



Impending Danger Threats

1. No adult in the home will perform parental duties and responsibilities in line with the child's individual developmental needs.

This refers only to adults (not children) in a care-giving role. Duties and responsibilities related to the provision of food, clothing, shelter, and supervision are considered at a basic level.

Child welfare professionals shall consider whether short-term or limited-time education or support to the parent/caregiver would mitigate the threat or if further intervention is needed.

2. One or both parent's/caregiver's behavior shows a pattern of violence.

Pattern of violence means ongoing violent behaviors which result in situations where a child is unsafe or is likely to be unsafe. Violent behaviors include physical fighting, hitting, beating, physically assaulting a child, significant other or another adult member of the household. It may be immediately observable, regularly active or a constant state of unpredictability.

3. One or both parents/caregivers has impulsive behavior that they cannot/will not control.

This threat is about self-control (e.g., a person's ability to postpone or set aside needs, plan, be dependable, avoid destructive behavior, use good judgment, not act on impulses, exert energy and action or manage emotions. Parent's/caregiver's lack of self-control places vulnerable children in jeopardy. This threat includes parents/caregivers who are incapacitated or not controlling their behavior because of mental health or substance abuse issues). Poor impulse control or lack of self-control includes behaviors other than aggression and can lead to severe harm to a child.

4. One or both parents/caregivers have exaggerated, negative perceptions of the child.

This threat describes a negative perception that is so exaggerated that the parent/caregiver is likely to have a dangerous response that will have severe harm for the child.

5. Family does not use known, available, and accessible resources to assure the child's essential needs for food, clothing, and/or shelter are met.

This threat only refers to essential needs for food, clothing and/or shelter that if chronically unmet will likely result in serious harm to the child. **Note: It may be likely that another Impending Danger Threat is a better fit to describe the current family condition.**

A family's experience of poverty alone does not indicate the appropriateness of this threat. Child welfare professionals must consider the intersection of poverty and the family's ability to meet the child's essential needs; as well as how potential connections to resources, instead of CPS intervention, may mitigate this threat.

As a reminder, local child welfare agencies are still required to maintain Active Efforts and provide culturally appropriate services for Native America families whenever possible.

6. One or both parents/caregivers fear they will maltreat child and/or request placement.

This refers to caregivers who express anxiety and dread about their ability to control their emotions and reactions toward their child. This expression represents a parent's distraught/extreme "call for help." A request for placement is extreme evidence with respect to a caregiver's conclusion that the child can only be safe if he or she is away from the caregiver.

7. One or both parents/caregivers intend(ed) to seriously hurt child.

Parents/caregivers anticipate acting in a way that will assure pain and suffering. "Intended" means that before or during the time the child was harmed, the parent's/caregiver's conscious purpose was to hurt the child. This threat is distinguished from an incident in which the parent/caregiver meant to discipline or punish the child and the child was inadvertently hurt.

"Seriously" refers to an intention to cause the child to suffer physically or emotionally. Parent/caregiver action is more about causing a child pain than about a consequence needed to teach a child.

8. One or both parents/caregivers lack parenting knowledge, skills, or motivation necessary to assure a child's basic needs are met.

This refers to basic parenting that directly affects a child's needs for food, clothing, shelter, and required level of supervision. The inability and/or unwillingness to meet basic needs creates a concern for immediate and severe consequences for a vulnerable child.

9. The child has exceptional needs which the parents/caregivers cannot or will not meet.

"Exceptional" refers to specific child conditions or needs that are beyond what is typical (e.g., intellectual/cognitive disability, physical disability, sensory disability, behavioral disability, communication disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder, special medical needs, etc.). This threat is present when parents/caregivers, by not addressing the child's exceptional needs, create an immediate concern for severe harm to the child.

This does not refer to parents/caregivers who do not do particularly well at meeting the child's special needs, but the consequences are relatively mild. Rather, this refers to specific capacities/skills/intentions in parenting that must occur and are required for the child with exceptional needs not to suffer severe harm.

10. Living arrangements seriously endanger the child's physical health.

This refers to conditions in the home that are immediately life-threatening or seriously endanger the child's physical health (e.g., people discharging firearms without regard to who might be harmed; the lack of hygiene is so dramatic as to potentially cause serious illness). Physical health includes serious injuries that could occur because of the condition of the living arrangement.

11. The child is profoundly fearful of the home situation or people within the home.

"Home situation" includes specific family members and/or other conditions in the living arrangement. "People in the home" refers to those who either live in the home or frequent the home so often that a child routinely and reasonably expects that the person may be there or show up.

The child's fear must be obvious, extreme, and related to some perceived danger that the child feels or experiences. This threat can also be present a child who does not verbally express fear but their behavior and emotion clearly and vividly demonstrate fear.

O - Observable

V - Vulnerable child

O - Out-of-Control

I - Imminent

S - Severe harm



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