



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Shevaun L. Harris
Secretary

DATE: October 17, 2024

TO: Child Protection Directors
Community Directors
Community Based Care Lead Agency CEOs
Children's Legal Services

FROM: Kate Williams, Deputy Secretary *KW*

SUBJECT: Trauma Screening Tool (Amended Memo)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this amended memorandum is to provide updated guidance regarding the use of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) questionnaire to screen children for trauma upon removal from their home in order to appropriately assess for immediate trauma and/or crisis service intervention. This memo supplants the memo dated September 20, 2024.

BACKGROUND: Section 39.523, Florida Statutes, requires the Department or lead agency to administer a trauma screening promptly following a child's removal from their home, ensuring completion no later than 21 days after the shelter hearing. Should the screening indicate appropriateness or necessity, the Department or lead agency must make a referral for the child's comprehensive trauma assessment. The trauma assessment itself must be finalized within 30 days, with subsequent provision of services and interventions as necessary.

NEW INFORMATION: Effective immediately, Child Protective Investigators (CPIs) and case management staff are required to complete the 60-minute web-based training entitled, "Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma | Risk Factors for ACEs, Prevention & Intervention found within the My FL Learn system (<https://www.myflfamilies.com/my-fl-learn>) to familiarize themselves with the ACE tool.

Supplemental training regarding the ACEs screening tool which outlines how to assess the child's ACEs score and documentation in the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) and Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) is located in My FL Learn at <https://myflfamilies.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/course/32af8f5c-44e7-409e-8d47-507f78f9d59e>.

Beginning October 11, 2024, CPIs and case management staff are required to complete a trauma screening for each child who is sheltered using the ACEs tool. This tool must be completed within 21 days of removal in order to assess for the need for immediate, more intensive trauma or crisis related services. CPI or case management staff are required to complete the electronic ACEs tool located at <https://adversechildhoodexperiences.myflfamilies.com/> and/or within the CCWIS application for each child who has been sheltered. When conducting the trauma screening on non-verbal, medically compromised, or developmentally delayed youth, staff should utilize case history known to them and any additional resources to appropriately answer the questions. The ACEs tool will calculate the results automatically.

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Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

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The CPI or case management staff assigned primary to the case should be administering the trauma screening using the ACEs tool for each child removed and placed in out-of-home care. In addition, the same staff is responsible for completing immediate referrals for services on the child's behalf when the ACEs score is six or above.

CPIs are required to print and upload the completed ACEs tool (which will generate a .pdf form) for each impacted child into CCWIS using the following naming convention:

- Select the Image Type of "Evaluation"
- Image Category of "Investigation"
- Image Description of "Child's Name ACE Score results", (Ex. John. Doe ACE Score 3).

Case management staff are required to print and upload the completed ACEs tool for each impacted child into the FSFN file cabinet for the specific case using the following naming convention:

- Selecting Image Category "Participants Document"
- Image Type "Other"
- File Name "Child's Name ACE Score results", (Ex. John. Doe ACE Score 3)

For children whose ACEs score is six or above, staff will need to determine the appropriate referrals needed to ensure the child is receiving supports as soon as possible. In addition, staff will be responsible for creating a case note under the note type of "Review-Other" documenting the child's score and any referrals for services that were made on behalf of the child.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please share this memorandum with all CPIs and case management staff.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions or need clarification regarding this memorandum, please contact Shamara Anderson, Child Protective Investigation Policy Specialist, at Shamara.Anderson@myflfamilies.com.