

Screening and Assessing Youth for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)

Protocols for CFSA and Contracted Private Agency Social Workers



Sexually transmitted infections, if untreated, can have devastating effects on youth who contract them. Comprehensive screening and early detection are key activities for prevention and treatment of health issues stemming from infection. This FAQ document addresses the common screening questions of District social workers.

Where am I supposed to bring a youth to get screened?

CFSA is conducting the STI screening at the Healthy Horizons Assessment Center (HHAC) on the first floor of CFSA Headquarters.

Should I bring every child on my caseload into HHAC for an STI screening?

No, not every child. Only youth ages 11 or older who have had a home removal should be screened.

What about consent? Do I need to get the youth's consent before HHAC screens him/her for an STI?

No. The nurse practitioner will review the form with the youth and answer any questions he/ she may have prior to the screening. If the youth signs the consent form, the nurse practitioner will complete the STI screening.

For which infections is the HHAC STI screening, and how do they do it?

HHAC tests the youth's urine for chlamydia, gonorrhea, and trichomoniasis. For screening for other infections or diseases, the youth needs to be referred to his/her primary care physician (or another medical provider).

When should I bring a youth in for screening?

Bring them in at entry or re-entry into foster care, prior to any placement change, and upon return from abscondence. For new entries into foster care, HHAC will screen youth at the initial placement screening, and then again at the thirty day comprehensive screening, just in case they are asymptomatic at the first screening.

But what if there's no change in placement, but I just suspect that the youth may have an STI, or may be at risk of contracting one... can I bring him/her in for screening?

No. You should refer the youth to his/her primary care or other medical provider for STI testing and counseling.

What if the youth refuses to consent to the screening?

Depends. The HHAC nurse practitioner will at the very least document the youth's refusal in his/her medical record. If there are no clinical indications for STIs, then the youth will be cleared for placement. But if it is clinically indicated, the youth won't be cleared for placement and HHAC will refer the youth for a medical screening at Children's Health Systems (formerly Children's National Medical Center).

As a social worker, what sort of information can be shared with me about the results of the screening?

There are limited instances where HHAC will share the STI screening results; if HHAC needs your assistance in contacting the youth and/or to ensure that the youth receives treatment. Anytime HHAC learns that a youth is sexually active (regardless of the results of an STI screening), they will inform you that the youth should receive sexual education and counseling.

If the screening comes back positive, then what do I do?

When HHAC receives positive results for one or more of the STIs, a nurse practitioner will notify the youth that he/ she needs to return to the Clinic. If needed, the nurse practitioner will also notify you that the youth needs to return to the Clinic but the diagnosis will not be revealed.



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