

## **Best questions that could be used to explore Parental Conflict**

### **Exploring with parents who are together**

- When you are feeling tired, frustrated, upset – how is this communicated to your partner? Can you tell me about their reaction? How would you prefer to tell them about how you are feeling?
- Describe to me how you think (name of partner).... Feels when you have said that/raised your voice. Can you talk me through their reaction?
- Can you tell me how ...(child) could feel when hearing arguments/raised voices/shouting – how do you know that?
- Tell me about a time, where you have felt upset/angry/frustrated/overwhelmed and instead of arguing, you did something else ... what was that? How did it help?
- Can you think of a time when you were young, did you know anyone in your family or in your friends whose parents argued?... what happened... how did that make you feel at the time.... How do you feel about it now?
- If I were to ask a neighbour about you and you partners relationship what do you think they would say?
- If I were to ask a friend/parent/sibling about you and your partners relationship what would they say ?
- If you could change one thing about your relationship what would that be and why..... what difference would that make to you and to your partner?
- Tell me a time when things have been good with you and ..... what did that look like?
- Tell me about the worst time with you and .....what did it look like?
- On a bad day, who supports you?
- Tell me the good things about (partner/child)
- How often do you feel stressed/argue? A couple of times a week? Every day? What kinds of things can cause you stress/argue? Are things tougher at home more than usual?
- How do you know when your partner is stressed? How does your partner know when you are stressed?
- What happens when you argue, who starts it? How does this make you feel? What would you like to happen?
- What support do you think would help you?
- What do you want your future to look like? What do you think needs to happen to get there?
- Talk me through how you would want your relationship to look like?
- What do you think your child/children would say about your relationship?
- What are the things you argue most about?
- What annoys you the most in their responses?
- What do your children see and hear?
- Do they get upset or caught up in arguments?
- How does the disagreement turn into a big argument?
- Is there anything you are able to agree on?

- When was the last time you were kind or civil to each other? What was different to now?
- What are your co-parent's positive parenting qualities?
- How do you show your child you love them?
- Do you ever resolve the issues in a positive way?
- What difference could you make to help?
- What would you like to happen?
- What would be the best outcome for your child?
- Going forward, what are some of your hopes about how you work together as parents?
- What would you like your children to see and experience as they grow?
- As adults looking back, how would you like your children to remember their childhood

### **Exploring co-parenting with parents who live apart**

- What would you like the day to day care arrangements for the children to look like?
- Who will take them to school and pick them up from school? Where will they sleep during the school week?
- What about your co-parent? Is it safe for the children to spend time with your co-parent?
- What level of care do you see them having? Think about the practical arrangements like travel, school uniforms, homework, toys, siblings, pets, etc
- Will this work for your children? Should you ask them what they want? Will all the children have the same view? Will your child's voice be more important as they grow?
- What will care arrangements look like for special occasions like birthdays, religious holidays, father's/mother's day?
- What about holidays? Will these be abroad or in the UK?
- How will you and your co-parent make decisions about education like the choice of school, subjects, parents' evenings etc?
- How will you make decisions around your child's health with your co-parent? Who will make appointments with the GP and dentist? How will you share information?
- How will you deal with a child's request for a tattoo or piercing? Will there be a process for you to discuss this with your co-parent?
- How will you keep your child safe in relation to sex, alcohol and drugs? How will you work with your co-parent in this respect?
- What else is important to you? Do you want your child to be raised in a certain faith or with certain cultural values? What about a second language or the need to understand ethnic roots by mixing with extended family?
- How and when will new partners be introduced to the children? What role will they take and what will they be called by the children?

- How do you want to communicate with your co-parent? Phone, text, email or parenting app?
- What about money? Does one co-parent need help from the other? Will this be a regular payment or for expenses like school trips?

### **Exploring with child/children:**

- We all deal with things differently when feeling upset or angry, can you talk to me about what happens in your house when a person feels this way? Tell me how that makes you feel?
- When people fall out, or have an argument, how do you think they can make up (or language used by the family)
- Can you tell me how adults around you show they love and care about each other? And you?
- Who would be a part of your perfect day? what would they be doing? Where would you be?
- If you had a magic wand, and tomorrow, Mummy and Daddy (or whoever is in the house) were happy/getting on well (examples) what do you think this would look like? Do you see this in your house?
- If your parents could be like someone else, who? What does that person do that mum and dad don't?
- Tell me the good things about Mum /Dad..... what do they do?
- Sometimes families shout and fall out...can you tell me about that?
- How does that make you feel? (use feelings cards to help young children...emojis happy/sad/scared/angry?)
- Who do you go and tell/talk to when you feel scared or worried?
- What would help make things better for you?
- If you could tell me what a good/bad day is what is it? Why?