

Table 5: Frequency of Safety Discussion Topics in Hearings

Discussion Topic	Never/Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always/Always	Total	Weighted Average
Conditions for Return	1% (3)	3% (9)	15% (39)	23% (63)	12% (33)	147	3.7755
What is Preventing Child from Returning Home Today	3% (7)	6% (16)	20% (53)	17% (45)	12% (31)	152	3.5066
Safety Reasons Family Time Supervised	4% (10)	6% (16)	21% (57)	17% (46)	9% (24)	153	3.3791
Clear Expectations Parents in Dispo and Review Hearings	3% (7)	6% (16)	15% (40)	18% (49)	15% (41)	153	3.6601
How Services Match Safety Threats in Dispo and Review Hearings	7% (18)	13% (36)	17% (46)	13% (36)	7% (18)	154	3.0000
How Services Enhance Protective Capacities	6% (17)	17% (45)	17% (45)	12% (33)	5% (13)	153	2.8693

Understanding of Safety Decision-Making Framework Concepts

To gauge stakeholders' understandings of safety decision-making, they were asked to provide definitions of concepts within the safety guide – safety threats, parental protective capacities, vulnerabilities, case plan progress (as it relates to safety) and conditions for return. Definitions provided give insight into the safety language stakeholders are more familiar with and its meaning to them. Stakeholder definitions of the safety concepts were examined against the safety decision-making guide descriptions of the concepts, using the following coding scheme:

1) Definition indicates a lack of understanding: No reference to key safety elements or the definition lacks a connection to a safety/risk analysis. Examples of definitions provided by stakeholders indicating a lack of understanding of assessing “case plan progress,” for example, included “*whether DSHS is satisfied,*” “*frequent reports,*” and “*whether there is a change from review to review.*”

2) Definition indicates a basic understanding: Reference to key safety elements and a connection to safety/risk analysis. Examples of definitions provided by stakeholders indicating a basic understanding of assessing “case plan progress,” for example, included “*review of services that*

have been implemented to address the safety threats and risks and the parents' progress towards alleviating those risks," and "how is the parent progressing towards building protective capacity, and addressing vulnerabilities and safety threats to allow for the safe return of the child home."

3) Definition indicates a higher understanding: Reference to key safety elements, a connection to safety/risk analysis, and inclusion of some examples or specifics. Examples of definitions provided by stakeholders indicating a higher level of understanding of "case plan progress," for example, included: "Review of progress parent is making at engaging in services; services should have been targeted at ameliorating specific child safety risks and threats of harm; consideration is how have the services enhanced parental skills, capacities, and the situation to alleviate or eliminate the safety threat and the reasons the child was at risk? What has been successful and what more needs to be done to safely return the child home?" and "Progress in services that are designed to eliminate parental deficiencies and safety threats; could be parent in SUD, DV, and other treatments, and progress in parent education. Are the parents involved in their services, to what degree of success at eliminating the safety risks, what remains to be done, what are the safety reasons for continued supervision of visits, can the child be safely returned home today?"

Table 6 below summarizes the findings for Judges, State Attorneys and Parent Attorneys on their understanding of the safety concepts. Judges demonstrated a basic understanding of all of the safety concepts, but were more challenged to provide definitions of case plan progress as it relates to safety (62% of judges' definitions lacked an understanding of case plan progress from a safety perspective). Safety areas with "higher levels of understanding" in the judges' definitions were protective capacity (49%) and safety threat (43%). Like the judges, state attorneys demonstrated a basic understanding of all of the safety concepts, and also similar to the judges, state attorneys were more challenged to provide definitions of case plan progress from a safety perspective (38% of the definitions lacked an understanding of the safety framework). For State attorneys, the conditions for return had the most definitions indicating a higher level of understanding (27% of responses). Parent attorneys were also most challenged to provide definitions of case plan progress as it relates to safety (74% of responses indicated a lack of understanding). The area with the most definitions indicating a "higher level of understanding" for parent attorneys was the conditions for return (22% of responses) safety concept. However, more than half of parent's attorneys provided a definition of the conditions of return that lacked an understanding of the safety framework (56% of responses).

Table 6: Understanding of Safety Decision-Making Framework in Stakeholder Definitions of Safety Concepts

Safety Concept	Definitions Provided Indicate Lack of Understanding	Definitions Provided Indicate Basic Understanding	Definitions Provided Indicate Higher Understanding	Total Responses
Judges (N=37)				
Safety Threat	0%	57% (12)	43% (9)	21
Protective Capacity	0%	51% (11)	49% (10)	21
Vulnerabilities	25% (5)	50% (11)	25% (5)	21
Case Plan Progress	62% (13)	24% (5)	14% (3)	21
Conditions for Return	29% (6)	62% (13)	9% (2)	21

State Attorneys (N=53)				
Safety Threat	19% (5)	61% (16)	19% (5)	26
Protective Capacity	0%	77% (20)	23% (6)	26
Vulnerabilities	35% (9)	42% (11)	23% (6)	26
Case Plan Progress	38% (10)	38% (10)	23% (6)	26
Conditions for Return	23% (6)	50% (13)	27% (7)	26
Parent Attorneys (N=43)				
Safety Threat	43% (10)	39% (9)	17% (4)	23
Protective Capacity	13% (3)	83% (19)	4% (1)	23
Vulnerabilities	45% (10)	36% (8)	18% (4)	22
Case Plan Progress	74% (17)	13% (3)	13% (3)	23
Conditions for Return	56% (13)	22% (5)	22% (5)	23

Table 7 below presents findings for Child Attorneys, Guardians ad Litem (GALs) and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) on their understanding of safety concepts. Few responses were provided by children’s attorneys for these questions, but the definitions that were given indicated a lack of understanding by children’s attorneys of safety threat and case plan progress (50% of definitions for those concepts lacked an understanding of the safety framework). Children’s attorneys did better with definitions of protective capacity, with 67% of responses indicating a higher level of understanding. For GALs, the biggest area of challenge was in defining case plan progress from a safety perspective, with 80% of responses indicating a lack of understanding. Similar to children’s attorneys, more than half of protective capacity (56%) definitions indicated a higher level of understanding. CASAs were also challenged to provide definitions of case plan progress from a safety perspective, with 75% of definitions lacking understanding.

Table 7: Understanding of Safety Decision-Making Framework in Stakeholder Definitions of Safety Concepts				
Safety Concept	Definitions Provided Indicate Lack of Understanding	Definitions Provided Indicate Basic Understanding	Definitions Provided Indicate Higher Understanding	Total Responses
Children’s Attorneys (N=17)				
Safety Threat	50% (3)	33% (2)	17% (1)	6
Protective Capacity	0%	33% (2)	67% (4)	6
Vulnerabilities	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)	5
Case Plan Progress	50% (3)	33% (2)	17% (1)	6
Conditions for Return	40% (2)	20% (1)	40% (2)	5
GAL (N=19)				
Safety Threat	50% (5)	20% (2)	30% (3)	10
Protective Capacity	33% (3)	11% (1)	56% (5)	9
Vulnerabilities	30% (3)	60% (6)	10% (1)	10

Case Plan Progress	80% (8)	20% (2)	0%	10
Conditions for Return	30% (3)	30% (3)	40% (4)	10
CASA (N=11)				
Safety Threat	50% (2)	25% (1)	25% (1)	4
Protective Capacity	0%	100% (3)	0%	3
Vulnerabilities	0%	67% (2)	33% (1)	3
Case Plan Progress	75% (3)	(1)	0%	4
Conditions for Return	25% (1)	75% (3)	0%	4

Table 8 below presents findings for caseworkers and social service agency workers/supervisors on their understanding of the safety concepts. Caseworkers demonstrated a basic understanding of most of the safety concepts. For caseworkers, the concept with the most definitions lacking understanding from a safety perspective was “conditions for return” (37% of responses). More than half of the caseworkers providing a response gave definitions of protective capacity (58%) and vulnerabilities (54%) indicating a higher level of understanding of those safety concepts. Agency workers/supervisors also demonstrated a basic understanding of most of the safety concepts. While 44% of definitions of “vulnerabilities” lacked an understanding of the safety framework, another 44% of definitions of “vulnerabilities” indicated a higher level of understanding. Almost half (45%) of the definitions provided by agency workers/supervisors of safety threats indicated a higher level of understanding of that safety concept.

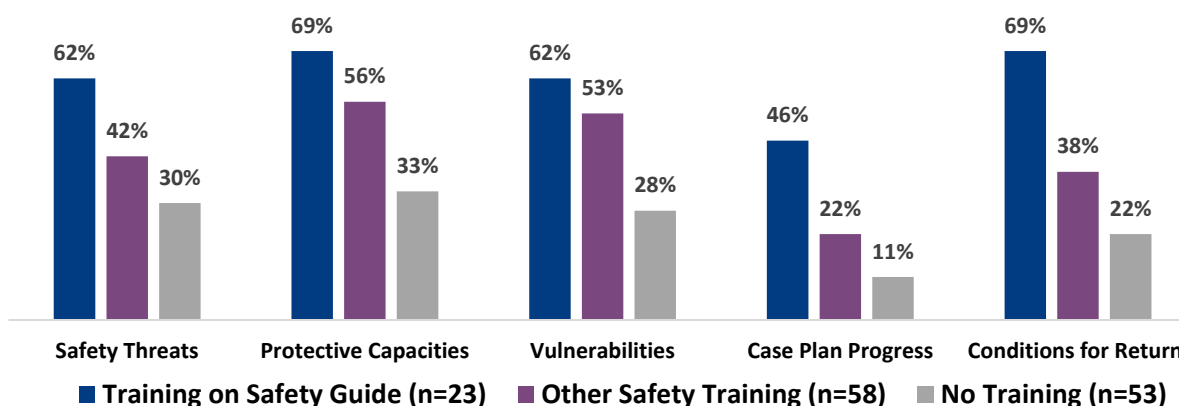
Table 8: Understanding of Safety Decision-Making Framework in Stakeholder Definitions of Safety Concepts				
Safety Concept	Definitions Provided Indicate Lack of Understanding	Definitions Provided Indicate Basic Understanding	Definitions Provided Indicate Higher Understanding	Total Responses
Caseworkers (N=29)				
Safety Threat	12% (2)	44% (7)	44% (7)	16
Protective Capacity	0%	42% (5)	58% (7)	12
Vulnerabilities	18% (2)	27% (3)	54% (6)	11
Case Plan Progress	21% (3)	50% (7)	28% (4)	14
Conditions for Return	37% (6)	44% (7)	19% (3)	16
Agency worker/supervisor (N=27)				
Safety Threat	0%	54% (6)	45% (5)	11
Protective Capacity	27% (3)	45% (5)	27% (3)	11
Vulnerabilities	44% (4)	11% (1)	44% (4)	9
Case Plan Progress	30% (3)	50% (5)	20% (2)	10
Conditions for Return	30% (3)	30% (3)	40% (4)	10

Understanding of Safety Decision-Making Framework and Training Attendance

Stakeholder definitions for each of the safety framework concepts were examined by whether or not individuals reported having attended a training. Three groups were compared: 1) individuals who reported attending training specific to the Safety Guide (e.g., 2018-2019 Multidisciplinary Training Sponsored by CITA/Rob Wyman); 2) individuals who reported attending some other type of safety training; and 3) individuals who reported having no safety decision-making training. Safety concept definitions for these three groups were analyzed and the percentage of definitions indicating a “higher level understanding” were compared.

Stakeholders who attended some type of training were able to generate more “higher level understanding” definitions of all of the safety concepts when compared to individuals who reported having no safety training (i.e., individuals with training gave more definitions that referenced key safety elements, connected to a safety/risk analysis and provided specifics or examples). Furthermore, stakeholders who reported attending a training specific to the Safety Guide/Safety Decision-Making framework had a greater percentage of responses indicating a “higher level of understanding” of safety concepts than individuals who attended some other type of safety training. See Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Percent of Safety Concept Definitions Indicating Higher Level of Understanding -Training vs. No Training



Stakeholder Perceptions of Parental Understanding of Requirements

Understanding of case plan requirements: Parent attorneys (n=43) and caseworkers (n=29) were asked for assessments of the percentage of cases in which parents fully understand their case plan requirements. Parent attorneys’ assessments ranged from 0% to 90% of the time, with most parent attorneys (19%; n=8) believing that the parents they represent fully understand their case plan requirements in 50-65% of cases. Caseworker assessments of parental understanding of case plan requirements ranged from 10% to 100% of the time, with most of the caseworkers (27%; n=8) believing that parents fully understood their case plan in 75-90% of cases.

Understanding of how to demonstrate case plan progress: Parent attorneys (n=43) and caseworkers (n=29) were asked what percent of parents they work with fully understand how to demonstrate progress on their case plan. Parent attorneys' assessments ranged from 0% to 90% of parents, with most parent attorneys (26%; n=11) reporting that between 25-50% of parents they work with fully understand how to demonstrate progress on their case plans. Caseworker assessments ranged from 10% to 100%, with most caseworkers (48%; n=14) believing that 75-100% of parents they work with fully understand how to demonstrate progress on their case plan.

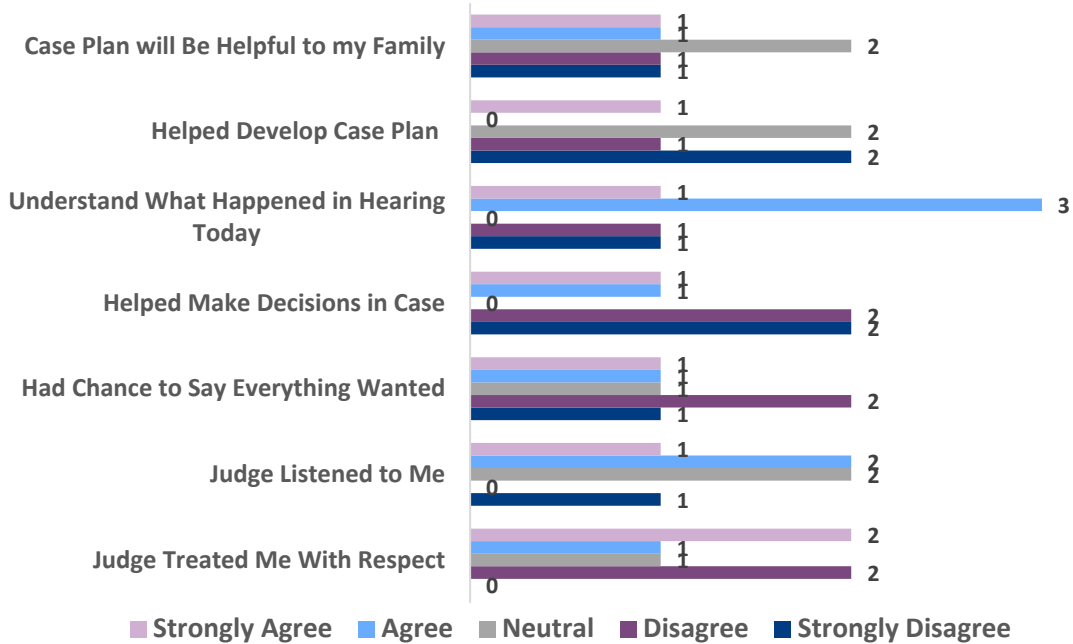
Understanding of what needs to be done to achieve conditions for return: Parent attorneys (n=43) and caseworkers (n=29) were asked what percent of parents they work with understand what needs to be done to achieve the conditions for return. Parent attorneys' assessments ranged from 0% to 90%, with most attorneys (19%; n=8) believing that half (50%) of the parents they work with understand what needs to be done to meet the conditions for return. When asked for the percent of cases where it is clear to them (the attorney) what parents need to do to satisfy the conditions for return, responses ranged from 1% to 100% of the time. Most attorneys (33%; n=14) reported that in 75-100% of cases they understood what parents they work with needed to do to satisfy conditions for return.

Caseworker assessments of the percentage of cases in which parents understand what is required to achieve the conditions for return ranged from 25% to 100% of parents, with most (24%; n=7) believing that 75-100% of parents understood what they needed to do to satisfy the conditions for return. When asked for the percent of cases where it is clear to them (the caseworker) what parents need to do, responses ranged from 10% to 100% of the time. Most caseworkers (28%; n=8) reported that in 80-100% of cases they understood what the parents would need to do to meet the conditions for return.

Parent Surveys

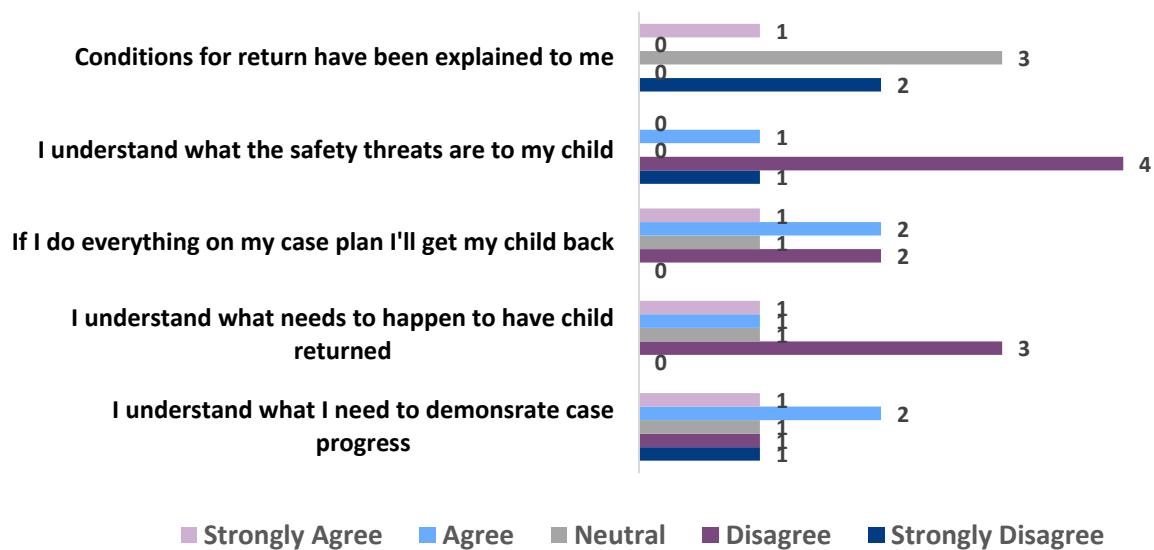
A total of 6 parents completed surveys, reflecting cases that began from August 2019 through September 2020, and representing 5 mothers and one father. Parents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a series of statements about their experience in the case, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The statements parents agreed with the most were "I understand what happened in the hearing today," "the judge listened to me," and "the judge treated me with respect." The statements parents disagreed with the most were "I helped make decisions in my case," "I helped to develop my case plan," and "I had a chance to say everything I wanted." See Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Parents' Report of Experience in Case (N=6)



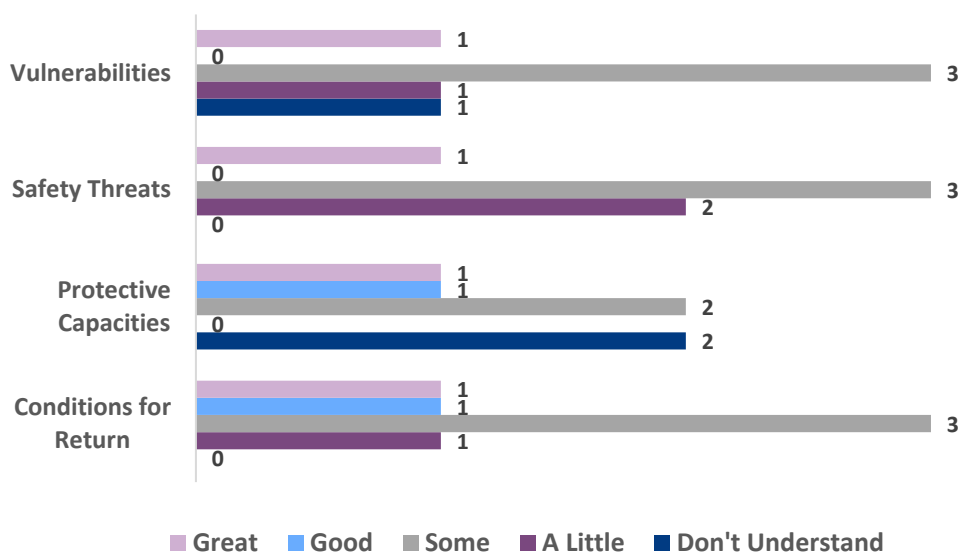
Parents were also asked to rate their agreement with a number of statements about their understanding of the case. The statements parents agreed with the most were “If I do everything on my case plan I’ll get my child back,” and “I understand what I need to do to demonstrate progress on my case.” The statements parents disagreed with the most were “I understand what the safety threats are to my child,” and “I understand what needs to happen to have my child returned.” See Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Parents' Report of Understanding (N=6)



Parents were asked to rate their understanding of safety concepts using the following scale: “don’t understand,” “little understanding,” “some understanding,” “good understanding,” and “great understanding.” Two parents reported understanding the conditions for return safety language, but half reported only some understanding. Parents were about equally divided about their understanding of protective capacity with two parents providing ratings of understanding and two parents reporting that they did not understand that concept at all. The safety concepts with the lowest ratings of understanding were “vulnerabilities,” “protective capacities,” and “safety threats.” See Figure 7 below.

Figure 7: Parents' Understanding of Safety Concepts (N=6)



At the end of the survey parents were given the chance to provide any comments they wanted to make to help improve the court system. Two parents took advantage of the opportunity to share comments, providing some insight into areas they feel need to be better explained to parents – the reasons for remaining on supervised visits, court orders, and the case plan/return home process and what is expected of them.

“Listen to the client/parents they know what they need but don't know how to ask or say it at first- let them have a voice. And always make sure there's forward progress in each case. I've been in compliance for 9 months straight and I'm still on supervised visits. Just because caseworkers GAL and lawyers are professionals doesn't always mean that they're doing their job. And how could they when they have a huge caseload. I do believe that the case plan/ return home needs to be laid out better like what's expected that way everyone can be on the same page.”

“I just know that the findings were yes progress and yes compliance and we have completed everything we were asked to do and our daughter has been in foster care for almost a yr - we have been clean almost a yr and doing everything asked and again our court date was set out another 6 months -we just are not understanding why. We haven't missed a visit including zoom visits a few months back we knew things have been rough due to covid but not having our daughter returned home yet is even rougher. And haven't got a call back from our social worker or lawyers regarding our case and explaining our court

order to us has been frustrating. We know to be cooperative and understanding but when we don't fully understand because it's complicated it is really tough.”

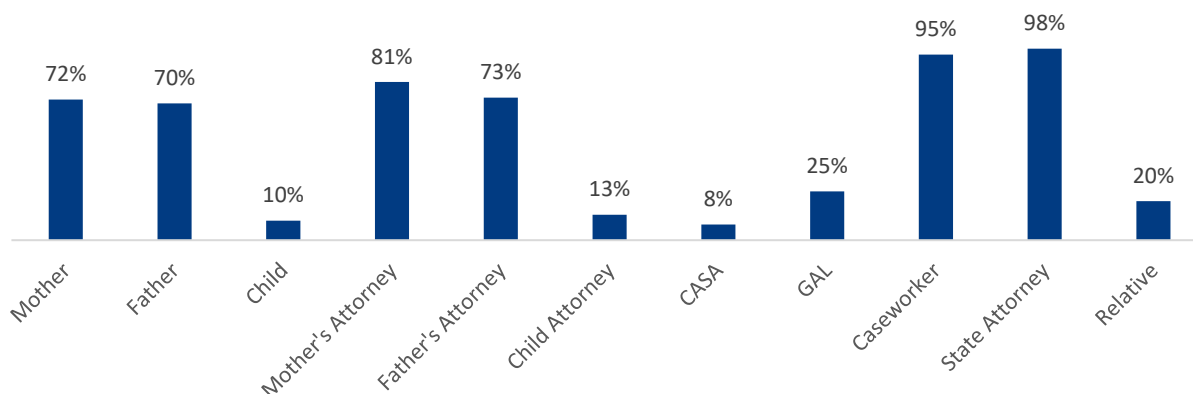
Court Observation

Seventy-nine Shelter Care (66%) and 41 Review (34%) hearings were observed for the study. Of the 79 Shelter Care, 52 (67%) waived or agreed to Shelter Care, which impacted the discussion at the hearings and 26 (33%) did not. Data is presented by hearing type below.

Shelter Care

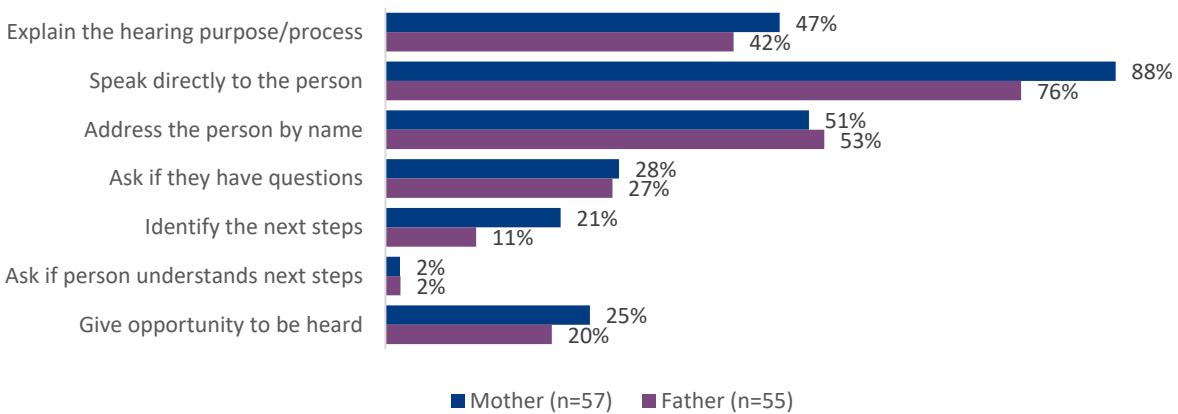
Figure 8 illustrates the percentage of Shelter Care hearings where a party was present. In addition, foster parents were present in 3% of hearings, and interpreters and tribal representatives were each present in 1% of hearings.

Figure 8. Percent of Shelter Care Hearings Where Party Was Present



The baseline assessment explored judicial engagement of parents at the hearings. Judicial engagement measured whether judges engaged in specific practices such as explaining the hearing process, speaking directly to the party and calling the party by name. These behaviors were only tracked when a party was present at the hearing. Figure 9 illustrates the percentage of time the judges engaged in specific behaviors with mothers and fathers at hearings. Engagement was also explored when youth were present. Only eight hearings had youth present. The judge explained the hearing process and spoke directly to the youth in 50% of these hearings and addressed them by name, asked if they had questions, and gave them an opportunity to be heard in 13% of the hearings.

Figure 9. Percentage of Hearings That Judge Used Specific Engagement Strategies



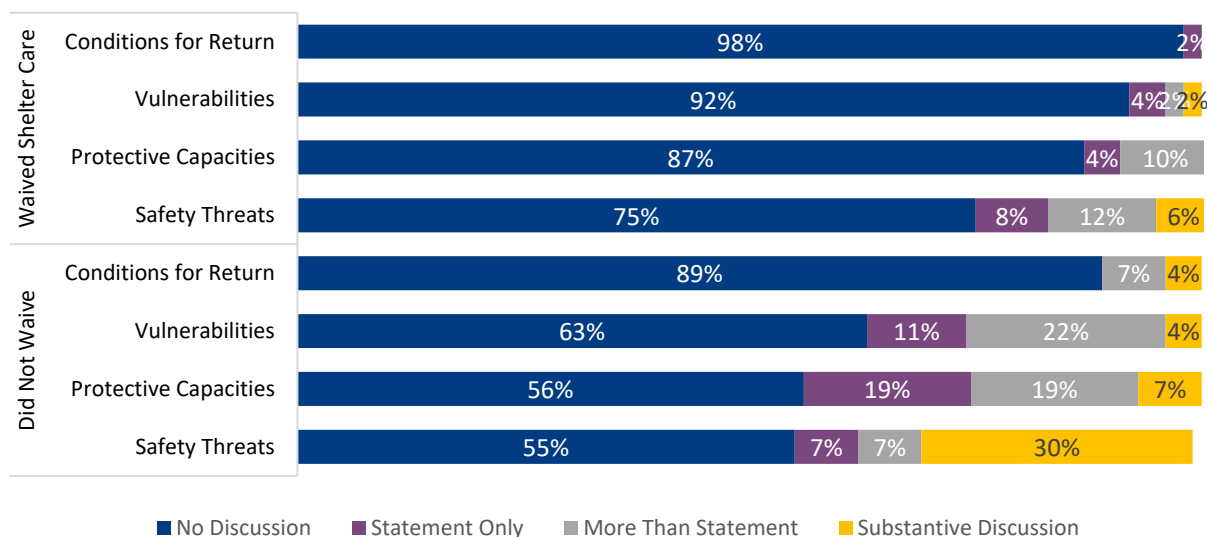
Of primary interest to the study was the discussion that was held at each hearing. Table 9 below illustrates the percentage of time a specific topic was discussed at all during a hearing. This is further broken down by whether the Shelter Care hearing was waived (or agreed) or not.

Shelter Care Discussion

Table 9. Percentage of Hearings Where Topic Was Discussed or Judge Inquired				
	All Shelter Care (n=79)	Waived SC (n=52)	Not Waived (n=27)	Judicial Inquiry (n=79)
GENERAL DISCUSSION				
Child’s Placement	95%	96%	93%	27%
Educational needs/placement	14%	10%	22%	1%
Child physical health	19%	11%	33%	--
Child mental health/development	8%	8%	7%	3%
Child other well-being	15%	13%	18%	--
Efforts to finalize perm/prevent removal	19%	10%	37%	5%
Relative Resources	43%	35%	59%	13%
Parent’s rights/process/perm timeframes	62%	71%	44%	46%
SAFETY DISCUSSION TOPICS				
Specific safety threats	32%	25%	44%	10%
Parent’s protective capacities	24%	13%	44%	6%
Vulnerabilities (child)	18%	8%	37%	--
Conditions for return	5%	2%	10%	3%
Visitation/Family time (generally)	72%	77%	63%	29%
Visit: Justification for supervision time	25%	29%	18%	10%
Visit: Level of supervisions (who)	45%	52%	32%	17%
Visit: Setting	38%	36%	41%	9%
Safety planning (in-home)	11%	4%	26%	4%

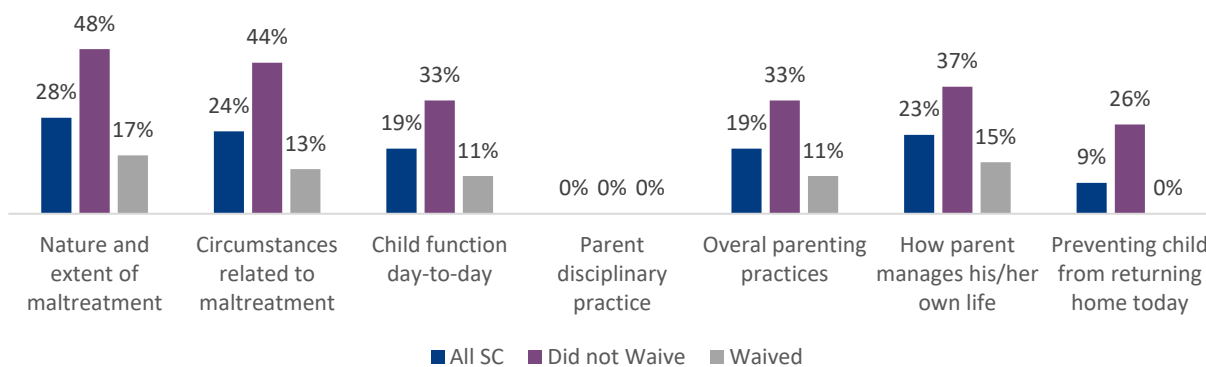
Discussion was coded on a 4-point scale that included 0=no discussion, 1=statement only, 2=2-3 statements, 3=substantive discussion. This was considered the depth of discussion. Figure 10 illustrates what the depth of discussion was in hearings when Shelter Care was waived or agreed versus when it was not. When there was discussion of safety threats (primarily in non-waived hearings), it was most likely to be substantive.

Figure 10. Discussion Depth for Safety Topics



In addition, coders explored how often there was discussion of contextual safety information related to a series of questions that judges could ask to be more informed about safety related decision-making. Judges rarely made active inquiry related to these topics. In 4% of hearings, judges inquired about circumstances related to maltreatment or overall parenting practices, and in 3% of hearings judges inquired about how parents managed their own life. Figure 11 illustrates the percentage of Shelter Care hearings where these items were discussed. This is broken down by whether Shelter Care was waived or agreed to or not.

Figure 11. Percentage of Shelter Care Items Where Topic Ever Discussed



Discussion of these items was also explored for depth of discussion. Table 10 identifies the depth of discussion of items broken down by whether Shelter Care was waived or not waived. Substantive discussion of any of the items was rare, but was mostly like to be about the nature and extent of maltreatment and the circumstances related to maltreatment.

Table 10. Depth of Discussion of Contextual Safety Information in Shelter Care				
	No Discussion	Statement Only	More than Statement	Substantive Discussion
Non-Waived Shelter Care				
Nature and extent of maltreatment	52%	15%	15%	18%
Circumstances related to maltreatment	56%	19%	7%	18%
Child function day-to-day	67%	33%	--	--
Parent disciplinary practice	--	--	--	--
Overall parenting practices	67%	15%	15%	4%
How parent manages his/her own life	63%	11%	11%	15%
Preventing child from returning home today	74%	22%	4%	--
Waived Shelter Care				
Nature and extent of maltreatment	83%	10%	6%	2%
Circumstances related to maltreatment	87%	6%	6%	2%
Child function day-to-day	90%	4%	2%	4%
Parent disciplinary practice	--	--	--	--
Overall parenting practices	89%	6%	4%	2%
How parent manages his/her own life	85%	10%	6%	--
Preventing child from returning home today	0	--	--	--

Findings on the Record

At 11% of Shelter Care hearings, judges made a verbal reasonable efforts finding (n=9). When they made a reasonable efforts findings, 100% of them included detail in their findings and 78% referenced the safety threat.

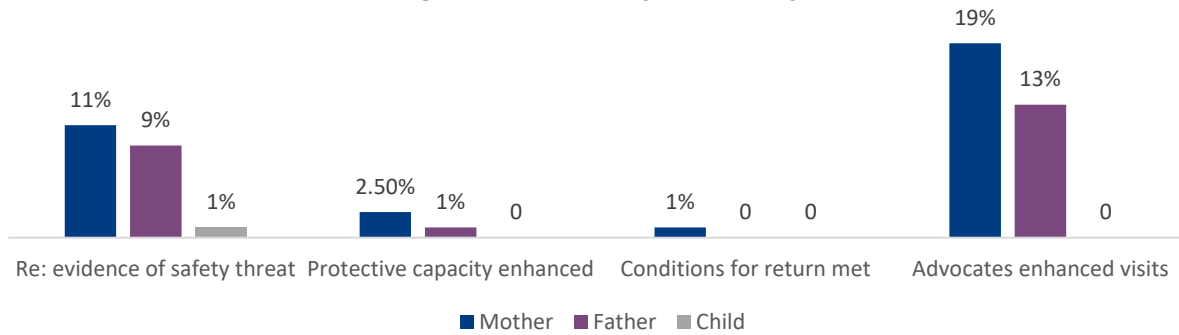
Safety Analysis

Coders observed whether *anyone* in the hearing demonstrated through discussion a safety analysis. That is, was there something that indicated that someone had considered the safety threats in relation to child’s vulnerabilities. Coders noted some evidence of this analysis in 20% of hearings observed

Advocacy

A final measure in hearings was attorney advocacy. Advocacy was determined by whether the attorney for the parent or advocate for the child argued for something for their client. In particular, in-court advocacy focused on whether there was argument regarding the safety threat, that parent’s protective capacities were enhanced, that conditions for return had been met, or advocated for enhanced visitation (either longer, or less supervision). Figure 12 illustrates the percentage of hearings where advocacy was noted by the attorney (or advocate) for the parent and child.

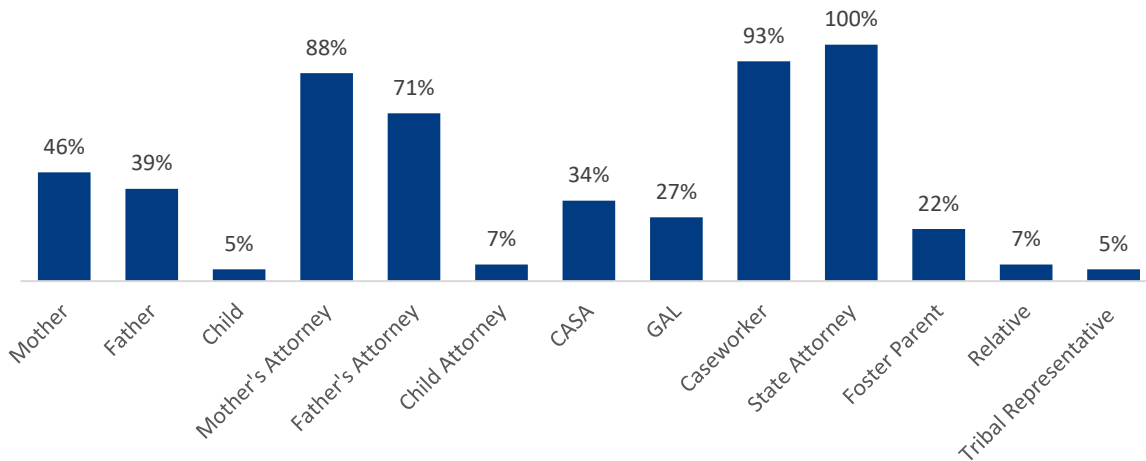
Figure 12. Attorney Advocacy



Review Hearings

Parties present at the review were mostly like to be the state attorney, caseworker, and mother’s attorneys (see Figure 13).

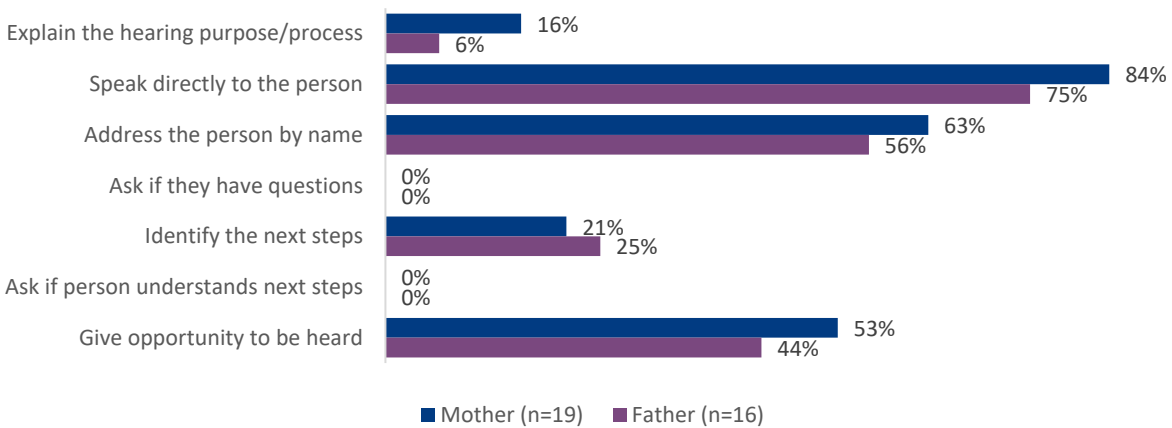
Figure 13. Parties Present At Review Hearings



Judicial Engagement

Figure 14 below reports on how judges engaged mothers and fathers at the review hearing. Youth were not present in sufficient numbers to be represented in the graph.

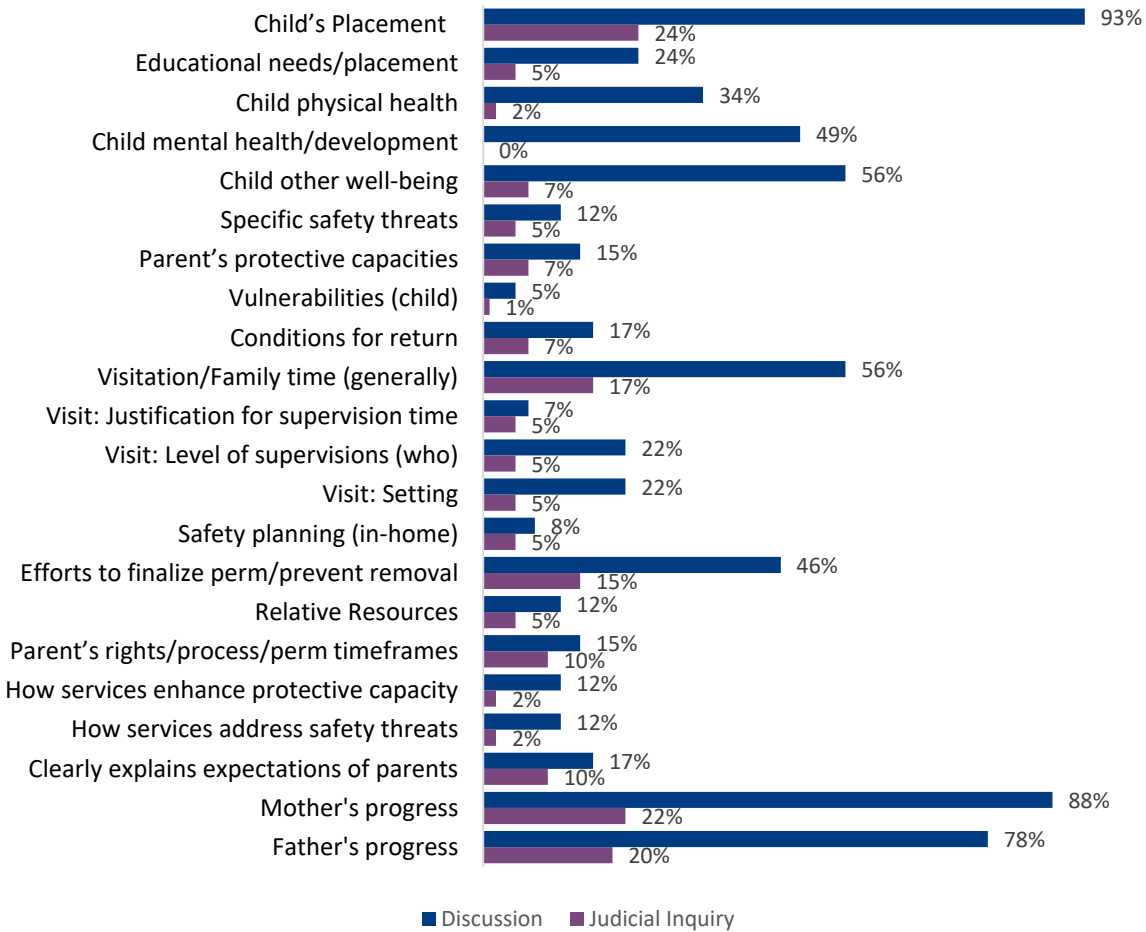
Figure 14. Review Judicial Engagement



Discussion

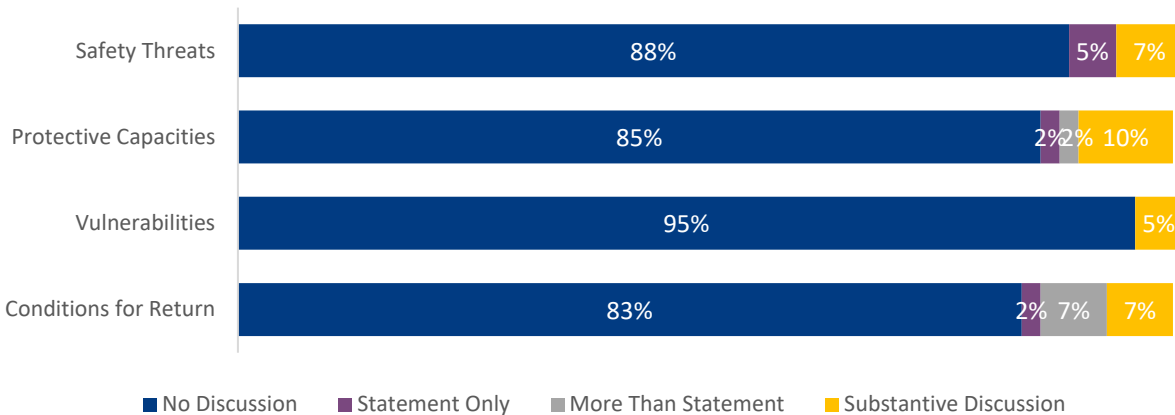
Figure 15 portrays the percent of hearings where there was any discussion of a topic and the percentage of hearings where the judge made an inquiry about the given topic. As noted in the graph, child placement and mother and father’s progress on the case plan were most likely to be discussed. However, the discussion of progress did not focus on how the case plan would reduce safety threats, how services were enhancing protective capacities and only rarely did it include clear expectations for the parents.

Figure 15. Discussion at Review Hearings



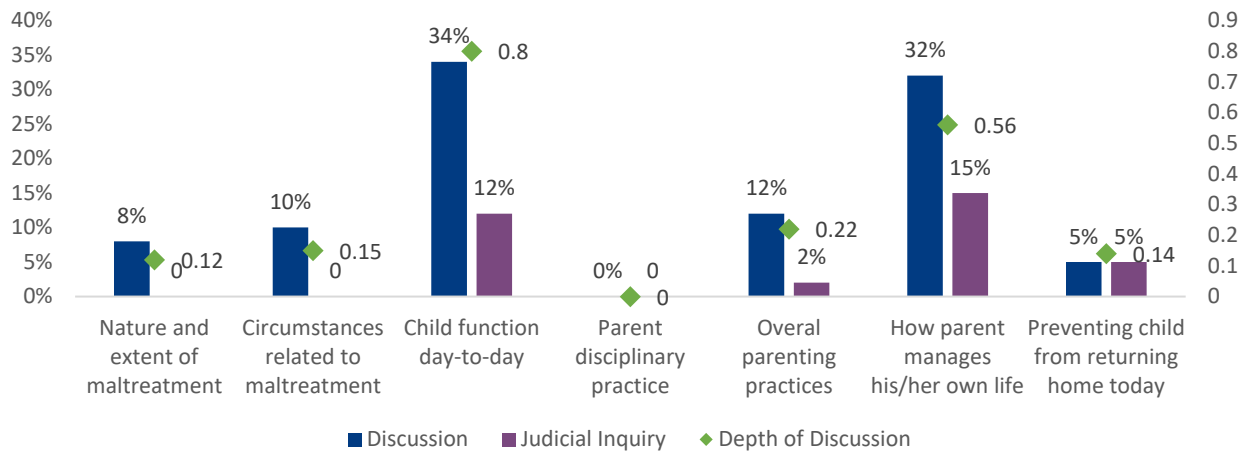
Safety concepts were pulled out to explore depth of conversation. Figure 16 illustrates depth of discussion. When discussed (rarely), there often was substantive discussion.

Figure 16. Depth of Discussion of Safety Items



In addition to the general discussion and safety items from the review, the coders also explored the percentage of hearings where there was discussion and judicial inquiry related to contextual information that could help inform safety decisions. Figure 17 presents the percentage of hearings where the item was discussed, the percentage of hearings where there was judicial inquiry related to the questions and the average depth of discussion on the green diamond. Higher numbers indicate that when the item was discussed, it was often discussed in more depth.

Figure 17. Discussion and Judicial Inquiry at Review



Findings on the Record

In 22% of review hearings the judge made verbal reasonable efforts findings (n=9). When a finding was made, 67% had detail about the finding and none of them referenced a safety threat.

Safety Analysis

Only 10% of reviews had evidence of any safety analysis discussed in the hearing.

Case File Review

The primary intent of the case file review was to identify what types of information the judge (and other stakeholders) receive prior to the hearings, specifically regarding safety analysis. It is important to note that case file reviews were limited to the information that was provided to the court and documented in the case management system. As such, information such as case plans were not included in the documentation. Further, as cases were selected that opened in 2020, not all cases had made it to review, which limited the number of cases to explore and whether and what types of information were provided.

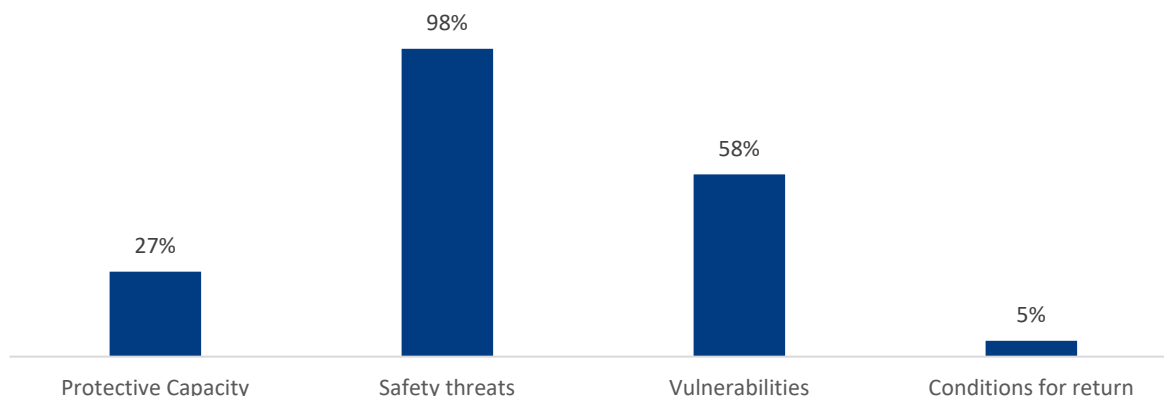
Shelter Care Documentation

The case file review first explored the type of information provided in documentation that came into the court prior to the Shelter Care hearing. This typically only included a dependency petition. Coders reviewed this information to determine the extent of safety decision-making related

information that was provided. Coders looked for basic safety information related to safety threats, protective capacities, vulnerabilities of the child, and conditions for return.

Coders reviewed the American Bar Association’s publication *Child Safety: A Guide for Judges and Attorneys* (Safety Guide) for training on these constructs and the types of information that would fit into each category and then coded the case documents that the court would have received prior to each hearing to see what information they contained. In addition, coders explored whether the document included a safety analysis. According to the Safety Guide, “whether a child is safe depends upon a *threat of danger*, the child’s *vulnerability*, and a family’s *protective capacity*.” In determining whether there was a safety analysis, the coders explored whether the information provided included information about threats in relation to vulnerabilities and protective capacities. It was soon discovered that documents rarely discussed protective capacity, so credit was given to the site if they discussed safety threats in relation to child vulnerabilities. In 60% of the documents reviewed prior to the Shelter Care hearing, there was some evidence of a safety analysis. As noted in Figure 18, nearly all the documents included safety threats, most included vulnerabilities of the child, but few included protective capacities. Only 5% of documents included conditions for return.

Figure 18. Percentage of Pre-Shelter Care Documents That Included Safety Components

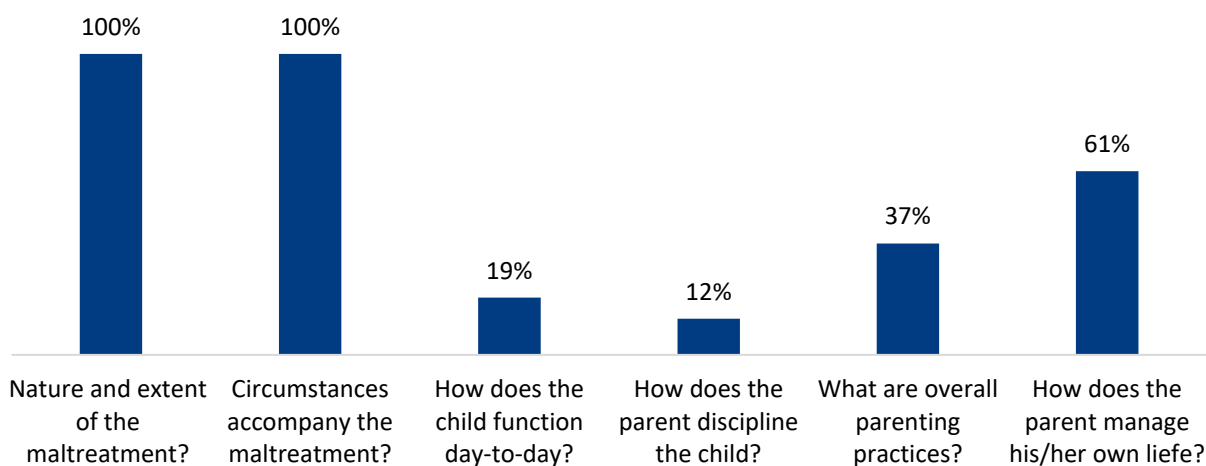


In addition, coders explored whether there was information about 6 key questions that judges are encouraged to ask to gain more contextual information about the safety of the child. These include:

1. What is the nature and extent of the maltreatment?
2. What are the circumstances that accompany the maltreatment?
3. How does the child function day-to-day?
4. How does the parent discipline the child?
5. What are overall parenting practices?
6. How does the parent manage his/her own life?

Figure 19 illustrates how often this information as provided in these documents.

Figure 19. Percentage of Pre-Shelter Care Documents That Included Contextual Safety Information

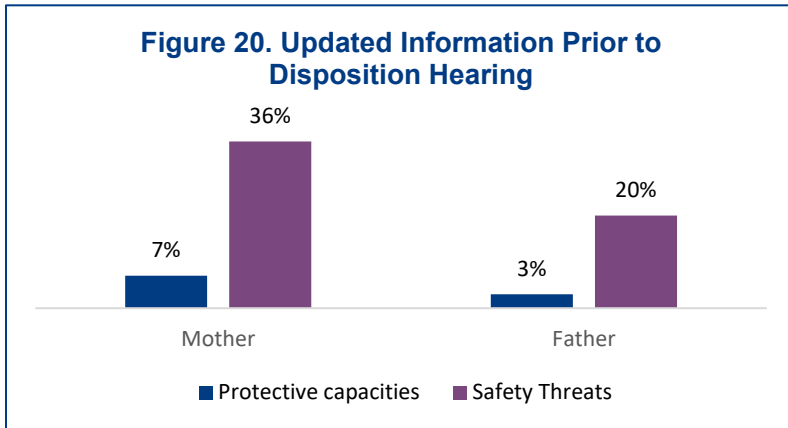


The review of documents also included whether there was a reason why supervision was required for any family time/visitation. At the Shelter Care hearing, specific information on the level of supervision for mother’s visits was missing in 34% of cases and father’s visits was missing in 46% of cases. When information was provided, visits were ordered to be supervised or monitored (the vast majority supervised) in 88% of cases for the mother and 96% of cases for the father. Only 6% of documents included reason why family time was supervised for the mother and only 9% of documents included a reason why family time was supervised for the father. Consider this in the context of court observation findings. Justification for supervision was only discussed in 25% of hearings. This indicates that the majority of hearings there was not an indication of why supervision was necessary.

In addition a reasonable efforts finding was found in the Shelter Care order in 90% of cases reviewed. The finding included detail in 36% of cases, 49% there was a reference to detail in the report/documentation provided.

Disposition Documents

Coders reviewed documents that were presented to the court prior to the disposition hearing. These documents included court reports with case plan summaries. No actual case plans were found for parents in these files so findings should be interpreted with caution. The primary question at disposition was is there *updated* information about families related to safety threat, protective capacity, and justification for supervision.

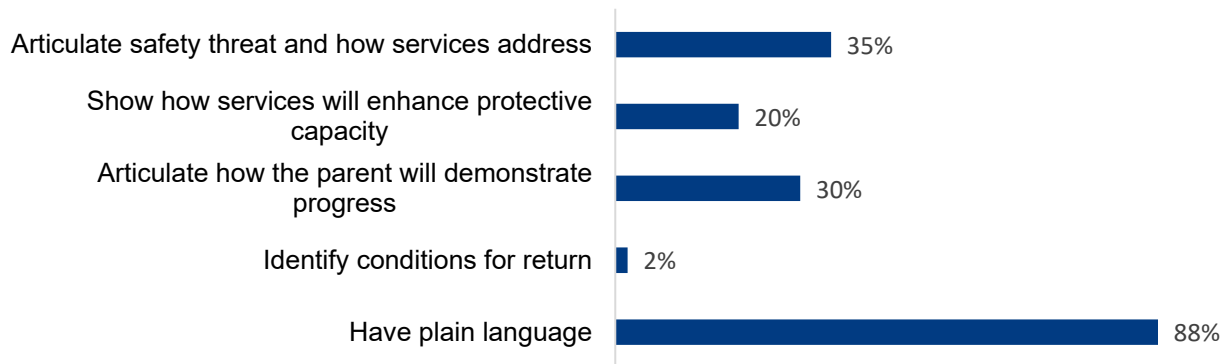


As noted in Figure 20, there was rarely updated information about protective capacities or safety threats. When data were available regarding level of supervision for parent visits, it was supervised or monitored for mothers in 96% of cases and for fathers in 97% of cases. The family time plan on included justification for supervision in 12% of cases for

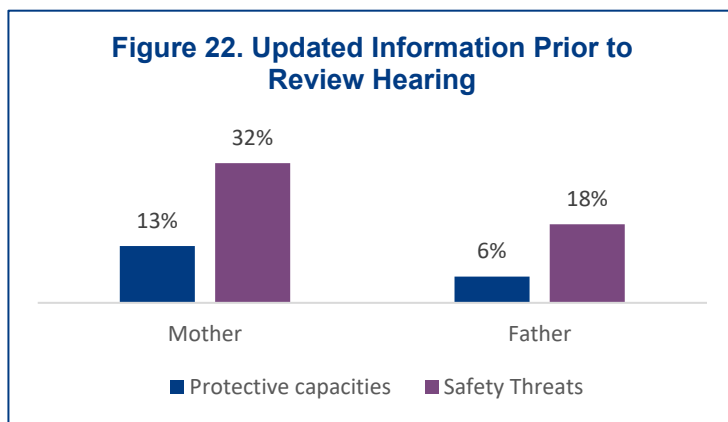
the mother and 10% of cases for the father. The language around visitation had been updated in 40% of cases.

Documentation prior to the Disposition Hearing included a review of the case plan summary provided to the court to determine how often it articulated the safety threat and how the services would reduce the threat, show how services would enhance protective capacity, articulate how the parent will demonstrate progress, and identify conditions for return. Figure 21 illustrates how often these were noted in the documents. Plain language was coded on a scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 2 (very easy to understand). Plain language averaged 1.25, indicating it mostly contained moderately plain language for parents.

Figure 21. Safety Information in Case Plan Documents Prior to Disposition



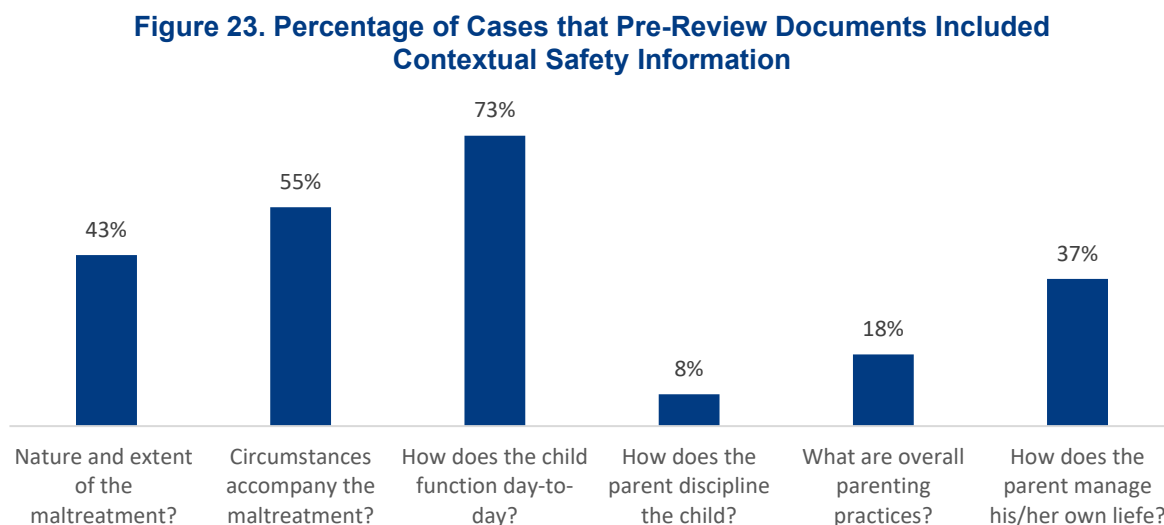
Case files were also explored prior to the first review hearing. Again, the intent was to determine whether there was *updated* information and safety analysis as this should be an ongoing conversation with sites. As noted in Figure 22, there was rarely updates about safety threats or



protective capacities for either parent in the documentation. In addition, documentation only included information about whether conditions for return had been met in 7% of cases. When the information specified a visitation plan it was supervised or monitored in 97% of cases for mothers and 96% of cases for fathers. The family time plan included justification for supervision (when applicable) for 11%

of cases for mother and 10% of cases for father. The visitaiton had been updated since the last report in 38% of cases.

The coders also explored whether there was information about the contextual safety data that judges may use in their safety analysis. Figure 23 illustrates how often this information is observed. Coders also examined how often the reports to the court included a safety analysis, comparing threats to vulnerabilities. This occurred in 33% of cases reviewed prior to the review.



Matched Case File Review and Court Observation

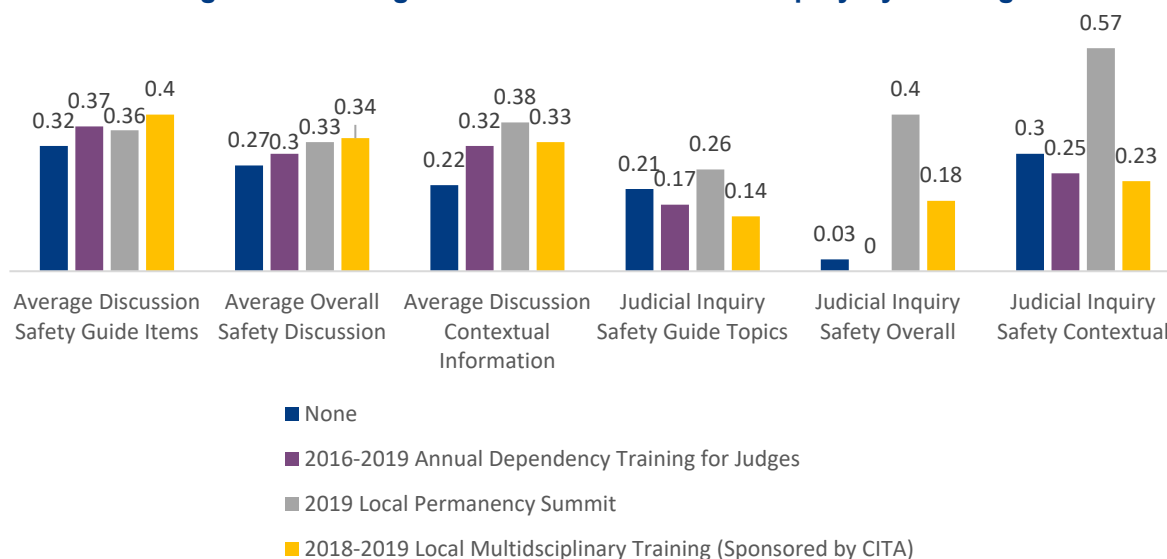
Case file review and court observation data were matched so that exploration could occur of how often safety analysis occurred for cases. Safety analysis was documented as a yes/no variable for both the case file review and the court observation. For the Shelter Care hearing, 20% of Shelter Care hearings and 60% of documents reviewed prior to the Shelter Care included some evidence of a safety analysis (only safety threats and vulnerabilities). When taken taken together 70% of Shelter Care hearings had some indication that a safety analysis had been conducted

either via documentation prior to the hearing or discussion within the hearing. Just under a third of cases that had both a review hearing and review documentation showed evidence of a safety analysis.

Effects of Training on Discussion and Judicial Inquiry

Information was provided to the evaluation team that included which judges had attended prior trainings. Prior training included 2016, 2018, and 2019 Annual Dependency Training for Judges, the 2019 Local Permanency Summit, and the 2018-2019 Local Multidisciplinary Safety Guide Training (sponsored by CITA). Discussion in the hearings was averaged by specific safety categories. These included the safety guide specific topics (safety threats, vulnerabilities, protective capacities), all safety topics (specific topics plus justification for visitation supervision, preventing the child from returning home today, safety plan discussion and review discussions of progress as it relates to safety decision-making), and the contextual information on safety (e.g., nature and extent of maltreatment, circumstances surrounding maltreatment, etc.). An “average” discussion was calculated for each set of these items as well as an average of whether the judge asked questions about these topics. The results are presented in Figure 24.

Figure 24. Average Discussion and Judicial Inquiry By Training



There was also no relationship between the training the judge had received and whether the hearing or the case file review documents included a safety analysis. This is not a perfect way to explore training impacts on practice, but it does allow for an opportunity to see variations in practice related to training events.

Administrative Data

Administrative data was provided to determine how often cases have in-home safety plans in place and how often those cases result in the child being removed from the home. DCYF provided site level and state level data on the % of cases where a removal occurred within 6 months and the percentage of cases where removal occurred within 12 months of an in-home safety plan.

For the evaluation counties (7 counties identified above), 5% of cases with an in-home safety plan resulted in removal from the home within 6 months of intake, and 7% of cases resulted in removal within 12 months of intake. This is only slightly higher than the state level data which indicated that 4% of cases are removed from the home within 6 months of intake when there is an in-home safety plan in places and 6% of cases are removed from the home within 12 months of intake.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from this study are not without limitations. The biggest limitation is in the response rate of the majority of the data collection methods. The stakeholder survey was sent to stakeholders all over the state of Washington but only received 268 response, a fairly low response rate. This means it cannot be fully generalized to the entire state. The parent survey was also limited in responses, with only 6 responses. As such, these should be considered in a qualitative way as an indication of additional context. Case file review data included the full anticipated sample, but was already small due to the resource intensive nature of a file review process. Court observation was also smaller than anticipated because there were some challenges with gathering the audio recordings for all the case files and because some cases did not reach a review hearing. However, case selected were randomly selected and should be at least somewhat representative of the jurisdiction at large. As such, the findings present a good starting point for thinking about what is known about safety decision-making, both understanding and practice. It is also important to consider that researchers were trying to extrapolate from a listing of judges and what trainings they had to examine whether this impacted practice. There are more robust and resource intensive ways of exploring this. Again, it is meant to be a starting point, a baseline from which some decisions can be made and can be used for future comparisons. Findings should also be considered in their context. For example, the majority of Shelter Care hearings were waived or agreed to, and the culture of the court in these cases was to not discuss safety issues unless something was contested. That is all to say that the findings and implications thereof should be considered in light of the limitations of the research and in consideration of what they can (and cannot) tell. Considerations for overarching themes and ideas that have emerged from the data are reported below, but are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all findings.

Safety Concepts. A primary purpose of the study was to explore stakeholder's understanding of safety decision-making concepts as well as explore current practice related to these concepts. Four safety concepts were examined across multiple data sets. These included safety threats, protective capacities, vulnerabilities, and conditions for return. The concepts were explored in the stakeholder survey, parent survey, court observation, and case file review. Some key observations for further consideration include:

- Stakeholders reported they were least likely to hear vulnerability and protective capacity language in hearings. Stakeholders also indicated they were more likely to hear safety threats and conditions for return language in hearings.
- Court observation revealed that vulnerabilities, protective capacities, and conditions for return are rarely discussed at hearings. Case file review supported this.
- Despite stakeholders saying they were more likely to hear about safety threats, parents (albeit a tiny sample) reported a lack of understanding of the concept of “safety threats”. The small sample of parents also reported a lack of understanding of “what needs to happen to have my child returned to me.”
 - Considerations: *How might parent’s perceptions be aligned with those of the stakeholders? Can discussion of protective capacities (when those capacities are present) be done in court to as a means of positively engaging parents? Can safety discussions and conditions for return discussion be held in a way to facilitate parent’s understanding? Why are there discrepancies between stakeholder perception (that conditions for return are often discussed in court) and court observation or case file review findings?*

Safety Analysis. Safety analysis was defined as exploring safety threats in relation to child vulnerabilities and parent protective capacities. Within the study it was explored both in terms of discussion in court observation and information presented within the case file review. Key findings included:

- Court observation data revealed that safety analysis is rarely occurring in court.
- The majority of petitions included a safety analysis (if only considering safety threats and vulnerabilities). Protective capacities were almost never explored as part of a safety analysis, at least not in an overt way. There is little evidence in court observation or case file review that there is an *ongoing* safety analysis for families.
 - Considerations: *How might safety analyses be improved? Should there be discussion at every hearing regarding how safety threats, vulnerabilities, and protective capacities may have changed over time?*

Contextual Safety Information. Contextual safety information was defined as information that could contribute to a better understanding of safety for the family. It included six questions (or topical areas) about nature and extent of maltreatment, circumstances leading up to the maltreatment, how child functions day to day, how parent disciplines the child, overall parenting practices, and how parents manage their own lives. Findings from the study indicate:

- Nature and extent of maltreatment and circumstances leading to maltreatment are commonly discussed in documents provided to the court, especially the dependency petition. How the child functions day to day is more likely to be reported later in the case. None of these topics are commonly discussed in court.
 - Considerations: *Should there be more discussion of this information in court hearings? Should there be more updated information about these topical areas in court reports prior to hearings? How can this be achieved? How might this information be related to ongoing safety analysis discussions?*

Case Plan Progress. Several items explored case plan progress. Case file review explored whether the case plan items were tied to specific safety threats, whether the plan discussed how parents would enhance protective capacities, and how progress would be measured. Court observation identified whether there was discussion of how services address safety threats, how services enhance protective capacities, and whether there was a clear expectation of parents articulated. The stakeholder survey asked all parties to define case plan progress. Findings revealed:

- Discussion of any of these items in documents presented to the court prior to the disposition hearing was not terribly common, nor was there much discussion of these items in review hearings.
- The stakeholder survey revealed that judges were challenged to provide definitions of case plan progress as it relates to safety (62% of definitions lacked understanding). State attorneys were similarly challenged, as were parent attorneys, child attorneys and guardians ad litem. All of them found it difficult to provide a full definition of case plan progress from a safety framework.
 - Considerations: *How can stakeholders better understand case planning and case plan progress from a safety framework? If stakeholders struggle to define it, how will parents understand? How can the agency and courts better explain to parents how to demonstrate progress?*

Visitation. Visitation was explored from a safety decision-making perspective. In particular, it was explored whether there was information regarding the justification for supervised visitation. That is, what is the safety threat that requires supervision. Findings included:

- Visitation was not always clearly defined in the case file review documentation. In particular, it was not always clear what the frequency or duration of visits were, whether (and to what extent) it was supervised, and who could supervise. When it was clearly articulated, nearly all visitation was supervised. The justification for supervision based on a safety threat was rarely articulated, although some sites clearly had a space to document this in their report to the court.
 - Considerations: *How can discussion of the safety threats that justify supervision be better incorporated into discussion at hearings? What do stakeholders need to know to ensure parents can visit in the least restrictive manner with their children?*

Safety Plan. The study explored safety planning in two ways. Administrative data was used to determine how often in-home safety planning is effective and court observation data was used to explore how often there is discussion of safety planning.

- Administrative data revealed that in-home safety plans rarely result in removal from the home. Discussions of safety planning were not common in court.
 - Considerations: *Are there opportunities to enhance the use of safety planning? Can in-home safety planning be implemented at other points in the case? How can discussion of in-home safety planning be enhanced so that there can be considerations for a child to be returned safely?*

Implications for Training

- Consider ways to enhance training for all stakeholders, including opportunities for multidisciplinary trainings. Forty-four (44%) percent of stakeholders had received training and 56% had not – most judges and agency/supervisors had been to training; BUT most attorneys had not and more than half of caseworkers had not.
- Seek opportunities to engage parents on safety considerations/safety language. Parent perceptions (although only a few) did not demonstrate understanding of these concepts.
- Identify opportunities to enhance training around the most confusing concepts for professionals, including case planning from a safety framework and conditions for return.
- Individuals who were able to attend some type of safety training were able to demonstrate more “higher level understanding” in their definitions of safety concepts when compared to individuals who had not been to trainings. Individuals who went to safety guide training were able to generate the most higher level understanding definitions. While there did seem to be a difference in understanding between trained versus untrained persons, no differences in practice emerged. There could be many reasons for this (e.g., not enough hearings where contested shelter care). However, it is important to consider if there are challenges implementing the concepts learned from training into practice. If concepts in training are not fully translating to behavior change, then how can trainings be enhanced to ensure practice aligns with understanding?

Appendix A: Court Observation Instrument

Hearing Date / / Case # Coder Judge County

Start time: End time: Recess time: mins. Continued? Y N

Parties Present		Parent/Youth Engagement --Did the judge...	N/A	N/A	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Mother	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother Atty	Explain the hearing purpose/process? <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	
<input type="checkbox"/> Father	<input type="checkbox"/> Father Atty	Speak directly to the person? <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	
<input type="checkbox"/> Child(ren)	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Atty	Address the person by name? <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	
<input type="checkbox"/> Caseworker	<input type="checkbox"/> Relative	Ask if they have questions? <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> Y
<input type="checkbox"/> AG/DA	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter	Identify the next steps? <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	
<input type="checkbox"/> CASA	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Rep.	Ask if person understands next steps? <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> Y
<input type="checkbox"/> GAL	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Mentor	Give person opportunity to be heard? <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> Y

Foster Parent Other

Other # Other 1 2 3 4

What type of hearing is it? SC Review

Waive SC Y N

ALL HEARINGS	Disc	Jl	Discussion	Judicial Inquiry
Child's Placement	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Nature & extent of the maltx?	0 1 2 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Educational needs/placement	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Circumstances related the maltx?	0 1 2 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Child physical health	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Child function day-to-day?	0 1 2 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Child mental health/development	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Parent discipline the child?	0 1 2 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Child other well-being	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Overall parenting practices?	0 1 2 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Specific safety threats	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Parent manage his/her own life?	0 1 2 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Parent's protective capacities	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Preventing returning home today?	0 1 2 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Vulnerabilities (child)	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N		
Conditions for return	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Analysis of information re: safety threat and removal?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Visitation/Family time (generally)	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N		
Visit: Justification for supervision time	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Reasonable Efforts Finding	
Visit: Level of supervisions (who)	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Reasonable efforts finding	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Visit: Setting	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<input type="checkbox"/> RE Made <input type="checkbox"/> RE Not Made <input type="checkbox"/> RE Not Required	
Safety planning (in-home)	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Detailed finding?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Efforts to finalize perm/prevent removal	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Finding includes reference to safety?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Relative Resources	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N		
Parent's rights/process/perm timeframes	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Child returned home at this hearing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Rev: How services enhance prot capacity	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	ATTORNEY PRACTICE	M_Atty F_Atty C_Atty
Rev: How services address safety threats	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Advocates re: evidence of safety threat	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Rev: Clearly explains expectations of parent	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Protective capacities enhanced	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Rev: Mother's progress	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Conditions for return met	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Rev: Father's progress	0 1 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Advocates enhanced visits	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Notes (include any conversation on family time & examples of safety discussion that include indication of safety analysis being made)

Appendix B: Washington Safety Decision-Making CASE FILE REVIEW INSTRUMENT

CODER: _____ DATE CASE CODED: ___/___/___ CASE NO: _____
JUDGE/COMMISSIONER: _____ County: _____

PRIMARY CHILD (Child who is the focus of the particular file):

Date of Birth: ___/___/___ Gender: Male Female ICWA Case? Yes No

Ethnicity: White African American Hispanic Native American Asian/Pacific Islander
 Other Unknown/Unreported

Petition Allegations

Mo Fa Other
 Physical Abuse
 Neglect
 Sexual Abuse/Exploitation
 Emotional Abuse
 Abandonment
 Other _____

Presenting Problems

Mo Fa Other
 Domestic Violence
 Substance abuse
 Mental Health
 Incarceration
 Homelessness
 Other _____
 Other _____

Indication that an in-home safety plan was in place prior to removal? Yes No

Was the child removed from the home? Yes No Removal Date: ___/___/___ UD

Removed from Mother Father Other UD Date Returned Home ___/___/___ Returned to Mother Father Other

Petition Filing Date: ___/___/___

Point in Case (Date)	Check off all parties present	Visitation	Placement
Shelter Care ___/___/___ Child returned at hearing? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Mother Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Father Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Child Advocate <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> Caseworker <input type="checkbox"/> State Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Representative	MO: ___ hrs/ ___/wk <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> U Total ___ hrs/wk Sup by: <input type="checkbox"/> R <input type="checkbox"/> FP <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> AD <input type="checkbox"/> UD FA: ___ hrs/ ___/wk <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> U Total ___ hrs/wk Sup by: <input type="checkbox"/> R <input type="checkbox"/> FP <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> AD <input type="checkbox"/> UD	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Kin <input type="checkbox"/> FC <input type="checkbox"/> Group home <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Shelter Care Documentation Info in affidavit or petition includes: Protective capacity 0 1 2 Safety threats 0 1 2 Vulnerabilities 0 1 2 Conditions for return 0 1 2 Safety/risk analysis? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Documentation Includes: 1. Nature and extent of the maltreatment? 0 1 2 2. Circumstances accompany the maltreatment? 0 1 2 3. How does the child function day-to-day? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N 4. How does the parent discipline the child? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N 5. What are overall parenting practices? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N 6. How does the parent manage his/her own life? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Does family time plan include safety reasons why supervision is required? (or court order) Mother: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Father: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> RE Made <input type="checkbox"/> RE Not Made <input type="checkbox"/> Imminent risk <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot be protected in home <input type="checkbox"/> Services have not remedied <input type="checkbox"/> Detail <input type="checkbox"/> per rpt
Disposition Hearing ___/___/___ Mo signs case plan <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> UK Fa signs case plan <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> UK	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Mother Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Father Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Child Advocate <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> Caseworker <input type="checkbox"/> State Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Representative	MO: ___ hrs/ ___/wk <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> U Total ___ hrs/wk Sup by: <input type="checkbox"/> R <input type="checkbox"/> FP <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> AD <input type="checkbox"/> UD FA: ___ hrs/ ___/wk <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> U Total ___ hrs/wk Sup by: <input type="checkbox"/> R <input type="checkbox"/> FP <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> AD <input type="checkbox"/> UD	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Kin <input type="checkbox"/> FC <input type="checkbox"/> Group home <input type="checkbox"/> Other

Point in Case (Date)	Check off all parties present	Visitation	Placement
<p>Disposition Documentation Report to court includes current/updated protective capacities and safety threats of parents Mother: ST: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Updates PC: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Updates Father: ST: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Updates PC: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Updates</p>	<p>Does the case plan ... Clearly articulate the safety threat & how the service addresses the threat 0 1 2 Show how services will enhance protective capacity 0 1 2 Articulate how the parent will demonstrate the progress/change in behavior 0 1 2 Identify conditions for return? 0 1 2 Have plain language 0 1 2 (0=No, 1=Some, 2=Mostly/All)</p>	<p>Does family time plan include safety reasons why supervision is required Mother: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Father: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Is the language updated from the last report? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> RE Made <input type="checkbox"/> RE Not Made <input type="checkbox"/> Imminent risk <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot be protected in home <input type="checkbox"/> Services have not remedied <input type="checkbox"/> Detail <input type="checkbox"/> per rpt</p>
<p>1st Judicial Review Hearing ___/___/___ Mo Compliance: <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> F Fa Compliance: <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> F (0=None, M=Minimal, S=Some, F=Full)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Mother Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Father Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/> Child Advocate <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> Caseworker <input type="checkbox"/> State Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Representative</p>	<p>MO: ___ hrs/ ___/wk <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> U Total ___ hrs/wk Sup by: <input type="checkbox"/> R <input type="checkbox"/> FP <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> AD <input type="checkbox"/> UD FA: ___ hrs/ ___/wk <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> U Total ___ hrs/wk Sup by: <input type="checkbox"/> R <input type="checkbox"/> FP <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> AD <input type="checkbox"/> UD</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Kin <input type="checkbox"/> FC <input type="checkbox"/> Group home <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>

Point in Case (Date)	Check off all parties present	Visitation	Placement
Review Documents Report to court includes assessment of: current/updated protective capacities (PC)and safety threats (ST)of parents Mother: ST: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Updates PC: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Updates Father: ST: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Updates PC: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Updates Identify whether the conditions for return have been met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Evidence to support? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Documentation Includes 1. Nature and extent of the maltreatment? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N 2.Circumstances accompany the maltreatment? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Documentation Includes (Updated) 3.How does the child function day-to-day? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N 4.How does the parent discipline the child? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N 5.What are overall parenting practices? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N 6.How does the parent manage his/her own life? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Evidence of safety/risk analysis? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Does family time plan include safety reasons why supervision is required Mother: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Father: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Is the language updated from the last report? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> RE Made <input type="checkbox"/> RE Not Made <input type="checkbox"/> Imminent risk <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot be protected in home <input type="checkbox"/> Services have not remedied <input type="checkbox"/> Detail <input type="checkbox"/> per rpt

Case Closed?: Yes No

Date Case Closed: ___/___/___

Reason: Reunification Mother Father Adoption [Check if Kinship Adoption] Guardianship
 Dismissal of petition (**at/pre adjudication**) Placed with Relative Child was emancipated/Child turned 18

Other: _____ Total number of placements _____

Qualitative Field Notes

(Focus on safety documentation in the case file review; indications of using information in an analysis of safety threats related to removal, visitation, services, and return home)

Appendix C: Stakeholder Survey

What is your role in child welfare cases?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Judge/judicial officer | State attorney |
| Parent attorney | Child attorney |
| Caseworker | Guardian ad litem |
| Court Appointed Special Advocate | Tribal attorney |

In which county do you primarily work? _____

Have you ever been to a safety decision-making training? Yes No

If yes,

Which of the following have you attended? (Check all that apply)

- 2016 Annual Dependency Training for Judicial Officers 2018 Annual Dependency Training for Judicial Officers
- 2019 Annual Dependency Training for Judicial Officers 2020 Annual Dependency Training for Judicial Officers
- 2019 Local Permanency Summit
- 2018 – 2019 Local Multidisciplinary Safety Training sponsored by CITA/Rob Wyman

What have you done differently (if anything) to improve safety decision-making in your practice since the training?

For all Participants (regardless of whether they have had training)

This survey is about current practice regarding Safety Decision-Making in Washington. Consider practice in the court you work in when responding

How frequently is this **specific** language used in discussions of safety in the courts?

	Never/ Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always/ Almost Always
Parental protective capacities	1	2	3	4	5
Safety threats	1	2	3	4	5
Vulnerabilities	1	2	3	4	5
Conditions for return	1	2	3	4	5

How often does discussion of the following occur in court?

	Never/ Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always/ Almost Always
Discussion of conditions for return	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion of what is preventing the child from returning home today	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion of safety reasons why family time is supervised	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion in disposition or review hearings includes clear expectations of parents	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion in disposition or review hearings of how services match safety threats	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion in disposition or review hearings of how services enhance protective capacities	1	2	3	4	5

Thinking about safety decision-making in child welfare cases, how would you define the following terms:

Parental protective capacities: _____

Vulnerabilities: _____

Safety threats: _____

Conditions for return: _____

Case plan progress: _____

For Parent Attorneys & Social Workers Only

What percentage of parents that you represent fully understand their case plan requirements?

What percentage of parents that you represent do you think fully understand how to demonstrate progress on their case plan?

What percentage of parents that you represent do you think understand what they need to do to achieve conditions for return?

What percentage of cases where you represent a parent is it clear to you what parents need to do to satisfy conditions for return?

Appendix D: Parent Survey

We are interested in your opinion of how your hearing went today. This information will only be used to help improve the court system and will not affect your case in any way. This survey is anonymous, meaning that no one will know how you answered these questions. Your participation in this survey is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate at any time.

What month and year did your case begin? ___month___year

What is your role on the case? _____Mother _____Father _____Guardian/Custodian

What is the name of the judge for your case? _____

Please show your agreement with each statement, using the following scale.

1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

The judge treated me with respect.....	1	2	3	4	5
The judge listened to me.....	1	2	3	4	5
I had a chance to say everything I wanted to say.....	1	2	3	4	5
I helped make the decisions for my case.....	1	2	3	4	5
I understood what happened in the hearing today.....	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what I am supposed to do next.....	1	2	3	4	5
I agree with the decisions made in the hearing today...	1	2	3	4	5
I helped develop the case plan for my case.....	1	2	3	4	5
The case plan will be helpful to my family	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what I need to do to demonstrate progress on my case plan	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what needs to happen to have my child(ren) returned to my care.....	1	2	3	4	5
If I do everything on my case plan, I will get my kids back	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what the court says are safety threats to my child	1	2	3	4	5
Conditions for return have been explained to me	1	2	3	4	5

The child welfare agency and courts use a lot of words and phrases specific to the case process. How well do you understand the following terms?

1= Do not understand 2=Understand a little 3= Some understanding 4=Good understanding 5=Great understanding

Conditions for return	1	2	3	4	5
Protective capacity	1	2	3	4	5
Safety threats	1	2	3	4	5
Vulnerabilities	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your time!