

## Family Assessment

- Safety of child(ren) is the top priority.
- Family is the most important resource for caring and nurturing children.
- Families have unique strengths and needs and deserve respect.
- Family members are experts on their own lives and situations.

*A crisis can be an opportunity for positive change.*



## Important Numbers

Social Worker: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

To report concerns about child abuse or neglect, call 1-800-362-2178.

## Differential Response System:



## Family Assessment

**DHS Mission Statement:**  
To help Iowans achieve healthy, safe, stable, and self-sufficient lives through the programs and services we provide.

## What is a Family Assessment?

A Family Assessment is an approach by Iowa DHS to address reported concerns of child abuse and neglect.

In situations where children are safe, the Department believes the most important thing is to identify the family's strengths and needs and connect the family to any needed services.



### Elements of a Family Assessment:

- There is no formal determination of abuse and the caretaker will NOT be placed on the child abuse registry.
- Child safety is achieved through family engagement and collaborative partnerships.
- A plan of action is developed to utilize family supports, as well as local services and resources to meet any identified needs.

## Why is my family receiving a Family Assessment?

Concerns of possible child abuse or neglect were reported to the Department resulting in this assessment process. Your case has met initial eligibility criteria for a Family Assessment.

### What can my family expect during the Family Assessment?

- During the Family Assessment, the social worker will ask to visit your home, speak with individual family members and gather an understanding of what your family is experiencing.
- The social worker will work with you and your family to assess your child's safety.
- After you help the social worker understand your family's strengths and needs, the social worker will help connect your family to any needed services.
- Services at the conclusion of the Family Assessment are voluntary.



## Safety is Everyone's Responsibility

If there are safety issues present, the social worker will problem solve with your family to help provide a safe environment for your child(ren).

If additional allegations other than denial of critical care are identified during the Family Assessment or information emerges making the case ineligible for a Family Assessment, the case will be reassigned as a Child Abuse Assessment.

In the event your family chooses not to participate in the Family Assessment, the Department is legally obligated to conduct a Child Abuse Assessment, which would include an abuse finding and possibly court intervention.