

Improving Psychotropic Medication Use among Children in Foster Care: Clinical and Functional Well-Being Assessments

To improve the appropriate use of psychotropic medications among children and youth in foster care, child welfare case workers and providers need access to tools that support decision making, service planning, and outcomes monitoring. The Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) developed this matrix of clinical and functional well-being assessments for states participating in [*Improving the Use of Psychotropic Medication among Children and Youth in Foster Care: A Quality Improvement Collaborative*](#). This resource provides links to and descriptions of existing clinical and functional assessments that evaluate a child's health and well-being.

Target Population	Assessment	Description
All ages	Family Assessment Form (FAF)	Aids in family assessment, service plan development, and progress tracking. It examines a child's physical, social, and financial environment; caregiver history, characteristics, and child-rearing skills; a child's developmental and behavioral status; and family interpersonal interactions.
All ages	North Carolina Family Assessment Scale	Assesses family functioning in the domains of environment, parental capabilities, family interactions, family safety, and child well-being.
All ages	Vineland Adaptive Behavioral Scale, Second Edition (Vineland-II)	Helps diagnose and evaluate children's special needs. The focus of this particular test is the measurement of the adaptive behaviors, including the ability to cope with environmental changes, to learn new everyday skills, and to demonstrate independence.
Young children (1 month - 5.5 yrs)	Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition (ASQ-3)	Assesses a child's strengths and weaknesses, educates parents on developmental milestones, and incorporates a parent's knowledge about their child. This assessment screens communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and person-social skills.
Young children (1.5 - 5 yrs)	Child Behavior Checklist for Ages 1.5-5 (CBCL/1.5-5)	Includes 99 items that describe specific kinds of behavioral, emotional, and social problems that characterize preschool children, as well as open-ended items for describing additional problems. Items are scored on syndrome scales designated as emotionally reactive, anxious/depressed, somatic complaints, withdrawn, attention problems, aggressive behavior, and sleep problems.
Young children (birth - 5 yrs)	Developmental Assessment of Young Children-2 (DAYC-2)	Identifies children from birth through five years with possible delays in cognition, communication, social-emotional development, physical development, and adaptive behavior, who may benefit from early intervention.
Young children (1.5 - 5 yrs)	Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment - Preschool	Assesses adaptive and maladaptive functioning. Obtains parents', daycare providers' and teachers' ratings of 99 problem items plus descriptions of problems, disabilities, what concerns parents or respondent most about the child, and the best things about the child.
Young children (2 - 6 yrs)	Early Screening Profiles	Uses multiple domains, settings, and sources to measure cognitive, language, motor, self-help, and social development. It also surveys the child's articulation, home environment, health history, and test behavior. The result is an ecologically valid assessment that provides a wealth of practical information to help make accurate screening decisions and plan intervention strategies for children and their families.
Young children (1 month - 3.5 yrs)	Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development	Assesses developmental delays in the very young.

Target Population	Assessment	Description
Young children and adolescents (5 - 19 yrs)	Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS)	Designed to assess day-to-day functioning and track changes in functioning over time. The CAFAS assesses functioning across eight critical subscales (school, home, community, behavior towards others, moods, self-harm, substance abuse, thinking) and two scales to assess caregiver functioning (material needs, social support).
Young children and adolescents (6 - 18 yrs)	Child and Adolescent Service Intensity Instrument (CASII)	Designed to determine the appropriate level of care for a child or adolescent. It links a clinical assessment with standardized levels of care and matches both by quantifying the clinical severity and service needs. This assessment can be used for any child or adolescent regardless of their setting and diagnosis or the system with which the child is involved (mental health, child welfare, etc.).
Young children and adolescents (2 - 21 yrs)	Behavior Assessment System for Children, Second Edition (BASC-2)	The tools provide information on the behaviors and emotions of children and adolescents. It includes the Teacher Rating Scales, Parent Rating Scales, Self-Report of Personality, Student Observation System, and Structured Developmental History.
Young children and adolescents (0 - 5 yrs; up to 17 yrs)	Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths - Trauma (CANS-Trauma)	Trauma-focused assessment strategy and multi-purpose tool that is comprehensive yet flexible designed to integrate all the information gathered about the child and family in one place, The CANS can be used to track client progress and acts as a helpful “translational” tool for treatment planning and family engagement.
Young children and adolescents (6 to 18 yrs)	Child Behavior Checklist for Ages 6-18 (CBCL/6-18)	Collects feedback from parents, other close relatives, and/or guardians regarding children's competencies and behavioral/emotional problems. Parents (or caregivers) provide information for 20 competence items covering the child's activities, social relations, and school performance. The CBCL/6-18 has 118 items that describe specific behavioral and emotional problems, plus two open-ended items for reporting additional problems.
Young children and adolescents (2 - 16 yrs)	Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory (ECBI)	Includes an Intensity Scale, which measures the frequency of child behavior problems and a Problem Scale, which reflects parents' tolerance of the behaviors and the distress caused. It is intended to assess both the type of behavior problems and the degree to which parents find them problematic.
Young children and adolescents (5 - 18 yrs)	Ohio Youth Problems, Functioning, and Satisfaction Scales (Ohio Scales)	Measures outcomes for youth ages 5 to 18 who receive mental health services. The Short Forms of the Ohio Scales consist of five domains: (1) the Functioning Scale; (2) the Hopefulness Scale; (3) the Satisfaction Scale; (4) the Problem Severity Scale; and (5) the Restrictiveness of Living Scale for agency workers.
Young children and adolescents (4 - 16 yrs)	Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC)	Used by pediatricians and other health professionals to improve the recognition and treatment of psychosocial problems in children.

About the Center for Health Care Strategies

The Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) is a nonprofit health policy resource center dedicated to improving health care access and quality for low-income Americans. In collaboration with state and federal agencies, health plans, providers, and consumer groups, CHCS pursues innovative and cost-effective strategies to better serve Medicaid beneficiaries.

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