

Case Assessment Questions (Activity 2I)

- What harm has the child suffered?
- Classify the degree of harm as severe, moderate, or mild.
- Are the consequences, physical and emotional, likely to be short-term, long-term or permanent?
- What is the likelihood of recurrence and why?
- What services, short of removal, are necessary to adequately reduce risk?
- What services were made available to the family prior to removal (or prior to hearing)?
- What is the parent/caregiver's understanding of the situation?
- Is the parent/caregiver motivated to make necessary changes?
- Describe the parent/caregiver's current emotional state.
- What kind of support is available from the parent/caregiver's spouse, significant other, extended family and/or friends?
- Has the parent/caregiver demonstrated cooperation with service providers or lack of it?
- What indications of parent/caregiver-child attachment have been observed?
- Are basic food and clothing provided for the child when he or she is in the parent/caregiver's home?
- Is the family income sufficient to meet the child's basic needs?
- List all the losses that the child would suffer by being removed from the home.
- What is the most appropriate type of placement for this child?
- What efforts have been made to locate possible relative placements?
- What will out-of-home placement provide for the child? What will out-of-home placement provide for the parent/caregiver?
- What visitation arrangements should be made between the child and parent/caregiver (for example: location, frequency, length, transportation, supervision)?
- What is the expected duration of placement?

Asking the Right Questions and Planning Your Next Steps Supplemental Materials

INITIAL INVESTIGATION PLAN

This worksheet is a helpful tool for creating your investigation plan. Remember, the plan for your investigation will be different in each case because each child's situation is unique.

Date of Next Court Hearing:		
Type/Purpose of Hearing:		
Court Report Is Due:		
Questions I Would Like	Possible Sources of	Priority #
A		
B		
C		
D		
E		
F		
G		
H		
I		
J		

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

CHILD

Child Interviews

(Please note that it is not your role as a CASA/GAL volunteer to interview a child about the allegations; many of the children have been interviewed many times and additional interviews may be harmful to the child and to any potential criminal prosecution.)

Type of Information/Assistance

If the child is verbal:

- History of the family situation
- Information about relationships (parents, families, foster families)
- Wishes and desires for the future
- Challenges or areas in need of help
- Likes/dislikes
- Information regarding visits with parents, siblings, other family
- Other _____

Best way to contact source:

Child Observations

(Visits with parents, visits with siblings, child in current setting, child at school or daycare, etc.)

Type of Information/Assistance

- Affect
- Moods, mood changes
- Developmental stages
- Verbal ability
- Relationships, interactions with others
- Intellectual ability
- Other _____

Best way to arrange observation:

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Cont'd.)

PARENTS & FAMILY

Parents

(When parents are represented by an attorney, follow program protocol before speaking with the parents.)

Type of Information/Assistance

- Their version of the events stated on the petition
- Omissions or extenuating circumstances they feel are important
- Their child's developmental milestones, joys, fears, etc.
- Specific information about the child's behavior related to:
 - Visitations with parents and siblings
 - Adjustments in school
 - Behavior problems and strengths
 - Medical concerns
- Adjustment to separation/loss
- Their background
- Other: _____

Best way to contact source:

Family

Type of Information/Assistance

- What they've seen happening as it relates to the life of the child
- Potential resources for the child and family
- Other _____

Best way to contact source:

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Cont'd.)

TRIBE

(Applies only if you are working with an Indian child as defined by the Indian Child Welfare Act.)

Type of Information/Assistance

- Potential service resources
- Tribal enrollment issues
- Potential transfer of jurisdiction
- Information regarding whether anyone is going to appear in court for the tribe and whether the tribe is going to formally intervene, send a representative or make a written recommendation; information regarding recommendations
- Potential cultural responses to the current family problem
- Extended family or members of the tribe who may be a potential placement alternative for the Indian child
- Other _____

Best way to contact source:

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Cont'd.)

PROFESSIONALS

Child Protection Agency Caseworkers

Type of Information/Assistance

- Where the child is placed
- Documentation, case record
- Case plan within 30 days of placement
- Names, addresses, and phone numbers of other principals in the case
- Contact information (e.g., for foster parents, parents, etc.)
- Response to your observations
- Community or educational resources
- Progress of case plan
- Safety issues, if any
- Medical status of child
- Educational status of child
- Anything else the CASA/GAL volunteer should know
- Other _____

Best way to contact source:

Child's Teacher or Childcare Provider

Type of Information/Assistance

- Child's behavior at school
- Educational problems or delays, strengths
- Changes in behavior
- Child's appearance
- Peer relationships
- Grades
- Parental involvement
- Likes/dislikes
- Attendance prior to/post removal
- School nurse reports
- School counselor reports
- Other _____

Best way to contact source:

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Cont'd.)

PROFESSIONALS (Cont'd.)

<p style="text-align: center;">Legal Personnel</p> <p><i>Type of Information/Assistance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal records, other court records • Other _____ <p>Best way to contact source:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Child Protection Agency Attorney/Prosecutor</p> <p><i>Type of Information/Assistance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of Information/Assistance • Other _____ <p>Best way to contact source:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Attorney for the CASA/GAL Program or for the Child</p> <p><i>(If there is one appointed)</i></p> <p><i>Type of Information/Assistance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance with the legalities of the case • Assistance with complex legal situations particular to the case • Assistance in negotiating settlements in preparation for trial • Filing of legal documents • Subpoenas of witnesses • Other _____ <p>Best way to contact source:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Attorneys for the Parents</p> <p><i>(If the CASA/GAL program is represented by counsel, the attorney should follow program protocol regarding contacting other attorneys on a case.)</i></p> <p><i>Type of Information/Assistance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements to talk to his/her clients • Anything the volunteer should know about the client • Other _____ <p>Best way to contact source:</p>

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Cont'd.)

PROFESSIONALS (Cont'd.)

Medical Personnel

Type of Information/Assistance

- Child's medical condition as related to the abuse and/or neglect
- Past medical history, medical records
- Follow-up services that may be required to address medical conditions resulting from abuse and/or neglect
- A particular medical condition that should come to the attention of the caseworker, foster parents, courts, etc.
- Contact with parent(s), if any
- Other _____

Best way to contact source:

Psychological/Psychiatric Professionals

Type of Information/Assistance

- Nature of referral information they received
- How they came to a particular conclusion
- What the diagnosis means in practical terms and how progress is measured
- Discrepancies in opinion
- Possible counseling or therapeutic models being recommended for the child, parents, family, etc.
- Other _____

Best way to contact source:

Foster Parents & Independent Living Coordinators

Type of Information/Assistance

- Specific information about the child's daily life and about the child's behavior related to:
 - Visits with parents and siblings
 - Adjustments in school
 - Behavior problems and strengths
 - Medical concerns
 - Contacts made by parents through letters, phone calls, etc.
 - Child's daily functioning
 - Adjustment to separation/loss
- Other _____

Best way to contact source: