***Virginia’s Social Emotional Related Factors Screening & Assessment Guidance Document***

These guiding questions are intended to complement the Virginia’s Social Emotional Related Factors Screening & Assessment Toolkit and may be utilized by Early Interventionists during intake, assessment, and ongoing assessment processes.

Explanation for families: *We ask these questions about your history because it could potentially influence your child's development, your parenting beliefs, or your parenting practices. These inquiries are standard and aid us in fostering the emotional well-being of your family. Please note that any information you provide is voluntary and will remain confidential. If you prefer not to answer any of these questions, please feel free to let us know.*

**Overall Social Emotional**

*Recognizing the family’s perinatal experience, the child’s health status, and the family medical history can be instrumental in identifying potential risks in social-emotional development. As necessary, utilize a comprehensive social-emotional screening and assessment tool for a thorough evaluation.*

How would you describe your pregnancy, birth, and postpartum? *Pay attention to any trauma they may have experienced and hold space for it.*Tell me about your pregnancy and delivery experience.   
*(i.e., medical complications, length of pregnancy, type of delivery, medications/substances used during pregnancy, other complications or challenges during pregnancy such as exposure to COVID or any other respiratory illness)*

Tell me about the birth and first few weeks of your child’s life. *(i.e., birth weight, hearing and vision tests, description of NICU stay, length of hospitalization)*

Tell me about your child’s overall health. *(i.e., allergies, medications, reflux, ear infections, other medical issues such as tongue/lip tie, hearing or vision concerns, specialists seen or current specialists such as neurology or developmental pediatrics, upcoming appointments, exposure to COVID or any other serious illness)*

Tell me about your family’s medical history.   
*(i.e., high blood pressure, diabetes, lung problems such as asthma, heart problems, miscarriages or pregnancy attempts, nerve problems, mental illness, drinking/drug use, any other medical issues)*

***Autism***

*The Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-Chat) screening tool can be incorporated for all children aged between 16 and 30 months as part of the screening process.*

Is there anyone in your family diagnosed or suspected to have autism or any other learning differences?

Are you concerned about Autism or any other learning differences? If so, describe your concerns.

**Attachment**

*Attachment is crucial as it establishes the foundation for robust emotional, social, and cognitive growth, equipping children with essential skills to interact with the world and build significant relationships throughout their lifespan. If there are any concerns regarding a child’s attachment, consider utilizing an attachment screening tool or referring them to a clinical provider for further assessment and support.*

Tell me about your family and who your child spends time with during their week.   
*(i.e., any changes with caregiving, name/location and hours attended, family scheduling/work concerns, any other caregivers identified important in the child/family’s life)*Tell me if there are any caregivers/peers you want your child to spend time with and what may be preventing this from happening. *(i.e., access to childcare, needs of the child, other caregiver’s ability to support the child)*

Tell me about a time your child may have been separated from you or another person who your child depends on for love or security for more than a few days OR under very stressful circumstances and how they responded? *(i.e., due to foster care, immigration, war, major illness, or hospitalization and including who, length of time, age of child)*

**Behavior**

*When engaging in discussions about a child's behavior with a caregiver, it's essential to inquire about aspects that shed light on the child's development, emotions, and interactions. Consider utilizing a behavioral screening and assessment tool or referring the child to a clinical provider for further assessment and support.*

Describe how your child expresses their various emotions. *(i.e., happy, no affect, sad, excitement, length of time, crying, physical and verbal expressions)*

How does your child communicate their feelings?How do you know what your child is feeling?

How does this change across different situations and settings? *(i.e., going out in the community, child care, different caregivers, foster care)*

Tell me about anything that impacts those emotions   
*(i.e., sleep, change in routine, nutrition/hunger, new family stress factors, change in family dynamics such as deployment or extended family visiting)*  
  
What does your child do or need to calm? *(i.e., co-regulation, self-regulation, length of time)*

**Environment Safety/Stability**

*An environment and safety checklist can aid families in pinpointing safety concerns and identifying necessary resources for support.*

Describe ways you keep your child safe at home or out in the community. *(i.e., sleeping arrangements, child safety locks, outlet covers, neighborhood safety, gates/stairs, anchors for heavy furniture, car seats, etc.)* What resources may be helpful for you?

When you go out in the community, how do you get around? *(i.e., car seat, stroller, bus)*

**Family Mapping and Resources**

*Supporting the resources needed by families is crucial for promoting well-being, fostering child development, preventing adverse outcomes, promoting equity, and enhancing community stability. If necessary, consider utilizing the Ecomap Template or Family Mapping and Resources screenings. Additionally, you can visit* [*https://www.211virginia.org/consite/index.php*](https://www.211virginia.org/consite/index.php%20) *to find local resources tailored to specific needs.*

Describe your recent housing/living situation in the past year. *(i.e., being homeless, not having a stable place to live, moved more than two times in a six-month period, faced eviction or foreclosure, or had to live with multiple families or family members)*

Tell me about any resources you have access to or use if you have concerns about running out of food or having enough food to eat.

Please share any aspects of your culture, faith, spiritual practices you want us to be mindful of when working with your child and family.

Tell me what a typical day looks like for your family. What about on the weekends?

What does your family do together for fun? What activities really interest your child, and which one’s interest you to do with your child?

Describe how your child participates in activities. *(i.e., mealtime, looking at books, going on walks, bath time, etc.)*

Tell me about the activities/routines or times of the day where you or your child may have more difficulty or need support. *(i.e., if needed, refer back to caregiver’s concerns and priorities)*

Tell me about the places your child and family spend time or where you would like to go.

**Parent-Child Relationship**

*Exploring the parent-child relationship can offer valuable insights into family dynamics and the well-being of both parent and child. Consider utilizing a Parent-Child Relationship screening as needed.*

Describe your parenting style/practices. What about other caregivers?

How would you describe your relationship with your child? What are some of the strengths and challenges you encounter?

What is most important to you in parenting?

Tell me how you feel your parenting practices support what is most important to you in parenting.

What are some of the most memorable moments you've shared with your child, and what made them special to you?

Can you describe any rituals or routines you have with your child that help strengthen your bond and connection?

How do you prioritize quality time with your child amidst the demands of daily life? What activities or experiences do you enjoy sharing together?

How do you handle discipline and boundaries in your relationship with your child? What strategies do you use to teach and guide them effectively?

Thinking back to how you were raised, describe any similarities or differences in your parenting style. *(i.e., available caregivers, emotional and/or physical support, available resources and supports)*

**Parental Mental Health and Parenting Stress**

*These questions serve to guide parents in reflecting on their mental health experiences and pinpointing areas where they might require extra support or resources. It's vital to conduct these discussions with empathy and without judgment, establishing a safe environment for parents to express their feelings and worries about their mental health in relation to their parenting responsibilities. Assessing a parent's level of parenting stress is essential for offering suitable support and intervention. Stressors experienced by caregivers can significantly affect the parent-child relationship. Consider implementing the Parental Mental Health and Parenting Stress Scale for comprehensive evaluation and assistance.*

Has your child ever lived with a parent/caregiver who needed support with a *(diagnosed or undiagnosed)* mental health, serious physical illness or a disability? If so, how was your child affected by these experiences?

Has your child every been impacted by a family member’s drinking or drug use?

Have you noticed any changes in your parenting behavior or interactions with your child when you're feeling overwhelmed?

Are you currently receiving any support or treatment for your mental health, such as therapy, medication, or support groups? If not, is this something you feel may be beneficial for you?

Tell me about any stress factors that may seem overwhelming at the moment. (i.e., parenting, financial, work-related, illness/injury, etc.)

How would you describe your typical day as a parent? What are the most challenging aspects of your daily routine?

Can you share with me any specific situations or moments when you feel particularly stressed or overwhelmed as a parent?

How do you typically cope with stress or challenging situations related to parenting?

Do you feel supported in your role as a parent? Are there friends, family members, or community resources that you rely on for help or guidance?

Are there any specific concerns or worries you have about your child's development or behavior that contribute to your stress?

How do you prioritize self-care and relaxation in your life as a parent? What activities or strategies do you use to recharge and take care of yourself?

How do you manage your responsibilities and obligations as a parent when you're feeling overwhelmed or emotionally drained?

Have you noticed any physical or emotional symptoms that may be related to your parenting stress, such as difficulty sleeping, irritability, or changes in appetite?

Do you feel pressure to meet certain expectations or standards as a parent, either from yourself, your family, or society?

How would you rate your overall level of satisfaction and fulfillment in your role as a parent? What are the most rewarding aspects of being a parent for you?

**Temperament and Self-Regulation**

*Temperament refers to a person’s inherent biological disposition, which remains consistent over time and applicable across various situations. It encompasses how children engage with the world, specifically their approach to and reaction toward experiences. It is crucial for caregivers to comprehend both their child’s temperament and their own, allowing them to align with their individual preferences and worldviews. This understanding enables caregivers to effectively manage their responses to their children, fostering a harmonious relationship known as "Goodness of Fit" – the compatibility between a caregiver and a child. Introducing a Temperament and Self-Regulation Scale can aid caregivers in comprehending both their child's temperament and their own, facilitating better interaction and support. These questions can be used to facilitate a discussion regarding their child’s temperament.*

How would you describe your child's typical mood? Is your child generally cheerful, easygoing, or more serious and intense?

How does your child respond to new situations or changes in routine? Do they adapt easily, or do they tend to become upset or anxious?

What are some activities or environments where your child seems most comfortable and happy? Are there any situations that consistently seem to make them uncomfortable or distressed?

How does your child interact with other people, including family members, peers, and adults they encounter? Are they outgoing and sociable, or more reserved and cautious?

How does your child handle frustration or disappointment? Do they tend to become easily upset, or do they typically remain calm and composed?

Does your child have any specific preferences or sensitivities, such as to noise, texture, or certain foods? How do these preferences impact their daily life and activities?

How does your child approach new tasks or challenges? Are they cautious and hesitant, or do they dive in with enthusiasm and confidence?

How does your child regulate their emotions and impulses? Do they have strategies for calming themselves down when they're upset or excited?

How would you describe your own temperament and parenting style? Are there any similarities or differences between your temperament and your child's? How do you think these factors influence your interactions with each other?

**Trauma and Grief**

*These questions serve to guide parents in reflecting on their experiences of trauma and grief and how these experiences impact their parenting journey. Creating a safe and supportive environment for these discussions is essential, enabling parents to openly share their feelings and concerns.*

Has your child ever seen or heard anyone in your family or outside of your family (i.e., neighborhood) verbally arguing or physically fighting? How does your child respond in these situations? (i.e., imitate any of these behaviors, withdrawing, anxious or fearful, etc.)

Can you tell me about any significant losses or traumatic experiences you've faced in your life?

Have you noticed any ways in which your experiences of trauma or grief influence your parenting style or interactions with your child?

Are there any specific challenges or triggers related to your past trauma or grief that you encounter in your role as a parent?