

# CONVERSATION CARDS



THEMED CARDS TO SUPPORT PHSB CONVERSATIONS WITH CAREGIVERS & CHILDREN

Safe Wayz



The Companion Guide and Conversation Cards were developed by NSW Health in partnership between the Program Delivery Office (Ministry of Health) and the Education Centre Against Violence (NSW Health).

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Rosie's Place

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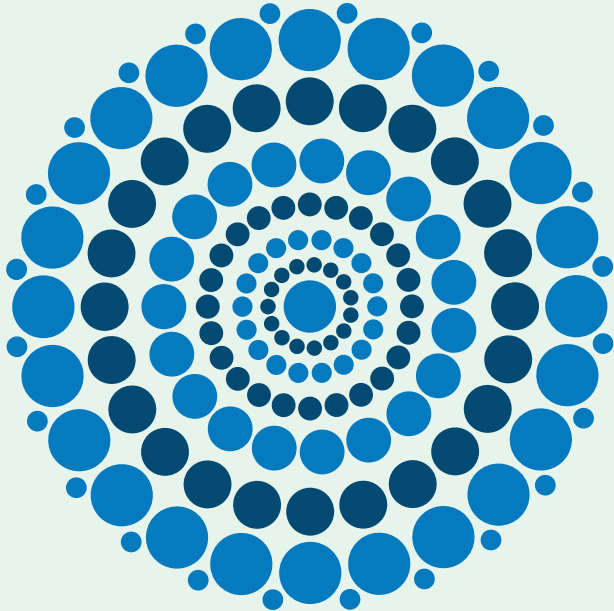
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The Safe Wayz artwork symbolises the key messages of the Safe Wayz program.

The artist, Lani Balzan, is a proud Aboriginal woman from the Wiradjuri people of the three-river tribe.



## Culturally safe and inclusive

We welcome children of all abilities, languages, cultures, experiences and backgrounds. Each district has at least one Aboriginal Safe Wayz worker.



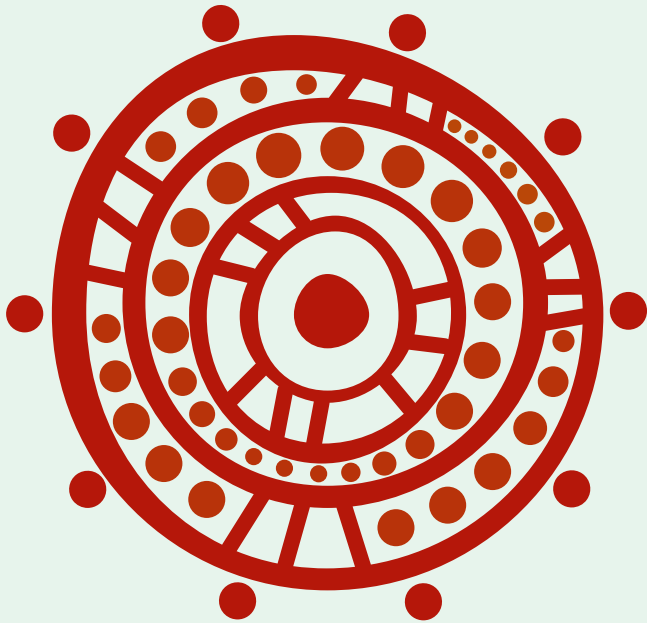
## Focused on working with families

We work with families and carers. We will listen to your concerns. We will help you to make positive changes. We will talk with you about supports in your community that might be able to help.



## Focused on supporting children

Children are free to express themselves, and ask questions. We provide information in a way they can understand. We build on their strengths.



## Safe and respectful

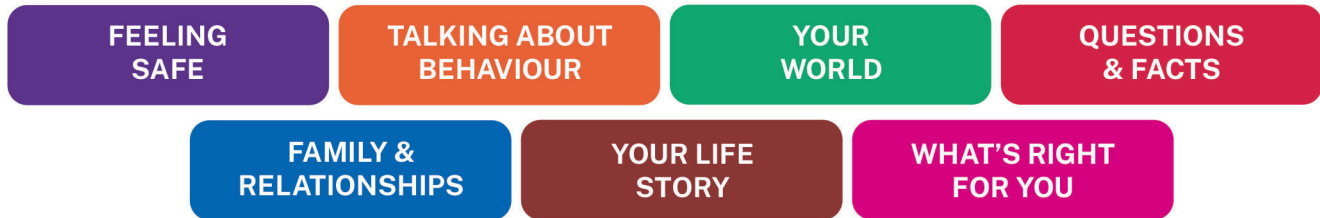
We support children and families with dignity. We listen to your concerns and help build understanding. We will support you around the safety of your child(ren).

# Using the conversation cards

These cards support your frontline, clinical practice with children under 10 years old who have displayed Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviours (PHSB). Together with the companion guide they offer guidance and ideas for therapeutic engagement with families and children.

The companion guide and these cards are designed to build on concepts you will have seen already in tertiary level PHSB training and related frameworks. They are not intended to replace therapeutic knowledge or expertise, but suggest prompts to help you navigate the PHSB landscape, connecting relevant themes to counselling conversation starters.

## Introducing the conversation ‘anchor themes’




The cards are structured around 7 anchor themes to support conversations with parents/carers and children who have been referred for specialist/tertiary counselling. The questions for each theme use plain language and concepts which are straightforward, inclusive, and adaptable for use with diverse client needs and circumstances.

Each theme splits into 3 'sub-themes'. Each sub-theme offers 2 questions for parents/carers, and 2 for shared conversations together with the child. There are 12 questions in total for each theme.

*Here's an example from 'Family & Relationships':*

You can see the full list of suggested questions at the back of the companion guide.

 <b>FAMILY &amp; RELATIONSHIPS</b>				
SUB-THEME	PARENTS & CARERS		CHILDREN & SHARED CONVERSATIONS	
Being together	What's family/home life like?	How is your family doing right now?	Who is in your family? What's your favourite thing to do with them?	Who are your friends? What do you like to do together?
Favourite people	Who do you go to when you need help or support?	Who does your child feel closest to? Who do they go to for support?	Can you tell me about a good friend you have?	Who would you like to spend more time with?
Unhelpful people	Are any relationships or family connections stressful or difficult?	Who would you never talk to about what happened?	Do you know people who fight and argue? What do you do when this happens?	Who would you like to spend less time with?

# Using cards to support conversations

The conversation cards are to support clinical conversations. You might use them to open the discussion on certain topics, or to change the pace and format of conversations during sessions. Questions are intentionally short and straightforward so they can be adapted for different ages, cognitive abilities, language and cultural contexts.

In the majority of cases, conversations with parents/carers should come first. You can also guide them in preparing for the conversation with their child by discussing any concerns they might have and how they can best support their child during conversations.

**The companion guide and conversation cards do not replace the therapeutic conversation, nor are they considered to be a 'one size fits all' resource. Trust your own clinical expertise to adapt language, interpretation and context to best align with the needs of your clients.**

## Sequencing: Linking, layering and 'looping back'

Each theme appears individually, but should be considered as interconnected elements that help us work towards a holistic understanding of a child's behaviours in the context of their family, environment and community. The themes are not intended to be used in a particular order and you are encouraged to explore suitable topics in response to the needs of each family and child. Suggestions for linking, layering multiple themes and 'looping back' to previously discussed themes are included in each section of the companion guide.

# Introducing a theme

Each theme includes a brief description which you can use if you find it helpful:



You could show or read  
the description first...

..then turn the card and  
show/read the 3 sub-themes

# Introducing the questions

Each sub-theme has 2 questions for parents/carers, and 2 questions for children/shared conversations. The cards are always labelled to show who the questions are for.

 **PARENTS & CARERS**

 **CHILDREN & SHARED CONVERSATIONS**

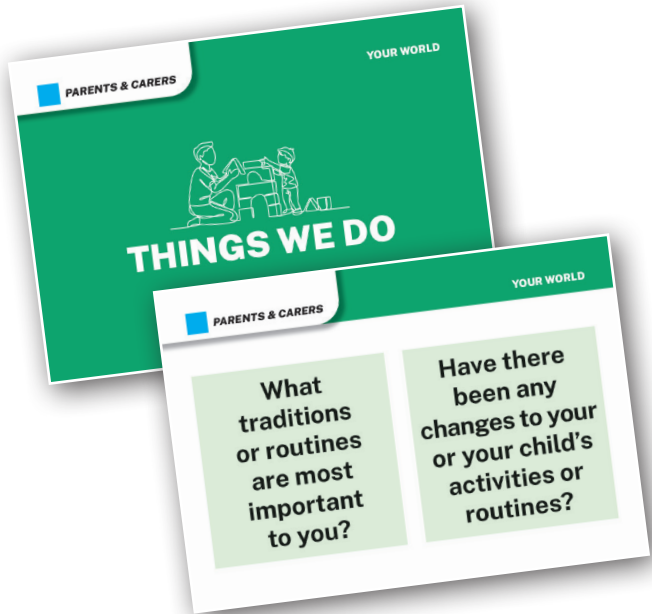


Illustration of two cards for Parents & Carers. The top card is green with a white header containing a blue square icon, the text 'PARENTS & CARERS', and 'YOUR WORLD'. Below the header is a white line drawing of a person and a child sitting at a table. The main text on the card reads 'THINGS WE DO'. The bottom card is white with a green header containing a blue square icon, the text 'PARENTS & CARERS', and 'YOUR WORLD'. It features two light green boxes with the following questions: 'What traditions or routines are most important to you?' and 'Have there been any changes to your or your child's activities or routines?'.



Illustration of two cards for Children & Shared Conversations. The top card is green with a white header containing a yellow circle icon, the text 'CHILDREN & SHARED CONVERSATIONS', and 'YOUR WORLD'. Below the header is a white line drawing of a person and a child sitting at a table. The main text on the card reads 'THINGS WE DO'. The bottom card is white with a green header containing a yellow circle icon, the text 'CHILDREN & SHARED CONVERSATIONS', and 'YOUR WORLD'. It features two light green circles with the following questions: 'What do you like to do before / after school?' and 'What are your favourite places?'.



## Offering choices: theme and sub-theme

- The cards are designed so you can always offer choice to parents, carers and children.
- Show or read out the 3 'sub-themes'. If needed, you can also suggest what the parent, carer or child might be able to talk about.

## Introducing questions: choose one, both or neither

- When a 'sub-theme' is chosen, show or read the 2 questions for that theme.
- The parent, carer or child might want to answer one, both, or none of the questions on the cards. If you have your own preferred question, ask that instead.
- Extend and build on the conversation based on their responses. If they want to choose a different question or switch to another theme, that's okay too.



# Card themes: overview

## FEELING SAFE



These conversations are about creating a feeling of safety and establishing your therapeutic relationship and trust. You don't have to start talking about the problematic behaviour straight away – it may be better to begin more broadly, then use these conversations to link to more specific discussions about PHSB as needed, when clients are comfortable.

## TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOUR



These conversations can help to regulate and calm families, giving them a chance to be heard, understood, and held without catastrophising behaviour. It can help us explore what's behind the behaviour (e.g. unmet need, emotional response, not a rational decision) and explore safer ways to talk and respond to needs. Conversations move away from reinforcing stigma and shame about the behaviours, helping children and parents/carers talk about them in different ways.

## YOUR WORLD



These conversations help you gain insights into the circumstances that may be impacting the child and PHSB, e.g. culture, education, social, financial, and other factors. Be curious, seeking to understand the child and family context holistically without preconceived ideas. Consult with experienced colleagues as needed around specific contexts such as working with disability, cultural diversity, age, gender and so on.

## QUESTIONS & FACTS



Talking about common PHSB myths and misunderstandings can be a helpful way to start conversations with new clients or to re-visit as needed. You can acknowledge strong emotions related to PHSB, but also help to build trust by answering questions and sharing what you know. It's important to gauge clients' current state of regulation (fight/flight/freeze) and use your therapeutic skills to validate, reassure, regulate or simply listen and be ready to explore their current understanding and response to the PHSB.

## FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS



PHSB doesn't happen in isolation, and support must be holistic, involving children and their families. We want to build connections between us, the family, carers and child, with conversations that support safety and communication both within and outside the sessions. These conversations are also helping us to work out what may be contributing to the behaviour.

## YOUR LIFE STORY



PHSB can be a trauma response, and a way of communicating and coping for a child. In these conversations, we are constantly assessing, exploring and being curious about what has happened to this child/family. What do they need from this process in order to repair and recover? This will be a theme across all conversations, but the suggestions and questions here can help to facilitate these conversations.

## WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU



These conversations are about exploring appropriate ways to work with clients' individual needs and involving them in choices. You will need to adapt language and activities to fit the child's age, disability or cognitive development, for example. You don't have to be the expert in every specialist area — draw on the wisdom of other clinicians (and the carer/family) when you need it.



# FEELING SAFE

Let's talk about feeling safe and helping other people feel safe. We could talk about what you do to feel safe, and who helps you feel safe.

**Is there a topic here  
you would like to start with?**

**Feeling  
safe**

**Safe  
places**

**Safe  
people**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**FEELING SAFE**



**FEELING SAFE**

**When you  
don't feel  
safe, what  
does it  
feel like?**

**How can  
you tell if  
your child is  
not feeling  
safe?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**FEELING SAFE**



**FEELING SAFE**



**What do  
you do when  
you feel happy?  
What about when  
you feel sad  
or scared?**

**What  
happens in  
your body  
if you don't  
feel safe?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**FEELING SAFE**



# **SAFE PLACES**

**When /where  
do you feel  
safe?**

**Do you change  
things at home  
to make it  
safer? How?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**FEELING SAFE**



**SAFE PLACES**



**Where do  
you go if you  
don't feel safe  
or okay?**

**How do you  
feel when  
you are in a  
safe place?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**FEELING SAFE**



**SAFE PEOPLE**

**Who helps  
or supports  
you?**

**Who helps  
your child to  
feel safe?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**FEELING SAFE**



**SAFE PEOPLE**



**Who can  
you tell  
if you don't  
feel safe?**

**When you  
feel sad  
or scared,  
who do you  
go to?**



# TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOUR

We could talk about what happened,  
how you are feeling about it  
and what it means to you.

**Is there a topic here  
you would like to start with?**

**How I  
feel**

**What  
happened**

**What  
behaviour  
means**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOUR**



**HOW I FEEL**



**How did you  
feel about what  
happened  
with your child?’**

**How are  
you feeling  
now?’**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOUR**



**HOW I FEEL**



**How did you  
feel when the  
behaviour  
happened?**

**Is anyone  
else hurt or  
upset by what  
happened?  
Who?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOUR**



# WHAT HAPPENED



**What worries  
you most  
about the  
behaviour?**

**What could  
help keep  
your child  
and others  
safe?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOUR**



**WHAT HAPPENED**



**This is a safe place to talk about what happened and we are all here to help you.**

**Can we talk  
about what  
happened?**

**When this  
happened  
how did  
you feel?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOUR**



# **WHAT BEHAVIOUR MEANS**



**What do you think makes the behaviour happen?**

**What do you know about the sexualised behaviour?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**TALKING ABOUT BEHAVIOUR**



# **WHAT BEHAVIOUR MEANS**



**Why do  
you think we  
are talking  
about what  
happened?**

**Why do  
you think  
this behaviour  
happens?**



# YOUR WORLD

What's your world like?

We can talk about what you do each day,  
people you see and what you like or don't like.

**Is there a topic here  
you would like to start with?**

**My  
day**

**My  
people**

**Things  
we do**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**YOUR WORLD**



**MY DAY**

**What does  
a typical day  
look like  
for you?**

**What makes  
life easier for  
you? What  
makes things  
more difficult?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**YOUR WORLD**



**MY DAY**



**What's your  
favourite  
time of  
the day?**

**What do  
you like  
to do on the  
weekend?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**YOUR WORLD**



**MY PEOPLE**

**Who do you  
spend most  
time with?**

**Has this  
situation  
(behaviour)  
impacted any  
relationships?  
How?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**YOUR WORLD**



**MY PEOPLE**



**Who are  
your friends?  
What do you  
like about  
them?**

**Who would  
you like to  
spend more  
(or less)  
time with?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**YOUR WORLD**



**THINGS WE DO**

**What traditions or routines are most important to you?**

**Have there been any changes to your or your child's activities or routines?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**YOUR WORLD**

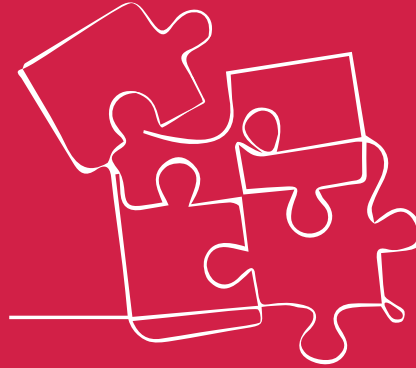


**THINGS WE DO**



**What do  
you like to do  
before/after  
school?**

**What are  
your favourite  
places?**



# QUESTIONS & FACTS

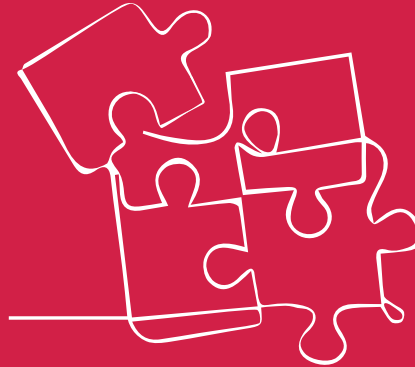
Here we can explore what's true  
and what isn't true about this behaviour.  
We can talk about any questions you have, too.

**Is there a topic here  
you would like to start with?**

**Questions  
I have**

**What other  
families &  
kids ask**

**What  
happens  
next**



# **QUESTIONS I HAVE**



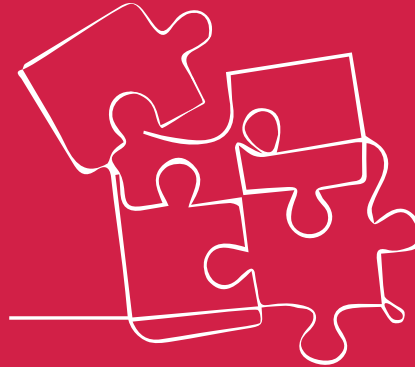
**What  
questions  
do you have  
about this  
behaviour?**

**What  
questions  
do you  
think your  
child has?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**QUESTIONS & FACTS**

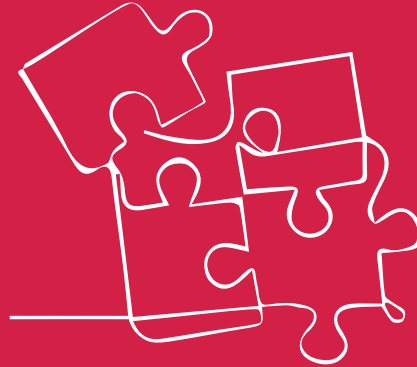


**QUESTIONS I HAVE**



**What do  
you want to  
know or ask  
about?**

**What are  
you most  
confused  
or unsure  
about?**



# **WHAT OTHER FAMILIES & KIDS ASK**

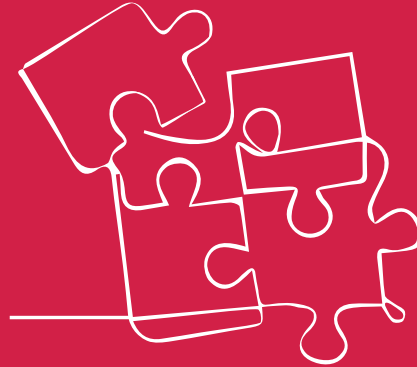
**Is there  
something  
wrong with  
us/my child?**

**Will the  
behaviour  
stop?  
How likely  
is that?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**QUESTIONS & FACTS**



# **WHAT OTHER FAMILIES & KIDS ASK**



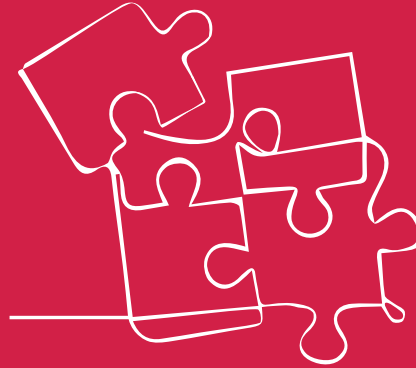
**Are we  
in big  
trouble?**

**Do we  
have to tell  
everybody?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**QUESTIONS & FACTS**



**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

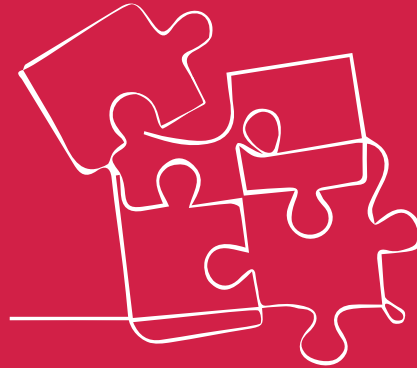
**What do you  
think will  
happen in  
the future?**

**What would  
you like to see  
happen for  
your child,  
in the future?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**QUESTIONS & FACTS**



**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**



**What do  
you wish  
could be  
different?**

**Can you  
picture yourself  
a year older than  
now? What are  
you doing?**



# **FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS**

We can talk about your family,  
relationships, and people  
who are important to you.

**Is there a topic here  
you would like to start with?**

**Being  
together**

**Favourite  
people**

**Unhelpful  
people**

**PARENTS & CARERS**

**FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS**



**BEING TOGETHER**

**What's  
family/home  
life like?**

**How is your  
family doing  
right now?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS**



**BEING TOGETHER**



**Who is in  
your family?  
What's your  
favourite thing  
to do with  
them?**

**Who are  
your friends?  
What do  
you like to do  
together?**

**PARENTS & CARERS**

**FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS**



# **FAVOURITE PEOPLE**

**Who do  
you go to  
when you  
need help or  
support?**

**Who does  
your child feel  
closest to?  
Who do they  
go to for  
support?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS**



# **FAVOURITE PEOPLE**



**Can you  
tell me  
about a  
good friend  
you have?**

**Who  
would you  
like to spend  
more time  
with?**

**PARENTS & CARERS**

**FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS**



# UNHELPFUL PEOPLE

**Are any relationships or family connections stressful or difficult?**

**Who would you never talk to about what happened?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS**



# UNHELPFUL PEOPLE



**Do you  
know people  
who fight and  
argue? What do  
you do when this  
happens?**

**Who would  
you like to  
spend less  
time with?**



# YOUR LIFE STORY

We can talk about your life now and before now.  
It might include things that have been hard  
for you, and how you feel about that.

**Is there a topic here  
you would like to start with?**

**My  
story**

**The hard  
stuff in life**

**My life  
now**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**YOUR LIFE STORY**



**MY STORY**

**What do I  
need to  
know about  
your life  
(past or now)?**

**What do I  
need to  
understand  
about your  
child's life?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**YOUR LIFE STORY**



**MY STORY**



**What's been  
happening at  
home or school  
recently?**

**If you  
describe  
your life,  
what does it  
look like?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**YOUR LIFE STORY**



# **THE HARD STUFF IN LIFE**

**Can you  
tell me about  
when things  
have been  
difficult  
for you?**

**What made  
things hard  
for your  
child in the  
past?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**YOUR LIFE STORY**



# **THE HARD STUFF IN LIFE**



**What  
do you wish  
could be  
different  
at home or  
school?**

**When  
something  
was hard or  
upsetting  
for you, what  
happened?**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**YOUR LIFE STORY**



**MY LIFE NOW**



**What's on  
your mind  
right now?  
What help do  
you need?**

**What's  
difficult in  
your child's  
life at the  
moment?**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**YOUR LIFE STORY**



**MY LIFE NOW**



**What  
is your  
biggest worry  
right now?**

**What  
helps you  
feel happy  
right now?**



# WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

Listening to you and  
getting to know you better.

**Is there a topic here  
you would like to start with?**

**You  
need to  
know...**

**What  
helps  
me**

**What  
doesn't  
help me**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU**



**YOU NEED TO KNOW...**

## **How would you finish this sentence?**

**The most  
important  
thing to  
understand  
about my  
child is...**

**In these  
sessions,  
I need  
you to...**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU**



**YOU NEED TO KNOW...**



## **How would you finish this sentence?**

**When I  
come here,  
can we  
please...?**

**I want our  
sessions to  
feel like  
include...**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU**



**WHAT HELPS ME**

# **How would you finish this sentence?**

**Talking  
to my child  
is easiest  
when...**

**What helps  
me when  
we talk  
here is...**



**CHILDREN & SHARED  
CONVERSATIONS**

**WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU**



**WHAT HELPS ME**



**How would you finish  
this sentence?**

**It's easier  
for me to  
talk to you  
when...**

**Spending  
time with you  
feels better  
when...**



**PARENTS & CARERS**

**WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU**



**WHAT DOESN'T  
HELP ME**

## **How would you finish this sentence?**

**When we  
are not  
getting the  
right support,  
I feel...**

**This won't  
work for  
us if...**