State of Minnesota

WOMEN’S SUPPLEMENTAL RISK/NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROBATION/PAROLE INTERVIEW, Version 5A: February 2010 ©

Supplemental Scoring Tips
WRNA Probation/Supervised Release Trailer

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This document is designed to supplement the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institution’s Women’s Supplemental Risk/Needs Assessment Manual. It is not a substitute for that manual or for the training required of users. All tips have been reviewed and approved by UCCI.
HOUSING SAFETY

General issues:

“Couch hopping” (Living at one friend’s home and then a family member's and then a hotel, for example.) is scored the same as homeless in this section. If the individual is couch hopping, score all items for this scale as “NO”. You can write in “NA” for all of the case management items that refer to her residence.

If a woman on probation is assessed while in a jail or treatment placement, score this section according to her housing immediately prior to incarceration/placement.

Home or home environment is defined as a place where the woman would expect some control over who can access the area. It’s the place where she says she lives and includes the home garage, shed, etc. It would not include apartment complex common areas like the courtyard or game room (these areas would be reflective of her neighborhood environment).

Assessment Scales:

Is your current housing stable? Can you count on being able to live there for the foreseeable future?

If the woman can remain in her housing location for more than six (6) months, then her housing is stable. If she can not foresee being there longer than six (6) months, score this item “NO”.

Is your home environment free of violence / substance abuse?

If she lives in multiple places (all of which she calls home), then ALL places must be free of violence/substance abuse.

Case Management Notes:

Will you be living on your own for the next several months?

This question is asking whether or not she will be living without other adults; meaning no co-parent, roommate, adult family members, boyfriends/spouse, etc.
EMPLOYMENT/FINANCIAL

Assessment Scales:

**Do you have a checking/savings account?**

The key here is to find out if the woman has financial management support. If the account is open and available for use, regardless of amount, score YES.

**Are you (or you and your significant other) able to pay your bills without financial help from family or friends?**

Include the finances of the person(s) living in the home that contribute to the household income. In some cases, it will be more than just the woman and her significant other. It may include aunts, adult children, etc.

This question does not assess government aid, only extra funds from *people* in the woman’s life. It’s about borrowing money from people outside the home to get by.

Child support is not included here. It is considered part of the woman’s regular income.

**Have you had any recent problems like eviction, bankruptcy...**

Recent is defined as in the past year.

You are looking for large or serious financial difficulties. Restitution judgments could be included here.
MENTAL HEALTH HISTORY

Assessment Scales:

Have you *ever* been diagnosed with mental illness?

If the woman tells you that she’s ever been on medication for a mental health condition, score this YES. The medication may have been prescribed by a general MD without an official diagnosis; however, the MD determination that medication was necessary to treat symptoms is enough to answer YES to this question.
**ABUSE**

**General issues:**

Neglect is not included in this section because there is no current research indicating that neglect is linked to recidivism.

Sexual abuse is not defined in the introduction because the authors found that offenders understood what is meant by sexual abuse. The definition of physical abuse, by comparison, was consistently unclear.

The authors defined physical abuse along a continuum that began with threats of physical abuse to serious physical attacks. Biting would be included in their definition.
PARENTING

General issues:

This section uses a very loose interpretation of terms. Children can mean anyone under 18 that she considers to be her children, such as biological children, grandchildren, foster children, step-children. Fathers can include the child’s biological father, grandfather, uncle, mother’s boyfriend, or same-sex partner.

If the respondent only had custody of her biological children (under 18) for a short period of time but expects to regain involvement, then answer the questions in this section.

If she had custody of her biological children for a short period of time but has no expectation to ever regain involvement (for example, she has terminated her parental rights and has no desire for reunification), indicate YES for “do you have any children who are 18 or younger” and NO for all other items in this assessment scale (version 5, #69-72). Write the reason she will not regain involvement in Parenting Notes. Leave the case management questions blank except for version 5, #78 and #79. This woman would not complete the Parental Stress survey scale.

Generally, this scale seeks to indicate to the assessor whether or not the woman has parenting support. The questions are designed to give you some idea of her situation and assist case management. This section does not contribute to their overall risk score.

Assessment Scales:

Do you have shared or full custody of your children?

This is the only question that asks about legal custody status. If the woman has legal shared or full custody of any of her children, score YES.

Are you involved in important decisions regarding your children?

If she is involved in the decisions for any of her children, score this item YES.
Case Management Notes

Do you have adequate support from the father(s) of your children?

This question includes more than financial support. Consider the entire process of co-parenting, such as support in making decisions about the children or consideration for her feelings in addition to finances.

You are asking for her interpretation of support from anyone that she considers to be the co-parent of her children. This could include the child’s biological father, step-father, uncle, grandfather, partner etc. If there are multiple fathers, you are looking for her perception of support from all the fathers. If she is not satisfied with the level of support from any of the fathers, score this item NO.

For example, one father may not be providing any support and another father provides a lot of support and the woman is perfectly fine with that. In this case, score this item YES. But, if she is not happy with the one father’s lack of support, then score this item NO.

Do any of your children have significant behavioral problems?

Look for her interpretation. Probe by asking does she view her child’s behavior as being problematic or just a minor issue. Ask her to decide for you; do not make those decisions for her.
FAMILY OF ORIGIN

**General issues:**

This section uses a very broad interpretation of family of origin. Answer these questions based on anyone that the woman considers to be her parents and siblings. This could include foster parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins.

Family Conflict is defined as a lack of pro-social support. If there is no contact with family members, even if that is a good thing, the question represents risk. This is similar to scoring risk for an offender that has deceased parents on the LSIR.

**Assessment Scales:**

**Conflictual some of the time; Conflictual most of the time**

Clarify the term conflictual by asking the woman if they fight and disagree a lot or if they generally get along.

**Have any family members (parents or siblings) ever been in trouble with the law or had problems with substance abuse or domestic violence?**

This item does NOT require an official record of law violations, substance abuse or domestic violence. Probe to see if she knows whether or not any of those things occurred.

Remember, this question refers to those she considers parents and siblings only.