



Series: Operating Procedures **COA:** Net 6.03
Procedure Name: Family Assessments **CFOP:** 175-41
Procedure Number: OP-1041
Revision #/Date: (2)2/04/09
Effective Date: 11/29/04

Applicable to: All CBCB Staff and Contract Providers

SUBJECT: Family Assessment

PURPOSE: establishes the minimum standards for the assessment of families involved with CBC of Brevard services.

PROCEDURE:

References

Florida Administrative Code 65C-30.005

Note: CFOP: 175-41 repealed 10/31/08

Definitions

“Assessment” means a process and a product that documents the process. The assessment process is one that begins at initial contact with the family and is continuous throughout the time CBC of Brevard is involved with the family. The process involves the care manager and the family in a joint effort to identify and analyze the family strengths and resources as well as factors that contribute to child safety risks. At certain times there are various forms or formats used to document the assessment at that point in time.

a. Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to determine:

- a. Whether the child currently can live safely in the home.
- b. Whether the family can provide a permanent and stable home in which the child can remain free from abuse or neglect.
- c. The changes, if any, the family must make to provide a safe home for the child.
- d. The needs the family has that hinder them in providing a safe and stable home for the child.

- e. The unique resources and strengths the family possesses that can be used to improve the child's and family's well-being.

b. General Requirements

- a. All assessments must be conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the social, economic and cultural environment of the family.
- b. Family members should actively be involved in identification of any significant issues and solutions to whatever problems may be discussed in the assessment.
- c. When any assessment is documented in writing, the viewpoints of family members should be clearly reflected.
- d. Assessments must include input from the guardian ad litem and any professional who has knowledge of the child and/or family. If input from any party or participant conflicts with CBC of Brevard viewpoint, it is crucial to document differences of opinion. This gives decision-makers the best opportunity to make informed and appropriate decisions. Omitting input that represents differing viewpoints can result in faulty decision-making and subsequent harm to the child.

c. Specific Requirements

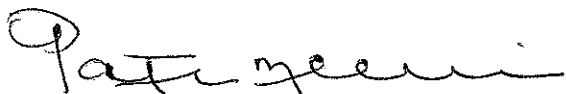
- a. Initial Assessment and Its Relationship to Safety Planning. An assessment of family strengths and risks to the child must be conducted upon initial contact with the family and completely documented within 15 working days following the Team staffing.
 - (1) The purpose of conducting the assessment upon initial contact is to determine whether a safety plan is necessary to reduce risk to the child. A safety plan is the identification of an immediate action that will keep the child safe from harm when a threatening situation is present in the child's home. The safety plan may include taking the child into custody or helping the family to make necessary changes to reduce the risk to the child.
 - (2) Safety plans must be periodically reassessed and updated. The reassessment of the safety plan must focus on its appropriateness and be reflected in the chronological case notes.
- b. Ongoing Assessment and Its Relationship to Case Planning For all children and families receiving services, the assessment process is a critically important component of the case plan. Again, the strengths, resources, and the factors related to child safety risks are examined so that interventions and supports can be matched to the family's needs.
 - (1) The following are the elements to be considered in the assessment which forms the basis of the case plan:
 - (a) A factual summary of any major casework activity, such as service provision or referral that has occurred prior to performing the initial family assessment.

- (b) Family composition and relationships, including those between the spouse and paramour, parent and child, paramour and child, parent/child/paramour and any other household members.
- (c) Stressors and other factors relating to the abuse, neglect, or abandonment, i.e, unemployment, chronic disability, etc.
- (d) Home environment, including the physical and emotional environment and whether the child's basic needs were and are being met.
- (e) Support systems available to the family.
- (f) Services or supports in the community available to the family.
- (g) The family's understanding of and response to CBC of Brevard's intervention.
- (h) Other family factors, child or adult, affecting family strengths or risk to the child.
- (i) History of the parent being abused as a child or adult.
- (j) The parent's age, physical condition, emotional state, education level, and intellectual capability.
- (k) The parent's skill and knowledge in the use of discipline.
- (l) The presence or absence of substance abuse or chemical dependency in the household.
- (m) Recognition of service needs and willingness and ability to access services available by members of the household.
- (n) Prior history of the child being abused, neglected, or abandoned.
- (o) Alleged perpetrator's access to the child.
- (p) The age of the child and visibility (i.e., the extent to which the child, in the child's normal activities, is seen by others) in the community.
- (q) The physical, emotional and cognitive development status of the child.
- (r) An explanation of the family, adult and child factors that are considered to be skills and resources and how they will help the family to resolve problems and reduce the risk to the child.
- (s) An explanation of the family, adult and child factors that must be resolved to ensure the child's safety.
- (t) An explanation of the outcomes that must be achieved in order to achieve permanency as specified in the current case plan.

- (u) An explanation of the services needed by the child and family to meet the identified case plan goals and a statement of the services agreed to and planned by the care manager and family. It will include both the services mandated by the court and any services agreed to by the care manager and the family, and planned or expected initiation and completion dates for each service.
 - (2) The case plan is a record of the tasks and activities designed to change the conditions or the behaviors that cause the child to be at risk or harm. The tasks and activities are based on the strengths and child safety risk factors and needs of the family identified in the assessment.
- c. Ongoing Assessment and Its Relationship to Safety Plan and Case Plan Updates
The child may be living with the child's parents, with relatives, non-relatives, or in a substitute care home or facility. Continuous, ongoing assessment of the safety plan, if applicable, and the case plan must be reflected as often as possible in the chronological case file notes.
 - (1) Safety Plan If the child has a safety plan, is it appropriate to the child's current circumstances? If the child does not have a safety plan, do the child's current circumstances indicate one is needed?
 - (2) Case Plan Are the services and tasks in the case plan still appropriate for the family? Are they effective in reducing risk to the child? Is the permanency goal still appropriate based on the progress noted and based on input from all parties? Do the services, tasks or goals need to be revised based on changing needs or changing circumstances?
- d. Ongoing Assessment at Six-Month Intervals At least every six (6) months, the progress toward the permanency goal of all individual parties involved in the case plan must be reviewed by those parties. This may be conducted as part of the Family Team Conference process.
 - (1) For families receiving protective or post-placement supervision, the progress assessment is documented in the Judicial Review Social Study Report. The progress assessment must include a factual summary of major casework activity that has occurred during the past six months, including:
 - (a) A discussion of all services received by the family, including any services that are still needed to meet case plan goals;
 - (b) An explanation of any changes, both improvement and deterioration, in the family adult and child factors identified six months previously; and,
 - (c) A discussion of any new factors that affect family strengths, risk to the child or signs of emerging danger, as well as any changes in planned services or the permanency goal.
 - (2) For families receiving foster care/adoption services, the six-month family progress assessment is documented on the Judicial or Administrative Review Social Study Report/Case Plan Update form which is completed at six-month intervals.

- (3) Six-Month Family Progress Assessments and Judicial or Administrative Review Social Study Report/Case Plan Updates must be signed and dated by the care manager and the supervisor. Families receiving protective or post-placement supervision must be given an opportunity to review and sign the assessment as well as receive a copy. Families receiving foster care and adoption services must be given a copy of the report 48 hours prior to the court hearing, citizen review or administrative review.
- e. Assessment Prior to Reunification or Any Modification of Placement This is a joint effort of the care manager and the receiving family and includes input from the guardian ad litem, the current caretaker and any professionals working with the family.
- (1) The assessment must be documented by the completion of an Assessment of Family Strengths and Risks form.
 - (2) If any risk factors are noted during the assessment, these must be discussed thoroughly with family members and clearly noted for the court in CBC of Brevard's written communication with the court, if the court is involved.
 - (3) If there are differing viewpoints or opinions among the other professionals and CBC of Brevard staff, these differing opinions must also be clearly noted in CBC of Brevard's written communication with the court, if the court is involved.
- f. Assessment Prior to Termination of Services This is a joint effort of the care manager and family and includes input from the guardian ad litem, and any professionals that have worked or are currently involved with the family.
- (1) The assessment must be documented by the completion of an Assessment of Family Strengths and Risks form.
 - (2) If any risk factors are noted during the assessment, these must be discussed thoroughly with family members and clearly noted for the court in CBC of Brevard's written communication with the court, if the court is involved.
 - (3) If there are differing viewpoints or opinions among the other professionals and CBC of Brevard staff, these differing opinions must also be clearly noted in the CBC of Brevard's written communication with the court, if the court is involved.

BY DIRECTION OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:



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