

These questions have been designed as a guide to practice. They should be used with sensitivity, in conjunction with the six principles outlined in the guide summary.

This guide is not intended to be prescriptive. The order and emphasis given to each of the five domains should be tailored to suit your work context and the family's culture and circumstances.

You do not need to ask questions from every domain, every time. Instead, work on those areas that are relevant each session.

Trust may take a few sessions to develop, so questions can be revisited if necessary.

The language used in a guide only and should be adapted to suit the individual worker/client.

The parent's unique situation and level of stability should always be kept in mind when using this guide. It is crucial to think about what the parent is feeling at the end of these conversations, and to ensure they leave your sessions with a sense of hope.

For more resources, visit emergingminds.com.au/online-training



Parent-child relationship

Engagement questions

What's it like being a parent to (child's name)?

How would you describe your relationship with (child's name)?

How do you think (child's name) would describe their relationship with you?

What activities do you and (child's name) enjoy doing together? (Prompt: What do you think [child's name] would say they enjoy the most?)

How do you balance looking after (child's name) and taking care of the household?

How do you think (child's name) would describe their relationship with you?

Exploring the impact of adversity on children

Have you noticed any differences in the way (child's name) responds to/approaches/interacts with you during adversity or 'tough times'?

What aspects of the adversity affect your relationship with (child's name) the most? What do you think (child's name) is noticing about this?

When there is stress or conflict with (child's name), what do you do? What do they do?

How does (child's name)'s relationship with their other parent change when things are tough?



Emotions and behaviours

Engagement questions

What happens for (child's name) when they're stressed or upset? How do they show you they're feeling this way?

Does (child's name) appear more unsettled than usual when times are tough?

What do you do to manage any worries that (child's name) might have about your current experiences? How do you talk to them about their worries?

Is (child's name) displaying any challenging behaviours that you're unsure how to manage?

Are there any of (child's name)'s behaviours that you find particularly difficult to handle?

How often is this behaviour an issue or concern for you?

How confident do you feel in helping (child's name) to manage these emotions or behaviours? What would help to improve your confidence?

What would help you to better understand (child's name)'s emotions and behaviours?

Exploring the impact of adversity on children

How do you think (child's name) feels about what is happening? Do you think their understanding of (the adversity) is having an impact on how they feel?

When you are experiencing extra stress, what do you think (child's name) might notice or worry about?

Have you noticed any changes in their behaviour or responses to you at these times?

Has your child or family lived through a traumatic event or time?

Have you noticed anything specific about (child's name)'s behaviour and emotions? (E.g. Difficulty concentrating; acting withdrawn, shy, fearful or defiant; bullying others; refusing to go to school; complaining of physical symptoms; spending time on their own; or withdrawing from spending time with others)



Routines

Engagement questions

How does (child's name) usually manage daily routines? Sleeping? Meal times? Going to bed?

What is working for you with regard to sleeping and mealtime patterns? What do you find challenging?

How do you look after yourself, your child and household tasks? What other commitments do you need to fit in?

Have there been any changes in routine recently? **OR** Have there been any changes that have impacted on your household/family routines?

Do you share any activities or hobbies with (child's name)? What do you do that you both enjoy? Are you able to find time to read or play games together?

What does your regular weekly routine look like? What are the busy/quiet times?

When does (child's name) do their homework? How do you go finding time to help them?

Exploring the impact of adversity on children

How do routines at home change when you are facing tough times? What do you think (child's name) notices about these changes?

How do routines outside of the home change when you are facing tough times?

What happens for (child's name) when you're not with them? Do other people know about their daily routines?

How are the regular family routines/activities affected when you're facing tough times? Are there ways that some of these routines could continue, even when times are tough? Who can help with this?



Communication and meaning-making

Engagement questions

What opportunities do you get to spend time talking with (child's name)?

What are the best times for you and (child's name) to talk about things? Are there particular activities that help you to talk?

Do you talk with (child's name) as you're doing things with them, and about what's happening around them? (Even if they're non-verbal)

What are some things (child's name) does to help you understand what they need?

What do you do to understand how (child's name) is making sense of their world, and how you can support them to feel safe?

Exploring the impact of adversity on children

Do you talk with (child's name) about any challenges your family may be facing?

Is (child's name) able to share their thoughts and feelings with you when things are tough? What might get in the way of this sharing?

What changes might (child's name) have noticed as a result of your adversity? (Prompt: What might they see in your face or behaviours, or hear in the tone of your voice?)

What might worry (child's name) the most about your experience of adversity? What sense might they make of the changes that they notice?

How can you help (child's name) to make sense of what is happening to you and to them?

How have you helped (child's name) make sense of tough times in the past? Do you think this helped them to worry less about what was happening for you?



Support networks

Engagement questions

Who does (child's name) enjoy spending time with? (Prompt: Do they have a close relationship with another adult?)

How does (child's name) get along/play with other children?

Who supports you as a family? Would they talk to you if they noticed that (child's name) was worried or concerned?

Does (child's name) see their grandparents/aunties and uncles?

Are you and (child's name) part of any groups/communities that provide support?

What does (child's name) enjoy the most/least about school? How are they progressing with school work? How confident are they in their learning?

How does (child's name) get along with the other children at school?

How would you describe your relationship with the teachers at the school? Do you meet with them?

Does (child's name) have a close friend or group of friends? Do you think (child's name) would be able to talk to them if they had worries? What makes you think this?

Exploring the impact of adversity on children

Who helps you when you are going through tough times or feeling unwell?

Who else knows about your experience of adversity? Can they help to support (child's name) when things are tough?

How do you support (child's name) to stay connected to activities at home when you are going through tough times?

Have you talked to (child's name)'s teacher/child carer about some of your experiences? Can they help to support (child's name) when things are tough?

Who do you think would notice if (child's name) was struggling?