POST ADOPTION SUPPORT | CENTER FOR CHILD & FAMILY HEALTH
CCFHNC.ORG/ADOPTION

Post-Adoption/Permanency Caregiver Interview

Date: _____ **Caregiver Name: _____**

Clinician: _____ **Child Name: _____**

Tell me a little about what brought you here and what you are hoping to get out of this assessment. *(Consult reason listed on referral form)*

Adoption History: Parents

Tell me about how you came to the decision to adopt your child

- *If child not adopted,* "Tell me about how your child came to be placed in your care."
- *If applicable,* Were both parents on the same page about the adoption decision?

Was the adoption process what you expected it to be?

Thinking back on your expectations before adopting your child, what has been different than what you expected?

- Are there things about your child, yourself as a parent, your relationship with your child, or relationships with others that are different from what you expected?

When your child first came into your home, how did it go forming a relationship with them?

- What would your child do when they were upset? Would they accept comfort from you? Were there ever times when your child seemed to reject you or push you away at a time they needed comfort?
- Were there any challenging behaviors or emotions?

Contact Kate Murray, lead author, for support with this tool: kate.murray@duke.edu

Child's Adoption History

Briefly review timeline of child's placements before coming into parents' care (*consult developmental history form*).

- *(For each placement*) What do you know about your child's care in that home?

What do you know about your child's early experience with abuse, neglect, family violence, or other trauma*?*

- *Consulting referral form, If they selected possible/suspected, ask what leads them to suspect that type of abuse.*

Has there been any exposure to loss or trauma since your child was adopted?

What do you know about possible exposure to drugs or alcohol while your child's birth mother was pregnant? Was there any known or suspected alcohol or substance use by birth parents?

What do you know about the birth parents' mental health?

Adoption Conversations/Openness

Tell me about conversations between you and your child about adoption or their past?

- How often do you talk about adoption? How do those conversations typically go? Who brings it up? Does it seem particularly hard for you or your child to talk about their past?

Is there some information about your child's past that you have not shared with your child because it may be painful or difficult?

Does your child have any contact with any members of his or her birth family?

- If so, what does that look like (how often, who initiates, etc.)? How does your child respond to that relationship? How is it for you as a parent?
- If there is no current contact, has your child expressed any interest in contact with birth family members?

What names does your child use to refer to their birth parents?

Current Family Relationships

Tell me about your relationship now with your child.

- What do you and your child enjoy doing together? Does your child seek comfort from you if they are hurt, sick, sad, or scared? What is difficult about your relationship with your child?

How does your child get along with other members of your family?

- How well do you see your child's personality fitting in with the rest of the family?

Transracial/Cultural Adoption Questions

Describe the racial identity of your family members. (*Review from intake paperwork)*

What else is important for me know about your identity? This could be faith or religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, languages you speak, or where you are from.

For transracial families: How have people in your community treated you as a transracial family? Have you experienced any difficulties?

For transracial families How comfortable are you talking about racial differences with your child?

For families of international adoption: Are there any cultural differences that have made it difficult for your child to adjust to your home or life in America?

For all trans-racial/cultural families: What are some ways that you have incorporated your child's birth culture into your family?

Placement Disruption Risk

(*If applicable, typically when parent has expressed concerns about maintaining placement*) Some families we see have concerns about their ability to keep their child safely in their home. Do you have any such concerns? Have you considered or sought out alternate placements, such as a hospital, treatment center, or other family?

Current Behavior/Mood

What are your top concerns with your child's current behavior?

How would you describe your child's typical mood? Does your child have issues with intense emotions?

What have you tried to deal with these concerns?

School Functioning

Review developmental history for retention, special services, and follow up on details.

How is your child doing in school academically?

Is your child having behavior problems at school (suspensions, expulsion, etc.)?

Is your child receiving any special services at school?

How does your child fit in with other children at school?

Developmental Information

How does your child eat? Are there any issues with eating too much or not enough? Are there any issues with food hoarding?

How does your child sleep?

Does your child have any sensitivities to sensory stimulation (like the way clothes feel, loud sounds, or textures of food)?

Follow up on any concerns listed on the referral form, including any physical or medical issues.

Treatment History

Follow up on information on developmental history form regarding any previous assessments and/or treatment.

Tell me about any mental health services you've received for your child and if they have been helpful.

***Be sure to review suicide/homicide screening and follow up as needed**

Family Strengths

What are some of the greatest strengths of your family?

What are you particularly proud of about your parenting?

What supports do you have in parenting your child (e.g., extended family, church)?

What are some of your child's strengths?

What do you find most likable about your child?

Post-Adoption/Permanency Child Interview

Date: _____ **Child Name: _____**

Clinician: _____

Introduction

- Who I am/what I do
- Purpose of interview
- Confidentiality and limitations
- Interview process
- Voluntary

First, I want to get to know you a little bit. Tell me about some of the things you like to do for fun. Do you do any activities or play any sports?

What do you like about yourself?

Family Relationships

Who lives with you at home?

How do you get along with the members of your family?

- What do you enjoy doing together?
- What do you wish was different?

How do your other family members get along with each other?

Draw a picture of your family doing something together.

- What are they doing?
- Tell me two words to describe each person in the family.

Optional questions about parent-child relationship for teens:

- How much do you feel like your parent cares about what is important to you? How does he/she show their support?
- If you had a really big problem, who would you talk to? [*If parents not mentioned*] Would you go to your parent? How do you think he/she would respond?
- Do you feel that your parent accepts you for who you are? Tell me why or why not.

School Functioning

What school do you go to? What grade are you in?

What do you like most about school? Favorite subject?

What do you like least about school? Least favorite subject?

How do you get along with other students? Do you ever get bullied or made fun of?

Do you ever worry about school?

Do you ever get in trouble at school?

Relationships with Friends/Peers

Do you have friends at home and /or school?

- Do you have someone you consider a best friend? *(For ages 10+)* If yes, do you feel like you can go to that person for help if you have a problem? Do you trust this person?
- What do you like to do with your friends?
- How often do you see them?
- Do you ever have problems with friends, like getting into fights or arguments?

(*For ages 12+)* Do you have a romantic or sexual partner, like a boyfriend or girlfriend? What are the gender or genders of people that you are attracted to?

Adoption Questions

(Use clinical judgement to determine which are appropriate/most important for each client.)

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about being adopted. Tell me what your understanding is of what it means to be adopted.

I am going to get a sense of the places that you've lived by drawing a timeline here. On one end is where you were born and on the other end is now. I'm going to ask you some questions about different places you lived. I know that you might not remember things from when you were a baby, but I want to get a sense of what you understand based on what you were told.

- How old were you when you joined your family?
- Where did you live before that?
- [*For each placement*] What do you remember about living there? Who took care of you there? Who else lived there? Tell me about the best thing about living there. What was the worst thing about living there?

What do you understand about the reason why you are not living with your birth parents [using their language]?

(If child remembers separation from birth parents), What do you remember about when you had to leave your birth parents? What did you understand about what was happening to you at the time? How did you feel at the time?

How often do you think about your birth parents now? What kinds of things do you think about?

(For teens) Many people who were adopted feel like they are missing information about their past. What do you wish you knew about your birth parents or your past?

If you could ask your birth parents one question, what would it be?

How often do you talk about adoption with your parent(s)? Who usually brings it up and what do you talk about?

How comfortable are you in bringing up your adoption? How comfortable do your parent(s) seem talking about adoption?

What are some people or things that you miss from your life before you were adopted?

Kids who have been adopted have many different feelings about being adopted, often at the same time. How do you feel about being adopted? (*use visual feelings thermometers or other age-appropriate rating scale to assess feelings*)

Do you have any contact with any members of your birth family? If yes, describe who and how often you talk to them. How do you feel about that contact? Do you wish you talked to them less or more?

(*For teens, if applicable*] Have you ever thought about trying to find information about any of your birth family members? Have you ever tried reaching out to them or connecting with them online?

Do your friends know that you were adopted? If yes, do you talk about it with them? [*If relevant*, *such as transracial families*] How comfortable are you having friends see you with your family?

Do you ever feel different from other kids because you are adopted? If yes, in what way?

Do other people make comments or ask you questions about adoption? What kinds of things do they say?

Transracial/Transcultural Identity

If someone asked you what your race was, what would you say? Do you consider this to be the same or different from other members of your family?

How do you feel about being a different race than some of your family members? Has it ever been hard to be a different race from your parent(s)?

(*Give examples as needed, such as the following: Some kids feel like they identify with more than one race but don't quite fit in with either. Other kids feel like they are treated differently by people in their family or by people outside of their family because they look different*.)

Have you ever felt like you've been treated unfairly because of your race or being part of a family with different races?

(For older children and teens) Some people who have family members who are a different race feel connected to some aspects of their birth culture and they also feel connected to some aspects of their parents' culture. Do you ever feel this way? If so, tell me what that is like for you. What are some ways you feel connected to your birth culture?

(*For children of international adoption with memories of birth country)* What has it been like to leave your birth country and move to America? What has been different than you expected? What do you miss about your birth country?

Other Identity

Ask preferred name, pronouns, and gender identity, following guidance here (Ages 7+)

If any responses to gender or sexual identity are not already documented by caregivers, ask: Is there anyone you would not like me to use this name/pronouns around? Are you comfortable with these answers appearing in your record, which your parent(s) have access to?

***Complete trauma screener and other measures as indicated**

Risk Assessment

Have you ever felt so sad or bad that you thought about hurting yourself?

Have you ever wished you weren't alive anymore?

If yes to either of the above, assess frequency, duration, plan, and attempts.

Have you ever felt so mad that you thought you might really hurt somebody else?

(Ages 12+) Some kids who have stress in their lives take drugs or drink alcohol. How much do you drink? How much do you use other drugs?

Closing

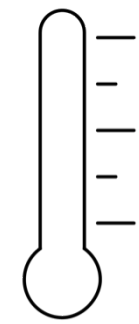
What do you want to be when you grow up? (Or for teens, What plans do you have for after high school?)

If you had three wishes, what would you wish for?

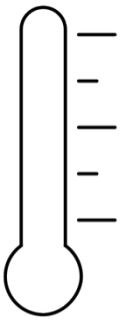
Is there anything I haven't asked you about that you think is important for me to know?

Do you have any questions for me?

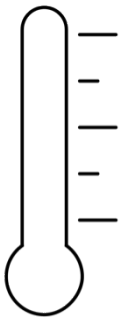
Feelings Thermometers: Shade in how much you feel each of the following feelings:



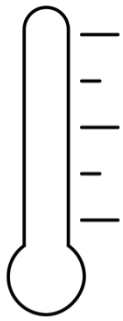
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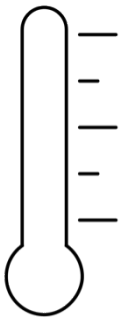
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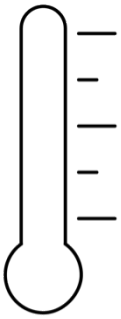
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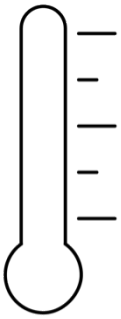
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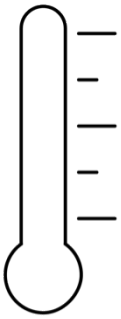
Happy



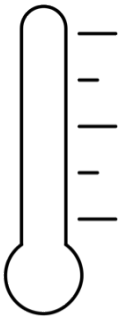
Scared/ Worried



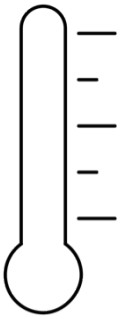
Lonely



Guilty/ Ashamed



Angry/ Frustrated



Other: _____