BOX 6-2  Family Assessment Tool Utilizing Theory Approach

STRUCTURAL FAMILY ASSESSMENT

Internal Structure
Family composition (nuclear, stepfamily, grandparent family, blended family)—includes all family members, biologically related and by kinship, and those not living at home
Gender—ideas about masculinity and femininity, expected behaviors
Rank order—birth order, gender, and distance in age
Subsystems—dyads, small groups within the large family unit
Boundary—who participates and how

External Structure
Extended family—family of origin, present generation, in-laws and steprelatives
Larger systems—work systems, public welfare, child welfare, clinics, health care

Context—Background Relevant to Event or Personality
Ethnicity—a combination of cultural history and religion
Race
Social class—upper-upper, lower-upper, upper-middle, lower-middle, upper-lower, lower-lower, education, income, occupation
Religion—organized church affiliation, local church, temple, or synagogue
Environment—larger community, community services, the neighborhood, and the home

Tools
Genogram
Ecomap

DEVELOPMENTAL FAMILY ASSESSMENT

Middle-Class North American Family Life Cycle
Launching of the single young adult
Marriage: The joining of families
Families with young children
Families with adolescents
Launching children and moving on
Families in later life

Divorce and Postdivorce Family Life Cycle
Deciding to divorce
Planning the breakup of the system
Separation
Divorce
Single-parent custodial
Single-parent noncustodial

Remarried Family Life Cycle
Entering the new relationship
Planning the new family
Remarriage

FUNCTIONAL FAMILY ASSESSMENT

Instrumental functioning—routine activities of daily living
Expressive functioning—communication, problem solving, roles, influence, beliefs, alliances and coalitions

Adapted from references 5, 69.

BOX 6-3  Criteria for Assessing Healthy Families

1. Ability to provide for the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of the family
2. Ability to be sensitive to the needs of family members
3. Ability to listen and communicate effectively
4. Ability to provide trust, support, security, affirmation, and encouragement
5. Ability to initiate and maintain growth-producing relationships and experiences inside and outside the family
6. Demonstration of mutual respect for family and others
7. Commitment to teach and demonstrate moral code
8. Concern for family unity, loyalty, and interfamily cooperation
9. Capacity to use humor and to share leisure time with each other, to enjoy each other
10. Commitment to strong sense of family where rituals and traditions abound
11. Ability to perform roles flexibly and share responsibility
12. Ability to maintain balance of interaction and privacy among the members
13. Ability for self-help and helping other family members, when appropriate
14. Ability to use crisis or seemingly injurious experience as a means of growth
15. Ability to grow with and through children
16. Capacity to maintain and create constructive and responsible community relationships in the neighborhood, school, town, and local and state governments and to value service to others

Taken from references 2, 6, 20, 69.