

Signs of Safety

6 Practice Elements

- 1. Understand the position of each family member.** Seek to identify and understand the values, beliefs and meaning family members perceive in their stories. This assists the worker to respond to the uniqueness of each case and to move forward plans the family will enact.
- 2. Find exceptions of the maltreatment/negative behavior.** Search for exceptions to problems. This creates hope for workers and families by proving that the problem does not always exist. Exceptions may also indicate solutions that have worked in the past. Where no exceptions exist, the worker may be alerted to a more serious problem.
- 3. Discover family strengths and resources.** Identify and highlight positive aspects of the family. This prevents the problems from overwhelming and discouraging everyone involved.
- 4. Focus on goals.** Elicit the family's goals to improve the safety of the child and their life in general. Compare these with the agency's own goals. Use the family's ideas wherever possible. Where the family is unable to suggest any constructive goals, danger to the child is probably increased.
- 5. Scale safety and progress.** Identify with the family members' sense of safety and progress throughout the case. This allows clear comparisons with workers' judgements.
- 6. Assess willingness, confidence and capacity.** Determine the family's willingness and ability to carry out plans before trying to implement them.