

The Erie County Family Council

Family Development Matrix

How The Matrix Works. . .

- The Family Development Matrix (i.e., the Matrix) is based on 13 **Outcome Areas**:
 - Shelter
 - Food & Clothing
 - Transportation & Mobility
 - Health & Safety
 - Social & Emotional Health
 - Finances
 - Family Relations
 - Community Relations
 - Adult Education & Employment
 - Children's Education & Development
 - Children's Care & Safety
 - Youth Services
 - Immigration & Resettlement.

- The **Outcome Areas** are based on life domains and consist of five **Status Levels**.

- Each **Status Level** corresponds with the various stages of life a family may be experiencing. While some areas may be in need of immediate assistance (i.e., **Risk Levels**) other parts of the family's life may be flourishing (i.e., **Growth Levels**).

- The Matrix provides a basis for a relationship between families and service providers. It also contributes to consistency in quality service delivery.

- The family is assessed in each **Outcome Area** as applicable to their self-identified needs.

- A family's progress is tracked over time in each of the applicable **Outcome Areas** as they receive services.

- The Matrix quantifies a family's development. Creating a visual image of the family's growth over time.

- This allows the family and service coordinator to identify the family's successes as well as areas in need of further attention and assistance; consequently, allowing service coordination to be more targeted giving the family accurate assistance.

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Establishing a Baseline with the Family. . .

- After an initial relationship with the family is established (i.e., second or third visit/meeting), the service coordinator should explain the **Map** to the family.
- The **Map** is the one-page diagram of all the **Outcome Areas** and their corresponding **General Indicators**.
- Then, the family and the service coordinator should work together to identify the **Outcome Areas** the family wishes to work on based on their need(s) and goals.
- When discussing an **Outcome Area**, be sure to thoroughly explain the **General Indicators** before delving into the **Status Levels**.
- The first time the Family Development Matrix is used, the family's **Baseline Scores** (i.e., their **Status Levels**) are established in the various **Outcome Areas**.
- IMPORTANT: It is not necessary to complete the entire Matrix assessment during the initial meeting/visit between the service coordinator and family.
- IMPORTANT: Nor is it necessary to complete the entire Matrix assessment during one visit/meeting.
- However, it is important to record the date of each **Baseline Assessment** once it is established with a family.
- The **Baseline Assessment** is the initial **Status Level** that corresponds with the family's life or current condition in an **Outcome Area**.
- When determining a **Status Level**, use the **Best-Fit Rule**. The **Best-Fit Rule** refers to selecting a status level that best fits the family's current condition. Every aspect of the status level may not exactly correspond to the family's current condition; but rather, they generally can identify with the majority of indicators within the status level.
- IMPORTANT: When determining **Status Levels**, the service coordinator should be working in conjunction with the family.
- IMPORTANT: Be careful not to inflate or underscore a family's status level.
- The Matrix is not an assessment tool used to issue judgment against the family; it is designed to help the family during their time of need.

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What Each Status Level Means. . .

- The family is assessed in each **Outcome Area** as applicable to their self-identified needs.
- TIP: If a family feels their entire life is in total crisis, it is often useful to use the entire Matrix. By using each of the **Outcome Areas** rather than merely looking at their risk areas, the service coordinator can demonstrate areas of strength as well as areas in need of assistance.
- Every **Outcome Area** consists of a 5-point scale that assesses a family's **Status Level**.
- The **Status Levels** corresponds with the various stages of life a family may be experiencing. While some areas may be in need of immediate assistance (i.e., **Risk Levels**) other parts of the family's life may be flourishing (i.e., **Growth Levels**).

Growth Levels	Thriving: Score 5 Prevention, early intervention & sustain family system.
	Self-Sufficient: Score 4 Monitoring to maintain family.
	Stable: Score 3 Family establishes functional level with consistent recurring support.
Risk Levels	At-Risk/Vulnerable: Score 2 Intervention required preventing further deterioration.
	In-Crisis: Score 1 Requires immediate intervention to protect the individual or family

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More on the Status Levels. . .

Thriving

The family systems are strong, healthy and fully functional in this outcome area. The family is achieving its goals. ***Growth Level – Score 5***

Safe/Self Sufficient

The family is strong and had made significant progress in improving its circumstances. It is generally secure as a result of its own efforts. The family has a clear vision of its ultimate goals. Intervention is resource-oriented and motivation is from within. ***Growth Level - Score 4***

Stable

The Family no longer is in danger, and the family is ready and willing to change. Planning occurs for its future. Supportive services are provided to assist the family in implementing their plans. ***Growth Level – Score 3***

At-Risk/Vulnerable

The Family is secure from immediate threats to health and safety, but has not yet developed or committed to strategies/plans for long-term growth and change. Continuing safety-net intervention provides a platform on which the family can build its plans from improving circumstances. ***Risk Level – Score 2***

In-Crisis

The Family cannot meet its needs. They are unwilling or unable to work toward positive change. The Family systems have collapsed or are in immediate danger of collapse. Strong outside intervention required to move family to “At-Risk” level. ***Risk Level – Score 1***

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Updating the Matrix with the Family. . .

- Update the Matrix on a *monthly* basis.
- Only update the outcome areas that the family has identified as areas they wished to work on. Leave all other **Outcome Areas** blank.
- **Do not** assess the family's status level in outcome areas they have not identified need. Leave those **Outcome Areas** blank.
- Preferably, update the Matrix in a face-to-face meeting with the family.
- **IMPORTANT:** If the service coordinator does not have a scheduled face-to-face meeting with the family or the family is not available to meet during any given month, the service coordinator should do one of the following:
 - Update the family's **Status Level** based on their progress to date, *or*
 - If the service coordinator is not aware of the family's progress to date, carry over the number from the previous month.

Adding New Outcome Areas with the Family. . .

- Keep in mind, new **Outcome Area(s)** can be added as needed by the **family** to work on in addition to the initial **Outcome Areas**.
- If the family identifies a new **Outcome Area(s)**, proceed through the assessment, note the date of the **Baseline Assessment**, and record the corresponding **Status Level**.
- The following month, update the new **Outcome Area(s)** with the rest of the **Outcome Areas** accordingly in the corresponding month.

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IFSP Reminders to Keep in Mind when Working with the Matrix. . .

- The family is in control of the IFSP - the family needs to commit to the plan in order to have it be successful.
- The family and the service coordinator should work together to identify the Outcome Areas the family wishes to work on based on their need(s) and goals. When determining Status Levels, the service coordinator should be working in conjunction with the family.
- The intensity of service coordination can vary in intensity depending on the family's needs.
- Do not walk in with a preconceived notion of what a family needs.
- The Matrix is not an assessment tool used to issue judgment against the family; it is designed to help the family during their time of need.
- Work to enhance the capacity of families to meet their own needs.
- By giving families the skills to cope with their problems enables them to gain effective control over their lives.
- Remember to put together the family's ***Dream Team*** - those people who will assist the family's support system.
- If you interview a family rather than have a conversation, he/she will feel you are doing a job. If you have a conversation, they will know & feel you actually care.