WORKSHEET: USING PROTECTIVE FACTORS AS A LENS TO MONITOR PROGRESS TOWARD CASE CLOSURE

Worker name ___________________________________
Family name ___________________________________
Date last updated ____________________

Just as we monitor other aspects of case progress, we also want to stay attuned to changes in the family’s protective factors. In the end, as families transition out of their engagement with the child welfare system, we want to be able to demonstrate that:

- The family made progress on their own protective factors goals
- The family can reliably draw upon their protective factors in ways that help prevent a repeat of the issues that brought them in contact with the system
- The family has a plan in place for continuing to build their protective factors once they are no longer involved with the system

The chart below can be used in multiple ways, including:

- In early engagement with caregivers to discuss and agree on the type of growth in protective factors that could be used to indicate progress
- In family team meetings or other conversations with partners who are also supporting the family
- To help staff in documenting growth in family strengths for court reports and other case progress reports
- To support decisions about case closure

The form below includes possible indicators of family progress, with room for your notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions to ask</th>
<th>Indicators of change as framed by protective factors</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has caregiver functioning acceptably improved?</td>
<td><strong>Strengthened Parental Resilience</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Improved problem solving skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Better able to cope with stress/does not allow stress to impact parenting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self-care strategies in place</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Social and Emotional Competence of Children</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Caregiver is emotionally responsive to the child(ren)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Caregiver has created an environment in which the child(ren) demonstrates a sense of safety to express his/her emotions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Caregiver separates emotions from actions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Caregiver provokes age-appropriate social-emotional responses and encourages/reinforces social skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Caregiver creates opportunities for the child(ren) to explore and solve problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Indicators and Notes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions to ask</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Has caregiver’s willingness and ability to reach out to others in times of need changed? | **Strengthened Parental Resilience**  
  - Improved help-seeking behavior  
  - Receiving mental health or substance abuse services as needed  
  **Enhanced Social Connections**  
  - Caregiver has supportive relationships  
  - Caregiver has a network he/she can turn to for help  
  - Caregiver has relationship-building skills  
  **Concrete Supports**  
  - Caregiver is open to accessing and using services  
  - Caregiver has enhanced skills in accessing supports when needed |
| Does the caregiver have realistic expectations for the child(ren)?               | **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**  
  - Caregiver is more confident in his/her parenting skills  
  - Caregiver has a new appreciation for his/her nurturing role  
  - Caregiver has developed a balance between parenting and self-care  
  - Caregiver better understands/encourages healthy development  
  - Caregiver better understands/employs age-appropriate responses to the child(ren)’s behaviors  
  - Child(ren) responds more positively to the caregiver’s approach  
  - Caregiver is effectively linked to early childhood resources  
  - Caregiver is involved in the child(ren)’s early childhood activities  
  - Caregiver understands the child(ren)’s special needs and how best to meet those needs |
|                                                                                  | **Social and Emotional Competence of Children**  
  - Caregivers sets clear and age-appropriate expectations/limits  
  - Caregiver has created an environment in which the child(ren) can safely express his or her emotions  
  - Caregiver is emotionally responsive to the child(ren) |
|                                                                                  | Other Indicators and Notes                                                                                              |