

Schedule 4 – Selection criteria

Document no.	Date	Document	Status	Reason for Exemption	Online release status
1	Version May 2005	Comprehensive kinship carer assessment tool (used in 2008 assessments)	Full release		Full release
2	Version May 2011	Care and Protection Services Comprehensive Kinship Carer Assessment Tool (used in 2013 assessments)	Full release		Full release



CARE & PROTECTION SERVICES COMPREHENSIVE KINSHIP CARER ASSESSMENT TOOL

CONTENTS

CHECKLIST

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1. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT & STATISTICAL DATA
2. FAMILY STRUCTURE / SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS
3. CONTEXT OF REQUEST FOR CARE
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5. CARER SUITABILITY CHECKS

PART B

THE CHILD / CHILDREN

PART C

PROSPECTIVE CARER & HOUSEHOLD DETAILS

PART D

THE CHILD / CHILDREN'S PARENT(S)

**Throughout the tool there are comments in italics. These are included as a guide only.
Please delete on completing report. **

- (a) Discretion should be applied throughout the interview process – the issues kinship carers face and their motivations are different from foster carers. Research also indicates that many kin carers find the assessment process intrusive to the point of choosing to withdraw.
- (b) However, the purpose of kinship and foster care assessment is the same: to determine the capacity of other adults to provide care to a child who has suffered the trauma of removal from his/her parents' care. The prospective carers may themselves be affected by this crisis and any pain associated with the assessment will require recognition and possibly support.
- (c) Other factors such as age or criminal history that could result in non-approval for unrelated carers may need to be viewed differently: using a strengths perspective to determine if there are others in the family & friendship network who can substitute / provide support in this area.
- (d) Remember: In recognition of the importance of continuity and family relationships to a child, no child should be placed in foster care or residential care unless all kinship options have been exhausted.

Sources for this Tool include:

1. Step by Step, NSW Association of Child Welfare Agencies;
2. Oz Child Kinship Care Program; &
3. Kinship care – a social work student project of Jennifer Thorpe, ACT Family Services.

CHECKLIST

Proposed Name	Carer(s)	
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**Criteria
Comments**

Suitability

Pre-existing relationship between prospective carer and child/ren (consider views of both)		
Relationship with child/ren's parents, ability to facilitate contact		
Adaptability to and acceptance of the caring role		
Stability of all relationships in the household		
Understanding of children and young people's needs and ability to respond		
Personal resources of proposed carer and other household members (including carer's children)		
Carer(s)'s support networks		
Carer(s)'s health		
Fit and proper person/s		
Physical home environment		
Willingness to undertake initial and ongoing training		
Understanding of the policies and willingness to work as a team with OCYFS staff and other service providers		

Ranking Scale: **A**=Acceptable **U**=Unacceptable

Date of Police Check:

Recommended: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Additional Comments:

Sign Off

Care and Protection Worker:

Date:

Team Leader:

Date:

Specific Parental Authority submitted .

Yes/No

Date:

Data Management notified

Yes/No

Date:

(carer & banking details)

PART A

1. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

Date of Report: Assessing Worker:

Subject Child/ren's Name(s):

Child 1. Date of Birth:

Child 2. Date of Birth:

Child 3. Date of Birth:

Child 4. Date of Birth:

Legal status:

Current living arrangements:

Child/ren's placement needs: eg: short/medium/long term, level of support (specify special needs), desired outcome (family restoration, permanent)

Child/ren's view of proposed placement: eg: perspective of carer's helpfulness, relationship with other children in home, expectations of placement

Prospective Carer(s) & their relationship to the child/ren: eg: place in family, strength of pre-existing relationship, mutuality of commitment to arrangement

How prospective carers were identified: eg nominated by child, parent or selves, Family Group Conference

Outcome of assessment/ recommendations: eg in brief identify likely strengths and limitations of prospective placement, and support needs if placement to take place

Demographics

Age(s) of carers

Indigenous status

Marital status

Relationship of carer to child

Number of carer's birth children

Number of other children in home

Ages of dependent children

2. FAMILY STRUCTURE/ SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS

THE PROSPECTIVE CAREGIVER(S)

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CARERS	CONTACT DETAILS

THE CHILD/REN

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER	LEGAL STATUS	CONTACT DETAILS

BIRTH PARENTS

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS	CONTACT DETAILS

EXTENDED FAMILY / SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	RELATIONSHIP	CONTACT DETAILS

GENOGRAM

- A genogram should be completed as part of the discussions with family members. It can be a useful tool in teasing out the complexities of a family history and relationships see Attachment A for a guide.
- Workers may choose another tool, an eco map illustrated in Attachment B to explore the family's support system

3. CONTEXT OF REQUEST FOR CARE

Provide a **brief background** to the referral, past and current child protection issues, past placement history, indications of whether kinship care may or may not be the preferred option for each of the family members involved.

Is there **LAC** material available to indicate identified needs of child and partnerships to meet these? Yes/No

Court Orders & Care Plan: If applicable attach copies. Comment on capacity of prospective carers to understand and meet commitments eg for family contact.

4. SOURCES OF INFORMATION / SUMMARY OF CONTACT

Interviews/observations: state the chronology of interviews & home visits

Reports / Files Read:

Discussions with professionals / significant others:

5. CARER(S) SUITABILITY CHECKS

Criminal: Request for check by Australian Federal Police (Attachment C) to be completed by prospective carer(s) and lodged by Regional Office Administration Supervisor – may take several weeks to be returned.

Date lodged:

Date returned:

Issues/decision about suitability:

Medical: Any factors that may affect the capacity of the prospective carer(s) should be identified through a request for a report from the prospective carer's General Practitioner (Attachment D). Care and Protection Services will reimburse the cost of the consultation.

Date lodged:

Date returned:

Issues/decision about suitability:

Referees: Generally not required, ideally the family have nominated the carers. If there are particular concerns eg about parenting, school teachers, sports clubs as well as family friends may be contacted.

Date lodged:

Date returned:

Issues/decision about suitability:

PART B

6. THE CHILD/REN *The focus of the assessment*

Maintain a child-focus at all times throughout the assessment, ie how will each issue/decision impact on the child/ren.

Please address each of these elements – this can be done in narrative form or by following the Q & A outline. Where more than one child separate out comments ie separate page per child.

Name:

Date of Birth:

Age (years):

Any siblings living separately:

Name:

Date of Birth:

Location (placement type & address)

6.1 The child's wishes about prospective placement:

6.2 The current relationship between the child and prospective carer(s): Are they known to each other, is the child aware of their parent(s) relationship with them – is this a strength or difficulty

6.3 Observations of child: May be direct or indirect, minimise intrusion into child's life where possible – could be compiled by a worker familiar with the child (an option for questions 5.7 & 5.8 – child's needs and support network)

6.4 The child's current and probable long term needs: May be available through LAC, discussion with CP worker and others – include health, emotional, educational, developmental and social/relationship needs.

6.5 Support services available to child/ren:

6.6 Potential fit between the child and prospective carer(s): Positives and likely challenges

PART C

7. PROSPECTIVE CAREGIVER(S) & HOUSEHOLD DETAILS

Where there is more than one carer, cover the same issues separately through individual interviews and complete Section 6 a) separately for each carer

a) Family Life

7.1 Family history / recollections of carer's childhood: An adult who cannot remember, minimises or disassociates from their childhood places any child in their care at risk of attachment and developmental difficulties.

- With whom did they grow up
- Difficult times during childhood and how they were managed
- Parental discipline
- Cultural and religious upbringing
- How opinions and feelings were expressed between family members

7.2 Carer as an adult:

- Extent to which prospective carer has adopted childhood experiences in their adult life
- What do they consider as their strengths and weaknesses as a person
If partnered ask how they see their partner's strengths and weaknesses
- Hobbies / interests An indication of energy levels & general happiness/sense of well-being, social connections
- Friends or family that can be relied upon for support
- Employment, finance, accommodation: Level of security or anxiety about family's future
- Health: Ask carer for their rating of their emotional and physical health & a medical report should be sought (Checks Section 5, OCYFS to pay)

7.3 Carer's relationship with partner (if applicable):

- Length of relationship
- Similarities and differences with partner How differences are seen as complementary or resolved if there is a tension
- Is either partner more strongly motivated to offer care to the subject child/ren? A successful placement requires the support and participation of each adult party

7.4 Carer's parenting experience and beliefs:

- Relate experiences in caring for children
- Understanding of impact of child's past trauma on their emotions and behaviour, strategies for dealing with these
- Reality of expectations about child's potential and level of performance eg socially, school & sport

7.5 Motivation of prospective carers: Reactive vs thoughtful offer, type of placement sought (short or long term), existing bonds with child/ren

- Previous experience of providing relative care
- Lifestyle and capacity to prioritise the needs of the child/ren
- Willingness to work with Care and Protection Services and other service providers

7.6 Carer's relationship with child/ren's parents:

- Attitudes towards parents impact on child/ren's security and identity of exposure to positive/negative attitudes or behaviours
- Capacity to facilitate contact
- Willingness to support parent's role in care plan

7.7 Children currently in the family: All children of verbal age should be spoken to (ideally separate from their guardians) and their views about the prospective placement ascertained

Age is an important consideration due to potential displacement and rivalry factors, especially with a child who has high needs.

7.8 Home Environment

In this section describe levels of safety and suitability of the surrounds relevant to the age(s) of the child/ren. Issues such as space and standard of accommodation / furnishings need to be considered in terms of living arrangements being supportive of rather than undermining a child's sense of well-being. Please comment on the following:

- Backyard/Front Yard
- Bedroom
- Firearms
- Fire safety + smoke detectors

- Pets
- Storage of medication & cleaning products
- Safety guards on power points, stairs, oven (if toddlers)
- Toys
- Vehicle
- Water Hazards
- Other Issues eg access to transport, schools

Template only
Do not reproduce

Part D

8. CHILD/REN'S PARENTS

8.1 Current circumstances of parents:

8.2 Current circumstances of father:

8.3 Parent(s)' view of the prospective placement:

8.4 Object of placement, expectations on parents:

8.5 Support services for parents:

8.6 Contact Arrangements: attach schedule if known, responsibilities for transport, specific issues / limitations on behaviour & any special support considerations

8.7 Special Needs Payment Required? Attach Special Needs Subsidy form using template on CHYPS, with all relevant signatures.

Report Completed by:

Name and Signature of Worker:

Qualifications:

Date:

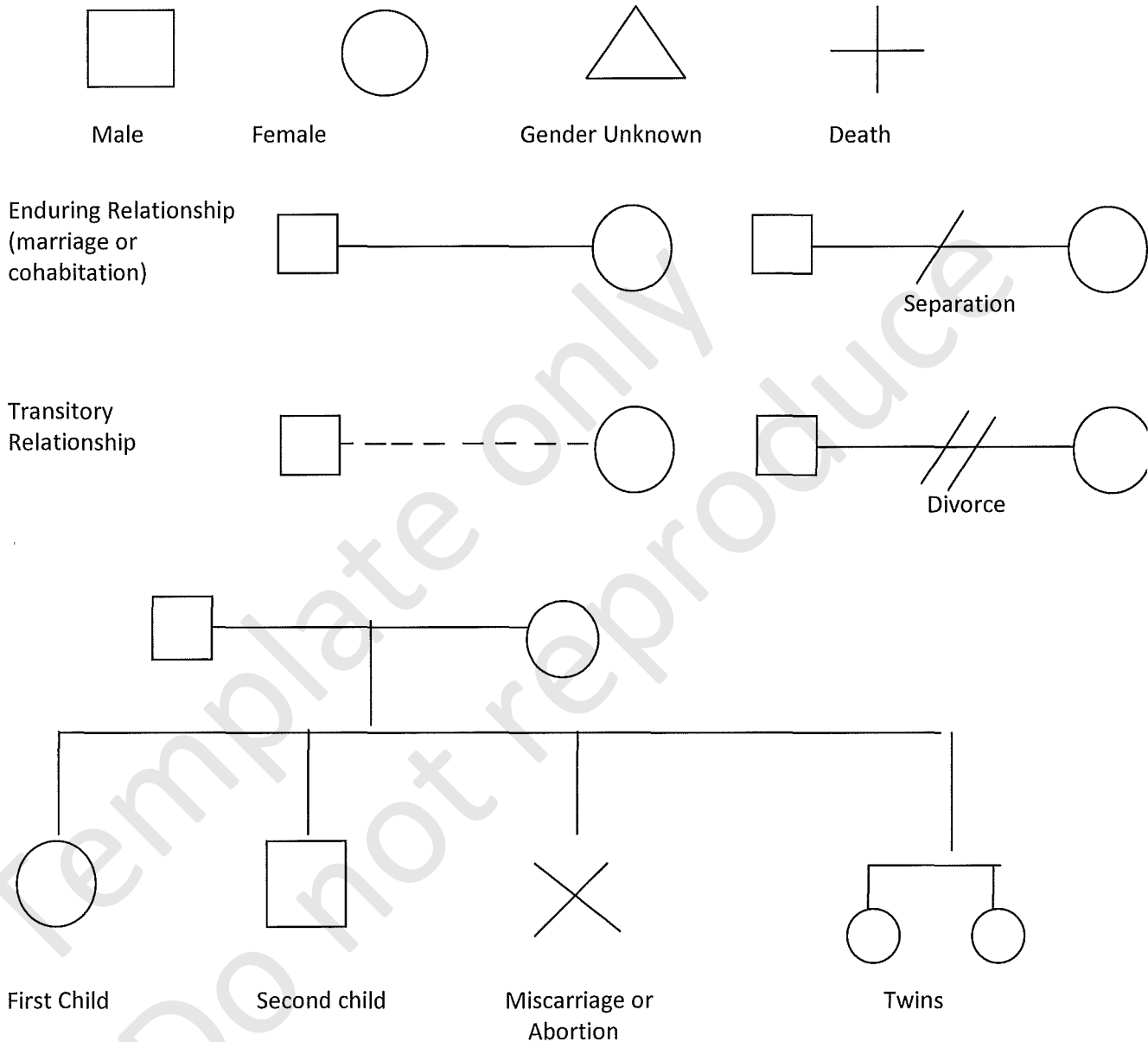
GENOGRAM

ATTACHMENT A

The advantages of a genogram are:-

- It provides an overview of the complexity of constellation in a very concise form.
- It highlights patterns and themes in previous and present generations.

Symbols



A dotted line should be drawn around the people who currently lived in the same house.

A genogram of family tree covering three or more generations may be compiled using these symbols. Other relatives in addition to parents and children can be involved in compiling the genogram. More than one session may be needed if the exercise is used to discuss the family's history in detail and to enter significant dates and other information. Working on a genogram also provides the practitioner with an opportunity to observe family relationships for example how open family members are with each other, how well they respond to each other's needs, how flexible they are and how much they know about each other. It is not just a physical representation, record the narrative about relationships as well.

ECO-MAP

ATTACHMENT B

Think about the various factors* that affect you and the type of relationship you and your family has with each: strong and supportive, weak or stressful. Then, complete the eco-map below. When you are done, you will have a better grasp of the sources of support and stress in your family's life and can start to think about strategies for building on areas that need this.

* eg health, job, finances, home, family and friends, spiritual, hobbies/interests...

—————

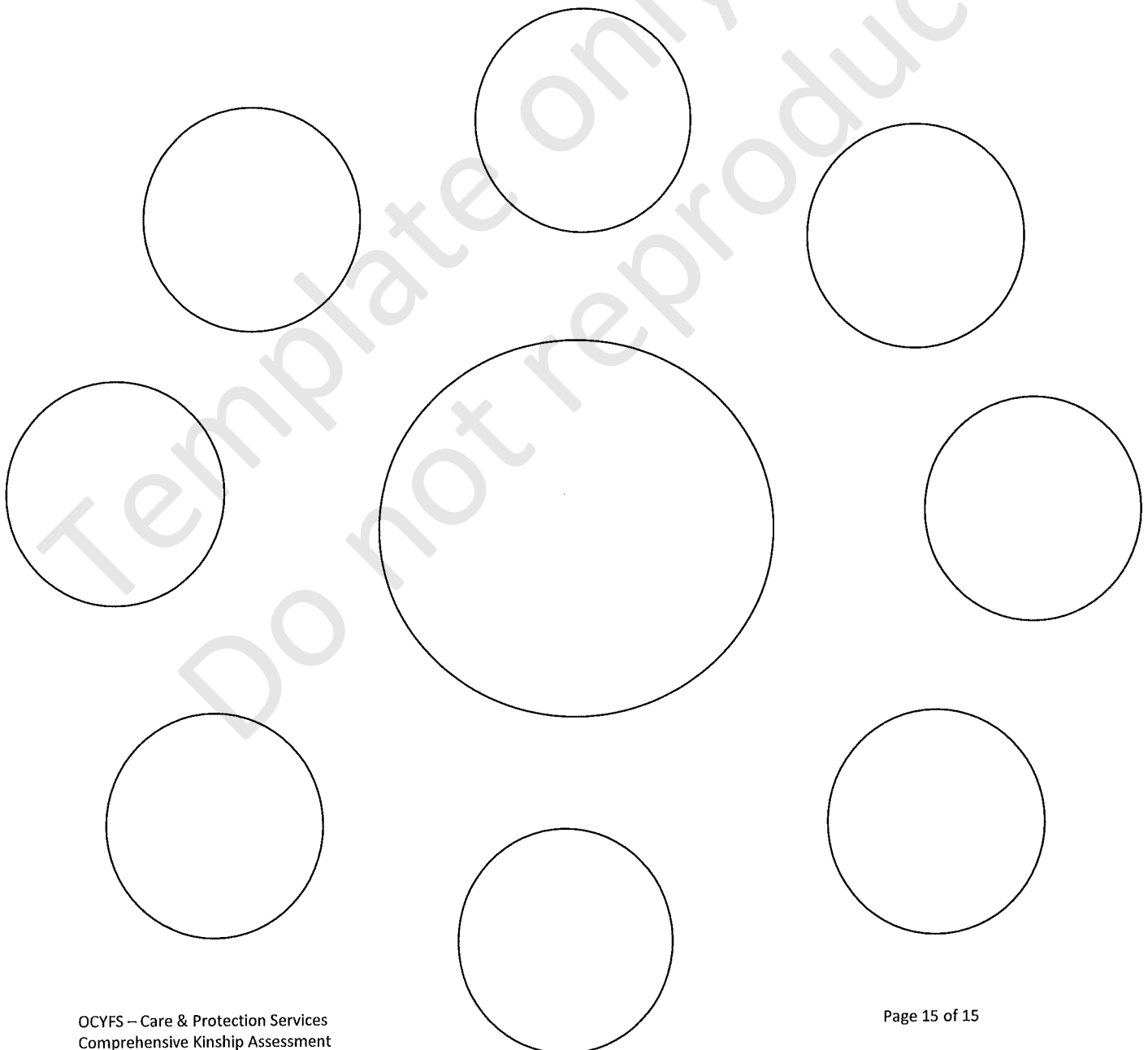
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WWWWWWWWWW

Strong and Supportive Relationship

"Weak Relationship"

"Stressful Relationship"



Used in 2008 Assessments.



dhcs | ACT

department
of disability,
housing &
community
services

community partners

GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

Telephone
13 22 81

www.dhcs.act.gov.au

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Please delete on completing report. **

- (a) Discretion should be applied throughout the interview process – the issues kinship carers face and their motivations are different from foster carers. Research also indicates that many kin carers find the assessment process intrusive to the point of choosing to withdraw.
- (b) However, the purpose of kinship and foster care assessment is the same: to determine the capacity of other adults to provide care to a child who has suffered the trauma of removal from his/her parents' care. The prospective carers may themselves be affected by this crisis and any pain associated with the assessment will require recognition and possibly support.
- (c) Other factors such as age or criminal history that could result in non-approval for unrelated carers may need to be viewed differently: using a strengths perspective to determine if there are others in the family & friendship network who can substitute / provide support in this area.
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3. Kinship care – a social work student project of Jennifer Thorpe, ACT Family Services.



CHECKLIST

Proposed Carer(s) Name	
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Criteria	Suitability	Comments
Pre-existing relationship between prospective carer and child/ren (consider views of both)		
Relationship with child/ren's parents, ability to facilitate contact		
Adaptability to and acceptance of the caring role		
Stability of all relationships in the household		
Understanding of children and young people's needs and ability to respond		
Personal resources of proposed carer and other household members (including carer's children)		
Carer(s)'s support networks		
Carer(s)'s health		
Fit and proper person/s		
Physical home environment		
Willingness to undertake initial and ongoing training		
Understanding of the policies and willingness to work as a team with OCYFS staff and other service providers		
Ranking Scale: A =Acceptable U =Unacceptable		Date of Police Check:
		Recommended: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Additional Comments:

Sign Off

Child Protection Worker: _____
 Team Leader: _____
 Specific Parental Authority submitted . Yes/No
 Administration notified (carer & banking details) Yes/No

Date: _____
 Date: _____
 Date: _____
 Date: _____

PART A

1. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

Date of Report: _____ Assessing Worker: _____

Subject Child/ren's Name(s):

Child 1. _____ Date of Birth: _____

Child 2. _____ Date of Birth: _____

Child 3. _____ Date of Birth: _____

Child 4. _____ Date of Birth: _____

Legal status: _____

Current living arrangements: _____

Child/ren's placement needs: eg: short/medium/long term, level of support (specify special needs), desired outcome (family restoration, permanent)

Child/ren's view of proposed placement: eg: perspective of carer's helpfulness, relationship with other children in home, expectations of placement

Prospective Carer(s) & their relationship to the child/ren: eg: place in family, strength of pre-existing relationship, mutuality of commitment to arrangement

How prospective carers were identified: eg nominated by child, parent or selves, Family Group Conference

Outcome of assessment/ recommendations: eg in brief identify likely strengths and limitations of prospective placement, and support needs if placement to take place

Statistics

Age(s) of carers _____ Relationship of carer to child _____

Marital status _____ No. carer's birth children _____

Indigenous status _____ No. other children in home _____

Income _____ Ages of dependent children _____

2. FAMILY STRUCTURE/ SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS

THE PROSPECTIVE CAREGIVER(S)

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CARERS	CONTACT DETAILS

THE CHILD/REN

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER	LEGAL STATUS	CONTACT DETAILS

BIRTH PARENTS

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS	CONTACT DETAILS

EXTENDED FAMILY / SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	RELATIONSHIP	CONTACT DETAILS

GENOGRAM

- A genogram should be completed as part of the discussions with family members. It can be a useful tool in teasing out the complexities of a family history and relationships see Attachment A for a guide.
- Workers may choose another tool, an eco map illustrated in Attachment B to explore the family's support system

3. CONTEXT OF REQUEST FOR CARE

Provide a **brief background** to the referral, past and current child protection issues, past placement history; indications of whether kinship care may or may not be the preferred option for each of the family members involved.

Is there **LAC** material available to indicate identified needs of child and partnerships to meet these? Yes/No

Court Orders & Care Plan: If applicable attach copies. Comment on capacity of prospective carers to understand and meet commitments eg for family contact.

4. SOURCES OF INFORMATION / SUMMARY OF CONTACT

Interviews/observations: state the chronology of interviews & home visits

Reports / Files Read:

Discussions with professionals / significant others:

5. CARER(S) SUITABILITY CHECKS

Criminal: Request for check by Australian Federal Police (Attachment C) to be completed by prospective carer(s) and lodged by Regional Office Administration Supervisor – may take several weeks to be returned.

Date lodged: _____ Date returned: _____

Issues/decision about suitability: _____

Medical: Any factors that may affect the capacity of the prospective carer(s) should be identified through a request for a report from the prospective carer's General Practitioner (Attachment D). Care and Protection Services will reimburse the cost of the consultation.

Date lodged: _____ Date returned: _____

Issues/decision about suitability: _____

Referees: Generally not required, ideally the family have nominated the carers. If there are particular concerns eg about parenting, school teachers, sports clubs as well as family friends may be contacted see suggested Referees Report Attachment E.

Date lodged: _____ Date returned: _____

Issues/decision about suitability: _____

PART B

5. THE CHILD/REN *The focus of the assessment*

Maintain a child-focus at all times throughout the assessment, ie how will each issue/decision impact on the child/ren.

Please address each of these elements – this can be done in narrative form or by following the Q & A outline. Where more than one child separate out comments ie separate page per child.

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Age (years): _____

Any siblings living separately:

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Whereabouts _____

5.1 The **child's wishes** about prospective placement:

5.2 The **current relationship between the child and prospective carer(s)**: Are they known to each other, is the child aware of their parent(s) relationship with them – is this a strength or difficulty

5.3 **Observations of child**: May be direct or indirect, minimise intrusion into child's life where possible – could be compiled by a worker familiar with the child (an option for questions 5.7 & 5.8 – child's needs and support network)

5.4 The child's current and probable long term needs: May be available through LAC, discussion with CP worker and others – include health, emotional, educational, developmental and social/relationship needs.

5.6 Support services available to child/ren:

5.7 Potential fit between the child and prospective carer(s): Positives and likely challenges

PART C

6. PROSPECTIVE CAREGIVER(S) & HOUSEHOLD DETAILS

Where there is more than one carer, cover the same issues separately through individual interviews and complete Section 6 a) separately for each carer

a) **Family Life**

6.1 Family history / recollections of carer's childhood: An adult who cannot remember, minimises or disassociates from their childhood places any child in their care at risk of attachment and developmental difficulties.

- With whom did they grow up
- Difficult times during childhood and how they were managed
- Parental discipline
- Cultural and religious upbringing
- How opinions and feelings were expressed between family members

6.2 Carer as an adult:

- Extent to which prospective carer has adopted childhood experiences in their adult life
- What do they consider as their strengths and weaknesses as a person If partnered ask how they see their partner's strengths and weaknesses
- Hobbies / interests An indication of energy levels & general happiness/sense of well-being, social connections
- Friends or family that can be relied upon for support
- Employment, finance, accommodation: Level of security or anxiety about family's future
- Health: Ask carer for their rating of their emotional and physical health & a medical report should be sought (Checks Section 5, OCYFS to pay)

6.3 Carer's relationship with partner (if applicable):

- Length of relationship
- Similarities and differences with partner How differences are seen as complementary or resolved if there is a tension
- Is either partner more strongly motivated to offer care to the subject child/ren? A successful placement requires the support and participation of each adult party

6.4 Carer's parenting experience and beliefs:

- Relate experiences in caring for children
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- Reality of expectations about child's potential and level of performance eg socially, school & sport

6.5 Motivation of prospective carers: Reactive vs thoughtful offer, type of placement sought (short or long term), existing bonds with child/ren

- Previous experience of providing relative care

- Lifestyle and capacity to prioritise the needs of the child/ren
- Willingness to work with Care and Protection Services and other service providers

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- Attitudes towards parents impact on child/ren's security and identity of exposure to positive/negative attitudes or behaviours
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Age is an important consideration due to potential displacement and rivalry factors, especially with a child who has high needs.

b) Home Environment

In this section describe levels of safety and suitability of the surrounds relevant to the age(s) of the child/ren. Issues such as space and standard of accommodation / furnishings need to be considered in terms of living arrangements being supportive of rather than undermining a child's sense of well-being. Please comment on the following:

- Backyard/Front Yard
- Bedroom
- Firearms
- Fire safety + smoke detectors
- Pets
- Storage of medication & cleaning products
- Safety guards on power points, stairs, oven (if toddlers)
- Toys
- Vehicle
- Water Hazards
- Other Issues eg access to transport, schools

Part D

7. CHILD/REN'S PARENTS

7.1 Current circumstances of parents:

7.2 Current circumstances of father:

7.3 Parent(s)' view of the prospective placement:

7.4 Object of placement, expectations on parents:

7.5 Support services for parents:

7.4 Contact Arrangements: attach schedule if known, responsibilities for transport, specific issues / limitations on behaviour & any special support considerations

Report Completed by: _____

Name and Signature of Worker: _____

Qualifications: _____

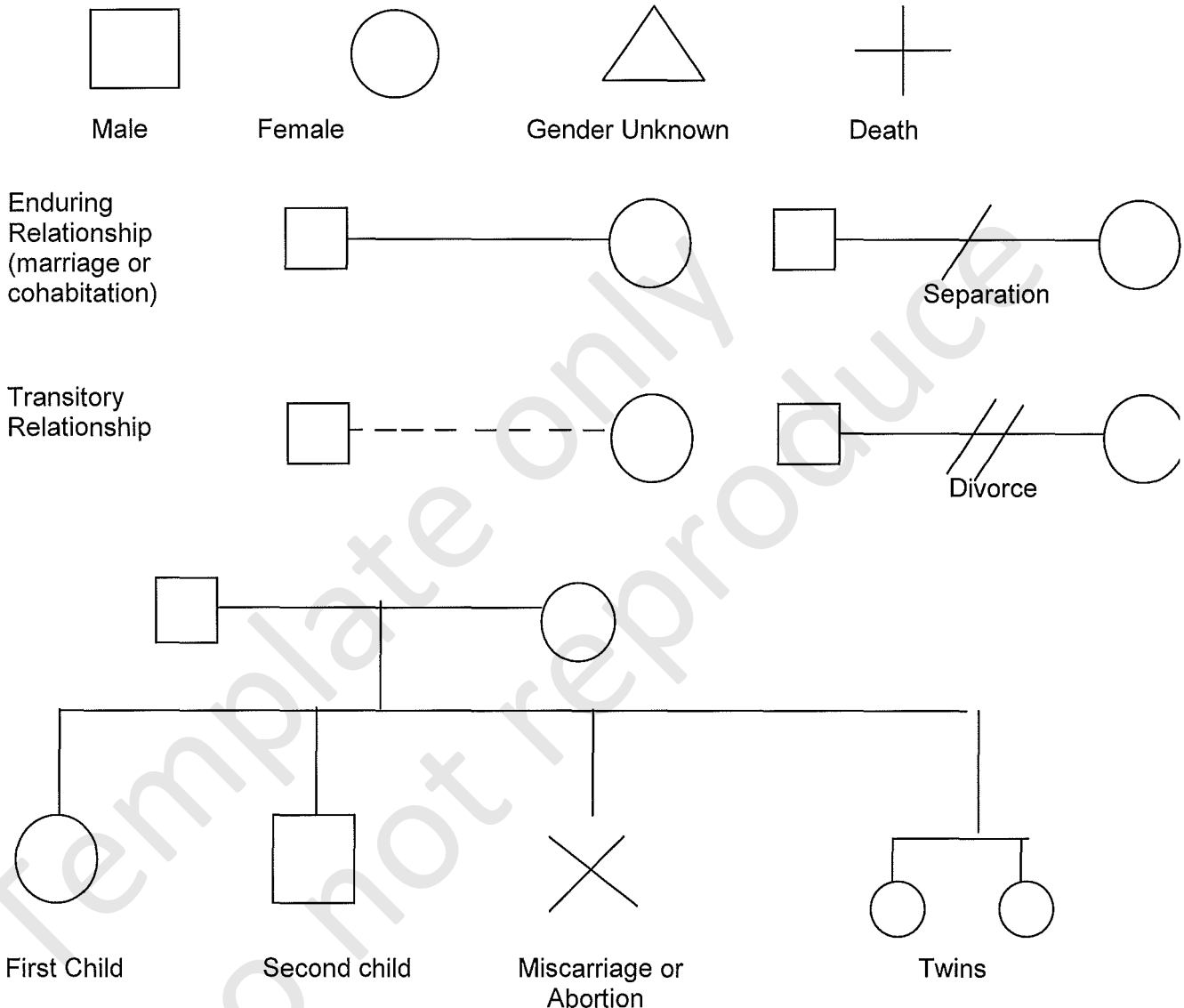
Date: _____

GENOGRAM

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- It provides an overview of the complexity of constellation in a very concise form.
- It highlights patterns and themes in previous and present generations.

Symbols



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Eco-Map

Attachment B

Think about the various factors* that affect you and the type of relationship you and your family has with each: strong and supportive, weak or stressful. Then, complete the eco-map below. When you are done, you will have a better grasp of the sources of support and stress in your family's life and can start to think about strategies for building on areas that need this.

* eg health, job, finances, home, family and friends, spiritual, hobbies/interests...

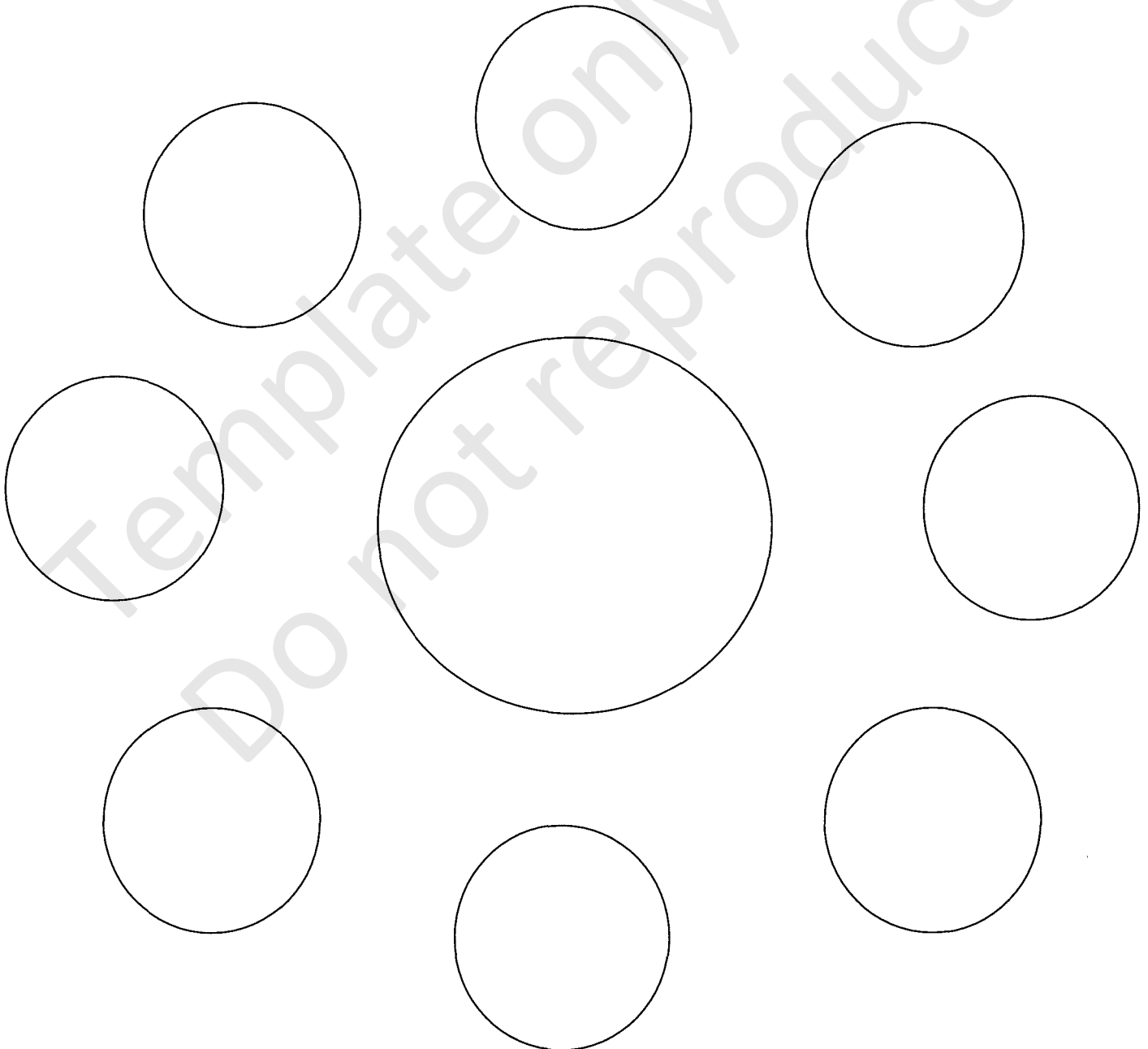


Strong and Supportive Relationship

"Weak Relationship"

"Stressful Relationship"

WWWWWWWWWWWW



Form 3.6.5

ASSESSMENT FOR SPECIAL NEEDS SUBSIDY

This form is to be used for the assessment of a child for the Special Needs Subsidy. It does not replace the "Placement and Assessment/Approval of Care Subsidy" form. Please ensure **both** forms are completed if the child needs to be assessed for the Special Needs Subsidy.

(Please attach current report, case plan and any applicable professional assessment reports.)

CHILD'S NAME: DATE OF BIRTH:

FILE NO.:

NATURE OF DIAGNOSED PHYSICAL DISABILITY/BEHAVIOURAL
DISTURBANCE

ASSESSMENT OF ADDITIONAL SUPPORT, SUPERVISION AND CARE REQUIRED (Please tick appropriate box)

Physical Care: ' Minimal ' Mild ' Moderate ' Severe '
Intensive

Supervision & Behaviour Management: ' Minimal ' Mild ' Moderate
' Severe ' Intensive

Auxiliary Care & Expenses: ' Minimal ' Mild ' Moderate '
Severe ' Intensive

Stress and Restriction of Activities: ' Minimal ' Mild ' Moderate '
Severe ' Intensive

Other Special Circumstances: ' Minimal ' Mild ' Moderate '
Severe ' Intensive

Future Prognosis:

Community Resources:

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Recommended Subsidy Level:

AGREEMENT BY SUBSTITUTE CARE PROGRAM?

YES/NO

If No, Please attach comments/report from Program worker

Workers Name: Unit: Date:

Officer In Charge: Date:

Manager, Child Protection Services: Date: