

## Provincial Safety Planning Review – Representative Sample Analysis

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In response to the death of a child known to the Ministry, the Minister requested a provincial analysis of all current, active files involving children age six and under (as of May 12, 2011) to determine whether appropriate safety planning had occurred for these children and to ensure this planning was documented on the child's file. The review focused on children age six and under because of the particular vulnerability of young children. Approximately 7,500 files were reviewed. As a result of the large sample size, the review was completed in two phases: a review of a random representative sample of 2,500 was completed by May 30, 2011 (phase 1), with the remaining files completed by June 30, 2011 (phase 2).

Due to the wildfires affecting parts of northern Alberta, the random representative sample of 2,500 files did not include files from North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority, Bigstone Cree Social Services Society and Kee Tas Kee Now Child and Family Services. Of the 2,500 files to be reviewed in phase 1, three were not reviewed due to a flood, one was not available due to a file transfer, one was unavailable as it was sealed for adoption and 52 files were incorporated into phase 2, bringing the completed sample to 2,443 files.

Parameters for the review included reviewing all identified files for safety planning, regardless of the legal authority. For children with an in-care status (i.e. Custody Order/Agreement, Temporary or Permanent Guardianship ) the review included safety planning relative to access with parents, guardians, extended family and significant others only.

A template was created to gather the information in a consistent way (Appendix A). A companion document, the Safety Summary Sheet (Appendix B), was completed and placed on the file with the information about the safety plan and/or action required to ensure that the plan was available, appropriate and contained detail specific to safety planning. The summary sheet was intended to be used both as a case management tool and to assist in documenting more detailed information from the safety planning review than was contained in the reporting template, in case further information or clarification were needed at a later date.

Of the 2,443 files reviewed, there were 2,236 files that required safety planning to have been completed based on the information provided and legislative, policy and practice requirements. The remaining 207 files did not require a safety plan as there was no access for the children with their parents/extended family or the file was closed at assessment as unsubstantiated or malicious and the child was safe.

Of the 2,236 files that required safety planning, analysis indicated that 91 per cent of the files had safety planning completed.

Of the remaining nine per cent that did not have safety plans completed:

- 9 per cent did not require safety planning or the worker was unable to complete safety planning due to the actions of the family
- 34 per cent had safety planning in progress (Safety Phase Assessment in progress but plan was not completed)
- 57 per cent had issues with documentation and the file reviewer determined that the plan was not complete.

Where it was determined that safety planning was required and/or that the documentation on the file was incomplete or inadequate, the need for follow-up action was documented on the Safety Summary Sheet with a completion timeline of two weeks from the date of the review.

The files with documentation issues represented approximately 5 per cent of the total sample size.

The results of the sample were analyzed in relation to the overall safety planning, as well as with other main variables, including age, gender, and legal authority grouping (Appendix C illustrates all main findings).

One of the main findings was a noticeable difference in the reported completion of safety planning across legal authority types, from 85 per cent completed on files at the Safety Assessment phase (Front-End) and 97 per cent completed for Family Enhancement Agreements. Some of this discrepancy is a result of assessments being recently initiated at the front-end with safety planning underway as part of the assessment, which is consistent with policy and practice expectations.

In addition to reporting whether safety planning was required and completed, the template also collected information regarding the safety planning details, which would indicate whether the plan addressed the safety needs and elements of safety planning indicated by policy and practice expectations. For the details/elements that are common to safety planning, the results ranged from 98 per cent of the plans having addressed the safety needs of the child and identifying all parties and responsibilities in relation to safety planning to 91 per cent of the plans having a review/monitoring process in place.

Results of the other policy areas related to safety planning revealed that of the sample files reviewed where safety planning had been completed:

- 98 per cent had all participating parties and responsibilities clearly delineated.
- 97 per cent addressed the safety issues related to all persons living in the home or having contact with the child.

- 95 per cent involved direct observations of the child by various parties, including the caseworker.
- 93 per cent identified specific activities in their safety planning (such as the frequency of home visits, whether the visits would be unannounced/announced, etc.).
- 92 per cent of the specific activities identified were felt to be reasonable for all participants to follow.

Template

child ID	child initials / birth yr / gender	legal authority	Region	work site	unit	Safety planning completed?	If no planning completed, does the child reside with or have access/contact with family members?	Rationale/ Explanation	Do the planning details address the safety need(s)?	Are direct observations of the child by various parties (including the caseworker) occurring?	Are specific activities (i.e. number of home visits to occur, unannounced/ announced , etc.) identified?	Are the activities identified reasonable to follow for all participants?	Are all participating parties and responsibilities clearly delineated?	Are safety issues related to all persons living in the home or having contact with the child addressed?	Is there a monitoring / review process indicated?	Additional planning details
						Y/N	Y/N		Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	

*Safety Planning Summary Sheet*

Name of Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Authority or Stage of Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

Caseworker's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Individuals involved in the safety planning: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Safety planning details (provide details with respect to all safety planning completed for this child):

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If safety planning is required for a child and one is not documented on the file, please provide an explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

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If there is no safety planning completed, please indicate what action will be taken within 2 weeks of this review to address safety planning needs:

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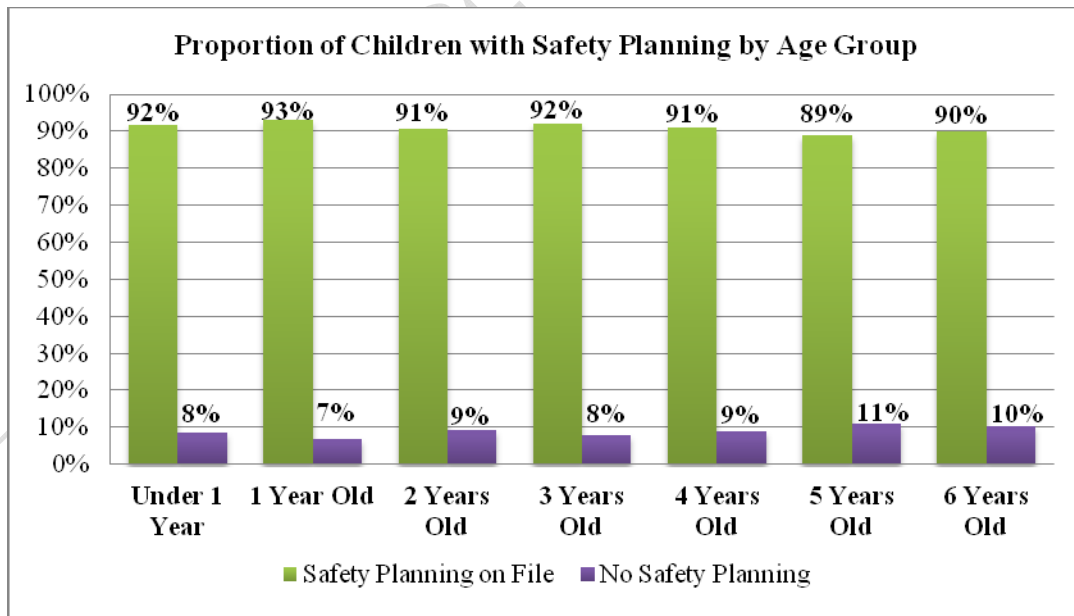
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**Note: File the completed Summary Sheet on section 1 of the child's current volume and forward a copy to the regional office or the DFNA Director by May 30, 2011.**

**Age distribution<sup>1</sup>:**

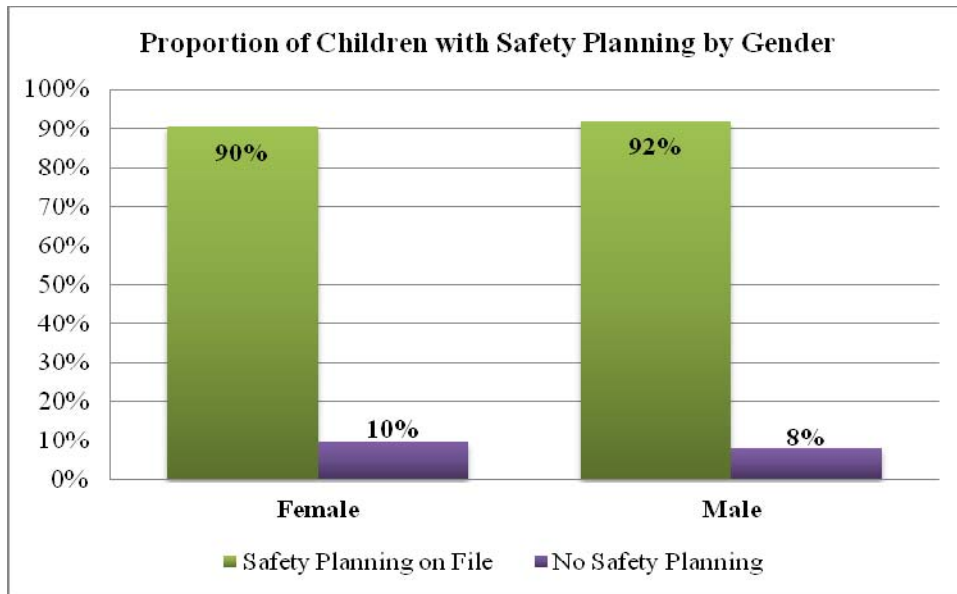


**Completed Safety Planning by Age Group:**

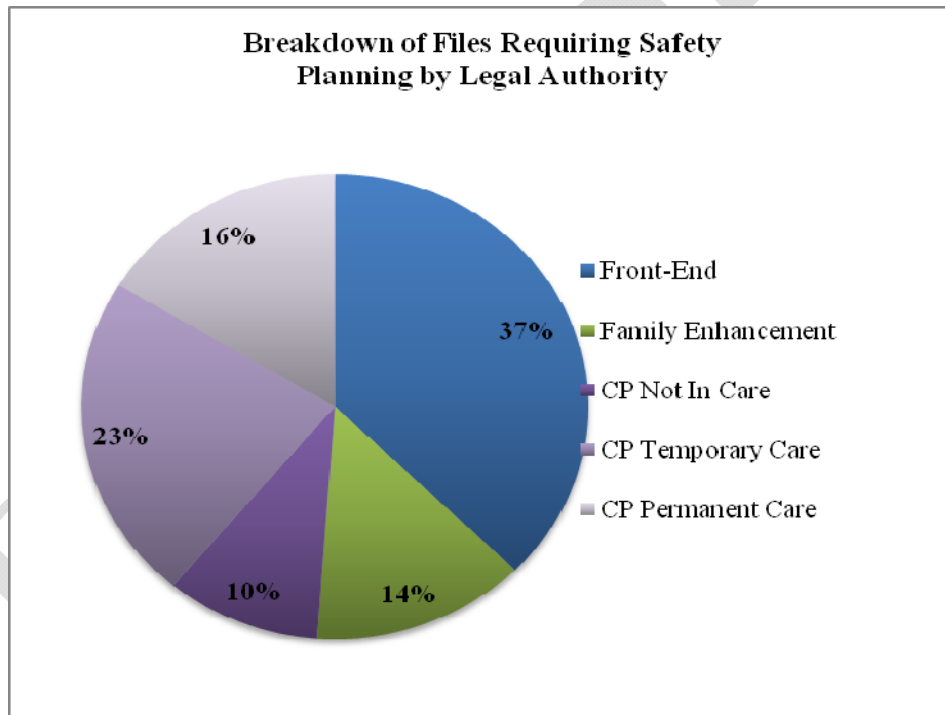


<sup>1</sup> Table reflects the 2,236 files that were noted to require safety planning.  
Safety Planning Review

**Proportion of Children with Completed Safety Planning by Gender<sup>2</sup>:**



**Legal Authority Representation within the Sample:**

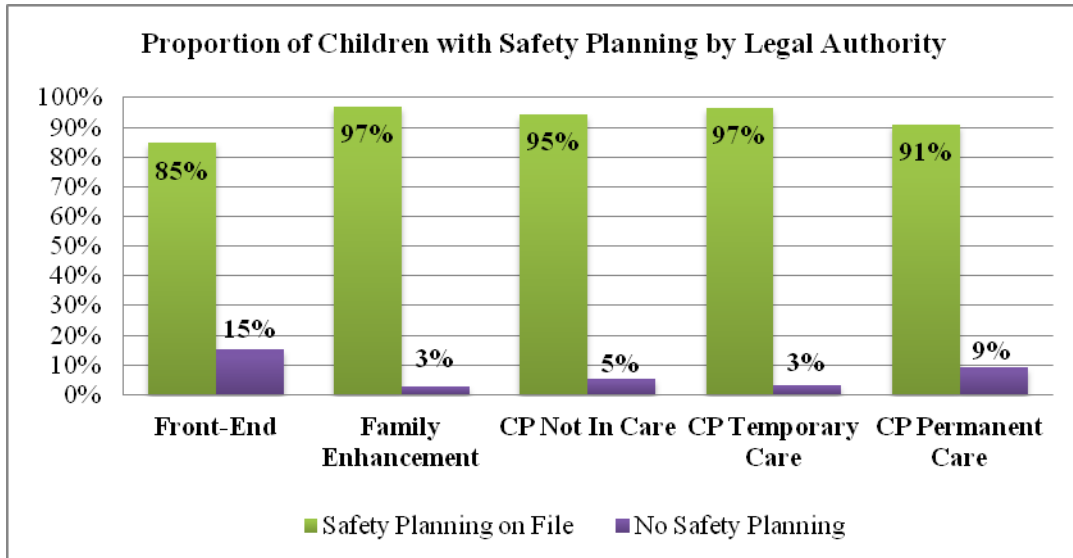


- Front-End includes Safety and Detailed Phase Assessment
- Family Enhancement includes Enhancement Agreement with Guardian
- Child Protection (CP) Not In Care includes Supervision Order, Interim Access Order and Open to Assessment
- CP Temporary Care includes Custody Agreement with Guardian, Interim Custody Order, Custody Order and Temporary Guardianship Order
- CP Permanent Care includes Permanent Guardianship Order and Permanent Guardianship Agreement

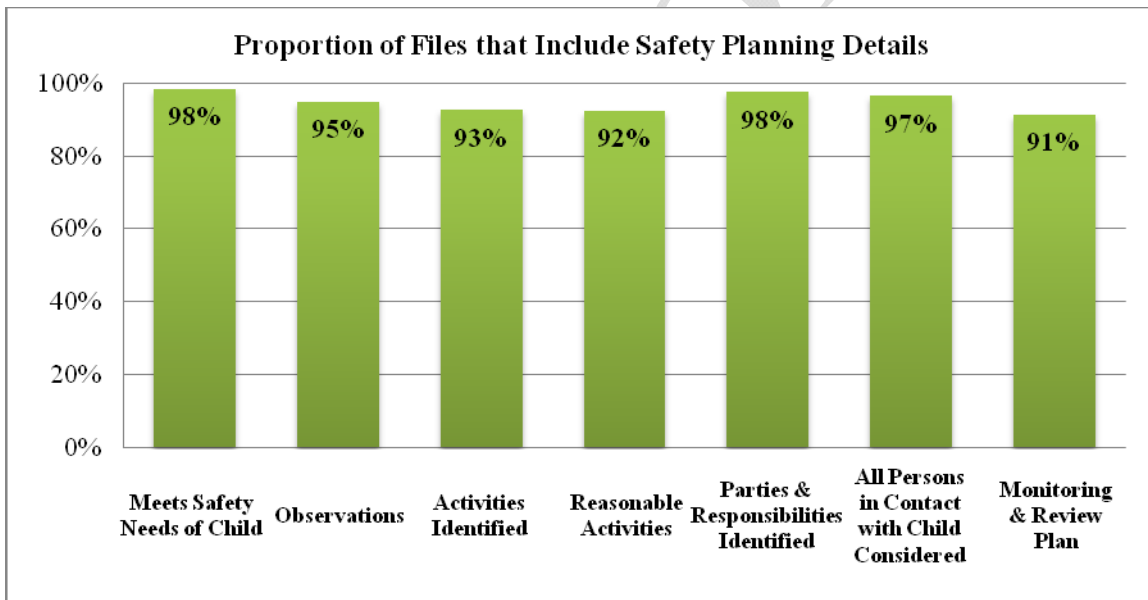
<sup>2</sup> The children sampled represented an equal proportion (50 per cent) of females and males



**Completed Safety Planning by Legal Authority<sup>3</sup>:**



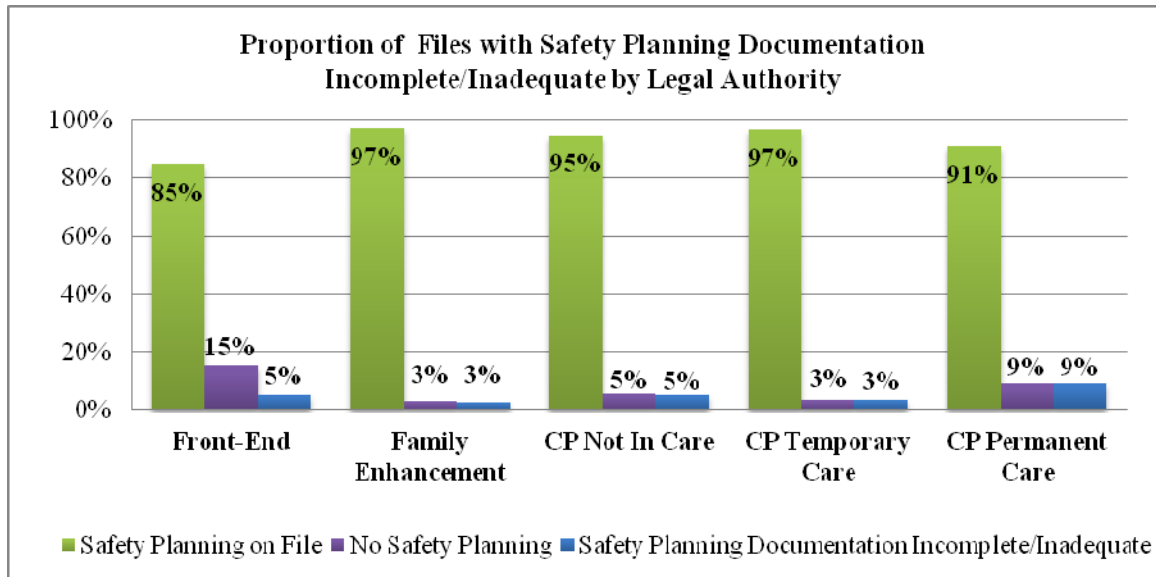
**Breakdown of the Safety Planning Details<sup>4</sup>:**



<sup>3</sup> Based on the 2,236 files reviewed that required safety planning

<sup>4</sup> Safety Planning Details are the common elements that are used to develop safety planning for a child based on their individual safety needs (See Appendix A)

### File with Incomplete Safety Planning by Legal Authority:



Within the 2,236 files reviewed, 199 files had incomplete safety planning or there were other issues identified with the documentation of the safety planning. Further analysis of the information provided regarding these files indicated that:

- 43 per cent of the files had planning in progress (Front-End activity) or safety planning was not able to be completed; and
- 57 per cent of the files demonstrated documentation issues regarding safety planning. The Safety Summary sheets were used to ensure completion and follow through on safety planning for the child.

This 57 per cent represents five per cent of the overall sample size and further represented:

- five per cent (44 files) of the Front-End files;
- three per cent (8 files) of the Family Enhancement files;
- five per cent (11 files) of the CP Not In Care files;
- three per cent (17 files) of the CP Temporary Care files; and
- nine per cent (33 files) for the CP Permanent Care files reviewed.