



Put It Into Practice #3

Questions For Older Children And Youth About Their Strengths And Needs

► **When should I use this resource?** DURING and AFTER a natural disaster occurs

Directions: Use the sample questions below to ensure that school-age children, adolescents, and transition-age youth have a voice in identifying their own strengths and needs in four key areas during and after a natural disaster: information and resources, social connections, physical safety and wellness, and emotional safety and wellness. This is not an exhaustive list, and you may want to add your own questions.

Information & Resources

Example questions for older children and youth

- Is there anything you want to know about [natural disaster/pandemic]?
- Is there anything you want to know about how the services you receive from [child welfare agency] may be different during [natural disaster/pandemic]?
- What types of support would help you during [disaster/pandemic]? (*Prompts: food, clothing, housing, financial assistance, education, employment, mental health or substance abuse treatment*)
- What other information or supports might you need during [disaster/pandemic]?

Social Connections

Example questions for older children and youth

- How are things going at home? (*Prompts: biological, foster, and/or kinship home*)
- How are your family members doing? (*Prompts: biological, foster, and/or kin*)
- Are you getting the support you need from your family and friends? If not, what do you need?
- Are there family members or friends that you need help getting in touch with?

Physical Safety & Wellness

Example questions for older children and youth

- How are you feeling physically? Are you having health concerns? If so, what?
- How well are you taking care of yourself? (*Prompts: exercise, sleep, nutrition, self-care, hobbies, medical care, mental health care*)
- Are your basic needs being met? (*Prompts: sleep, having enough food, safe housing, enough money, access to education/employment, medical care, and mental health care*)
- Is there anything that is making you feel physically unsafe right now? If yes, what's making you feel unsafe? What would you need in order to feel safe?

Emotional Safety & Wellness

Example questions for older children and youth

- How are you feeling about the [natural disaster/pandemic]?
- It's common to feel stressed, worried, irritable, or depressed when there's a natural disaster or pandemic. Are you having any of those feelings? If so, tell me about what you're feeling.
- Some people use more alcohol/drugs during a natural disaster or pandemic. Is this a concern for you?
- Are you getting the emotional support you need?
- What type of emotional support would be helpful to you?
- What's going well for you? Are there ways [child welfare agency] can help you continue to do well?