



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Shevaun L. Harris
Secretary

DATE: September 20, 2024

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

FROM: Kate Williams, Assistant Secretary for Child and Family Well-Being *KW*

SUBJECT: Trauma Screening Tool

NOTE: an amended version
of this memo was issued on
October 17, 2024

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

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

NEW INFORMATION: Effective immediately, Child Protective Investigators (CPIs) and case management staff are required to complete the 60-minute web-based training entitled, "Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma | Risk Factors for ACEs, Prevention & Intervention found within the MyFLLearn system (<https://www.myflfamilies.com/my-fl-learn>) to familiarize themselves with the ACE tool. This training will need to be completed by all staff prior to the rollout date of October 11, 2024.

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

2415 North Monroe Street, Suite 400, Tallahassee, Florida 32303-4190

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

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

Select the Image Type of "Evaluation"

Image Category of "Investigation"

Image Description of "Child's Name ACE Score results", (Ex. John. Doe ACE Score 3).

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

Selecting Image Category "Participants Document"

Image Type "Other"

File Name "Child's Name ACE Score results", (Ex. John. Doe ACE Score 3)

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

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

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