



## Put It Into Practice #3

### Questions for older children and youth about their strengths and needs

► **When should I use this resource?** DURING and AFTER a natural disaster occurs

**Directions:** Juvenile justice staff who work directly with youth and families can use this discussion guide to ensure youth have a voice in identifying their own strengths and needs in four key areas during and after a natural disaster: information and resources, social connections, physical safety and wellness, and emotional safety and wellness. The questions listed in each area are examples that may be useful but are not an exhaustive list and other questions may be added as needed. **Before you begin:** Review the DOs and DON'Ts for talking to youth in juvenile justice about natural disasters.

#### Information & Resources

##### Example questions for youth

- Is there anything you want to know about [natural disaster/pandemic]?
- Is there anything you want to know about how the services you receive from [juvenile justice agency] may be different [natural disaster/pandemic]?
- What types of support would help you during [disaster/pandemic]? (*Prompts: food, clothing, housing, financial assistance, education, employment, mental health or substance abuse treatment*)
- What other information or supports might you need during [disaster/pandemic]?

#### Social Connections

##### Example questions for youth

- How are things going at home? (*Prompts: biological, foster, and/or kinship home*)?
- How are your family members doing? (*Prompts: biological, foster, and/or kin*)
- How are your friends doing?
- Are you getting the support you need from family and friends? If not, what do you need?
- Are there family members or friends that you need help getting in touch with?

#### Physical Safety & Wellness

##### Example questions for youth

- How are you feeling physically? Are you having health concerns? If so, what?
- How well are you taking care of yourself? (*Prompts: exercise, sleep, nutrition, self-care, hobbies, medical care, mental health care*)
- Are your basic needs being met? (*Prompts: having enough food, safe housing, enough money, access to education/employment, medical care, and mental health care*)
- Is there anything that is making you feel physically unsafe right now? If yes, what's making you feel unsafe? What would you need in order to feel safe?

#### Emotional Safety & Wellness

##### Example questions for youth

- How are you feeling about the [name of disaster/pandemic]?
- It's common to feel stressed, worried, irritable, or depressed when there's a natural disaster or pandemic. Are you having any of those feelings? If so, tell me about what you're feeling.
- Some people use more alcohol or drugs during a natural disaster or pandemic due to stress. Is this a concern for you?
- Are you getting the emotional support you need?
- What type of emotional support would be helpful to you?
- What's going well for you? Are there ways [juvenile justice agency] can help you continue to do well?