Initial Assessment Review Tool  
Case Review Guidelines

Case Name / eWiSACWIS Case No. : Record the case name and case number, which can be found in the upper right hand corner of the Initial Assessment.

County: Record the name of the county where the review occurred.

Name – IA Worker: Record the name of the Initial Assessment worker. This can be found on the last page of the Initial Assessment above the line labeled “Name – Worker.”

Name – IA Supervisor: Record the name of the Initial Assessment supervisor. This can be found on the last page of the Initial Assessment above the line labeled Name – Supervisor.

Date of Screened-In Report: This is the date the Access report was entered into the system. This date can be found on the Initial Assessment in the upper left corner labeled “Referral Date.”

Name of Reviewer: Enter your name here.

Date of Review: Enter the date of the review.

**A. Present Danger Assessment (Wisconsin Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards, Section 2, II.A. – II.C, pg. 6-7)**

Present Danger Threats refer to immediate, significant, and clearly observable family conditions actively occurring or “in process” of occurring at the point of contact with a family and will likely result in severe harm to a child. Definitions and examples of present danger threats can be found in the Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards issued May 2, 2006, pages 21 through 24.

This section requires the reviewer to determine if the initial assessment worker appropriately identified present danger and if present danger was identified, whether appropriate actions were taken to ensure safety.

**A.1.Present danger identification by the Initial Assessment Worker**

The purpose of the first question is to determine if the worker identified present danger and if the identification was correct based on the information provided in the assessment.

If the reviewer agrees with the worker’s assessment of present danger or if the reviewer agrees with the worker’s assessment that present danger was not a factor, then this section should be rated a “4.” If the worker identified a present danger threat and the reviewer disagrees with the specific present danger threat identified, this section should be rated a “3.”

If the reviewer cannot determine whether present danger exists due to a lack of information, this section should be rated a “2.” If the worker did not identify present danger and the reviewer determined that one or more present danger threats existed, this should be rated a “1.” Documentation of the rationale for the reviewer’s decision is required in the comment section for any ratings of “1” or “2.”

1. **2. If present danger was identified by the Initial Assessment Worker, were immediate and sufficient  
    measures taken**

The purpose of the second section is to determine if correct actions were taken to ensure safety once present danger was identified. A protective plan must include immediate actions to control present danger threats while more information is being gathered through the course of the initial assessment / investigation. The worker must:

* inform the parents / caregivers why the child is determined to be unsafe (present danger threats),
* identify with the parents / caregivers which protective plan options are available and acceptable,
* inform the parents / caregivers of the role of CPS to ensure the child is protected,
* attempt to use resources within the family network to develop the protective plan,
* confirm there is agreement by all participants,
* implement the plan before CPS leaves the family / situation, and
* consult with a supervisor or her / his designee regarding the protective plan by the next working day.

In cases where resources within the family network are not available, accessible, or appropriate, CPS must use formal resources to develop the protective plan. It is typical in these situations to have a combination of informal and formal resources in place. A protective plan involving emergency removal must be used when present danger threats exist and family network or formal resources are not available or accessible or parents / caregivers are unable / unwilling to permit CPS to implement a protective plan.

If documentation clearly indicates the actions taken by the worker to create and implement a protective plan OR there was no present danger, then this section should be rated a “4.” If the assessment does not include a clear plan of action to ensure safety, then this section should be rated a “1.” If the worker did not identify present danger, this section should be rated “Not applicable.”

**B. INFORMATION GATHERING AND ANALYSIS (Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 2, Chapter 14, XIV.E, p. 50 and Appendix 3, pg. 93-98)**

1. **1. Maltreatment**

This section of the assessment should include a description of the maltreatment which occurred based on the information gathered by the worker from the family, collateral contacts, and from worker observations. Detailed information should be provided about the reported concerns and any concerns discovered during the assessment process. Supporting documentation should be provided for assessment conclusions including any maltreatment determinations and court interventions.

Information gathered should be specific to the family and family members and describe both the problems and strengths of the family and family members in terms of behaviors, perceptions, conditions, beliefs, etc. pertinent to safety and risk of maltreatment. If the reviewer determines there was a comprehensive description of the maltreatment, this section should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines most of the required information was documented and only minor details are missing, this section should be rated a “3.” If the reviewer determines that key information is missing that affects the validity of the safety decisions made during the assessment process, this section should be rated a “2.” If the reviewer determines that because of lack of information provided that safety could not be assessed, then this section should be rated a “1.” The reviewer is required to provide an explanation for the rating determination in the comment section.

**B. 2. Surrounding Circumstances**

This section of the assessment should include information about what was happening when the maltreatment occurred, such as:

* What were the immediate precursors to the maltreatment? Was the use of drugs or alcohol a contributing factor?
* Was the maltreatment incident an unusual circumstance or behavior, situation-related, or has it been occurring for a while?
* Has it been escalating, or have the behaviors or conditions stayed about the same or improved over time?
* What was the parent’s reaction after the maltreatment occurred? Did they regret what occurred or did they justify the behavior?
* Were the maltreatment and its results intentional or premeditated?
* How did the parent interact with or respond to the child following the maltreatment? Does the parent accept responsibility?
* Was the maltreatment justified as a cultural or religious practice to which the parent adheres? This section should address the parent’s reaction even if the finding is that there was no maltreatment.

If the reviewer determines a comprehensive description of the circumstances was provided in the assessment, then this section should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines minor details were missed, but most information was provided, then this should be rated a “3.”

If the reviewer determines key information was missed, then this section should be rated a “2.” And if the reviewer determines there was insufficient information assessed, this section should be rated a “1.” For ratings of 1 or 2, the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**B. 3. Child Functioning**

This section is concerned with how the child acts and includes physical capacity as well as vulnerability. Vulnerability should be considered based not just on age, size, cognitive development, and physical needs, but also emotional developmental and needs. The emphasis in this component is on general behaviors, emotions, and temperament rather than the child’s response to intervention. Effects of maltreatment on a child’s functioning should also be described. This includes emotional and behavioral effects as well as physical. The link between the maltreatment and the child’s functioning need not be verified by a physician or psychologist / psychiatrist to be documented, but the basis for the worker’s conclusions in this area must be documented. Some child functioning may be different than what one normally expects but can be understood as associated with a cultural norm, behavior or practice. If the culturally based functioning does not endanger the child or others, jeopardize development or cause the child to be generally rejected by others, it should be judged as acceptable and appropriate.

This section should include more than the child’s appearance at the time the worker interacted with the child or the identity of the child’s school and grade. The purpose of this section is to understand the child’s general behaviors, emotions, temperament, and vulnerability, as well as the child’s reaction to the alleged maltreatment.

If the reviewer determines there was a comprehensive description of the child’s general behaviors, emotions and temperament, vulnerability, and reaction to the alleged maltreatment provided in the assessment, then this section should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines minor details were missed, but most information was provided, then this should be rated a “3.”

If the reviewer determines key information was missed, then this section must be rated a “2.” If the reviewer determines there was insufficient information assessed, this section should be rated a “1.” For ratings of 1 or 2, the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**B. 4. Adult Functioning**

This section is concerned with how the adults in the family feel, think, and act on a daily basis in respect to life events and life management. This includes any information related to substance abuse or mental health, such as consideration of reality perception, coherence, rationality, self / emotional control, and any impairment associated with mental health or substance use; physical health, self-concept and esteem, self-care and self-preservation. It also includes areas such as communication, coping, stress management, impulse control, problem solving, judgment, decision making, independence, money, and home management, employment, education, social relationships, citizenship, community involvement and other basic life skills. Any criminal behavior in the community or home, including domestic violence, should be discussed here.

This section may also include the childhood and recent adult history of the adult being assessed, particularly as it may affect current functioning. Examples are:

* Is the adult from a stable, well-adjusted family or a product of an unstable / dysfunctional family?
* Is there evidence of life successes as a child or general life disappointment dating to childhood?
* Is there a history of behavioral / emotional dysfunction as a child / young adult?
* Was the adult's general childhood history nurturing and satisfying or unhappy and miserable?
* Are there indications that the adult is a product of an abusive or neglectful childhood or seriously deprived childhood?
* What is known about permanency and significant relationships in the adult’s history?

Perhaps most critical is a person’s current perceptions of and adjustment to his or her childhood history. Examples are:

* If there is a negative history, does the parent recognize this or deny it?
* Does the parent seem to be repeating the same negative behaviors of his / her own parents or do they see themselves as separate and able to behave differently?
* Is the parent “stuck” in this history or have they been able to come to terms with it and move on to build a positive life?
* Consider the individual’s cultural context as you describe adult childhood history.

If the reviewer determines there was a comprehensive description of the adult’s general behaviors, emotions, and temperament, including coping skills, stress management, impulse control, problem solving, and judgment taking into consideration childhood information and relevant information about any substance abuse and domestic violence in the assessment, then this section should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines minor details were missed, but most of the information was provided, then this should be rated a “3.”

If the reviewer determines key information was missed, then this section should be rated a “2.” If the reviewer determines there was insufficient information assessed, this section should be rated a “1.” For ratings of 1 or 2, the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**B. 5. Disciplinary Approaches**

This section is concerned with how discipline occurs in the household. The disciplinary methods include more than punishment. They include the parent’s / caretaker manner of teaching a child how to behave and guiding his or her behavior, as well as the actions a parent / caretaker takes to teach the child self-discipline. They should be described as well as an evaluation of the typical context in which it occurs, i.e. when, how, where and for what reasons and purpose discipline might occur or usually occurs. The disciplinary methods used with all of the children should be assessed, not just with the child reported as maltreated.

* Which of the child’s behaviors do the parents tolerate and which do they not tolerate?
* Does the parent use a variety of disciplinary approaches, suited to the child’s age and needs?
* How consistent is the parent in the use of discipline?
* To what extent does the parent demonstrate self-control when disciplining?
* To what extent is the parent aware of and responsive to the child’s need for boundaries? Does the parent avoid applying discipline? Does the parent view discipline as punishment only?
* Do disciplinary practices represent a cultural practice and does this endanger or harm the child?

If the reviewer determines there was a comprehensive description in the assessment of disciplinary practices including how each child in the home is disciplined; the parent’s view of discipline; as well as when, how, where and for what reasons and purpose discipline might occur or usually occurs, then this section should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines minor details were missed, but most of the information was provided, then this should be rated a “3.”

If the reviewer determines key information was missed, this section should be rated a “2.” If the reviewer determines there was insufficient information assessed, this section should be rated a “1.” For ratings of “1” or “2,” the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**B. 6. Parenting Practices**

This section explores the general nature and approach to parenting and includes matters associated with the parent’s perception of their children, reasons for being a parent, feelings about being a parent, knowledge and general skill, basic care, nurturance, decision making about parenting, parenting style, history of parental behavior, and expectations for the child. Parenting should be assessed for all of the children, not just the child reported as maltreated.

* Are expectations for the child appropriate for the child’s age, capacities and development?
* Do parents see parenting as a chore or as a positive part of their lives?
* How does the parent express affection for the child and under what circumstances?
* Does the parent consistently provide for the basic necessities for the child?
* How does the parent describe the child?
* To what extent does the parent meet the child’s need for social interaction?
* How connected and associated to the child is the parent?
* Does the parent recognize cues from the child and respond appropriately?

This section should also include the parent’s ability and willingness to parent based on the child’s needs rather than the parent’s needs, to put the child’s needs ahead of their own, to have empathy for the child and act on that empathy, and to have sensitivity and understanding toward children. It is not unusual for parents to divide some parenting responsibilities and share others. It is also not unusual for this to change at different life stages of a family, with one parent more effective with toddlers, for example, and the other more effective with adolescents. The fact that one parent does not perform all parental functions does not indicate that they are unable or unwilling to do so, and may indicate that the family is flexible in its roles in order to meet family needs. This should be discussed as part of the family’s functioning as a system (see below).

If the reviewer determines there was a comprehensive description of parenting practices including the parents general nature and approach to parenting, their feelings about being a parent, knowledge and general skill, basic care, nurturance, decision making about parenting, parenting style, history of parental behavior and expectations for all of the children in the family included in the assessment, then this section should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines minor details were missed, but most of the information was provided, then this should be rated a “3.”

If the reviewer determines key information was missed, this section should be rated a “2.” If the reviewer determines there was insufficient information assessed, this section should be rated a “1.” For ratings of 1 or 2, the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**B. 7. Family Functioning**

This section concerns how the family unit operates, including both strengths and current stresses. Major issues for study and understanding include:

* how the family is structured,
* the clarity of roles and boundaries,
* who is in charge,
* how family decisions are reached,
* the level and type of communication used,
* the presence and use of affection,
* marital issues,
* presence / absence of domestic violence
* the general feelings / climate within the family and relationship to the community,
* demographics, including family make-up, housing, and income in terms of its sufficiency to meet the family’s needs.

Are family roles and boundaries clear and effective or blurred and ineffective? Are roles being vacated by adults or is there an inappropriate exchange of roles between children and adults? Is communication open and productive or closed / manipulative / used to intimidate? Is the home climate calm, inconsistent, indifferent, frustrating or destructive? Is there routine and order or chaos / disorganization? Is the marital relationship satisfying and stable? Is there a sense of belonging to a family among all family members? How is power distributed among family members? How does the family respond to problems / crises? Is the family integrated into the community or isolated? How does the family manage the stresses associated with resources, employment, neighborhood, etc.?

If the reviewer determines there was a comprehensive description of family functioning including roles and boundaries, decision making process, communication, and general climate in the home included in the assessment, then this section must be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines minor details were missed, but most information was provided, then this should be rated a “3.”

If the reviewer determines key information was missed, then this section must be rated a “2.” If the reviewer determines there was insufficient information assessed, this section should be rated a “1.” For ratings of 1 or 2, the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**C. Initial Assessment – Compliance and Practice**

This section deals with key requirements of the Initial Assessment process. Rating for this section is limited to a “4” when assessment meets the compliance goal or 1 if the goal is not met.

**C. 1. Face-to-face Contact**

This question should be rated a “4” if the worker met the assigned response time for face-to-face contact. If the worker did not meet the assigned response time, this question should be rated “1.” The assigned face-to-face contact date can be determined by the screening decision documented in the access report. The worker’s first contact date with the family can be found in the Initial Assessment report under the section “Contact.”

Response time criteria are as follows:

1. Present danger threats to child safety (See *Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards Appendix 1: Present Danger Threats to Safety*)

▪ Immediate to within the same day response time

1. Information which indicates the presence of impending danger threats to child safety. (See *Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards Appendix 6: The Safety Threshold and Impending Danger Threats to Child Safety*)

▪ Response within 24 or 48 hours of receipt of report, including holidays and weekends

* + When a report has been assigned a 24-hour response time and the day the report is received falls on a Friday or the day before a holiday, contact with the child and parent(s) and the requirement to conduct an assessment of threats to child safety must not be deferred to the next business day.

1. No present or impending danger threats to child safety identified

▪ Response within five business days of receipt of report

Supervisory approval (or that of her / his designee) is required for all timeframes for response decisions.

**C. 2. Home Visit**

Outcomes must be rated a “4” if there is documentation the worker completed a home visit as required by Wisconsin Child Protective Services Assess and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 2, Chapter 14, XIV, C, pg. 49. If there is insufficient information documented to determine whether a home visit occurred, then this question should be rated a “1.” The reviewer may need to check both the contacts entered by the worker as well as the body of the assessment to determine where contact with the family occurred.

**C. 3. Interviewing all required persons**

This question should be rated a “4” if there is documentation that all required persons were interviewed. All household members must be interviewed to ensure accurate and thorough information is gathered. If a child is too young to be interviewed or is non-verbal, the child must, at a minimum be observed.

Face-to-face contact is required with the following individuals:

* Identified Child(ren)
* Sibling(s) and other children in the home
* Non-maltreating adults (if any)
* Alleged Maltreater

If there is insufficient information documented to determine whether all required interviews occurred or the reviewer is unable to determine who was interviewed as part of the Initial Assessment, then this question should be rated as “Not applicable.”

**C. 4. Initial Assessment Timeliness**

The reviewer will need to determine if the assessment was completed within the required 60 day time period. The referral date can be found on the first page of the assessment in the top, left corner. Information about the closing date of the assessment can be found in the approval tab of the assessment in eWiSACWIS. The reviewer will have to calculate how many days the assessment remained open. If the assessment was closed within 60 days, this question should be rated a “4.” If the assessment was closed after the 60-day time period, this question should be rated a “1.”

**C. 5. Collateral Contacts**

When known to CPS, collateral sources of information (e.g., physicians, treatment providers, and others with knowledge of the family) must be contacted during the initial assessment process to analyze and understand threats to child safety or risk concerns. Information from collateral sources should be pursued to understand family strengths and problems and to assist in making case decisions.

This question should be rated a “4” if the reviewer determines all relevant and necessary collateral contacts were made. If one or more necessary collateral contacts were not made, this question should be rated a “1.”

**D. Safety Assessment – CONCLUSION OF INITIAL ASSESSMENT (Wisconsin Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards, Section 5, V.A. – V.C. 3, pg. 9-12)**

**D. 1. Assessment of Impending Danger**

CPS must complete a safety assessment at the conclusion of the initial assessment / investigation of alleged maltreatment by a primary caregiver. The basis for assessing child safety at the conclusion of the initial assessment / investigation is the identification of impending danger threats. If impending danger threats are identified, then a child may be unsafe. (See *Safety Appendix 6: The Safety Threshold and Impending Danger Threats to Child Safety*). If a safety assessment indicates a child may be unsafe, a safety analysis must be completed to determine if a child is safe or unsafe by:

• identifying how impending danger threats are occurring in the household

• assessing the parent’s / caregiver’s ability and capacity to provide protection

The same day a child has been determined unsafe (e.g. presence of impending danger and insufficient parent / caregiver protective capacities), CPS must develop and implement a safety plan.

*Impending Danger is a foreseeable state of danger in which family behaviors, attitudes, motives, emotions and / or situations pose a threat which may not be currently active, but can be anticipated to have severe effects on a child at any time in the near future and requires safety intervention. The danger may not be obvious at the onset of CPS intervention or occurring in a present context, but can be identified and understood upon more fully evaluating individual and family conditions and functioning.*

If the reviewer agrees with the worker’s assessment of impending danger or lack of impending danger, this question should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines the worker was correct in identifying impending danger, but determines the incorrect impending danger threat was identified by the worker, this question should be rated a “3.”

If the reviewer determines there was a significant lack of information in the assessment making it difficult to determine if there are impending danger threats, this section should be rated a “2.” If the worker did not identify impending danger and the reviewer identified one or more impending danger threats, this section should be rated a “1.” For ratings of “1” or “2,” the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**D. 2. Unsafe Conditions**

When unsafe conditions are identified, the reviewer must determine if the worker provided a comprehensive description of those conditions. The assessment should include how long the conditions have posed a safety threat, how frequently the conditions exist, how predictable the threat is including specific times of the day which may require additional attention, whether safety factors prevent a caregiver from adequately functioning, and whether in-home safety intervention can be implemented. If all of the above information is documented, this question should be rated a “4.”

If the unsafe conditions are not clearly defined or the description is focused solely on the incident of maltreatment, this section should be rated a “1.” For ratings of “1,” the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**D. 3. Does the reviewer agree with the safety determination?**

If the reviewer agrees with the worker’s assessment of child safety (safe or unsafe determination), this question should be rated “4.” If the reviewer does not agree with the worker’s assessment of child safety, this question should be rated “1.” A rating of “1” requires a detailed explanation by the reviewer in the comment section.

**D. 4. Analysis of Information**

In this section, the reviewer must determine if the documentation supports the appropriateness of a safety plan. The following factors must be considered in the assessment of safety:

* If the non-maltreating parent or another adult in the home can and will protect the children
* If the parent is willing to participate in services
* If the home environment is calm enough for services to be safely provided
* If all the safety services that control all of the conditions affecting safety can be put in place with results of any evaluation
* If the parents or caregivers are residing in the home

If documentation supports the plan, then this question should be rated a “4.” If there is insufficient information to determine whether the safety plan is appropriate, then this question should be rated a “1.” For ratings of “1,” the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section. This section should be rated “Not applicable” (X) if the child(ren) was determined safe.

**D. 5. Was safety managed throughout the case?**

If the children were determined unsafe, was safety actively managed throughout the remainder of the assessment? Documentation should include the specific threat, the safety service used to manage the threat, identification of providers implementing safety services, the actions taken, and how CPS will manage / oversee the plan. If these elements are clearly documented, then this question should be rated a “4.” If the plan for managing safety was not clearly documented, including all of the above information, then this question should be rated a “1.” For ratings of “1,” the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section. This section should be rated “Not applicable” (X) if the child(ren) was determined safe or child(ren) is in out-of-home care.

**D. 6. Was safety actively managed through case transfer?**

If the children were determined to be unsafe, was safety actively managed through case transfer? Documentation should include contact between the worker, safety service providers (formal and informal) and the family as outlined in the safety plan to ensure the safety plan is being followed and is sufficiently controlling the identified Impending Danger Threat(s). If documentation supports the worker actively managed the safety plan, then this question should be rated a “4.” If there is insufficient information to determine whether the safety plan was actively managed, then this question should be rated a “1.” For ratings of “1,” the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section. This section should be rated “Not applicable” (X) if the child(ren) was determined safe or child(ren) is in out-of-home care.

**E. CASE FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS**

**E. 1. Maltreatment Determination**

Within 60 days after receipt of a report of child maltreatment, the CPS agency must conclude whether or not maltreatment occurred by using one of the following determinations: Substantiated, Unsubstantiated, or Unsubstantiated / Critical Sources of Information Are Not Available. To substantiate maltreatment, the worker / supervisor must determine an existence of a preponderance of the evidence, based on credible information, that every element of the definition of the specific type of maltreatment has been met.

If the reviewer agrees with the worker’s determination of whether or not maltreatment occurred, this question should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer determines there was insufficient information for the worker’s determination, this section should be rated a “1.” The section should be rated “Not applicable” (X) if reviewing an Alternative Response Assessment, as a maltreatment determination is not required. For ratings of “1,” the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

*Substantiation of Physical Abuse*

To substantiate physical abuse, a worker must obtain information, which establishes all of the following:

* the child involved is under the age of 18, *and*
* the child has (or had) an injury, *and*
* the injury was inflicted on the child by other than accidental means, *and*
* the injury the child has or had falls within the definition in s. 48.02(14g), Stats., *and*
* the determination that abuse has occurred is not "based solely on the fact that the child's parent, guardian or legal custodian in good faith selects and relies on prayer or other religious means for treatment of disease or for remedial care of the child." [Ref. s. 48.981(3)(c)4., Stats.]

Physical abuse does not include self-injury by a child.

*Substantiation of Neglect*

To substantiate neglect, the worker must obtain information, which establishes all of the following:

* the child is under the age of 18, *and*
* the child is not receiving: care, food, clothing, medical or dental care or shelter,   
  *and*
* the care which the child is not receiving is necessary, *and*
* the lack of care seriously endangers the physical health of the child, *and*
* the lack of care is a result of failure, refusal or inability to provide the care, *and*
* the lack of care is not due to poverty, *and*
* the parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person exercising temporary or permanent control is not providing this care to the child, *and*
* the determination of neglect is not made "based solely on the fact that the child's parent, guardian or legal custodian in good faith selects and relies on prayer or other religious means for treatment of disease or for remedial care of the child" [Ref. s. 48.981(3)(c)4., Stats.]

Necessary care, as referenced above, includes protection from behaviors that seriously endanger a child’s physical health. A caregiver has a responsibility to protect a child not only from dangerous situations or behavior of others, but also from any behaviors of the caregiver himself or herself which present an imminent threat of serious physical harm. Therefore, lack of necessary care includes when a caregiver negligently, recklessly, or intentionally commits an act against the child that places the child at substantial risk of harm, i.e., an act that a reasonable person could conclude would logically result in injury as defined in s. 48.02(14g), Stats., regardless of the actual outcome. (If the act resulted in actual injury to the child as defined in s. 48.02(14g), Stats., it would be substantiated as physical abuse.)

*Substantiation of Sexual Abuse*

To substantiate sexual intercourse or contact constituting abuse occurred, the worker must obtain information, which establishes all of the following:

* the child involved is fifteen years old or less,   
  *or*  
  the child involved was 16 or 17 years old and did not freely give consent, was unconscious, was under the influence of an intoxicant to a degree which rendered him or her incapable of appraising the other person’s conduct, or was suffering from a mental illness or deficiency which rendered that person temporarily or permanently incapable of appraising the person’s conduct, *and*
* sexual intercourse as described above occurred,   
  *or*  
  sexual contact as described above occurred *and* that it was done for the purpose of:  
  ° sexually degrading the child victim, *or  
  °* sexually humiliating the child victim, *or  
  °* sexually arousing or gratifying the maltreater, *or  
  °* the touching contained elements of actual or attempted battery

Sexual contact, which is mutual, occurs with a peer, and is devoid of elements of actual or attempted battery, coercion, or exploitation must be Unsubstantiated if the sexual contact is within the range of normal sexual behavior for the child’s age or development.

**E. 2. Maltreater Determination**

The CPS agency should make a determination that a specific person has maltreated a child only when all of the following criteria are met:

* maltreatment has been substantiated
* the following persons were interviewed by CPS:
  + the child (if the child is too young to be interviewed, the child must be observed)
  + at least one parent
  + the alleged maltreater, who must be advised of the allegations. An interview is not required only if there is other credible evidence (e.g., an arrest by law enforcement, a confession to law enforcement, or criminal charges brought by a prosecuting attorney and CPS has obtained a copy of the police report or criminal complaint.)
* there is a preponderance of the evidence that the child was maltreated by the particular person identified

If the reviewer agrees with the worker’s determination that a specific person maltreated the child, this question should be rated a “4.” If the reviewer believes there was insufficient information for the worker’s determination, this section should be rated a “1.” This section should be rated “Not applicable” (X) if reviewing an Alternative Response Assessment or if no specific maltreater was named. For ratings of “1,” the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section.

**E. 3. Mandated Reporter Feedback**

CPS agencies must inform a person required to report under s. 48.981(2)(a), Stats., what action, if any, was taken to protect the health and welfare of the child or unborn child who is the subject of the report. CPS has the responsibility for providing feedback to mandated reporters in all cases.

A relative who makes a report of alleged maltreatment may make a written request to the agency for information regarding what action, if any, was taken to protect the health and welfare of the child or unborn child who is subject of the report.

The supervisor or her / his designee must, within 20 days after the agency receives the written request from a relative, inform the relative reporter in writing of what action, if any, was taken (unless a court order prohibits the disclosure) and of the duty to keep the information confidential as provided under s. 48.981(7), Stats., and of the penalties for failure to do so.[s. 48.981(3)(c)6m., Stats.]

If documentation exists that the mandated reporter or relative reporter (if requested) was provided feedback, then this question should be rated a “4.” If there is insufficient information to determine whether the mandated or relative reporter was provided feedback, then this question should be rated a “1.” This question should be rated “Not applicable” if there is no mandated reporter or no indication a relative reporter requested feedback. For ratings of 1, the reviewer is required to provide an explanation of the rating in the comment section. The section should be rated “Not applicable” (X) when the report was screened in or there is no mandated reporter or there is no indication the relative reporter requested feedback.

**Initial Assessment Review Tool**

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| Case Name/eWiSACWIS Case No. | | | County | | |
| Name – IA Worker | | | Name – IA Supervisor | | |
| Date of Screened-in Report | | Name – Reviewer | | Date of Review |
| **A. Present Danger Assessment *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards, Section 2, II.A – II.C, pg. 6-7)*** | | | | | |
| Rating | | | | | |
|  | 1. Present danger identification by the Initial Assessment Worker   4 – The worker identified present danger and the reviewer agrees the correct Present Danger Threat(s) was identified OR the reviewer agrees with the assessment of no present danger.  3 – The worker identified present danger; however, the incorrect Present Danger Threat(s) was identified.  2 – There is a significant lack of information making it difficult to assess whether there is present danger.  1 – The worker did not identify present danger. The reviewer identified one or more Present Danger Threat(s).  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |
|  | 2. If present danger was identified by the Initial Assessment Worker, were immediate and sufficient measures taken (i.e., the worker implemented a Protective Plan)?    4 – The Protective Plan documentation must include all of the following:   * + specific information regarding the identified present danger threats,   + how the protective plan is intended to control identified threats to each child’s safety,   + the names of the responsible/protective adult related to each protective action,   + the actions/services to ensure child safety including frequency and duration,   + the child’s location, alleged maltreater and parent/caregiver access to the child, and   + how CPS will oversee/manage the protective plan, including communication with the family and providers.   1 – Does not include the above information or insufficiently describes the plan and how CPS will manage or oversee safety of the child(ren).  X – Not applicable. Present danger was not identified by the worker.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |
| **B. Information Gathering and Analysis *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 2, Chapter 14, XIV.E, p. 50 and Appendix 3, pg. 93-98)*** | | | | | |
| Rating |  | | | | |
|  | 1. Maltreatment     4 – Includes a comprehensive description of all types of maltreatment found to be present, including specific information about any injury or condition. Any maltreatment alleged in the CPS report but not found to be present should also be described, with reasons for that determination. This component should also provide the supporting documentation for maltreatment determinations and/or court intervention.  3 – Includes most of the information described in #4, but is missing minor details the worker would be expected to gather.  2 – The description of maltreatment lacks key information the worker would be expected to gather. The worker’s decision-making process is not clearly described. Safety decisions may not be accurate due to insufficient information.  1 – The description of maltreatment is superficial and lacks detail. Safety cannot be assessed due to insufficient information.  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |
|  | 1. Surrounding Circumstances     4 – Includes a comprehensive description of the circumstances accompanying or leading up to the maltreatment, the parents’ reaction after the maltreatment occurred (even if the finding is that no maltreatment occurred), environmental conditions, which clearly and directly contributed to the maltreatment, or other stressful conditions assessed to have directly contributed to the occurrence or risk of maltreatment.  3 – Includes most of the information described in #4, but is missing minor details the worker would be expected to gather.  2 – The description of the surrounding circumstances lacks key information the worker would be expected to gather.  1 – The description of the surrounding circumstances is superficial and lacks detail.  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |
|  | 1. Child Functioning     4 – Includes a comprehensive description of the child’s capacity for attachment, general temperament, expressions of emotions/feelings, typical behaviors, presence and level of peer relationships, school performance and behaviors, known mental health disorders, issues of independence/dependence, motor skills and physical capacity, effects of maltreatment on the child’s functioning, and cultural factors.  3 – Includes most of the information described in #4, but is missing minor details the worker would be expected to gather.  2 – The description of child functioning lacks key information the worker would be expected to gather. Safety decisions may not be accurate due to insufficient information.  1 – The description of child functioning is superficial and lacks detail. Safety cannot be assessed due to insufficient information.  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |
|  | 1. Adult Functioning     4 – Includes a comprehensive description of communication, coping, stress management, impulse control, problem solving, judgment, decision making, independence, money and home management, employment, education, social relationships, citizenship, community involvement and other basic life skills, criminal behavior in the community or home (including domestic violence), childhood information and relevant information from previous assessments.  3 – Includes most of the information described in #4, but is missing minor details the worker would be expected to gather.  2 – The description of adult functioning lacks key information the worker would be expected to gather. Safety decisions may not be accurate due to insufficient information.  1 – The description of adult functioning is superficial and lacks detail. Safety cannot be assessed due to insufficient information.  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |
|  | 1. Disciplinary Approaches   4 – Includes a comprehensive description of disciplinary methods used with all of the children. The description should include, which behaviors the parents tolerate and which they do not, whether the parent uses a variety of disciplinary approaches which are suited to the child’s age and needs, how consistent the parent is in their use of discipline, to what extent the parent demonstrates self-control when disciplining, and the parent’s view on discipline.  3 – Includes most of the information described in #4, but is missing minor details the worker would be expected to gather.  2 – The description of disciplinary approaches lacks key information the worker would be expected to gather. Safety decisions may not be accurate due to insufficient information.  1 – The description of disciplinary approaches is superficial and lacks detail. Safety cannot be assessed due to insufficient information.  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |
|  | 1. Parenting Practices   4 – Includes a comprehensive description of the general nature and approach to parenting, the parent’s perception of their child(ren), reasons for being a parent, feelings about being a parent, knowledge and general skill, basic care, nurturance, parenting style, history of parental behavior and expectations for the child(ren).  3 – Includes most of the information described in #4, but is missing minor details the worker would be expected to gather.  2 – The description of parenting practices lacks key information the worker would be expected to have gathered. Safety decisions may not be accurate due to insufficient information.  1 – The description of parenting practices is superficial and lacks detail. Safety cannot be assessed due to insufficient information.  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |
|  | 1. Family Functioning   4 – Includes a comprehensive description of how the family is structured, the clarity of roles and boundaries, how family decisions are reached, level and type of communication, marital issues, presence or absence of domestic violence, general climate within the family and relationship to the community, and financial situation in terms of its sufficiency to meet the family’s needs.  3 – Includes most of the information described in #4, but is missing minor details the worker would be expected to gather.  2 – The description of family functioning lacks key information the worker would be expected to gather.  1 – The description of family functioning is superficial and lacks detail. Safety cannot be assessed due to insufficient information.  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | | | | |

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| **C. Compliance and Practice** | | |
| Rating | | |
|  | 1. Did the Initial Assessment worker make face-to-face contact within the required response time? *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 1, Chapter 7, VII.A, pg. 25)*     4 – Yes, the worker made face-to-face contact within the required response time.  1 – No, the worker did not make face-to-face contact within the required response time.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. Did a home visit occur? *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 2, Chapter 14, XIV.C, pg. 49)*     4 – Yes, a home visit occurred.  1 – No, a home visit did not occur.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. Were all required persons interviewed, including identified child(ren), sibling(s) and other children in the home, household members (if any), non-custodial parent, and alleged maltreater? *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 2, Chapter 14, XIV.C, pg. 49)*     4 – Yes, all required persons were interviewed as part of the Initial Assessment based on the documentation within the Initial Assessment narrative or case notes.  1 – No, not all required persons were interviewed as part of the Initial Assessment.  X – Not applicable. The reviewer is unable to determine who was interviewed as part of the Initial Assessment. Unable to be determined can only be selected under the following conditions:   * + - An individual was selected as a participant in the case note, but there is no documentation within the case note or the Initial Assessment narrative regarding information from the interview of that individual     - An individual was not selected as a participant in any case note and the documentation is confusing regarding whether an interview occurred with that individual   Comments (Rating of 1 or X requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. Was the Initial Assessment completed within 60 days? *(Ref. s. 48.981(3)(c)4)*     4 – Yes, the Initial Assessment was completed and approved by the supervisor within 60 days of receipt of the CPS Report  1 – No, the Initial Assessment was not completed and approved by the supervisor within 60 days of receipt of the CPS Report  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. In accordance with the Access and Initial Assessment Standards, were necessary collateral contacts made? *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 2, Chapter 14, XIV.C, pg. 49)*     4 – All necessary collateral contacts were made by the Initial Assessment Worker.  1 – One or more necessary collateral contacts were not made by the Initial Assessment Worker.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
| **D. Safety Assessment - Conclusion of Initial Assessment *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards, Section 5,V.A – V.C.3, pg. 9-12)*** | | |
| Rating | | |
|  | 1. Assessment of Impending Danger   4 – The worker identified impending danger and the reviewer agrees the correct Impending Danger Threat(s) was identified OR the reviewer agrees with the assessment of no impending danger.  3 – The worker identified impending danger; however, the incorrect Impending Danger Threat(s) was identified.  2 – There is a significant lack of information making it difficult to assess Impending danger.  1 – The worker did not identify impending danger. The reviewer identified one or more Impending Danger Threat(s).  Comments (Rating of 1 or 2 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. If the child(ren) were determined unsafe by the Initial Assessment Worker, are the unsafe conditions described?   4 – The Initial Assessment Worker provided a comprehensive description of the unsafe conditions, including:   * + how long conditions in the family have posed a safety threat   + how frequent or often the family condition poses a safety threat   + how predictable the safety threat is and whether there are occasions when the safety factor is more likely to be an active influence   + specific times during the day, evening, night, etc. that might require “special attention” due to the way in which the safety threat is manifested   + whether safety factors prevent a caregiver from adequately functioning in primary roles (i.e., individual life management and parenting)   + whether in-home safety intervention can be put into place without the results of any scheduled professional evaluations (mental health, substances)   1 – The unsafe conditions are not clearly described using the criteria above OR the description is focused solely on the incident of maltreatment.  X – Not applicable, the child(ren) was determined safe.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. Does the reviewer agree with the safety determination at the conclusion of the Initial Assessment?   4 – Yes, the reviewer agrees with the worker and supervisor’s assessment of safety of the child(ren) at the conclusion of the Initial Assessment.  1 – No, the reviewer does not agree with the safety assessment.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. Is the analysis of the information supporting a safety plan accurate, logical, and understandable?   4 – The documentation throughout the case supports the appropriateness of a safety plan. The following factors must be considered in the analysis:   * + if the non-maltreating parent or another adult in the home can and will protect the child(ren)   + if the parents are willing to participate in services and will cooperate with service providers   + if the home environment is calm enough for services to be provided and for service providers to be in the home safely   + if safety services that control all of the conditions affecting safety can be put in place without the results of any scheduled evaluations   + if the parents or caregivers reside in the home   1 – The documentation throughout the case does not support the appropriateness of a safety plan.  X – Not applicable, the child(ren) was determined safe.    Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. If an unsafe determination was reached, was safety actively managed throughout the remainder of the Initial Assessment?   4 – Documentation must include the following:   * + - the specific impending danger threat(s),     - the safety services used to manage impending danger threat(s),     - the names of formal and/or informal providers providing safety services,     - the roles and responsibilities of the safety service providers including a description of the availability, accessibility, and suitability of those involved,     - the action/services including frequency and duration, and     - how CPS will manage/oversee the safety plan, including communication with the family and providers.   1 – Does not include the above information or insufficiently describes the plan and how CPS with manage or oversee safety of the child(ren).  X – Not applicable, the child(ren) was determined safe or child(ren) is in out-of-home care.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. If an unsafe determination was reached, was safety actively managed through case transfer?   4 – Documentation reflects contact between the worker, safety service providers, and family as outlined in the safety plan.  1 – Documentation does not reflect contact between the worker, safety service providers, and family as outlined in the safety plan.  X – Not applicable, the child(ren) was determined safe or child(ren) is in out-of-home care.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
| **E. Case Findings/Conclusions** | |
| Rating |  | |
|  | 1. Does the reviewer agree with the maltreatment determination? *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 2, Chapter 20, XX.A, pg. 60 and Appendix 2, pg. 84)*     4 – The reviewer agrees with the maltreatment determination.  1 – The reviewer disagrees with the maltreatment determination.  X – Not applicable, Alternative Response Assessment does not require a maltreatment determination.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. Does the reviewer agree with the maltreater determination? *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Section 2, Chapter 20, XX.C, pg. 61)*   4 – The reviewer agrees with the maltreater determination.  1 – The reviewer disagrees with the maltreater determination.  X – Not applicable, Alternative Response Assessment OR no maltreater was named in the Initial Assessment.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
|  | 1. Was feedback provided to the mandated reporter within 60 days of receipt of the report or, when requested, to a relative reporter within 20 days of receipt of the request? *(Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards, Sec. 2, Ch. 12, XII.J., Feedback to a Mandated Reporter, p. 40; and Ch. 12, XII.K, Feedback to a Relative Reporter, p. 40-41)*   4 – Documentation exists that feedback was provided to the mandated or relative reporter.  1 – No documentation exists that feedback was provided to the mandated or relative reporter or it cannot be determined.  X – Not applicable, the report was screened in or there is no mandated reporter or there is no indication the relative reporter requested feedback.  Comments (Rating of 1 requires a detailed explanation) | |
| **Reviewer Notes** | | |
| Comments regarding any issue not addressed previously | | |