

Children's Long-Term Support Functional Screen Tip: Social Competency

Children's Functional Screen Team

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to retain administrative authority and responsibility for the operation of § 1915(c) home and community-based services waiver programs by exercising oversight of the consistent performance of waiver functions by other state and local or regional non-state agencies and contracted entities.

The Bureau of Children's Long Term Support Services (BCLTSS) has established the Children's Functional Screen Team to ensure county waiver agencies follow the requirements for evaluating and reevaluating an applicant's or participant's institutional level of care, consistent with the protocols specified in the approved CLTS Waiver Program.

The purpose of the "CLTS Functional Screen Tips" is to support local operating agencies in accurate eligibility determinations by clarifying or reiterating current clinical screen instructions for areas where questions arise or errors are noted in the review of screens.

Social Competency

Social competency skills develop continually throughout childhood. Social competency is composed of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision making. As children age, the skills required for social competency become much more sophisticated and subtle. It would be uncommon for a child with significant behavior and/or functional limitations to be at the same social competency level as that of peers of the same age.

As a result, items in the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Functional Screen designed to measure delays in social competency require the screener to consider the child's development compared to his or her same-age peers.

A child unable to develop a social skill due to a physical, communication, or learning impairment will demonstrate delays in social competency. If an item under social competency asks for the child's ability to perform a subtle social act but the child in question cannot perform the primary social act, the screener should select that item for the child. For example, one social competency item states, "Does not control his/her temper in disagreements with other children." If the child does not have the ability to have disagreements with other children, then select this for the child even though the question is designed to address the more advanced skill of controlling his or her temper.

That is why, while a child may seem to meet the identified areas for the age cohort under this item in the screen, the child may not meet questions under the younger age cohorts or all of the components of social competency. If this is the case, screeners can select one of the items under the current age cohort and explain the social competency issue from the previous age cohort in the notes.