

Parenting Domains

Focus on parenting skills:

- Capacity to attend to child's physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs
- Capacity to provide a stable and nurturing environment
- Age-appropriate understanding and expectation of child
- Capacity to initiate or follow and enjoy child – centered activity
- No evidence of physical or sexual abuse

Focus on caregiver with mental health concerns:

- Level of disturbance, instability and violent tendencies (impulse control)
- Level of caregivers capacity to differentiate reality from fantasy
- Sense of responsibility for self, child and family
- Capacity to acknowledge any risk to child
- Level of paranoia
- Capacity to form trusting relationships
- Use of help/clinical interventions

Focus on other caregivers, if relevant:

- Attitude toward partner's illness
- Relationship to child
- Commitment to maintaining family
- Capacity to intervene on child's behalf if and when necessary



Focus on marriage/partnership, if relevant:

- Style and intensity of marital conflict
- Ability to communicate
- History of domestic violence

Parenting Domains (continued)

Focus on the child:

- Developmental progress
- Child's attachment status
- Capacity for self protection
- Unusual behaviors or characteristics
- Relationships outside the nuclear family

Focus on Context:

- Financial/housing status
- Environmental stress
- Quality of non-family network
- Quality of Home environment



Hendrick V and K Daly (2000). Parental Mental Illness (as cited in N Halfon, E Shulman, M Hochstein and M Shannon, eds., Building Community Systems for Young Children). ULCA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities).