

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Tool: Considerations When Domestic Violence is Identified Reference: 2.D (2.30 Domestic Violence [DV])	
	Effective Date: June 1, 2022	Version: 1

Suggested Questions to Assist in Making a Finding When Domestic Violence (DV) has Been Identified

The following are examples of questions that may be used to assist in making an assessment finding when DV has been identified:

1. What is the frequency of the DV and the extent of the injuries?
2. Is there a history of strangulation (choking)? Has pressure been applied to the neck, or has there been a loss of time or memory, or bowel or bladder function? If any of these have occurred a Computed Tomography Angiography (CTA) is recommended to rule out a carotid dissection (see <https://www.allianceforhope.com/strangled-victims-need-imaging/> for further guidance).
3. Has your child observed property damage?
4. Are there current safety issues?
5. Where was the child located when the DV occurred?
6. Would the child be unsafe in the home where the DV occurred?
7. Is the child at risk of future harm?
8. Is the child in need of protection?
9. Has the child intervened in the DV? (Whether the child was injured or not, a child's direct involvement presents extreme risk.)
10. Has anyone else intervened in the DV?
11. Is there an established pattern of DV that is chronic or severe?
12. Has the child exhibited extreme emotional or behavioral changes, or has the child been diagnosed with a mental health condition such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, or fear as a result of living with DV?
13. Has there been a co-existence of DV and substance abuse that impedes a parent's ability to assess the level of danger in the home? (Substance abuse may exacerbate the violence, increasing risk to the child and alleged victim/parent.)
14. Has a parent been threatened or injured in the presence of the child?
15. Has a parent been injured and/or sought medical treatment resulting from DV?
16. Has there been a history of abuse towards pets?
17. Are there services/assistance that may be provided to the alleged DV offender?
18. What resources and assistance can be provided to help the alleged victim/parent succeed?
19. How is the child doing in school (including both grades and behavior)? Is the child overly aggressive?
20. Are the parents willing and capable of providing a safe environment for the child?

The following criteria may be used when making a decision to determine if it is appropriate to substantiate neglect on the alleged victim/parent in DV related DCS cases:

1. The alleged victim/parent's history of and/or attempts to use DV shelters or programs;
2. The alleged victim/parent's history of and/or attempts calling law enforcement or use/knowledge of how to request court services for DV protection orders ([Protection, No Contact and Workplace Violence Restraining Orders](#));
3. The alleged victim/parent's past efforts and history of making other arrangements to protect the child (e.g., taking the child to a relative or friend's house);
4. The alleged victim/parent's history and level of cooperation with past DCS services; and
5. The level of risk and safety factors for the child at the present time.

Factors Indicating Child may Remain at Home

The following factors may suggest a child may safely remain in the home:

1. The non-offending parent acknowledges risk to the child and demonstrates the use of protective factors (e.g., nurturing and attachment to the child, knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development, parental resilience, social connections, and concrete supports for parents) to mitigate risks;
2. The non-offending parent and child are in a shelter or other safe location;
3. The alleged DV offender's access to the child and non-offending parent or activities with them are restricted (e.g., in jail, complying with protective orders, or no-contact orders in place);
4. The alleged DV offender is actively engaged in intervention programs and takes responsibility for the alleged DV offender's behavior;
5. The child has a supportive adult in the home;
6. The child is older and has a plan to be safe and the ability to carry out the plan;
7. Violence is not escalating;
8. Other issues (e.g., substance abuse and mental health) do not pose safety threats; and
9. The non-offending parent has supportive extended family or community ties.

Non-offending Parent Remains with the Offender

If the non-offending parent is remaining with the offender, consider the following:

1. Is the child safe to remain in the home?
2. In an emergency, what works best to keep the child safe?
3. Who can the non-offending parent or child call in a crisis?
4. Would the non-offending parent or child call the police if the violence started again? Is there a phone in the home? Could the non-offending parent develop a plan with the child or neighbors to call the police or get help?
5. If the child and/or non-offending parent need to leave the home, where can they go?
6. Is the non-offending parent aware of services that may address barriers to leaving the offender (e.g., housing and financial assistance, DV programs, or a civil attorney)?

Factors that may Indicate Need for Out-of-Home Placement

The following factors may suggest that a child needs an out-of-home placement:

1. No other workable plan may be put in place that ensures child safety;
2. Other types of child abuse exist, which creates safety threats;
3. The alleged DV offender continues to expose the child to serious violence despite intervention;
4. The alleged DV offender continues to have illegal or other contact with the child, which presents safety concerns;
5. The alleged DV offender's history includes known violent behaviors;
6. The child has increased vulnerability due to the child's physical, emotional, and/or developmental ability and/or age; and/or

7. Abuse of alcohol or other drugs presents additional safety threats in the home.

Factors to Consider Prior to Case Closure

The following are examples of factors that should be considered prior to case closure when DV has been identified as a risk factor during a case:

1. The child and non-offending parent feel safe in their home;
2. The alleged DV offender has participated in treatment;
3. The alleged DV offender is complying with parole or probation supervision and any court ordered intervention program;
4. The alleged DV offender is accepting responsibility and not using physical violence or control tactics;
5. Both parents or caregivers understand the effects of DV on their child;
6. No new reports of CA/N related to DV have been filed within the past six (6) months;
7. The non-offending parent and alleged DV offender each have a [Safety Plan \(SF 53243\)](#) in place that is being followed;
8. The non-offending parent has and exhibits the ability to protect the child;
9. The non-offending parent has knowledge of and access to relevant supports, resources, information, and safety options for both self and the child; and
10. Other case issues (e.g., drug or alcohol abuse) are resolved or not affecting parenting ability.