

# Using Strengths to Meet Needs

## Engagement

Talk about what has been working for you as you meet with families. What are your needs? If you are ready to improve your skills in using strengths to meet needs, this guide can support you as you assess and plan.

### **Explore:**

When you think about using strengths to meet needs, what are your strengths?  
 What improvements would you like to make in using strengths to meet needs?

## Assessment

### **Scaling:**

On a scale of 1 (need to learn) to 10 (can mentor), where would you place yourself?  
 (Record on the Functional Assessment.)



### **Scaling Continuum:**

<u>Learning</u> Learning the Skills	<u>Working</u> Using the Skills with Families	<u>Mentoring</u> Using the Skills to Mentor
1. Talk about identifying strengths and what that means.	1. Support families in identifying their strengths.	1. Models identification of strengths.
2. Talk about identifying needs and what that means.	2. Look beyond the apparent to identify hidden or disguised strengths.	2. Models identification of needs.
3. Able to state needs in a positive way.	3. Support families in identifying their needs.	3. Models stating needs in a positive way.
4. Utilization of Functional Assessment Field Guide and solution-focused questions to identify strengths and needs.	4. Utilization of the Functional Assessment Field Guide and solution-focused questions to identify the needs and strengths of families.	4. Supports caseworkers in self-assessing and identifying their needs and strengths.
5. Linking needs to the strengths that can meet the need.	5. Assists families in linking strengths to needs that can be met through the strengths.	5. Assists caseworkers in linking strengths to needs in self-assessment and in working with families.

## **Planning**

1. What will it look like when you are using strengths to meet needs as you would wish?
2. What steps can you take that will lead to the desired result?

## **Practice Opportunities**

<b>Mentor with Caseworker</b>	<b>Caseworker with Family</b>	<b>Family with Family</b>
Complete a Functional Assessment with the new employee to identify their strengths and needs. Discuss using their strengths to meet the identified needs.	Identify family strengths with the family.	Coach family in identifying strengths in a family member that is struggling.
Coach new employee through using the strengths and needs section of the Functional Assessment Field Guide to do a Functional Assessment with another employee, friend, or family member.	Assist family in identifying particular strengths that can be used to meet presenting needs.	Coach family in supporting family member in applying the identified strengths to meet the need that is creating the struggle.
Demonstrate doing a Functional Assessment with a family.		
Coach new employee through doing a Functional Assessment with a family.		
Using real case scenarios, practice identifying strengths and needs with caseworker.		

## **Knowledge Base:**

### **Concept:**

Relationship between strengths and needs

**Basic Elements:**

Strengths

Needs

Functional Assessment (Strengths and Needs Section)

Look for strengths for each need

**Definitions:**

Strengths:

A family's available past and present experiences, assets, interests, resources, and preferences to meet needs.

Needs:

A need may be a requirement that is essential to all human beings such as the need for shelter, food, affiliation, or nurturance. A need is often a description of the underlying conditions that are the source of the symptoms or the behavioral expressions of problems that a family may be encountering. Sometimes when we positively reframe problems we get at the need.

Functional Assessment (Strengths and Needs Assessment):

**STRENGTHS:** (describe strengths of the child, family, and their environment/resources in addition to those listed within the context of the functional areas listed below.)

<b>TOOLS</b>		
GENOGRAM	ECOMAP	TIMELINE
FAMILY SYSTEMS MAP	SOCIAL NETWORK MAP	CHALLENGE MODEL

<b>INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:</b>	
<b>Children's Questions</b>	
<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>NEEDS, WANTS AND DESIRES</b>
What do you like to do for fun?	What are some things you used to do for fun?
What music/movies do you like?	If you could do anything, what would it be?
Do you have a girlfriend/boyfriend? What do you like about her/him?	What do you want to be when you grow up?
Tell me three words that would best describe you.	In addition to the three words that describe you, what other words would you like to have describe you?
If your best friend were here, how would he or she describe you?	
Describe a typical day for yourself.	If you could plan a great weekend doing anything you want, what would you pick to do?

Where do you and your friends go to hang out?	Are there people that you used to spend time with that you would like to spend more time with? If so, who are they?
What do people like about you the most?	What is something about you that others would like to change?
What is the one personal trait that you value the most?	
How do you play? What is/are your favorite toy(s)?	
Do you have any pets?	
Who do you admire most and why?	What would help you to follow in the footsteps of this person?
What are the qualities of a good friend?	What could improve the time you spend with family and friends?
How long have you lived around here?	
<b>Family, Environment, and Resources Questions</b>	
What is working? What is making a difference in your family right now?	If you could change one thing what would it be? What would you want to be different?
Tell me how you discuss issues that come up.	
What do you and your family do for fun?	What are your dreams for yourself and for your kids?
Think of a good day or activity. What was it?	What do you think you need to make your life better?
How does your family play?	Who would you like to be closer to in your family? What could make that happen?
Tell me about your other children.	
How did you meet and how long have you been a family?	What are some things that you would like to do to strengthen your relationship with family or friends?
Have you ever had a vacation? Where did you go? What did you do?	What do you want right now?
What are your hobbies (separate and together)?	
Are you dating a significant other?	Do you want a partner and what do you expect in a partner?
What do you like about where you live? (town, neighborhood, street, house/apartment)	
Did you grow up around here?	
Do you have any brothers or sisters?	

<b>COLLATERAL REPORTS:</b>	
<b>Prior DCFS Case Files</b>	<b>Child and Family Team Members</b>