

# SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

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## **A. Background**

The [Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments](#) of 1973 (Section 504), the [American with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) of 1990, and the [Education for All Handicapped Children Act](#) of 1975, helped qualify the need for a Social and Developmental History for students who might receive special education placements. These laws require that all assessments be free from racial and cultural bias.

A systems approach is used to develop a Social and Developmental History. The student is related to social systems such as family, school, neighborhood, and peers; each system should be addressed. While the school social worker meets with the student's family, family intervention is not the primary objective.

## **B. Definition**

A Social and Developmental History is the appraisal (by a school social worker) of the factors that may impinge upon a student's ability to learn and function optimally in school. A social history adds to the diagnostic information related to the student and his/her needs, and "helps guard against the inappropriate labeling of students based on test scores and school performance alone, without consideration of cultural and language differences." (*The Social History: Best Practice Guidelines for School Social Work Assessment in Florida*, June 1988). School social workers shall possess the skills in systematic assessment, data gathering, and interpretation at multiple levels using a variety of methods to assess the needs, characteristics, and interactions of students, families, and school personnel. School social workers shall conduct reliable and valid assessments of students and organizations to inform the design of interventions to remove barriers to learning. Assessments shall use ecological perspectives and functional approaches to enhance understanding of barriers to learning and the interventions that foster improvement of student well-being and academic progress.

This assessment includes information compiled from the following areas:

- family composition/dynamics/background
- developmental/medical history
- educational history
- socioemotional/behavioral functioning
- environmental and cultural influences

A Social and Developmental History can be an invaluable tool as an integral part of needs assessment concerning which of the three levels of interventions – school-wide, targeted, or intensive – are most appropriate for a student.

## **C. Purpose**

The purpose of the social history is to obtain information about the student that extends beyond the school environment. The social history report contains interpersonal, familial, emotional, behavioral, academic, and environmental variables that influence the student's adaptation to school. Multiple sources are used to obtain information including: interviews with parents, teachers, the student, and others; observations of the student in multiple settings; and a review of school records and/or agency reports and evaluations. The process includes:

- developing communication between the school social worker and the parents, often resulting in the therapeutic effect of more frequent and cooperative home/school contacts
- identifying conditions that may require further evaluation, referral, or intervention

- helping parents define their child's problem and their helping role
- ensuring that parents understand their due process guarantees

A school social worker may be part of a multidisciplinary team that may include teacher, school psychologist, school counselor, other staff, or community agency professional. The skills of the social worker may include:

- interviewing techniques
- identifying and interpreting family dynamics that affect a student's learning
- non-biased evaluative instruments

A Social and Developmental History contributes valuable information to the school assessment teams, staff, and parents in identifying students' strengths and areas of needs, developing interventions and positive behavior support plans, identifying eligibility for special services in school, and assisting the school social worker in identifying and connecting students and parents to needed community resources and counseling.

**Note:** Information obtained from *The Social History: Best Practice Guidelines for School Social Work Assessment in Florida*, June 1988.

#### **D. Reasons a Social and Developmental History is Requested**

##### **1. Initial Placement**

The social history is required for initial placement in the following programs:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)
- Dual-Sensory Impaired (DSI)
- Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (EBD)
- Intellectual Disability

##### **2. Other Placement Considerations**

A social history is not required for initial placement in the following programs. However, if a student is already receiving services under one of these exceptionalities, the committee may request a social history if they are considering another exceptionality or additional services:

- Developmentally Delayed (age 0-9 or the student's completion of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade-whichever occurs first)
- Established Conditions (age 0-2)
- Gifted
- Hospital/Homebound
- Language Impaired
- Orthopedically Impaired
- Other Health Impaired (OHI)
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

i) Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

j) Visually Impaired

### 3. Pre-Kindergarten/Child Find Social History

Procedures regarding placements requiring a social history are the same for students in Pre-K. The [Child Find Social History](#) (form 2007004, *English or Spanish*) can be used for initial placement (completed by the parent). Sometimes, Child Find will request the completion of a social history report from the school social worker prior to eligibility, but this is on a case-by-case basis.

A social history may be needed for students articulating from Pre-K to Kindergarten, if it is an eligibility requirement or a recommendation by the reevaluation committee.

### 4. Reevaluation/Social History Update

In accordance with Section [300.533](#) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), reevaluation is the process of gathering and reviewing information to determine:

- if a student continues to have a disability
- the present levels of performance and educational needs of the student
- whether the student continues to need special education and related services
- whether any additions or modifications to special education and related services are needed to enable the student to meet the measurable annual goals on the IEP and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum

Social histories are not required as part of the three-year Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Reevaluation. However, a Social and Developmental History or Social History Update may be requested if:

- the reevaluation committee recognizes a need for additional information that is educationally relevant and is impacting the student's present level of functioning
- a change in a student's ESE classification/eligibility to any of the aforementioned exceptionalities (i.e., ASD, EBD, etc.) is being considered

The school social worker should ask school personnel what questions and issues are driving the need for the Social and Developmental History or Social History Update. Upon reviewing and consulting with the reevaluation committee, the request for a social history or social history update may be completed. Social histories which have been completed within one calendar year or less are acceptable for the consideration of a more restrictive placement.

### 5. Temporary Placements

It is not necessary to have a Social and Developmental History or Social History Update when moving a student from temporary placement to new, unless a change in a student's classification/eligibility to any of the aforementioned exceptionalities is being considered. If the student has a social history from another school district, the school social worker must be provided a copy of the out-of-county/state social history report in order to review and approve. However, the school social worker should use professional judgment.

## E. Addendums

If a parent requests to include additional information in the social history report after the report has been completed or new/additional information is discovered, the school social worker needs to make an addendum to the report. The addendum includes the cover page and a one-page report of the additional information. The cover page of the Social and Developmental History includes the notation “Addendum” and the date of amended report. The one-page report contains the school social worker’s name, title, and date report was amended (similar to the final page of the social history report). The addendum is uploaded into Focus under “ESE Staffing/Eligibility Determination Meeting”. An email is to be sent to the DPS and other evaluators informing them of the addendum.

## F. Corrections/Revisions

If a parent or school requests to make corrections to an original social history, the following procedures must be followed:

- A meeting with the parent/guardian and principal/designee must occur to ensure all are in agreement of the change of the student’s records.
- An [Agreement to Correct, Delete, or Expunge Student’s Educational Records](#) (form 2001176, *English or Spanish*) must be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian and principal/designee and two witnesses.
- The original social history and completed [Agreement to Correct, Delete, or Expunge Student’s Educational Records](#) is sent to Student Records Services. A copy of this form is to be kept in the cumulative record.
- The school social worker makes the corrections to the social history report. The cover page includes the notation “Corrected” and the date of the corrections.
- The school social worker uploads the corrected social history report into Focus under the “ESE Staffing/Eligibility Determination Meeting” and an email is sent to the DPS and other evaluator informing them of the corrected report.
- If the parent/guardian and principal do not reach an agreement, the principal contacts the District Office of Legal Services.

## G. Parent Consent

Florida Statute **1000.21(5)** defines “parent” as “either or both parents of a student, any guardian of a student, any person in a parental relationship to a student, or any person exercising supervisory authority over a student in place of the parent.” Part 300 – **Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities** (300.20) defines “parent” as “a natural or adoptive parent of a child, a guardian but not the State if the child is a ward of the State, a person acting in place of a parent (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives or a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare), or a surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with 300.515.”

According to Rule 6A-6.0333, “An educational surrogate parent is an individual appointed to act in the place of a parent in safeguarding a student’s rights in the exceptional education decision-making process, when the student’s parent after reasonable efforts, cannot be located by the school district, the student is a ward of the state under State law, or the student is an unaccompanied homeless youth.” A

surrogate parent may be appointed by either the court or by the school district superintendent (or designee). Educational surrogate parents receive training developed and approved by the school district.

An agency or group home cannot sign as parent for educational purposes, therefore students that are already ESE are appointed surrogate parent through IDEA to represent the student in all matters relating to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the student and the provision of FAPE to the student. Volusia County School district typically have approved and trained surrogate parents. The compliance office must be contacted for assistance.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Community Partnership for Children have guardianship over children under their supervision in regular education matters. They may be able to sign for things, such as medical and legal issues for students. It is important to emphasize that an educational surrogate is required for educational decision-making only when the child is or is suspected of needing exceptional student education services. Schools should continue to invite DCF and CPC caseworkers to meetings regarding all students as they may have information critical to the decision-making process. When a student's biological parent(s) right have been legally terminated, an assigned foster parent(s) may serve as surrogate(s) once certain conditions are met. You can reach out to our Community Partnership Educational and DJJ Liaison or ESE Compliance Assistant Director, if you have questions.

If a student has a school patron and formal documentation is in the cumulative school record and FOCUS student demographics, the school patron will sign the consent in place of the parent/legal guardian who is unavailable to sign. A school patron form allows a person other than the parent/legal guardian to make educational decisions for a student. A school patron form does not establish guardianship, only a judge's order can grant or change guardianship. There are 2 types of School Patron Authorization forms, and both are located in our procedural manual. Typically, the School Patron Authorization II requires the school social worker to verify that the parent/legal guardian is deceased or unavailable to sign. The unavailability of a parent/legal guardian must be due to extreme hardship circumstances such as the parent/legal guardian's whereabouts being unknown, is serving an adjudicated sentence, or is incapacitated due to substance abuse or mental health illness, etc. If the School Patron Authorization I is the document on file, the school social worker can proceed with obtaining the social and developmental history information but the parent/legal guardian most likely will need to be the one to consent for placement, if found eligible for services.

## 1. Initial Evaluations

A school social worker should not proceed with an initial [Social History Referral](#) unless a [Consent for Formal Evaluation Parent/Guardian Notice](#) has been signed/completed by parent/guardian and uploaded to FOCUS. The school social worker receives an email that the consent has been uploaded to FOCUS; go to school-SSS-Manage Student-ESE-Locked Events and "Notice of Evaluation and Consent for Reevaluation".

**Parent revocation, student withdrawal, student unavailable for testing, parent unresponsive for social history, or eligibility meeting are the only reasons a consent form is "deactivated" once it has been signed by the parent. All evaluators should be working from the original consent form.**

According to the Special Program and Procedures (SP&P), the school district is not required to obtain informed consent for an initial evaluation if the child is a ward of the State and is not residing with the parent:

- The school district cannot discover the whereabouts of the parent;

- The rights of the parent have been terminated; **or**
- The rights of the parent to make educational decisions have been subrogated by a judge and consent for initial evaluation has been given by an individual appointed by the judge to represent the student.

If the parent refuses consent for an evaluation to determine eligibility as a student with a disability, the school district may continue to pursue consent for the evaluation by using the mediation or due process procedures.

## 2. Reevaluations

The school district ensures that a reevaluation is conducted if the district determines that the educational or related services needs of the student warrant a reevaluation or if the student's parent or teacher requests it. The school district will obtain informed consent from the parent of the student prior to administering a test or other instrument that is not administered to all students.

According to the SP&P, if the parents fail to respond to reasonable attempts to obtain consent, informed parental consent is not required for reevaluation. Documented reasonable attempts include:

- Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls;
- Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received; **and**
- Detailed records of visits made to the parent's home or place of employment and the results of those visits.

**Since social history interviews are conducted with the parents/legal guardians, the social history can only be completed if they are willing to participate in the interview. *Written parent consent must be obtained prior to conducting the interview.***

### **Prior Written Notice For Change of Placement/Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**

The prior written notice is informed consent to parents of proposal or refusal to take a specific action by the school district. State and Federal laws regarding students with disabilities require that parents be informed if changes are made to their child's exceptional student education services or placement.

Prior Written Notice of change of placement may occur whereby dismissal of ESE supports and services due to verbal or written denial of consent by parent to conduct needed evaluations. This form is in FOCUS/SSS/Prior Written Notice.

This procedure conforms to the requirements set forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA) regulations and the Volusia County Schools Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P). A copy of the summary of Procedural Safeguards should be provided to the parent(s) by the Compliance Office along with the individuals to contact if they have any questions.

This is just a reminder that forms, **especially consent forms** (i.e., consents for evaluation/reevaluation, consent for instruction in Access Points/FSAA), should **NOT** be highlighted in any way to indicate what answer the parent should select or where the parent should sign. This is not informed consent as we must assume that the parent is not making a selection because it is his/her choice, but it is because we told them what to answer. Any consent form submitted with highlighting will be returned to the person who submitted it and consent will need to be obtained from the parent without highlighting on the form. Also, whiteout should never be used on any IEP related form and any handwritten changes must be legible and initialed. Please remember that these are legal documents.



Below is an example with highlighting that cannot be accepted:

**7. Parent Consent:**

- ☒ Yes ☐ No I have received prior written notice regarding the evaluation being proposed. I have been fully informed of the individual evaluation process and why it has been recommended for my child.
- ☒ Yes ☐ No I understand and give my consent for the individual evaluation of my child.
- ☒ Yes ☐ No I understand that my consent for an individual evaluation is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. However, that revocation is not retroactive (i.e., it does not apply to an action that has occurred after the consent was given and before the consent was revoked).
- ☒ Yes ☐ No The information provided to me has been given in my preferred mode of communication. If other than English, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Adult Student/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Interpreter, if required

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## H. Referral Process and Packet

1. **Initial Evaluations:** The State monitors the completion of Psychological Evaluations and Social History Referrals under Indicator 11 of the State Performance Plan and expects 100% compliance. Specifically, according to State Board Rule, “the school district shall ensure that initial evaluations of students suspected of having a disability are completed within sixty calendar days, with holidays and summer vacations exempted from the timeline that the student is in attendance after the school district’s receipt of parent consent for evaluation.”  
In order to meet the intent of this rule while following best practice, the following procedures are recommended:
  - a) When a concern is noted with vision, speech, hearing, or an FBA is requested, the [Multi-Tiered System of Support Team Consent Parent/Guardian Notice](#) (form 2009020, *English or Spanish*) should be provided to the parent. In addition, this form should be provided to the parent when a referral for evaluation may be imminent. These screenings should be completed prior to the Multi-Tiered System of Support Team (MTSS) meeting when possible as results contribute to the analysis of the problem phase of the MTSS meeting.
  - b) At the MTSS meeting, the parent should be provided with informed consent of the evaluation if a referral for formal evaluation is recommended. The parent should complete the [Notice of Evaluation and Request for Consent](#).
  - c) If the parent is not in attendance at the MTSS meeting, the parent must be made aware of the intent of the evaluation. Simply providing the parent with the consent form or sending the consent home with a student is not best practice and does not meet the standard of informed consent.  
Efforts should be made to have the parent come to the school to be provided with informed consent or contact parent by phone to provide the information. If this is not possible, the MTSS Chair, or the school administrator must contact the parent regarding the Notice of Evaluation and Request for Consent in order to obtain consent. At no time should the parent consent be signed prior to a team’s decision to proceed with an evaluation and completion of the MTSS paperwork. Referral packet includes consent for evaluation and MTSS paperwork.

- d) The 60-day timeline begins when the parent consent is signed at the school or if the parent is not present at the meeting, when the consent is received by the school. The MTSS Chair uploads the consent packet to Focus and notifies clerical that it has been uploaded. Clerical emails designated evaluators.
- e) **For initial consents for evaluation:**
- The MTSS Chair will Scan and upload the signed consent form to the consent event in Focus, along with all intervention documentation (IPST packet/MTSS packet).
  - Email [eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us) for initial consents for evaluation.
  - In the subject line of the email type – “Initial - (followed by the student’s alpha code)”
  - For all initial consents to evaluate, in the body of the email include:  
School:  
Student Name:  
Alpha:
  - Date Consent was received by school
  - **If the student is bilingual, this should be documented in the body of the email, as well. This is imperative as failure to notify the appropriate evaluator can delay testing and violate state statute.**
  - Attach a copy of the signed consent to the email.

If a parent requests a meeting or expresses that their student needs an IEP, the meeting must be scheduled within 30 days of the parent’s request.

If consent is modified according to district procedure:

- Scan and upload the modified consent form to the eligibility determination event (this cannot be uploaded to the consent event as it will already be locked).
- Email [eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us) all modified initial consents to evaluate.
- In the subject line of the email type – “Initial – Modified Consent – (followed by the student’s alpha code)”
- For all modified initial consents to evaluate, in the body of the email include:  
School:  
Student Name:  
Alpha:
- If the student is bilingual, this should be documented in the body of the email, as well. This is imperative as failure to notify the appropriate evaluator can delay testing and violate state statute.
- Attach a copy of the modified consent to the email.

Evaluation reports from private evaluators should be emailed directly to James Barringer for review. Please remember to include the Psychological Report Review coversheet with the report.

When consent forms are processed the appropriate evaluators will be notified via email.

- f) **Once you receive email notification that there is an initial evaluation required, locate student in SSS:**
- (1) Open "Notice of Evaluation and Request for Consent" under locked events, locate signed consent in the Uploads section of the Event
  - (2) Evaluate the student as required by the Consent and write the report
  - (3) Save report as a PDF and Upload Report to the "ESE Staffing Eligibility Determination Meeting" Event under the Uploads tab

(4) Open the "ESE/Gifted Tracking and Reporting" Event and fill in the last date of your Evaluation.

(5) If you are the last required Evaluator to complete this step, fill in the "Date of Last Evaluation" box with the latest date of all evaluations completed

g) **NOTE:** After receiving email notification of the referral, it is imperative that each social worker verifies the contents like signature of parent/guardian, date of consent-signed by parent/guardian or date school received parent consent, student's Alpha ID, ~~and~~ due dates logged on the tracking form, and suspected disability, etc. These items are pertinent to ensure we have all that is required for compliance of scheduling an interview with the parent. One day discrepancy can make or break our 60-day compliance on an initial referral. Print the signed Notice of Evaluation and Request for Consent page and add to the SH work folder.

h) **OPTIONAL-**The school social worker may choose to complete the Information For Submitting Completed Referrals Datasheet. This form can be printed and attached to your completed SH folder to be filed.

If a student transfers after the consent has been uploaded, the school social worker should follow the transfer procedures by signing the referral, completing a transfer sheet, and alerting the receiving school social worker of the transfer.

2. **Reevaluation:** In order to expedite the processing of requests for social histories generated through the ESE reevaluation process, the following procedures will be implemented:

- a) When the reevaluation committee determines that an evaluation and/or social history is warranted, the designated school staff member processes the consent for evaluations. The date that the parent provides the signed consent to the school serves as the official date of parent consent.
- b) For *all signed consents* for reevaluation:
- Scan and upload the signed consent form to the consent event in Focus.
  - Email [eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us) for all consents for reevaluation
  - In the subject line of the email type – "Reevaluation – Consent Obtained - (followed by the student's alpha code)"
  - For consents to reevaluate, in the body of the email include:  
School:  
Student Name:  
Alpha:  
Select at least one:  
\_\_\_\_\_ No additional information currently  
\_\_\_\_\_ DD Exit  
\_\_\_\_\_ Coordinator involvement  
\_\_\_\_\_ Bilingual evaluator needed
  - Attach a copy of the signed consent to the email.

If consent is *modified* according to district procedure:

- Scan and upload the modified consent form to the eligibility determination event (this cannot be uploaded to the consent event as it will already be locked).
- Email [eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us) for all modified consents to reevaluate.
- In the subject line of the email type – "Reevaluation – Modified Consent – (followed by the student's alpha code)"
- For modified consents to reevaluate, in the body of the email include:

School:

Student Name:

Alpha:

Select at least one:

\_\_\_\_\_ No additional information currently

\_\_\_\_\_ DD Exit

\_\_\_\_\_ Coordinator involvement

\_\_\_\_\_ Bilingual evaluator needed

- Attach a copy of the modified consent to the email.

If parent indicates that they *do NOT consent* to the evaluation:

- Scan and upload consent form to the consent event in Focus.
- Email [eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us) for all consents for reevaluation.
- In the subject line of the email type – “Reevaluation – Consent Not Obtained- (followed by the student’s alpha code)”
- In the body of the email include:

School:

Student Name:

Alpha:

- Attach a copy of the signed consent to the email.

If parent/guardian/adult student *does not respond* to attempt to gain consent:

- Make at least 3 attempts to gain consent, using multiple methods (sending home with the student, email, USPS, etc.), making sure to document the dates/types of attempts.
- Attempts should not all be on the same day but should be made in a reasonable amount of time.
- Email [eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:eseconsent@volusia.k12.fl.us) the reevaluation consent form.
- In the subject line of the email type – “Reevaluation – No Response – (followed by the student’s alpha code)”
- In the body of the email include:

School:

Student Name:

Alpha:

All dates/types of attempts made:

Select at least one:

\_\_\_\_\_ No additional information currently

\_\_\_\_\_ DD Exit

\_\_\_\_\_ Coordinator involvement

\_\_\_\_\_ Bilingual evaluator needed

Evaluation reports from private evaluators should be emailed directly to James Barringer for review. Please remember to include the Psychological Report Review coversheet with the report.

When consent forms are processed the appropriate evaluators will be notified via email.

**c) Once you receive email notification that there is an re-evaluation required, locate student in SSS:**

- (1) Open "Notice of Re-Evaluation and Request for Consent" under locked events, locate signed consent in the Uploads section of the Event
- (2) Evaluate the student as required by the Consent and write the report
- (3) Save report as a PDF and Upload Report to the "ESE Staffing Eligibility Determination Meeting" Event under the Uploads tab

- (4) Open the **"ESE/Gifted Tracking and Reporting"** Event and fill in the last date of your Evaluation.
- (5) **If you are the last required Evaluator to complete this step, fill in the "Date of Last Evaluation" box with the latest date of all evaluations completed**

## **I. Timeline**

The School Social Services department has a recommended completion date for all social history assessments within 30 calendar days. This departmental timeline is in place to safeguard the timely completion of evaluations. It is also recommended that the interview once completed be typed up in a timely manner (i.e., 10-day timeframe unless other approved priorities take place). The goal is that the interview be completed, report typed and uploaded by the due date. When a referral is received, the social worker should do due diligence in reviewing the referral for due date, making sure parental consent and all information is accurate and act accordingly trying to schedule the interview in a timely manner. It is a good practice to review all referrals received within a 2-week period and enlist the office specialist's support in scheduling the appointment using a staggered calendar timeline, scheduling initial referrals as a priority first, then reevaluations. Pursuant to [State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.0331](#), the school board ensures that a student suspected of having a disability is evaluated within a period of time, not to exceed 60 calendar days, with holidays and summer vacations exempted from the timeline, of which the student is in attendance, after

- the completion of required activities in general education procedures section of the Special Programs and Procedures manual;
- the receipt for the parental consent for evaluation; and
- the receipt of the referral for evaluation.

The date on which the last of these requirements is completed is the beginning of the 60-day timeline. The departmental timeline of 30 days will assist with compliance of the 60-day timeline set by the state. The social history report is considered complete when the social worker signs off on the referral.

The departmental procedure is to respond to [Social History Referrals](#) in the order received, with the exceptions of initial evaluations, emergency and/or priority requests by principals, and referrals for students on ESE Temporary status. If there is a referral for a student suspected of having a disability that is approaching the 60-day due date, it will be responded to as "priority" and will be taken out of order to stay in compliance with Rule 6A-6.0331.

Open referrals and due dates will be reviewed on a monthly basis to determine the compliance of the 30-day completion timeline, need for referral transfer within the department, or the need for any other action. If the referral timeline exceeds the mandated 60 days, the school social worker will be notified to provide a status update to the School Social Services Coordinator. The school social worker may be required to send a letter to the parents/guardians requesting a response in order to discuss their willingness to continue the evaluation process.

## **J. Electronic Signatures and Submission Process**

School Social Workers use their Electronic Signature for the typed / completed Social History Report (See **document Creating Your Electronic Signature**) and uploads the report in Focus as a PDF file.

The Social Worker sends the referral packet, their case notes and any other pertinent documentation to the Coordinator's secretary for storage.

Key reminders include saving as a PDF and uploading that PDF version of your report to Focus, remember to include date report was typed along with electronic signature, save a copy of the report in word format for your records, corrections, and addendums. Use procedural guideline for naming reports (last name, first name, ALPHA, SW, date interview was completed).

It is recommended that each school social worker keep a copy of the completed social history report (**word format**) for the current school year in case any addendums/additions or changes are needed. Reports may be kept via memory stick, CD's, or hard drive, to be accessible for revisions if necessary.

## **K. ESOL (ELL)**

When ESOL (Spanish) social histories are requested, the referral will include the assigned ESOL school social worker and the zoned school social worker should call-the assigned district ESOL school social worker-to ensure they received the referral. This will facilitate communication regarding the details of the case. If the caseload of the district ESOL social worker is unbalanced it may be necessary to transfer one or more of the regular referrals, to ensure equity.

Because we are collaborating on these types of cases, it is courtesy for the zoned school SSW to assist with setting up or securing a spot for the bilingual SSW to interview the parent, if the interview will take place at a school. Telling them the contact person to contact at your school to review the cum record or paving that way is also a courtesy that will help in making this transition easier. Remember, this student is still on your caseload and will be followed by you for services rendered. The bilingual SSW is assisting our department with reducing barriers of communication to ensure we gather the information in a timely manner instead of awaiting our district translator to assist.

**NOTE:** The office specialist entering the ELL referral into the ESE/Gifted Tracking and Reporting form will consult the most recent bilingual assignments for each respective department and automatically assign the referral to the bilingual social worker on the tracking form. The zone social worker may not always receive ~~any~~ notification (but I've asked that they do for consistency across all departments) but it is best practice to advise your colleague just in case the social work browse shows that there has been contact or awareness of the student and pertinent information can be shared. Again, collaboration should be taking place throughout this process. The correct school social worker must be reflected in the tracking form in Focus.

## **L. Legal Social History Referrals**

When a legal social history referral is requested, the assigned school social worker completes the social history. The referral must be clearly marked "Legal Case." There are times when the parent consent may be signed by the court appointed Attorney Ad Litem. The assigned school social worker also attends any meetings such as eligibility, reevaluations etc.

## **M. Transferring Social History Referrals**

If a student transfers schools following the completion of a referral packet, the school social worker is to complete a social history Referral Transfer Sheet, which includes the name of the school social worker to whom the referral is to be transferred, the name of the student, and the date of the transfer. Once providing the necessary information, the school social worker sends the transfer sheet and referral to the receiving school social worker. The social worker transferring the referral must go back into the ESE/Gifted Tracking and Reporting Form to update the SSW name. The receiving school social worker signs the transfer sheet, which is used to ensure receipt of the transfer of referrals. The receiving school social

worker sends/scans the signed transfer sheet to School Social Services Office for processing and documentation.

## **N. Social History Referral Components and Information**

Once the consent for evaluation/re-evaluation is printed, the school social worker should add the following information/components:

- Contacts for Scheduling Social Histories/Outcome of Referral – used for tracking purposes and possible close-out
- Confidential Social History Interview Structured Worksheet and ASD Questionnaire– for handwritten notes
- Focus student browses (i.e., Enrollment History, Attendance Browse, Discipline Referrals, Grades, etc.)
- Social History Cum Record Review form (Optional)
- Parent Satisfaction Survey – which is completed by the parent/guardian at the end of the interview
- Teacher/School Staff Interview Guide – which should not be given to the teachers to complete without their consent (an e-mail soliciting the information may be utilized)
- Student Interview form – when applicable
- Copies of any other pertinent documentation (community resources, etc.)

## **O. Steps Before the Social History Interview**

### **1. Ensure parent consent**

Ensure that the parent/guardian has given consent for the Social and Developmental History to be completed. A social history interview should not be conducted until consent has been uploaded.

### **2. Review the student's cumulative record**

- information related to student's academic progress and behavioral concerns (i.e., Individual Education Plan, MTSS, Functional Behavioral Assessment, conferences, etc.)
- information on the student entry form
- school screenings (vision, hearing, speech, and language)
- psychological evaluations (date and author)
- FCAT scores/ FSA scores
- birth certificate (verify legal name, date of birth, and parents' names)
- teacher comments/parent teacher conference forms
- legal/custody documentation
- records from out-of-county schools

**Note:** The Social History Cum Record Review form may be used.

### **3. Review the student's electronic records**

- Student Demographics/Enrollment
- Attendance (current and previous history)
- Discipline
- Enrollment History
- Academic History
- Special Programs (i.e., ESE)
- School Social Worker Query
- Other relevant browses

#### 4. Solicit school staff input

Solicit current information from the student's teacher. The Teacher/School Staff Interview Guide form may be used to gather information. **This form must not be given to teachers to complete without their consent.** An e-mail soliciting the information may be utilized.

#### 5. Contact the family to arrange the interview

- introduce yourself
- mention that a Social History Referral has been received which was generated from the parent consent signed on stated date
- explain the purpose of the social history report in the evaluation process
- indicate the time-frame of the social history interview
- agree upon a time, date, location, and method (face to face, Teams, telephone) for the meeting
- notify the parent that you may be observing/interviewing the student

#### 6. Conduct a student observation/interview

### P. Overall Strategies for Conducting the Social History Interview

A social history interview can be conducted in the home, the student's school, via Microsoft Teams, or telephone. Face to face is the recommended method.

Begin the interview by establishing rapport with the parents. Review the purpose of the social history report. Ask if they have any questions. Help the parents feel comfortable by speaking respectfully and being friendly. Let them know that the goal is to work together as a team to help their child succeed in school. If the parents are reluctant, allow them to express their concerns and ask any questions.

Maintain rapport with the parents/guardians by listening attentively and using appropriate eye contact. Do not have an obvious time-frame. If the parents are hostile, find out what they are upset about. Validate concerns and respect their feelings. Let the parents know their rights regarding the interview and other matters of due process. Provide community and parental education information, as appropriate.

To conclude the interview, clarify any areas of concern and check for understanding. Ask the parents if there is anything that has been discussed that they do not want included in the Social and Developmental History report. Inform them that the final report may include information from the cumulative record, teacher, and student observation/interview. Explain the staffing process and the importance of their participation. Let the parents know that the information gathered will be shared with the staffing committee. Inform the parents that the staffing will be an opportunity for their concerns to be voiced and



questions answered. Solicit feedback from the parents by asking them to complete the [Parent Satisfaction Survey](#).

## **Q. Emergency or Priority Social History Requests**

The following procedures should be followed regarding a [Social History Referral](#) considered to be an emergency or a priority in nature:

### **1. Emergency Referral**

An emergency social history request is made by the principal/designee when a student poses an immediate threat to themselves or others. This [Social History Referral](#) takes precedent over all other referrals in the school social worker's caseload, irrespective of schools. A letter/e-mail from the principal/designee requesting the emergency social history must accompany the referral. This letter documents the need for emergency status. A [Threat Assessment](#) must be completed in Focus by the school. The interview must not be delayed if the Threat Assessment has not been completed. **All emergency social history reports should be completed within one calendar week.**

### **2. Priority Referral**

A priority social history request is made when a principal/designee determines that a student's referral be placed ahead of the other [Social History Referrals](#) from their school. A letter/e-mail from the principal/designee requesting the priority social history must be received. **All priority social history reports should be completed within two calendar weeks.**

**Note:** If the school social worker is not able to complete the emergency or priority social history report within the recommended time-frames due to difficulty in arranging the parent interview, school personnel should be notified.

## **R. Out-of-District Social History Reports**

All social history reports completed by personnel outside the Volusia County School District must be submitted by the school personnel to the assigned school social worker for review and approval at the time of student's enrollment, regardless of placement status. The report should be accompanied by the [Social History Approval](#) (revised 9/2019). The school social worker will then make a determination of approval or disapproval, or the need for additional information to be gathered.

### **1. Guidelines for Reviewing and Processing Social Histories Completed Outside Volusia County Schools**

The following factors should be considered, in combination, when reviewing social histories completed by someone outside of Volusia County:

- a) **Date Completed:** Social history reports completed less than three years from the date of review may be considered acceptable. There may be instances where a report submitted for approval is of very good quality but is over three years old. Professional discretion may be used in conjunction with the need to gather updated information.
- b) **Content:** The content of a social history report should closely follow the components outlined in a social history report completed by Volusia County Schools. An exception to this may be situations where it is impossible to obtain current information and approving the existing document may assist in determining the student's placement.

- c) **Completed by a Professional:** A social history report should be completed by a school social worker or other member of the helping profession. A signature on the report is preferred, but not required.

Professional discretion is exercised when determining how such reports may be used. If the standards are met, the social history report may be approved. Upon approval, if it is determined that additional information is needed, then the need for a Social History Update should be indicated in the comments section of the Social History Approval form (i.e., “Please submit request for a Social History Update.”).

## **2. Completing the Social History Approval Form**

- a) The top section of the Social History Approval form must be completed by school personnel and attached to social history report.
- b) The bottom section is then completed by the school social worker. It should indicate whether or not the social history report is approved and should be dated and signed. The comments section may include pertinent information that should be relayed back to the school.
- c) The following information should be written on the first page of the social history report (in the upper, right-hand corner) by the school social worker:
- Statement: Approved for Social History **OR** Not Approved for Social History
  - Date of approval/non-approval

## **3. Procedure for Processing Approved / Non-Approved Social History:**

The approved out-of-county/district social history is processed as follows:

- a) Once reviewed and the out of county/district social history is approved, the parent should be contacted if a social history has been requested to advise the out of county/district social history meets the criteria and will be used, parent consent must be modified (contact administrator), and approval noted on the consent form and event relocked. The revised consent needs to be uploaded to the Notice of Evaluation and Request for Consent form. School social worker removes their name from the ESE/Gifted Tracking and Reporting form and the event is relocked by the department/designated administrator.
- d) The social history report and the approval form needs to be uploaded as a PDF to the ESE Staffing Eligibility Determination Meeting Event area named as “last name, first name, student ID, Out of Co SW and date”.

## **S. Inactivation of Social History Referrals**

Before a social history referral can be inactivated, the following attempts to contact the parent must be done and documented on the Contacts for Scheduling Social Histories/Outcome of Referral form:

- at least two attempts to schedule an appointment by phone
- at least one attempt to schedule an appointment through a home visit
- at least two correspondences by mail to schedule an appointment
- at least one attempt by school personnel to schedule an appointment

After following the due diligence attempts shown on the Contacts for Scheduling Social Histories/Outcome of Referral (see form for descriptions of contacts and suggested number of attempts), if you must complete a social history inactivation, please do the following:

**There are situations in which consent to evaluate must be inactivated. These situations include:**

1. The student no longer resides in Volusia County.
2. The parent has revoked consent to continue the evaluation process.
3. Parent has not made the student available for comprehensive evaluation to be completed.
4. Consent was obtained for a Social History and parent has continued to be unresponsive even after due diligent efforts have been attempted.
5. Consent was obtained for a Functional Behavioral Assessment and the student is no longer enrolled in a VCS public school. (example – home school student)

**Steps 1- 5 of this process is completed by the person completing the inactivation form.**

**Step 6 is completed by the Compliance Office OR Private School Office**

**Steps:**

1. Complete the VCS ESE: Referral for Evaluation Inactivation Form. It can be found in the eligibility event under Supplements.

The screenshot shows a software interface. On the left is a sidebar with a list of items: 'ESE Determination of Eligibility/Staffing', 'ESE Staffing Supplements (1)' (highlighted in blue), 'Meeting Minutes', and 'Uploads (0)'. The main panel on the right displays a list of documents. The top document is 'VCS ESE: Referral for Evaluation Inactivation', which is highlighted in yellow. Below it is a search filter box. The list continues with 'Additional Meeting Participants', 'VCS: Functional Behavior Assessment', 'VCS ESE: Referral for Evaluation Inactivation' (highlighted in blue), 'Provision of Procedural Safeguards', 'Report In Lieu of Attending IEP Meeting', 'Focus: LI-Written Summary of Group's Analysis', 'Focus: Summary of Eligibility-Statement of Disagreement', 'Focus: InD-Written Summary of Group's Analysis', and 'Focus: SLD-Written Summary of Group's Analysis'. To the right of the document list is a button labeled 'Add this form', which is circled in red.

2. Print the VCS ESE: Referral for Evaluation Inactivation Form and Sign the bottom of the form. Upload the form to the eligibility event.
3. Move the eligibility event to inactive. The program will ask the user to Enter A Reason For Setting This Event Inactive. The user should also include their name and date.

For example: The parent has revoked consent to continue the evaluation process and the compliance office – name of contact has been notified by Sara Kinney 6/1/2021.

**\*\*\*If your profile does not allow you to move the eligibility event to inactive, email Sara Kinney for assistance.\*\*\***

4. View the ESE/Gifted Updating & Reporting. Check the following statement on the event

☐ The referral for evaluation is being INACTIVATED

Just a Reminder: Only the dates of the evaluation that were completed would have been entered by the evaluator. They would not have entered a date if the evaluation was partially completed or not completed at all.

Do **NOT** move the ESE/Gifted Updating & Reporting to inactive. It will remain active and the appropriate office will address.

5. Notify a. / b. / c. that the pending evaluations are being made inactive.

- a. the appropriate office

Public School Student	Private School Student
Notify the Compliance Office – <u>Mary Ellen Speidel</u> <a href="mailto:mspeidel@volusia.k12.fl.us">mspeidel@volusia.k12.fl.us</a>	Notify the Private School Office – <u>Tom Allard</u> <a href="mailto:TJALLARD@volusia.k12.fl.us">TJALLARD@volusia.k12.fl.us</a>

- b. DPS (if the student is in Private School include Norman, Johna R.)
  - c. ALL evaluators listed on the ESE/Gifted Updating & Reporting event.

Sample Email:

**Subject:** Inactivation - Alpha

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason the evaluation is being inactivated: \_\_\_\_\_

6. The Compliance Office or Private School Office will:
  - a. Move the ESE/Gifted Updating & Reporting event to inactive.
  - b. Reply to all with the email received in Step #5 if additional action is needed OR if the process is complete.
  - c. If the process is complete, a date will be entered on the SIS side – ESE Tab: Referral for Evaluation Inactivated

Case Manager	
Revocation of ESE Services	
Referral for Evaluation Inactivated	
ESE Exceptionalities	

## T. Social Service Reports

Staff will keep track of social history referrals with the social history referral log. This practice would be done as a cross reference to ensure all the referrals being sent into the Coordinator via Wendy Sloan are getting captured. At the end of each month, each staff member is responsible for sending their completed report with all

notations to the office specialist for the Coordinator, so the Coordinator can review. **Everyone MUST indicate the Date of Interview (DOI) as well as the social history completion date in the Comment/date section.** If you have not yet done the interview, please note that you are “in the process of scheduling” or “pending contact” or something. If the report is still in the process of being typed, please note that you are “typing” with a projected completion date. If the referral has been closed, please indicate the date you closed the referral on the forms as well. If the referral was transferred, please indicate to which social worker it was transferred.

Please do not send in your monthly logs without making notations in the Comment section- **DO NOT LEAVE the Comment/Date area blank.**

## **U. CARS (Counseling as a Related Service)**

Counseling as a Related service is counseling that is provided when the Individual Education Plan team or the Educational Plan team determines that it is required in order for a student to benefit from exceptional education. Counseling may be provided individually or as a group and can be provided by school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, or other qualified personnel. A list will be pulled each month for all schools with names of students who will be receiving this related service. Please use the following instructions to pull the list for each of your schools.

1. (SIS10320) -> Click the green “Run” button
2. If it is not already selected, select your school from the drop-down menu and click the green “Run” button again
3. Click the blue “Filter” button so that it turns “On”
4. Use the gray scrollbar at the bottom to scroll to the right until you can see a column called “Related Services: Service”
5. In the white text field right above that column, type “counseling”
6. The system should filter out all students whose IEPs do NOT contain CARS and leave only those students who have CARS on their IEPs (some may show twice if they have had an annual review already)
7. If you scroll to the right again, you will be able to see:
  - RS MINS PER WEEK = how many minutes per week of CARS the student is supposed to get (times it by 4 to get the monthly total, of course)
  - RS PROVIDED BY = the mental health provider the DPS listed (should hopefully just say “school-based mental health provider” or something along those lines)

## **V. Medicaid/MaxCapture**

The [Medicaid Certified School Match Program](#) allows school districts to bill Medicaid for Medicaid eligible services for Medicaid eligible students. Volusia County Schools is reimbursed for services provided by the school social worker, including social history referral process and Counseling as a Related Service (CARS). Categories of service that are billable include: assessment and evaluations; interviews, social developmental studies, and functional assessments; development of evaluative reports; Counseling as Related Service, consultation/coordination with school staff, Eligibility meetings, and IEP meetings.

As of July 1, 2011, the district Medicaid Service Tracking Office launched an electronic system called MaxCapture, which replaced the need for the former ESE Service Form – Social Work Services and ESE Referral/Social History form. Training will be provided for the MaxCapture-Medicaid billing system and a username will be issued by the Coordinator of Health Services. Appropriate codes to be used when billing for services are: F89-Unspecified Disorder of Psychological Development, or F819-Development Disorder of Scholastic Skills, Unspecified for evaluations and F939-Childhood Emotional Disorder, Unspecified for CARS. Use whatever codes best fits the individual student being evaluated.

## W. Legal Issues

When writing a social history report which will become part of the student's permanent record, one must be sensitive to the school's "**need to know**" versus the family's "**right to privacy**." The coordinator of School Social Services must ensure that staff members are familiar with federal, state, and district requirements regarding access to student records and other rights. "Records are kept to assist the school in offering appropriate educational experience to the student. The interest of the student must supersede all other purposes." (Fischer and Sorenson, 1985)

### Some Best Practice Guidelines to Follow

1. Although civil protection should exist from the district School Board if the worker is acting in good faith and within the job description, professional liability insurance is recommended. Policies are available through professional groups and the Florida Department of Education.
2. Written parental consent must be obtained prior to beginning the social history assessment.
3. The reader of the social history should always be able to distinguish between facts, observations, and writer's professional conclusions. School social workers should never express their personal opinions in the report.
4. Always indicate the informants' names in relationship to the student. When recounting an interview, be sure to clarify who said what (i.e., "\_\_\_\_\_ stated, indicated, reported, responded, commented, expressed, noted, shared, said that..." or "According to \_\_\_\_\_ ..." or "\_\_\_\_\_ describes his child as..."). Do not write "parent believes" or "parent thinks" or "parent feels," rather state "parent stated that she believes..."
5. Use quoted statements sparingly – as all quoted statements **MUST** be accurate.
6. Sensitive information should be included only to the extent that it is educationally relevant.
7. If a student has been a victim of sexual abuse, it may be relevant to include this sensitive information in a social history report. However, the word "sexual abuse" should not be used. Instead, the writer may use the following examples, i.e., "the student has suffered a traumatic event that is impacting their academic performance or behavior," ***OR*** "a variety of family crises have occurred," ***OR*** "there are issues being addressed." Do not include unnecessary details about the abuse. Ask the parent if the abuse was reported and act according to the legal mandate. If the abuse has not been proven legally, use the word "alleged." State the source who gave the information about the student's abuse. Ask the parent if there has been anything discussed that they do not want included in the social history.
8. If there is a concern about a completed social history by a parent who did not participate in the interview process, whether custodial or not, an addendum may be done. A new consent form, depending on the circumstances, may need to be signed. Examples of possible situations that may arise include: parents have shared legal custody or child lives with one parent. Either parent may be interviewed and only one consent is needed. If parents do not have shared legal custody and the child resides with the parent who does not have custody, either parent may do the social history, if no parental rights have been terminated. **In difficult cases regarding guardianship, consult with the Records and Compliance departments.**
9. Names of other foster children in the home must not be included in the report.

10. Completed social history reports must not be faxed or e-mailed to schools or parents due to confidential information.
11. Do not include information about race. Do not inquire or include information about religion unless it is a prominent part of the family's identity and helps with understanding the student's behaviors.
12. Communicable diseases are not mentioned in social history reports, even if the person gives consent. The writer may report that "student/parent has a chronic health condition." Refer to *A Parent's Guide to Communicable Diseases* (2004) produced in cooperation with Volusia County Schools and Volusia County Health Department for a complete list. Be familiar with the School Board Policy #216:

Under Florida Statutes, the Department of Health has supervision over matters pertaining to public health, including that of school students. Laws, rules and, regulations relating to contagious or communicable diseases and sanitary matters including 64D-3.001, Florida Administrative Code, shall be followed. The superintendent of schools cooperates with the county health officer in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the State of Florida.

13. Do not include negative information about school staff. Make a general statement when a parent insists on the information being included in the report. For example, "parent disagrees with school personnel and the issues have not been resolved."
14. School social workers do not diagnose or assign labels. If you want to allude to a diagnosis, write "Mother reports that her child was diagnosed with ADHD in 1st grade, by Dr. Jane Doe," **OR** "Medical documentation shows that\_\_\_\_\_."
15. Under **Summary and Recommendations** section of the social history report, include your impressions as a professional school social worker. Impressions are interpretation of all the data gathered. It is a diagnostic statement of the problems and needs of the child at home, at school, and in the community. It addresses educational issues and other factors which affect the student's adaptation to the school setting (i.e., strengths of the student and family and how these strengths might be mobilized to solve the presenting problems).
16. In order to prevent the school system from assuming liability for payment of outside services, choose wording carefully. Do not say, "Student *must have* \_\_\_\_\_ in order to be successful." It is better to say, "Student *may benefit from* \_\_\_\_\_." It is acceptable to share the names of community resources/agencies, but do not identify private practitioner's names. Another suggestion would be to advise the parent to contact the family's insurance company for a list of providers.

### **Do's and Do Not's of Documentation**

The suggestions below may be useful in the social history report process. This list is not all-inclusive:

1. Use electronic signature in blue ink.
2. DO NOT use one-sentence paragraphs.
3. Qualify your observations and comments (i.e., "Student appeared tired, as demonstrated by his repeated yawning" **OR** "it seems..."). Use descriptions to define what you observe (i.e., "agitated," "irritable").
4. DO NOT mention ESE or DSM labels, unless the student already has one.

5. Remember that parents have access to our records and schools routinely give copies of social histories and other documents to parents upon their request. It is also possible for our files to be subpoenaed by the courts.
6. DO NOT let the signature lines go to a new page (change the “page setup” margins for top and/or bottom, etc.).
7. ALL social history reports must be professionally written and educationally relevant.

Source: Adapted from The Social History: Best Practice Guidelines  
for School Social Work Assessment in Florida, June 1988



## SOCIAL HISTORY OUTLINE

(Information in the social history report should be educationally relevant)

*Significant information from previous social histories should be reflected in Social History Update under corresponding sections.*

**NOTE:** The “Confidential Social History” reports are computer shell forms and should be personalized and saved to your computer as a Microsoft Word Template. **Ensure that the most up-to-date shells are being used.**

### Cover Page/Footer/Header

- A. Use appropriate cover page: regular Social History, Social History Update, or Social History for Child Find
- B. DOB and Date of Interview (DOI) must be consistently written, i.e., DOB 4/2/2000 and DOI 2/2/2007 or April 2, 2000 and February 2, 2007
- C. Footer should be on the bottom of the page with MIS number and current revision date
- D. Header – Student (First name, Last name)  
DOB (consistently written with cover page)
- F. There should be two (2) spaces between each header category

### Referral Information

- A. Requested by Problem Solving Team (MTSS) or Individual Education Plan (IEP) committee
- B. Reason Action is Proposed for evaluations
- C. Updates/re-evaluation reports – list current exceptionality(ies)
- D. Define the content/layout of the social history report
- E. Date referral received
- E. Source(s) of information gathered
  1. parent/guardian interview (include names/date/location)
  2. cumulative record review
  3. teacher comments/school staff input
  4. student observation/interview (include date)
  5. electronic data browses
  6. previous social history, if applicable (include interview date and interviewee)
- F. Note any *extreme* difficulties in arranging interview or unusual circumstances surrounding parents’/guardians’ inability to participate

## **Family Background**

- A. Family Composition – include names, relationship to student, ages, employment, and education of adults/children residing in the home at present

**NOTE:** *If using table style format for Section A, include the following headings: Name, Relationship, Age, Employment, and Education. There is no need to include the same information captured in the narrative portion.*

- B. Length of time at current address
- C. History of residences for student (include student's emotional reactions to moves)
- D. Pertinent information regarding parents/guardians (i.e., custody/court orders, etc.)
- E. Parents'/guardians' perceptions of how everyone gets along (i.e., interaction with parents/guardians, siblings, etc.)
- F. Activities the family enjoys doing together (*What time do you enjoy most with your children?*)
- G. Community involvement/support (i.e., YMCA, church group, support group, etc.)
- H. Agency involvement (services previously or presently received by family such as therapy, DCF involvement, parenting classes, counseling, etc. and include type, date of service, and service provider)
- I. Strengths of the family (*What has helped the family survive thus far? How have you been getting through it all? What do you do to relieve stress? What is working for your family? What family accomplishments bring you pride? When things were going well, what was different?*)
- J. Challenges the family is currently facing (i.e., economic instability, homelessness, relevant cultural, language, and diversity issues)
- K. Other family issues that may be affecting the student (include student's reaction to)
1. deaths or significant losses
  2. traumatic event (i.e., sexual, physical, emotional abuse)
  3. use of alcohol or drugs (i.e., neighborhood and peer influences, family history of substance abuse, etc.)
  4. family problems (i.e., divorce or other marital issues, unemployment, etc.)
- L. Family goals/aspirations
- M. Other significant person(s) not in the home, including absent parent (identify names, relationships to student, ages, education, employment, and contact with student)

## **Developmental/Medical History**

- A. Pregnancy
1. mother's emotional health
    - a) emotional reaction to pregnancy
    - b. presence or absence of emotional support (identify support persons)
  2. mother's physical health
    - a. access to prenatal care
    - b. complications during pregnancy
    - c. use of medication
    - d. use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco (DO NOT INDICATE "DENIED USE OF")
    - e. length of pregnancy (i.e., pre-term, full-term, post-term)
- B. Labor and delivery
1. duration and/or complications of labor
  2. type of delivery
  3. place of birth
  4. weight – *normal weight is 5.5-10 pounds* (ex. 8 pounds, 6 ounces)
  5. complications at birth
    - a. baby (i.e., respiratory, jaundice, infection, seizures, cord around neck, turned blue, etc.)

- b. mother
- 6. length of hospital stay for baby and mother

#### C. Early Development

1. achievement and age accomplishment of developmental milestones
  - a. sit up – *normal age is 4-8 months*
  - b. crawl – *normal age is 9-10 months*
  - c. walk – *normal age is 12-24 months*
  - d. single word speech – *normal age is 18 months*
  - e. talks using phrases – *normal age is 2 years*
  - f. toilet trained – *normal age is 3 years* (concerns or current problems)
2. concerns/worries during early development (i.e. asthma, fevers, ear infections, **indifference or aversion to affection/physical contact, failure to cuddle, lack of eye contact/facial responsiveness, failure to respond to parents'/guardians' voices, difficulty being soothed, restricted range of interests, odd or bizarre behaviors, prefers to play alone, lack of imaginative play, preoccupation with external stimuli, inflexibility to routine/rituals, etc.**)
3. other developmental concerns (include medical interventions for identified problems)
  - a. speech (**i.e., regressive, perseverate, echolalia, repetitive, flat affect, inappropriate pitch or volume, etc.**)
  - b. hearing (**i.e., hypersensitivity to sound, inconsistent responses to sound, etc.**)
  - c. vision (**i.e., exaggerate reactions to light, etc.**)
  - d. diet (**i.e., texture of food, refuses to eat a variety of foods, pica [eats things that are not food] etc.**)
4. rate of child's development (*Did this differ from his/her siblings?*)

#### D. Medical History (as relevant, include relevant information from cumulative record)

1. health insurance
2. physician name
  - a. last examination
  - b. findings
3. dentist name
  - a. last examination
  - b. findings/concerns (grinds teeth)
4. present physical health (i.e., nature of the problem and short-term vs. long-term effect on student)
  - a. general health
  - b. ongoing health concerns/diagnoses (include initial date)
  - c. frequent illnesses
  - d. allergies
  - e. vision concerns
  - f. sleeping concerns
  - g. hearing concerns
  - h. eating/dietary concerns
  - i. medications/treatments (include effectiveness)
  - j. specialized providers (neurologist, cardiologist, etc.)
5. present mental health (i.e., nature of the problem and short-term vs. long-term effect on student)
  - a. ongoing health concerns/diagnoses (initial date)
  - b. medications/treatments (effectiveness)
  - c. psychiatric/management provider (initial date and frequency)
  - d. counseling/therapy provider (initial date and frequency)
  - e. targeted case management provider (initial date and frequency)
6. past physical/mental health (include age of occurrence, type, length of treatment, recuperation period, diagnosis and/or prognosis)
  - a. injuries or accidents

- b. illnesses or chronic conditions
- c. medication/treatments (include effectiveness)
- d. hospitalizations or surgeries
- 7. family history (if considered to be significantly affecting student)
  - a. medical problems (maternal/paternal)
  - b. mental health problems (maternal/paternal)

**NOTE:** Family medical/mental health history may be reported in **Family Background** or **Socioemotional/Behavioral Functioning** sections if affecting entire family.

### **Educational History**

- A. Pre-school experience
  - 1. primary caretaker prior to entering
  - 2. name of pre-school
  - 3. student's age in pre-school
  - 4. length of care in pre-school
  - 5. teacher and/or parent/guardian concerns about student (i.e., behavior problems, lack of self-help skills, difficulty learning numbers and letters, **restricted range of interests, odd or bizarre behaviors, prefers to play alone, lack of imaginative play, preoccupation with external stimuli, inflexibility to routine/rituals, etc.**)
- B. Electronic data review and summary (past/present when applicable)
  - 1. General Demographics (homeless, ESOL, 504, School Social Worker contacts, etc.)
  - 2. Attendance Summary – absences (excused and unexcused) should be addressed in all social histories, even when it has not been a problem; lates (unexcused) and tardies (excused) need to be defined for clarity; include suspension days
  - 3. Enrollment **NOTE: *If using table format, include the headings: School Year, Grade, School Name, Concerns***
    - a. Enrollment History – schools attended with dates (include history of excessive absences)
    - b. Grade Promotion Status (each year)
  - 4. Referrals (number of referrals and primary offense codes)
  - 5. ESE Exceptionalities (past/present ESE exceptionalities)
  - 6. SSS tabs (Section 504, ESE, and Social/Emotional Wellness)
- C. Cumulative record review and summary (including dates) *Refer to Social History Cum Record Review*
  - 1. Problem Solving Team notes (include student's general response to interventions)
  - 2. teacher comments/conference notes
  - 3. records from out-of-county schools
  - 4. legal/custody documentation
  - 5. birth certificate (verify legal name, date of birth, and parents' names)
  - 6. health/medical documentation
  - 7. information on student entry forms
- D. Teacher/School staff perception and comments (*Refer to Teacher/School Staff Interview Guide*)
  - 1. student strengths (*What comes easily to this student? When does this student work best independently? What special classroom job would this student most excel at?*)
  - 2. interventions/motivators (*What have you done that has helped the student the most? What motivates this student?*)
  - 3. academic progress/challenges (*Describe a task that was difficult for this student and a way he/she overcame*)

4. behavior at school (*How frequent is the behavior? What motivates the student to show this behavior? Can you predict when the behavior will occur? What factors make it worse? What are some strategies already tried to address the problem? How successful was each strategy?*)
  5. social functioning (*How does the student get along with his/her peers?*)
  6. relationship with teacher(s) and/or administrator(s)
  7. parent/guardian contacts (frequency and type)
- E. Parents'/guardians' input regarding school
1. student's like/dislike of school (i.e., separation anxiety, school phobia characteristics, loss of interest, etc.)
  2. student's strengths
  3. nature of the student's challenges or parent concerns regarding the child's education
  4. onset and frequency of the challenges or concerns
  5. cause of the challenges
  6. other areas of concern regarding the student (i.e., academics, behaviors, social relationships, etc.)
  7. parents'/guardians' contacts with the school regarding these concerns (*have you been contacted by school personnel?*)
  8. homework (*Does the child have any?*)
    - a. habits (*Are they compliant? Do they struggle with it? Do they ask for help?*)
    - b. parents'/guardians' comfort with helping
  9. parents'/guardians' educational goals/expectations for student (short-term and long-term)
  10. parents'/guardians' perception of the assistance needed at school for their child to achieve educational success
  11. openness to child receiving (more) support services at school
  12. obstacles that may hinder progress at home or school
  13. family education experiences (family history of learning problems/disabilities or giftedness)
- F. Student contact (include date)
1. observation
  2. interview (*Refer to Student Interview form*)
    - a. personality (*Tell me about yourself. What are some words that describe you? How would your friends/family/teachers describe you?*)
    - b. strengths (*Tell me about your positive qualities. What do you like about yourself? What are you good at? What would your parents/teachers/friends say you are good at?*)
    - c. interests (*Tell me about your interests and activities you like to do. What interests you? What do you like to do outside of school? Are you involved with a sport, hobby, or club? What does your typical daily routine look like?*)
    - d. motivators (*Tell me about your motivators. What gets you excited? What is your greatest accomplishment? Of what you are most proud?*)
    - e. family/support system (*Tell me about your family. How do you get along with members of your family? With whom are you closest to in your life? With whom do you feel closest to in your family? Who are your role models? Who inspires you?*)
    - f. school (*Tell me about school. Do you like school? What do you like about school? What is your favorite part of the school day? What is your favorite subject/class? Why? What is your least favorite subject/class? Why? How often do you feel discouraged/frustrated at school? What are your classmates like? How do you get along with them? Who do you feel closest to at school? How do you get along with your teachers? Do you feel comfortable asking for help from your teacher(s)? Do you ask for help? When? How has your teacher(s) helped you? Tell me about your study skills/homework. How do you stay organized? How often do you forget to do homework/study?*)
    - g. educational/career goals (*Tell me about your grades. How important is it for you to have good grades? What grades do you strive to achieve on your report card? How far do you see yourself going educationally? What do you want to do or be when you grow up?*)

- h. coping skills (*Are things going well right now or was there a time when things were going better? When things were going well, what was different? How do you get through the day? What keeps you going on a day-to-day basis? Do you ever feel sad/worried/angry? How often? When do you feel the most sad/worried/angry? Home/school? What do you do when you feel sad/worried/angry? How do you calm yourself/cope with that emotion?*)
- i. social skills/friends (*Tell me about your friends. Do you have a lot of friends/a few/none? Do you have a best friend? What are your friends like? What do you like to do together? How have your friends helped you out? Do you get in arguments with your friends? How often? How do you resolve the problem? What is one way you are a good friend? What is your favorite way to help people?*)
- j. **Final Question:** Is there anything we can help you with...at school or at home?

### **Socioemotional/Behavioral Functioning**

- A. Student's personal characteristics
    - 1. description of personality (i.e., leader, outgoing, creative, emotional, independent, happy, jealous, moody, shy, etc.)
    - 2. strengths and positive qualities (i.e., generous, forgiving, trustworthy, determined/persistent, high self-esteem, confident, etc.) (*What is your child good at? What does your child do that makes you proud?*)
    - 3. favorite activities, interests, or hobbies (include level of involvement)
    - 4. parents'/guardians' socioemotional/behavioral goals/expectations for student
  - B. Social interaction/relationships
    - 1. after school activities (i.e., team sports, clubs, YMCA, scouts, part-time job, etc.)
    - 2. ability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers (i.e. tolerance of others, bully, etc.)
    - 3. level of social functioning (i.e., leader/follower, peacemaker/fighter, bully/victim, etc.)
    - 4. peer influence (negative or positive)
    - 5. preferred peer group (younger, older, same age)
    - 6. social interaction/social communication concerns (poor social skills, poor/abnormal eye contact, etc.)
    - 7. interaction with adults/authority figures
- Note: Add significant social interaction and social communication concerns from ASD Parent Interview Questions, if applicable.*
- C. Independent functioning
    - 1. age-appropriate capabilities and daily living skills (i.e. dress/bathe self, brush teeth, tie shoes, put toys away, make bed, fold/wash laundry, prepare own meal/microwave, follow multi-step directions, count money/making purchases, perform tasks independently, navigate the environment, etc.)
    - 2. personal choices/decisions (i.e., personal hygiene, follows household rules, stays home alone, self-regulation, substance use, risky behavior, responsible behavior, etc.)
    - 3. assigned chores/tasks or responsibilities
    - 4. compliance with doing chores/tasks or responsibilities (with or without reminders)
  - D. Behavior Management Techniques
    - 1. disciplinarian
    - 2. behaviors disciplined for
    - 3. methods (i.e., ignore, scold, spank, threaten, reason, redirect, timeout, restriction, etc.)
    - 4. effectiveness
    - 5. consistency

6. frequency
7. main person who rewards
8. behaviors rewarded for
9. rewards for positive behavior

E. Behavior in the community

1. child's behavior in public places (*grocery store, restaurant, doctor offices, etc.*)
2. criminal activity/involvement – past/present (i.e., Teen Court, DJJ, etc.)

F. Emotional/behavioral checklist (significant, out of the ordinary, or longstanding – lasting a minimum of 6 months) ***Check all that apply and expand upon in report.***

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No recognition of danger           | <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety/panic          | <input type="checkbox"/> Temper tantrums          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Withholds affection                | <input type="checkbox"/> Unusual fears/worries  | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-compliance           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overactive/fidgety                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Somatic complaints     | <input type="checkbox"/> Resentment/holds grudges |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor task completion               | <input type="checkbox"/> Depression/sadness     | <input type="checkbox"/> Anger                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inattentive/unfocused              | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal aggression        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsiveness                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of interests      | <input type="checkbox"/> Destructive behaviors    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Risk-taker                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Low self-esteem        | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical aggression      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hallucinations/irrational thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Hides feelings         | <input type="checkbox"/> Cruelty to animals       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demanding/Hard to satisfy          | <input type="checkbox"/> Underactive/low energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Lying                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire-setting                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Moodiness              | <input type="checkbox"/> Blames others            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No remorse                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Cries excessively      | <input type="checkbox"/> Stealing                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easily frustrated/annoyed          | <input type="checkbox"/> Jealousy               | <input type="checkbox"/>                          |

*Note: Add significant restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped behavior concerns from ASD Parent Interview Questions, if applicable.*

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Difficulty with changes</b>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Self-injurious/abusing</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Overreacts</b>            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Repetitive motor movements</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Restricted/fixated interests</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unusual play/behavior</b> |

**ASK INTERVIEWEE:** Is there anything else you would like us to know about your child? Is there anything you would like to add, clarify, or omit? Any questions for me?

## **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**NOTE:** No new information is to be introduced in the recap section.

A. Recap of student information

1. referral information (referred by, reason for referral, date received)
2. identifying information (student's name, age, grade, school, current exceptionality)
3. summarize student's strengths
4. summarize parent/guardian/teacher/school staff concerns regarding student
5. summarize current diagnoses, medication, and treatment
6. services student/family is currently receiving (DCF, psychiatric, counseling, parenting classes, etc.)

B. Recap of parent/guardian interview

1. Interviewee, date, place/method

2. interview summary
  3. family's view/recognition of the problem including family's strengths and parents'/guardians' openness to their child receiving additional support services
  4. identifications of possible obstacles which may preclude progress at home and at school
- C. Community Services/Agencies
1. information shared with or provided to parent/guardian (community resources, educational terms/acronyms, etc.)
  2. community agency referral
- D. School social worker's recommendations/follow-up
1. School Social Worker recommendation

**Example:** "It is recommended that the information in this report be used in conjunction with information obtained from school staff for determining educational supports or services presently available for the child."

2. School Social Worker follow-up

**Example:** "This worker will provide emotional support to the family, link them to appropriate services and resources, and work with school personnel to make recommendations for additional interventions as needed/requested."



### More Do's and Don'ts of Documentation

The suggestions below may be useful in writing reports. This list is not all-inclusive:

- ✓ Be sure to use blue ink to sign and date all reports.
- ✓ DO NOT use one sentence paragraphs.
- ✓ Qualify your observations and comments (e.g., “Student appeared tired, as demonstrated by his repeated yawning.”)
- ✓ Use descriptions to define what you observe (e.g., “agitated,” “irritable”).
- ✓ When recounting an interview, be sure to clarify who said what (e.g., “\_\_\_\_\_ **stated, indicated, reported, responded, commented, expressed, noted, shared, said** that...” or “According to \_\_\_\_\_ ...” or “\_\_\_\_\_ describes his child as...”)
- ✓ Use quoted statements **sparingly** – as all quoted statements **MUST** be accurate.
- ✓ DO NOT state “parent/guardian believes” or “parent/guardian thinks” or “parent/guardian feels,” rather state “parent/guardian **stated that she believes...**”
- ✓ DO NOT give a diagnosis unless you identify the source of the information. “Mother reports that her child was diagnosed with ADHD in 1<sup>st</sup> grade by Dr. Jane Doe.”
- ✓ DO NOT mention communicable diseases, i.e., HIV status, even if person gives consent.
- ✓ DO NOT specify that a student was sexually abused, rather say the student experienced a traumatic event.
- ✓ Remember that parents/guardians have access to our records and schools routinely send copies of social histories and other documents to parents/guardians upon their request. It is also possible for our files to be subpoenaed by the courts.
- ✓ DO NOT include other foster children’s names in the report.
- ✓ DO NOT let the signature lines go to a new page (change the “page setup” margins for top and/or bottom).
- ✓ ALL reports must be professionally written and educationally relevant.

## SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY FLOW CHART

