Unified Home Study

Relative/Non-relative

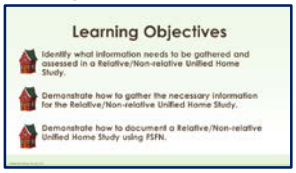
Unified Home Study

Trainer Guide

Office of Child Welfare

4/1/2018

Relative and Non-relative Unified Home Study

Time:	3 hours
Overview: *Slide: 3.1*	The purpose of this unit is to teach Case Management staff how to assess relative and non-relative placements and document this assessment using the Relative and Non-relative Unified Home Study in FSFN.
Learning Objectives: *Slide: 3.2*  **PG: 3**	1. Identify what information needs to be gathered and assessed in a Relative/Non-relative Unified Home Study. 2. Demonstrate how to gather the necessary information for the Relative/Non-relative Unified Home Study. 3. Demonstrate how to document a Relative/Non-relative Unified Home Study using FSFN.
Materials:	• Trainer's Guide (TG) • Participant's Guide (PG) • PowerPoint slide deck • Flip chart paper / markers
Activities:	• Activity A: – Part 1: A Non-relative Placement for Jacob and Jenna – TG: 46, PG: 35 – Part 2: A Non-relative Placement for Jacob and Jenna – TG: 61, PG: 44

Trainer Note: *In order to teach FSFN functionality, there are sections in this Trainer Guide designated as "FSFN Tutorials" to indicate when to play the associated tutorial before discussing the material.*

After the material is discussed, there are sections in the Trainer Guide designated as "FSFN Screens" showing independent screenshots to reinforce what was shown in the tutorial and discussed in the material.

It is ideal to show the tutorial(s) first and complete each topic with the screenshot(s) in order to strengthen the concepts that participants see and hear. However, it is the trainer's choice to use the material in a way that best suits the class.

Relative/Non-relative Unified Home Study

Slide: 3.3

PG: 4

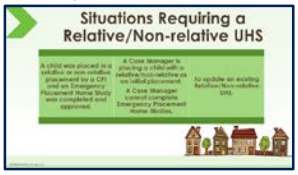
Who recalls what a Relative/Non-relative Unified Home Study (UHS) is?

Endorse:

- A Relative/Non-relative UHS is the type of UHS completed by Case Managers when a child is placed or being assessed for placement with a relative or non-relative.

Situations Requiring a Relative/Non-relative UHS

Slide: 3.4



PG: 4

There are many situations that require a Relative or Non-relative UHS to be completed. These include the following:

- A child was placed in a relative or non-relative placement by a CPI and an Emergency Placement Home Study was completed and approved.
  - In these situations, a Relative/Non-relative UHS must be completed by the assigned Case Manager within 45 calendar days after case transfer.

- A Case Manager is placing a child with a relative/non-relative. Examples of when this may occur include:
  - A disruption of the child's current placement
  - A relative/non-relative placement is identified as a less restrictive and/or more appropriate placement than the child's current placement
  - A child is removed from the home after case transfer and there is an open case management case.

- To update an existing Relative/Non-relative UHS. Examples of times an update must occur include when:
  - There are changes in the composition of the household.
  - The home address/residence of the relative/non-relative caregiver(s) change.
  - There are change in the physical environment that are a significant safety concern.

  - There are significant changes or circumstances that affect the ability of the caregivers to care for or protect the child.
  - A re-screen of household members' background is needed. This is required every 12 months.

- When an approved UHS already exists in FSFN, Case Managers will now have the ability to use a copy functionality in FSFN so they will not have to start the Relative/Non-relative UHS from the beginning and input data that is already in the system. This copy functionality will be discussed in more detail later in this unit.

Information Gathering

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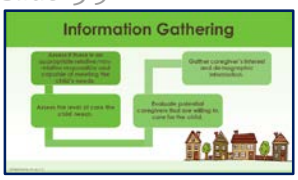


PG: 4

While the steps to complete a Relative/Non-relative UHS are quite similar to that of an Emergency Placement Home Study, one distinct difference is that the prospective caregiver(s) must be FULLY assessed PRIOR to placing the child in their care. That means that the entire UHS assessment must be completed in its entirety prior to placing the child.

- When it is determined that a placement is needed for a child under Case Management, either due to a placement disruption, post-disposition change of custody, a caregiver's inability to provide for the child, or another reason, the Case Manager is responsible for assessing if there is an appropriate relative/non-relative responsible and capable of meeting the child's needs. Placing with a relative or placing with someone that has an established relationship with the child, who is not related by blood or marriage is important to minimize trauma impacts to the child. This does not negate the in-depth home study assessment that must be completed to ensure that the placement is the BEST placement.

- When evaluating potential caregivers, especially if there are multiple potential caregivers that are willing to care for the child, Case Managers must consider:
  - The child's relationship with the potential caregivers
  - The relationship the potential caregivers have with the

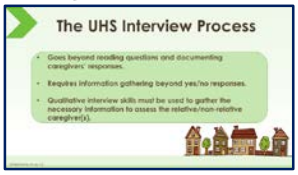
parents/legal guardians
  - How long the potential caregivers are willing to keep the child
  - The relative is willing to take the siblings
  - Which placements will be the least disruptive when multiple caregivers are interested in placement. An example of this is a relative placement that resides in the same school district that the child currently attends versus a relative placement where the child would need to change schools.

- These factors help prioritize which caregivers to assess first.

- When potential relative/non-relative caregiver(s) are identified, the Case Manager speaks to the potential caregiver(s) in order to gather interest in caring for the child and demographic information. As discussed in the previous unit, demographic information is one of the core components of the UHS.

The UHS Interview Process

Slide: 3.6



PG: 5

There is a lot of information that must be gathered and assessed because the UHS is not, as mentioned earlier, only the caregiver's willingness to take the child, the physical home, and/or the caregiver's background. It is much more than that. The desired outcome is the first placement to be the BEST placement for the child!

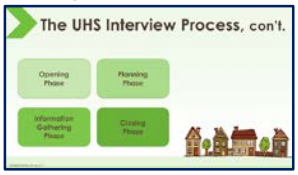
- Making an in-depth assessment of the prospective caregiver by collecting the needed information in each component of the UHS and appropriately evaluating that information is integral to ensuring the best placement is chosen for the child.

- Conducting this assessment means going beyond reading the questions or sections of the UHS and documenting the prospective caregiver's responses verbatim. It also means ensuring the information gathered is more than a yes/no response. In order to gather the necessary relevant information that will provide a clear picture regarding the

caregiver's ability to provide a safe and nurturing placement, Case Managers must employ qualitative interviewing skills.

- The phases of an interview that are based off of Lawrence Shulman's work. These phases and the behaviors and skills required during each phase help Case Managers fully engage the prospective caregiver and relevant collaterals to gather the needed information.

Slide: 3.7



PG: 5

- There are four phases within the interview process:
  1. Opening phase
  2. Information Gathering phase
  3. Planning phase
  4. Closing phase

The purposes of each phase is as follows:

1. **Opening Phase:** The purpose of this phase is to establish rapport and a working relationship with the interviewee. Here Case Managers:
   - Introduce oneself.
   - Discuss the purpose for the contact.
   - If needed, address any immediate concerns before the interview begins.

2. **Information Gathering Phase:** In this phase, Case Managers gather the needed information and reconcile and/or validate the information collected. During this phase, Case Managers:
   - Ask relevant open-ended questions that provide information for each UHS component required.
   - Discuss documentation gathered, such as background checks, in order to validate/reconcile information already attained.

3. **Planning Phase:** This is an opportunity to discuss next steps. Prospective caregivers will want to know what to expect regarding the process, when the decision will be made regarding placement, if further visits/contacts will be warranted, and what other tasks, if any, they will need to complete.

4. **Closing Phase:** This is the last step in the interview process. Here Case Managers check and confirm their understanding of the information conveyed, discuss next steps, and follow-up with information requested.

- As Case Managers conduct each phase in the interview process, there will be specific behaviors and skills that they can exhibit that will make the interview a success. Let's take a look at these.

- When Case Managers begin to build rapport with the prospective caregivers being genuine, respectful and having empathy for the situation at hand will be key. These can be displayed by:
  - Being cognizant of body language and tone of voice
  - Providing appropriate verbal responses
  - Limiting self-disclosure
  - Being non-judgmental
  - Recognizing strengths
  - Recognizing and acknowledging the person's experiences, feelings and non-verbal communication.

- When moving into the second phase of the interview process, the use of active listening allows Case Managers to gather the relevant information needed. Active listening requires full concentration, accurate understanding, proper responses, and the ability to remember what is being said.

- The use of reframing and providing clarification are integral to the Planning and Closing phases. This ensures that the information gathered is accurate and sufficient to make the needed assessment. It also ensures that prospective caregivers feel validated and heard as they provides sensitive details of who they are and why they are the best placement option.

Demographic Information

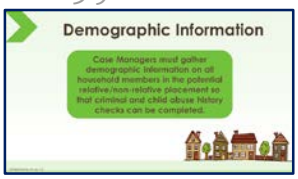
For the UHS, who is considered a household member?

Endorse:

- Any person who resides in the household.

Slide: 3.8

Slide: 3.9



PG: 6-7

FSFN Tutorial: *To show the material discussed below, use the FSFN tutorial to conduct a demonstration showing what the demographic tab looks like after the demographics have been entered into the Person Provider and the UHS has been launched.*

Case Managers must gather demographic information on all household members and adult visitors to the home who provide care of the child outside of the caregiver's ability to provide sight and sound supervision so that criminal and child abuse history checks can be completed. Questions that may be asked in gathering this information include:

- What is the person's full name?
- Do they have any other last names or aliases?
- What is the person's date of birth and social security number?
- Did the caregiver or any other household member ever live out of state? If so, how long ago and where?
- Do they have frequent visitors, over 18 years of age, who will be providing sight and sound supervision for the child(ren) being placed?

- Once the demographic information is gathered, verified, and documented in FSFN and the UHS is created, the demographic page captures the following information:

- **Case(s) Associated:** Child Welfare Professionals can search for the relevant cases pertaining to the participants.

- **Children Associated:** Based on the case that was selected, any child under 18 years of age and active in a case is also displayed as long as the child has a role designation of "child receiving services". Child Welfare

Professionals must select the child associated with the UHS being completed. Only the child checked as part of the UHS is displayed when the UHS is launched /printed.

- **Contact/Identifying Information** (for caregiver 1 and 2): This populates from the Person Management page which will be discussed shortly. Child Welfare Professionals must ensure that the social security numbers are verified and that dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers, and length of time in Florida is collected.

- **Other States of Residence and Approximate Dates Lived There**: For both caregiver 1 and 2, Child Welfare Professionals need to enter all of the states that they lived in and the time periods.

- **Home Evaluation:** The Date Initiated field is system derived based on the date that the UHS is launched and required to initially save the UHS page. The Date Completed field is user entered and should capture the date the user completed the home study.

- **Provider Notes:** Entered into FSFN that are created on or after the Initiated Date captured in the Home Evaluation group box. The user can enter Provider Notes directly from this page.

- **Other Household Members:** Other household members are displayed in this section of the demographic page. The other household members include the caregivers' biological children that reside in the home. These individuals are pulled from the Person Provider page.

- **All Children Currently Placed OR Exited within 1 Year from Home Evaluation Date Initiated:** Name, date of birth, age, placement type, placement dates, race, ethnicity, gender, language, and client characteristics are populated for each child that is currently or was previously placed (within one year) with the potential caregivers.

- **Non-Household Members:** Non-household members involved with the family are displayed here. These are

individuals, such as frequent visitors, that the Child Welfare Professional listed in the Person Provider page.

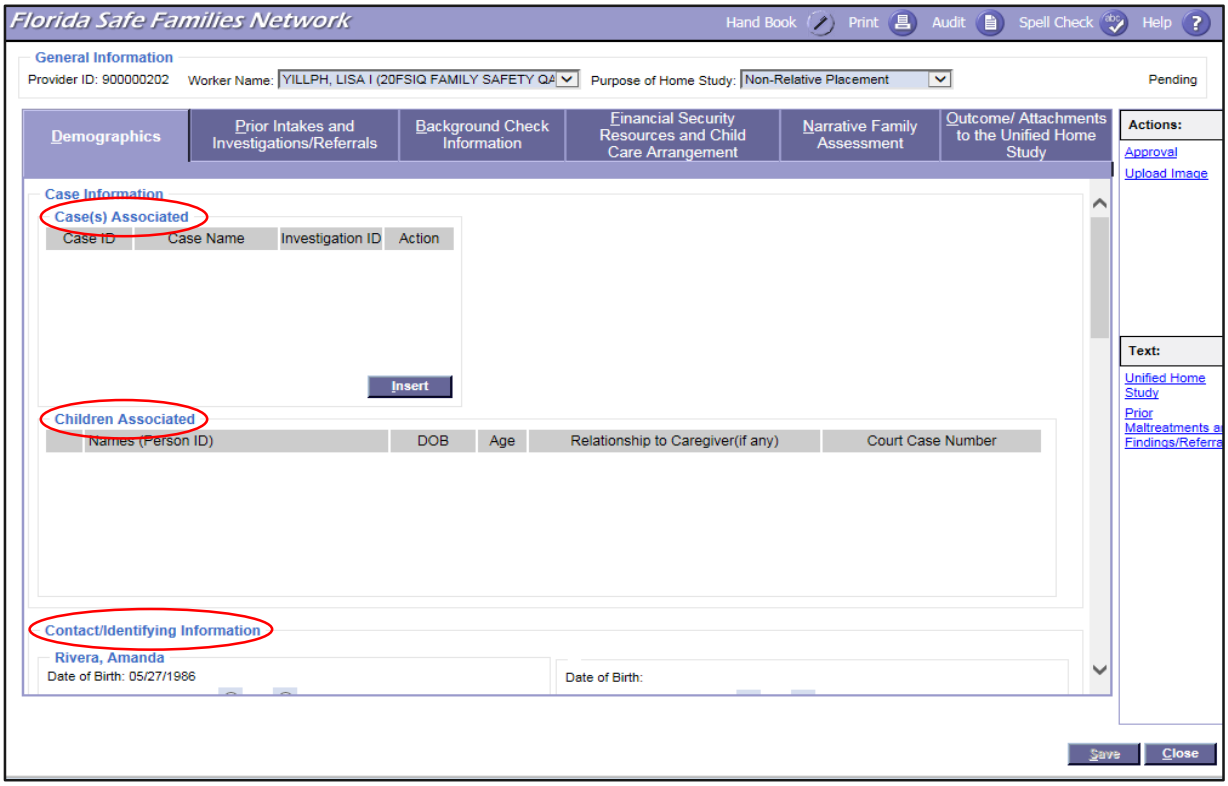
– Once the demographic information is obtained, Child Welfare Professionals can continue their UH assessment process by completing background checks needed for placement.

Slide: 3.10-3.13

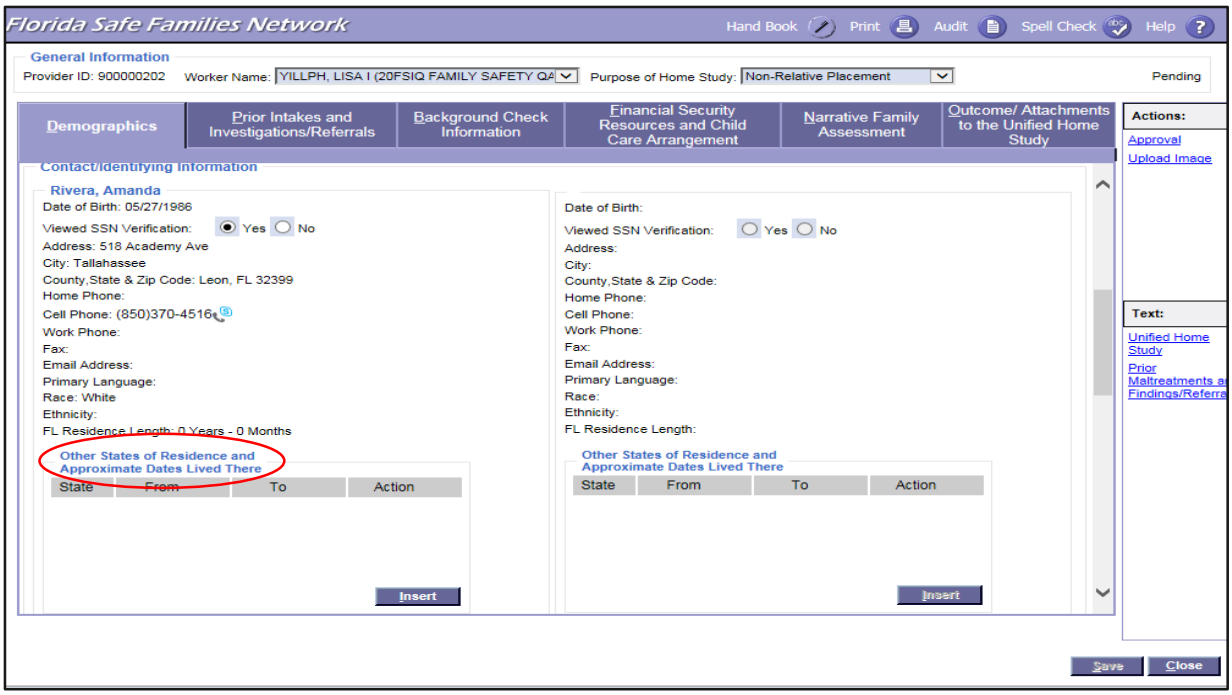
PG: 8-9

FSFN Screens: *Show participants what the demographic tab looks like after the demographics have been entered into the Person Provider and the UHS has been launched. Refer participants to screenshots in the Participant Guide.*

UHS Demographics tab:



UHS Demographics tab:



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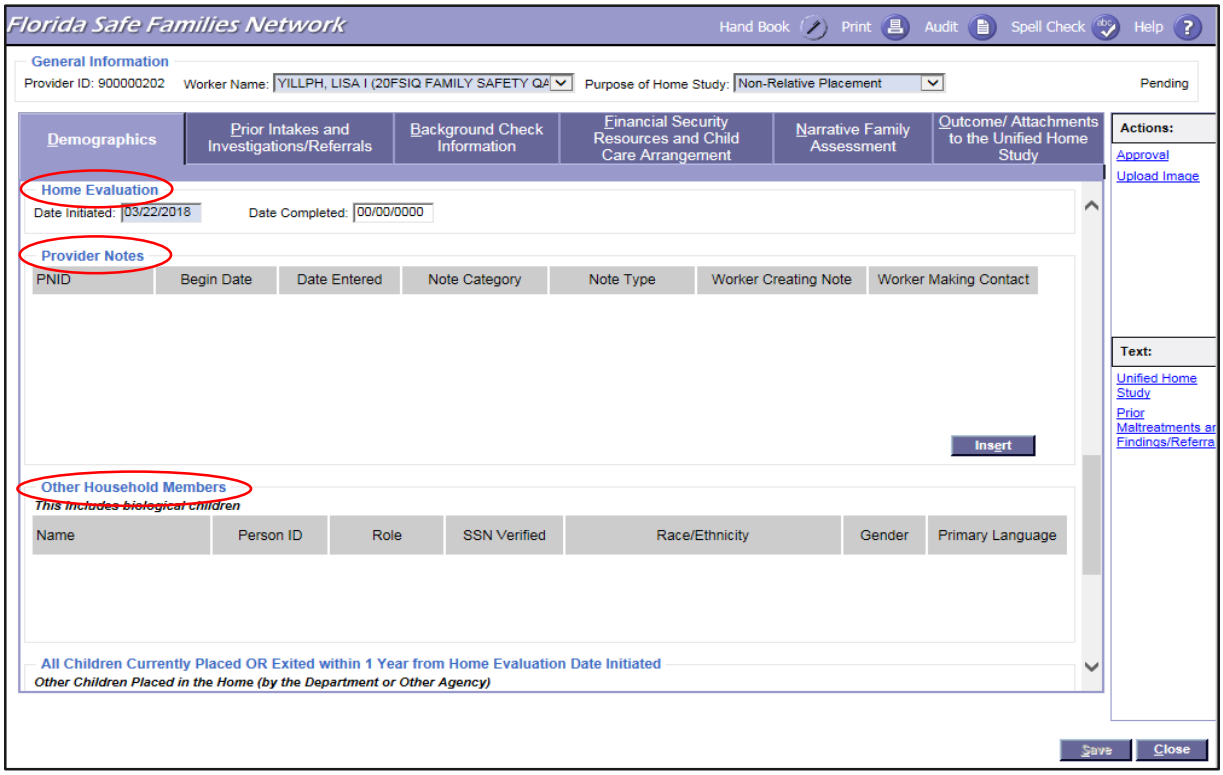
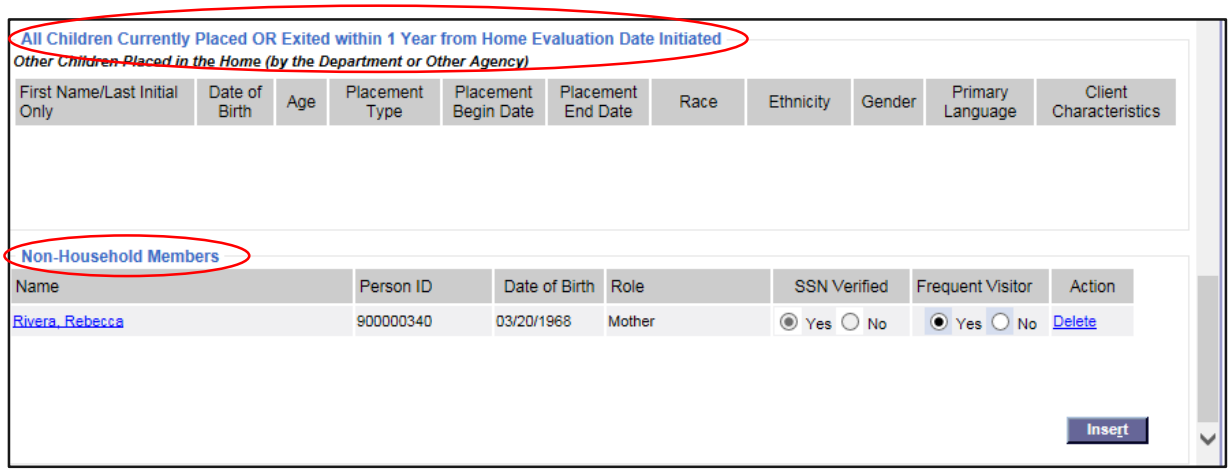


UHS Demographics tab:



Background Checks

Slide: 3.14

FSFN Tutorial: *To show the material discussed below, use the FSFN tutorial to conduct a demonstration showing how to complete the FSFN Background Check Information tab on the Relative/Non-relative UHS. Discuss the following information:*

- *How to navigate and use the Prior Intakes and Investigations/Referral tab.*
- *How to request emergency placement checks from the CIU and where to document dates and statuses for background histories received on the Background Check information tab.*
- *Where to document the background analysis in the Clearance Issues text box.*
- *Where to insert clearance from different sources.*

Slide: 3.15

PG: 10

Case Managers must obtain and assess background checks for all household members over the age of twelve, and frequent visitors over the age of 18 who will provide sight and sound supervision for the child being placed. This may be done by gathering and verifying the demographics of the potential

caregivers, household members, and frequent visitors via phone or in person.

- There are two types of relative/non-relative background checks based on when the child is in need of placement:
  1. Emergency Background Checks
  2. Planned Background Checks

- Emergency background checks occur when exigent circumstances exist and the child must be placed within 72 hours. Case Managers must only use the emergency background check option when it is a true emergency and the child has to be placed with another relative/non-relative caregiver quickly. Planned background checks occur when exigent circumstances do not exist and the child does not need to be placed within 72 hours.

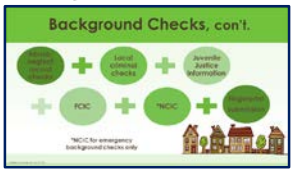
  Example: *Planned Background Check Request (Planned Placement)* - A Case Manager is notified on April 1st that the current non-relative caregiver will no longer be able to provide placement for the child, and the child will need to be moved by April 30th. The Case Manager has identified another non-relative who is willing to take the child as a placement on April 15th. The Case Manager completes a planned background check request because there are not exigent circumstances and the placement is not needed within 72 hours.

  Example: *Emergency Background Check Request (Emergency Placement)* - A Case Manager received a call from a relative caregiver at 6:00pm on a Friday stating the child must be picked up from their home now. The Case Manager identifies another relative willing to take the child as a placement that night. The Case Manager completes an emergency background check request because the placement was needed under exigent circumstances and it is within 72 hours.

- When background checks are conducted using UHS functionality, they go to the Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU). The CIU will need to know whether emergency or planned background checks are needed as this will impact the type

of background searches that are conducted. This distinction between planned and emergency background checks was made so that Florida is in compliance with federal law. To ensure Florida stays in compliance, audits are regularly done on the types of background checks conducted. If it is found that Florida is requesting emergency placement background checks for planned placement, this can lead to Florida losing access to national crime information. For this reason, it is very important that emergency background checks are not identified unless exigent circumstances exist and placement is needed within 72 hours.

Slide: 3.16



PG: 10

- The following background checks are required when a child is placed with a relative/non-relative caregiver:
  - **Abuse/neglect record checks:** This is done via a FSFN search of each individual.
    - In addition to assessing if they are a caregiver responsible for abuse or neglect, the child abuse investigation and service history can provide key information regarding the past family conditions and dynamics that may be currently present.
    - If any household members, age 18 and older, have resided in another state in the preceding five years, a request must be made to that state for an abuse/neglect history check. This additional history needs to be taken into account when assessing the person's background.
  - **Local criminal checks:** These checks can be requested through local law enforcement or through a search of the Comprehensive Case Information System (CCIS).
    - A request for calls-outs from the local police or sheriff's office regarding the household members should be made and call-outs reviewed prior to placement if the results are available.
    - A CCIS search should only be used if local police or sheriff's office checks are not available. If used, the reason CCIS was used instead of local law enforcement checks must be documented in the "Additional background checks not listed above…." group box.

- **Juvenile Justice information:** Delinquency record checks are required for household members 12-26 years of age.

- **FCIC:** A state criminal check completed via the Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC) is required for all household members and frequent visitors who are providing sight and sound supervision over the age of 12. When a request is made to the CIU for a background check for placement purposes, the Florida criminal history , designated as the "Q document" is obtained by the CIU from the FCIC for household members age 12 or older. This includes:
  - Results of a deliquency records check through the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice for people who are between the ages 12-26.
  - Results of a records check of the Florida Department of Corrections age 18 or older and Florida Sexual Predator websites for household members age 14 or older.

- **NCIC:** When an emergency placement is being made national crime information is required for all household members age 18 and older.
  - NCIC is a computerized index of criminal justice information including criminal record history, fugitives, stolen properties, and missing persons. It includes information across states.
  - A letter is produced by the CIU stating whether the NCIC checks returned any arrests for a charge that may have safety implications that impact placement.

- **Fingerprint Submission:** A fingerprint submission must be completed for all household members and frequent visitors, who provide sight and sound supervision, who are over the age of 18.
  - For emergency placements, the fingerprints must be submitted to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) no later than within ten calendar days of the FCIC name check. For planned placements, fingerprints must be completed prior to placement.
  - Fingerprint results are sent to the Background

Screening Placement Unit who conduct a review of both the Florida and National criminal history record results and provide a Criminal History Record Review Letter for the Purpose of Placement. This indicates if there is an offense that prohibits an individual from being considered by placement per s. 39.0138, F.S.
  - When placement occurs before or as the case is transitioning from investigations to a Case Manager, the CPI that requested the emergency placement checks from the CIU is responsible for ensuring fingerprints are submitted within the ten calendar days. If the fingerprint results are returned prior to case transfer, the results should be included with the case transfer items.
  - Case Managers enter the date the fingerprint results are received and the status of the fingerprints into the UHS Background Check Information Page.

PG: 11

- In addition to the required background checks, other record resources can be accessed in order to gather and validate additional background information for all household members, especially the potential caregiver, to see if past behaviors have negative implications for child safety. These include, but are not limited to:
  - Florida Vital Statistics - Provides birth information
  - Parent Locator Services
  - ACCESS Florida Information
  - Comprehensive Case Information System (CCIS)- provides Florida Clerk of Court case information
  - FDLE Sexual Offender and Predator Public website
  - Dru Sjordin National Sexual Offender website
  - Accurint - a system that searches multiple data sources for public information that may be helpful with locating persons and/or verifying personal information
  - Driver and Vehicle Information Database (DAVID)

- When an emergency background check request is made to the CIU, information is gathered and provided from:
  - Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC)
  - National Crime Information Center (NCIC)
  - Driver and Vehicle Information Database (DAVID)
  - Department of Corrections (DOC)

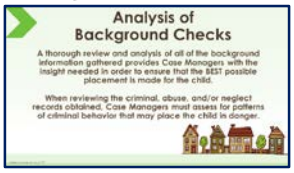
  - Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS)

- For planned placements, the same information is provided with the exception of NCIC.

- All other required background check information must be obtained by Case Managers.

Analysis of Background Checks

Slide: 3.17



PG: 12

A thorough review and analysis of all of the background information gathered provides Case Managers with the insight needed in order to ensure that the BEST possible placement is made for the child. When reviewing the criminal, abuse, and/or neglect records obtained, Case Managers must assess for patterns of criminal behavior that may place the child in danger. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Patterns of assault and battery
- Domestic and/or family violence
- Substance abuse
- Sexual assault
- Crimes against children
- Resisting arrest with violence
- Other crimes involving violence
- Open arrest warrants
- Household member on probation/parole
- Child welfare history with implications for placement due to similar allegations as the removal reason or other child safety-related concerns

- If potential caregivers have prior abuse reports or a service record history with the Department, Case Managers can look at the Prior Intakes and Investigations/Referrals tab in FSFN. However, this tab only provides information about people attached to the UHS.

- Case Managers can print all previous intakes and/or investigations by clicking on the "Maltreatments and Findings/Referrals" button in the Outliner.

Disqualifiers

Slide: 3.18

PG: 12

Slide: 3.19

PG: 12

Slide: 3.20

PG: 12

While Child Welfare Professionals hope that all of the background information is positive and does not affect child safety, they may find information that automatically disqualifies a person from being a placement candidate. Placement of a child with a relative or non-relative who has offenses listed in s. 39.0138, F.S., and Rule 65C-28.011, F.A.C. is prohibited. These include:

- Child abuse, abandonment, or neglect
- Domestic violence
- Child pornography or other felony in which a child was a victim of the offense
- Homicide, sexual battery, or other felony involving violence, other than felony assault, or felony battery when an adult was the victim of the assault or battery, or resisting arrest with violence (The underline section was a revision that was made this year, 2018, by House Bill 1079.)

- In addition, Case Managers may not place a child with a person other than a parent if the criminal history records check reveal that the person has been convicted of a felony, within the last five years, that falls within any of the following categories:
  - Assault
  - Battery
  - A drug-related offense
  - Resisting arrest with violence

- A Children's Legal Services (CLS) staffing must be requested when it is learned that a household member, another visitor, or a paramour of a household member has had verified findings of sexual abuse or has been found guilty of any of the serious crimes listed in this section. A CLS staffing is also helpful as the court has the authority to approve a placement regardless of the Department's recommendation.

Documentation

Slide: 3.21

PG: 13

Within FSFN, Case Managers document the records obtained and their thorough analysis of the background check results within the Background Check Information page.

- The written analysis includes a summary of information about the child welfare history and charges/dispositions from criminal history records obtained directly from a local law enforcement agency. The information is documented in the "Clearance Issues (Analysis of Background Check Results and All Priors)" text box within the Background Check Information tab of the UHS. The documentation needs to note the specific local law enforcement agency that provided the results and how the criminal and child welfare history is relevant given the person's current situation and status.

- In addition to summarizing information obtained, the analysis explains how the information does or does not implicate child safety.

- Participants documented as Caregivers and any participant captured as Other Household Member or Non-Household Member who are 12 years or older pre-fill the Background Check Information tab from the Person Provider page.
  - If there are non-household members, such as a visitor, that Case Managers also want to request criminal history for, Case Managers can use the Insert button which allows them to pull in non-household members who do not automatically pre-fill within the Criminal Background Check Request group box. Keep in mind that those individuals would need to first be added to the Person Provider page.

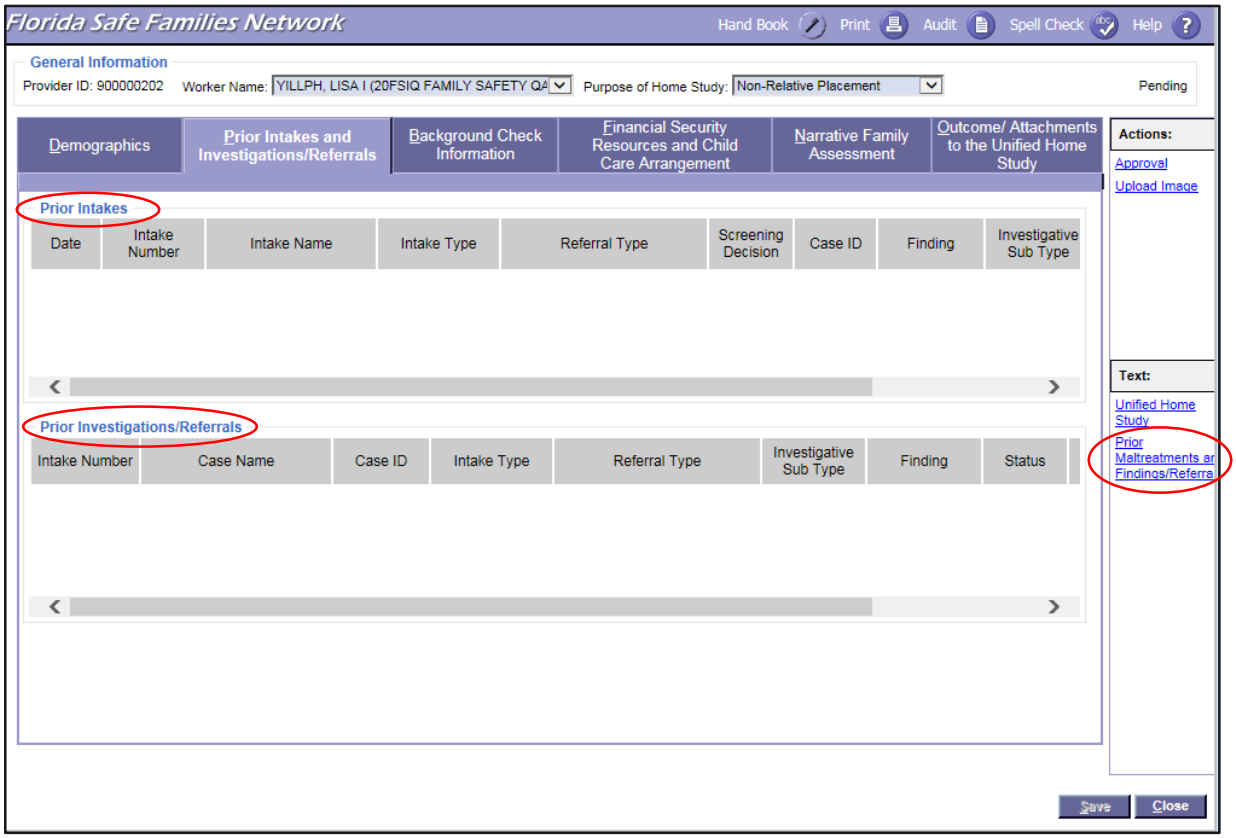
- If a Case Manager requests emergency check in error, the Fingerprint status drop-down option of "Requested in Error - Planned not Emergency" must be selected in the Fingerprint status drop-down menu of the Relative/Non-relative UHS.

Slide: 3.22-3.27
PG: 13-16

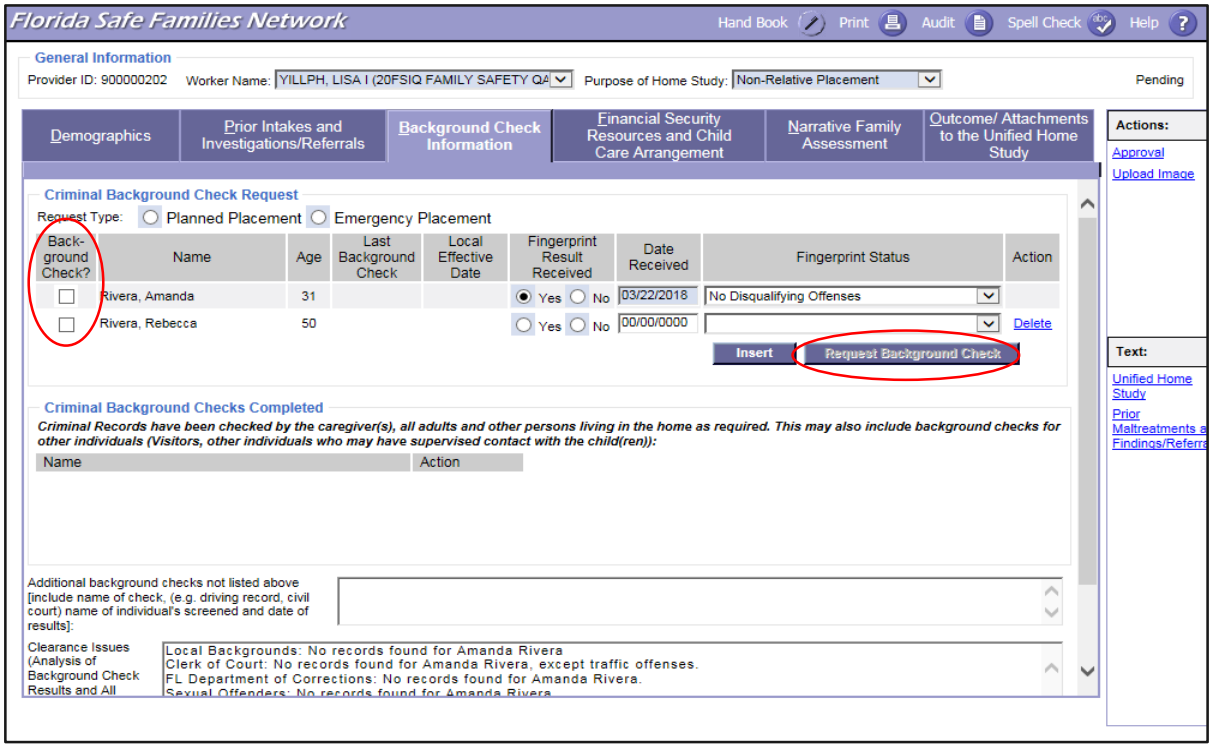
FSFN Screens: *Show participants the following information and refer them to the screenshots in the Participant Guide:*

- *How to navigate and use the prior intakes and Investigations/Referral tab.*
- *How to request emergency and planned background checks from the CIU and where to document dates and statuses for background histories received on the Background Check information tab.*
- *Where to document the background analysis in the Clearance Issues text box.*
- *Updating criminal history dates*
- *Where to insert clearance from different sources.*

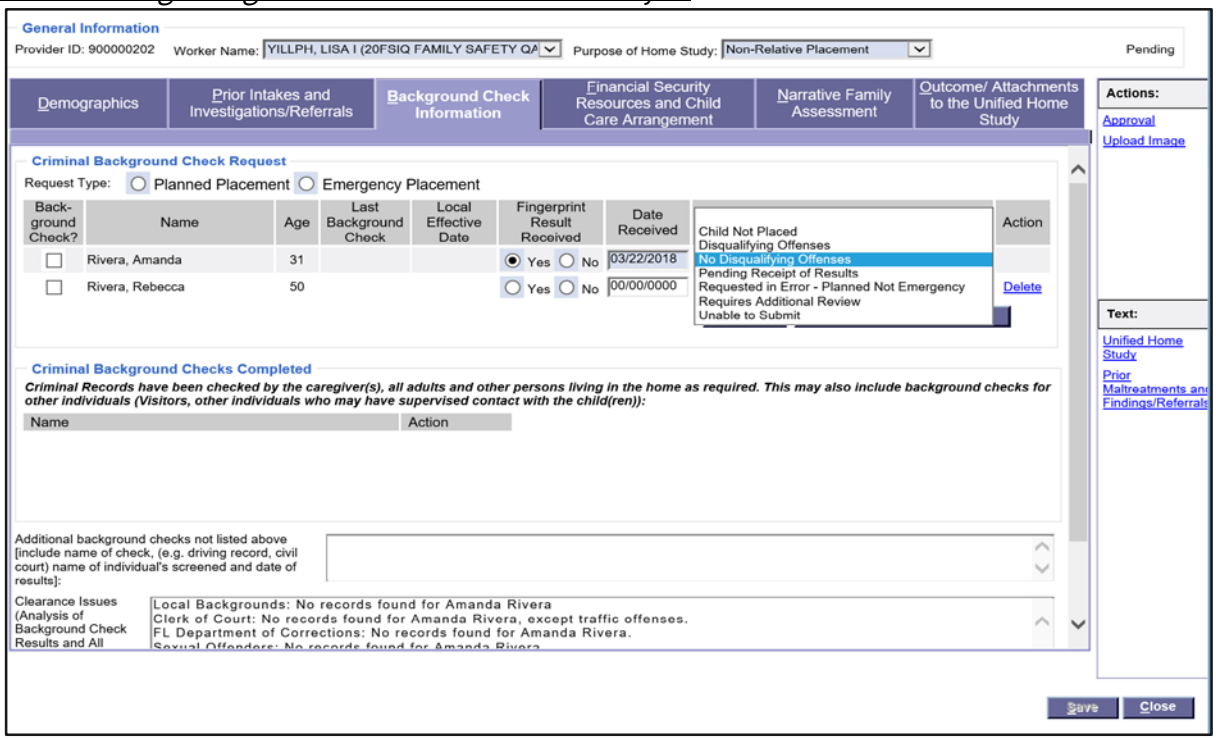
Prior Intakes Investigations/Referrals:



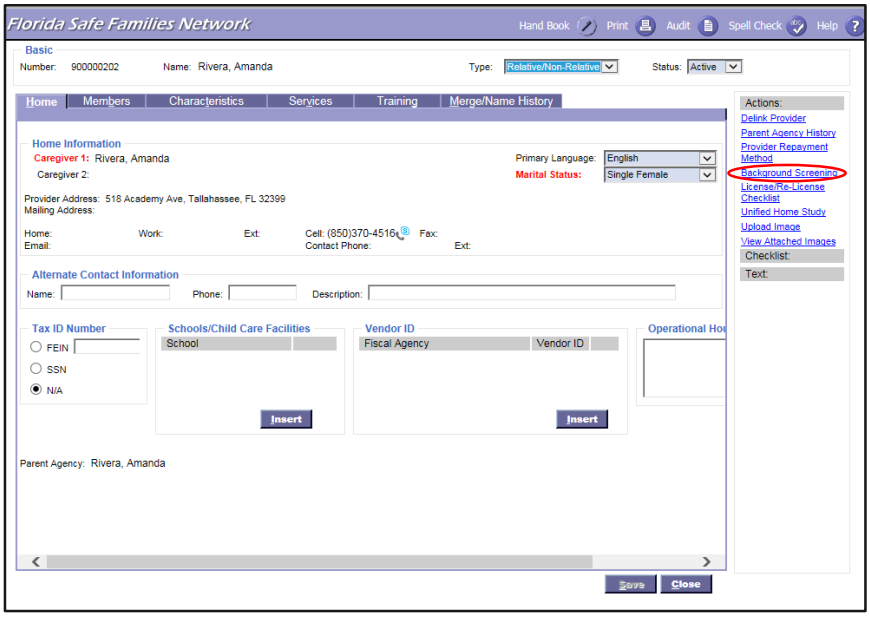
Requesting Background Checks:



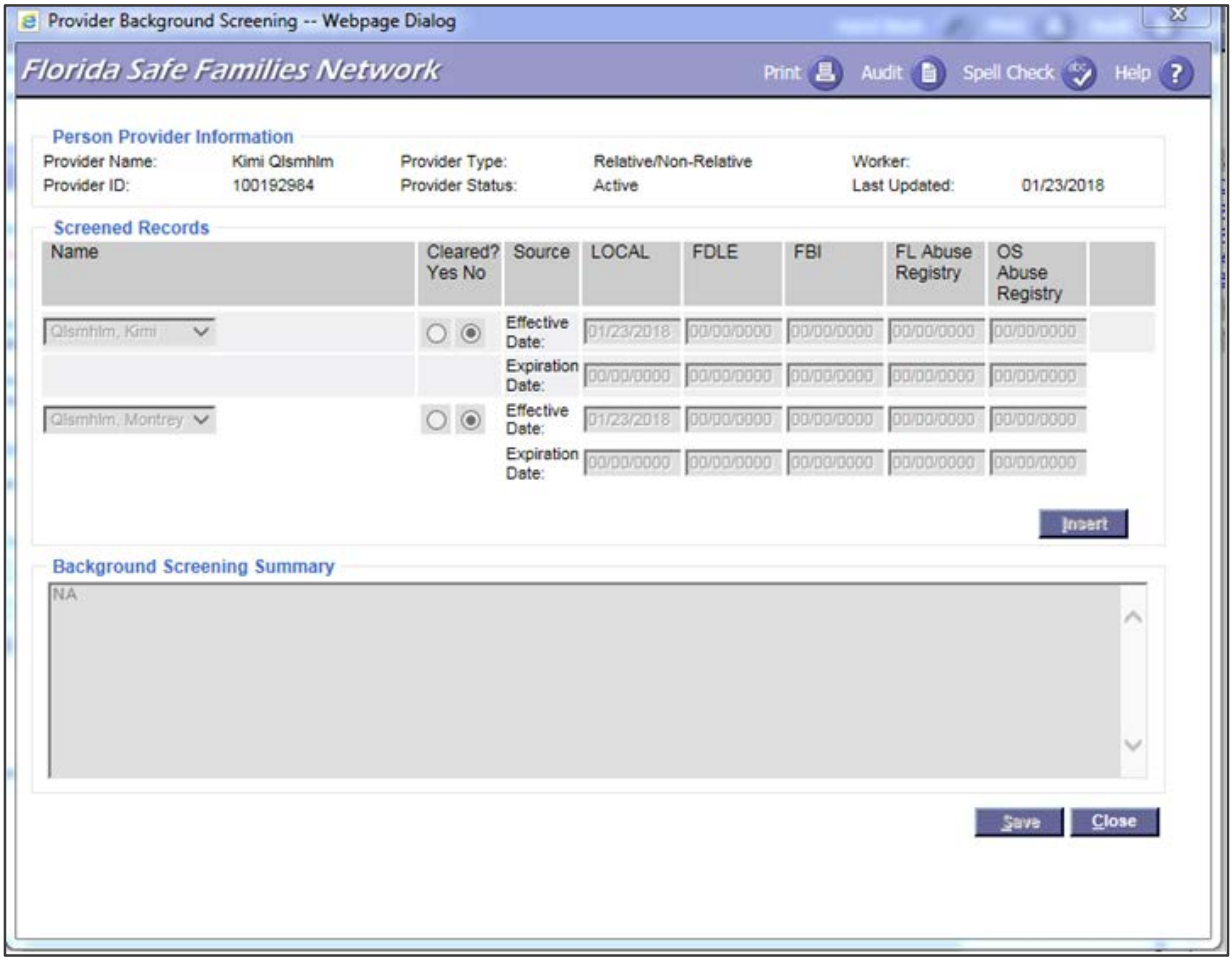
Documenting Background Check Results and Analysis:



Updating criminal history dates:

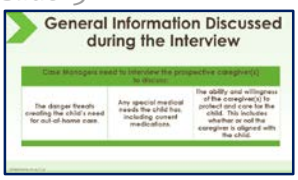


Where to insert clearance from different sources:



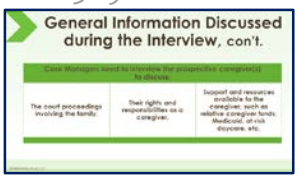
General Information Discussed during the Interview

Slide: 3.28



PG: 17

Slide: 3.29



PG: 17

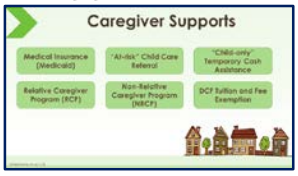
After reviewing the prospective caregivers' and household members' background checks, Case Managers can proceed with the interview process.

Case Managers need to interview the prospective caregiver(s) to discuss:

- The danger threats creating the child's need for out-of-home care.
- Any special medical needs the child has, including current medications.
- The ability and willingness of the caregiver(s) to protect and care for the child. This includes whether or not the caregiver is aligned with the child.
- The court proceedings involving the family.
- Their rights and responsibilities as a caregiver.
- Support and resources available to the caregiver, such as relative/non-relative caregiver funds, Medicaid, at-risk daycare, etc.

Caregiver Supports

Slide: 3.30



PG: 17

Supporting relatives/non-relatives help children achieve stability and well-being with the caregiver(s) they know. Case Managers responsible for completing the Relative/Non-relative UHS must discuss the following supports that are available with the potential caregiver(s). Although this information may have already been shared by a CPI if an Emergency Placement Home Study was completed, the Case Manager is still responsible for verifying the caregiver received all needed information when completing the Relative/Non-relative UHS. The supports include:

- **Medical Insurance (Medicaid):** There is a process in place for automatic, temporary Medicaid enrollment of children placed in out-of-home care with a relative. The child will be enrolled in the Sunshine Health Child Welfare Specialty Plan.
  - If the child is removed from the home, the Community-Based Care (CBC) staff must apply for

Medicaid for the child within 48 business hours of the child's removal. The Economic Self-Sufficiency Child in Care (CIC) Specialist processes the Medicaid eligibility application immediately upon receipt of all required information.

- **"At-risk" Child Care Referral:** A child care subsidy may be available to eligible relative caregivers through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) At-Risk category.
  - Applications for an "at-risk" child care subsidy are processed by the local Early Learning Coalition (ELC).

- "**Child-only" Temporary Cash Assistance:** "Child-only" monthly cash assistance under Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) might be available subject to eligibility criteria.
  - Payment amounts, benefits, eligibility criteria, and application procedures are different than Relative Caregiver Program.
  - Once a child placed with a relative is adjudicated and a home study completed, the child-only payment can be transitioned to a Relative Caregiver Payment.
  - For this payment to be received, relatives are required to order child support from parents.

- **Relative Caregiver Program (RCP):** This is a program whereby monthly payments under the Relative Caregiver Program are established per s.39.5085 F.S.
  - Payments can be made to the relative caregiver for each eligible child placed to cover the cost of providing for the child's basic needs.
  - In order for the child who is placed with a relative caregiver to receive a monthly Relative Caregiver Program payment, the child must:
    - Live in the home of a specified relative based on an approved home study.
    - Be adjudicated dependent and be in court-ordered temporary legal custody of the relative under protective supervision of the department or court-ordered placement in the home of a relative as a permanency option.

  - Contingent upon availability of funding and continuing eligibility, RCP benefits shall continue until the child reaches age 18, is no longer living in the home of the relative caregiver, or the child is adopted, whichever is sooner.

- **Non-Relative Caregiver Program (NRCP)**
  - Payments can be made to a non-relative caregiver for each eligible child placed to cover the cost of providing for the child's basic needs
  - The following criteria apply to Non- Relative Caregiver Financial Assistance payments:
  - A completed UHS. The UHS must be completed and filed with the courts prior to the courts consideration of the non- relative caregiver as a placement option for the dependent child.
  - A court order adjudicating the child dependent
  - A court order placing the child in the care and custody of the non-relative caregiver and finding that the placement is in the best interest of the child.
  - A signed statement by the non-relative caregiver expressing financial need to continue to care for the child long term (this should be documented in the court-approved unified home study)
  - **Note:** A non-relative caregiver may receive the Non-Relative Caregiver Financial Assistance (NFCA) payment for a minor parent who resides in the caregiver's home and meets other eligibility requirements.

- **DCF Tuition and Fee Exemption:** Children placed in out-of-home care may be eligible for a tuition and fee exemption at any public Florida University or Florida College System.

Financial Security, Resources, and Child Care Arrangements

Slide: 3.31

FSFN Tutorial: *To show the material discussed below, use the FSFN Tutorial to conduct a demonstration showing how the information is viewed in the Financial Security Resources and Child Care Arrangements tab of the UHS, including the following information:*

When entering the information in the FSFN UHS, the Financial Security Resources and Child Care Arrangements page will only display the member name (potential caregiver), Employer Name, and Net Monthly Salary within the Employment Information group box. Case Managers need to click on the edit hyperlink within the Actions group box in order to view the employer's address, length of employment, and hours/shifts worked.

Slide: 3.32

PG: 18

As mentioned in the General Information unit, Case Managers explore the caregivers' financial situation in order to determine if the caregivers are financial able to care for the child and to assess what resources, if any, are needed by the caregivers.

- In the UHS are four areas that Case Managers needs to gather information around when assessing the caregiver's financial situation:
    1. Finance Breakdown
    2. Additional Monthly Support
    3. Household information
    4. Family Situation

- It is important to gather sufficient information in all of these areas in order to provide a clear picture of the family's financial status and their ability to financially care for the child.

- Information that needs to be gathered for each area is included below:

    1. **Finance Breakdown:** information about all household members' current employment and the income they earn from each place of employment. It includes:

- Employer Name: Includes all current employers for each household member. If a household member has multiple employers than each one must be documented. Current employment does not include retirement benefits. If the participant is retired, their retirement benefit is included under the additional Monthly Support or income section.
- Employer Address
- Length of Current Employment: The length is measured in years and months. For example, if the person has worked at their employer for 18 months this would be documented as one year, six months.
- Hours and Shifts Worked
- Net Monthly Salary: total amount of money brought home after taxes and other expenses, such as insurance, are taken out.

2. **Additional Monthly Support or Income:** In order to fully assess the financial situation of the caregiver(s), information about other sources of income for the household also needs to be gathered. This includes income, outside of employment, that a caregiver, household member, or non-household member is contributing to the household. For example, if a child is residing in the home who is receiving Social Security benefits, this information is included as part of the additional monthly support. The following information needs to be gathered when assessing additional monthly support or income:
   - Who Is Receiving the Additional Income (Member Name): In FSFN this is a dropdown menu that includes all of the household and non-household member's names.
   - Income Type: type of income that is being received. This is another dropdown menu in FSFN and options include:
     - Adoption subsidy
     - Disability benefits
     - Retirement benefits
     - Social Security benefits
     - Temporary Cash Assistance
     - Other

- Income Amount: Amount of money from each specified type of income.
  - When assessing this area, additional questions to ask include:
    - Is this a long-term or short-term additional income?
    - How long is additional income expected to continue?

3. **Household Information:** It is equally important to gather information on all of the expenses the household has on a monthly basis. This needs to be fully explored by asking follow-up questions to ensure all expenses are included. When assessing monthly expenses, the assessment should include:
   - Expense Type: Type of expense that has been identified. There is a dropdown menu that includes typical expenses, such as car insurance, car payment, child care, food/supplies, housing, medical, transportation, utilities. There may be other expenses that are identified outside of the typical list and for these FSFN includes an "other expense" category to document the type of expense.
   - Expense Amount: Monthly expense amount for each selected expense type.
   - Combined Monthly Income, Total Monthly Expenses, and Net Monthly Income: This information is totaled by FSFN which allows for easy viewing.

4. **Family Situation:** Financial strengths/needs of the family. It includes the identification of any financial barriers and possible assistance that can be provided to the caregivers. The information about the caregiver's expenses and income are used to answer some of these questions, but additional information and discussion needs to take place to fully explore the financial impact and needs that an additional child or children will bring. The specific questions that need to be assessed include:
   - Does the family have sufficient funds to support their current expenses?
   - Will child care or after-school care be needed?
   - What new expenses are anticipated for the child(ren)

to be placed in the home?
- Will the family be able to provide sufficient care for children to be placed in the home without causing financial hardship for the family?
- Were all available assistance programs discussed with the family? If yes, explain. If no, why not. What assistance programs will the family need in order to help ensure placement stability?

- An additional question is asked in this area about the need for an adoption subsidy, but this question will be greyed out and will not require an answer for this type of home study.

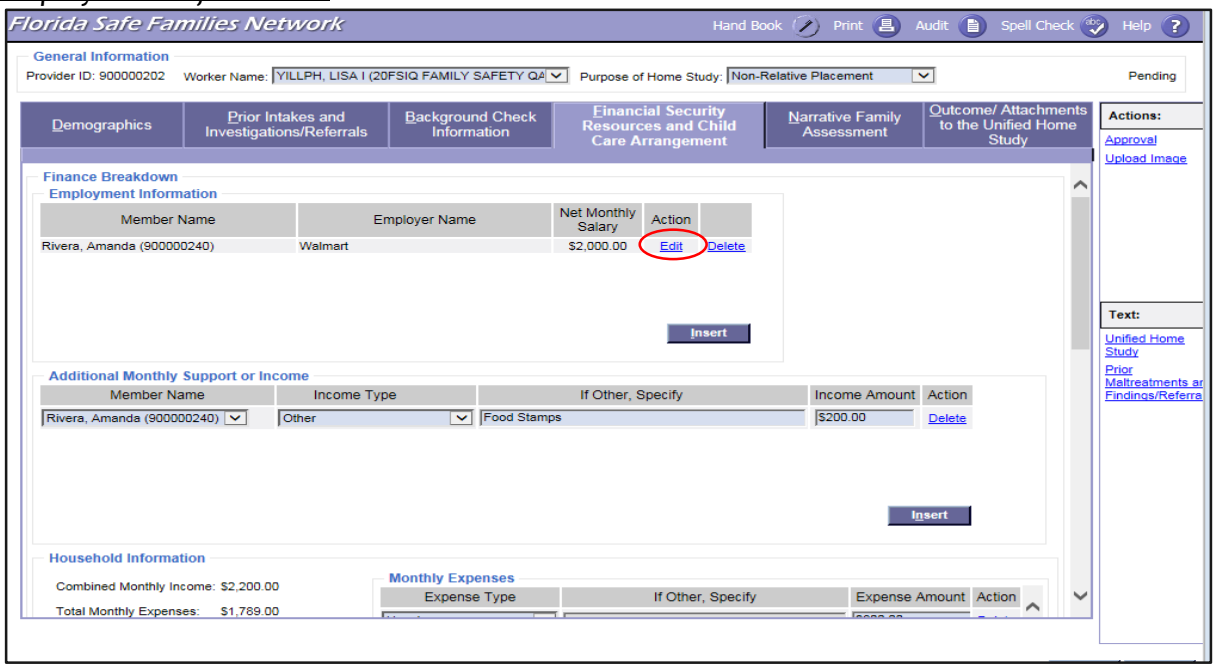
- When answering narrative responses in the Relative/Non-relative UHS, it is important to be thorough so it is clear what the family's strengths and needs are.

Slide: 3.33-3.37

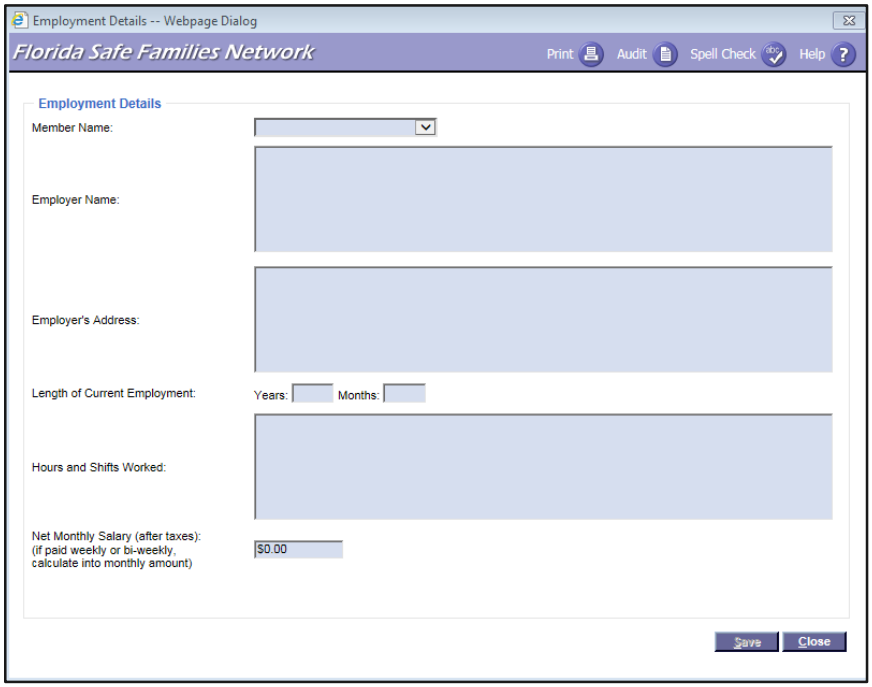
PG: 19-21

FSFN Screens: *Show participants how the information is viewed in the Financial Security Resources and Child Care Arrangements page of the UHS. Refer participants to screenshots in the Participant Guide.*

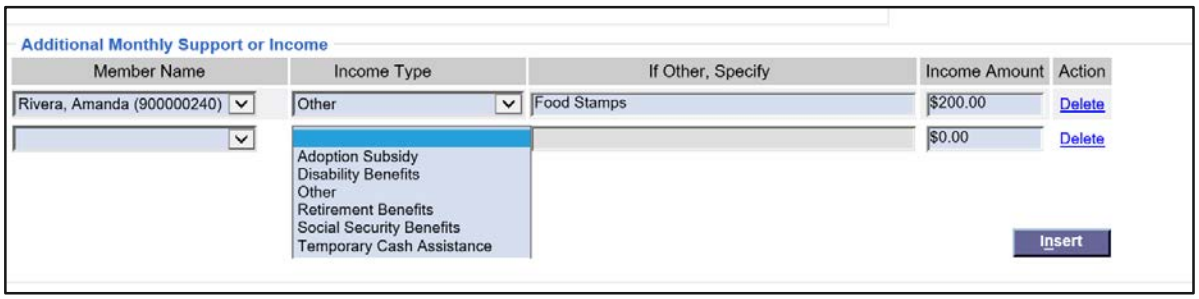
Employment Information:



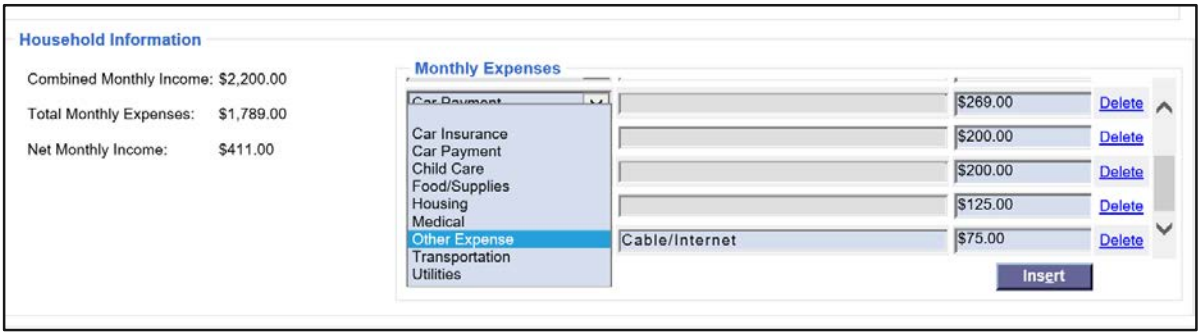
Adding Employment Details:



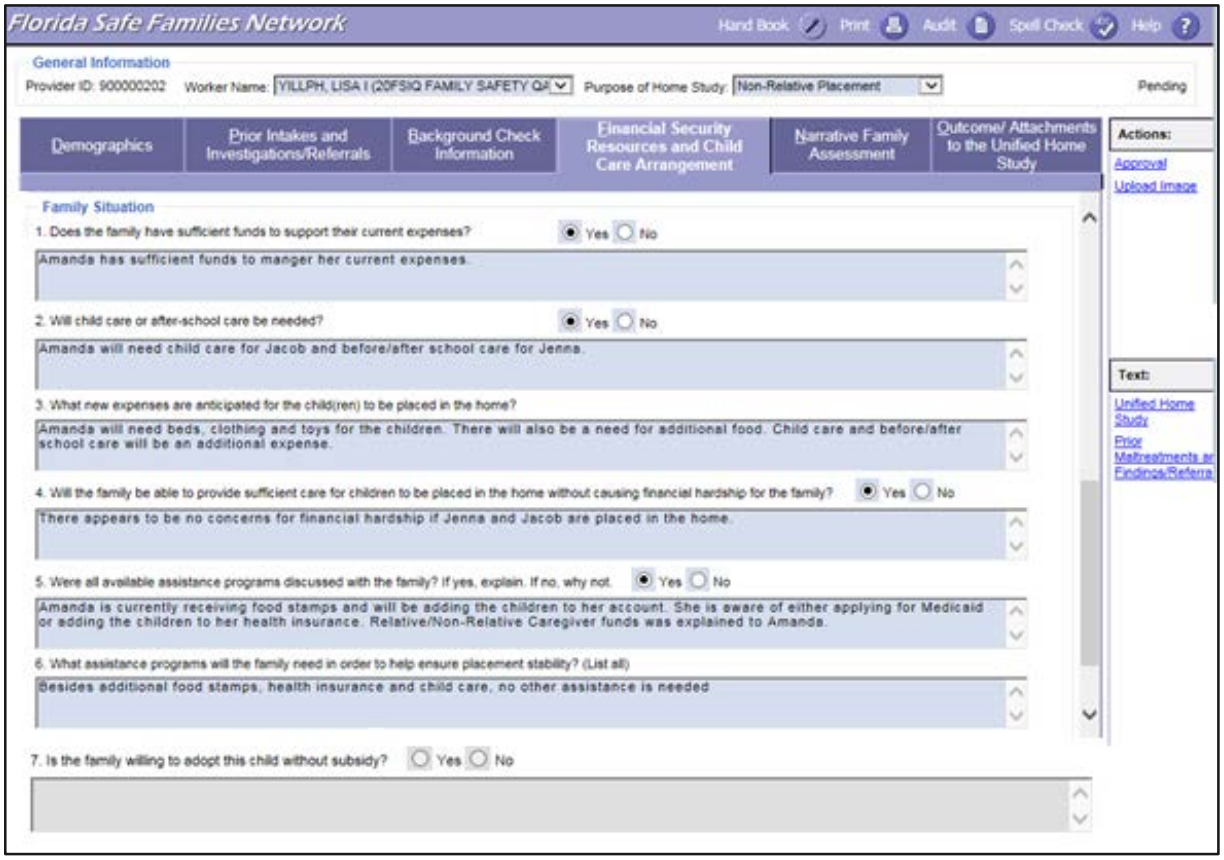
Adding Additional Monthly Support or Income:



Adding Monthly Expenses:



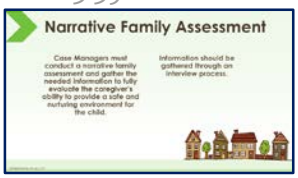
Family Situation:



Narrative Family Assessment

Slide: 3.38

Slide: 3.39



PG: 22

FSFN Tutorial: *To show the material discussed below, use the FSFN tutorial to conduct a demonstration showing how the information is viewed in the Narrative Family Assessment page of the UHS.*

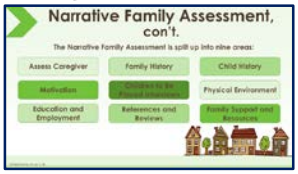
Case Managers conduct a narrative family assessment to gather the needed information to fully evaluation the caregiver's ability to provide a safe and nurturing environment for the child. Information should be gathered through an interview process where the Case Managers ask questions and follow-up questions based on what they know about the caregiver(s) and what additional information they need to know to complete the Relative/Non-relative UHS.

This assessment is not limited to just caregivers and needs to be reflective of all household members. Information is gathered

through interviews with the proposed relative/non-relative caregivers, household members, and the child or children who are being placed in the home.

- Not all questions listed as part of the Narrative Family Assessment are required for the Relative/Non-relative UHS. It is best practice to answer all questions, but only the blue boxes are required to be completed.

Slide: 3.40



PG: 22-29

- The UHS Narrative Family Assessment is split into nine areas:
  1. Assess Caregiver
  2. Motivation
  3. Education and Employment
  4. Family History
  5. Children to Be Placed Interviews
  6. Reference and Reviews
  7. Child History
  8. Physical Environment
  9. Family Support and Resources

Trainer Note: *The material below provides additional information about each area in the UHS Narrative Family Assessment and goes through the questions that are included in each area. This material can be trained in a couple different ways based on the participant and trainer preference. Suggestions include:*

- *Trainer provides information about each area then reads each question, or has a participant read each question. After each question is read, a discussion is conducted on the information that needs to be addressed to answer this question.*

- *Trainer instructs participants to read through the questions and then discuss them in more detail, including what information needs to be gathered and assessed to answer each question.*

- Below is detailed information about the nine areas of the Narrative Family Assessment, including the questions included in each area:

1. **Assess Caregiver:** This is where Case Managers assess the caregiver(s) and the family environment. There are 15 assessment questions. The questions are:

   - Question 1: Explain any experiences with child abuse or neglect; alcohol and/or substance abuse treatment; or domestic violence. Describe whether the history, if any, involved either of the parent(s) of the child being placed or the child. Explain how experiences may positively or negatively impact the ability of the caregiver(s) to care for and protect the child(ren).
     – *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

   - Question 2: Explain any caregiver health or mental health conditions that may interfere with the ability of the caregiver(s) to care for the child. Explain how the caregiver will address any challenges.

     For example, the caregiver takes medications that may result in drowsiness, causing restrictions in the caregiver's ability for driving a vehicle; or the caregiver has significant individual needs that might affect the safety of the child such as severe depression, lack of impulse control, medical needs, other current caregiving demands, etc.
     – *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

   - Question 3: Explain how the caregiver(s) will participate in a team supporting the child's safety, permanency and well-being by:
     a. Sharing necessary information with others on the team maintaining the confidentiality of the child and caregiver as required by law, regulation, and professional ethics.
     b. Participating in planning activities, court hearings, staffings, and other key meetings.
     – *This question is enabled, but NOT required for Emergency Placement Home Studies.*

- Question 4: Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to make a loving commitment to the child(ren)'s safety and well- being. This may include but is not limited to the following:
  a. Providing appropriate supervision and positive methods of discipline.
  b. Encouraging the child in his/her strengths, and respecting the child's individual likes and dislikes.
  c. Providing opportunities to develop the child's interests and skills.
  d. Maintaining awareness of the impact of trauma on behavior.
  e. Involving the child in family and community activities.
  f. Providing transportation to school, child care, extracurricular activities, etc.
  g. Ensuring the child's safety by employing appropriate physical safety measures, including in the household, for transportation, and with pets.
  – *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

- Question 5: Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to:
  a. Respect and honor any child's culture, religion and ethnicity.
  b. Adapt to and support any child's individual situation, including sexual orientation and family relationships. If the caregiving family's religion, culture, or other factors will impair their ability to meet the needs of any child, please explain what the family's limitations are, and how limitations could impact any child placed in their home.
  – *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

- Question 6: Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to commit to maintaining any child they accept in their home until such time as it is in the child's best interest to leave the home.
  – *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

Question 7: Explain how the caregiver(s) will address challenges in caring for the child(ren) to be placed,

including available supports and resources.

a. These challenges may include, but are not limited to, behaviors that are a significant threat to others, juvenile sexual abuse, problematic sexual behavior, severe self-harm behavior, etc.
b. The caregiver is caring for the other children or adults which results in significant demands on their time.
c. The caregiver is caring for family members with mental health or medical conditions that might result in harm to the child.

– *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

- Question 8: Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to participate in transition planning for the child(ren).
  – *This question is enabled, but NOT required for Emergency Placement Home Studies.*

- Question 9: Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to assist the biological caregivers in improving their ability to care for and protect their children and to provide continuity for the child after reunification.
  – *This question is required for ALL home study types EXCEPT Adoption and Adoption Addendum.*

- Question 10: Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to assist the child(ren) in family time/visitation and other forms of communication including Post Adoptions Communication Plans when appropriate.
  – *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

- Question 11: Explain how the caregiver(s) will: Maintain records and ensure that these records are made available to other partners that are important to the child welfare system and to the child and family, that are important to any child's well-being including child resource records, medical records, school records and all psychotropic medication records.

- *This question is enabled, but NOT required for Emergency Placement Home Studies.*

- Question 12: Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to advocate for children in their care as needed with the child welfare system, the court, and community agencies, including schools, child care, health and mental health providers, and employers.
  - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

- Question 13: Explain the willingness and ability of the caregiver(s) to participate fully in any child's medical, educational, psychological, special or physical needs and dental care. This includes providing transportation, attending appointments and communicating with professionals.
  - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

- Question 14: Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to support the child(ren)'s school success by:
  a. Participating in school activities and meetings, including disciplinary and/or IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings.
  b. Assisting with school assignments, supporting tutoring programs, meeting with teachers and working with an educational surrogate if one has been appointed and encouraging the child's participation in extra-curricular activities.
  c. For any child who has a disability, or is suspected of having a disability, to attend Educational Surrogate Parent training, if needed or recommended by the court; and thereafter advocate for the child(ren) in the school system.
  d. Maintaining the children in the school of origin, if it is in the child(ren)'s best interest to do so.
  e. Maintaining the child(ren) in the school of origin until an appropriate grading break in the academic year, if not possible or not in the child(ren)'s best interest to remain in the school of origin for the remainder of the school year.
  - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

- Question 15: Is the family willing and able to provide placement for any siblings?
  - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

2. **Motivation**: This area of assessment is where Case Managers describe the motivations the caregivers have to be approved as a relative/non-relative caregiver. If it is a two-parent household, Case Managers need to address both caregivers' mutual desire to care for the child. This includes, but is not limited to, gaining an understanding of the following:
   - What is the alignment of the caregiver(s) with the child?
   - What is the understanding of the caregiver(s) of the danger threats that make the child unsafe?
   - What is the commitment of the caregiver(s) to implement and adhere to the safety plan?
   - What is the willingness of the caregiver(s) to help the child achieve permanency?
     - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

3. **Education and Employment:** This area of assessment differs from the financial employment questions previously discussed. Here Case Managers are not detailing where caregivers work or how much money they make, but how their education and /or employment history has helped prepare them to care for a child. In this area of assessment, Case Managers will:
   - Describe how the caregiver(s)' education, special training or employment history helps prepare them to care for a child.
   - Discuss whether the person may have any challenges, including but not limited to the caregiver(s)' past difficulties in school, a specific learning disability, or his/her current work schedule.
     - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

4. **Family History:** This area used to be called Family Life in previous home studies. Here Case Managers describe the relationships between household members, extended family, and friends. This means gaining a clear understanding of the elements below:

- Describe/discuss relationships between household members and extended family and friends. Identify the family's formal and informal support systems, including current and anticipated child care arrangements.
- Describe the family's cultural and religious beliefs and their willingness to accommodate children of different faiths, beliefs, ethnicities, and/or cultures.
- Discuss each caregiver's history to include any past trauma that could impact the family's ability to provide quality care to children.
- Describe attitudes towards children and parents involved in the child welfare system.
- Describe how family members have demonstrated capacity to parent children with special needs.
- Discuss any significant losses by the family members and any coping mechanisms used to manage such loss.
- Describe the type of discipline used in the family prior to fostering and how they were disciplined as children.
  - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

5. **Child(ren) To Be Placed Interview(s):** This is a new area of assessment included in the UHS. For this area Case Managers interview the child or children being placed to gain their understanding and/or feelings about being placed in the home.
   - Discuss and assess the child(ren)'s understanding or feeling about being placed in the home. Document any concerns or needs that they would want the potential caregiver(s) to know about them.
     - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

6. **References and Reviews:** This is also a new area of assessment where the Child Protection Investigator will be able to describe references regarding the family's ability to meet the needs of the child.
   - Obtain, contact, and document the results of a minimum of two references from relatives, non-relatives, professionals and/or services providers regarding the family's ability to meet the needs of a

child(ren) placed in the home.

- *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

7. **Child History:** This is also a new area of assessment where Case Managers contact references regarding the family's ability to meet the needs of the child. Describe each child living in the home separately, including developmental history/issues, personality, health, education level, special needs and behavioral challenges.
   - In addition, describe/discuss the adjustment and integration of children previously adopted by or placed with the family.
   - Discuss with all family members any failed placements in terms of the cause, resolution, and any differences or changes that will be made as a result of lessons learned.
     - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

8. **Physical Environment:** This area requires a walk-through of the home to ensure that the living environment is free of any potential hazards and the sleeping arrangements are appropriate for the age of the child.
   - Discuss the physical environment, including a description of the home; address the interior, exterior, number of rooms, etc., sleeping arrangements, and accommodations for child(ren)'s personal belongings.
   - Are there any changes needed in order to accommodate child(ren)?
     - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

9. **Family Supports and Resources:** This new addition to the UHS allows Case Managers to fully describe what support system currently exist in the family's life.
   - Describe if the applicant(s) have a well-developed support system comprised of extended family, friends and community organizations that affirms the applicant's decision to provide care for a child placed in their home.
   - If there were an unforeseen emergency, whom would they identify as using for respite, or

additionally, for long term planning?

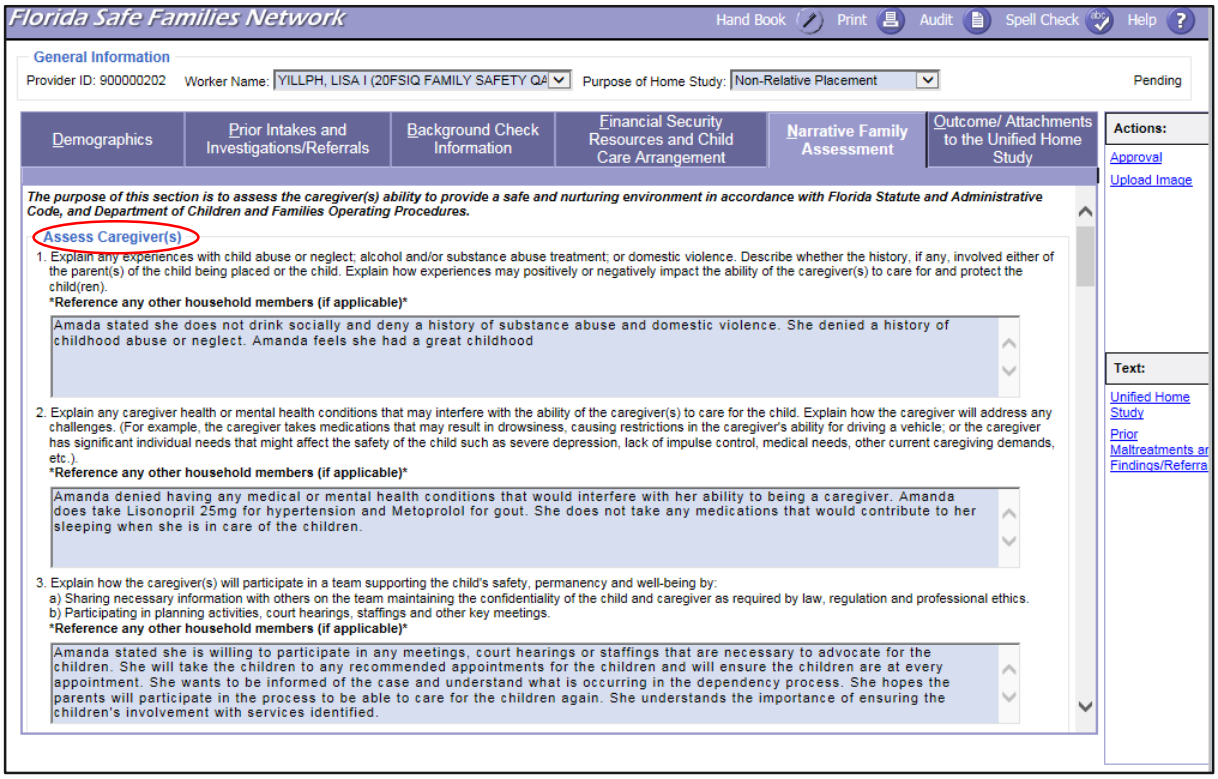
- What is their willingness to engage in recommended services such as therapy and support group, etc.?
  - *This question is required for ALL home study types.*

Slide: 3.41-3.49

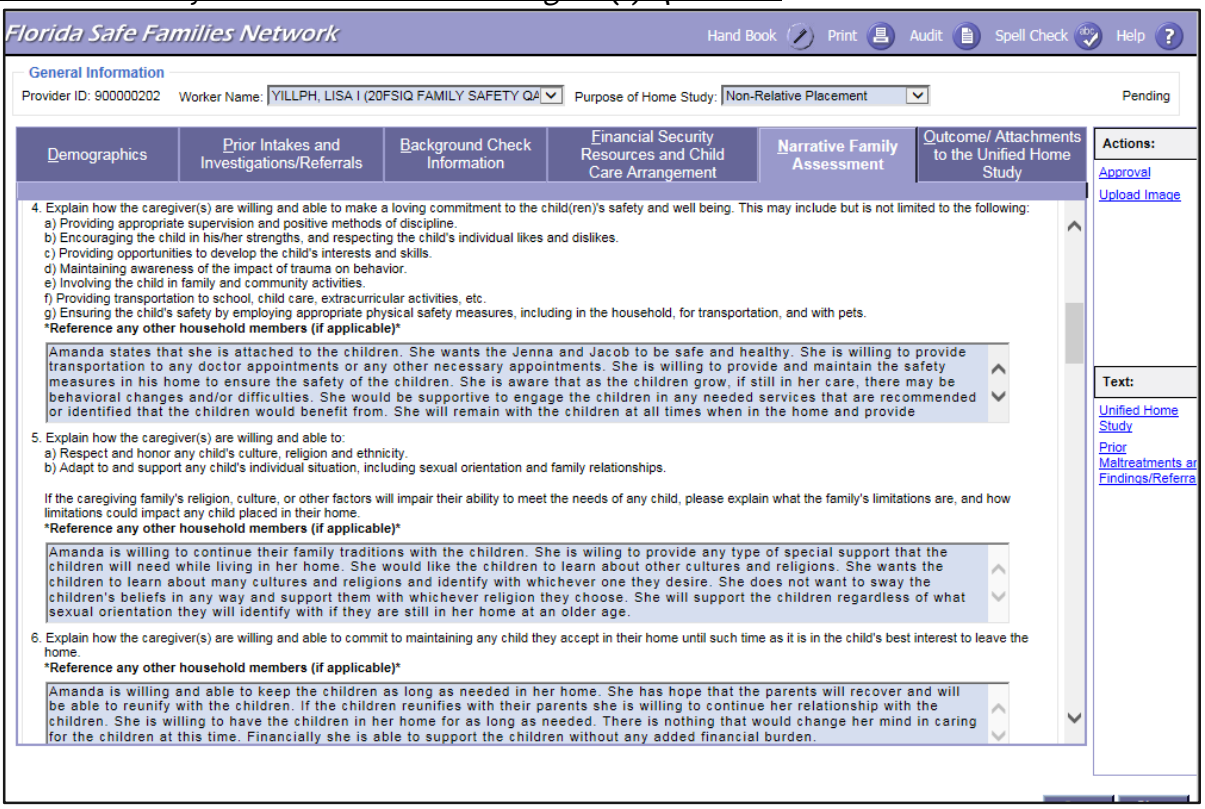
PG: 30-34

FSFN Screens: *Show participants how the information is viewed in the Narrative Family Assessment page of the UHS. Refer participants to screenshots in the Participant Guide.*

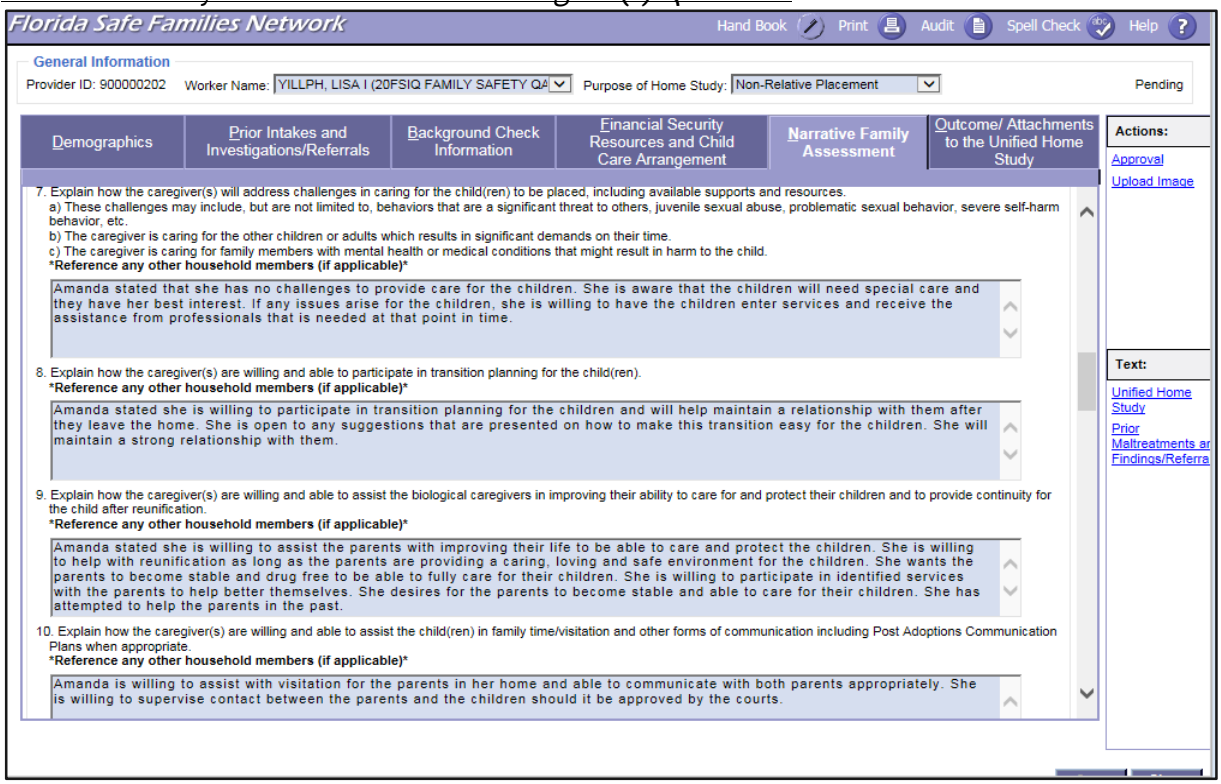
Narrative Family Assessment – Assess Caregiver(s) Questions:



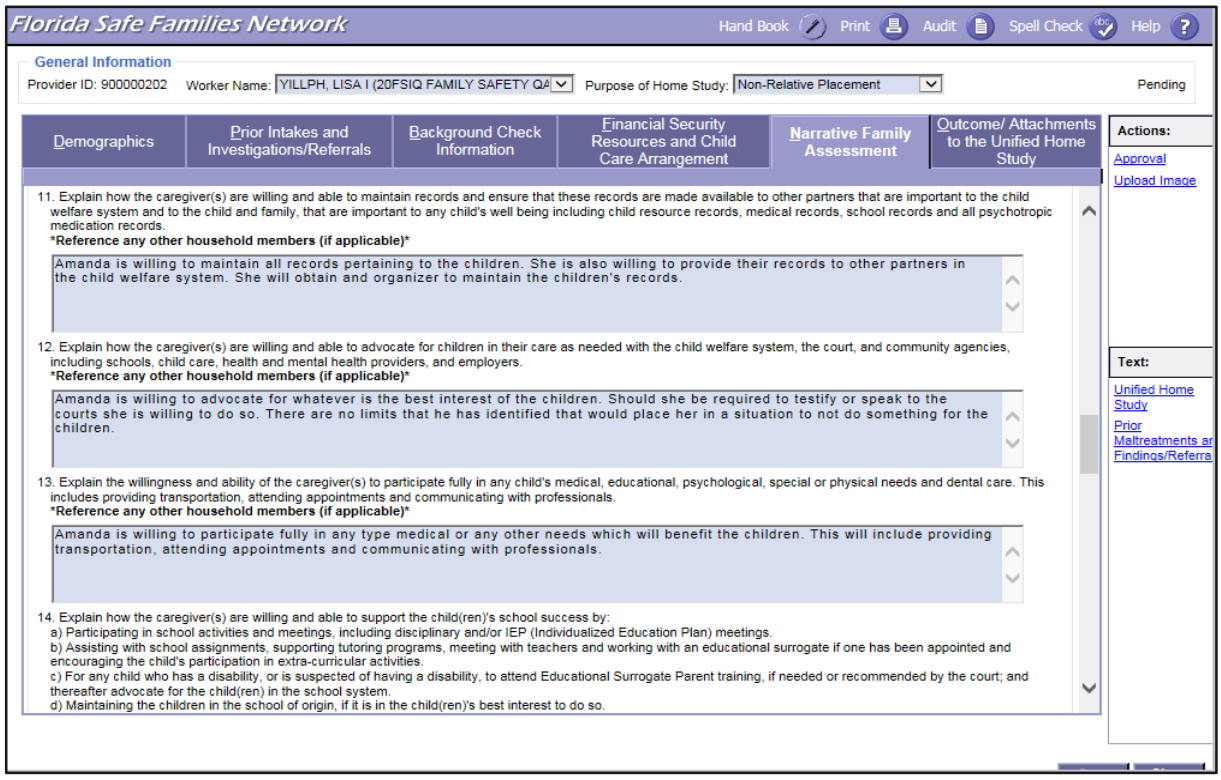
Narrative Family Assessment – Assess Caregiver(s) Questions:



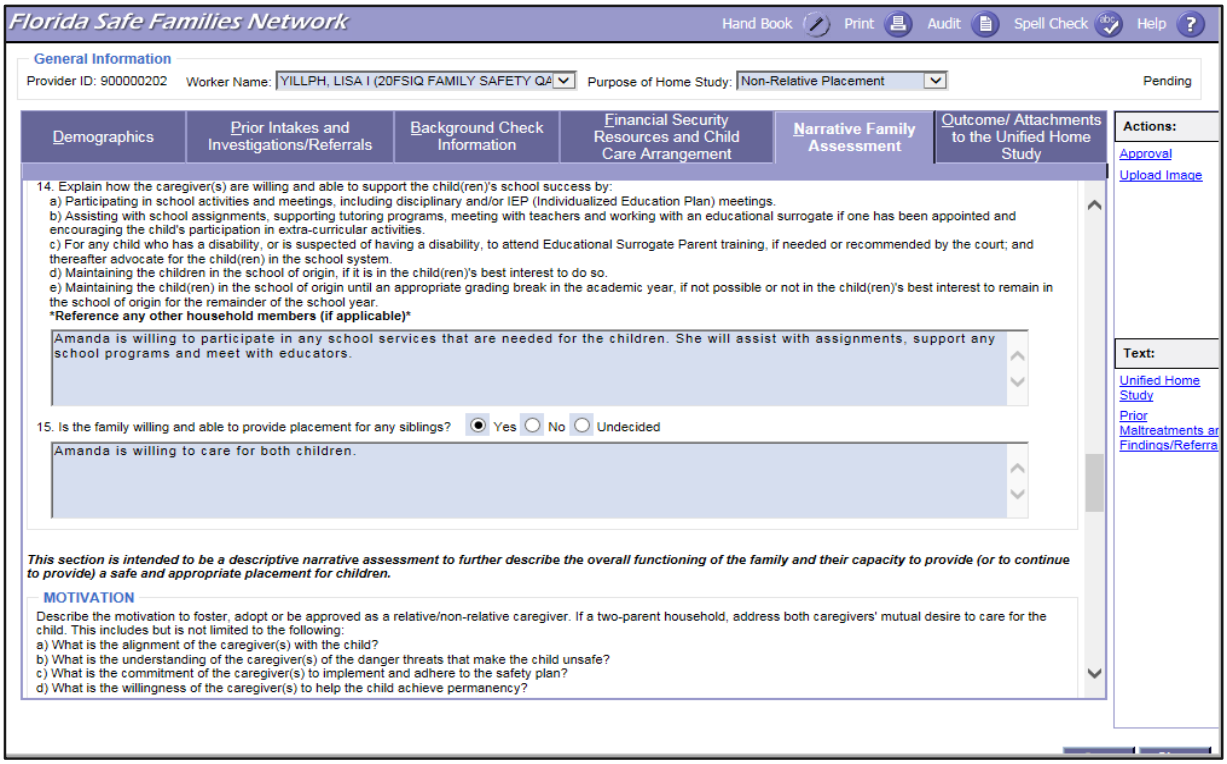
Narrative Family Assessment – Assess Caregiver(s) Questions:



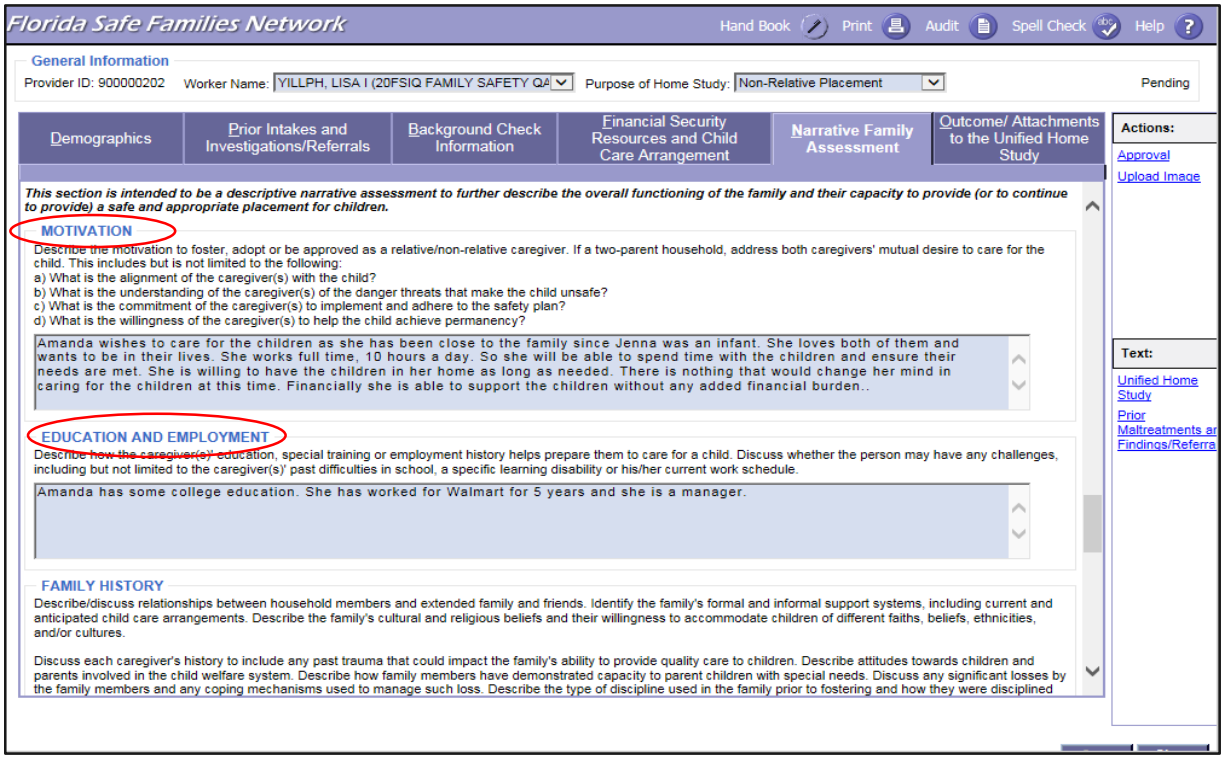
Narrative Family Assessment – Assess Caregiver(s) Questions:



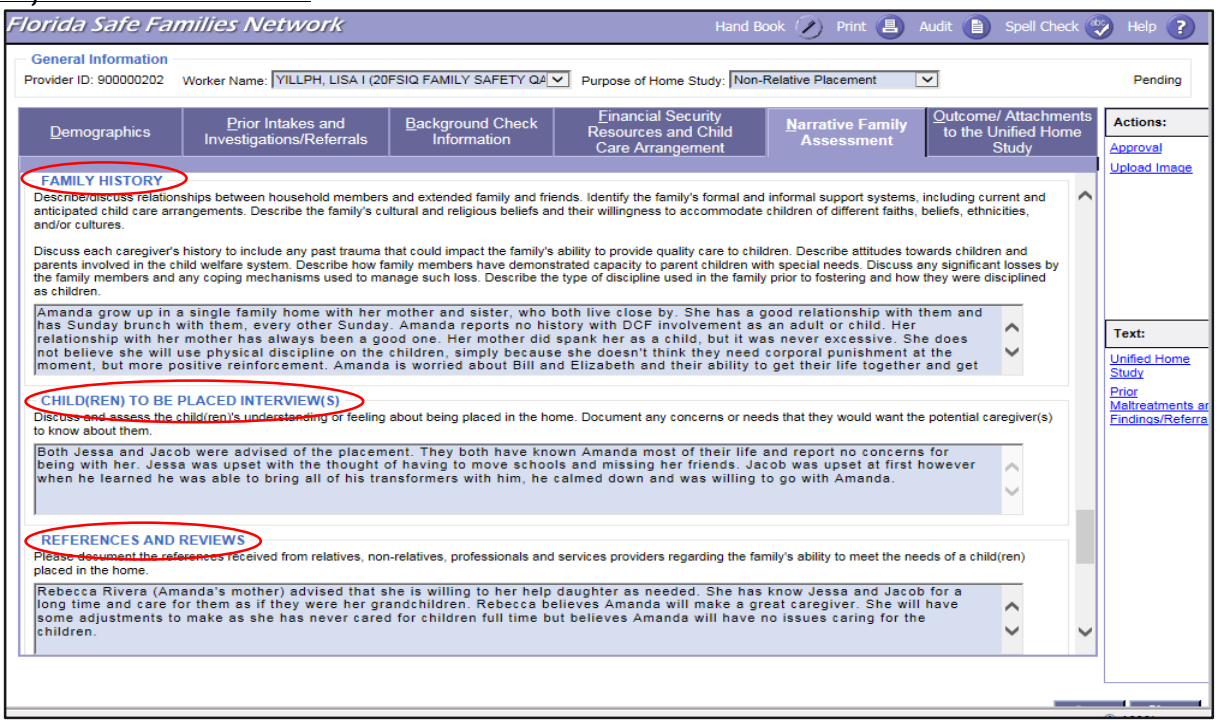
Narrative Family Assessment – Assess Caregiver(s) Questions:



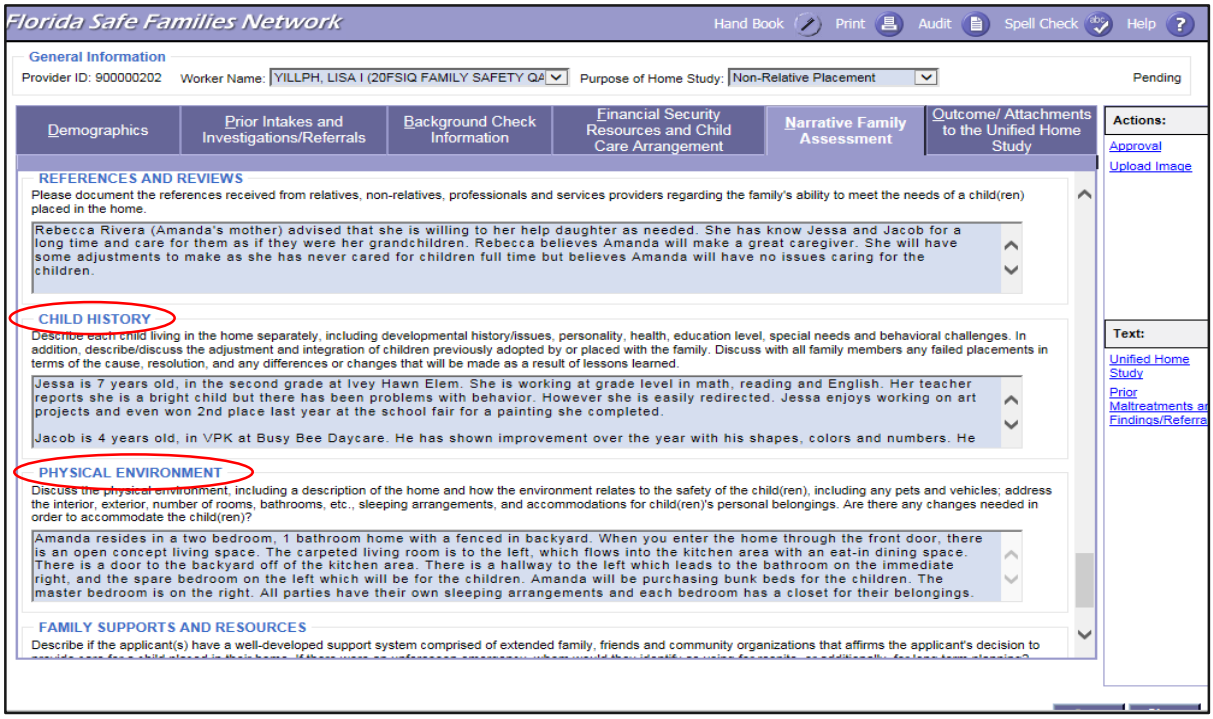
Narrative Family Assessment – Motivation and Education and Employment:



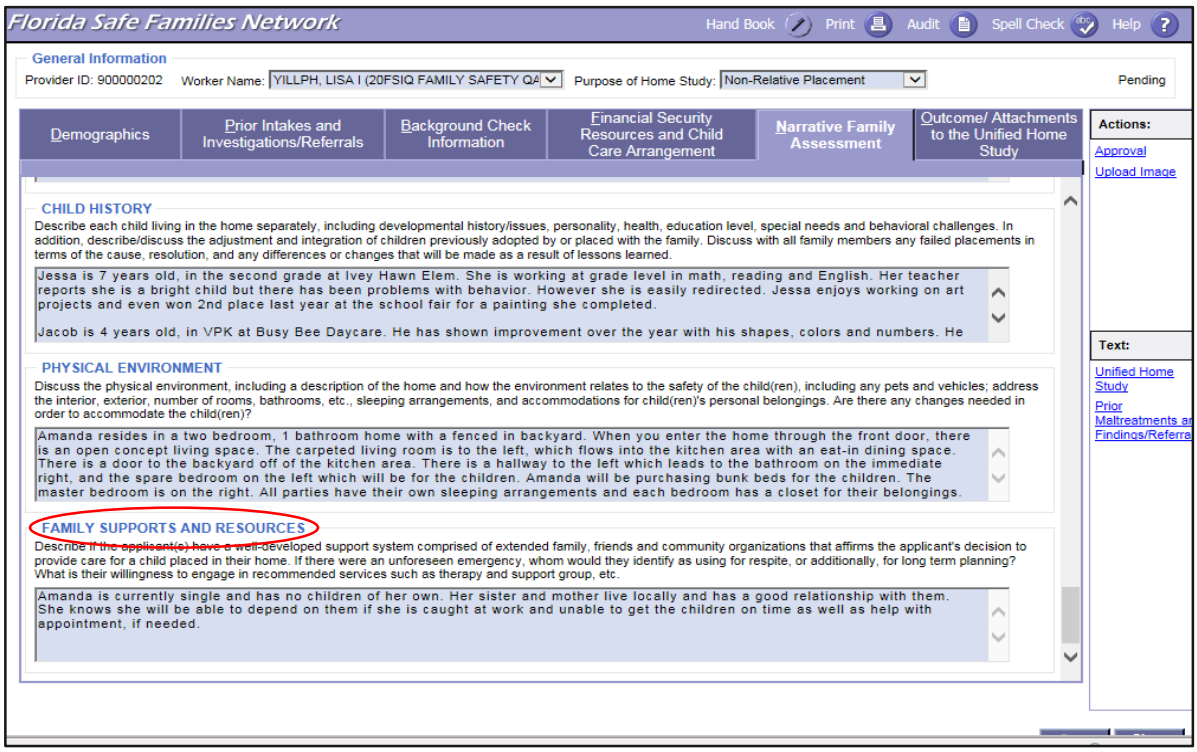
Narrative Family Assessment – Family History, Child(ren) To Be Placed Interview(s), and References and Reviews:



Narrative Family Assessment – Child History and Physical Environment:



Narrative Family Assessment – Family Supports and Resources:



Activity A: Part 1 – A Non-relative Placement for Jacob and Jenna

Time:	20 minutes
Purpose:	To practice conducting an interview for a Non-Relative/Relative Home Study utilizing the interview phases.
Materials: *Slide: 3.50*	• **PG: 35-37,** *A Non-relative Placement for Jacob and Jenna worksheet*
Trainer Instructions:	• *Break participants into groups of two: one Caregiver/Interviewee, one Case Manager/Interviewer.* • *Ask participants to read the scenario. The scenario is split into two parts, Part A and Part B. Part A everyone reads and Part B only the Interviewee reads. The interviewer is to select at least five of the following questions from the Family Narrative Assessment to gather information around.* – ***Question 1:*** *Explain any experiences with child abuse or neglect; alcohol and/or substance abuse treatment; or domestic violence. Describe whether the history, if any, involved either of the parent(s) of the child being placed or the child. Explain how experiences may positively or negatively impact the ability of the caregiver(s) to care for and protect the child(ren).* – ***Question 2:*** *Explain any caregiver health or mental health conditions that may interfere with the ability of the caregiver(s) to care for the child. Explain how the caregiver will address any challenges. For example, the caregiver takes medications that may result in drowsiness, causing restrictions in the caregiver's ability for driving a vehicle; or the caregiver has significant individual needs that might affect the safety of the child such as severe depression, lack of impulse control, medical needs, other current caregiving demands, etc.* – ***Question 3:*** *Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to make a loving commitment to the child(ren)'s*

safety and well-being. This may include but is not limited to the following:

a. *Providing appropriate supervision and positive methods of discipline.*
b. *Encouraging the child in his/her strengths, and respecting the child's individual likes and dislikes.*
c. *Providing opportunities to develop the child's interests and skills.*
d. *Maintaining awareness of the impact of trauma on behavior.*
e. *Involving the child in family and community activities.*
f. *Providing transportation to school, child care, extracurricular activities, etc.*
g. *Ensuring the child's safety by employing appropriate physical safety measures, including in the household, for transportation, and with pets.*

- ***Question 4:*** *Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to:*
  a. *Respect and honor any child's culture, religion and ethnicity.*
  b. *Adapt to and support any child's individual situation, including sexual orientation and family relationships. If the caregiving family's religion, culture, or other factors will impair their ability to meet the needs of any child, please explain what the family's limitations are, and how limitations could impact any child placed in their home.*

- ***Question 5:*** *Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to commit to maintaining any child they accept in their home until such time as it is in the child's best interest to leave the home.*

- ***Question 6:*** *Explain how the caregiver(s) will address challenges in caring for the child(ren) to be placed, including available supports and resources.*
  a. *These challenges may include, but are not limited to, behaviors that are a significant threat to others, juvenile sexual abuse, problematic sexual behavior, severe self-harm behavior, etc.*
  b. *The caregiver is caring for the other children or adults which results in significant demands on their time.*

	c. *The caregiver is caring for family members with mental health or medical conditions that might result in harm to the child.* – ***Question 7:*** *Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to assist the biological caregivers in improving their ability to care for and protect their children and to provide continuity for the child after reunification.* – ***Question 8:*** *Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to assist the child(ren) in family time/visitation and other forms of communication including Post Adoptions Communication Plans when appropriate.* – ***Question 9:*** *Explain how the caregiver(s) are willing and able to advocate for children in their care as needed with the child welfare system, the court, and community agencies, including schools, child care, health and mental health providers, and employers.* – ***Question 10:*** *Explain the willingness and ability of the caregiver(s) to participate fully in any child's medical, educational, psychological, special or physical needs and dental care. This includes providing transportation, attending appointments and communicating with professionals.* • *The Case Manager/interviewer is to conduct the four interview phases (Opening, gathering, planning, closing) with the Interviewee/Caregiver.* • *After the activity, as a large group, conduct a discussion to address the following:* – *What was easy and/or difficult about completing the interview phases?* – *What interview behaviors/skills needed to be employed when conducting the assessment?* – *What areas were harder/easier to gather information around?* – *Address questions and areas of difficulty.*

Participant Instructions:	1. Read the scenario. Note that the scenario is split into a Part A and Part B. The first part is for everyone, and the second part should only be read by the Interviewee/Caregiver. 2. Select who will be the Case Manager/Interviewer and who will be the Caregiver/Interviewee. 3. The interviewer must select up to five of the narrative assessment questions and using the four interview phases gather the needed information from the caregiver.

Scenario Part A:

A child abuse investigation was received on parents, Bill and Elizabeth, and their two children, four-year-old Jacob and seven-year-old Jenna. After commencing the investigation, the CPI determined that Jacob and Jenna were in present danger due to ongoing drug use by the parents. An In-Home Safety Plan was unable to control the danger threats and the children were removed and placed in foster care. At the time there were no relatives or non-relatives who were identified as a possible placement for the children. The CPI completed their assessment, determined that the children were unsafe, and the case was transferred to Case Management. After case transfer the parents shared with the Case Manager that they have been talking to one of their long-term friends, Amanda Rivera, about taking placement of the children. Amanda Rivera, age 32, is willing to take both children and has known and had regular contact with the children since they were born. Bill and Elizabeth believe Amanda will provide the children with a loving home.

The following information has been gathered about Jessa and Jacob:

- Jenna is seven years old in the second grade at Ivey Hawn Elementary. She is working at grade level in math, reading, and English. Her teacher reports she is a bright child, but there have been problems with behavior. However, she is easily redirected. Jenna enjoys working on art projects and even won 2nd place last year at the school fair for a painting she completed.
- Jacob is four years old and in VPK at Busy Bee Daycare. He has shown improvement over the year with his shapes, colors, and numbers. He is struggling with fine motor skills, such has holding a pencil correctly. He is very active and likes to spend time playing outside. He also loves playing video games, especially Minecraft.
- Both Jenna and Jacob have good things to say about Amanda and talked about times when she has taken care of them in the past. They were advised of the placement. Jenna was upset with the thought of having to move schools and

missing her friends. However, when she learned that Amanda is willing to transport her to her school, she was willing to go with Amanda. Jacob was upset at first, however, when he learned he was able to bring all of his transformer toys with him, he calmed down and was willing to go with Amanda.

The following information has been gathered from Rebecca Rivera (Amanda's mother):

- She advised that she is willing to her help daughter as needed.
- She has known Jenna and Jacob for a long time and care for them as if they were her grandchildren.
- Rebecca believes Amanda will make a great caregiver. She will have some adjustments to make as she has never cared for children full time, but believes Amanda will have no issues caring for the children.

Background checks have been completed and Amanda Rivera has no criminal or child abuse histories.

Scenario Part B:

Additional Information for the Interviewee/Caregiver: Only read if you are role-playing as the interviewee/caregiver. This only provides a basic level of information; additional information should be added as needed to answer the questions asked by the Interviewer.

- Amanda has known the family for six and a half years. She met the mother, Elizabeth, though work and they became friends.
- Amanda is currently single and has no children of her own. Her sister and mother live locally and she has a good relationship with them. She knows she will be able to depend on them if she is caught at work and unable to get the children on time as well as help with appointment, if needed.
- Amanda takes Lisinopril 25mg for hypertension and Metoprolol for gout. She has no diagnosed mental health issues.
- Amanda has worked full-time at Wal-Mart for two years and five months. She works four ten-hour days, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 7am to 5pm. Her hours are stable and she does not have to switch shifts unless she requests it.
- Amanda reports having an excellent relationship with Elizabeth and Bill up until last year when their drug usage became more frequent. She is open to supervising visits between the children and Elizabeth and Bill, but is concerned that the parents will not listen to her if they are high. She wants Elizabeth and Bill to stop using drugs and be able to provide full time care for the children again. She is willing to do whatever she can to help the parents get better.

When providing information to the interviewer, at first be vague or give too much

information – some not relevant.
Activity STOP

Finalizing the Relative/Non-relative UHS

Attachments

Slide: 3.51

PG: 38

FSFN Tutorial: *To show the material discussed below, use the FSFN Tutorial to conduct a demonstration showing how documents are attached to the UHS. Also, demonstrate how to select the recommendation and send it to the supervisor for approval, and how supervisors make the final determination and freeze the UHS.*

Slide: 3.52

Slide: 3.53

PG: 38

Attachments provide verification of information gathered and evidence of information shared with the caregivers. The attachments that are required depend on the type of UHS being completed.

- The Outcome/ Attachments tab includes attachments that are in print form and external to the UHS and/or FSFN. This tab includes a list of sixteen possible attachments that may be uploaded. When one of these possible listed documents is not attached, an explanation must be provided in the appropriate comment field.

- Listed below are the upload requirements for each listed attachment in the Relative/Non-relative UHS.

Slide: 3.54

PG: 38

Attachments	Upload Requirements for Relative/Non-relative UHS
Affidavit of firearm safety	Required: Signed Acknowledgement of Firearms/Safety Requirements
Consent to Release Information	Required: Use Agency Specific Release
Personal references	Optional to Upload Information
Referrals	Optional to Upload Information Provided to Caregiver
Receipts of Rights and responsibilities	Optional to Upload Information Provided to Caregiver
Receipt of Grievance Brochure	Optional to Upload Information Provided to Caregiver
Water Addendum	Optional to Upload Information Provided to Caregiver
Relative Caregiver Program Information	Optional to Upload Information Provided to Caregiver
Adoption-Child Study	N/A
Adoption-Subsidy Acknowledgement form	N/A
Affidavit of Good Moral Character	N/A
Florida Adoption Assistance Program	N/A
Information Packet Sent-Adoptive Home	N/A
Information Packet Sent-Foster Home	N/A
Florida Adoption Reunion Registry	N/A
TANF information	N/A

Signatures, Recommendations, and Final Approvals

Signatures

Slide: 3.55

PG: 39

Once **all** required information has been gathered and assessed, Case Managers must ask the caregiver to review and sign the Relative/Non-relative UHS created. The caregiver(s)' signatures provide attestation that the information shared by the caregiver(s) is accurate as of the date that their signature is provided. If known, it is at this time that Case Managers inform the caregiver of any concerns or changes that might affect the anticipated outcome of the home study.

Slide: 3.56

PG: 39

- Once signed by the caregivers, Case Managers, and supervisors, the entire UHS, including the signature page, must be uploaded into the UHS page in FSFN within two business days.

- When the information is entered in FSFN and caregiver signatures obtained and uploaded, Case Managers are then ready to develop their recommendation for the home study.

- The recommended outcome must be based upon the information gathered and if the caregiver(s) will be able to provide the needed care, nurturing and protection for the child(ren) to be placed within the home.

Recommendations

Slide: 3.57

PG: 39

In the FSFN UHS Outcome page, Case Managers have to select a recommended outcome for their supervisor to review. The outcomes available to choose from are as follows:

- "Withdrawn": Occurs if the prospective placement changes their mind about wanting the child to be placed with them.

- "Denied": The home study can be denied because of one or more of the following:

  - "Criminal Disqualifier": Based upon criminal history, the Case Manager must not place the child(ren) with the caregiver(s).

  - "FSFN Disqualifier": The Case Manager has determined that, based upon information reviewed in FSFN, placement in this home is not in the best interest of the child(ren).

  - "Review Comments": There are other reasons which are the basis for the Case Manager's determination that placement in this home is not in the best interest of the child(ren).

  - "Duplicate - Created in Error": Used if the UHS was created by mistake.

- "Approved": There are two options when recommending a home study for approval.

  1. "Approved - Meet Requirements": The Case Manager determines that both of the following conditions exist.

     – The caregiver(s) meet home study requirements.

     – Placement in this home is in the best interest of the child(ren).

  2. "Approved - Review Comments": There are other reasons the Case Manager would like the supervisor to be aware of that are a part of the determination.

Final Approvals

Slide: 3.58

PG: 40

- After Case Managers select the recommended outcome on the FSFN page and provide a narrative detail regarding why the recommendation is being made, they must launch the UHS template and submit it for supervisor review and approval. All of the required fields on the home study pages must be completed in order to submit a "completed" home study to a supervisor for review.

- The supervisor reviews the home study in FSFN to determine that appropriate interviews, background checks and analysis, and assessment of caregiver(s) have been completed.

- For the approval/denial process, Child Welfare Professional Supervisors must enter a justification for approval or denial in the Outcome text box.

Slide: 3.59

PG: 40

- The supervisor has the authority to approve or deny a completed home study regardless of a Case Manager's recommendation. The supervisor must use the FSFN UHS module to record the final decision and completion date for all home study types.

Slide: 3.60

PG: 40

- In the Outcome group box on the FSFN UHS page, the Case Manager supervisor selects an appropriate conclusion from the Outcome drop-down choices:
  - "Application Withdrawn" means that the caregiver(s) decided to not continue with the home study process.
  - "Approved - Meets Requirements" means that the Case Manager Supervisor has determined that the caregiver(s) meet all requirements without the need for any support or assistance at this time.
  - "Approved - Review Comments": The Case Manager Supervisor has determined that the caregiver(s) meet the requirements based on specific services or resources that must be available to care for the child.
  - "Denied - Criminal Disqualifier": Based upon criminal history, the Case Manager must not place the child(ren) with the caregiver(s).
  - "Denied - FSFN Disqualifier": The that the Case Manager Supervisor has determined that, based upon information reviewed in FSFN, placement in this home is not in the best interest of the child(ren).
  - "Denied - Review Comments": There are other reasons which are the basis for the Case Manager Supervisor's determination that placement in this home is not in the best interest of the child(ren).
  - "Duplicate - Created in Error": Used if UHS was created by mistake.
  - "Denied - Court Approved": This option will be selected when the Case Manager Supervisor has recommended a denial outcome but the court has opted to nevertheless approve the placement.

Slide: 3.61

PG: 41

- Once reviewed by the Supervisor, the outcome is documented in FSFN. The Case Manager will print the UHS to be provided to the court. The UHS should not be finalized until the court has made a determination. If the court makes a determination that is not the outcome of the Department, the supervisor should document this within the Outcome group box, under their recommendation and use the "Denied - Court Approved" option from the drop-down.

- When the supervisor approves or denies a home study, they will document the reason in the Outcome text box. Supervisors document their approval or denial in the Outcome text box after reviewing the completed UHS.

- If the supervisor is unavailable, the Child Welfare Professional can choose an alternate supervisor.

- Child Welfare Professionals cannot approve their own home study.

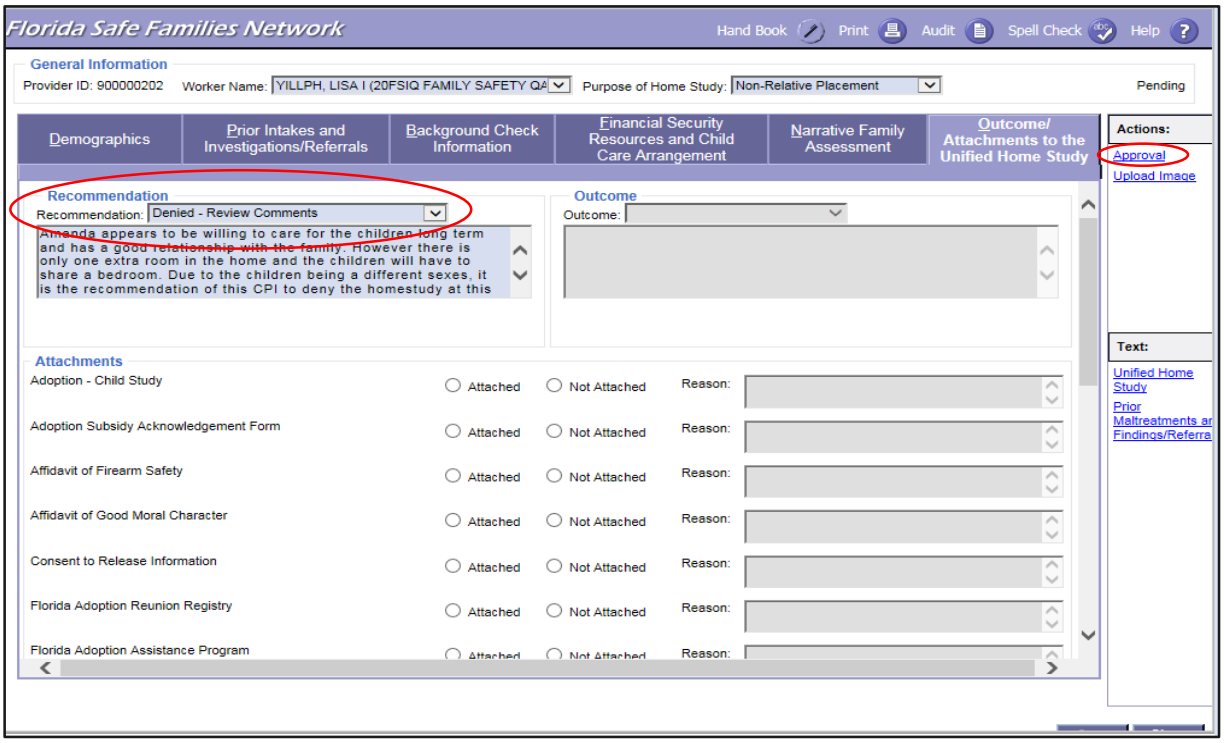
- Upon the supervisor approving or denying the home study in FSFN, the document freezes along with the associated UHS template and is no longer editable. Supervisors need to finalize the home study and freeze it even if the UHS was denied via the approval routing FSFN functionality.

- Once the recommendation, approval/denial, and signatures are complete, Case Managers have five business days to provide a copy of the signed home study to the caregiver(s), regardless of the supervisor's decision.

Slide: 3.62
PG: 41

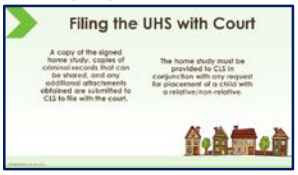
FSFN Screens: *Show participants how to document what will be attached to the UHS, how to select the recommendation and send it to the supervisor for approval, and how supervisors make the final determination and freeze the UHS. Refer participants to screenshots in the Participant Guide.*

Outcome/Attachments, Recommendations, and Approval:



Filing with the Court

Slide: 3.63



PG: 42

A copy of the signed home study, copies of any criminal records that can be shared, and any additional attachments obtained, are submitted to CLS to file with the court. Note that the home study must be provided to CLS in conjunction with any request for placement with the relative/non-relative.

- If a Relative/Non-relative UHS is needed for a hearing that is not an emergency, it must be provided to CLS for review and file with the court five business days prior to the hearing, unless the hearing is set within a period of less than five business days, in which case the home study must be provided no later than 72 hours prior to the hearing.

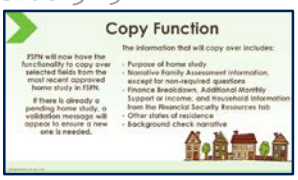
Copy Function

Slide: 3.64

FSFN Tutorial: *To show the material discussed below, use the FSFN Tutorial, to conduct a demonstration showing how to use the copy function from an approved UHS, including the following information:*

Once the Person Provider has been searched for and/or created and the UHS launched from the Actions Menu, a list of existing Unified Home Studies for that provider will appear in a pop-up box. Select the most recent and approved UHS to copy.

Slide: 3.65



PG: 42

FSFN will now have the functionality to copy over selected field from the most recent approved home study in FSFN. This will allow Case Managers to complete a home study without having to start from scratch if there is already an approved home study in the system. This can be a huge timesaver as well as a big convenience to the caregiver who may have already answered all of the questions. While Case Managers need to validate the information to ensure it is still correct, they do not have to re-enter duplicative information.

- The information that will copy over includes:
  - Purpose of home study
  - Narrative Family Assessment information, except for non-required questions (i.e., questions 3, 8, 9, and 11)
  - Finance Breakdown, Additional Monthly Support or Income, and Household Information from the Financial Security Resources tab
  - Other states of residence
  - Background check narrative

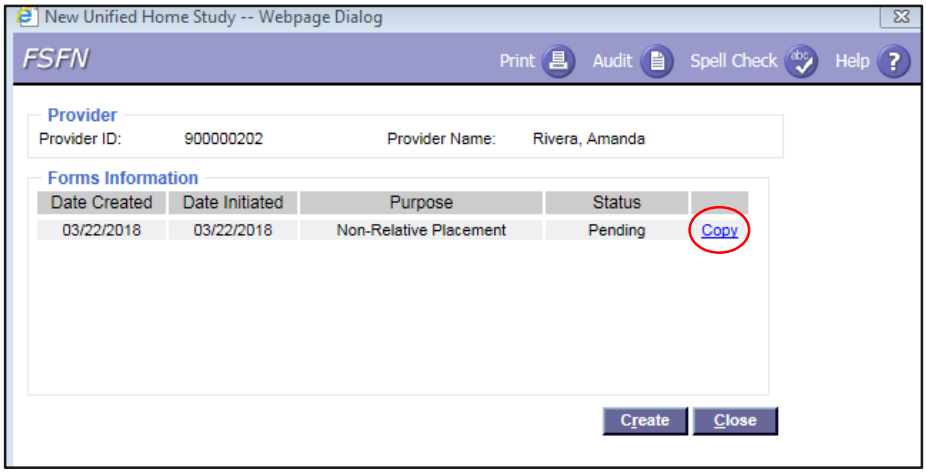
Each home study is an assessment made in that moment in time as done with the FFA-I, FFA-O, and Progress Update. Information Case Managers gather to assess must be relevant, detailed, and sufficient in order to provide a clear assessment of the caregiver's current ability to care and nurture the child. This includes ensuring that the information copied over from a previously approved UHS is still valid and current.

Slide: 3.66

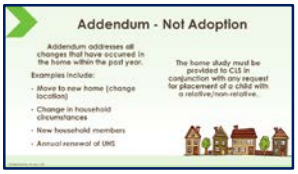
PG: 43

FSFN Screens: *Show participants how to use the copy function from an approved UHS. Refer participants to the screenshots in the Participant Guide.*

Copy Function:



Slide: 3.67



PG: 43

Addendum – Not Adoption

An addendum addresses all changes that have occurred in the home within the past year.

Examples include:

- Move to new home (change location)
- Change in household circumstances
- New household members
- Annual renew of UHS

The home study must be provided to CLS in conjunction with any request for placement of a child with a relative/non-relative.

Activity A: Part 2 – A Non-relative Placement for Jacob and Jenna

Time:	45 minutes
Purpose:	To practice completing a Non-relative UHS.
Materials: *Slide: 3.68*	• Computer and access to sandbox • **PG: 44,** *A Non-relative Placement for Jacob and Jenna worksheet*
Trainer Instructions:	• *FSFN PREP ACTIVITY OPTIONS: This activity can be implemented using any one of following options:* – *As part of the activity, have the participants create Amanda Rivera as a Person Inquiry and/or Person Provider and launch the UHS from that page.* – *Complete the Person Inquiry as seed data in the sandbox for each group BEFORE the activity in order to complete the Relative/Non-relative Home Study.* – *If there is already existing seed data built that will fit this purpose, the scenario can be changed to fit the seed data that exists.* • *In the TTT session, this activity was demonstrated in tutorial format but please ensure that participants are able to complete the activity either individually or in small groups to ensure they become familiar with FSFN functionality.* • *Instruct participants to read the Scenario which builds on the information learned in Part 1 of this activity. Additional information, not included in the scenario, can be added as needed to complete the home study.* • *Have participants access seed data in sandbox, if needed.* • *Ask participants to read the following scenario and* complete *Non-relative Placement Home Study in FSFN where both the Case Manager and Case Manager Super\visor recommends the UHS.* • *Verify that the Non-relative UHS each group correctly completed was done correctly.*

Participant Instructions:	• *As a large group discuss any issues participants had when completing the home study.* 1. Read the scenario. 2. Create and complete Relative/Non-relative UHS in FSFN where both the Case Manager and Case Manager Supervisor recommends the UHS.

Scenario Part 2:

Amanda resides in a three room, two bathroom home with a fenced in backyard. When entering the home through the front door, there is an open-concept living space. The carpeted living room flows into the kitchen area with an eat-in dining space. There is a door to the backyard off of the kitchen area. There is a hallway to the left which leads to the bathroom and three bedrooms. Amanda will be purchasing bunk beds for the children. The home was observed to be very clean and no environmental hazards were noted.

Activity STOP

Unit Summary:	Relative/Non-relative Unified Home Studies are completed by Case Managers when a planned change of placement is to occur and also when updating an existing Relative/Non-relative UHS due to changes occurring in the household. Case Managers need gather critical information from the onset in order to assess the caregiver's criminal and child welfare history, their home environment, and their ability to care for the child. It is vital to make a thorough assessment of the caregiver's ability to nurture, care, and protect the child. Once the information is obtained, Case Managers assess all of the information gathered regarding the caregivers and ALL of the household members and frequent visitors who provide sight and sound supervision in order to make a recommendation for the supervisor to review. The supervisor then approves or denies the home study accordingly.