

**Family Assessment Project**

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**Family Identification**

The family discussed in this Assessment is the Nwaolai Family, located in San Pablo, California. The family is a nuclear family, consisting of two parents, two girls and one boy. The Nwaolai family is a Christian family that is ethnically from Anambra State, Nigeria. The name of the mother is Maureen Nwaolai Nnoka. Maureen is a married 45-year-old female who works as a psychiatric nurse at John George Psychiatric Facility. During Maureen's free time, she enjoys hanging out with her closest friends and shopping with her two daughters. Maureen oversees taking care of her children, cooking for the family, and picking her children up from school. The father and husband to Maureen is Nathaniel Nwaolai. Nathaniel Nwaolai is a married 47-year-old male who works as a security guard at a nearby prison. During Nathaniel's free time, he enjoys grabbing a beer with his closest friends and spending time with his three children. Nathaniel is in charge of taking care of the kids after work, making sure the bills are paid on time and providing for his kids. Jasmine Nwaolai is the eldest child in the Nwaolai family. Jasmine is a 13-year-old female who currently attends 7th grade at Stewart middle school. She enjoys creating drawings on her iPad during her free time and watching anime. Nathaniel Nwaolai, who will be referred to as Jr in this paper, is the only son in the Nwaolai family. Jr is a 9-year-old male who currently attends 4th grade at Stewart elementary school. He enjoys playing with his best friend/next-door neighbor RJ and his twin sister during his free time. Sophia is the youngest daughter in the Nwaolai family. Sophia Nwaolai is a 4-year-old female who currently attends speech therapy due to a lack of progression in developmental age. During her free time, she enjoys watching Mickey Mouse Clubhouse.

**Developmental Stage**

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The Nwaolai family is a family with one pre-school children, one school-aged children, and one teenager. During this time, Jasmine Nwaolai is entering her early adolescence phase. The early adolescent phase is when puberty begins, and girls tend to need more privacy (Child Development: Young Teens, 2021). The family tries to accommodate her needs by giving Jasmine her own room. When Jasmine turned twelve years old, she asked if she could turn the guest room into her own bedroom as she felt she was too old to share a room with her younger brother. After both parents discussed this topic, Jasmine was able to turn the guest room into her own room. Jr Nwaolai is currently entering the middle of childhood (Child Development: Middle Childhood, 2021). During this time, Jr.'s parents are beginning to notice that he is becoming independent and doing things on his own without asking for help like he used to. His parents are trying to accommodate his development by allowing him to do things independently until he comes to them for help. Both parents are trying to emphasize the importance of independence during this age. Sophia Nwaolai is currently entering her Preschooler developmental age (Child Development: Preschooler, 2021). Despite being at the preschooler stage, Sophia still shows signs of progression as the age of a toddler. Recently, Sophia joined speech therapy because she was unable to meet her 50 wordmark for her age. Her parents are trying to accommodate her by working around each other's schedules and making room to take her to speech therapy and help her continue what she learns there in their household.

Maureen Nnoka Nwaolai and Nathaniel Nwaolai are originally from Issele-Uke, a small town located in Anambra State, Nigeria. Maureen and Nathaniel met at age 15, shortly after her parents had passed away, and did not date until she was 19 due to strict family members and tradition. Maureen migrated to the United States in 2001 with her sister Nneka Umeh. Nathaniel Nwaolai would not be able to come to the United States until 2017, leaving them in a long-

distance relationship with her taking care of the children here in the United States. Due to the long distance, Nathaniel was not able to be here for the birth and developmental milestones for both Jasmine and Jr. but tried to make up for everything he missed out on as much as possible.

### **Environmental Data**

The Nwaolai family bought a two-story house consisting of three bedrooms and three bathrooms. They are currently looking to sell this house to look for a bigger house as Sophia is beginning to grow up and may need her own room in a couple of years. The Nwaolai family are very fond of their neighborhood which contains two parks and is a walking distance from mainly different hiking trails and includes a nice view of the bay located in Northern California. Maureen enjoys that she is a two-minute drive from her older sister Nneka Umeh. The kids are especially fond of the neighborhood because they live very close to their friends from school and people who have been there since they were born. The Nwaolai family currently has two cars that are used for transportation. Maureen utilizes the 2018 Mercedes Benz as the family car because it can fit the entire family in it. In contrast, Nathaniel Nwaolai uses a 2019 Toyota Corolla to commute to work. The family does not own any animals or pets at the moment. The water supply is adequate, and the family can obtain drinking water from their refrigerator at any time of the day. The water filter in the fridge does need to be changed every six months, but it takes minimal effort. Currently, there is no hazard or precautions that need to be taken in the home. The fire alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are working properly. The Nwaolai Family is currently connected to many different communities. They are a part of their homeowner association in their neighborhood, parent community at their children's school, and are currently connected to the Nigerian Community in the Bay Area. The Nwaolai family takes pride in being a part of the Issle-Uku community because they are reminded of where they came from and

enjoy exposing their children to their culture. Due to the fact that the Nwaolai Family is a part of many different communities and groups, they are able to network with many different types of people outside of their work life.

### **Functional Assessment/ Family Structures**

In the Nwaolai family, Maureen and Nathaniel often make the rules in the family and discuss certain topics. At the end of the day, Nathaniel's word is what goes since he is the man in the family, and culturally it is believed that the man is the head of the family. Nathaniel takes the role of the head of the family and main decision-maker, while Maureen is the mother and household overseer. In the Nwaolai family, one thing that they value the most is family. They believe that family will have your back forever despite others coming and going. Another thing that the Nwaolai family values is education. The family believes that the sky is your limit with education and good background. The Nwaolai family always encourages their kids to be attentive with schoolwork to get good grades.

One thing that the Nwaolai family struggles with is communication. Since Maureen and Nathaniel grew up in different countries and environments, it can be challenging to communicate and understand their children. Maureen and Jasmine often seem to argue when Maureen doesn't let Jasmine do things like participating in sleepovers. Since Maureen has never really experienced a sleepover, she doesn't feel comfortable having her daughter sleep over at other people's houses, excluding other family members. The ethnic barrier can often make it difficult for the parents to communicate and understand their children. Another thing that the ethnic barrier is causing a gap between is affection and love. In Nigerian culture, it is normal for parents not to give their children hugs, kisses, or praise because they often assume that providing for the child makes up for it. This idea is different from the ones the children learn here in America. In

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America, affection, love, and praise are necessary between parents and children for a healthy relationship. This ethnic barrier bridges a gap that makes the family not meet the needs for affection, love, and understanding. Currently, there are no economic resources or lack that the Nwaolai family is experiencing. Both parents try to provide for their kids and ensure that they do not lack anything and experience a normal childhood.

### **Health History**

Nathaniel Nwaolai has never had any significant past medical history that has taken a toll on him. He always tries to take care of his health and live a healthy lifestyle. Maureen Nwaolai, unfortunately, did experience gestational diabetes during her pregnancy with both Jr. and Sophia. She is aware that this can affect her future and increases her chance of having diabetes later on in life. In recent years she has been trying to lose weight and eat healthier to change her previous lifestyle. Growing up, Jasmine has never experienced any medical problems and has no allergies. Her nutritional intake for an adolescent girl meets the needs of her age, and she can eat anything without allergy restrictions. When Jr. was younger, he was hospitalized at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital because he would experience seizures as a child. Jr. has no allergies and is currently seizure-free today. Junior's nutritional intake is now meeting the needs of his developmental age, and he can eat anything without restriction. Sophia has been hospitalized as a baby and diagnosed with Atopic Dermatitis. Growing up, Sophia was hospitalized frequently because she had many allergic triggers that would lead to a bad break out or anaphylaxis episode. Sophia is currently allergic to dairy, eggs, and many more things making her nutritional intake very difficult. Due to certain restrictions, Sophia is much smaller, both in weight and height, than most children her age.

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For Extracurricular activities, Jasmine enjoys playing soccer with her friends and for her school. She is currently considering playing soccer in high school as she begins to progress to that stage. She has many male and female friends and enjoys playing video games and watching anime with her friends during her free time. Junior is currently interested in basketball but has not made any effort to sign up for a team. His parents are now searching for a team outside of school to sign him up for. His closest friends are his next-door neighbors, and he is beginning to make more friends with the opposite gender, which was different from previous years. Sophia is not in any extracurricular activities, but she recently joined a speech therapy class with other children who struggle with speech development. This is Sophia's first year being around other children her age, so she has difficulty sharing toys and playing with other kids. The organization has spoken to Sophia's mother about her having trouble sharing the toys in the facility with the other children. The parents are currently working on her sharing her toys and other things.

### **Family Coping**

Currently, the primary stressor that the Nwaolai Family is dealing with is Sophia not meeting her developmental milestones. In the beginning, Maureen tried to deny that there was anything wrong with Sophia, while the father emphasized getting her involved with speech therapy. After a while, Maureen believed it was her fault because he had Sophia in her 40s and was scared that this would be something more complicated than just a speech problem. When they finally decided to get Sophia help, the pandemic had hit, making things even more difficult because no facilities were open. One coping strategy the family used during the pandemic was relying on each other during the good times and the bad times. When facilities began to open, each family member had to pick up a little more work around the house to help Sophia get the help she needed. Jasmine had to reduce the time she spent with her friends to watch Junior while

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their parents attended speech therapy with Sophia. Although it took time, Nathaniel and Maureen had to work around each other's schedules to be there for Sophia and make sure she met every Speech therapy meeting. Although there are still bad times, the family tries to cope with this by discussing a plan that works with everyone's schedule.

### **Nursing Careplan**

Currently, Sophia's verbal communication is impaired, which can lead to family issues. The Nwaolai family is a risk for care giving burden related stress provoking factors related to Sophia's impaired communication. An expected outcome would be for the Nwaolai family to verbalize that stress factors have minimized. One intervention would be referring the family to a family therapist. The family would be able to talk out their differences and shed light on the areas that are causing them stress. The goal was met, the Nwaolai family was able to verbalize that their family stress levels have minimized.

### Reference

*Child Development: Middle Childhood (9–11 years old)* | CDC. (2021, September 23). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved March 22, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/middle2.html>

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*Child Development: Young Teens (12–14 years old)* | CDC. (2021, September 23). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved March 22, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/adolescence.html>