



NH Department of Health & Human Services
Division for Children, Youth & Families

DCYF Standard Operating Procedure

1173.1 ENGAGING CHILDREN-ASSESSMENT

Policy Directive: **20-25**

Effective Date: **June 2020**

Implements Policy: **1173**

Approved:

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

This SOP defines the procedures for Child Protective Service Workers (CPSWs) to engage children during an Assessment beyond an initial interview.

Procedure

The following information is to support the implementation of the above referenced policy. This document shall not preclude staff from using their professional judgement based on individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements of the policy.

- I. It is expected that all children in the identified household will be seen at least once a calendar month, in their place of primary residence or more often as determined through both formal Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools and informal assessment.
 - A. Children who do not live in the identified home full-time will be seen in the home that is most appropriate to assess their safety and needs.
- II. When circumstances warrant an alternative plan for monthly face-to-face contact, or if the CPSW is not able to see all children in the home, alternative means of contact, as well as collateral resources will be used to assess for safety and well-being. This may include:
 - A. Seeing children in an alternative setting;
 - B. Teleconferencing/telephone contact (as age/developmentally appropriate and with parental/guardian consent as needed);
 - C. Utilizing collateral resources to physically see the children and assess safety; or
 - D. Contacting collateral resources to obtain information as to children's safety and well-being needs.
- III. Barriers to seeing a child must be discussed with the Supervisor and documented in the DCYF electronic information system.
- IV. Monthly contact will include ongoing assessment of each child's:
 - A. Overall safety; and
 - B. Well-being needs:

1. Physical and mental health;
 2. Social/emotional development;
 3. Education; and
 4. Supports and connections.
- V. All children in the home (including siblings who visit, but are residing in another home) are entered into the Demographic Screen and identified as "Participating as Child".
- VI. All contact with children will be documented in the DCYF electronic information system under the child's name and the type of contact by the end of the next business day. The contact should include:
- A. A description of where the child was seen;
 - B. A description of the over-all presentation of the child (demeanor, dress, developmental stages);
 - C. Who was present;
 - D. The details of the conversation with the child, including conversation around the child's:
 1. Physical and emotional safety;
 2. Well-being (physical and emotional health, education, etc.);
 3. Needs; and
 4. Supports and connections (including family, friends, and others whom the child sees as a support/important connection); and
 - E. Any child in the household who was not initially entered in the demographic screen is entered under "Participating as Child" by the end of the next business day.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. How do I talk to a child about their missing/non-custodial parent?

- A Ask them directly about their missing/non-custodial parent, including their name, where they think they might live, other contact information, when they last saw/spoke with them, and any additional family they may have through this parent; and
- A Engage them in conversation around their feelings about their missing/non-custodial parent, with a focus on the positives they may feel about this parent,

as well as exploration of any concerns or fears they may have about this parent being located/contacted.

Glossary and Document Specific Definitions

A - B C - D E - F G - I J - L M - N O - Q R - S T - V W - Z

Document Change Log

PD	Modification Made	Approved	Date
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