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Family Map

Family map captures CURRENT household situation. Helps the family and worker to focus on how the family defines ‘family members.’

- Minimal Connection
- Typical Connection
- Strong Connection
- Overly Close Connection
- Unacknowledged Conflict
- Mild Conflict
- Moderate Conflict
- Heavy Conflict
- Nature of Relationship is Unknown
Eco-Map

An eco-map is a visual depiction of a family’s connections to the external world. It is a useful tool for assessing a family’s CURRENT social and community relationships, and highlighting the quality of these connections.

**Sample Eco-Map**

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**Eco-map Legend**

- A solid or thick line represents an important, strong or positive connection.

- A broken line represents a tenuous or weak connection.

- Lines with crosses through them indicate a stressful relationship.

- Arrows along the line point towards the direction or flow of resources, energy or interest.
A legend for capturing descriptive dynamics within relationships. These can be used in eco-maps, timelines, or genograms.
Time Lines

Family Timeline

- Reports are filed to CPS and caseworkers come to the home. Kids are afraid every time someone comes to the home that they will be taken away.
- Mom leaves boyfriend, enters a recovery program, and wants to get into better homes. Kids are moved to a new foster home.
- Police come in the middle of the night and remove the children.
- Mom and kids make a supervised home visit.
- Kids hear mom and dad fighting.
- Violent confrontation between the boys and foster parents.
- Kids are placed with more stable grandparents.

1 Month Before Foster Care | Foster Care | 3 Months Age

My Life

Music:

School:

Work:

Sports:

- Minnesno
- Bliss Against the Machine
- Mossin Lakes
- Ocean

Baseball
- Hockey
- Soccer

- Okla
- Duro, IL
- Dubuque, IA
- Chicago, IL
Communicating with the child:

Hi my name is ------. I have the coolest job in the world! I get to talk to kids and families about how to make sure kids are safe. That means I get to talk to lots of kids! It’s my favorite part of my job. Some of the kids I’ve talked to have told me it helps if they can draw a picture of their family and who helps their family. I have some crayons (or a pencil or markers) and some paper here that we can draw on. Which one do you like to draw with? Markers? Oh good! I like to use pencils so you can use the markers and I’ll use the pencil. That works out great. First let’s draw who lives in our house. For me that’s …let me see… me, my husband and my dog! My kids are all grown up and live at college now! I’ll draw them over here. Now how about you?

(Talk while they are drawing – ask them to write beside the person or object who or what that is – by name – and if they can’t write – ask them if you can write it in for them with your pencil.)

Wow – good job! These are the people that live in your house. Name them. Clarify any people or names not understood. Now you said this is Aunt Sally? What do other people call her? Oh so this is Joe? Is Joe a grown-up person or a kid? Does this one sleep at night at your house? (etc.)

Okay – we need to put some more people on a drawing. I will start with mine… If I am sick and need to call someone to help who doesn’t stay at my house, I call my grandmother. Let me draw her here….

Your turn – (to child). If your parents need help because someone is sick or they need a ride, who can they call?

Allow the child to draw that person into their drawing. Emphasis on great to have a lot of people we can ask for help.

Sometimes if I need money or have a flat tire or just need to talk I call my Friend… (Adam).

Who else can we draw in your picture who is a helper to your whole family? Let’s draw them in now.

Who else is your very own person you like to talk to – that listens to you?

Those are really important people. Do you want a different color of marker for them?

Okay – this is a neat drawing. Let’s make sure we didn’t forget about anybody! I can write a list down the side of your drawing… Who are the people you love the most in the whole world? Who do you like to stay with when you are not at home? Who comes to check on you and your family? Whose phone numbers do you know?

WOW! Awesome list!!!! I’ll make a copy of this picture and bring one back to you – and I’ll keep one in case we need some help with something!

Good JOB! If you think of someone to add to this cool picture let me know and I’ll bring mine so you can draw on it too!
Communicating with the parent:

Through my work with families, I've learned an important lesson. The families I've worked with have taught me that you are the expert on your family. No one else can know more than you do about your family. The families have also taught me that sometimes they need help thinking about who can help them through this time in their life. Families have told me at first that there is no one left willing or able to them. Sometimes they think everyone has given up on them and they are not even worth calling again. I've found out through working with these families that sometimes I can help with that. Together we can gather up some support that will help us work through whatever is going on and sometimes it’s really big stuff. It helps if we list it out or draw it out sometimes. Seems funny for grownups to draw pictures, but the other moms/dads I’ve worked with say it really helps. There’s actually a professional name for the drawing even. Genograms, timelines, and eco-maps! Right now let’s make a list though, and then we can turn it into a work of art if you think that would help. I have this list of people that live in your house.

Is there anyone we need to add or remove? That helps us get started.

Now, can you think of a time you needed help with something in the past? Transportation? Money? Food? Stay with you while someone is sick or in hospital? Take care of the children? Let’s write them all down even you think they would never help again or you would never want them to help again.

Here we go…

(Prompt by saying ... grandparents... maternal... paternal... aunts... uncles... friends... godparents... neighbors... etc.)

Keep prompting by asking specific questions. When you were in the hospital having your second baby – who took care of the first?

When you need child care – who do you call?

Wow. There are several names on this list!

Let’s talk now about who on this list you think you still could call today.

Give them time.

Ok. Great. Let’s talk now about who you think you couldn’t call anymore.

Ok – your father. Tell me about that.

Your sister. Hmm. Tell me about that.

It might surprise you but a lot of the times when another mom/dad has told me a person wouldn’t help them anymore, they were surprised to find out when we asked together they were willing to help. We will just have to see how it goes, but it would help us to have as many people working to provide support right now as possible to keep your family together.

Sometimes when we gather just a few people who care about you and children together, amazing things can happen. We have a name for that too – Family Team Meeting.