



## Policy: Family Assessment

**ChildNet Number: CN 004.016**

**Original Approved Date: May 16, 2003**

**Policy Revised Date(s): April 12, 2010; June 16, 2010; August 22, 2014**

**Policy Sunset Date:**

**COA Standard(s): CR 1.04, 1.07, AS 2.02, 2.06, FKC 2.01, 2.04, 2.05, 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, 3.04**

### **Statement of Policy:**

ChildNet's policy is to provide an ongoing assessment process that begins at initial contact with the family and is continuous throughout the time ChildNet is involved with the family in accordance with state and federal laws.

**Board Chair's Signature:**

**Date:**

8/22/14



## Procedure: Family Assessment

**ChildNet Number: CN 004.016**

**Original Approved Date: May 16, 2003**

**Procedure Revised Date(s): April 12, 2010; June 16, 2010; August 22, 2014,  
January 11, 2017, May 8, 2024**

**Procedure Sunset Date:**

**COA Standard(s): CR 1.04, 1.07, AS 2.02, 2.06, FKC 2.01, 2.04, 2.05, 3.01, 3.02, 3.03,  
3.04**

### **Definitions (If any):**

Assessment: An evaluation, which utilizes professional expertise and skills in the collection and analysis of data to understand and describe the nature of service needs of an individual, family, or group.

### **Statement of Procedure:**

The Ongoing Family Functioning Assessment involves the family and the child in a joint effort to identify and analyze the family strengths and resources as well as the contributing factors and underlying conditions that contribute to the child's safety and risk of maltreatment, recognizing that the child and the family are the experts on themselves. Immediate family members are engaged in the assessment process identifying extended family members and other supports available. Engagement of custodial and non-custodial fathers is critical to child well-being and may lead to the identification of other extended family members. Engagement begins with the moment the family comes into contact with the agency and involves;

- a) Identifying strengths, protective capacities and resilience in parents;
- b) Building relationships with parents through empathy and compassion;
- c) Promoting caregivers and young people involved in the system as the experts for matters concerning their families, and
- d) Supporting the use of community-based resources to achieve positive outcomes.

The format used for the family assessment will include the approved family functioning assessment tool in the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS). In addition, to the family functioning assessment, children and/or families receive a Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment conducted by community providers.

The case manager conducts a home visit with the child within two business days to further the assessment process for children in out-of-home care as well as those under in-home supervision. The Family Functioning Assessment is the formalized assessment process



which is built from the assessment completed during the investigation stage of the case. Furthermore, the case manager receives the present danger assessment and safety plan completed by investigations to be able to assess ongoing. These initial tools for assessment inform decision making, identify suitable resource families, and assist in the development of safety plans with parents and resource families as needed.

A. The purpose of the family functioning assessment is to document and describe the specific family functioning and dynamics across six domains that must be addressed and baseline measurement of parental protective capacities and child needs which will be used to evaluate progress to determine:

1. Whether the child is able to live safely in the current home or placement, safely return to the home or whether the child needs to remain in an out-of-home placement.
2. Whether the family can provide a permanent and stable home in which the child can remain free from abuse or neglect.
3. The changes, if any, the family must make to provide a safe home for the child.
4. The needs the family has that hinder them in providing a safe and stable home for the child.
5. The unique resources and strengths the family possesses that can be used to provide for the child's safety and the family's ability to provide a safe environment.
6. The family functioning assessment aids in the development of the family's service/case plan. In addition, the family will be engaged in the decision making process in the development of this service/case plan. See CN 003.006, Case Supervision.

B. General Requirements:

1. Families participate in an individualized, strengths-based, family focused, culturally responsive assessment, which includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Age
  - b. Developmental level
  - c. Ethnicity
  - d. Gender identity and expression
  - e. Geographic location,
  - f. Immigration/refugee history and status
  - g. Language,
  - h. Political status,



- i. Race
    - j. Sexual Orientation
    - k. Tribal affiliation,
    - l. Religion, and
    - m. Cultural background and tradition.
  2. The family assessment must be conducted in a strengths-based, culturally-responsive trauma informed manner to identify resources that can increase service participation and support the achievement of agreed upon goals.
  3. Efforts are made to engage all family members and extended family members where appropriate. However, family members may refuse to participate unless mandated by law or court order and must be informed about the consequences of such refusal. The following areas are discussed and documented during the assessment process:
    - a. The child and family's telling of their story;
    - b. The presence and impact of trauma on the child, parents, and extended family members including kinship caregivers;
    - c. child, parent, and family strengths and protective factors;
    - d. child, parent, and family needs across life domains;
    - e. Individual and family functioning over time and historical factors that have contributed to the concerns identified in initial risk and safety assessments and screenings;
    - f. child and family characteristics pertinent to selecting an appropriate placement or to ensuring stable placement with kin;
    - g. identification of extended family system and the dynamics of family relationships;
    - h. identification of informal supports as well as community and cultural resources and connections for the child and the parents; and
    - i. exploration of contributing factors such as poverty, domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, and chronic health problems.
  4. The Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessments, and Ongoing Family Functioning Assessment assist in identifying placement and service needs for the children and family. The ongoing informal and formal assessments progress update inform permanency staffings, safety planning, the Judicial Review Social Study Report.
- C. Specific Requirements:
1. The assessment process is initiated through individual meetings:



- a. with the child, within 72 business hours of initial placement or any subsequent placement
  - b. with parents within the first two weeks of placement; and
  - c. with resource parents within the first two weeks of placement.
2. The family functioning assessment completed by the child advocate will build upon the investigative assessment developed by the Child Protective Investigator (CPI) and be completed within 30 days of case transfer.
  3. Ongoing assessment via a progress update must be conducted no less than every 90 days until termination of services to assess and address changes within the family dynamics, protective capacities, and child needs.
  4. In addition, the family functioning assessment should be updated via a progress update within 30 days as changes occur in the family conditions or circumstances, such as:
    - a. all factors affecting family strengths or protective capacities
    - b. identified risks to the child
    - c. signs of present or impending danger (i.e. including new abuse reports)
    - d. change in family structure,
    - e. new baby/sibling born to the parents
    - f. arrest/incarceration
    - g. loss of job/income or home
    - h. death of a siblin

#### D. Additional Progress Update Requirements

1. A Progress Update shall be used to assess the parent(s) protective capacities, home environment and backgrounds for Reunification.
2. Within 10 business days of starting a Progress Update to reunify, the child welfare professional must update local criminal history checks, including required fingerprint submission for any household members 18 years of age or older.

**President's Signature:** Larry N. Rein **Date:** 6/3/2024