



ASK THE QUESTIONS

1. Have you or a family member served in the military?
2. Do you have any children?

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES

WHY ASK THE QUESTIONS?



Service providers who specialize in domestic violence, sexual assault and other social services may be unaware that they are already serving service members, veterans and military families.

Veterans do not always identify themselves, nor do their spouses and loved ones. They can be proud and stoic and tend to be more comfortable helping others than asking for help themselves – even when they need it. Combat traumas, Military Sexual Trauma (MST), and reintegrating after a military deployment can impact family relationships, anger management and safety.

Appropriate service provision and coordination depend on understanding a client's history and the various challenges, opportunities and services available to them. The way to ensure service members, veterans and their families get the best possible services is to ASK!

WHEN THE ANSWER IS "YES"



YOU MIGHT THEN SAY "THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE."

This statement should always be delivered with sincerity and good eye contact, and only if you feel the individual would receive this positively.

Once you have identified a military-veteran client, you will then be able to increase your understanding of their challenges and better assist them in safely accessing the resources and services they need.

Asking further questions about military service will also help you:

- Build rapport and demonstrate interest and cultural competency
- Identify, help determine eligibility for, and refer to military/veteran resources and referrals, regardless of discharge status or combat history
- To identify key past and present service-related stressors
- To identify any broader areas of family functioning in need of support
- To identify individual and family strengths, supports, and resources
- To identify perceived barriers to seeking support/services and address/resolve any impediments to help-seeking
- If engaging in clinical counseling, to initially identify mental health concerns that will eventually need further diagnostic and treatment work and will impact treatment planning and goals
- To explore sources of income and financial stability

**#AskTheQuestionsOC is a campaign of the
OC Veterans and Military Family Collaborative**



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Here are some questions that could be asked in the context of gathering information for more effective referrals and services.

Pay attention to non-verbal cues, and show respect, curiosity and empathy.



Be aware that responsiveness and effective follow-up are critical to building trust and rapport.

When did you/your family member serve? What service era? Which Branch?

- Build rapport with the client and demonstrate interest and cultural competency
- Identify family supports & resources as well as needs for support not yet met

In what ways may your need for services here be connected to your/your family member's military service?

- Identify any stressors on the child and family as well as any related behavioral, emotional, social & academic implications for the child
- Explore deployment and reintegration challenges

Are you/your family member enrolled at or connected to the VA or other veteran resources or organizations for support and services?

- Link to any needed military and veteran resources and benefits, including both VA and non-VA programs
- Identify family supports and resources as well as needs for support not yet met

What types of support are needed but not yet met?

- Link to any needed military and veteran resources and benefits, including both VA and non-VA programs
- Identify family supports & resources as well as needs for support not yet met

What reservations did you/your child have about coming in to seek support and assistance? Is there anything that might be a barrier to further seeking assistance?

- Address perceived barriers to the child or parent(s) in seeking support