

- Children experiencing major stressful life events (e.g., chronic illness, disability, parental divorce, death of a family member)
- Children requiring extensive home care
- Children with developmental delays
- Children with repeated accidental injuries and those with suspected child abuse
- Children with behavioral or physical problems that could be caused by family dysfunction

The most common method of eliciting information on the family structure is to interview family members. The principal areas of concern are family composition, home and community environment, occupation and education of family members, and cultural and religious traditions (Box 4-7).

Box 4-7

Family Assessment Interview

General Guidelines

Schedule the interview with the family at a time that is most convenient for all parties; include as many family members as possible; clearly state the purpose of the interview.

Begin the interview by asking each person's name and their relationships to one another.

Restate the purpose of the interview and the objective.

Keep the initial conversation general to put members at ease and to learn the “big picture” of the family.

Identify major concerns and reflect these back to the family to be certain that all parties receive the same message.

Terminate the interview with a summary of what was discussed