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## FAMILY INTERACTION OBSERVATION AND DOCUMENTATION - INSTRUCTIONS

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The Family Interaction Observation Checklist is a supportive tool used to assist in the evaluation of quality, safety, and risk in family interactions for standardized use by DHS, Service Contractor/Provider staff, and anyone involved in supervising family interactions. It also assists in the decision making process for moving family interactions to different levels (fully supervised to semi-supervised to no supervision at all).

**Case Information.** Enter the following information:

- **Children’s names.** All names of the children.
- **Parent/Caregiver Name.** The name of the parent/caregiver.
- **Parent/Caregiver/Non- Custodial Name.** The name of the parent/caregiver or non-custodial parent.
- **Date and time of Interaction.** The date and time of the scheduled interaction.
- **On time/Late to Interaction.** Document whether the parent/caregiver/non-custodial parent was on time or late to the interaction.
- **Place/Location of Interaction.** Document the location of the interaction. Family interaction should occur in the least restrictive, most homelike setting that allows for natural interaction and appropriate to meet the child’s needs for safety. Generally, the parental, relative, or resource family home will provide the best environment. When safety is an issue, a more secure setting should be chosen and a safety plan developed for the interactions to continue. Consider the type of interaction as you document the location. For example, if an interaction is built around school activities, sport activities, or doctors’ appointments, you would document the location of the event (i.e., school, gymnasium, ball field, doctor office, etc.).
- **Participants in Interaction.** Document who was present and participating in the interaction; this includes the children, parents, and caregivers as well as any others. If supervision is required, document who is providing the supervision during the interaction.

**Safety Constructs.** This section provides definitions to the elements explored in assessing safety: Threats of Maltreatment, Child Vulnerability, and Caretaker’s Protective Capacities.

**Safety.** Refer to the safety concerns identified on the Family Interaction Plan and document in this section. Any safety concerns identified during the specific interaction will be documented within the “summary” section.

**Goals of Family Interaction.** Enter the identified goals outlined in the Family Interaction Plan. Progress observed during the specific interaction toward the identified goals will be documented within the “summary” section.

**Children’s Behaviors.** In responding to the questions specific to this section of the document, attend to cultural and developmentally appropriate behaviors or responses.

When observing multiple children, address strengths and needs for the specific child under the “other” section.

Use the listed “things to consider” when assessing progress relating to identified goals. Check specific behaviors by checking the appropriate box(es) listed for the children’s response to seeing parent(s). Check yes or no or NA by marking the appropriate box(es) listed for each respective question.

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**Parent's Behaviors.** In responding to the questions specific to this section of the document, attend to cultural and developmentally appropriate behaviors or responses.

When observing both parents, address strengths and needs for the specific parent under the "other" section.

Use the listed "things to consider" when assessing progress relating to identified goals. Check yes or no or NA by marking the appropriate box(es) listed for each respective question.

**Summary.** Document any mitigating factors impacting interactions either positively or negatively.

- **Progress Observed.** Identify progress demonstrated toward the goals of the specific interaction. Explain what barriers were present that prevented the parent from making progress toward the goals or demonstrating the skill to achieve the goal during the specific interaction.
- **Safety Concerns.** Identify any safety concerns present during the interaction and document how those concerns were addressed.
- **Action Steps.** Identify any action steps that may be taken for the parent to improve ability and skill set to achieve identified goals. Document what needs to be done in order for interactions to move to less supervision. Indicate the barriers and what is being done to address/resolve barriers.

**Completed By.** Document the name of the person observing/supervising the interaction.

**Date.** Enter the date the document was completed.

### **Completion/Distribution Requirements**

If the DHS worker supervises the interaction, information obtained from this observation checklist will be incorporated into the DHS Case Notes. If an FSRP contractor supervises the interaction, information obtained will be incorporated into the Case Progress Report submitted to the parent and DHS. If anyone else supervises the interaction, the observation checklist may be provided to the assigned DHS worker for documentation to be included in the case file.

### **Location of Forms**

All Family Interaction forms and documents can be accessed at the following website:

<http://iatrainingsource.org/forms/>