

Childhood Experiences Worksheet

Please note: The Childhood Experiences Worksheet (ChEW) is designed to support conversation and is not a screening tool.

Our experiences in childhood help to shape the adults we become. Many of us have a mix of positive and negative experiences from growing up. This worksheet can help you think about the childhood experiences YOU had and the types of experiences you want YOUR CHILD to have. This worksheet is meant to be a flexible discussion guide and is not a scored assessment. The tool can be used in its entirety or by pulling out individual sections.

1 Caregiver History

In this section, think back to the first 18 years of your life to answer the following questions. If there is another caregiver for your child or children, they may want to answer these questions too.



Positive Childhood Experiences

These are some positive things that may have happened during your childhood. Positive childhood experiences can help you have a sense of calm, security, and wellbeing throughout life.

<i>Which of these happened to you while you were growing up in your first 18 years of life...</i>	Caregiver 1		Caregiver 2	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
Did you have at least one caregiver with whom you felt safe?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you feel able to talk to your family about feelings?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you feel your family stood by you in difficult times?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have a predictable home routine (for example, regular meals, bedtime, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have at least one good friend?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have at least one adult (not a parent/ caregiver or the person from #1) who could provide you with support or advice?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have beliefs that gave you comfort?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you like or feel a sense of belonging in school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have opportunities to have fun?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you like yourself or feel comfortable with yourself?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have other positive experiences growing up?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Adverse Childhood Experiences

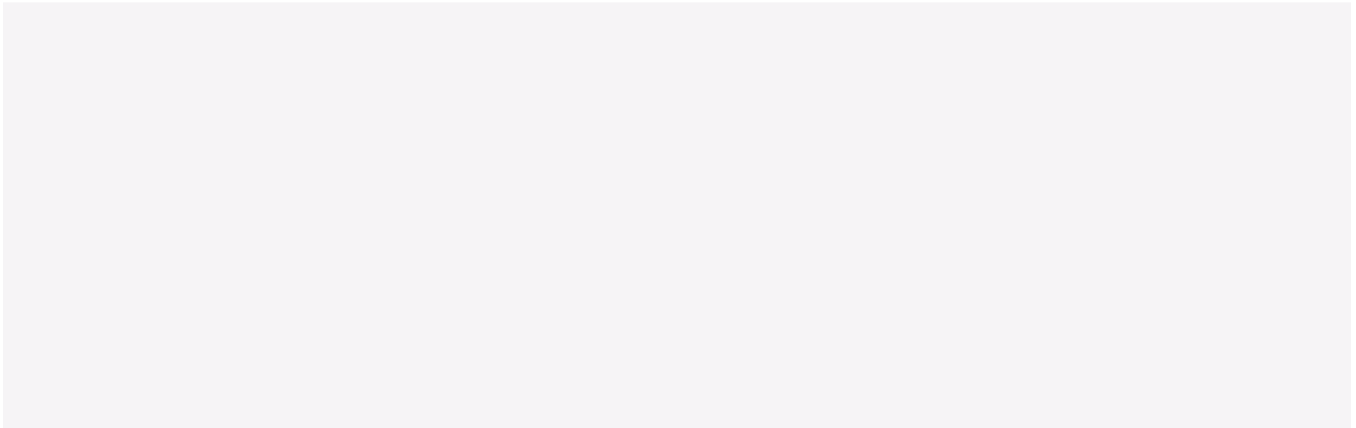
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood and may cause toxic stress. These are things that happen to children that may impact their ability to grow and thrive. ACEs are common and can be intergenerational (things that also happened to your parents and grandparents). ACEs you have experienced may also have positive impacts in building your resiliency, especially if you experienced supports such as those on the first page. If you experienced ACEs as a child, your home visitor has some resources to share with you.

<i>Which of these happened to you while you were growing up in your first 18 years of life...</i>	Caregiver 1		Caregiver 2	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
Did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, leave marks or physically hurt you in any way?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did a parent or adult in your home regularly with anger swear at you, insult you, or put you down?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did anyone ever touch you sexually or force you to have sex?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were special?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you feel that you frequently didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had no one to protect or take care of you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you live with anyone who had a problem with frequent drinking or using drugs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did your parents or adults in your home ever hit, punch, beat, or threaten to harm each other?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have to move a lot?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Was a family member that you lived with ever mentally ill, depressed, or admitted to a psychiatric hospital?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did your family regularly not have enough money to meet your needs (rent, utilities, food, transportation)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you ever lose a parent through divorce, abandonment, death, or other reason?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you live with anyone who served time or was sentenced to serve time in a prison, jail, or other correctional facility?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you or your family experience discrimination?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you experience an event that impacted many people and was also challenging for you and your family (such as a war or natural disaster)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Were you regularly exposed to an environmental substance that impacted your health or well-being (like lead, contaminated water, poor air quality)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have any other negative experiences growing up?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

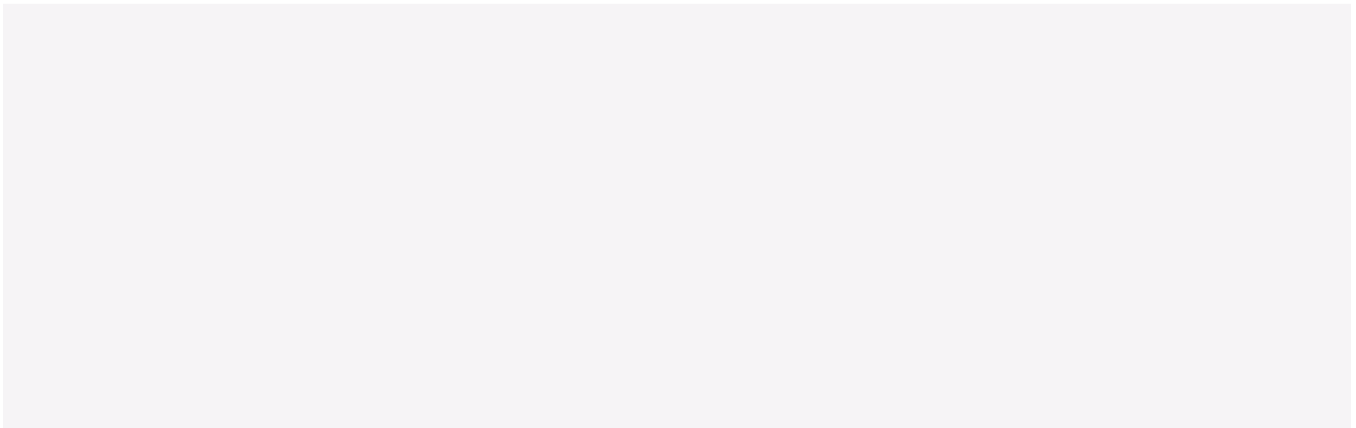
Thinking About **Your Childhood Experiences**

Thinking about childhood experiences may bring up a lot of feelings and questions, especially as a new parent. Let your home visitor know how they can help!

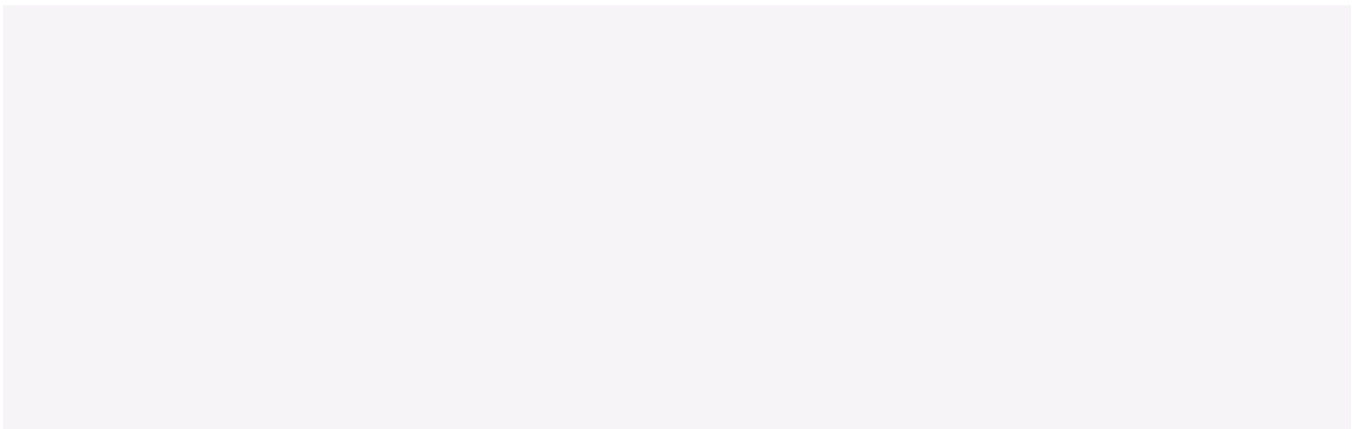
Which, if any, of these experiences **still impact** you today?



Which of these positive experiences helped you **grow and thrive**?



When you look at these lists, how does that make you **feel**?



2 Your Child's Experience

Now let's think about the experiences your child is having right now at the beginning of their childhood.



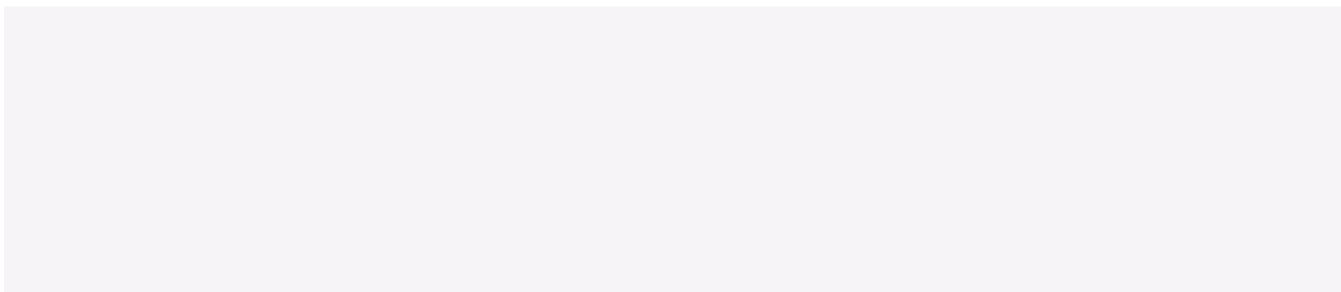
Positive Childhood Experiences

<i>Which of these things is your child experiencing?</i>	YES	NOT YET	NOT SURE
Does your child have at least one caregiver to keep them safe?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you comfort your child when they are crying or upset?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you talk or sing to your child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you cuddle and hold your child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you tell your child "I love you" and other things to help them feel special?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you have a predictable home routine, like regular meals and a regular bedtime?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you praise your child when they do something right or new?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you pay attention to your child when they are trying to communicate with you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you set aside time each day to talk and play with your child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does your child have support from other adult friends and family members?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there other young children they can have "play dates" with so they can learn to make friends as they grow older?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you include your child in family traditions like birthdays or holidays?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any other positive experiences that your child is having?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

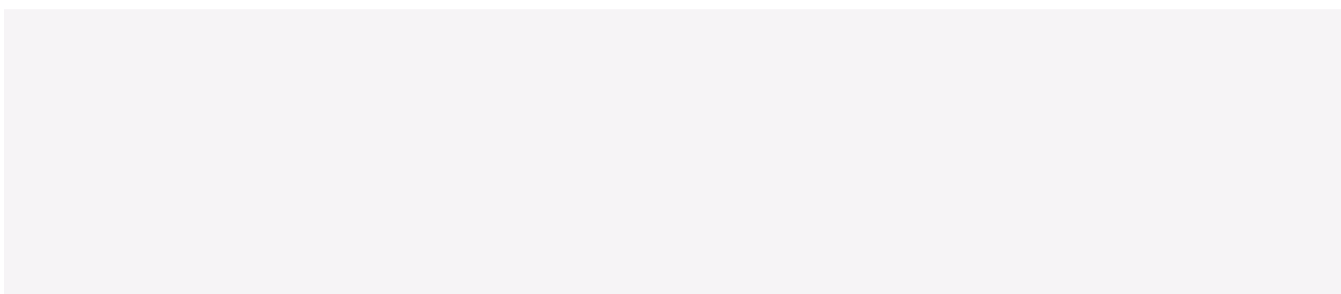
Thinking About **Your Child's Current Experiences**

Thinking about your child's experiences may bring up a lot of thoughts, feelings, and questions for you. Let your home visitor know how they can help!

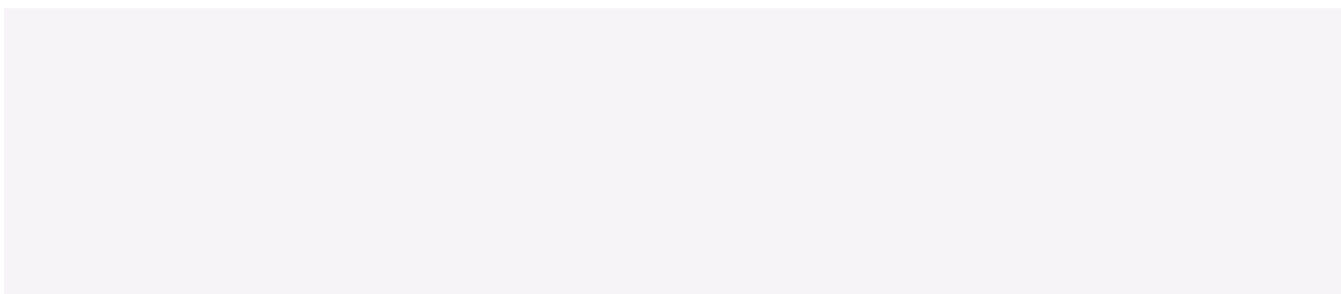
Which of these **positive experiences** do you **want your child to have**?



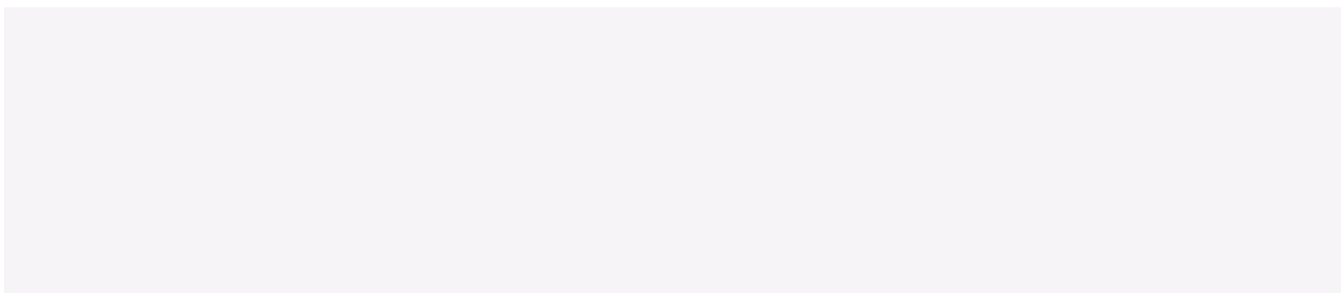
Are there things about **your childhood** you would like **your child** to have or experience? Are there things you would like to be **different for your child**?



When you look at this list, how does that make you **feel**?



What **resources and supports** do you **want to access** for your child?



1 Sources

Positive Childhood Experiences Caregiver Section adapted from:

- Bethell, C., Jones, J., Gombojav, N., Linkenbach, J., & Sege, R. (2019). Positive childhood experiences and adult mental and relational health in a statewide sample: Associations across adverse childhood experiences levels. *JAMA pediatrics*, 173(11), e193007-e193007.
- Narayan, A. J., Rivera, L. M., Bernstein, R. E., Harris, W. W., & Lieberman, A. F. (2018). Positive childhood experiences predict less psychopathology and stress in pregnant women with childhood adversity: A pilot study of the benevolent childhood experiences (BCEs) scale. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 78, 19-30.
- Input from MIHP staff members.

Adverse Childhood Experiences Caregiver Section adapted from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2021). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) ACE Module*. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/acestudy/BRFSS_ACEModuleQuestions_2021_508.pdf
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2023). *Risk and Protective Factors*. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/riskprotectivefactors.html>
- Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V., & Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. *American journal of preventive medicine*, 14(4), 245-258. CDC ACE risk factors
- Input from MIHP staff members.

2 Sources

Positive Childhood Experiences Child's Experience Section adapted from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2023). *Risk and Protective Factors*. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/riskprotectivefactors.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2021). *Positive Parenting Tips*. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/index.html>
- Child Welfare Information Gateway (2020). *Keeping Your Family Strong*. https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/strong_ts_2020.pdf
- Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE) (2022). *The Four Building Blocks of HOPE*. <https://positiveexperience.org/resource/the-four-building-block-of-hope/>
- ACE/PCE items included in Part 1 of this worksheet.
- Input from MIHP staff members.

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