

Childhood Experiences Worksheet

Our experiences in childhood help to shape the adults we become. Many of us have a mix of positive and negative experiences from growing up. This worksheet can help you think about the childhood experiences YOU had and the types of experiences you want YOUR CHILD to have.

1 Caregiver History

In this section, think back to the first 18 years of your life to answer the following questions. If there is another caregiver for your child or children, they may want to answer these questions too.



Positive Childhood Experiences

These are some good things that may have happened during your childhood. Positive childhood experiences can help you have a sense of calm, security, and wellbeing throughout life.

<i>Which of these happened to you while you were growing up in your first 18 years of life...</i>	Caregiver 1		Caregiver 2	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
Did you have at least one caregiver with whom you felt safe?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you feel able to talk to your family about feelings?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you feel your family stood by you in difficult times?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have a predictable home routine (for example, regular meals, bedtime, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have at least one good friend?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have at least one adult (not a parent/ caregiver or the person from #1) who could provide you with support or advice?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have beliefs that gave you comfort?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you like or feel a sense of belonging in school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have opportunities to have fun?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you like yourself or feel comfortable with yourself?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any other positive experiences that impacted you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Adverse Childhood Experiences

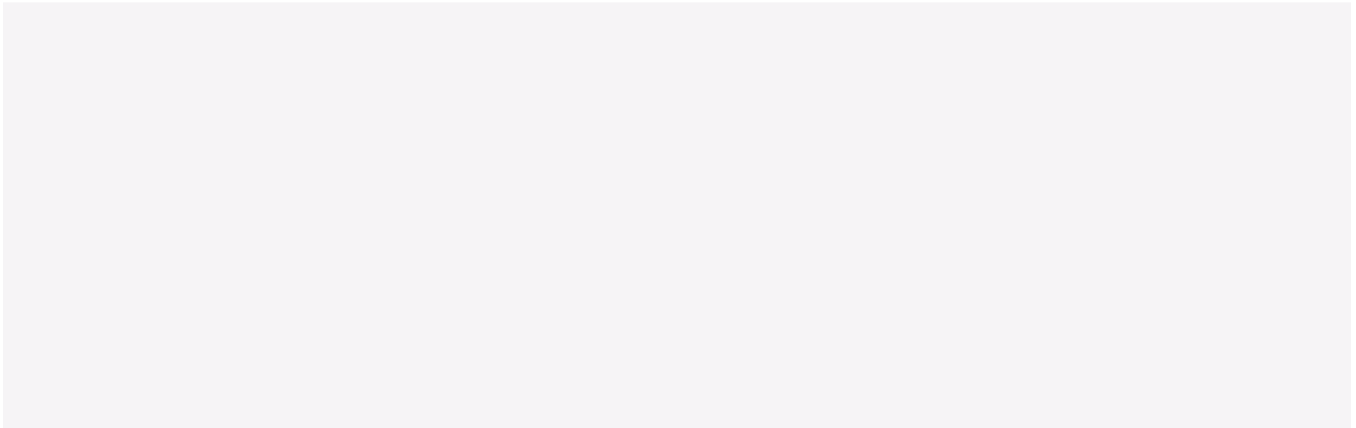
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are serious childhood traumas that can result in toxic stress. These are things that happen to children that may impact their ability to grow and thrive. ACEs are common and can be inter-generational (things that also happened to your parents and grandparents). ACEs you have experienced may also have positive impacts in building your resiliency, especially if you experienced supports such as those on the first page. If you experienced ACEs as a child, your home visitor has some resources to share with you.

<i>Which of these happened to you while you were growing up in your first 18 years of life...</i>	Caregiver 1		Caregiver 2	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
Did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, leave marks or physically hurt you in any way?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did a parent or adult in your home regularly with anger swear at you, insult you, or put you down?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did anyone ever touch you sexually or force you to have sex?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were special?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you feel that you frequently didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had no one to protect or take care of you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you live with anyone who had a problem with frequent drinking or using drugs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did your parents or adults in your home ever hit, punch, beat, or threaten to harm each other?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you have to move a lot?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Was a family member that you lived with ever mentally ill, depressed, or admitted to a psychiatric hospital?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did your family regularly not have enough money to meet your needs (rent, utilities, food, transportation)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you ever lose a parent through divorce, abandonment, death, or other reason?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you live with anyone who served time or was sentenced to serve time in a prison, jail, or other correctional facility?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you or your family experience racially based discrimination?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Did you experience an event that impacted many people and was also challenging for you and your family (such as a war or natural disaster)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Was your family significantly impacted by COVID?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Were you regularly exposed to an environmental substance that impacted your health or well-being (like lead, contaminated water, poor air quality)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any other negative experiences that impacted you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

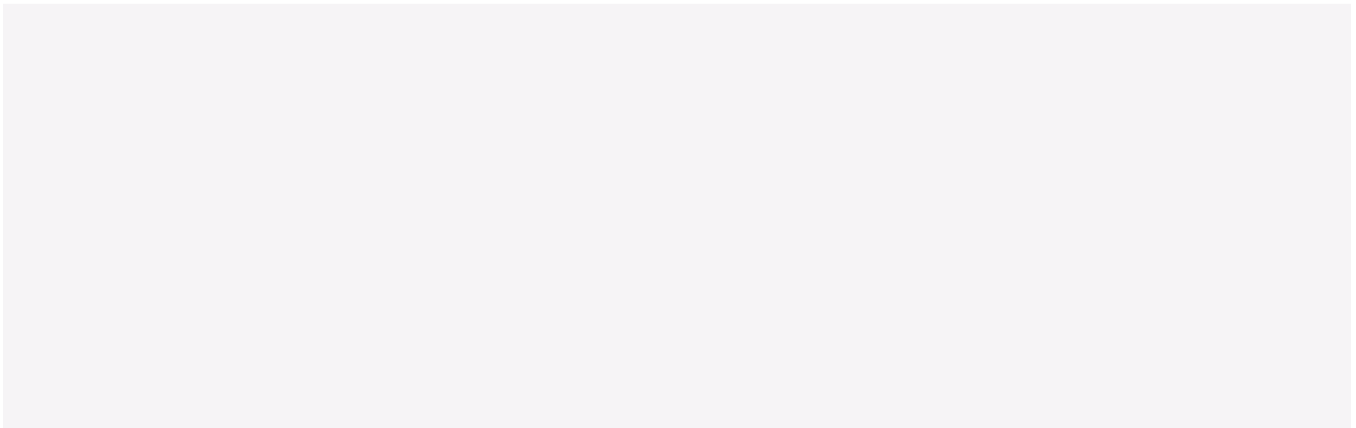
Thinking About **Your Childhood Experiences**

Thinking about childhood experiences may bring up a lot of feelings and questions, especially as a new parent. Let your home visitor know how they can help!

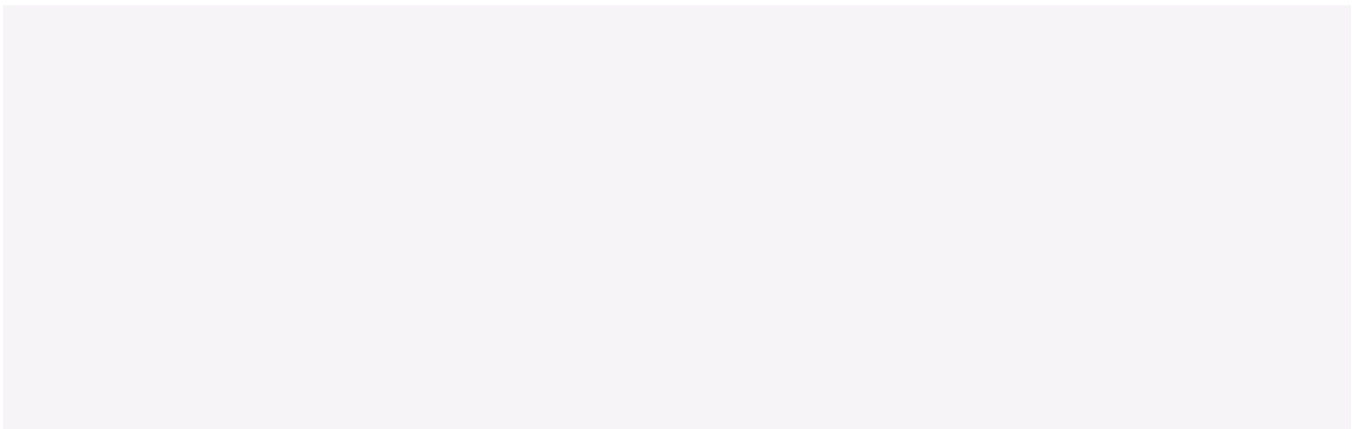
When you look at these lists, how does that make you **feel**?



Which of these positive experiences helped you **grow and thrive**?



Which of these adverse experiences **still impacts** you today?



2 Your Baby's Experience

Now let's think about the experiences your baby is having right now at the beginning of their childhood.



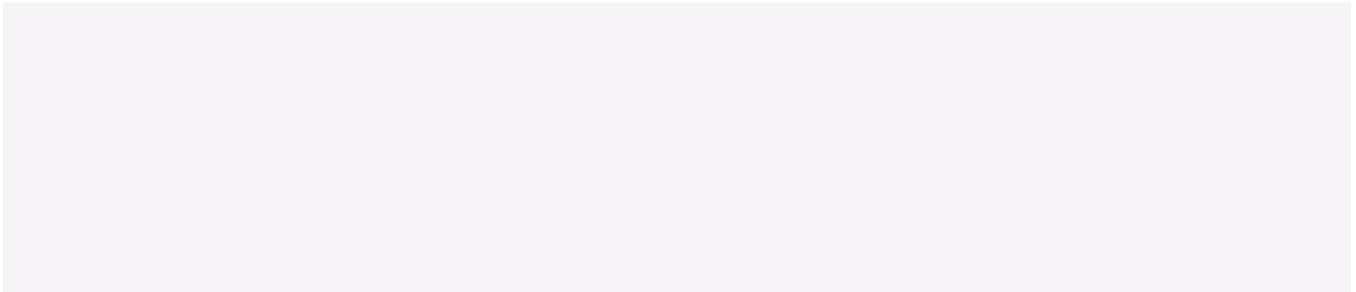
Positive Childhood Experiences

<i>Which of these things is your baby experiencing?</i>	YES	NO/ NOT YET	NOT SURE
Does your baby have at least one caregiver to keep them safe?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you comfort your baby when they are crying or upset?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you talk or sing to your baby?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you cuddle and hold your baby?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you tell your baby "I love you" and other things that make them feel special?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you have a predictable home routine, like regular meals and a regular bedtime?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you praise your child when they do something right or new?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you pay attention to your child when they are trying to communicate with you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you set aside time each day to talk and play with your child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does your baby have support from other adult friends and family members?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are there other young children they can have "play dates" with so they can learn to make friends as they grow older?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you include your baby in family traditions like birthdays or holidays?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any other positive experiences that your baby is having?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

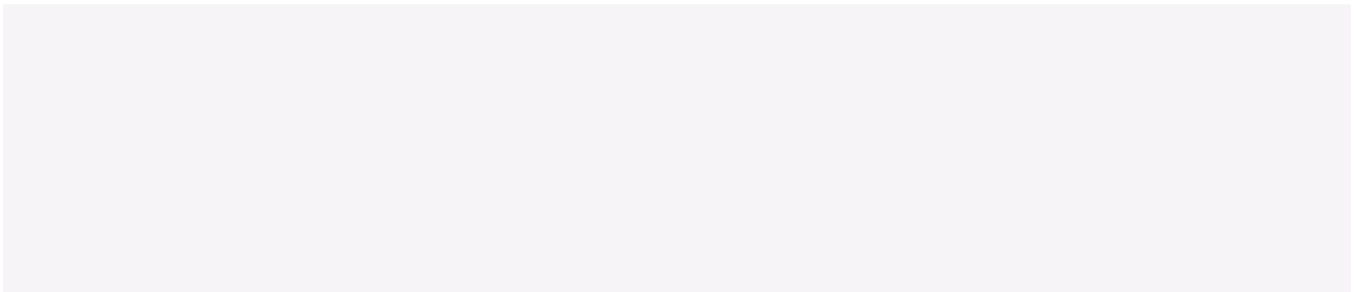
Thinking About **Your Baby's Current Experiences**

Thinking about your baby's experiences may bring up a lot of thoughts, feelings, and questions for you. Let your home visitor know how they can help!

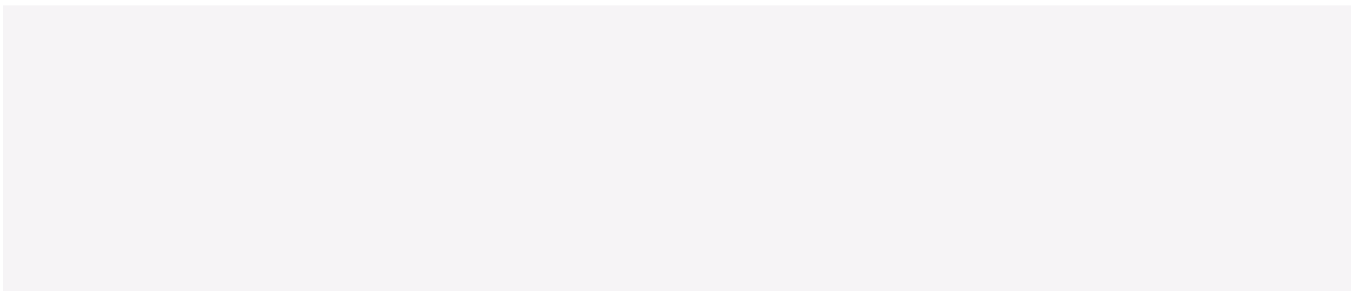
When you look at this list, how does that make you **feel**?



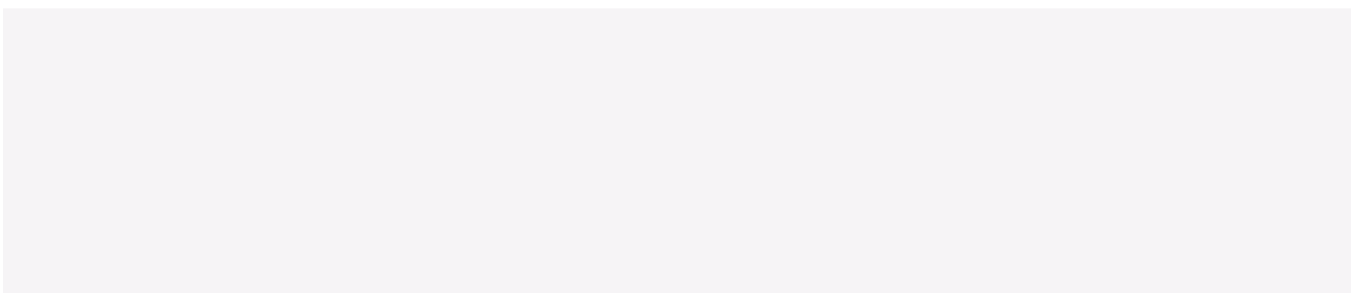
How would you like your **baby's childhood** to be **different than yours**?



Which of these **positive experiences** do you **want your baby to have**?



What **resources and supports** do you **want to access** for your child?



1 Sources

Positive Childhood Experiences Caregiver Section adapted from:

- Bethell, C., Jones, J., Gombojav, N., Linkenbach, J., & Sege, R. (2019). Positive childhood experiences and adult mental and relational health in a statewide sample: Associations across adverse childhood experiences levels. *JAMA pediatrics*, 173(11), e193007-e193007.
- Narayan, A. J., Rivera, L. M., Bernstein, R. E., Harris, W. W., & Lieberman, A. F. (2018). Positive childhood experiences predict less psychopathology and stress in pregnant women with childhood adversity: A pilot study of the benevolent childhood experiences (BCEs) scale. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 78, 19-30.
- Input from MIHP staff members.

Adverse Childhood Experiences Caregiver Section adapted from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2021). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) ACE Module*. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/acestudy/BRFSS_ACEModuleQuestions_2021_508.pdf
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2023). *Risk and Protective Factors*. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/riskprotectivefactors.html>
- Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V., & Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. *American journal of preventive medicine*, 14(4), 245-258. CDC ACE risk factors
- Input from MIHP staff members.

2 Sources

Positive Childhood Experiences Baby's Experience Section adapted from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2023). *Risk and Protective Factors*. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/riskprotectivefactors.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2021). *Positive Parenting Tips*. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/index.html>
- Child Welfare Information Gateway (2020). *Keeping Your Family Strong*. https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/strong_ts_2020.pdf
- Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE) (2022). *The Four Building Blocks of HOPE*. <https://positiveexperience.org/resource/the-four-building-block-of-hope/>
- ACE/PCE items included in Part 1 of this worksheet.
- Input from MIHP staff members.

This resource was supported by funds made available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under award #6NH28CE002755-01-01. The content of this resource are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of or endorsement by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.