

The **PERCS Conversation Guide** is a psychosocial discussion tool for professionals working with parents. It supports collaborative, respectful conversations around the impact of parental and family adversities, such as mental and physical health issues, substance use issues, and family and domestic violence on children's daily lives.

The guide provides example questions to help you explore five important domains in a child's life. It is designed to help you to recognise parents' strengths and hopes for their family, and opportunities to support and improve children's mental and physical health, resilience and wellbeing.

There are four broad stages to the guide:

1 What is the entry point?



Look for opportunities, or 'entry points' to engage the parent in conversations about their child. Potential entry points include:

- The parent presents with an issue or circumstances that might impact on the child.
- The parent expresses concerns about the child's behaviour or circumstances.
- The professional explores the child's mental health and wellbeing through:
 - open enquiry
 - concerns around parental, family, or social adversity.

2 What are you curious about?



Consider the five PERCS domains:

- P** Parent-child relationships
- E** Emotions and behaviours
- R** Routines
- C** Communication and meaning-making
- S** Support networks

This guide contains example questions to assist professionals in their conversations with parents.

3 Conversation with the parent



Conduct a collaborative and respectful conversation with the parent to arrive at shared understandings and decisions, using the six principles of parent engagement:

- Child-aware and parent-sensitive
- Curiosity
- Collaboration
- Strengths and hopes
- Context
- Respect

These principles will support the development of the trusting therapeutic relationship.

4 Provide support



Provide support to parents to lessen the impacts of adversity on their children:

- Use a strengths-based approach to support a positive parent-child relationship and improved social and emotional wellbeing for children.
- Provide resources to parents regarding child development and parenting practices.
- Practice integrated care and make warm referrals to other community supports or specialist services.
- Continue to work with the parent around their initial presenting issue.