

Modified Manual Policy Revision
Crosswalk

CPS INTAKE		
Section	Policy, Protocol, Guidance	Justification
CPS Intake Pages: 31, 44, 47, 49, 71-72, 92, 101	Title change: Improper discipline changed to Unsafe discipline.	Clarification of the type of discipline that should be considered maltreatment.
CPS Intake: Physical Injury Screening Tool Directions	Removal of “criminally charged” from the decision tree and replaced with, “Has the parent been driving while intoxicated?”	A child is unsafe in a car with a caretaker who is driving under the influence of alcohol or any mind-altering substance regardless of whether law enforcement charges them with a crime.
CPS Intake: Physical Injury Screening Tool	Has the parent been driving while intoxicated? If the allegations are that a parent or caretaker is driving under the influence of mind-impairing substances, regardless of whether they are prescribed or not and the child is in the car, the report must be accepted for assessment. It is irrelevant whether or not the caretaker was criminally charged as the statute reads, “creates or allows to be created.” A child is unsafe in a moving vehicle with an impaired caretaker driving. All of these reports must be accepted for abuse.	A child is unsafe in a car with a caretaker who is driving under the influence of alcohol or any mind-altering substance regardless of whether law enforcement charges them with a crime.
CPS Intake: Unsafe Discipline Screening Tool Directions	Removal of “...minor temporary redness of skin lasting more than 24 hours...” Addition of “Unsafe Discipline occurs when a parent/caretaker uses physical discipline on a child four and older that results in minor bruises, welts, or other soft-tissue	A child is unsafe when physically disciplined to the point of injuries regardless of the severity or timeframe. Clarification for when discipline is unsafe and should be screened in for assessment.

Modified Manual Policy Revision
Crosswalk

	<p>injuries on the buttocks, back, legs, and/or arms that do not require medical attention. Cases of unsafe discipline must be accepted for assessment. In screening, the worker must consider whether the discipline that was given was reasonable for the child’s age, developmental status and/or other vulnerability factors to determine whether the allegations meet the threshold for physical abuse.”</p>	
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CPS Family and Investigative Assessment		
Section	Policy, Protocol, Guidance	Justification
<p>CPS Family and Investigative Assessment: Notifications</p>	<p>In cases where the perpetrator remains unknown, but the caregivers are the only people responsible for the care of the child, a case decision of Unsubstantiated or Protective Services Not Needed would not be appropriate. Indicator 1 on the Safety Assessment Tool (DSS-5231) can help guide decision making in cases where there is an unknown perpetrator and a child/ren may still be at risk of future harm and in need of protection. Further guidance can be found under the Decision Making in Cases with Unexplained/Poorly Explained Injuries with Unknown Perpetrators section.</p>	<p>Clarification for case decisions with undetermined perpetrators.</p>

Modified Manual Policy Revision
Crosswalk

<p>CPS Family and Investigative Assessment: Notifications</p>	<p>Protocol: DECISION MAKING IN CASES WITH UNEXPLAINED/POORLY EXPLAINED INJURIES AND AN UNKNOWN PERPETRATOR</p> <p>For cases involving infants and non-verbal children who are not yet mobile, the child welfare worker must answer the following questions along with the four case decision questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have any circumstances of the family changed that provide safety for the child(ren) in the absence of child welfare services? • What are the conclusions and/or recommendations of any medical evaluations, such as a CME? • If law enforcement is involved, what is the status of their case? Will there be charges? • Has the child(ren) sustained any additional injuries of any kind during the assessment? • What steps have parents/caretakers taken during the assessment to address the concerns? 	<p>Clarification for case decisions with undetermined perpetrators.</p>
<p>CPS Family and Investigative Assessment: Notifications</p>	<p>Protocol: DECISION MAKING IN CASES WITH NO CHILD IN THE HOME</p> <p>When there is an open assessment regardless of the track and the child dies or has an 18th birthday and is no longer a minor AND there are no other children in the home a case decision must still be made.</p> <p>If the child death is a result of abuse or neglect the assessment must still be completed. Family Assessment cases must be changed to the Investigative track at the time of the fatality. The local county child welfare must make a case decision and place an individual on the RIL, if appropriate.</p>	<p>Clarification for case decisions when there is no longer a child in the home.</p>

Modified Manual Policy Revision
Crosswalk

	<p>In situations where the minor has reached their 18th birthday the assessment must be completed, if possible, and a case decision must be made.</p> <p>Guidance: DECISION MAKING IN CASES WITH NO CHILD IN THE HOME</p> <p>Completion of the assessment and a case decision allows the child welfare agency to maintain information on abuse or neglect to ensure the safety of children. It is important to continue to assess open cases of abuse and neglect of children particularly in situations where a fatality is likely the result of abuse and/or neglect.</p>	
CPS Family and Investigative Assessment: Assessment Track: Family and Investigative Assessments	Removal of Services Recommended as a Case Decision	Case Decisions should be focused on safety. Services Recommended was designed to address non-safety services and well-being needs. The removal of it will help workers better focus on safety.
CPS Family and Investigative Assessment: Assessment Track: Family and Investigative Assessments	The purpose of the case decision is to determine whether a family is in need of child protective services.	Clarification of the purpose for the case decision.
CPS Family and Investigative Assessment: Assessment Track: Family and Investigative Assessments	Protocol: Child Protective Services Needed - This finding is appropriate when neglect and/or dependency was found to have occurred, and where there are safety issues and a future risk of harm, the agency must provide non-voluntary protective services to ensure the safety of the child. The finding of Child Protective Services Needed must be made, and the county child welfare services agency must continue to	Clarification of the title to better reflect what the outcome of the case decision means and guidance on better decision making.

Modified Manual Policy Revision
Crosswalk

	<p>provide involuntary CPS In-Home Services in every case the agency believes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The family must be involved with services (of any type, provided by any agency or individual) for the child to safely remain in the home; or● The child would not be safe if the family ever becomes noncompliant with services. <p>A finding of Child Protective Services Needed must be made if the answer is yes to one or more of the questions on the structured CPS Assessment Documentation Tool (DSS-5010) concerning frequency and severity of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Maltreatment;● Current safety issues;● Risk of future harm; and● Child in need of protective services. <p>There must be documentation to support the answers included on the case decision tool.</p> <p>If the decision of the North Carolina Safety Assessment is “Safe”, and the findings of the North Carolina Family Risk Assessment of Abuse/Neglect and the North Carolina Family Assessment of Strengths and Needs are both “Low,” then the case would not be found “Child Protective Services Needed,” unless there are unusual circumstances where there is a continued need to ensure safety. In those cases, the supervisor must complete the “Rationale for Case Decision/Disposition” to justify the change.</p>	
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Modified Manual Policy Revision
Crosswalk

	<p>Guidance: Findings of Child Protective Services Needed should be made for situations in which the safety and risk of harm is so great that the agency cannot walk away from this family without either providing protective services or monitoring those provided by another agency or provider. All children referred to In- Home services may not be at risk of removal. The NC SDM Family Risk Assessment of Child Abuse/Neglect is used to assess risk of maltreatment recurring.</p> <p>The county child welfare worker should discuss the outcome of the Family Assessment with the family face-to-face after the case finding of Child Protective Services Needed has been made. The discussion should include the actions and behaviors that have led to safety concerns and the changes and services that will address the safety issue or risk of harm. The family should also be notified in writing within seven working days.</p> <p>If the initial assessment indicates a risk level of “Moderate” or higher, and the family receives services which lead to a reduction in the risk level at the close of the assessment, such that non-voluntary services are no longer needed, the finding should be Services Provided, Child Protective Services No Longer Needed.</p> <p>In cases where there are NO safety issues or risk of harm to the child, and services are recommended that would benefit the family, they should be documented in the case decision summary and discussed with the family. Recommended services CANNOT include protective services that are needed to ensure the safety of the child. These services can include prevention services that the agency believes the family might</p>	
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Modified Manual Policy Revision
Crosswalk

	<p>benefit from, but if they choose not to engage in them will not require CPS involvement.</p>	
<p>CPS Family and Investigative Assessment: Assessment Track: Family and Investigative Assessments</p>	<p>Protocol: Services Provided, Child Protective Services No Longer Needed - This finding is appropriate for all CPS reports of neglect and dependency assigned to the Family Assessment response in which the safety of a child and future risk of harm were at some point in the assessment high enough to require non-voluntary services, but the successful provision of services during the assessment has mitigated the risk to a level in which involuntary services are no longer necessary to ensure the child’s safety. To close cases with this finding, at the time of case decision, the child cannot have current or ongoing neglect and/or dependence concerns, and the safety and future risk of harm of the child is not an issue. This case decision can only be chosen when non-voluntary protective services are not required to keep the children safe. A case decision of Services Provided is not appropriate for cases where the family is engaged in service provision that if ended once the case is closed would result in safety concerns for the children.</p>	<p>Clarification of the title to better reflect what the outcome of the case decision means and guidance on better decision making.</p>
<p>CPS Family and Investigative Assessment: Assessment Track: Family and Investigative Assessments</p>	<p>Child Protective Services Not Needed - This finding is appropriate for all CPS reports of neglect and dependency assigned to the Family Assessment response in which the safety of the child is not an issue, there is no concern for the future risk of harm to the child. This case decision is chosen when non-voluntary protective services are not required to keep the children safe.</p>	<p>Clarification of the title to better reflect what the outcome of the case decision means and guidance on better decision making.</p>

Modified Manual Policy Revision
Crosswalk

Forms		
Section	Policy, Protocol, Guidance	Justification
DSS-5010	Removal of “Services Recommended” as a case decision option	Case Decisions should be focused on safety. Services Recommended was designed to address non-safety services and well-being needs. The removal of it will help workers better focus on safety.
DSS-5010	Revision of case decision titles to “Child Protective Services Needed,” “Child Protective Services Not Needed,” “Services Provided, Child Protective Services No Longer Needed”	Clarification of the title to better reflect what the outcome of the case decision means.
DSS-5104	Maltreatment Type from Improper Discipline with Injuries and Improper Discipline without Injuries, “Unsafe Discipline with Injuries to Unsafe Discipline without injuries” to respectively	Clarification of the title to better reflect discipline that meets the statutory definition of involvement.