## Administrative Policies and Procedures: 11.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject:</th>
<th>Assessment Intervention Process and Tools</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority:</td>
<td>TCA 37-5-105 (3), 37-5-106, 37-1-137</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standards:</td>
<td><strong>DCS Practice Model Standards</strong>: 2-105B; 2-109B; 2-110B; 5-201; 5-204; 6-400; 6-507B; 6-508B; 6-513C; 8-101; 8-206B; 10-101; 11-101; 11-103; 11-302A; 11-307A; 11-310B; 11-315B; <strong>PREA</strong>: 115.341</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application:</td>
<td>To All Department of Children’s Services Employees</td>
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### Policy Statement:

The Department shall utilize comprehensive, uniform, family focused, assessment interventions to provide a communication basis for understanding the permanency and treatment needs of children and families. Assessment intervention shall be a continuous process throughout the life of the case.

### Purpose:

To engage children and families, understand their needs and strengths and develop a treatment or service plan that addresses identified needs. The purpose of the assessment intervention process is to support case planning and level of care decision-making and to allow the Department to monitor service outcomes.

### Procedures:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A. Documentation of the assessment intervention process</th>
<th><strong>Family Functional Assessment Process (FFA)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Family Functional Assessment is designed to support the DCS practice wheel, the guiding principles of Tennessee child welfare practice, and high-quality casework.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The FFA is not an assessment tool. It is an ongoing, written record of the information attained through the assessment process and successful engagement of family members, providers, and other key stakeholders in that process. Refer to <strong>Protocol for Family Functional Assessment</strong> and <strong>Family Functional Assessment</strong> located in TFACTS for additional information.</td>
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<th>B. Assessment intervention tools 1.</th>
<th><strong>Child Abuse/Neglect Intake Assessment Tool</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>A tool used by the Child Abuse Hotline upon receipt of a report of abuse/neglect to gather all available information to determine whether the report meets DCS criteria to initiate a CPS case. If the report meets DCS criteria to initiate a case, the tool is also used to determine how quickly face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim is initiated for assigned CPS cases (See <strong>Child Abuse/Neglect Intake Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual</strong>).</td>
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2. **Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)**

A multi-purpose intervention tool that supports level of care planning and decision-making that provides a context for communication and collaboration while managing service outcomes. The CANS consists of sixty-five (65) core items in five domains rated for all children and parents or unpaid caregivers. (see [CANS Case Protocol](#)). For youth who score a “2” or “3” on the identified high risk items on the CANS Assessment, follow the steps listed in the [High Risk Protocol](#).

3. **Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST)**

An assessment intervention tool that addresses the needs of families who are at risk for DCS involvement through the CPS process. The FAST consists of thirty-two (32) items used to assess all family members in the home, identify service needs, and to support care planning and decision making for the family. (See [Protocol for Completion of the Family Advocacy & Support Tool (FAST)](#) for additional information).

4. **Independent Living Assessments**

Life Skills Assessment tools are used to assess a youth’s knowledge of the following areas:

a) Permanency;

b) Daily Living;

c) Housing and Money Management;

d) Self-Care;

e) Relationships and Communication;

f) Work and Study Life

g) Career and Education Planning; and

h) Looking Forward

♦ The assessment results are useful for goal setting, program and permanency planning, and for measuring progress on life skill acquisition.

♦ Eligible youth (ages 14 and above) and young adults as defined by DCS Policy [16.51, Independent Living and Transition Planning](#), receive an individualized life skills assessment of strengths and needs. The Family Service Worker (FSW) administers the assessment in advance of Permanency Plan development. The assessment is completed no later than fourteen (14) days after a youth enters custody in order to fully integrate the results into the youth’s Independent Living/Family Permanency Plan. It is updated at least annually thereafter. One of the tools used for Independent Living Assessments is the Casey Life Skills Assessment. Instructions for completing this assessment and the most updated testing instrument addressed is located in the [Identifying and Accessing Independent Living Services Manual](#). Storyboards that describe how to administer the Casey Life Skills Assessment and entry of the results in TFACTS are located on the
### Office of Independent Living web page:

**Note:** There are circumstances that may impede the ability to complete a life skills assessment in advance of the initial CFTM/Permanency Plan development. These circumstances and alternative measures are outlined in the *Identifying and Accessing Independent Living Services Manual.*

5. **Profile of Parenting Study (POPS)**

A tool designed to assist in identifying and developing prospective resource parents. The foundation for POPS is the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment. Staff are trained and certified to use the *Profile of Parenting Study* assessment tool.

6. Time frames for implementation/completion of assessments and those required for each case type or program are outlined in assessment training, DCS policies and procedures, and/or current practice.

### C. Goals of assessment intervention

The goals of the assessment intervention process are to:

1. Identify functional strengths;
2. Identify needs in order to access appropriate services;
3. Maximize communication about needs and strengths;
4. Support individual case planning;
5. Support level of care decision-making;
6. Allow for monitoring of service outcomes;

### D. Responsibility

All employees who work with child and family assessment intervention tools shall ensure that the assessments are conducted in such a way to promote communication, service coordination and outcome management and contain current and accurate information on the child/youth/family for each case type or program.

### E. Training

All employees who utilize assessment intervention tools receive appropriate initial and annual training and certification. Assessment training and certification is documented in each employee’s training record and maintained by the Office of Professional Development.

### F. Health assessments

Part of the assessment process for children/youth in DCS custody is related to the child's/youth's medical and behavioral health. This includes assessment of immediate health concerns as well as ongoing health related issues. The basis for screening and follow-up of the medical and behavioral health needs of children/youth in DCS custody is Early, Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT). All health related concerns are addressed through the EPSDT process.
Refer to DCS policies:
- **20.5 Health Care Delivery at Youth Development Centers**
- **20.7 TENNderCARE Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment**
- **20.8 Reproductive Health Education and Services**
- **20.12 Dental Services**
- **20.19 Communicable Diseases**

**Forms:**
- **CS-0777, Family Functional Assessment**
- **CS-0899, Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment**
- **CS-0906, Family Advocacy and Support Tool**
- **SDM Safety Assessment**

**Collateral documents:**
- **Casey Life Skills Assessment**
- **CANS Case Protocol**
- **Documentation of the Family Functional Assessment Process Manual**
- **Family Advocacy & Support Tool (FAST) Use and Review Protocol**
- **Protocol for Completion of the Family Advocacy & Support Tool (FAST)**
- **The Child Abuse/Neglect Assessment Intake Tool**
- **High Risk Protocol**
- **Identifying and Accessing Independent Living Services Manual**
- **Profile of Parenting Study Tool**
- **Profile of Parenting Study Tool Manual**
- **Protocol For Family Functional Assessment Process**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Intervention:</td>
<td>An on-going comprehensive and uniform assessment process which functions as a communication basis to support care planning and level of care decision-making and allows the department to monitor service outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protective Services Investigator (CPSI):</td>
<td>A DCS term used to identify the person under the CPS Multiple Response System (MRS) who investigates CPS allegations of severe abuse. This person is principally responsible for investigating allegations to uncover abuse, identify victims and perpetrators, and determine findings related to the allegations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protective Services Assessment Worker (CPSA):</td>
<td>A DCS term used to identify the person under the CPS Multiple Response System (MRS) who works with families who are involved in low- to moderate-risk CPS cases. This person is principally responsible for ensuring the safety of the child, while assessing and engaging the entire family in order to identify services and supports that can address the family's needs.</td>
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