



Children/Teen Programming and Supporting Parents Capacity Assessment for DV/SV Programs

Important Notes for Assessment:

- **n/a** column is primarily meant for non-direct service staff to use if they feel unable to answer a direct service focused question or for non-shelter programs when answering shelter questions.
- **Language:** 'Parent' refers to survivor/non-offending parent/guardian

I. Personal Assessment

The four questions on Part I are designed for advocates to evaluate their own individual beliefs and strengths, to identify areas on which to reflect, and for professional development and growth. This is for your personal use and will remain anonymous. This tool is intended to help you grow and is meant for honest personal reflection.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

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Consider your beliefs and current level of knowledge, skill and readiness for each topic. Please mark each statement according to the following scale.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

								Comments
1. Working with Children, Teens and Families:								
a. I feel comfortable working with children.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
b. I feel comfortable working with parents.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
c. I think all staff should be able to work with children and teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
d. I think all staff should be able to support parents.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
e. I feel comfortable with the idea that children/teens have individual and complicated feelings about their other parent.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
f. I can support children/teens and their non-offending parent around issues of visitation.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
g. I think all staff should have knowledge about nonviolent parenting approaches.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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Children and Supporting Parents DV/SV Program Assessments

h. I could use some more training on child advocacy (including child sexual abuse), child development, and the impact of trauma on children.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
i. I could use some more training on how to support parents around issues of non-violent parenting approaches and the impact of domestic and sexual violence on their children.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
j. I am able to support nonviolent parenting approaches with parents and families.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
k. I feel supported in strategizing about how to respond to child abuse issues.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
l. I receive adequate supervision which includes opportunities for reflection on the challenges of working with children, teens and families.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
m. I know how to get support in my agency if I am having strong reactions (like anger, frustration or sadness) to a parent/parenting behavior <u>or</u> to a child/teen or their behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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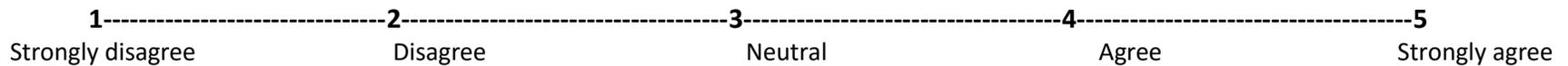
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2. What do you feel your strengths are in this section?

3. Where do you feel challenged?

4. Personal action steps for this section:



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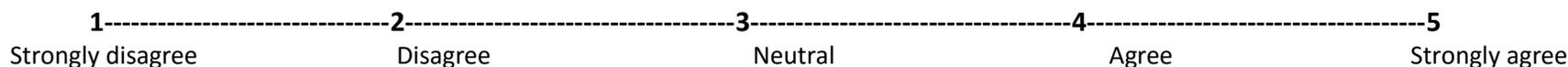
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II. Organizational Assessment

In each of the areas of Part II, consider your agency’s practices, policies, documentation, training, and organizational culture. Please mark each statement from 1 (agency takes no action or statement is not true) to 5 (agency takes action, or statement is true) for the agency’s knowledge of and response to children, teens, and non-offending parents. Space is provided for your comments and notes.



1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree/the statement is never true	Disagree	Neutral/the statement is sometimes true	Agree	Strongly agree/the statement is always true
The agency does <u>not</u> have this as a philosophy or hasn’t thought about it		The agency has this an <i>informal</i> philosophy or has engaged in this action <i>informally</i>		This is our agency’s philosophy.
We haven’t taken any action yet		We have some knowledge but not enough		We feel confident and comfortable here
		We sometimes try but sometimes forget to act		The agency does intentional work on this topic, has a plan



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A. Values: Talking about our beliefs, philosophy, and agreements

							Comments
1. Children and Teen Program Readiness:							
a. Our staff has had conversations about ageism and adultism.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
b. <u>All</u> staff members feel comfortable working with children and teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
c. Our program considers children and teens direct recipients of our services.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
d. We have a consistent message, common goal or overarching guideline about treatment of children and teens in our spaces.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
e. We approach children/teen’s needs as both separate and connected to their parents’.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
f. We believe that <u>all</u> staff should build capacity in child advocacy (including child sexual abuse), the impact of trauma on children and child development.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
g. We apply our survivor centered/empowerment model in our work with children and teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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Children and Supporting Parents DV/SV Program Assessments

h. We believe that children/teens deserve the highest degree of confidentiality possible.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
i. We are clear about how we handle information sharing, confidentiality and parental consent for children and teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
j. We have talked about visitation, supervised visitation, supporting non offending parents and children in their individual feelings about visitation issues.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
k. Our program goes beyond providing respite/child care for parents and focuses on providing direct advocacy and support for children and teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
l. We have discussed trauma informed advocacy practices and how we might incorporate them into our work with children, teens, and parents.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
m. We believe that supporting the relationships between children/teens, non-offending parents, other supportive adults and siblings is part of our work.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
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Shelter							
a. We have talked about and agree on how to handle requests of shelter involving teen boy family members in an attempt to offer safety and programs for this population	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
b. We provide enough autonomy and independence for older children in shelter.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
c. We are committed to providing consistent child and teen focused advocacy and support to children/teens who reside in shelter.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							

							Comments
2. Parenting:							
a. We have talked about our approach to supporting nonviolent parenting and treatment of children/teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
b. <u>All</u> staff members understand the challenges involved in parenting when DV and/or SV exists and believe that	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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parents deserve respectful support that meets them <i>where they are</i> as parents.							
c. Our program supports parents' authority to make decisions and actively parent in our environments.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							
Shelter							
a. We have a role in supporting parents in shelter.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
b. We have a role in supporting nonviolent parenting approaches in shelter.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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								Comments
3. Child Abuse and Reporting:								
a. <u>All</u> staff understand their mandates regarding child abuse reporting.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
b. We have talked about how to respond to situations where child abuse occurs in shelter or in our other spaces.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
c. We have talked about our programmatic challenges given the overlap of child abuse and domestic violence. (DV)	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
d. We have talked about our programmatic challenges regarding child sexual abuse and teen sexual violence and child abuse reporting. (SV)	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
Comments:								

1-----**2**-----**3**-----**4**-----**5**
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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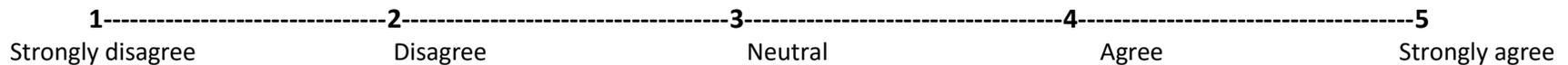
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Values: Action Steps

4. What are the areas that you have identified above in which your organization shows strength?

5. What are the areas that you have identified above in which your organization has opportunities for growth?

6. How can the agency use its strengths to enhance the areas identified as growth opportunities?



B. Policies: Reflecting best practices

								Comments
1. Overarching Policies:								
a. Our mission statement includes a specific commitment to children/teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
b. Our program allocates sufficient resources (financial, staff/volunteer time, etc.) to providing direct services to children and teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
c. Our program has a clear philosophical statement or policy about nonviolent treatment of children and teens in shelter and other spaces.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
d. Our program has a well-articulated statement about provision of services to children and teens which includes survivor centered/empowerment model language.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
e. The safety of non-offending parents and children/teens primary in our decision making.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
Comments:								

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

								Comments
2. Staff Recruiting and Hiring Practices:								
a. When we recruit for <u>all</u> positions, we seek experience, knowledge, and competency regarding working with children, teens and families.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
b. All position interviews include questions about experience, knowledge, and competency regarding working with children/teens and supporting parents.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
Comments:								

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

								Comments
3. Staff Development and Support:								
a. <u>All</u> staff trained in child development, child advocacy, nonviolent treatment of children/teens and supporting parents.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
b. <u>All</u> staff are trained in providing trauma informed services with some focus on how trauma impacts children and brain development.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
c. Our program provides adequate supervision for all advocates which includes opportunities for reflection on the challenges of working with children, teens and families.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
Comments:								

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

									Comments
4. Program Policies:									
a. We have clear policies about information sharing, confidentiality and parental consent for children/teens which allow children/teens the most confidentiality possible.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
b. We have policies that address not using family members as language or sign language interpreters - including children/teens not interpreting for parents and parents not interpreting for children/teens in advocacy situations.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
Comments:									
Shelter									
a. Our shelter has policies which allow for teen autonomy, protected space, and privileges.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
b. Our policies allow for teen boys to reside in shelter.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
c. Our shelter guidelines are empowering for both children/teens and parents and are written to reduce the	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			

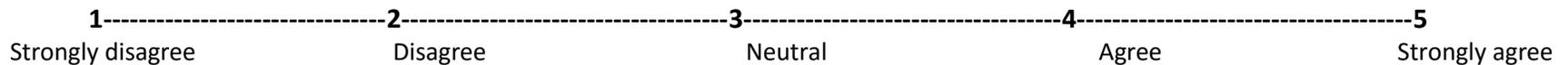
1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

Policies: Action Steps

6. What are the areas that you have identified above in which your organization shows strength?

7. What are the areas that you have identified above in which your organization has opportunities for growth?

8. How can the agency use its strengths to enhance the areas identified as growth opportunities?



C. Practice: Reflecting best practices

								Comments
1. General:								
a. Our program strives to balance advocacy with children/teens and parents both as individuals and together as families.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
b. We have clear lines of communication, coordination, and collaboration between children/teen advocates and adult focused advocates.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
c. Our office/community spaces are welcoming to children, teens and families.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
d. <u>All</u> staff members have training and skills to help strengthen, heal and strengthen parent, child, and sibling relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
e. We consider cultural values and practices related to violence, discipline, and mental health within families.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
f. <u>All</u> staff have skills and knowledge to work with children, teens and families who are marginalized (LGBTQ,	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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children/teens with disabilities, non-traditional families, families of non-dominant cultures, etc.).							
g. <u>All</u> staff have training in nonviolent discipline and parenting approaches and skills to support parents.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
h. Our practices are trauma informed.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
i. We engage language and sign language interpreting services to avoid family members' acting as interpreters (children/teens not interpreting for parents and parents not interpreting for children/teens in advocacy situations).	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							
Shelter							
a. Parents and children/teens have places to play together, have time alone, and cook and eat together.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
b. We have teen friendly spaces in shelter.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

									Comments
2. With Children and Teens:									
Our program supports children/teen’s healing by:									
a. Supporting strong bonds between children/teens, non-offending parents, other adults, and siblings.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
b. Providing an environment of safety for children/teens.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
c. Supporting environments that are structured and predictable.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
d. Connecting children/teens and families with their communities and support systems.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
e. Creating safe spaces for children and teens to express their feelings, be heard and understood.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
f. Allowing for children/teens to not feel responsible for the care of adults.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			
g. Providing access to advocacy, counseling and support groups.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a			

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
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Children and Supporting Parents DV/SV Program Assessments

h. Supporting decisions regarding contact with noncustodial parent if safe and doesn't interfere with healing.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
i. We create programs for teens which consider their individual needs and concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
j. We have clear practices about sharing children and teen's information, and parental consent for services that allow children and teens the most confidentiality and decision making possible.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							
Shelter							
a. We allow for teen autonomy, protected space, and privileges.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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								Comments
3. With Parents:								
a. Staff are available to support parents and families in informal ways (e.g., casual conversations, coordinating recreation, sharing food, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
b. Our program supports parents in reclaiming and (re)defining their parenting and family culture while offering resources and support.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
c. Staff offer respectful support to parents <i>where they are</i> , understanding the challenges involved in parenting when DV and/or SV exists.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
d. Our program practices support parents' authority to make decisions and actively parent in our environments.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
e. <u>All</u> staff are prepared to support non-offending parents who want their children to visit their other parent, provide information on impacts, options and safety.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
f. <u>All</u> staff are able to provide information to parents about the impact that batterers, sexual violence and/or trauma have on children/teens and ways to support children/teen's healing.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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g. <u>All</u> staff are able to discuss with non-offending parents the impact that batterers have had on their parenting, the stressors related to parenting in shelter and beyond, and strategize parenting supports. (DV)	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
h. <u>All</u> staff are able to support parents whose child/teen has been a victim of sexual violence. (SV)	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							
Shelter							
a. Our program empowers non-offending parents to care for their children without unnecessary rules and unnatural structures.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
Comments:							

1-----**2**-----**3**-----**4**-----**5**
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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								Comments
4. Child Abuse and Reporting:								
a. Our child abuse reporting policies and protocols are articulated to both adult and child service users in appropriate ways at the onset of services.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
b. Our program works closely with non-offending parents when reporting child abuse whenever possible.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		
Comments:								

								Comments
5. Community Connections:								
a. We have established connections and referral protocols with community programs and mental health providers that will support children and teens and promote resilience and healing.	1	2	3	4	5	n/a		

1-----**2**-----**3**-----**4**-----**5**
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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<p>b. We have an established relationship with our local child welfare office (<i>and with our DV Unit Specialist if applicable</i>) which allows communication about supporting the safety of children as well as adult victims of domestic violence and ensures that children are not removed from non-abusive parents. (DV)</p>	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
<p>c. We have sufficient understanding and knowledge about the child welfare system to enable the provision of effective systems advocacy for families involved with child welfare.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	n/a	
<p>Comments:</p>							

1-----**2**-----**3**-----**4**-----**5**
 Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

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