**Setting Conditions**

Setting conditions are circumstances surrounding a child/youth that can reasonably explain behavior. Setting conditions may include recent events, or relate to something that occurred long ago.

**School Setting Conditions**

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| **Attribute** | **Positive Indicators** | **Negative/Harmful Indicators** |
| Competent Staff | Staff demonstrate skills, values, and attitudes necessary to teach each child.  Staff evidence knowledge and skills necessary to recognize and appropriately respond to trauma-related behaviors. | Some children experience teaching practices that are ineffective and/or harmful.  A widely held belief is that bad behavior must be punished; trauma is just an excuse. |
| Effective relationships among staff and between students and staff | Staff possess skills necessary to establish and maintain academically friendly relationships; these skills are modeled in adult interactions. Development of positive student/adult rapport is purposeful. | Students observe adults behaving poorly. Some adults lack necessary skills and/or inclination to develop healthy relationships with all staff and students. |
| Effective relationships among students | School culture fosters acceptance of every child; each student is valued and welcome in the school. Students are explicitly taught relationship building skills. | Bully behavior is tolerated and even encouraged. Some students do not feel emotionally or physically safe. |
| Effective relationships with community mental health providers | A strong partnership exists between school and community mental health agencies. Individuals within each organization respect and trust one another. | Little or no communication occurs between school and mental health organizations. Turf wars, inconsistency in interventions/supports, and lack of trust are the norm. |
| Emotional and physical well-being of staff | Staff possess the emotional and physical well-being necessary to help students to learn. | Some staff lack the emotional and/or physical well-being necessary to be effective instructors. |
| Staff attendance | Staff are regularly in attendance; each student experiences continuity with respect to teachers who are assigned to help him/her to learn. | The student experiences a lack of consistency with respect to teacher availability. Staff absenteeism impedes development of predictable expectations. |
| Effective curriculum/instruction | Differentiation of instructional methods results in academic success for all learners. | Some students experience instruction that lacks rigor or relevance. Academic failure is a common occurrence. |
| Effective behavioral supports, both school-wide and individualized | Staff utilize effective supports when attempting to bring about improvement in student conduct/learning. Positive behavioral supports are both universal and explicitly tailored to the needs of some students. | Some students experience harmful and/or ineffective practices. (Ex: punishment, lack of positive supports, and harsh treatment.) Students do not feel safe. |

**Community Setting Conditions**

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| **Attribute** | **Positive Indicators** | **Negative/Harmful Indicators** |
| Availability of medical resources | Physical and mental health services are available to all children/youth and their families. | Some families lack access to basic preventative care and/or treatments necessary to remedy specific conditions. |
| Availability of nutritional resources | Nutritious food sources are available to families. | Some students arrive at school hungry and lack nutrition necessary to sustain healthy growth patterns and cognitive development. |
| Positive culturally embedded practices and beliefs | Cultural practices promote the well-being of families. Historical and current contributions of citizens are proudly acknowledged. Programs are in place to combat effects of racism, sexism, and other factors known to impede student academic success. | Historical contributions of citizens are unacknowledged.  Some students are “thrown away” via foster care, adjudication, violence, and other conditions often associated with racism and poverty. |
| Employment opportunities | Employment featuring family friendly hours, access to health insurance and childcare, and competitive wages are available in the community. | To maintain employment, care givers work irregular hours, nights, and weekends. Health insurance and daycare are not available through employers. Wages are low, often necessitating two or three jobs in order to meet basic expenses. |
| Safety | The student and family feel safe when at home and in the community. | Students expend considerable energy in survival mode, realistically concerned about their safety and the safety of those they love. |
| Transportation availability | Families are able to travel to locations where they can procure necessary resources such as healthy food, medical care, employment and educational services. Cultural and social events are accessible to families. | Due to lack of transportation, some families are unable to access basic resources. In addition, they are excluded from cultural/social events that could positively impact academic growth. |
| Availability of after-school programs/adult supervision | Students and families have options for after-school programs and adult supervision. | Students are unsupervised during after-school hours, increasing safety concerns and likelihood of unhealthy and risky situations. |

**Home Setting Conditions**

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| **Attribute** | **Positive Indicators** | **Negative/Harmful Indicators** |
| Competent caregivers/parents | The child/youth has at least one adult in her life who both loves her and is able to provide adequate care. | One or more parental figures is engaged in substance abuse; there is no adult able to provide basic parenting. |
| Appropriate medical treatment/mental health services/medication | The child/youth receives necessary treatment for mental or physical health conditions. | Basic preventive medical care and/or treatment for specific mental or physical conditions are unavailable. |
| Adequate nutrition | Cognitive functioning, physical development, impulse control, and behavioral choices are positively impacted by adequate nutrition. | Available food sources do not support nutritional needs of the child and family. |
| Adequate sleep | The child/youth engages in sleep patterns necessary to support typical growth and development. | The child/youth is often tired, irritable, and unable to focus on learning activities. |
| Routines for conflict resolution | Caregivers model positive conflict resolution skills. | The child/youth witnesses and/or emulates violent, confrontational methods of conflict resolution. |
| Stability | The child/youth experiences a high degree of predictability with respect to before/after school routines, sleeping arrangements, and housing stability. | The child/youth is unable to predict what will happen before and after school. Address changes are frequent; sleeping arrangements fluctuate. |

Source: Aldridge, L., Harrison, R., Harrison, K. & Blanchat, C. (2014) Exploring and Utilizing the Concept of Setting Conditions in the Functional Assessment Process. *Journal of Adolescent and Family Health*, 6(2).

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