

Community Action of Southeast Iowa – Head Start/Early Head Start Family Strengths & Needs Assessment

Adapted from Mid-America Head Start/Regional Council's Needs Assessment 7000 (June 2015)

Parent/Guardian Name: _____	Head Start Site: _____
Child Name: _____	Family Development Specialist: _____

GUIDANCE

Family Development Specialists will complete the questions below with the families and help them to think about ***goals they would like to set*** for the year and incorporate as a part of their ***Family Partnership Agreement***.

The Family Strength & Needs Assessment is completed at the beginning and end of the school year, each year. In some instances, families might also have a third (mid-year) assessment completed.

This form is written as if the parent is a single-parent ***or*** as if only one parent is completing the form with you today. Please remember to change your questions to "we" statements when there is a two-parent family involved and/or both parents are present during your visit.

The form is also written as though there is only one child in the home. Please remember to change your questions to say "children" to reflect those families that have more than one child in the home.

SCORING GUIDANCE

Each question will be scored on a scale of 1-3. Circle the corresponding score.
If a question is not applicable to a family, circle nothing.

Score	How to Score	Meaning
3.0	All criteria are met <i>OR</i> If question is not applicable	Strength
2.0	Some but not all criteria are met	Growth Area
1.0	No criteria are met	Need

On questions where there are lists, circle 2.0 for the score if only some of the criteria are met. ***Exception:*** There may be some questions that have a list but not all of the options apply to the family (or are an indicator of family need). For example, consider the following question: ***"I have life, home/renter's and car insurance."*** If a person has life insurance and renter's insurance but does not own or drive a car then having car insurance does not apply to him/her. In cases like this, you will go ahead and give a score of 3.0 as all of the other criteria (that apply to the family) are met.

If a question completely does not apply to a family, circle 3.0 for the score. Write a note next to the score that the question was "N/A" for your future reference and scoring.

On Mid-Year and Ending Assessments there are no numbers to circle for the scores. You may simply write the number that the score has changed to.

Beginning Assessment Date: _____	Mid-Year Assessment Date: _____	Ending Assessment Date: _____
Parent Signature: _____	Parent Signature: _____	Parent Signature: _____
Parent Signature: _____	Parent Signature: _____	Parent Signature: _____
Staff Signature: _____	Staff Signature: _____	Staff Signature: _____
Immediate or Emergency Needs Today: Yes No _____ _____ _____	Immediate or Emergency Needs Today: Yes No _____ _____ _____	Immediate or Emergency Needs Today: Yes No _____ _____ _____

1. Family Well-Being

Outcome: Families become more safe and healthy, and have increased financial security.

GOAL - Safety: Families learn about safety issues, strategies and resources, and use information to provide safe environments inside and outside the home.

	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
1.) We have everything we need to make our home safe for our family.						
<i>We have housing that meets my family's needs and that is structurally safe.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We have working locks on doors and windows and unused outlets are covered with safety covers.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We have working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and we check them (twice a year).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Our family has a safety plan for severe weather and a fire and we practice the plan (twice a year).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Medicines, drugs, chemicals and guns are in locked cabinets, lockboxes or safes.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child is always supervised by an adult (especially in the bathtub).</i>	3 2 1					
2.) I have done what I can to ensure that my child is safe when s/he leaves the home.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>We have safe, reliable transportation and child safety seats.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child knows the signs of danger: stop signs, poison labels, guns and dangerous behaviors.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My family talks with children about ways to stay safe (including with strangers).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have safe child care.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Our neighborhood is safe to live in and for my child to play.</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - Physical Health and Social and Emotional Well-being: Families foster their children's physical health and social and emotional development.

3.) We have enough resources to always feed the entire family.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>Each family member has enough to eat for each meal (parents included).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know where to go in the community if we need food assistance (including WIC).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I currently participate in the WIC program.</i>	3 2 1					
4.) We have adequate access to medical and dental care.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>Each member of the family has medical and dental insurance.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We know where to go if a family member is sick or in an emergency. (Use clinic for non-emergency).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Each member of the family sees a doctor and dentist (once a year).</i>	3 2 1					
5.) I know how to keep my child and myself healthy.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>Bedtime is the same time every night and my child sleeps 10-12 hours every night.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child gets at least one hour of exercise each day.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We eat regularly scheduled meals together as a family.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I serve fruits and vegetables that my child enjoys and encourage my child to try new foods.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child brushes his/her own teeth (with assistance) every day and washes his/her hands before meals and after using the restroom.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child has less than two hours a day of screen time (TV, computers, tablets, phones and video games).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child's room is a TV-free zone.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Family members who struggle with emotions or their mental health are getting the support and/or medication they need.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>When a family member is exposed to scary, confusing, or painful events, I feel that I can adequately support him/her and/or I know where to go for support.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My home is free of mold, insects, rodents and chipping paint.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>When my home is in need of repairs I am able to get these repairs made (or my landlord assists).</i>	3 2 1					

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GOAL – Financial Literacy: Families develop a plan for financial stability and use community resources.						
	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
6.) Our important papers are organized and easy to find.						
<i>I have all of my family members' birth certificates.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have all of my family members' Social Security information.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have all of my family members' insurance cards.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have all of my family members' citizenship papers (if applies).</i>	3 2 1					
7.) We have enough money coming in to pay our bills.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I have steady employment and job security.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I make and keep a budget for our expenses.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know what my debts are and they are manageable (I can afford to pay them).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have life, home/renter's and car insurance.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I am able to provide my child with what s/he needs (clothing, food, school supplies and educational materials).</i>	3 2 1					
8.) I have money saved for emergencies and the future.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I save money each month.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have a savings account and a 401K, pension or other retirement account.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have a college fund for my child.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have money saved for funerals.</i>	3 2 1					
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2. Positive Parent-Child Relationships

Outcome: Parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child's learning and development.

GOAL – Family Planning: Families are prepared for their role as primary caregivers for their children.

	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
9.) I feel prepared as a caregiver for my new baby and/or children I already have.						
<i>Expectant mom and dad are attending regular prenatal doctor's visits.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Expectant mom is eating well and getting enough sleep.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Expectant mom is avoiding alcohol, tobacco and drugs.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know about the benefits of breastfeeding and WIC.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have strong family support and support outside of my family. And, I know about the risks, symptoms and supports for post-partum (after the baby is born) depression.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We have a plan and space for the new baby in our home. The baby sleeps or will sleep in his/her crib (not in my bed).</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - Community and Culture: Families support children's social/emotional growth and attachment to significant adults in the home, school and community.

	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
10.) I share affection openly and often with my child.						
<i>I tell my child "I love you", cuddle, hug, kiss and/or hold him/her many times a day.</i>						
<i>I remember to tell my child that I am proud of him/her for something every day.</i>						
11.) I spend quality time with my child.						
<i>I play with my child every day.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I make time to talk with my child about his/her day each day.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child is a part of my activities when appropriate. (gardening, shopping, preparing meals, etc.)</i>	3 2 1					
12.) I share family and cultural traditions with my child.						
<i>We have "family traditions". (Example: celebrating birthdays and holidays or other traditions that are unique or special to our family.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child knows what we value in our family and culture.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I support my child's own spiritual growth (spiritual does not always mean "religious").</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child knows that we value school in our home and s/he attends regularly (missing no more than 2 days per month).</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - Managing Behavior: Parents establish consistent routines, clear expectations and use positive behavior strategies.

	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
13.) I know positive techniques to help my child manage his/her behavior without punishment. My child learns the behaviors that I model.						
<i>My child sees me acting how I want him/her to act. I set a good example.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I am calm and clear about my expectations with my child. And, I am consistent (yes means yes, and no means no).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know how to set limits and give consequences without anger or physical punishment.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know how to tune into my child and respond to the feelings that are behind his/her behavior.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know how to handle a tantrum without becoming upset and I ignore negative behavior.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I give my child compliments for his/her good behavior every day.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I help my child brainstorm about making good choices and finding solutions to problems.</i>	3 2 1					

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3. Families as Lifelong Educators of their Children

Outcome: Parents and families participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school and in their communities.

GOAL - Every Day is for Learning: Parents actively engage in learning experiences with their children.

14.) I am the first and most important teacher throughout my child's life. I teach my child through a variety of experiences inside and outside our home.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I feel ready to be my child's primary teacher throughout life and am a good example of how to live.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I encourage my child to ask questions and I answer those questions patiently.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I help my child brainstorm about positive solutions to problems (and not just give him/her the answer).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I ask open-ended questions that encourage my child to think (and not just give "yes/no" answers).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Conversation is an ongoing part of our day together (even at meal times).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I read to my child every day and teach my child words s/he doesn't know.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child has paper, pencils, crayons, play-dough and paint to use at home.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We go to the library together and check out books that my child is interested in.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child has jobs at home. (making the bed, setting the table, feeding a pet, putting toys away).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I look for chances to teach my child about letters, numbers and how things work every day. (at the store, in the car, while watching TV, etc.)</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I create learning experiences for my child during our daily activities (nature walks, bathtub games, writing and drawing materials, etc.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Make-believe play is one way my child learns and I follow his/her lead when we play.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I talk with my child about the importance of saving money and encourage him/her to save.</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - School and Family Work Together: Families maintain an active partnership with teachers to ensure that their children are ready for school.

15.) I have a good relationship with my child's teacher and other school staff. We work as a team to help my child grow and learn.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I feel comfortable sharing information about my child and family with staff at the school. And, I feel comfortable talking with them when I have questions or concerns.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I talk often with my child's teacher about how my child is doing at school.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I participate in Parent/Teacher Conferences.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I participate in Home Visits with my child's teacher.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I work with my child's teacher to set goals for my child.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know how my child gets along with other children at school.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I ask my child about school every day.</i>	3 2 1					

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4. Families as Learners

Outcome: Families advance their own learning to support their careers, parenting and life goals.

GOAL - Parenting and Child Development: Families are actively engaged in learning to be more effective parents.

16.) I know about local classes, groups, books and webpages to support me as a parent.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I attend local classes and/or groups at Head Start, local colleges or support groups.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I research questions about parenting in parenting books, magazines or on parenting websites.</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - Education and Career Goals: Parents know how to further their own education goals.

17.) I am working towards my education and/or career goals.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>Adults in my family have high school diplomas or GEDs.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I believe I can get more education. I believe other adults in my family can, too.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have researched what I need to do to get the job I want or I have researched college/technical school programs in my area.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have taken surveys or aptitude tests to help me find out what career to pursue.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I feel comfortable writing a resume and have a resume.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know how to use the Internet to apply for jobs and/or school.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have information about what types of jobs are hiring now.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have a written plan to reach my education and/or career goals.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know about and have considered employment opportunities with Head Start.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I feel comfortable speaking, reading and writing in English.</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - Individual Interests and Family Goals: Families identify, communicate and develop a plan to pursue their interests and life goals.

18.) I understand the importance of taking care of myself.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I eat healthy foods, exercise, get enough sleep and take care of my medical needs.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>When I am stressed or overwhelmed, I give myself permission to take a break to rest, relax or enjoy time with family and/or friends.</i>	3 2 1					
19.) I have a vision for my family's future.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>Each family member has individual interests or hobbies and makes to do them.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We have shared interests or hobbies as a family and make time to enjoy those activities together.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We take pride in and celebrate what makes our family special or unique.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We talk often about our family goals.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have a written five year plan for my family. (What will be different in 5 years? What things do we hope are still the same? What things would we like to do or achieve?)</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I am proud of everything we have already accomplished.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We work every day to be the people we want to become.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Every family member knows how they can contribute to our goals.</i>	3 2 1					

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5. Family Engagement in Transitions

Outcome: Families continue to advocate for their children as they grow and enter new and different schools, child care facilities or experiences other transitions within the home or family.

GOAL - New schools and growing children: Families support children through transitions to new schools and/or child care facilities.

20.) I know how to help my child emotionally as s/he grows and enters new schools and/or child care facilities.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I talk with my child about what the new setting will be like, who will be there, what will be the same, what will be different, etc. And, I am upbeat and positive when talking about it.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I am or plan to be upbeat and positive in front of my child when s/he begins attending the new place. I know that my child follows my lead and will “feed off” of how I act.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I feel that my child knows what to expect in the future.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I pay extra attention to keeping home routines the same when school routines are changing.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We attend or plan to attend open houses to see the new school and meet new staff.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We practice the new routine before the first day of school.</i>	3 2 1					

21.) I am ready to provide new schools with information about my child.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I know what my rights and responsibilities are in advocating for my child’s needs.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know what my child’s strengths are and how s/he learns best. I am ready to share that information with my child’s new teacher or child care provider.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I feel comfortable requesting a meeting to talk about any special concerns I have for my child that new staff should know so they can best help my child and support our family.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I plan to meet my child’s new teacher, principal or care provider before s/he begins attending.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I am aware of registration dates and what information is required of me to provide before my child can attend.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child’s medical records (including immunizations) are current and I already have a copy to share with the new school or child care provider.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I have the school supplies (or other supplies needed) or I already have the money set aside to buy them.</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - When our family life changes, I involve and support my child: Families support children emotionally through life changes.

22.) I explain change in age-appropriate ways so my child understands and feels secure.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I know that children are usually aware of changes in the family (even if they aren’t told).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>When my family has changes (divorce, separation, new baby, etc.) I talk to my child about what that change will be like and how it will affect him/her.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I assure my child that I will keep him/her safe and that s/he will be okay during the change.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I do not talk about adult problems and responsibilities in front of my child.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I let my child know how s/he can support the family during a change. (help with diapers, teach the baby, make a card for a sick relative, etc.)</i>	3 2 1					

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6. Family Connections to Peers and Community

Outcome: Families connect to others in their community and receive positive support.

GOAL - Connections to other parents: Families connect to others to receive or give support.

23.) I give and receive positive support and advice with other parents, friends and family.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I have friends who are also raising children and we share advice and support.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I spend time with friends who have children: sharing, telling stories and laughing together about our lives as parents.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>Both parents work together to raise the child (even from separate homes) and we support each other.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We have extended family in the area that we can ask for help, positive support and encouragement.</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - Connections to community: Families participate in the life of the community and access community resources when needed.

24.) I feel like a part of my community.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>We know and interact with our neighbors.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know where to get information about what is happening in my community.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We attend community events (parades, school events, library events, plays, fairs or sport events).</i>	3 2 1					
<i>We attend church, parenting groups, support groups, or community groups/meetings.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I volunteer in other community programs.</i>	3 2 1					

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7. Families as Advocates and Leaders
Outcome: Families participate in leadership development and decision-making within the Head Start program and community.

GOAL - Advocacy on children's issues: Families are informed about issues related to children in order to provide leadership and advocacy.

25.) I volunteer and understand the importance of being involved in my child's school.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I have a collaborative relationship with my child's teacher and other staff.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I support Head Start projects and committees by remaining informed about them and I am involved.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I regularly attend parent meetings at my child's school and learn about issues presented there.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know the bylaws of my Head Start parent committee.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I serve as an officer of the Parent Committee, Policy Council, Board of Directors or other committee.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>When my child moves on to Elementary School, I will join leadership committees there.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I am comfortable meeting and talking to school leaders like the Superintendent and Board of Education.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I already attend or plan to attend school board meetings.</i>	3 2 1					

26.) I am aware of local, regional and national issues regarding children.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>Head Start staff has shared with me ways that I can advocate for children in the community, state and country.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I am aware of places to get reliable news about children's issues. (Newspapers, magazines, websites, etc.)</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I make a point to learn all I can about children's issues and government.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I know the names of and how to contact my city council and state representatives.</i>	3 2 1					

GOAL - Participation in Civic Life: Families vote, volunteer and join civic groups. They take on leadership roles.

27.) I know my rights and responsibilities as a member of my community and country.	Beginning Score	Goal	Mid-Year Score	Goal	Ending Score	Goal
<i>I am registered to vote and I vote.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I stay informed about current issues and events in my community and country.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I contact our leaders and let them know my opinions on issues that are important to me.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>I belong to civic and community organizations (like Kiwanis) to improve my community.</i>	3 2 1					
<i>My child knows about the value of being involved in the community and being informed. I talk with my child about it.</i>	3 2 1					

Notes: