

Introduction



Child Protective Services has the following fundamental safety interventions when a reporter calls the child welfare agency with a concern:

- Gathering information related to present and possible/likely impending danger threats to child safety; and
- Making screening, urgency, and response time decisions based on threats to child safety.

The following template serves as a guide for information gathering. It is vital that every section of the report is filled out as all the information is used to assess not only the incident of concern but also going forward in the case process. Furthermore, this information is mandated by Child Welfare statutes and practice standards. Relevant questions are listed in each section to help you elicit necessary information. The sample questions are provided as a guide and support. It is not intended you ask every question. Check with your agency’s CPS professional for direction. Remember you will not be asked to decide about present or likely impending danger. That decision will be made by a CPS professional. The information you gather will assist the CPS professional with the decision-making process.

General Access Interview Questions

Case Name		Worker Safety Concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Report Number *Office Use*	
Date and Time Report Received <i>It is vital to record this as it starts the clock ticking for CPS to evaluate the report.</i>	CPS Report Type			County	
Name – Worker			Name - Supervisor		

I. Family Information

Name – Family				Telephone Number - Home		
Address – Street		Apt. No.	City / Town		State	Zip Code
Primary Language: English			Interpreter Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Directions to House						

A. Household Members

Name	Role	Relationship	DOB	Age	Gender	Race
"Who resides in the home?"						

<p>“Any family or friends who temporarily call this residence ‘home?’”</p> <p>For example, a significant other.</p>						
<p>“Any children who call this residence home, even though they might not be there every day?”</p> <p>For example, children who regularly visit the home to see an adult.</p>						
<p>“Does anyone stay in the home or on property, every once and awhile?”</p>						

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| AV = Alleged Victim | A = Asian or Pacific Islander |
| HM = Household Member | B = Black |
| NH = Non-Household Member | I = American Indian / Alaskan Native |
| M | P = Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander |
| PR = Parent / Parental Role | U = Unable to Determine |
| R = Reporter | W = White |
| RN = Report Name | |

Information that the child(ren) may have American Indian heritage, including names of tribe(s) if known.

In compliance with the Wisconsin Indian Child Welfare Act, ask and document:

- “Do you have reason to believe the child or family has American Indian ancestry, or is enrolled with the tribe?”
- “If yes, which tribes and where?”
- If reporter has no information note, “Reporter was asked and indicated they did not know.”

Note: Tribes must be notified within 24 hours of receiving information, regardless of screening decision. When Menominee tribe is identified they must be sent the CPS report. Check the eWISACWIS record for child’s American Indian heritage and tribe.

B. Parent(s) Not in Home / Other Non-Household Members

Name	Relationship	Address	Telephone No.	DOB	Gender	Race
"Do any of the children in the household you listed above, have a parent who lives at a different address?"						

C. Alleged Maltreatment

Alleged Victim	Relationship to Victim	A/N Code	Description	Fatality
Reporter does not always know if the condition they are reporting constitutes an allegation of maltreatment. Use your professional judgement to analyze what you learned during information gathering to enter the allegation type. Be sure to inquire about all forms of alleged maltreatment for all children in the home, enter each applicable type.				

D. Location of Incident

Address – Street	Apt. No.	City / Town	State	Zip Code
Telephone Number – Home	Telephone Number – Work	Date of Alleged CAN		

E. Contacts / Others with Information About Family

If this report is advanced for further assessment, the next CPS professional completes a comprehensive assessment to determine if the child is unsafe. For that reason, I want to ask about other people who might have information about the family.

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- “Who knows the family better than you do?”
 - “Which other adults in this child/children’s life share your concerns?”
 - “Would other people who know the family agree with your perspective?”
 - “I’m curious who else might have more information about this family?”
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II. Narrative

f. Describe alleged maltreatment: current and past; the surrounding circumstances; and the frequency; or intervention or services needed for the child.

Immediate:

- “What do you have concerns about?”
- “What have you observed (or heard) about the alleged maltreatment?” “Can you describe, in detail, the maltreatment (severe, multiple injuries, unexplained injuries, child unsupervised)?”
- “Are there multiple alleged victims in the home?”
- “Where did the alleged maltreatment occur?”
- **Dirty house reports are common but often hard to document ask the reporter:** “When did you last see the home?” “What did you see, smell, feel?”
- **If the report is about physical discipline, ask:** “Under what circumstances is this kind of discipline used?” “Does the parent/caregiver use an object?” “Where on the body do they hit the child?” “Do they use this kind of discipline with all the children in the home or only a couple of them?”
- **Concerns about drug or alcohol use:** “What substance is the adult using?” “How often are they using?” “Do they use at home or somewhere else?” “Where are the children when they are using?” “Do you know how the parent behaves when they are under the influence?” “When the parent is using is there another adult who can shield the child t from the effects of the parent’s use?”

Surrounding circumstances

- “What, in your view, are the worst aspects of the behavior you are describing?”
- “What do you think is the cause of the problem?”
- “Does another parent/caregiver in the home know about the maltreatment? How have they responded?”

Intervention or services needed

- “I hear you saying that things are not right with this family. What would have to happen for you to know that the problems had been resolved and you no longer had to worry?”
- “You probably thought long and hard before calling us. In your opinion, what would it take to make a difference for these children?”

b. Describe the child(ren)’s injury or conditions as a result of the alleged maltreatment or service needed.

- “Can you describe the injury in detail including size, location, color?” “Is it a bruise, laceration, scrape, cut, burn?”
- “Has the child received medical treatment?” “Do they need medical attention?”

c. Describe the child(ren)'s current location, school / daycare including dismissal time, functioning, including special needs, if any, and highlighting current vulnerability.

- "Where does the child attend school/daycare?" "Do you know what days/times they are there?"
- "Is the child at grade level?"
- "Do any of the children have special needs or disabilities?" "If yes, can you describe them?" "How do their needs affect their functioning?"
- "Does the child have friends?"
- "What concerns do you have about their development?"
- "What are the visitation schedule details?"
- "You said that the child always seems "miserable" and "withdrawn." Are there any times when you have seen them come out of their shell?" "What are they like then?"
- "If this problem is solved, what difference will it make for the children?" "How will their lives be different?"
- "What do the children say they want to be different?" "Or if they haven't said, what would they say if you asked them?"
- If parents are in separate household get details about visitation schedule and when the child(ren) will see the other parent next.

DESCRIBE ANY PRESENT DANGER THREATS, INCLUDING A DESCRIPTION OF POSSIBLE OR LIKELY EMERGENCY (EXIGENT) CIRCUMSTANCES

Note: As a designee you will not be asked to interview the reporter about present danger threats. However, if you receive information during the interview about a potential red flag for danger then enter that here.

Use the *Red Flags for Danger Job Aid* to identify reports you should take directly to the CPS professional.

d. Document relevant information from CPS history, CCAP and Sex Offender Registry-Reverse Address checks (if no information found, document that checks were completed).

CPS history for information about family and alleged maltreater found on the *Prior Involvement Tab* in eWiSACWIS.

Consolidated Court Automated Program (CCAP) for criminal records
Sex Offender Registry-Reverse Address check

Note: If no relevant information found, document that checks were completed.

e. Describe when the alleged maltreater will have access to the child.

- "Do they live with the family?"
- "Do they provide direct care to the child?"

- “Are there Family Court Custody arrangements?” “Do you know what they are?”

f. Describe any changes in circumstances that may make it difficult to fulfill CPS responsibilities.

- May include worker safety concerns
- Information that family is homeless or transient or has plans to move

g. Describe present of domestic violence, if applicable, including the demonstration of power and control and entitlement within the home.

General

- “Do you know if anyone else in the home besides the child has been hurt or assaulted?” “If yes, who?”
- “Have the police ever been called to the house to stop fighting among the family members?” “If yes, tell me about that.”
- “Have the children said that one of their caregivers is a victim of violence or is acting violently in the home?”
- “Do family members appear to be afraid of or intimidated by the alleged maltreater?”
- “Have you witnessed an argument and sensed that it was escalating?”

If the answers to the above four questions indicate the presence of domestic violence in the home, or if it appears that a family member is violent, aggressive, or controlling, these additional questions can assist with assessing the risk of danger to family members.

- “Has the violence changed or increased over time?” “How often does it happen?”
- “Has anyone made threats to hurt or kill him/herself, another family member or pets?”
- “Do you know if there any weapons in the home?” “If yes, what kinds?” “Who had access?”
- “Has the violent parent or caregiver threatened to run off with the child(ren) or threatened to take full custody of the child(ren)?”
- “Are you aware of circumstances in which the parent/caregiver has been criticized or threatened for seeking help or community resources, such as medical, mental health, parenting assistance, childcare, legal action etc.?”
- “Has a family member stalked another family member?” “Has anyone ever taken a family member hostage?”

h. Describe how the family may respond to intervention by the agency, including the parental protective capacities.

Family Response to Intervention:

- “Is the family aware the report is being made?”
- “How might the family respond to a CPS professional?”
- “Do you have concerns for the CPS professional’s safety?”
- “Is there another agency or resource that would do a better job than us?” “Or that the family would receive better?”
- “If no, do you know of another agency or resources that CPS can partner with to help this family?”

Parental Protective Capacities:

- You mentioned that it is not always like this. Can you tell me what is happening when the situation is OK?" "What is different about those times?"

Cognitive- what the parent thinks

- "Are the parents concerned about this problem?" "How do you know they are concerned?" "What have they already done to try and resolve it?" "What do you think they will try next?"

Behavioral- what the parent does

- "It sounds like this has happened before. What have you seen the family do to sort this out in the past?"
- "What have you seen this Mom/Dad do that let you know they are protective of their child/ren and can keep them safe?"
- "Are there times when they call on other people to help solve problems?" "When do they do that?" "Who do they call on most often?"

Emotional- what the parent feels

- "Are there times when the parent/caregiver is attentive and nurturing rather than what you're concerned about? Tell me more about those times." "What have you seen the parent or child do instead?" "What do you think contributed to the caregiver's ability to be protective during those times?"

THE FOLLOWING SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED FOR ALLEGED MALTREATMENT BY PRIMARY CAREGIVER OR PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE MALTREATMENT:

i. Describe the parents or adults: current location, functioning, and parenting practices and views of child(ren).

Functioning

- "You described this Mom/Dad as 'angry' and 'abusive.' Are there times you see them be playful, sweet or nurturing to their children?" "What is different about them then?" "What type of situations are they at their best?"
- "What lets you know that Mom/Dad are doing their very best?"

Parenting practice/views of children

- "If you were to imagine the parent giving advice to a new mother or father, what would they say is most important for a new parent to know about parenting?"
- "From your knowledge of the parent, how did they learn to parent?"
- "How would the parent describe their child to a new teacher?"
- "What have you seen or heard that tells you about the parent's relationship with the child?"

j. Describe the family functioning, strengths, and current stressors.

Family Functioning

- “What does a typical day look like in the family?”

Family Strengths

- “What do you see as positive about the relationship between these parents and their children?”
- “How does this family usually solve problems?” “What have you seen them doing?”

Current Stressors

- “What do you think this family needs to do to protect their children?” “Are the parents capable of doing that?” “Do they have the resources (financial, emotional support, etc.) to make a change?”
- “Are there aspects of your relationship with the family that, in coordination with our involvement or other community services, might help to influence them for the better?”
- “What do you imagine we could do to improve this situation?”

DESCRIBE THE POSSIBLE OR LIKELY IMPENDING DANGER THREATS TO CHILD SAFETY. (See Access Appendix 4).

Note: As a designee you will not be asked to interview the reporter about likely impending danger threats. However, if you receive information during the interview about a potential red flag for danger then enter that here.

Use the **Red Flags for Danger Job Aid** to identify reports you should take directly to the CPS professional.

k. Document the name of the alleged maltreater and relationship to child.

- “What is the child’s relationship with the alleged maltreater?”

III. Agency Response

A. Supervisor Screening Decision

Decision	Date / Time Decision was Made
Response Time	Reason
Explain:	

- B. Yes No Law enforcement notified
 Yes No After hours

IV Signatures

SIGNATURE – Worker

Date Signed

SIGNATURE – Supervisor

Date Signed

Name – Worker

Name – Reporter

The reporter may remain anonymous if they choose.

Relationship/Position

Address (Street, City, State, Zip Code)

Telephone

Affiliation:

Reason for Calling:

- “What prompted you to call today?”

Document the Reporter's motivation and source of information, if possible:

- “How do you know this information?”
- “How is this behavior or pattern a problem for you?”
- “Does the family see you as someone who would have their best interest in mind?”

Reporter's opinion about needed actions and child's safety:

- “Have you done other things (other than notifying) to help address the problem?”
- “This situation sounds serious. What do you think should happen?”
“How would that solve this problem?”
- “What difference will it make for you if the problem is resolved? How will your life be different?”

Worker's opinion of reporter's credibility:

Additional comments:

Reporter Narrative

Note: **The *Reporter Narrative* is in a separate part of the case record and will not be released to the family as a part of the CPS Access Report.**

Citations:

Turnell, A., & Edwards, S. (1999). *Signs of safety: A solution and safety oriented approach to child protection*. Chapter Four, *Starting Out Right: The Referral*. New York: Norton.

CPS Access & IA Standards, DV Appendix 5

Access Pre-Service Module