



Administrative Office of the Courts
Family & Youth Justice Programs
www.wacita.org



Safety Summit Project

Introduction Package

The information contained in this packet introduces the Safety Summit Project and guides interested potential sites through the process of fulfilling the pre-requisite requirements for participation.

ABOUT

The [Safety Summit Project](#) is the result of a training partnership between the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF), Office of Public Defense (OPD) Parent Representation Program and the Washington Association for Child Advocate Programs (WACAP). The planning, implementation, monitoring and continued development of the Safety Summit Project is overseen by the multi-disciplinary **Safety Summit Advisory Team (SSAT)**, which works with individual court sites at all phases of the project.

Safety Summits were engineered to be more than a one-time, cross-system training, with the addition of intentional changes to court practice and a robust local action planning process. The goal of the project is to help local dependency court systems enhance safety practice by developing a common framework for talking about child safety. When all court and system partners utilize a shared understanding and language to clearly and consistently articulate safety-related information, including the harms of removal, the court can engage parties in meaningful inquiries around assessments of safety, safety planning and case planning in ways that support improved outcomes for children and families.

**Safety Summit training is delivered virtually.
We are unable to accommodate requests for in-person training at this time.**

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING

A [pre-post hearing quality evaluation study](#) of the Safety Summit Project found **statistically significant improvements across multiple safety-related measures** at the Shelter Care Hearing, including increased court room discussions, judicial inquiries and documented safety-related information. Results of the evaluation showed statistically significant post-Summit findings across a number of different measures:

- **Increased courtroom discussion** of all safety assessment factors, safety planning, and justification for supervision in family time;
- **Increased judicial inquiry** into agency efforts to prevent removal, vulnerabilities of the child, and visitation;
- **Increase in verbal reasonable efforts findings** made by judicial officers;
- **More documents submitted prior to the hearing** contained a safety analysis and contextual safety information, with more documents including a reference to protective capacity, vulnerabilities and conditions for return.

[2022 Washington Safety Decision-Making Hearing Quality Evaluation Report](#)



[Click to View](#)

PRE-REQUISITE REQUIREMENTS

- **PLANNING WORKSHEET:** All Safety Summit Project sites are required to provide us with certain information for the purposes of planning and scheduling Safety Summit Project activities. This information must be submitted to us before we are able to schedule a summit for your site. This worksheet is designed for the Project Liaison to complete in collaboration with court system partners. Completed forms can be submitted to Laura Vogel at laura.vogel@courts.wa.gov.

- **COURT COMMITMENT:** The Court must be informed and supportive of hosting the Safety Summit Project in your community. We require that at least one judicial officer be willing to serve on the local planning team and participate in the phases of the project. Complete the applicable fields on Planning Worksheet to provide the confirmation of Court Commitment.

- **PROJECT LIAISON:** We require that each Safety Summit site identify **one person** to serve as the local primary point of communication for the Safety Summit Project in your community. Ideally, this person will be a court employee (e.g., FJCIP Coordinator; Operations Manager etc.). The Project Liaison will be the main point of contact and communication between the SSAT and your local planning team. They will also assist with organizing information, scheduling meetings, event logistics, and strategic plan follow-up. Complete the applicable fields on Planning Worksheet to provide the confirmation of your Project Liaison.

- **DCYF PRACTICE CHANGE:** We require written confirmation that the DCYF office(s) in your court community have committed to the practice change of attaching current safety assessments to court reports and current safety assessments/plans to courts reports for in-home cases. Confirmation can be provided by the DCYF Regional Administrator or Area Administrator, and can be sent via email to Laura Vogel at laura.vogel@courts.wa.gov.

3-PHASES OF PARTICIPATION

The Safety Summit Project aims to create sustainable, system-wide change in your court community. Once all Pre-Requisite Requirements are complete, the SSAT will guide you through a 3-step process designed to help you host a successful cross-system collaborative training event and make tangible, sustainable changes in your local court community.

Phase 1: Organization, Planning & Capacity Building

Phase Length: 3-4 months

The first phase of the Safety Summit Project focuses on building local system capacity and planning the training event for your court community. SSAT will use the information provided on your Planning Worksheet (see Pre-Requisite Requirements) to formalize your **local Safety Summit Team**, which will serve as the cross-systems team that oversees all phases of the

project in your court community. The SSAT will also use the information for your Planning Worksheet to schedule your Safety Summit Training event. We will assist you with marketing and promotion of your Safety Summit, along with applying for CJE and CLE credits.

The SSAT will work with your Project Liaison to schedule **two planning meetings**, to occur approximately 30-days and 60-days out from your event. These virtual meetings will be facilitated by the SSAT and will help plan the logistics of the training event along with providing a space for the SSAT to better understand the needs of your court system. All members of the Safety Summit Team will be invited to attend. Participants in “A Role for Everyone” will be asked to attend an additional 30-minute virtual prep meeting.

Phase 2: Safety Summit Training Event

Safety Summits revolve around a half-day (4 hour) training event. Using a crosswalk of the ABA Child Safety Guide (“Safety Framework”) and the DCYF Child Safety Framework, the Safety Summit training teaches systems how to **effectively apply the safety framework to crucial aspects of cases** (safety assessment, safety planning, conditions for return, family time, and case planning) in tangible ways that ultimately result in a more effective dependency system and better outcomes for families. The training begins with a session called “A Role for Everyone”, where representatives from your court community will speak about how their role intersects with issues of child safety. Training content primarily consists of presentations and practice activities designed to help participants effectively apply the Safety Framework to crucial aspects of cases. The final hour of the Safety Summit will involve two breakout room activities that will guide participants through a process of **strategic planning**. The first activity involves putting participants into randomly assigned small groups to generate a shared vision for their court system’s safety practice. The second activity involves breaking participants into their respective disciplines (e.g., court staff, DCYF, AGO, etc.) to generate tangible action steps their discipline could take to support the system achieving the larger vision around improving outcomes for families.

Note: All Safety Summits are recorded and made available for later viewing on AOC’s Family & Youth Justice Programs’ (FYJP) website: <https://www.wacita.org/safety-summit-project/#hubs>.

Phase 3: Strategic Plan in Action

Phase Length: 4-6 months

The project liaison will use information collected at the summit and from follow up with system partners to create a localized **Strategic Plan** containing shared goals for system improvement, defined action steps for discipline groups, and requests for support from FYJP and DCYF to assist with implementation of the strategic plan. The Strategic Plan is designed to be used by cross-system teams to make sustainable changes in local safety practice. The SSAT will be available to help your site finalize their Strategic Plan and to assist with implementation of plan items. We will discuss the available options for **evaluating the impacts and outcomes** of the Safety Summit Project at your site (e.g., hearing quality evaluation; Data Dashboard).

CONTACTS

General Questions

Tarassa Froberg
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Family & Youth Justice Programs
tarassa.froberg@courts.wa.gov

DCYF Project Contact

Ryann Charvat
Safety Programs Manager
Department of Children, Youth & Families
ryann.charvat@dcyf.wa.gov

Safety Summit Project PLANNING WORKSHEET

Site:

Potential Dates for Safety Summit

Safety Summits require a 4-hour block of consecutive time and are most successful when held on days that the majority of court staff and system partners are able to attend. Please provide three potential date/time options for your Safety Summit training event, with your preferred date listed first.

Option #1:

Option #2:

Safety Summit Team

Please provide us with the names and contact information for the court staff and system partners who will be part of your local Safety Summit Team. These should be individuals who are able to lead the development and implementation of your site's strategic plan in order to maximize improved ongoing outcomes after the summit event. The below roles/agencies are recommended for inclusion on your Safety Summit Team.

	Name	Position/Title	Email address
Judicial Officer (required)*			
Project Liaison (required)**			
Court Administrator			
Department of Children, Youth & Families			
Attorney General's Office			
Parent Attorney			
Child/Youth Attorney			
OPD Social Worker			
Child Advocate/GAL/CASA			
Parent Ally			
Other:			
Other:			

*Fulfills *Court Commitment* Pre-Requisite Requirement

**Fulfills *Project Liaison* Pre-Requisite Requirement

Submit completed form to Tarassa Froberg at tarassa.froberg@courts.wa.gov