

The screening tool provides a structure for evaluating and assessing risk to children. It aids in decision-making and helps promote consistency. The tool asks basic questions to assist screeners in determining whether the report of child abuse or neglect should proceed with services **and** to improve the quality of information on which decisions are based.

SECTION I

Section I of the screening tool contains reporting source information, as well as, the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the reporting source's concerns. This information is gathered up front as a means to identify calls that meet the criteria for further children's protective services involvement. It is important that enough information be sought about the who, what, when, where, why, and how to make good decisions. Information on safety issues of the child(ren) identified in the report is collected and documented in Section I to assist in determining risk at the present time and actions that need to be taken for protection of the child(ren). All of the information gathered in this section provides the basis for case determination – whether the case is deemed inappropriate for children's protective services involvement, processed for further assessment, or referred to other agencies/services.

SECTION II

Section II contains demographic information on the family including names, address, phone number, and school district. It also provides space for FACSIS codes and information identifying alleged child victim, alleged perpetrator, and caretakers.

Demographic information is essential for locating family members so the assessment process can proceed. A record check area is also included in this section. The screener is expected to check the computer and files to ascertain if the family has had prior involvement with the agency.

SECTION III

Section III contains the integration of risk assessment into the screening process. The screener needs to gather as much information from the reporter as possible. This section should identify family strengths, as well as, concerns. In this handbook, as part of the Appendix, is a list of questions the screener may use to gather information.