

Measures of Success in Reunification Therapy

For the child(ren)

Behavioral Indices of “Success” as measured through child’s behaviors.

1. Child no longer resists contact.
2. Child has neutral/friendly greeting of rejected parent.
3. Child can sit in the same room as the parent without an intense hostile response.
4. Child can sit in the same room as the parent without withdrawing or refusing to engage.
5. Child does not threaten or engage in violence against the rejected parent or other family members.
6. Child does not engage in the destruction of property.
7. Child does not engage in self destructive behavior.
8. Child and parent engage in sports or outings together.
9. Child and parent engage in cooperation with daily household tasks.
10. Child accepts reasonable limit setting of parent.
11. Child socializes with extended family of rejected parent.

Emotional Indices of “Success” as measured through child

1. Child demonstrates expressions of love.
2. Child shows displays of affection (sitting close by, hugging).
3. Child and parent engage in reciprocal conversation.
4. Child engages with parent while not employing avoidance or indifference to/with the rejected parent.
5. Child accepts offers of help with homework.
6. Child seeks out parent’s assistance with a problem.

Cognitive Indices of “Success” as measured through child

1. Child sees each parent in a realistic balanced way (to have complex thinking, to think in “greys”, have non-all-nothing thinking)
2. Child understands how distorted memories or perceptions can occur.
3. Child can acknowledge prior distortions regarding the rejected parent.
4. Child demonstrates an age-appropriate capacity for critical thinking as new situations arise.

For the rejected or “out” parent

1. Ability to understand and accept without blaming the child’s prior hostility and rejection on anyone.
2. Use of authoritative parenting skills.
3. Capacity for warmth and parental insightfulness.
4. Capacity for understanding, parental insightfulness, and empathy (for the child and for favored or “in” parent).
5. Attitude toward and extent of hostile comments toward the previously favored or “in” parent.
6. Employment of age and stage appropriate boundaries with child (e.g. degree of intrusive behavior and/or enmeshment).
7. Capacity to recognize, identify, support the child’s separate and unique needs.
8. Consistency of behavior & development of a new pattern of behavior as demonstrated through actions, not just words.

For the favored or “in” parent.

1. Degree of acceptance of the repair or restoration of the child’s relationship with the previously rejected parent.
2. Use of authoritative parenting skills.
3. Capacity for warmth.
4. Capacity for understanding, parental insightfulness, and empathy (for child and rejected or “out” parent).
5. Acceptance of previously rejected or “out” parent’s interest in and love of child.
6. Degree of hostility toward or rejection of child for restoring relationship with the other parent.
7. Employment of age and stage appropriate boundaries with child (e.g. degree of intrusive behavior and/or enmeshment).
8. Capacity to recognize, identify, support the child’s separate and unique needs.
9. Consistency of behavior & development of a new pattern of behavior as demonstrated through actions, not just words.