

Standalone SafeCare Decision Guidance

SafeCare is an evidence-based parenting intervention that supports families with very young children (birth-age 5) in building a strong foundation for child health, safety, and interactions between the parent and child. SafeCare is part of Iowa's prevention strategies in response to federal Family First legislation. Beginning July 1, 2024, HHS staff may make referrals for SafeCare without opening Family Casework (or refer for Non-Agency SafeCare without referring for Non-Agency Services).

The points below are provided to help guide conversation between the CPW, SWCM and Supervisor as decisions are made about making service referrals. Prior to using this guidance, a decision should first be made whether the family needs in-home Family Casework. If Family Casework is not referred and there are children birth-age 5 in the home, consider whether the family will benefit from SafeCare.

HHS staff will first utilize the Risk Assessment to determine if SafeCare can be utilized as a Standalone Service.

- If the final risk level for a household is moderate risk, then it is appropriate to utilize SafeCare as a standalone service. If the final risk level for a household is high, HHS Supervisor approval is needed to authorize SafeCare without Family Casework/Non-Agency Services.

The following should be considered when determining if SafeCare as a standalone service is appropriate

- The basic needs of the family have been met. For example, the parent cannot be homeless or in an active mental health crisis.
- The case is a voluntary in-home case with no court involvement.
- When it is a Presence of Illegal Drugs (PIDs) case – THC only is preferred but not required. Discuss the parent's history of use, whether the parent is actively using or in recovery, and how the use impacts parenting.
- The parent(s) is in consensus to complete the 18-week SafeCare program.
- There are no prior HHS founded reports within the last three years. If the household has confirmed reports within the last three years, consider whether the history of confirmed reports demonstrates a pattern of behavior that needs additional services to address.
- The family has not previously completed SafeCare. If the household was previously referred for SafeCare and did not complete the full curriculum, the household may be referred for SafeCare again.
- If the parent has older children outside of SafeCare eligibility range, explore whether the parent already has the skills learned in SafeCare.
 - SafeCare works well with first-time parents.
 - Parenting teens are eligible for SafeCare with their children.
- If there are questions about using Safe-Care as a standalone service – HHS and the provider should discuss the delivery of SafeCare as a standalone service.

Reminder - A warm handoff between the HHS worker and provider is crucial to the engagement of a family in services.