

Family Development Interview Guide

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Family Development Interview Guide

Instructions: The Family Development Interview Guide is a tool designed to assist the Family Development Consultant (FDC) to determine the scores that families receive on the Family Development Matrix. These questions will serve as prompts for relevant information from families so that the Matrix can be scored. Use the answers to determine the family's threshold in each life area and circle the score that most appropriately corresponds to the Family's condition. In many cases the criteria are self-explanatory, but included below the questions in each section is an explanation where necessary. On completion of all life areas, enter the individual scores into the cover sheet of the Matrix and add together for a total score. Further interviewing may be needed to get further background information on the family and to comprehensively complete Action Plans. Refer to the Family Development Interview Guide Supplemental Questions document for suggestions for further interview questions.

Income

- 1) How many people are in the household?
- 2) Determine the Total Family Income.
 - a) How much does the family make on a pretax basis each month? (If the family can supply pay stubs use that information) Is it an hourly, salaried, or fixed rate? What types of deductions are taken from the paycheck (child support, garnishments, etc.)?
 - b) Are there any other income sources for the family? Does the family receive child support? If not, are they eligible? Does the family receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)? If not, are they eligible? Does the family receive SSI/SSD? If not, are they eligible?
 - c) Does the family make child support payments for children not in the household? Is there any unsecured debt (such as credit cards, rent-to-own, check cashing, etc.)? If so, how much debt and how much are the monthly payments?
- *When there is a complete picture of the total family income (add all sources, and subtract any deductions for garnishments, child support, or unsecured debt), compare the total family income to the number in the household. Use the official Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Poverty Level to determine the family's percentage of OMB Poverty Level and circle the score of the range the family's level falls under. OMB releases poverty levels yearly.*

Example: A family of four has a monthly Total Family Income \$1,700. The OMB Poverty Level for a family of four in 2003 is \$1,533 (the "poverty level" is considered 100% of Poverty). Divide the Total Family Income by the Poverty Level ($\$1,700 / \$1,533$). This family's percentage of OMB Poverty Level is 111%, which would place them in the Vulnerable Threshold of the Matrix.

Adult Education

- 1) Does the client have a High School Diploma or GED?
- 2) Has the client ever attended college? Did they receive a degree? If yes, in what did they receive a degree and where did they receive it? What type of degree is it?
- 3) Does the client have a technical or professional license or certificate? If so, when and where did they receive it? What is the license or certificate for? How long was the training program?
- *GED refers to the General Educational Development test. A successful score on the GED test is generally considered an equivalency to a High School Diploma. In Stable, a certification refers to vocational training. These courses are short, usually lasting up to a year, and have a concentrated curriculum or job-training focus. Examples include cosmetology, paralegal services, secretarial, medical assistance, etc. In Self-Sufficient, equivalencies to an Associates Degree might include certain technical diplomas or apprenticeships received from technical colleges. They typically require longer or more concentrated training than certifications do.*

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Examples here might include accounting, dental hygienist, pharmacy technician, automotive maintenance, etc. In Thriving, equivalencies to a Bachelor's Degree or higher might include certain technical diplomas or apprenticeships that typically require extensive training. Some examples might be computer programmer/analyst, carpenter, millwright, machinist, etc.

Employment

- 1) Is the client currently employed? If yes, where?
 - 2) Is the employment full-time or part-time? Is it permanent, short-term, seasonal, or temporary?
 - 3) If the client is currently employed, are they working in a field in which they want to work? Are they working in the field in which they received a degree or certification?
- *Full-time employment is 36 or more hours per week. Underemployed is a situation in which a worker is employed, but not in the desired capacity, whether in terms of compensation, hours, or level of skill or experience. For example, a person earning minimum wage at a full-time job will usually be considered underemployed despite their skill level, because of the low compensation. Likewise, someone possessing a Master's Degree but working at a fast food restaurant would also be considered underemployed, because their employment does not match their skill level. A Degreed or Professional field refers to an occupation requiring extensive and special education or experience, and usually is accompanied by higher salaries or wages.*

Housing

- 1) Have the client describe their living arrangements. Do they rent or own? Are they living with others, such as family or friends? Are they living in a shelter?
 - 2) Is the house in which the client lives safe and secure? Do the doors and windows lock? Is the house in disrepair? Are there exposed wires? Does the family feel safe and secure?
 - 3) Does the client receive any sort of subsidy to assist with their housing payment? Does the client live in public housing? Does the client receive Housing Choice Voucher Program assistance? Is the client receiving any sort of financial assistance for their rent from any other source (trustee, church, social service agency, etc.)?
 - 4) Have the client describe the housing payment history for the past six months. Have the bills been paid on time? Is there a balance carried forward some months? If so, what is the balance? Are there any eviction or foreclosure notices?
- *A family is homeless if they have no housing, particularly if they are living on the streets or in a homeless shelter. Temporary housing is living in transitional housing or with family or friends. The family is vulnerable if they are renting or own a home but are significantly behind in rent or mortgage payments or have received eviction or foreclosure notices. A family is stable if they receive some form of regular assistance with their rental payments. This is typically through public housing or the Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly Section 8), but also includes any assistance from other organizations that is depended on on a regular basis.*

Food

- 1) Have the client describe their eating habits. How many meals do they eat per day? Do they ever go hungry? Do they eat snacks?
- 2) Discuss with the client any food subsidies that they may receive. Do they receive food stamps? If not, are they eligible? Do the children receive free or reduced breakfast or lunch at school? If not, are they eligible? Do they receive WIC? If not, are they eligible? Has the family used a food pantry or soup kitchen recently? If so, how many times or how often?
- 3) Does the client have a refrigerator and stove? If so, do they work? Does the client have pots, pans, cooking utensils, and eating utensils? Does the client have a microwave?

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- *Food pantries/soup kitchens refer to places a family can go to receive free food to take home or prepared meals. Food subsidies are forms of public assistance for nutritional purposes. These include food stamps, the free and reduced breakfast and lunch program, and WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) program. A family moves to stable if food subsidies and their own income meet the needs of the family (i.e. they don't need to use food pantries or soup kitchens in addition). The family moves to self-sufficient if they do not need food subsidies to meet their needs. A family is thriving if they can typically shop for food of types and brands to their taste, meet basic nutritional requirements, and they have all the cooking utensils they need to prepare meals.*

Child Care

- 1) Does the client's children attend child care (Child Care is defined as school, day care, preschool, or home care)? If so, how often do they attend? Is the child care regular and consistent? If the children do not attend child care or not every day, why?
 - 2) Is it the child care the client wants their children to attend? Is the child care safe?
 - 3) Is the child care affordable and accessible? Is the client receiving any assistance to help with the cost of child care? Is the child care geographically located in an area that is relatively easy for the family to access?
- *Child care refers to any type of care given to children of the family, which includes school. The family is in crisis if children are left unsupervised or in unsafe care. Child care is irregular or inconsistent if a family cannot rely on it on a regular basis. A family is stable if they have reliable care but receives financial assistance for the cost of it (school is not considered subsidized care). A family is self-sufficient if they pay for the care on their own, but may not be able to afford the care of their choosing.*

Health Care

- 1) What type of health insurance does the client have, if any? Who in the household is covered?
 - 2) If some in the household are covered by public health insurance, what type is it (i.e., Medicaid, Medicare, Hoosier Healthwise, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP))?
 - 3) Discuss the family's health care providers. Do they have a primary care physician? Is the client satisfied with the care that they receive? If not, what would they change? Is access to care convenient?
- *Public Insurance refers to any health insurance that is publicly provided, such as Medicaid, Medicare, Hoosier Healthwise, CHIP, etc. A primary care physician is a first point of contact for health care, and is usually a general or family practitioner. Private insurance is any health insurance not publicly provided, like employee health insurance.*

Transportation

- 1) Does the client have a vehicle?
 - a) If so, is it reliable? Do they ever have problems with it?
 - b) Do they have a driver's license? Is it current? What is the client's driving history? Are there many accidents and traffic violations? Does the client have car insurance? Is it registered with current plates?
 - c) Is there a loan on the car? If so, are the payments current?
- 2) Is public transportation available to the client? If so, does it generally meet their needs? Is access to public transportation generally convenient (i.e., the timing and routes to work, child care, etc.)

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- *A family is vulnerable if they rely on public transportation or other means of transportation (walking, riding with others, etc.) but it significantly limits their choices in other life areas. This might include a lack of employment opportunities or lack of adequate child care because they can't get to areas where these are available, or they can't get to them conveniently enough. A family is stable if they have a car but it is in danger of breaking down or is in danger of being repossessed, or if they are in danger of losing the ability to drive it legally.*

Utilities

- 1) Are the client's utilities on? Are the lights on? Is the water on? Is the furnace/air conditioning on?
 - 2) Have the client describe their payment history for their utilities over the past six months. Have the bills been paid on time? Have the bills been paid in full? Is there a balance carried forward some months? If so, what is the balance? Are disconnect notices received? Is there a current disconnect notice? Are the utilities in someone else's name (outside the household)?
 - 3) Is the client's home weatherized? Has insulation been installed? Has the furnace been looked at to determine if it is operating safely and efficiently? Have the registers been looked at to determine if they are leaky? Is the water heater insulated?
- *A family is in crisis if any of their utilities (heating, electricity, water) are disconnected. A family is self-sufficient if they pay their bills consistently but the home is inefficient, thereby increasing their utility burden. This might include lack of insulation, poor air sealing in the home, or inefficient furnaces, water heaters, etc.*

Support Systems

- 1) Does the client feel they can rely on family or friends for support when they need it? Does the client receive support from sources outside their family or friends? If so, from whom does the client receive support? Is the support the family receives positive?
 - 2) Discuss with the family their social service needs. What type of needs does the client have? Does the client access services as needed?
 - 3) Is the family involved with Child Protective Services, the Division of Family and Children, or the court system?
 - 4) What type of volunteering, if any, do family members do (i.e., public service, at children's school, social service, etc.)? Are they involved with social groups (i.e., religious organizations, clubs, professional organizations, etc.)?
- *A family is in crisis if they are isolated from family or community, or if the supportive systems in place have a negative impact on the family (like "friends" that provide access to drugs, or extended family members that borrow money all the time). A family is vulnerable if involved with CPS, DFC, or the court system. These supportive systems, while often viewed as negative and certainly indicative of family issues, do have a positive impact on some element of the family unit. Case management support is support received by individuals working closely with the family to alleviate needs and accomplish goals. They are typically from social service or faith-based organizations. A family is thriving if they give support outside the family unit, which usually indicates that the family's supportive needs have been fully met and have the ability to provide the same to others.*

Family Interaction

- 1) Has the client or anyone in the household ever experienced domestic violence or child abuse and neglect? If so, to whom did the abuse/neglect occur and when? Was the perpetrator ever identified? Have they been removed from the household?
- 2) Are there any issues relating to domestic violence or child abuse/neglect currently happening in the client's family? If so, discuss the situation. Is anyone receiving counseling?

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- 3) Discuss the family situation with the client. Is the interaction generally positive? Do family members generally support and respect one another? Is there a lot of fighting or arguing? Has the makeup of the family generally been stable? Are there family members absent from the household? Do family members come and go?
- *A family is in crisis if domestic abuse (in whatever form, violence, verbal, sexual, etc.) or neglect is currently present in the home. A family is vulnerable if there is little to no interaction between members, or if there is excessive negative interaction. "Stability" refers to the stableness of the family unit in the home or family, i.e., the degree to which all family members are present on a regular basis. (Divorce, especially immediately following, constitutes a lack of stability in the home.) Positive interaction is a caring environment, open communication, positive support for all members, etc. A family is thriving if it has a full history of positive interaction and includes a full history of stability in the household (in most cases divorce, domestic abuse, or neglect has a negative impact on the family unit that remains with that unit forever).*

Addictions

- 1) Has anyone in the household ever been involved in substance abuse? If yes, explain? Are they currently in a recovery program? Did they complete a recovery program? How long has it been since the abuse stopped?
- 2) Does anyone in this household use illegal drugs? Do you feel anyone in your family uses alcohol or legal drugs in excess? Has anyone in the household ever lost a job, or not gotten a job, because of substance use? Has anyone in the household ever been arrested because of substance use? Has anyone in the household ever had any problems because of substance use? If yes, describe.
- 3) Has anyone in the household ever been involved in other addictive behaviors that negatively impact the family (like gambling, sexual addictions, eating disorders, etc.)? If yes, explain. Are they currently in a recovery program? Did they complete a recovery program? How long has it been since the abuse stopped?
- *This life area is primarily a yes or no answer, but the thresholds beyond crisis refer to the likelihood that the addictive behavior will return. In general, the more treatment a person receives and the more time that passes since the addictive behavior, it is less likely there will be a relapse. If a person has ever been "addicted" to something, regardless of how much time since, they are more likely to relapse than someone who has never suffered from the addiction. Thus, only families with no history of abuse can truly be thriving.*