

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 2: Administration of Child Welfare	Effective Date: June 1, 2021
	Section 29: Safe System Review (SSR) for Child Fatalities and Near Fatalities	Version: 1

POLICY OVERVIEW

In an effort to improve child safety, prevent child maltreatment-related fatalities, and identify improvement opportunities on a systemic level, the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) has developed a Safe System Review (SSR) for child fatalities and near fatalities. This program is rooted in the practice of safety science, and its sole purpose is to assist in developing a more reliable, functioning system.

The SSR is a facilitated opportunity to process casework on a systemic level and explore statewide trends for improvement across the child welfare system. The SSR is a non-punitive process that considers the system as a whole, rather than the specific individual and case. The process is designed to afford individuals an opportunity to provide input into the existing functions of the agency.

PROCEDURE

DCS will complete an SSR for a child fatality or near fatality when one (1) or more of the below is present:

1. The child victim was in DCS custody at the time of the fatality or near fatality;
2. DCS had contact (through a screened-in report, assessment, or case) with either the child victim or any immediate family member of the child victim within the 12 months preceding the date of the fatality or near fatality;
3. The child or family participated in Healthy Families Indiana or Nurse Family Partnership within the 12 months preceding the date of the fatality or near fatality;
4. The child or child's family participated in a juvenile probation case within 12 months preceding the date of the fatality or near fatality; or
5. The DCS Director, Chief of Staff, Deputy Director of Field Operations, Assistant Deputy Director of Field Operations, or a Regional Manager (RM) requests a review of a fatality or near fatality.

Note: A SSR is not completed on all child fatalities and near fatalities. SSRs are not substitutes for, and do not replace, the review of child fatalities and near fatalities done by DCS to satisfy fatality reporting requirements in the State of Indiana. See policy 4.31 Child Fatality and Near Fatality Assessment for additional information.

Upon notification that SSR criteria has been met, the SSR Team will:

1. Contact field staff to schedule a confidential debrief;

Note: The debrief allows for field staff to openly share their experiences in order for the SSR Team to develop a full understanding of the role of field staff within the child welfare system.

2. Offer support to field staff, as needed, throughout the SSR process;
3. Prepare and complete a record review of the case;
4. Complete the Safe System Improvement Tool (SSIT) within 60-90 days after the child fatality or near fatality;
5. Complete the final report in the case management system;
6. Compile and/or map the data findings; and
7. Share the data findings quarterly with the Executive Team, Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team, and the RMs.

LEGAL REFERENCES

N/A

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

N/A

Forms and Tools

- [Healthy Families Indiana](#)
- [Nurse Family Partnership](#)
- [Safe System Improvement Tool \(SSIT\)](#)

Related Policies

- [4.31 Child Fatality and Near Fatality Assessments](#)