

KEY PROCEDURE #3

10 TIPS FOR CONDUCTING FAMILY IMPACT ANALYSIS

1. Include the appropriate members on the family impact team—experts in family science; experts on the specific policy, program, or agency; and experts familiar with family impact analysis and the theory and practice in this *Handbook* and accompanying *Rationale*.
2. Family impact analysts must be aware of the complexity and diversity of contemporary families to be able to accurately assess whether there are varying impacts for different family types and particular family functions.
3. Family impact analysis is often difficult to conduct if family data are unavailable. Sometimes data need to be collected before a family impact analysis can be completed.
4. When possible, data on cost effectiveness and political feasibility should be collected and taken into account in the analysis.
5. Attention should be paid to each step of the procedure for conducting a family impact analysis. Skipping a step can threaten the integrity and usefulness of the results.
6. Depending on the issue, the principles may conflict with each other. The decision about which principle(s) or question(s) to value more highly should be left to decisionmakers (e.g., policymakers, program administrators, boards of directors, key stakeholders, etc.).
7. The analysis should note the daunting prospect decisionmakers face in factoring in family impacts along with competing priorities and other policy levers such as economic and political considerations.
8. The family impact analysis is meant to be nonpartisan. The intent is not to end up supporting or opposing a policy, program, agency, or organization. Instead, the goal is to raise several, often competing, considerations that policymakers and professionals may want to weigh and factor into policy and program design, deliberations, and decisions.
9. In analyzing the data and presenting the results, keep in mind that family impact analysis has the potential to build broad, nonpartisan consensus. To do so, the analysis must be a high-quality, rigorous examination of the issue that clearly and fairly presents ways that families are and are not supported. Instead of making recommendations, the analysis should include implications for those responsible for making program and policy decisions.
10. The purpose of the family impact analysis is not to plan for the sake of planning, but rather to plan for the sake of acting. To move from analysis to action, be sure to develop next steps for discussing and disseminating the results and, when possible, for assessing the implementation and impact of any actions undertaken.