



Tennessee Department of Children's Services

## Protocol for Completion of the Toddler and Infant Needs and Strengths (TINS) in Safe Baby Court Cases

Supplemental to: Work Aid for Cases Assigned to a Safe Baby Court

The Toddler and Infant Needs and Strengths (TINS) is a specialized assessment developed to lay the foundation for individualized services of children ages zero (0) through four (4). The TINS creates opportunities for collaboration to guide service planning and manage outcomes for infants and toddlers in a Safe Baby Court (SBC).

1. All DCS staff with case management responsibility for cases assigned to SBC must attend and pass, with a reliability score of 0.70, an initial certification class conducted by a Vanderbilt Center of Excellence (COE) TINS Assessment Consultant. Staff must maintain TINS certification by attending and passing, with a reliability score of 0.70, yearly recertification training conducted by a consultant.
2. The TINS is completed for any child in SBC until the child turns age four (4). The completion of the TINS does not replace any other requirements to complete a FAST or CANS on applicable children (e.g. siblings over age five (5)).

### TINS Assessment

The TINS is composed of six (6) assessment components:

- Traumatic Experiences (ACES);
- Functioning;
- Behavioral and Emotional Needs;
- Emotional Needs;
- Risk Factors and Behaviors;
- Strengths; and

- Caregiver (Resources and Needs)

The TINS conducts an individualized assessment of up to three children and assesses actionable items for up to three caregivers (both parents and the placement/caregiver).

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**Completion and Review Process**

1. The DCS Case Manager assigned to an SBC case initiates and completes the TINS for applicable children.
2. The DCS Case Manager assigned to the SBC case uses the time from case assignment through the initial SBC CFTM to collaborate with the child/youth, family, and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to complete the TINS. The DCS Case Manager seeks input from the SBC Community Coordinator and all members of the Family Team.

3. The Family Team includes, but is not limited to:

The SBC Community;

The parents;

The Foster Parents/caregivers;

Supportive Family or Community Members identified by the family;

Agency Providers;

Service Providers,

Early Child Development Specialists;

Infant Mental Health Specialists;

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Child-Parent Psychotherapists;

Casa (if applicable); and

Attorneys representing the children, parents, and agency.

4. For on-going cases, The DCS Case Manager updates the TINS as circumstances of the case change, but no less often than otherwise indicated in the TINS completion timeframes.
5. Once the DCS Case Manager completes the TINS, the supervisor discusses and reviews the TINS and makes any necessary modifications. The supervisor documents the date the TINS was completed in a case consultation note and uploads the finalized TINS into TFACTS.
6. Regional Vanderbilt COE consultants are available to review TINS and provide support, as needed, at the request of the DCS Case Manager.

#### **Completion Timeframes**

##### **Initial Assessment**

1. The TINS is initiated on applicable children by the assigned DCS Case Manager during the first Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) that occurs after the case is accepted into SBC, but no later than thirty (30) days after the case acceptance.

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2. After completing the TINS, the DCS Case Manager enters the data into the REDCap database within seven (7) business days.

#### **Updates**

1. The TINS is updated, reviewed, and finalized at least every six (6) months for all TINS eligible children, unless there are changes in the circumstances of the case which require an update sooner.

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2. Updates will not be required on children who have reached age four (4).

### **TINS and Case Planning**

1. The TINS is used to guide case planning and service provision and to develop the permanency plan. The DCS Case Manager shares the results of the TIN with the Family Team to complete a needs-based Plan with the infant/toddler at the center of the decision making.
2. The DCS Case Manager ensures that needs records are created for any actionable items identified by the TINS.
3. During each CFTM, the DCS Case Manager discusses actionable items identified by the TINS with the team.
4. The DCS Case manager is encouraged to engage regional Vanderbilt COE consultants in CFTM and the completion of the TINS assessments.