Understanding Approach

While all the assessments embrace family-centered practice, the following chart highlights three areas in which the tools have different approaches or emphases.

Tool	Approach to Community	Approach to Diversity and Culture	Approach to Organizational Development
Strengthening Families™ Self-Assessment for Community-Based Programs	Focuses on strengthening relationships between families, between families and staff, and partnership with community organizations for more effective resource and referral and improved outcomes for children and families. Breaking isolation and building positive social connections is a key goal. Emphasis on parent engagement and leadership in the implementation of Strengthening Families, which has led many implementers to use a Café approach. To learn more about Parent Cafés visit http://www.bestrongfamilies.net/ and to learn more about Community Cafés visit http://thecommunitycafe.com/.	Culture is integrated throughout the tool. The focus is on assessing whether program strategies: ▪ Are responsive to all families and family members regardless of race, culture, home language, family composition, and sexual orientation and identity ▪ Engage fathers ▪ Partner effectively and respectfully with parents. Numerous items illustrate ways to achieve these goals in various aspects of program policy and staff practice.	Focuses on strategies and interventions used within each program to build protective factors. Highlights how the five protective factors can be supported through small but significant changes in program practice. Does not specifically address evaluation strategies.
Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support Program Self-Assessment	The Standards have a multi-layered approach. Building Community is one of the five key focus areas. Three standards address community building from the perspectives of: • Family to Family • Families as Program Leaders • Families as Community Leaders • Collaboration between organizations • Community building, advocacy and policy	Embracing Diversity is one of five key focus areas of the Standards; examples throughout the assessment include diverse families and urban, suburban, and rural settings. Three of 17 Standards specifically address policies and practices to effectively support "the diversity of families, including their cultural traditions, languages, values, socio-economic status, family structures, sexual orientation, religion, individual abilities, and other aspects." Standards look at staffing, policies and procedures, opportunities for ongoing learning for program staff and families, and building families' ability to function in a diverse environment.	Improved quality aligns with deeper integration of processes and increased family involvement. Emphasis on need to deepen practice through formal structures, family partnerships, and staff training that align with the family support and strengthening approach. Direct service staff can use self-assessment process to enhance work with families. Involvement by all levels of organization needed to complete the assessment. Highlights importance of evaluation with a section and set of elements that moves a program from minimum- to high-quality practice.
Understanding the Role of Program Assessment in Child Abuse Prevention: Tools for Peer Review and Beyond	Focus is on community collaboration and the role of the organization within the community. Assesses collaborative partnerships with other organizations, knowledge of community resources, and ability to help families access those resources. Includes a section on parent leadership, described as one element of engaging, retaining, and supporting families.	Since each section of the tool may be used independently, without the necessity of completing the other sections, it is key that cultural responsiveness is integrated into each section. There is a special emphasis on engaging and supporting fathers, developing linguistically responsive materials, and welcoming diverse families. The assessment emphasizes a culturally responsive approach in which staff are continually learning.	Looks at both program strategies and organizational structure (e.g., board development). Designed to be stand-alone sections rather than used as a whole, allowing programs to focus on areas that are consistent with their evaluation plan and needs. Can be used as internal tools or during a peer review process that allows for both internal and external respondents and encourages relationships with communities of practice for ongoing learning, support, and continuous quality improvement (CQI).