

NCFAS-G

North Carolina Family Assessment Scale
for General Services

Sample Scale & Definitions (v. G2.0)

National Family Preservation Network

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The NCFAS-G was developed in cooperation with Raymond S. Kirk, Ph.D.

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Introduction

This scale is used to determine how a family is functioning. There are 8 Domains, each comprising several subscales. For each subscale, rate its influence as a strength or problem for the family along the six-point continuum, using the following schema: +2 = Clear Strength, +1 = Mild Strength, 0 = Baseline/Adequate, -1 = Mild Problem, -2 = Moderate Problem, and -3 = Serious Problem. To rate each scale, circle the appropriate number. The “overall” Domain ratings (the ones in the shaded areas) should indicate your overall, composite rating for each of the 8 domains. The subscales represent areas of interest relating to the Domain under which they appear (e.g., Housing Stability appears under domain A. Environment). All of the relevant subscales should be rated before assigning an overall Domain rating. Reliability and validity studies of the original Scale have revealed that it is essential to rate each of the subscales before rating the overall domain scale in order to achieve the maximum reliability of Domain ratings.

Use the Definitions for the NCFAS-G scale as guiding language to help you make your ratings. The definition of the **Baseline/Adequate** level of functioning can be thought of as reflecting the community standards in which the scale is applied in practice. The **Baseline/Adequate** level of functioning *is the threshold above which there is no legal, moral, or ethical reason for public intervention*. The level of functioning described by this definition does not preclude the offer or acceptance of voluntary services, regardless of assigned rating. If the family is under-resourced or functioning below the Baseline/Adequate level, public services may be warranted, either on a voluntarily or mandatory basis, depending on circumstances and law.

Some content on the subscales can best be obtained by observation or interaction with the family in their home environment. Therefore, it is recommended that home visits be conducted during the assessment process. Case service plans should be closely tied to problems identified during these assessments. It is also helpful to revisit the scales during the service period to monitor progress. After the initial Intake assessment, the Scale should be reviewed periodically to remind service providers of all treatment or service issues, and to document changes, or lack of changes in the Domains that have been the focus of case services. Complete the Intake ratings as early in the service period as possible, but only after sufficient family contact and supportive information has been obtained to assign the ratings confidently. Closure ratings will be informed by the services provided, the work performed during the service period, and by ongoing contact with the family by the worker.

The NCFAS-G has been adapted from the NCFAS (North Carolina Family Assessment Scale, Version 2.0) developed by Kirk, R. S., and Reed Ashcraft, K., 06/98. Information on these scales can be obtained from the Scales' principal author at ray.kirk@ilrinc.com. (NCFAS-G v.G2.0, 1/1/2007)

A. Environment

<i>Overall Rating</i>	Not Applic.	Clear Strength	Mild Strength	Baseline/ Adequate	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Unknown
1. Overall Environment								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Subscales (7 total)

2. Housing Stability								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
3. Safety in the Community								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
4. Environmental Risks								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Definition of Subscale

3. Safety in the Community	
+2 Clear Strength	Refers to a safe and secure neighborhood for the children. Parents can allow children to play outside without fear. Neighbors look out for each other (i.e., neighborhood “watch”).
0 Baseline/Adequate	Refers to minor disturbances in the neighborhood, but disturbances do not prevent family members and children from spending time outside in the community.
-3 Serious Problem	Refers to many disturbances such as fights and/or outbursts in the neighborhood. The neighborhood is not safe for children to play outdoors or walk to the bus or to school. Evidence of violence, “boarded up” or barred windows, gun fire, the use of alcohol or drugs, and/or drug “trafficking” in the neighborhood. Neighbors fearful of “getting involved.”

B. Parental Capabilities

Note: This section refers to biological parent(s), if present, or current caregiver(s).

<i>Overall Rating</i>	Not Applic.	Clear Strength	Mild Strength	Baseline/ Adequate	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Unknown
1. Overall Parental Capabilities								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Subscales (8 total)

2. Supervision of Child(ren)								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
3. Disciplinary Practices								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
4. Provision of Developmental/ Enrichment Opportunities								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Definition of Subscale

2. Supervision of Child(ren)	
+2 Clear Strength	Refers to caregivers' provision of age-appropriate supervision, such as setting limits for activities based on the children's ages. Caregivers are careful and attentive to children's needs in selecting substitute caregivers (babysitter, neighbor). Makes sure children feel comfortable and safe with substitute caregivers. Keeps track of children and knows children's friends.
0 Baseline/Adequate	Refers to caregivers providing satisfactory supervision of children. Some limits are set on activities based on the children's ages. Some consideration given to selecting substitute caregivers, and some concern with children's comfort with the substitute caregivers. Has a basic knowledge of location of children, and has a basic knowledge of children's friends.
-3 Serious Problem	Refers to caregivers' lack of age-appropriate supervision, or any supervision. Limits on activities of children are not set or set inconsistently. Little or no consideration given to selecting substitute caregivers (strangers, known abusers, persons under the influence of drugs/alcohol). No thought about children's comfort and feeling of security with substitute caregivers. Children's friends are not known, and location of children is not regularly known.

C. Family Interactions

Note: This section refers to family members living in the same or different households.

<i>Overall Rating</i>	Not Applic.	Clear Strength	Mild Strength	Baseline/ Adequate	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Unknown
1. Overall Family Interactions								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Subscales (8 total)

2. Bonding with Child(ren)								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
3. Communication with Child(ren)								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
4. Expectations of Child(ren)								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Definition of Subscale

4. Expectations of Child(ren)	
+2 Clear Strength	Refers to caregivers possessing age-appropriate expectations for the children, and clear expectations of children. Above average understanding of children's development cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally.
0 Baseline/Adequate	Refers to caregivers' expectations for children as mostly age-appropriate. Caregivers appear to have an average understanding of children's developmental needs, or occasionally fail to attribute normal or age-appropriate expectations, but this behavior does not warrant intervention.
-3 Serious Problem	Refers to caregivers having unrealistic and unclear expectations for the children. Do not tolerate mistakes in children. Children are expected to take on adult responsibilities (i.e., "parentified"). Or, children are not allowed to engage in age-appropriate behaviors (e.g. sports, dating). Little or inappropriate understanding of normal child development.

D. Family Safety

Note: This section refers to family members living in the same or different households.

<i>Overall Rating</i>	Not Applic.	Clear Strength	Mild Strength	Baseline/ Adequate	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Unknown
1. Overall Family Safety								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Subscales (8 total)

2. Absence/Presence of Domestic Violence Between Parents/Caregivers								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
3. Absence/Presence of Other Family Conflict								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
4. Absence/Presence of Physical Abuse of Child(ren)								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Definition of Subscale

2. Absence/Presence of Domestic Violence Between Parents/Caregivers	
Note: This item may not be applicable in all cases. This would be the case if there were only one caregiver involved, and there is no significant other. If this is the case, circle NA on the form.	
+2 Clear Strength	Refers to families in which violence has never occurred between caregivers, and all family members are encouraged to solve problems “nonviolently.” Also refers to families in which domestic violence has occurred, but no longer occurs due to family’s success in counseling, and family actively discourages violence.
0 Baseline/Adequate	Refers to families in which domestic violence has occurred, but no longer occurs. Family is involved in counseling and making some progress. Also, families in which violence has never occurred. Disputes occur, and family members solve problems without violence.
-3 Serious Problem	Refers to incidents, complaints, or arrests for domestic violence. Violence between caregivers negatively affects ability to parent and/or has resulted in physical or emotional harm to children. One caregiver lives in fear of the other, and/or children fear for safety of one caregiver or themselves.

E. Child Well-Being

Note: This section pertains to all the children in the family. If more than one child, children may have different issues. Rate the family, thus if any child has, for example, a mental health problem, the family as a whole experiences that problem. In this way, all children in the family may contribute to the ratings on a single form.

<i>Overall Rating</i>	Not Applic.	Clear Strength	Mild Strength	Baseline/ Adequate	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Unknown
1. Overall Child Well-Being								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Subscales (7 total)

2. Child(ren)'s Behavior								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
3. School Performance								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
4. Child(ren)'s Relationship with Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Definition of Subscale

4. Child(ren)'s Relationship with Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)	
+2 Clear Strength	Refers to children accepting discipline and supervision. Having open and clear communication with caregivers. Express or exhibit strong affiliation with caregivers.
0 Baseline/Adequate	Refers to children having some problems in accepting discipline and supervision. Also, some problems in communication with caregivers, but doesn't warrant intervention.
-3 Serious Problem	Refers to discipline and supervision problems with children. Lack of open and clear communication, or no communication with caregivers. Do not respect boundaries, and have an abusive or hostile relationship with caregivers. Express desire to leave family as soon as possible.

F. Social/Community Life

<i>Overall Rating</i>	Not Applic.	Clear Strength	Mild Strength	Baseline/ Adequate	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Unknown
1. Overall Social/ Community Life								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Subscales (6 total)

2. Social Relationships								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
3. Relationships with Child Care, Schools, and Extracurricular Services								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
4. Connection to Neighborhood, Cultural/Ethnic Community								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Definition of Subscale

3. Relationships with Child Care, Schools, and Extracurricular Services	
+2 Clear Strength	Caregivers' relationship with schools, child care providers, and other child serving organizations (e.g., sports, youth groups) is open, respectful, frequent, and honest. Caregivers and teacher or service provider communicate clearly and encourage each other's success. Interactions focus on best interest of children, and each advocates for children's best interest.
0 Baseline/Adequate	Relationship between caregivers and school, child care, or other youth service provider is adequate to insure children's safety and is respectful. Minor difficulties in communications or advocacy may occur but do not significantly impair relationship.
-3 Serious Problem	Relationship between caregivers and schools, child care or youth service providers is un-supportive, critical, disrespectful, hostile, dishonest, or nonexistent. Communication does not focus on best interest of children but may focus on caregivers' convenience or caregivers' interest at expense of children's participation and success.

G. Self-Sufficiency

<i>Overall Rating</i>	Not Applic.	Clear Strength	Mild Strength	Baseline/ Adequate	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Unknown
1. Overall Self-Sufficiency								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Subscales (6 total)

2. Caregiver Employment								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
3. Family Income								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
4. Financial Management								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Definition of Subscale

2. Caregiver Employment	
+2 Clear Strength	Refers to family having stable, legal employment over the past 12–24 months. Employer provides benefits, such as health insurance, and employer respects caregivers' need to attend to and spend time with family. Caregiver takes advantage of opportunities for training and advancement.
0 Baseline/Adequate	Refers to family having relatively stable, legal employment in the past 12 months. Employment experience may vary between periods of steady employment, layoffs or compulsory overtime that create occasional disruption to family routines or caregiver's availability to family. Benefits are not available or are available at very high cost.
-3 Serious Problem	Refers to caregiver losing employment for "negative" reasons (such as being fired, laid off for substance use or poor attendance) two or more times in the past 12 months. Caregivers work only sporadically by choice, placing extreme stress on family finances. Family is without benefits of any kind. Caregivers' employment may be illegal (unreported earnings, drug trade, prostitution). Caregivers not interested or unable (perhaps due to illiteracy) to participate in advancing employment options.

H. Family Health

<i>Overall Rating</i>	Not Applic.	Clear Strength	Mild Strength	Baseline/ Adequate	Mild Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem	Unknown
1. Overall Family Health								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Subscales (8 total)

2. Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)'s Physical Health								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
3. Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)'s Disability								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
4. Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)'s Mental Health								
Intake (I)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK
Closure (C)	N/A	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	UK

Sample Definition of Subscale

2. Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)'s Physical Health	
+2 Clear Strength	Caregivers enjoy excellent physical health. There are no health problems that interfere with parenting, employment, or participating in everyday life. Caregivers promote good health in family, including keeping watch over diet, exercise, and lifestyle habits of children and other family members.
0 Baseline/Adequate	Caregivers enjoy good basic health. May have some health issues, such as elevated blood pressure or mild diabetes that are under control through medication and routine health care. Health issues may occasionally inhibit caregivers, but do not pose major obstacles in parenting abilities or significantly hinder the caregivers' ability to parent. Caregivers are knowledgeable about health status and normally makes lifestyle and diet choices accordingly.
-3 Serious Problem	Caregivers suffer from one or more chronic debilitating physical health problems (such as serious obesity, high blood pressure, HIV/AIDS), or progressive diseases (such as cancer, AIDS, etc.) that significantly interfere with daily life. Caregivers do not understand implications of diet, lifestyle, or exercise, or of proper medication regimen, and therefore do not manage the health condition(s) to the extent possible. Caregivers project personal health problems on children or other household members, or requires children to provide physical care.

NCFAS-G Training Package Contains:

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- Assessment Form
- NCFAS-G Database (CD)
- Training Video (DVD)
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- Case Scenario
- Case Ratings
- Case Plan
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