

Social History

These topics are presented in rough chronological order, but you should feel free to pursue them in whatever order seems appropriate with a given client. Some clients will be unwilling to talk about their childhood at first, but may become more willing after they see the way you handle a discussion of their criminal history, hobbies, or employment background. If your client won't or can't answer a question, try asking your "ally."

Birth, Growth & Development

- ☐ Any known complications with mother's pregnancy (bleeding, toxemia, smoking, alcohol, drugs, physical abuse, depression, accidents, illness)
Sample Q: How was your mother's health during her pregnancy with you?
- ☐ Any complications at birth (premature, respiratory difficulties, jaundice, known defects)
Sample Q: Did your mother ever complain about her labor and delivery?
Sample Q: What does your mother say about the day you were born?
- ☐ Approximate age at which developmental tasks accomplished (responsive smile, rolling over, crawling, pulling to stand, walking, speaking, self-care)
Sample Q: What has your mother told you about what you were like as a baby? As a child?
- ☐ Relationship with parents (emotional support, nurturing, expressions of love, discipline, infliction of physical harm or pain, sexual abuse, sexual modeling, displays of nudity, invasions of privacy)
Sample Q: Tell me about your mom?
Sample Q: How did your mom handle it when you did something wrong?
- ☐ Relationship with others in household
- ☐ Relationship with peers in school and neighborhood
Sample Q: What did you do when you weren't in school?
Sample Q: What were your friends like? How did others treat you?
- ☐ Police or social workers ever come to house
- ☐ Client or siblings ever run away

School History

- ☐ Age began school
- ☐ Schools attended (dates, addresses, reason for changing schools)
- ☐ Progress from one grade to next
- ☐ Placement (advanced, special education)

- ☐ Behavioral difficulties
Sample Q: Did you like school? What did you/did you not like about it?
- ☐ Lateness, attendance
- ☐ Performance
- ☐ Significant teachers/coaches
- ☐ Parental involvement in school
- ☐ Highest grade completed
- ☐ Extracurricular activities, clubs, sports

Environmental Factors

- ☐ All addresses where client lived
- ☐ Name, age, current address of all people with whom client lived
- ☐ Physical conditions in which client grew up (type of neighborhood, housing conditions, availability of heat, number of rooms, number of people in residence)
Sample Q: Tell me about where you grew up?
- ☐ Exposure to toxins (smoking, lead, folk remedies, solvents, glue, industrial area, agricultural area)
Sample Q: Where did you play when you were small?
- ☐ Client, family, or caretaker ever in an occupation at risk for neurotoxic exposure (agricultural, chemical, pharmaceutical, degreaser, dry cleaner, dental hygienist, electronics, plastics, painter, printer, rayon, steel, transportation, foundry, scrap metal)

Medical & Mental Health History

- ☐ Kind of health care child/family received (ER, doctor, clinic)
- ☐ Injuries, accidents, illnesses, including during childhood
- ☐ Head trauma (blows, car accidents, falls, sports injuries)
- ☐ Fevers, headaches
- ☐ MRI, CAT scan PET, EEG, x-ray of head, neuropsych or psych testing
- ☐ Hospitalizations
- ☐ Emergency room visits
- ☐ Alcohol/drug use
Sample Q: Tell me about the first time you ever used drugs or alcohol?
- ☐ Alcohol/drug treatment (where, when)
- ☐ Mental health evaluations, court-related or otherwise)
- ☐ Mental health treatment (where, when, who treated)
- ☐ Medications

Military History

- ☐ Ever rejected for military service
- ☐ Name, branch, and dates of service
- ☐ Highest rank obtained & rank at discharge
- ☐ Type of discharge

- ☐ Significant military experiences
Sample Q: What stands out to you when you remember being in the Army?
- ☐ Vaccinations, overseas experience, special training
- ☐ Veteran's care, post-military trauma or illness

Court History

- ☐ Prior juvenile or criminal charges (jurisdiction, disposition, name of attorney, date of offense, date of arrest, character of offense, length and place of incarceration or juvenile placement, name of parole/probation officer)
- ☐ Prison and/or probation record (disciplinary record, compliance with rules, ever granted privileges, work history, participation in programs, ever evaluated or treated, medications administered, noteworthy relationships)
- ☐ Plaintiff or defendant in civil case
- ☐ Witness in any court proceeding
- ☐ Filed bankruptcy
- ☐ Child support proceedings
- ☐ Paternity proceedings

Contact with Government Agencies

- ☐ Arrests, other police contact
- ☐ Benefits (food stamps, disability, unemployment, social security)
- ☐ Child welfare
- ☐ Veteran's Administration
- ☐ INS

Employment History

- ☐ Employment record (name, address, supervisor, dates of employment, reasons for leaving)
- ☐ Problems with employers/co-workers
- ☐ Lengthy periods of unemployment (why, collect benefits)
Sample Q: What did you do when you weren't working? How did you pay the bills?
- ☐ Workmen's compensation claims

Religious Background/Community Activity

- ☐ Attendance as child/adult (where, name of church, personnel, activities)
- ☐ Other community groups/service

Hobbies

- ☐ What client likes to do in spare time