

MUSE Family Resources Check-In (MUSE FRC)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the MUSE FRC?

The MUSE FRC is a new screener for economic strain. It was created for the Multisite Implementation Evaluation of Tribal Home Visiting (MUSE) study. As a part of the MUSE study, it was designed specifically for use with American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) families served by Tribal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (Tribal MIECHV) programs.

Why was a new economic strain screener needed for AIAN families?

Existing economic strain screeners are not tailored for the unique ways that AIAN social, cultural, and geographic settings shape family economic circumstances. As a result, such screeners may not adequately capture the level of need among families in AIAN communities. The MUSE FRC was designed to more adequately reflect the economic experiences in these contexts.

Who is involved with MUSE and what is the purpose?

MUSE is a study led by researchers at James Bell Associates and the University of Colorado Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health who are working together with Tribal MIECHV program staff across the country. The purpose of the MUSE study is to understand how home visiting programs are being implemented in tribal contexts. The MUSE study is funded by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation at the Administration for Children and Families.

How was the MUSE FRC developed?

The MUSE team led the development of the MUSE FRC in collaboration with the MUSE Technical Workgroup (TWG). Domains and items included on the MUSE FRC were drawn from existing screeners and previous research with AIAN populations. Adaptations were made based on guidance from the TWG and from MUSE grantees who provided feedback on preliminary versions.

What is included in the MUSE FRC?

The MUSE FRC is intended to screen for economic strain in seven areas: food security, housing, transportation, healthcare, employment, child-related expenses, and phone/internet access. Domains and specific items were selected because of their importance to the economic situations of families served by Tribal home visiting programs.

Is the MUSE FRC ready to use?

The MUSE FRC is ready to use for the MUSE study, but it is a new measure and still under development. The MUSE FRC data collected in MUSE will be analyzed to help us know how well this new tool works. Results will be used to improve the MUSE FRC, and what is learned will be shared with partners and programs. Until then, the MUSE FRC should be used with caution – and, as always, results of any screening should be interpreted within the larger context of information available about families.

How should this screener be used?

As a screener, the MUSE FRC is designed to be a quick way to begin to understand families' economic needs. It should be used only as a first step in gathering information to help guide decisions about what resources families may need.

How should the MUSE FRC be administered?

The MUSE FRC is designed to be completed by caregivers participating in Tribal MIECHV programs. If necessary, home visitors may help by reading items aloud to caregivers, but should refrain from helping caregivers answer the questions on the MUSE FRC.

How should the MUSE FRC be scored?

Positive Screen (+) scores are answers to MUSE FRC items that indicate financial hardship (see *How to use the Family Resources Check-in* document for specific responses on each item that count as + scores). It is recommended that + scores be used to guide further conversations with families about circumstances in the relevant domains to gather more information and determine whether or not referral or intervention is warranted.

What should happen if MUSE FRC scores indicate concern?

Each Tribal MIECHV program will determine procedures for responding when families' responses on the MUSE FRC indicate economic strain, including referrals to community resources.

Who will be using the MUSE FRC?

Tribal MIECHV grantees participating in the MUSE study will be required to use the MUSE FRC and share individual participant MUSE FRC data (at the item level) with the MUSE study team. The MUSE FRC can be used to meet the Performance Measurement requirement to screen for economic strain.

Who else can use the MUSE FRC?

Tribal MIECHV grantees not participating in the MUSE study can also choose to use the MUSE FRC to meet the Performance Measurement requirement to screen for economic strain.

Others interested in using the MUSE FRC should contact Nancy Whitesell at nancy.whitesell@ucdenver.edu for permission to use the MUSE FRC and to obtain a copy of the measure. We request that those using the MUSE FRC communicate with the MUSE study team about their experiences with it so that we can learn more about its performance.

Is the MUSE FRC appropriate for use with other populations?

The MUSE FRC is designed specifically for AIAN families; it may not appropriately screen for economic strain among families from other populations.

For more information about the MUSE FRC, email nancy.whitesell@ucdenver.edu.

For more information about the MUSE study, visit <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/multi-site-implementation-evaluation-of-tribal-home-visiting-muse-2011-2016-overview>

Family Resources Check-In

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MUSE Family Resources Check-In

Some families have a hard time paying for all of the things they need. The questions below are about some of the basic things families need. Please choose the box that best matches your experience of being able to afford things in the past year.

		Almost every month	Some months, but not every month	Only 1 or 2 months	Never	
IN THE PAST YEAR...						
1	we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	the food we bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	we couldn't afford to buy nutritious food for our family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How often IN THE PAST YEAR my family had trouble getting where we needed to go because...						
4	we didn't have access to a reliable vehicle.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	we couldn't afford gas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6	we couldn't afford to take the bus or other public transportation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Public transportation is not available where I live
IN THE PAST YEAR ...						
7	my family didn't have enough money to buy the basic things my child or children need (clothing, shoes, diapers, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8	I had to miss work, school or important appointments because I didn't have childcare.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
IN THE PAST YEAR ...						
9	I or someone else in my family couldn't afford to go to the doctor, dentist or other healthcare provider when we needed to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10	my family couldn't afford to pay for medications, glasses, or other medical supplies that we needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
IN THE PAST YEAR my family ...						
11	did not have phone service because we couldn't afford to pay for it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12	could not afford to pay for Internet access.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Internet is not available where we live
IN THE PAST YEAR, I or someone in my household ...						
13	looked for a job but could not find one.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14	had a job but it didn't pay enough to cover our family's expenses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
IN THE PAST YEAR, my family has ...						
15	had a safe place to live.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16	had electricity or other utilities shut off because we couldn't afford to pay the bill.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17	had a place to live that had enough space for everyone in the family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

MUSE Family Resources Check-In

18 My family has had to move **IN THE PAST YEAR**
because we couldn't afford where we were living.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| No | Yes, once | Yes, twice | Yes, more
than twice |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

19 **IN THE PAST MONTH**, I have had a place to live...

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Most of the
month (more
than 1 week but
not all month) | Only for 1
week or
less | No |
| All month
<input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

How to use the MUSE Family Resources Check-In

This screener offers an efficient way to gather information across domains where American Indian and Alaska Native families may experience economic challenges. It should not be relied on as the *only* source of information to guide decisions about whether or not a family may need help connecting with economic resources.

Positive Screen (+) scores are answers to any items that indicate financial hardship. It is recommended that + scores be used to guide conversations with families about circumstances in the relevant domains to gather more information and determine whether or not referral or intervention is warranted.

		Almost ev mo	some mo	1-2 mo	Never	
FOOD	IN THE PAST YEAR...					
	1	we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.	+	+	+	-
	2	the food we bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more.	+	+	+	-
	3	we couldn't afford to buy nutritious food for our family.	+	+	+	-
TRANSPORTATION	How often IN THE PAST YEAR my family had trouble getting where we needed to go because...					
	4	we didn't have access to a reliable vehicle.	+	+	+	-
	5	we couldn't afford gas.	+	+	+	-
CHILD-RELATED	6	we couldn't afford to take the bus or other public transportation.	+	+	+	-
	7	IN THE PAST YEAR, my family didn't have enough money to buy the basic things my child or children need (clothing, shoes, diapers, etc.)	+	+	+	-
HEALTHCARE	8	IN THE PAST YEAR, I had to miss work, school or important appointments because I didn't have childcare.	+	+	+	-
	IN THE PAST YEAR ...					
PHONE & INTERNET	9	I or someone else in my family couldn't afford to go to the doctor, dentist or other healthcare provider when we needed to.	+	+	+	-
	10	my family couldn't afford to pay for medications, glasses, or other medical supplies that we needed.	+	+	+	-
EMPLOYMENT	IN THE PAST YEAR my family ...					
	11	did not have phone service because we couldn't afford to pay for it.	+	+	+	-
HOUSING	12	could not afford to pay for Internet access.	+	+	+	-
	IN THE PAST YEAR, I or someone in my household ...					
HOUSING	13	looked for a job but could not find one?	+	+	+	-
	14	had a job but it didn't pay enough to cover our family's expenses.	+	+	+	-
	15	had a safe place to live.	-	+	+	+
	16	had electricity or other utilities shut off because we couldn't afford to pay the bill.	+	+	+	-
	17	had a place to live that had enough space for everyone in the family.	-	+	+	+
18	My family has had to move IN THE PAST YEAR because we couldn't afford where we were living.	no	once	twice	>twice	
19	IN THE PAST MONTH, I have had a place to live...	-	+	+	+	
		all mo	most mo	<1week	no	
		-	+	+	+	