

## Child Strengths

This domain describes the assets of the child that can be used to advance healthy development. It is important to remember that strengths are NOT the opposite of needs. Increasing a child’s strengths while also addressing his or her behavioral/emotional needs leads to better functioning, and better outcomes, than does focusing just on the child’s needs. Identifying areas where strengths can be built is a significant element of service planning.

In these items the ‘best’ assets and resources available to the child are rated based on how accessible and useful those strengths are. These are the only items that use the Strength Rating Scale with action levels.

<p><b>For Child Strengths, the following categories and action levels are used:</b></p> <p>0 = Well-developed or centerpiece strength; may be used as a protective factor and a centerpiece of a strength-based plan.</p> <p>1 = A domain where a useful strength is evident but require some effort to maximize the strength. Strength might be used and built upon in treatment.</p> <p>2 = A domain where strengths have been identified but require significant strength building efforts before it can be effectively utilized as part of a plan.</p> <p>3 = A domain in which no current strength is identified; efforts are needed to identify potential strengths.</p>
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**Question to Consider for this Domain:** What are the child’s assets that can be used in treatment planning to support healthy development? **Please rate the highest level from the past 30 days.**

**21. FAMILY SUPPORT** - This item refers to the presence of a sense of family identity as well as love and communication among family members. Even families who are struggling often have a firm foundation that consists of a positive sense of family and strong underlying love and commitment to each other. These are the constructs this strength is intended to identify. As with Family Relationships, the definition of family comes from the child’s perspective (i.e., who the child describes as his/her family). If you do not know this information, then we recommend a definition of family that includes biological/adoptive relatives and their significant others with whom the child is still in contact.

Questions to Consider	Ratings & Definitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Does the child have good relationships with any family member?</li> <li>→ Is there a family member that the child can go to in time of need for support? That can advocate for the child?</li> <li>→ Is there potential to develop positive family relationships?</li> </ul>	<p><b>0</b> Significant family strengths. This level indicates a family with much love and respect for one another. Family members are central in each other’s lives. Child is fully included in family activities. There is at least one family member who has a strong loving relationship with the child and is able to provide significant emotional or concrete support.</p> <hr/> <p><b>1</b> Moderate level of family strengths. This level indicates a loving family with generally good communication and ability to enjoy each other’s company. There may be some problems between family members. There is at least one family member with a strong loving relationship who is able to provide limited emotional or concrete support to the child</p> <hr/> <p><b>2</b> Mild level of family strengths. Family is able to communicate and participate in each other’s lives, but support that child gets from family members is less than child needs. Such supportive relationships need to be developed.</p> <hr/> <p><b>3</b> This level indicates a child with no known family strengths. There are no known family members, or there are no family members who are providing emotional/relational support to the child.</p>

**22. INTERPERSONAL** - This item is used to identify a child’s social and relationship skills. Interpersonal skills are rated independently of Social Functioning because a child can have social skills but still struggle in his or her relationships at a particular point in time. This strength indicates an ability to make and maintain long-standing relationships.

**Questions to Consider**

- Does the child have the trait ability to make friends?
- Do you feel that the child is pleasant and likeable?
- Do adults or other children like him/her?

**Ratings & Definitions**

- 0** Significant interpersonal strengths. Child has well-developed interpersonal skills and friends. Child is seen as well liked by others and has significant ability to form and maintain positive relationships.
- 1** Moderate level of interpersonal strengths. Child has good interpersonal skills and has shown the ability to develop healthy friendships
- 2** Mild level of interpersonal strengths. Child has some social skills that facilitate positive relationships with others but needs assistance in developing good interpersonal skills and/or healthy friendships.
- 3** Child needs significant help in developing interpersonal skills and healthy friendships. Child currently does not have any friends nor has s/he had any friends in the past. Child does not have positive relationships with adults.

**23. ADAPTABILITY** Some children move from one environment or activity to another smoothly. Others struggle with any such changes. This item rates how well a child can adjust in times of transition. A toddler who cries when transitioning from one activity to another but is able to make the transition with the support of a supervising adult would be rated ‘1.’

**Questions to Consider**

- Can child easily and willingly transition between activities?
- Does child require little support to adapt to changes in activities and schedules or is this a source of challenge for your child?

**Ratings & Definitions**

- 0** Child has a strong ability to adjust to changes and transitions.
- 1** Child has some ability to adjust to changes and transitions and when challenged, the infant/child is successful with support from a supervising adult.
- 2** Child has difficulties much of the time adjusting to changes and transitions even with caregiver support.
- 3** Child has difficulties most of the time coping with changes and transitions. Adults are minimally able to impact child’s difficulties in this area.

**24. PERSISTENCE** - This item rates the child’s ability to keep trying a new task/skill, even when it is difficult’.

**Questions to Consider**

- Does child show grit / ability to hang in there even when frustrated by a challenging task/game?
- Does child routinely require adult support in trying a new game/skill/activity that does not come easily at first?

**Ratings & Definitions**

- 0** Infant/child has a strong ability to continue an activity when challenged or meeting obstacles.
- 1** Infant/child has some ability to continue an activity that is challenging. Adults can assist a child to continue attempting the task or activity.
- 2** Child has limited ability to continue an activity that is challenging and adults are only sometimes able to assist the infant/child in this area.
- 3** Child has difficulties most of the time coping with challenging tasks. Support from adults minimally impacts the child’s ability to demonstrate persistence.

**25. PLAYFULNESS** - This rating describes the child's enjoyment of play alone and with others.

**Questions to Consider**

- How can you tell when your child is enjoying his or her playtime?
- Does child often avoid play or isolate during cooperative play?

**Ratings & Definitions**

- 0** This level indicates a child with substantial ability to play with self and others. Child enjoys play, and if old enough, regularly engages in symbolic and means-end play. If still an infant, child displays changing facial expressions in response to different play objects.
- 1** This level indicates a child with good play abilities. Child may enjoy play only with self or only with others, or may enjoy play with a limited selection of toys.
- 2** This level indicates a child with limited ability to enjoy play. Child may remain preoccupied with other children or adults to the exclusion of engaging in play, or may exhibit impoverished or unimaginative play.
- 3** This level indicates a child who has significant difficulty with play both by his/her self and with others. Child does not engage in symbolic or means-end play, although he or she will handle and manipulate toys.

**26. CREATIVITY/IMAGINATION** - This item rates the child's ability to problems solve and develop new ideas.

**Questions to Consider**

- Does your child enthusiastically engage in creative activities or find creative solutions to problems
- Has a teacher or childcare worker expressed that your child is skilled in this area?

**Ratings & Definitions**

- 0** Significant level of creativity/imagination. The child consistently demonstrates strong skills in this area.
- 1** Moderate level of creativity/imagination. The child usually demonstrates good skills in creativity/imagination but continues to need development in this area.
- 2** Mild level of creativity/imagination. The child usually demonstrates only marginal skills in creativity/imagination but can be encouraged in this area by adults.
- 3** This level indicates a child with no known skills in creativity/imagination. Adults are minimally able to impact child's skills in this area.

**27. CURIOSITY** - This rating describes the child's self-initiated efforts to discover his/her world. This item rates whether the child is interested in his/her surroundings and in learning and experiencing new things.

**Questions to Consider**

- Does your child seek out new experiences or actively explore new objects?
- Does your child avoid new objects or experiences, looking away or showing fear/anxiety?

**Ratings & Definitions**

- 0** This level indicates a child with exceptional curiosity. Infants display mouthing and banging of objects within grasp; older children crawl or walk to objects of interest.
- 1** This level indicates a child with good curiosity. An ambulatory child who does not walk to interesting objects, but who will actively explore them when presented to him/her, would be rated here
- 2** This level indicates a child with limited curiosity. Child may be hesitant to seek out new information or environments, or reluctant to explore even presented objects.
- 3** This level indicates a child with very limited or no observable curiosity. Child may seem frightened of new information or environments.

**28. RELATIONSHIP PERMANENCE** - This rating refers to the stability and consistency of significant relationships in the child's life. This includes parents and other family members but may also include other adults or peers.

**Questions to Consider**

- What relationships with adults have lasted throughout the child's lifetime?
- What contact does the child have with both parents?
- What relatives has s/he maintained long-lasting relationships with?

**Ratings & Definitions**

- 0** This level indicates a child who has very stable relationships. Family members, friends, and community have been stable for most of his/her life and are likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. Child is involved with both parents.
- 1** This level indicates a child who has had stable relationships but there is some concern about instability in the near future (one year) due to transitions, illness, or age. A stable relationship with only one parent may be rated here.
- 2** This level indicates a child who has had at least one stable relationship over his/her lifetime but has experienced other instability through factors such as divorce, moving, removal from home, and death.
- 3** This level indicates a child who does not have any stability in relationships. Family finding and/or adoption must be considered.

**29. NATURAL SUPPORTS** - Refers to unpaid helpers in the child's natural environment. All family members and paid caregivers are excluded.

**Questions to Consider**

- Does the child have non-family members in his/her life that are positive influences and provide support?

**Ratings & Definitions**

- 0** Child has significant natural supports that contribute to helping support the child's healthy development.
- 1** Child has identified natural supports that provide some assistance in supporting the child's healthy development.
- 2** Child has some identified natural supports however s/he is not actively contributing to the child's healthy development.
- 3** Child has no known natural supports (outside of family and paid caregivers).