Function-Based Interview Tool - Parents

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

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| **Sample Opening Script**: Thank you for meeting with me. We have planned 1 hour for our discussion. We can also schedule additional time if needed. I wanted to start by sharing with you how happy we are to have [insert student’s name] as part of our school community. She/he brings many strengths to fabric of our school and I would like to start by highlighting some of the [insert student’s name] qualities we find particularly admirable.     * [insert a description of the student’s strengths] * [share a story that illustrate the student’s strengths]   I want to reiterate our commitment to implementing this assessment process so that we can figure out what supports and strategies are going to work best for [insert student’s name]. You are an important partner in this process and the interview we are about to do helps me learn about [insert student’s name] and your family from your point of view.  I previously sent you the interview questions that will guide our discussion today. As I mentioned in the email, those are my starter questions. Based on information you share, new questions may occur to me so that I can better understand your point of view. Before we get started, are there any questions that you prefer not to discuss today?  Did you have any questions I can answer? At any time, you can end the interview or decide that there are questions you prefer not to answer. |

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| 1. **I would like to begin by learning a little bit more about your familiar. Is it okay if I begin asking some questions?** | |
| **Tell me about your family.** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * Who are the members of the household? * Where does [*student’s name*] fall in the order of his/her siblings (oldest, youngest, middle child)? * How does [insert student’s name] get along with his/her siblings or other family members living in the home? * Who are the significant people in [*insert student’s name*]’s life? |  |
| **Tell me about [*insert family’s last name, e.g., the Martin’s*] family life.** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * What is the primary language spoken at home? * What are your family’s favorite or important family traditions? * What types of activities do you enjoy doing as a family? * What is a typical day like for your family? * What are your priorities for your family? * What is the most important thing you would like me to know about your family? * Are there any significant changes or stressors occurring with your family that you would like to share that you think are important to understanding what is happening at school? |  |
| **How would you describe [*insert student’s name*]?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * What are [insert student’s name]’s positive qualities and strengths that you would like to emphasize? * What does [insert student’s name] like to do in his/her free time? * What interests or preferences does [insert student’s name] have? * Is there a special moment you remember about [insert student’s name]? * Who does [insert student’s name] turn to for comfort when they are upset? * Who does [insert student’s name] like to share good news with first? * What is the most important thing you want me to know about [insert student’s name] |  |
| **How do you envision the future for [insert student’s name]** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * What do you see [insert student’s name] doing as an adult? * What hopes, dreams, or aspirations do you have for [insert student’s name]? * What worries or fears do you have for [insert student’s name]? |  |
| * That concludes the questions in this first section. Is it okay to continue with the next set of questions? | |

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| 1. **Now that we have talk a little bit about your family, I’d like to ask you some questions about how [insert student’s name] is doing here at school. At any time, please feel free to ‘pass’ on a question you prefer not to answer. Is it okay if I begin asking some questions.** | |
| **The teachers are concerned when [insert an operationalized definition of behavior] occurs. Do you have the same concern or do you have a different perspective about what is occurring?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * Is the description provided by the teachers consistent with you understanding of what is happening at school? * What concerns you the most about [insert student’s name] experience at school? * Do you recall when school personnel first let you know that this is a concern? * How long has this behavior been occurring? * How often does the behavior occur? |  |
| **Does [*insert student’s name*] engage in this or any other specific behaviors at home that cause you concern?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * Tell me more about [insert the descriptor]. What does [insert the student’s name] say and do when they are [insert descriptor] * What concerns you the most about when [insert student’s name] [insert the behavior of concern]? * How often does the behavior occur? * How long has this behavior been occurring? |  |
| **Of the behaviors you described as a concern, which ones would you prioritize for your family as the most important for intervention?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * What is the impact on family members and your family routines when the behavior occurs? * Does an occurrence of behavior result in family members changing their plans or routines or abandoning plans or routines? * Are there routines you avoid doing because you are concerned about a behavior occurring? * How would changing or improving this behavior have a positive impact for [insert the student’s name]? * How would changing or improving this behavior have a positive impact on your family? |  |
| **Have you noticed when occurrences of [insert behavior description] are most likely to occur?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * Are there times, activities, or routines, when [insert student’s name] is most likely to engage in [insert the behavior of concern]? * Are there times, activities, or routines, when [insert student’s name] is least likely to engage in [insert the behavior of concern]? * Are you aware of anything that seems to cause [insert student’s name] to engage in the behavior? * Are there family members that when present [insert student’s name] is more or less likely to engage in [insert behavior of concern]? |  |
| **When an occurrence of behavior happens, how is the situation typically resolved?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * What do you typical say and do in response to [insert student’s name] engaging in [insert the behavior of concern]? * What do other family members say and do? * Does [insert student’s name] get access to something he/she wants? Do they get out of something she/he doesn’t want to do? Is there a disciplinary response? * Does an occurrence of behavior result in family members changing their plans or routines or abandoning plans or routines? |  |
| **It’s often helpful to walk through an occurrence of behavior step by step. Can you think of a recent occurrence that we can talk about?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * Just prior to [insert student’s name] engaging in [insert the behavior of concern], who was present? * What was everyone doing? * What is the last thing you remember occurring just before [insert student’s name] engaged in [insert the behavior of concern]? * When she/he [insert behavior of concern] what did you or other family members say and do? * Did that resolve the situation or did it continue?   + How did [insert student’s name] respond to you? What did they say or do?   + How did you or other family members respond?   + What do you think eventually resolved the situation? * Do you have any strong feelings about why [insert student’s name] might have engaged in [insert the behavior of concern] at that time? Do you think they were trying to get something? Or get out of something? |  |
| **Do you recall what was going on in your family’s life, at school or with [*insert student’s name*] when you first became concerned about her/his behavior?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * When did notice that [insert student’s name] began engaging in [insert target behavior]? * Was there a change in what was happening at school at that time? * Was there a change in your family or home situation at that time? * Was there a change in [insert student’s name] health at that time? * Does [insert student’s name] have any medical conditions or taking medication that maybe related to the occurrence of behavior? * Had [insert student’s name] or family members been exposed to stress, trauma, or violence? |  |
| * That concludes the questions in this third section. Is it okay to continue with the next set of questions? | |

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| 1. **In this last set of questions I would like us to look ahead to supports and strategies. A*t any time, please feel free to ‘pass’ on a question you prefer not to answer.*** | |
| **We can get a lot of great ideas by learning what strategies have been used in the past. What strategies have you to tried to stop future occurrences of behavior?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * Are there particular strategies do you use to prevent an occurrence of [insert behavior of concern]? * Are there routines you avoid doing because you are concerned about a behavior occurring? * Are there any disciplinary practices that you have tried? * Have you noticed if there is anything in particular that works to quickly resolve the situation? * Are there any reward or incentive strategies that you have tried? * What do you think would be most helpful for [insert student’s name]? |  |
| **What supports are most important for [insert student’s name]** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * What types of social support does [insert student’s name] rely on or find helpful? * Are there particular routines or activities that [insert student’s name] finds comforting / relaxing? * When [insert student’s name] is upset is there something they do or someone they go to for help/support/comfort? * What is the most important thing we should know about support [insert student’s name] here at school? |  |
| **The occurrence of behavior can often be stressful for family members. It’s important for you to attend to your well-being. What resources and supports are available to you and your family to help you when times are stressful?** | |
| **Examples of Follow-Up Questions** | **Notes** |
| * What do you do as a family to manage stress or work through difficulty times? * Does your family have traditions, routines or rituals that are important to how you mange stress or difficulty times? * What types of social support do you and your family rely on? * Are there friends or family members that you can lean on when you are stressed or having a difficult time? |  |

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| Is there anything else that you would like to discuss? |  |