

The Family Check-Up model is assessment-driven, strength-based, and tailored to improve family management practices (such as family routines and parenting skills) and child outcomes (such as depression, problem behavior, and anxiety) and aims to promote positive functioning and family wellbeing. It integrates motivational interviewing strategies and treats the parent as an expert in a collaborative process between the parent and provider. The Family Check-Up model is culturally responsive and uses a health equity lens to intervene by creating a collaborative set between caregivers and providers.

There are two types of Family Check-Up programs, the Online Program and the In-Person Program. Organizations can choose to use just one of the programs, or both of them. Each one is described below.

## Family Check-Up® Online Program

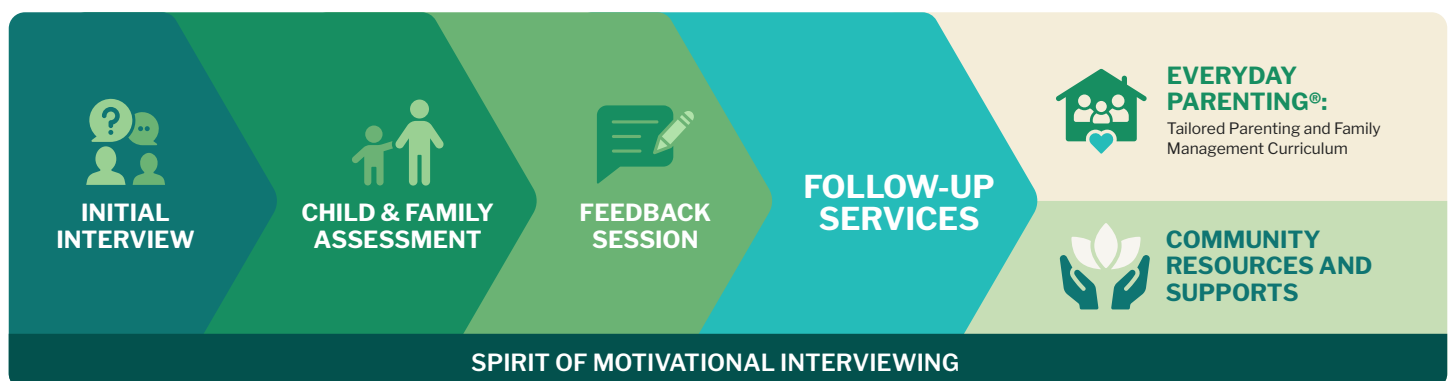
Family Check-Up (FCU) Online® is a web-based assessment and intervention tool that is time-efficient and cost-effective for larger organizations. The program is one of the first Internet-based interventions that engages at-risk populations through effective family management. It includes brief assessments, auto-generated feedback, and intervention modules based on the content of the Family Check-Up® model. FCU Online applies empirically supported eHealth strategies, such as videos featuring a family of animated bears, graphics, and interactive activities. It is supplemented with synchronized text message reminders to encourage engagement and adult learning. The online information is set to a sixth-grade reading level, and program features rely on web navigation standards understandable to even first-time users. The application is designed to be used as stand-alone family mental health support. Use of the program also can be supplemented with telehealth or in-person coaching sessions with provider staff.

The Family Check-Up Online website includes an administrative back end that provides staff with access to enable enrollment and assignment of program users. It also includes the capacity for tracking the number and duration of visits, assessment questions and answers, sessions completed, and a notes field. In addition, the website fully supports HIPAA compliance. The app can be used with children ages 2-14.

## Family Check-Up® In-Person Program

The Family Check-Up In-Person Program consists of three sessions and subsequent follow-up services tailored to the family's needs. It is an adaptive framework; as such, some families receive more follow-up services and support than others. Strengths, areas of resilience, and healthy family functioning are identified and strengthened as a foundation for positive change. The FCU emphasizes a collaborative process that empowers parents in their role as leaders within the family.

## The Family Check-Up® In-Person Framework



## Assessment and Goal Setting

**Initial Interview.** The initial interview takes 45 to 60 minutes. Its primary purpose is to establish a shared perspective between the provider and family on the child's behavior and family context and to develop mutual trust and respect between the provider and family. The provider gathers enough information to understand parents' concerns, goals, strengths, and parenting strategies they are already using.

**Child and Family Assessment.** The second session (Assessment) takes approximately 60 minutes. During the Assessment session, parents complete questionnaires and videotaped parent-child interactions. Questionnaires are brief and focus on domains such as parent well-being, child behavior, and the parent-child relationship. All caregivers (and the target child if 11 years or older)

complete a questionnaire. Family members complete the Family Interaction Tasks to elicit behaviors that demonstrate family relationships and child behavior, and highlight parenting strengths and challenge areas.

**Feedback.** Preparing for the feedback session includes synthesizing all the data collected during the Initial Interview and Assessment to develop an understanding of the key themes related to family and child strengths and challenge areas. This information will guide the feedback process and any subsequent work with the family. At the Feedback session, the provider presents assessment results and integrates video-based feedback from the family interaction tasks, and the parent and provider collaboratively decide on follow-up services, if needed. Although a list of services might include help with problems outside of parenting (e.g., individual therapy for a parent, or couples counseling), follow-up services often include Everyday Parenting (EDP) sessions (Dishion et al., 2011; Stormshak et al., 2024).

## Everyday Parenting

When Everyday Parenting is one of the chosen follow-up services, sessions include a focus on one or more of three broad domains (Dishion et al., 2011; Stormshak et al., 2024):

- ★ positive behavior support
- ★ monitoring and limit setting
- ★ family relationship building

Typically, only some of the available sessions are selected, depending on the parent's goals developed in the Feedback session. Sessions are tailored to the family's needs and economic, cultural, and community context. Consistent with behaviorally-based parenting interventions, sessions include the provider giving the parent a rationale for a particular parenting practice, explaining the new skill, modeling how to use it, role-playing the skill with the parent tailored to the parent and family context, and planning home practice for the parent to use the skill with their child. In subsequent sessions, parents report back on successes or challenges with the new skill, and works with the provider to problem-solve challenges and fine tune the skill as needed.



## Family Check-Up® Implementation Support

The overarching goal of implementation support is to help sites develop model expertise and local ownership of model implementation.

In the **exploration phase**, Northwest Prevention Science (NPS) and prospective sites confirm that adequate personnel, space, fiscal, and technological resources are available to support implementation. NPS also assesses the extent to which the FCU model fits with the organization's mission, has administrator buy-in, and can be integrated into existing systems, especially supervisory and other support systems for providers. Lastly, NPS and the site develop a site-specific implementation plan that addresses provider selection, training and consultation preparation and delivery, and for the In-Person Program, selection of site staff who will be trained and certified as Supervisor-Trainers.

In the **preparation phase**, providers are trained in the model by NPS through knowledge base development and application of model components via practice and role play. For the Online Program, training also includes technical guidance on the use of the FCU Online website. For the In-Person program, training also includes guidance on use of the questionnaires, family interaction task materials, Everyday Parenting tools, and other materials on the Resources Portal website hosted by NPS. Certified Supervisor-Trainers may train their own agency staff in the FCU In-Person Program.

In the **implementation phase**, providers begin to deliver the model with families, and group consultation with all trained providers is initiated. During group consultation, the group and NPS Consultant can use the COACH tool to assess the fidelity of sessions with parents, which helps build in-house capacity to monitor fidelity. Group consultation also is used to discuss and address challenges to uptake of the model.

For the In-Person Program, at the same time consultations are initiated, training and certification processes are initiated with staff selected to be Supervisor-Trainers. The NPS Consultant reviews the candidate's recordings using various versions of the COACH to assess the Supervisor-Trainers' ability to do the following with competence and fidelity: deliver the model in sessions with caregivers; supervise staff in the model; and train new staff in the model. Supervisor-Trainers are certified when they demonstrate the ability to deliver, supervise, and train in the model with fidelity.

In the **sustainability phase**, the site achieves the capacity to sustain model implementation independently. For the In-Person Program, certified Supervisor-Trainers provide internal ongoing supervision, training, and fidelity assessment of their providers. Supervisor-Trainers are recertified every 2 years. Providers continue to use the resources on the Resources Portal website for the In-person program and use the FCU Online website for the Online Program. Indicators that a site has achieved sustainability include that the model has been integrated into service delivery processes, required resources and infrastructure are consistently available, and an ongoing funding source is in place. NPS meets with site leadership annually to discuss the site's fidelity monitoring, outcomes, and site support for providers, and to engage in joint problem-solving as needed regarding model implementation.

