

*Illinois*

**Family Self-Sufficiency Scale**

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## THE FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY SCALE

The Family Self-Sufficiency scale is an instrument developed in Pennsylvania by the Bucks County Opportunity Council in consultation with Frederick Richmond. The scale has been used for helping families move toward self-sufficiency and has proved to be an effective instrument in measuring progress toward self-sufficiency.

The scale is broadly divided into ten areas namely, income, employment, education, transportation, parenting/social functioning, substance abuse, mental health, health insurance, shelter and subsistence. These ten areas were chosen by Bucks County as the areas which they believe indicate progress toward self-sufficiency. Illinois has made minor changes in the transportation subscale.

As Illinois CAA's use the instrument, additional changes may be needed to adapt to Illinois' needs and priorities. To ensure a continued reliable and valid instrument, such changes will require substantial research and development. Suggestions for changes to the Scale are welcomed by both Illinois and Pennsylvania staff involved with the Scale. Please route your suggestions and comments to :

FCD~Family Self-Sufficiency Scale Comments  
Illinois Community Action Association  
101 N. 16th Street  
Springfield, IL 62703

## Family Self-Sufficiency Scale Abstract

Factor	Income	Employment	Adult Formal Education	Transportation	Parent/Social Functioning
<b>Dependent 0-2</b>	No income or entitlement	Unemployed	Illiterate	No license or car, no public transportation	Negative behaviors or referral to social services
<b>Progress 3-5</b>	Inadequate income	Part-time employment	High school, GED, training, no license or certification	Access to car, or public transportation, some needs met	Active in social services or counseling
<b>Independent: 6-10</b>	Adequate income	Full-time employment, or completely disabled	Certification, license or college graduate	License and car or access to pub. transport, all needs met.	Classes or support groups, or no intervention

Factor	Substance Abuse	Mental Health	Health Insurance	Shelter	Subsistence
<b>Dependent 0-2</b>	Active addiction	Negative behaviors or referral to MH services	Adults no insurance, children insured	Homeless or temporary shelter	Unable to afford food, hunger
<b>Progress 3-5</b>	Attends treatment program or support group	Active in mental health services or counseling	Insurance for some household members	Transitional or unaffordable housing	Unable to afford food but uses subsidized food programs
<b>Independent 6-10</b>	Completes program, in recovery, or no intervention	Maintenance through counseling, medication, or no intervention	Insurance for entire household	Affordable housing	Able to afford food above subsistence level

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# **PROTOCOL FOR FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY SCALE**

## **Step 1 - Telephone Screen**

The initial contact with the FCD Program is usually by telephone, although walk-ins are possible. A secretary performs an initial screening and advises the potential client what documentation is needed for the initial interview with the case manager. On occasion, the secretary may refer the initial contact to a FCD Specialist.

## **Step 2 - Intake Form**

The FCD Specialist meets with the potential client and fills out the FCD Client Intake and Quarterly Review Form. A sample is included in the forms section of this manual.

## **Step 3 - Interview**

All clients who have signed the FCD Client Intake and Quarterly Review Form are interviewed by the FCD Specialist. It is determined at this time whether the client is appropriate for the FCD Program, or should be referred to other community resources. Clients can choose not to participate in the FCD Program, but should still complete a Goal Plan for the factor(s) for which they request services. Some clients, such as those requesting weatherization services only, may not have a Goal Plan.

If a client chooses to participate in the FCD Program, the client must sign a participation agreement. A sample Goal Plan and Participation Agreement is included in the forms section of this manual.

## **Completing the Family Self-Sufficiency Scale**

The Family Self-Sufficiency Scale is administered and scored with the participation of the family. The Scale contains ten factors and two Community Integration

sections. The ten factors are: Income, Employment, Education, Transportation, Parenting and Social Functioning, Substance Abuse, Mental Health, Health Insurance, Shelter, and Subsistence. Subsections for Community Integration Achievements and Community Integration Barriers are also included.

Each factor is scaled from 0-10 (with the exception of Community Integration subscales) representing a continuum of dependence to total self sufficiency. The components are grouped as follows:

- 0 - 2 - Neglect or total dependency (problem or need)
- 3 - 5 - Participation in self-sufficiency activities and still dependent (progress)
- 6-10 - Range of self sufficiency (success).

Individual components can be characterized as the status of the client, participation in an activity or achievement of an outcome. Since the scale represents movement along a dependency/self-sufficiency continuum, a client can achieve an outcome while still dependent (a score below six), or within the self-sufficiency range, (a score of six or above).

A client achieving an overall score of sixty or above would be considered self-sufficient as long as the client had employment and was not participating in a federal entitlement program. While it is theoretically possible to achieve a score of sixty or above without having employment or participating in a federal entitlement program, having these conditions present would preclude the client from being identified as self-sufficient regardless of the numerical score.

The prioritization worksheet, which is included in the sample forms section of this manual, should be completed with the client during the interview. The worksheet assists in determining the priority of goals for planning.

## **Completing the Goal Plan**

FCD families together with the FCD Specialist complete the Goal Plan, an eleven page version of the Family Self-Sufficiency Scale. Each of the ten factors and the Community Integration Subscale have their own page. The FCD Specialist scores each factor on the scale of 0-10 providing an assessment or baseline for the client on

each of the ten factors. If the initial score on any factor is above six, indicating the range for self-sufficiency, it is optional for the Specialist to fill out the Goal Plan for that factor. A Goal Plan should be considered for each factor below six.. Goal Plans for Community Integration should be completed if applicable.

There are priorities for completion of the Goal Plan. Crises, such as absence of income or shelter, should be completed first. The balance of the Goal Plan is completed on subsequent visits. Goals for each factor scored below six are written on the Goal Plan and should be signed-off by the client. Always involve the client in developing, setting, and writing all goals.

## **Timeframe**

The initial intake and interview usually lasts for 1.5 to 2 hours, and includes a review of documents requested during the intake process. Additional hours should be allotted to the FCD Specialist for paperwork. Subsequent interviews should be scheduled for one hour time periods.

## **Step 4 - Supplement to Goal Plan:**

### **Contact Note, Progress Narrative**

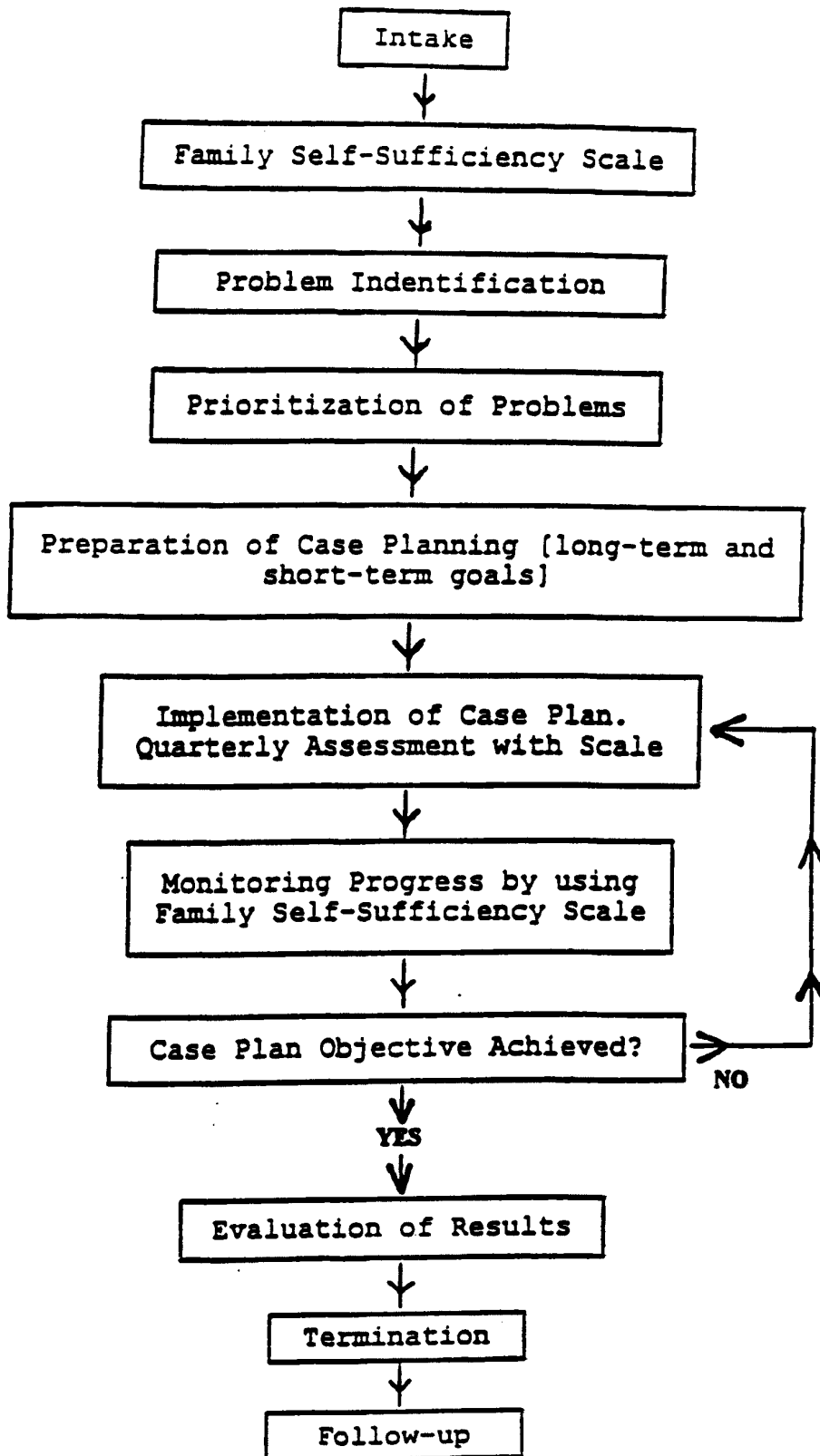
The FCD Specialist writes a progress narrative, or contact note, after each contact with the client. A sample contact note is included in the sample forms section of this manual.

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# Case Sample

Ms. Martha is a 29-year-old, single woman who lives in a rural area. She has a 13 year old daughter, Kathy. The last four weeks, both of them have been staying in a shelter for the homeless. Prior to that, Martha and Kathy were staying with Martha's boyfriend. Due to physical and emotional abuse, she decided to leave her boyfriend's house. Currently, Martha complains of occasional crying spells and has difficulty falling asleep. She often wakes early in the a.m. and can't go back to sleep. Martha was treated for substance abuse about 5 years ago and has since remained clean. Martha completed her GED last year. Kathy is in 8th grade and is an outstanding student in a local school. The past six months, Martha has been working in a local gas station for \$4.50/hr for about 40 hours a week. She has a car and driver's license but has not been able to pay for insurance. She receives food stamps for \$120 a month and has a medical card for herself and Kathy.

# FLOWCHART FOR THE PROCESS OF MEASUREMENT



# FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FAMILY SELF SUFFICIENCY SCALE

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## Income

- 0 No earned income, no entitlement or subsidized benefits.
- 1 No earned income, eligible but not participating in entitlement or subsidized benefits.
- 2 No earned income, and receiving entitlement or subsidized benefits.
  
- 4A Earned income inadequate for basic living expenses, receiving entitlement or subsidized benefits.
- 4B Earned income inadequate for basic living expenses, eligible but not participating in entitlement or subsidized benefits.
- 5 Earned income inadequate for basic living expenses, not eligible for entitlement for subsidized benefits.
  
- 6 Income adequate for basic living expenses and receiving transitional subsidized benefits.
- 7 Income adequate for basic living expenses.
- 9 Income adequate for basic living and discretionary spending.
- 10 Income adequate for basic living, discretionary spending and savings.

## Employment

- 0 Unemployed; work history and skills absent.
- 1 Unemployed; has skills and work history.
- 2 Unemployed; has skills, work history, and child care (or no children).
  
- 4 Working part-time.
- 5 Working part-time and attending education or training program.
  
- 9 Working full-time and attending education or training program.
- 10A Working full-time.
- 10B Completely disabled; no case plan to secure employment.

## Adult Formal Education

- 0 Reading, writing, and basic math skills absent.
- 1 Literate in English.
- 2 Reading, writing, and basic math skills present, but not certified.
- 4 Client formally educated, need English as a Second Language.
- 6 High school diploma or G.E.D.
- 7 Post high school vocational education, non-college business, technical or professional training, some college credit; not certified or not licensed.
- 9 Non-college business, technical, professional training; certification; licensed.
- 10 College graduate, post graduate or professional degree.

## Transportation

- 0A Drivers license and vehicle absent, no access to public transportation.
- 0B Drivers license or insurance absent, but drives.
- 3 Drivers license but no vehicle nor access to public transportation.
- 4 Drivers license, access to unreliable vehicle, some transportation needs met.
- 5 Drivers license, access to vehicle, some transportation needs met.
- 10A Driver license, owner of reliable vehicle, registration, insurance, all transportation needs met.
- 10B Access to public transportation, all transportation needs met.

### Transportation: Metropolitan

- 0A Public transportation unavailable.
- 0B Public transportation inaccessible.
- 3 Public transportation available but don't know how to use.
- 4 Public transportation available but unable to afford.
- 10 Public transportation available, can afford, and know how to use.

### Transportation: Rural

- 0 No drivers license.
- 3 Drivers license only.
- 4 Drivers license and access to car.
- 5 Drivers license and car but no insurance.
- 10 Drivers license and car with insurance.

## **Parenting/Social Functioning**

- 0 Reported or self-reported negative behaviors, intervention needed.
- 2 Referral to social services, counseling or classes, intervention needed.
- 4 Active case in social services or counseling.
- 8 Maintains resolution of issues through classes or community support groups.
- 10 Social services intervention not needed.

## **Substance Abuse**

- 0 Active addiction, not in treatment program or support group.
- 1 Accepts need for treatment, is scheduled to enter a treatment program or planning to attend a support group.
- 3 Attends a treatment program or support group.
- 7 In recovery less than six (6) months.
- 8 In recovery less than two (2) years.
- 9 In recovery more than two (2) years.
- 10 Substance abuse intervention not needed.

## **Mental Health**

- 0 Reported or self-reported mental health issues, intervention needed.
- 2 Referral to mental health services, intervention needed.
- 4 Receives mental health services for treatment of DSM IV diagnosis on weekly or bi-weekly basis.
- 7 Maintains resolution of issues through intermittent mental health services or medication.
- 9 Maintains resolution of issues through non-clinical support group.
- 10 Mental health services intervention not needed.

## Health Insurance

- 0 Insurance for adults and children absent.
- 1 Insurance for some children, but not adult(s).
- 2 Insurance for all children, but not adult(s).
- 3 Insurance for adult(s), but not children.
  
- 4 Insurance for some, but not all adults and all children.
- 5 All household members insured, some subsidized.
  
- 10 Private insurance for all household members.

## Shelter

- 0 Homeless.
- 1 Substandard Housing.
- 2 Temporary residence including shelter programs.
  
- 3 Transitional Housing.
- 4A Unaffordable subsidized rental.
- 4B Unaffordable non-subsidized rental.
- 4C Unaffordable home ownership.
  
- 6 Affordable subsidized rental.
- 9 Affordable non-subsidized rental.
- 10 Affordable home ownership.

## Subsistence

- 0 Unable to afford food, evidence of malnutrition or hunger.
  
- 3A Unable to afford food, participating in subsidized food programs.
- 3B Unable to afford food, use of pantry, soup kitchen or other private program for survival needs, eligible for subsidized food programs but not participating.
- 5 Unable to afford food, use of pantry, soup kitchen or other private program for survival need, not eligible for subsidized food programs.
  
- 6 Able to afford food at subsistence level, but not hungry.
- 10 Able to afford range of food choices.

## Community Integration Achievements

(Add 1 Point for Each Achievement)

- 1 Birth Certificate and social security card.
- 1 Registered to vote.
- 1 No outstanding judgments, fines or unmanageable debt.
- 1 Not incarcerated nor on probation or parole.
- 1 Available and affordable child care (or family without children).
- 1 All children immunized and receiving regular medical checkups (or family without children).
- 1 Checking, savings or positive credit history.
- 1 Participation in family planning.
- 1 Grades above passing for school age children (or family without children).
- 1 Participation in recreational activities, belonging to a social group or volunteering.

## Community Integration Barriers

(Subtract 1 Point for Each Barrier)

- 1 Victim of abuse.
- 1 Severe legal problems
- 1 Primary caregiver of chronically or severely ill family member.
- 1 Ineligible for social services; waiting for SSI
- 1 Current income undeclared.
- 1 Not receiving court ordered child support.
- 1 Record of felony/child abuse.
- 1 Debt over \$3,000.
- 1 Dysfunctional cohabitant inhibiting self-sufficiency.
- 1 No phone service.

DATE				
TOTAL SCORE				