

Guiding Principles
For Iowa's Future Child Welfare System
December 2015

Safety for children emerges and is enhanced when we do all the following:

1. Families, children, youth and caregivers will be treated with dignity and respect while having a voice in decisions that affect them.
2. The ideal place for children is with their families; therefore, we will ensure children remain in their own homes whenever safely possible.
3. When services away from the family are necessary, children will receive them in the most family-like setting and together with siblings whenever possible.
4. Permanency connections with siblings and caring and supportive adults will be preserved and encouraged.
5. Children will be reunited with their families and siblings as soon as safely possible.
6. Community stakeholders and tribes will be actively engaged to protect children and support families.
7. Services will be tailored to families and children to meet their unique needs.
8. Child welfare professionals will be supported through ongoing development and mentoring to promote success and retention.
9. Leadership will be demonstrated within all levels of the child welfare system.
10. Decision making will be outcome based, resource-driven and continuously evaluated for improvement.