

Solution-focused questions are a foundational skill and strategy of Safety Organized Practice that helps the social worker explore worries, what is working well and next steps with a family in a strength-based manner that is in itself an intervention. Below are examples of solution-focused questions focused around the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

THE THREE QUESTIONS

1. What's working well?

- What do you think is working well in your family during this time of being at home?
- What's one thing you have done with your children, and one thing your children have done, since this crisis started that you are proud of?
- What have you most appreciated about yourself during this time? What have your children appreciated about you?
- What new opportunities have happened since this all started?

2. What are we worried about?

- What are you worried about that is currently posing, or could later pose, a safety issue or concern?
- What about your experience has not been easy during this time of being on shelter in place?
- In what areas of your life have you experienced loss because of this crisis (income, housing, access to medical care, food, health issues, emotional needs, loss of control, etc.)?
- What disruptions to your "normal" routine have you experienced (visitation, eating, sleeping, employment, exposure vulnerabilities, case plan services, etc.)?

3. What needs to happen next?

- What in-home social activities are helpful for you and your family right now?
- Is there a backup plan if someone in your family's safety or support network becomes sick or unavailable?
- What do you need to stay healthy and safe right now?
- If you could pick one thing that has started to make things a little better, what would it be? What kind of difference would it make to do more of it?
- What do you need to support your success in visitation, services, progress, sobriety, etc.?
- What technology do you need to support connections?
- Who is someone in your support network that can check in with you daily by phone or video chat?

Exception Questions

- You have told me about some of the real challenges you have been faced with since this crisis began. Can you tell me if there has been a time when you weren't feeling so challenged or stressed?
- When was a time that you could have violated the COVID-19 restrictions, but didn't?

Coping Questions

- Have you ever experienced a situation like COVID-19 before? How did you cope and keep your children safe? How did you stay connected and what supports helped?
- How did you come up with the idea of...? That was clever!
- I'm hearing that you haven't been able to hug your child in 4 weeks. That must be so hard. What or who is helping you during this difficult time?
- Maintaining this isolation and dealing with others at home is not easy. How have you managed so far?
- How are you using your support network during this time?

Preferred Future Questions

- Let's imagine it is three months from now. What would you like it to look like? What can you do to make it more successful?
- If you woke up tomorrow and this was all over, and there was no need to maintain physical distancing, who is the first person you would want to visit or hug?

Scaling Questions

- On a scale between 1 and 10, how comfortable are you with me entering your home? What would it take to make you more comfortable?
- On a scale between 1 and 10, how worried are you about being exposed to COVID-19, about your child, about money, getting food/supplies, etc.? What would make you feel less worried?

Position Questions

- Your (sister/mother, friend, etc.) has been worried about you during this time. If they were here to help you, what is one thing they would think is helpful for you or your family? What advice would they give you?
- People in crisis often look to examples in their family and culture about how to deal with a crisis. Have people in your family had to face crises before? What did they do?