

Child Safety and Well-being: Matters to be Considered

Under An Act For Strong Families Building Stronger Communities, any decisions relating to a child receiving intervention services must consider the following matters*:

Family is primary	The child's family has the primary responsibility for the safety, health and well-being of the child and, as such, the family's well-being should be supported and preserved.
Impact of removal	Decisions must consider the risk to the child's safety, security or development if they are removed from a family, allowed to remain with a family, or are returned to a family.
Child's opinion	If the child is capable of forming an opinion, the child's opinion should be taken into account.
Child's identity	Decisions must consider the child's age, spiritual beliefs, gender identity, sexual orientation and various other components of who they are.
Indigenous identity	For Indigenous children, decisions must consider the importance of preserving, supporting and respecting the child's Indigenous identity, culture and traditions.
Stability and continuity	Decisions must consider the importance of stability and continuity to the child.
Enduring connections	Decisions must consider the importance of lasting relationships with family, friends, caregivers and others.
Cultural connections	Decisions must consider the importance of connections with the child's culture and communities.
Placement considerations	<p>When considering if the child should be placed outside their family, this decision must consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The benefits of placing them with extended family or people they already have a relationship with. The benefits of placing them as close as possible to their home community. For Indigenous children, the benefits of placing them where their identity, culture and traditions are respected and supported. The benefits of placing the child where their family, culture and spiritual heritage are valued. The child's mental, emotional, spiritual and physical needs and their current stage of development. The benefits of having permanent and formalized ties to people who care.
Family violence	If the child has been exposed to family violence, decisions must support family members and try to prevent removing the child from abused family member.
Support transitions to adulthood	For youth, the plans for care should help them prepare for the transition to independence and adulthood.
Support those with disabilities	If the child has a disability, the plans for care should address their unique needs.
Prevent unnecessary delays	There should be no unreasonable delay in making or implementing a decision respecting the child.

* See An Act For Strong Families Building Stronger Communities for exact wording in the legislation.