**HENNEPIN COUNTY**

**MAPCY Q & A FOR FOSTER CARE PROVIDERS**

**What does “MAPCY” stand for?**

“MAPCY” stands for the Minnesota Assessment of Parenting for Children and Youth”. It is an assessment instrument used to identify the caregiving behaviors provided by kin or foster parents for a particular child, based upon the child’s needs.

**What is the “MAPCY”?**

The MAPCY replaced the previously utilized Difficulty of Care (“DOC”) screening instrument for placements occurring after January 1, 2015 or for children placed prior to that date who undergo a status change. The MAPCY focuses upon identifying the specific caregiving behaviors that are demonstrated when caring for a child. Many social workers and foster parents have been accustomed to the DOC, but the MAPCY focuses more on the caregiving behaviors that a foster parent or relative uses to care for a child and stabilize him/her, as opposed to how “sick” a child might be. The MAPCY is also the instrument used in the newly legislated “Northstar Care for Children” programs, which seek to eliminate the benefit discrepancies that have previously been a barrier to permanency for children, so that benefits work better with both transfers of permanent legal and physical custody and adoptions.

**What are the “benefits?”**

There are three basic benefits under Northstar Care for Children: Medical Assistance, the monthly basic payment based upon the child’s age, and the monthly supplemental difficulty of care payment, which is based on the MAPCY assessment. Most children or youth will receive a monthly supplemental difficulty of care payment, much as they do now. In addition, a child care allowance may be available if needed by the caregiver for work or education. The amount available varies depending upon the age of the child. The Northstar Care child care allowance is unlikely to cover the full cost of child care and should be seen as partially defraying the costs. The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) is a better support. However, the two programs cannot be combined; a child care allowance must not be included in the MAPCY assessment if child care is available through the CCAP or other programs.

**My foster child currently has a DOC; will that have to change to a MAPCY after January 1, 2015?**

No. As long as the child remains stable and in the same foster home, they will continue to be assessed annually using a DOC. However, if there is a status change, if the child moves into permanency, or moves to another foster home, the child will then change to the Northstar Care program and a MAPCY will be utilized.

**What is the process for completing the MAPCY tool?**

After a child leaves their shelter home, within the first 30 days of the foster care placement, the MAPCY assessor will ask to meet with you to go over the MAPCY and collect information about the child’s needs and what you are doing to meet them. You are encouraged to complete the “Foster Parent Prep Sheet”. You can complete this form in the days leading up to the meeting to identify specific parenting behaviors that you are using to help the child, and be prepared for the meeting with the social worker. This will also make the meeting shorter and more productive for all involved. After the meeting, the MAPCY assessor will complete the report in our online documentation system and submit it. If there are no further questions, the MAPCY will be approved. You will receive a printed copy of the outcome of the assessment in the mail. You will then learn of the child’s “MAPCY level” which indicates how much, if any, additional reimbursement you will receive beyond the basic rate.

**What if I don’t agree with the MAPCY score?**

If you don’t agree with the findings of the MAPCY, please first contact the placing worker to review your concerns, to ensure that all of your parenting practices were captured by this assessment tool. The placing worker will communicate your concerns with the MAPCY assessor to determine if anything is missing. The MAPCY assessor will determine if a reassessment is needed, based on your concerns. If so, they will contact you to redo the assessment. If not, and you feel that one is warranted, you have the right to appeal within 30 days, just as you did with the DOC. The appeal would require additional documentation as to the child’s needs and what you are doing to meet them.