

CAFAS/PECFAS UTILIZATION STANDARDS

PURPOSE

The purpose of these standards is to provide direction and guidance to the Children and Family Services (CFS) programs regarding the utilization and application of the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS) and the Preschool and Early Childhood Functional Assessment Scale (PECFAS) for children with Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED). These standards are intended to achieve statewide consistency in the utilization and application of the CAFAS/PECFAS internally and externally and shall be implemented in the context of all applicable laws, rules and policies.

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Health and Welfare's definition of SED requires a child to have an Axis I mental health diagnosis according to the DSM-IV or IV-TR (excluding substance abuse, developmental disorders, and conduct disorders that stand alone) and substantial functional impairment. With the exception of the conduct disorder exclusion, this definition is consistent with the National definition of SED and the definition in the Children's Mental Health Services Act. In order to make the definition functional, measurable, and objective, the Department has implemented the use of the CAFAS/PECFAS to measure functional impairment. The range of impairment measured by the CAFAS/PECFAS is 0 to 240, with 0 being no functional impairment and 240 being the high or most severe level of functional impairment. The threshold for substantial functional impairment used by the Department is a CAFAS/PECFAS 8-scale total score of 80 with a moderate (or score of 20) in Moods/Self-Harm, Moods/Emotions, or Thinking scales.

The CAFAS/PECFAS has become a widely recognized measure of functional impairment in Idaho and is utilized by Department of Health and Welfare, Department of Juvenile Corrections, the Education system, counties and private providers. As Idaho develops a System of Care for children with SED, it is increasingly important that each of the child serving agencies/organizations partner for the delivery of services to children and families and begin coordinating services. The more the agencies and organizations can share information with each other, the less disruptive and more seamless the service delivery system can become for families. The CAFAS/PECFAS and other assessment/evaluation instruments are examples of documentation that can be shared between agencies, (provided authorizations for release are in place) therefore reducing duplication, increasing communication between agencies, and fostering trust and promoting a shared vision of the System of Care.

The CAFAS/PECFAS is not only used for eligibility determination, possibly it's more important application is as an outcomes tracking measure. The Department of Health and Welfare only uses the initial CAFAS/PECFAS for determination of eligibility. The subsequent completed CAFAS/PECFAS are used for outcome measurement and clinical

guidance. Case closure is determined by achievement of service plan objectives, not a reduction in the CAFAS/PECFAS score.

CORE VALUES

- The system of care should be child-centered and family focused, with the needs of the child and family dictating the types and mix of services provided.
- The families and surrogate families of children with emotional disturbances should be full participants in all aspects of the planning and delivery of services.
- Children with emotional disturbance should receive services that are integrated, with linkages between child-serving agencies and programs and mechanisms for planning, developing and coordinating services.
- Children with emotional disturbance should receive services within the least restrictive, most normative environment that is clinically appropriate.
- Children with emotional disturbances should receive individualized services in accordance with the unique needs and potentials of each child, and guided by an individualized service plan.
- The system of care should be culturally competent, with agencies, programs, and services that are responsive to the cultural, racial, and ethnic differences of the populations they serve.
- The needs of children and families can more effectively be met through flexible funding strategies than through categorical funding restricted to the most expensive resources.

STANDARDS

- 1) The CAFAS/PECFAS shall only be completed as part of an assessment process and not as a screening instrument. The CAFAS/PECFAS shall only be completed following the collection of collateral information from other service providers and the completion of a clinical interview with the parent or the completion of the CAFAS/PECFAS Interview (Parent Report).**
- 2) The CAFAS/PECFAS shall only be completed by an individual that has successfully achieved inter-rater reliability through use of the Self-Training Manual and determined reliable by a certified CAFAS/PECFAS trainer.**
- 3) Only the first CAFAS/PECFAS shall be used to determine eligibility. Subsequent CAFAS/PECFAS shall be administered every 120-days and at the end of services. These CAFAS/PECFAS shall only be used for measuring outcomes and to assist in clinical decisions regarding therapeutic services.**

- 4) **The CAFAS/PECFAS shall only be accepted by the Department from external partners under the following conditions:**
 - a. **The CAFAS/PECFAS shall be completed by an individual who has been determined reliable by Dr. Kay Hodges or another certified CAFAS/PECFAS trainer within two years from the date the CAFAS/PECFAS was administered.**
 - b. **The individual or agency shall submit the CAFAS/PECFAS with documentation of inter-rater reliability for the individual completing the CAFAS/PECFAS.**
 - c. **The individual or agency submitting the CAFAS/PECFAS shall complete the document fully and submit a photocopy of the completed front and inside front cover entitled CAFAS/PECFAS PROFILE: YOUTH'S FUNCTIONING, demonstrating item number endorsement. (According to Dr. Kay Hodges, it is not a copyright infringement to photocopy a completed CAFAS/PECFAS.)**
 - d. **The individual or agency submitting the CAFAS/PECFAS shall provide supporting documentation of the information used to rate the CAFAS/PECFAS in case of inconsistencies or disagreements. The CAFAS/PECFAS will only be accepted if the supporting documentation is consistent with the CAFAS/PECFAS score.**
- 5) **DHW personnel that administer the CAFAS/PECFAS shall annually achieve inter-rater reliability through use of the CAFAS/PECFAS Self-Training Manual or through refresher training and completion of CAFAS/PECFAS Booster Vignettes.**
- 6) **DHW may invite external partners to CAFAS/PECFAS training provided by DHW personnel. For the purposes of establishing inter-rater reliability, external partners shall complete the self-training manual and coordinate with Dr. Kay Hodges or other another certified CAFAS/PECFAS trainer for evaluation and scoring.**
- 7) **Any variance to these standards shall be documented and approved by division administration, unless otherwise noted.**