

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL</b>	
	<b>Chapter 5:</b> General Case Management	<b>Effective Date:</b> January 1, 2009
	<b>Section 2:</b> Gathering Case Information	<b>Version:</b> 2

**POLICY**

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will gather as much information as possible about the child and the family to assist in completing a thorough assessment of the functional strengths and underlying needs of the family. This information will be used when developing the [Case Plan \(SF 2956/DCS 0046\)](#) and establishing eligibility for federal funding. See separate policy, [5.8 Developing the Case Plan](#) and the [Family Functional Assessment Field Guide](#) for suggested questions in each functional area.

Code References  
N/A

**PROCEDURE**

- The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:
1. Collect at least the following information:
    - a. [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114/CW0310\)](#),
    - b. [Assessment of Alleged Abuse or Neglect Report \(SF 113/CW0311\)](#),
    - c. Safety Assessment,
    - d. Risk Assessment,
    - e. Strengths and Needs Assessment,
    - f. Assessment notes, photographs, and recordings,
    - g. Educational information,
    - h. [Medical Passport \(DCS PAM 036\(R2/3-06\)\)](#),
    - i. Family Network Diagram (See Chapter 12, [Family Network Diagram Instruction Guide](#)),
    - j. Documentation for determining eligibility for federal funding, and
    - k. Provider reports;
  2. Record all pertinent contacts pertaining to assessment in the Indiana Child Welfare Information System;
  3. Analyze all information as it pertains to safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren);
  4. Provide a summary of all pertinent information to the Child and Family Team (CFT), for the purpose of developing an appropriate [Case Plan \(SF 2956/DCS 0046\)](#) to meet the needs of the child and family; and
  5. Provide relevant information to service providers on the [Service Referral Form](#).

## PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

## FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Family Network Diagram Instruction Guide](#)
2. [Family Functional Assessment Field Guide](#) – Available on the Indiana Practice Model SharePoint
3. [Service Referral Form](#) – Available in the Indiana Child Welfare Information System
4. [Case Plan \(SF 2956/DCS 0046\)](#) – Available in the Indiana Child Welfare Information System
5. [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114/CW0310\)](#) – Available in the Indiana Child Welfare Information System
6. [Assessment of Alleged Abuse or Neglect Report \(SF 113/CW0311\)](#) – Available in the Indiana Child Welfare Information System
7. [Medical Passport \(DCS PAM 036\(R2/3-06\)\)](#) – Available in Hard Copy

## RELATED INFORMATION

### **Family Network Diagram**

This tool combines the Ecomap and Genogram to provide valuable information on genealogy and community resources available to the family. The use of this tool recognizes the family as the most knowledgeable source of information. See [Family Network Diagram Instruction Guide](#) for more information.

### **Areas of Assessment**

Assessment is an ongoing process that happens at every interaction point with the family. Throughout the life of the case, the FCM will strive to assess the functional strengths and underlying needs for each family member in the following areas:

1. Safety;
2. Well-being;
3. Domestic violence;
4. Sexual abuse;
5. Living conditions;
6. Financial aspects and employment;
7. Education;
8. Formal and informal supports available to caregivers;
9. Resources available to the family;
10. Interaction between caregivers and child(ren);
11. Academic or developmental level of the child(ren) and the parent, guardian, or custodian;
12. Relationship between adult caregivers and child(ren);
13. Recent losses;
14. Any apparent family physical or mental health issues;

15. Substance abuse challenges;
16. Stability and transitions; and
17. Permanence.

As the FCM is gathering case information from the family and service providers, the most accurate and up to date information should be documented in ICWIS and the case file, as needed. For example, if an item can be scanned into ICWIS, it does not need to be saved in the hard file. The following details regarding persons living in the household of the removed child are needed:

1. The relationship of household members to the removed child;
2. Sources and amounts of income for each household member in the month of removal;
3. Each parent's place of residence in the month of removal;
4. Each parent's employment status; and
5. Any physical or mental illnesses of one or both parents that would prevent the parent from providing care and support to the child.

**Note:** These details can be used in determining a child's eligibility for Title IV-E Foster Care, Title IV-E waiver and/or Title IV-A Emergency Assistance.

### **Functional Strengths**

The depth of an individual and family's capacity that enables them to endure and cope with difficult situations, to bounce back in the face of significant trauma, the ability to use external challenges as a stimulus for growth, to excel despite the barriers they may be presented, and the use of social supports, family rituals and traditions, as a source of resilience.<sup>1</sup>

### **Underlying Needs**

These are the underlying needs in the family that prevent the children from being safe. The family's beliefs, values, and knowledge that leads to behaviors that are either protective or not. The family, with help and support from the team, identify the needs, issues, obstacles, barriers, or problems to address in order to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for the children. The first meeting includes an honest and complete disclosure by the team of all the identified needs with the understanding that, over time, subsequent CFT Meetings will address each of the needs, according to the priority established by the team.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from McQuaide and Ehreulich, 1997