**QUALITY SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

**\*\*\*\*Explain who you are and why you are there in a positive fashion!\*\*\*\***

**Interview Date: Time:**

**Address:**

**Phone Numbers:**

**Name: DOB: SSN:**

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF HOME: - Inside and outside.** This should include sleeping arrangements (sheets on the beds), food in the home, open the fridge and cupboards, looking in cabinets, looking at trash can for beer cans. Bathroom clean? Flush the toilet to ensure utilities are working.

**\*\*\*Get the FACTS\*\*\***

AVOID BEING SUBJECTIVE (using terms like “believe” and “appear”)

ALWAYS BUILD A RAPPORT WITH THE CHILD BEFORE YOU START ASKING THEM QUESTIONS!!!! Remember that depending on where the conversation leads you can piggy back a million questions off of some children because they are very chatty.

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT MOST CHILDREN WILL TELL THE TRUTH.

1. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

Is anyone working? Where? Get work history and skill level. If working, then they should be able to read and write. How much money (hourly, weekly, monthly, yearly, ballpark figures)?

If working, do the children attend daycare? Where? If not who is the main sitter? Get all of their info for collateral. If school age where do they attend? Always get school collaterals and kids attendance records. This also has pickup people on it with contact info. Are they on target with grade level?

If relatives are helping them how long have they been helping and always get the contact info for who they say helps them.

If no one working are they receiving ACCESS benefits?

Child support? WIC services? (If small children)

Food Stamps? SSI//Disability?

Medicaid or private insurance?

1. **DRUG/ALCOHOL:**

History of use? If yes then drug of choice, last time used?

Family history of either drugs or alcohol?

\*\*\***Here are important questions for children in regards to drugs/alcohol:**

* Do mommy and daddy smoke?
* What color are the cigarettes?
* Do they come in a package or do they roll them up themselves?
* Do they ever go in a room that you are not allowed in?
* When they come out do they act funny? Describe funny. (staggering, wobbly, giggly) use descriptive words that are age appropriate for the child
* Are there people/strangers in and out a lot (traffic to home) especially at night? Ever see exchange of money?
* When driving do they swerve or drive funny?
* Ever hard to wake them up during the daytime?

1. **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:**

Any physical fighting or arguing (Young children will not know what arguing means but they now if someone gets loud. Someone hits someone)? What is the frequency? Where does the child go when this happens? How do they feel when the fighting or arguing begins (do they get emotional and cry, hide, not phased by it, etc)? Have they told anyone? Use words they can relate to for their age.

Have the police ever been to their home? If they answer yes, how many times and what for? Did anyone get taken in the police car?

Has father/boyfriend ever moved out and moved back in after a fight? (goes to protectiveness of mom)

Mommy cry a lot or sad?

\*\*\*\*just because this is the “first documented” episode does not mean there has not been past DV. Mom could be minimizing it due to him being the breadwinner or her being a battered spouse. Drill it down with the kids, they will know.

1. **DISCIPLINE AND PHYSICAL ABUSE:**

What is normal discipline or what happens when they get in trouble?

Do they receive spankings and is it over the clothing or are their pants down?

Hand or objects used? If object, what?

Child afraid of anyone and if they say yes you piggyback who and why?

Frequency of discipline. Is it only when you do something really bad and if so what constitutes something really bad? They can give examples. Also young children won’t know what frequent means so use simple language for that age. Also do not put words in their mouth. Ask open-ended questions always.

Mommy and daddy both use physical discipline or just one? If mommy has a boyfriend do they hurt you? Spank/hit?

If mommy and daddy live apart are there only spankings at one home and not the other? This goes to fear of the non-custodial parent. Different settings, different sleeping arrangements and small children cannot adjust like that. They don’t understand why mommy and daddy live apart. Is there bed wetting and if there is, is it only at non-custodial parents home? Piggyback this and is it the surroundings or fearfulness? Also you need to ask mom if they bed wet at her home. This is a red flag that possibly something is not right at the other home.

1. **MENTAL HEALTH HISTORY:**

**PARENTS WILL NEED TO SIGN A RELEASE OF INFORMATION TO VERIFY.**

Diagnosed? With what and are they on meds? If on meds should see the bottles and count pills.

Diagnosis:

Medications: Name of medications, Who prescribed it, Date when filled, How many refills, Directions, complete a pill count on addictive drugs (pain killers, benzos like xanax):

Meds:

Receiving disability and if so for what:

Prior baker acts (when, where):

Family history of mental illness?

1. **PAST SERVICE PROVIDERS/IF ANY:**

If yes then what agency, why involved and did they complete?

PRC for example; prior FIT; prior PS; Prior HS; have they ever completed drug treatment before?

1. **SUPPORT SYSTEMS:**

Extended family or close friends who are involved with the children often and get contact info (first/last name, phone, address)

RELATIVES:

FRIENDS:

CHURCH:

ALL FATHERS to be addressed. Mom may say not involved but ask all verbal children last time they saw their father.

1. **OTHER BASIC QUESTIONS FOR CHILDREN:**

Who cooks dinner?

Where do you eat breakfast and lunch?

Do you eat dinner as a family?

Who helps with your homework?

When you get home from school are you alone?

Does mommy ever leave after she sends you to bed and you wake up alone?

Are you in charge of your younger siblings at night?

Have you ever had to go to the neighbors for food//or because you were scared?

**\*\*\*STRATEGIC INTERVIEWING\*\*\***

**Strategic Interviewing (asking questions without the client realizing what responses you are trying to get from them and what it tells us about the family).**

**How to ask:**

* Normalize to the extent possible. Put them at ease, “most couples fight” or “most couples drink”.
* Focus on Partner/Family dynamics before specific Alcohol/Drug indicators.
* Focus on co-dependents before users.
* Initially focus on alcohol (much less threatening) before going into drugs.

**GENERIC CONTEXT QUESTIONS:**

Most kids know how to push their parents buttons….

Q: Are their times when \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is less patient, more easily frustrated with your child? How about you? (Specific times, ie weekends)

Most parents try to “do right by their kids”…..

Q: How does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ try to raise your children different from how he/she was brought up? How about you? (Generational issue)

At times, live can almost seem overwhelming…..

Q: What are some of the grief or loss experiences \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ had to deal with growing up? More recently? Your children? How about you? (self medicating)

**OVER/UNDER FUNCTIONING:**

Q: Tell me about your partner’s typical day…..Yours?

Q: Describe your spouse’s parenting style.

Q: Describe your spouse’s work habits.

Q: All couples argue, what do yours typically deal with?

Q: No one’s perfect, If there is one thing you could change about your partner, what would it be? What would they say about you?

**PARENTIFIED CHILD:**

Q: What do you like most about your child?

Q: What is your child really good at?

Q: Tell me about some of your child’s strengths.

Q: Who’s your most responsible child? How so?

Ask child==Q: Tell me how you help mom/dad around the house.

Ask child==Q: What is your favorite meal to make? How often do you cook it?

**ISOLATION ELEMENTS:**

Q: How many sleepovers at your house? Friend’s House?

Q: Are there any holidays, special occasions, or family functions that you do not celebrate anymore?

Q: What family members is your partner closest to? Most distant from?

Q: How many times have you moved in the past 5 years?

**ALCOHOL & DRUG IMPAIRMENT – Q’s for Partner (non user)**

Q: How does your partner react when you try to talk about his/her drinking/drug use?

Q: In what ways does your partner’s personality change when he/she is using?

Q: Have you ever had an argument that your partner did not remember the next day?

Q: How many different doctors has your partner seen within the past 2 years? For what?

**ALCOHOL & DRUG IMPAIRMENT – Q’s for User**

Today, many people drink or use drugs recreationally….

Q: Please finish this sentence….I would never become an alcoholic or addicted because…..

Q: How old were you when you had your first drink? Tried an illegal drug?

Q: Which describes your parents better – “hardy drinkers” or “hardly drank”?

Q: Has drinking or using drugs ever caused you to do something you wish you hadn’t?

**\*\*\*MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING\*\*\***

**CONSEQUENCES FOR CHILDREN – Q’s for User:**

Q: If it were true that your drinking/drug use had a negative effect on your child, what would that mean to you?

Q: Describe some ways in which your drug use has been harmful to your children?

Q: How might your relationship with your children be better if you didn’t use?

Q: Can you think of any ways your children are going without as a result of your alcohol or drug use?

Q: Have your children been exposed to anything that you wish they had not seen because of your alcohol or drug use?

Q: What memories would you like to leave your children about their childhood?

Q: Children tend to blame themselves for their parent’s problems or accept responsibility for “curing” them. What are some things you can do to set your children straight on those issues?

Q: Who has been the best role model in your children’s lives?

**CONSEQUENCES FOR USER:**

Q: How might your substance use contributed to negative consequences in your life?

Q: How would you say you are different when you are not drinking/using?

Q: What positive changes in your life might result if you stopped using?

Q: What is the longest period of time you’ve gone without drinking/using? How did you manage to do that? (HOPE QUESTION)

Q: If you woke up tomorrow and everything in your life was the way you wanted it to be, what would that look like?