

THE SECURE BASE INTERVIEW

Introduction

The following questions are about how (young person's name) is developing and also about how you find caring for him/her/them. The discussion will help us to see what is going well and to think about any additional support that might be helpful.

N.B. The diagram of the secure base model might be shown at this point with an explanation that the discussion will follow the five points of the 'star'. **Resources: Secure Base Model** (see more on

UEA - Secure Base Model) .

Section 1

A brief description of the child/young person

Could you give me a brief description of (child)? Just the first things that come into your mind when you think of him/her.

Recording			



Section 2 AVAILABILITY — Helping the child to trust¹

The following set of questions is about how far (the child) is able to trust in close adults. We will be thinking about what happens when he/she is upset or worried about something.

Can you think of a particular time when he/she was upset or worried about something? What did (child) do – just before, during and afterwards? Why do you think he/she behaved in this particular way? What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling? What did you do at this time? How did that work out? Was this your usual approach when he she is upset or worried or have you found other ways of helping? How did (the child's) behaviour at this time make you feel? Recording

¹ Throughout the interview, it is important to encourage the caregiver to focus on a specific example. Generalised responses such as 'he always has a tantrum' are not adequate for this type of assessment.



Section 3 SENSITIVITY – Helping the child to manage feelings and behaviour

Children vary a great deal in how they manage strong feelings such as anger, guilt, excitement and

sadness: some children show them easily, some go 'over the top', some bottle them up. The following set of questions is about how far (the child) is able to manage his/her feelings. Can you think of a particular time when he/she had strong feelings about something? What did (child) do when he/she had these feelings – just before, during and afterwards? Why do you think he/she behaved in this particular way? What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling? What did you say and/or do at this time? How did this work out? Was this your usual approach when he/she has strong feelings or have you found other ways of helping? How did (the child's) behaviour at this time make you feel? Recording



Section 4

ACCEPTANCE - Building the child's self esteem

The following set of questions is about how (child's name) feels about him/herself and how they cope if things don't go well.

Part 1

Can you think of a particular time when (child) showed how that they felt good about him/herself? (N.B. if there are no examples or these times are unusual, go to Part 2).

What did (child) do when he/she had these feelings – just before, during and afterwards?

Why do you think he/she behaved in this particular way?

What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling?

What did you say and/or do at this time?

How did this work out?

Was this your usual approach when he/she shows good self esteem or have you found other ways of supporting this?

How did (the child's) behaviour at this time make *you* feel?

Part 2

Can you think of a particular time when (child) showed how that they did not feel good about him/herself? (N.B. if there are no examples or very few examples leave this section out and go to Part 3).

What did (child) do when he/she had these feelings – just before, during and afterwards?

Why do you think he/she behaved in this particular way?

What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling?

What did you say and/or do at this time?

How did this work out?

Was this your usual approach when he/she shows low self esteem or have you found other ways of helping?

How did (the child's) behaviour at this time make you feel?

Part 3

Can you think of a particular time when things did not go well for (child)? (for example, they lose a game, are not successful at something)

What did (child) do when he/she had these feelings – just before, during and afterwards?

Why do you think he/she behaved in this particular way?

What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling?

What did you say and/or do at this time?

How did this work out?



helping? How did (the child's) behaviour at this time make you feel? Recording

Was this your usual approach when he/she shows low self esteem or have you found other ways of



Section 5

CO-OPERATION – Helping the child to feel effective and be co-operative

The following set of questions is about how effective and competent (child) feels. Examples of this are:

Able to complete a task, such as a jigsaw puzzle or laying the table.

Able to solve a problem, such as a shape sorter toy or how to draw something.

Able to make a choice, such as which cereal to have or what to wear.

Part 1

How does (child) usually manage when faced with a task, problem or choice?

Can you give a particular example?

Why do you think he/she behaved in this particular way?

What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling?

What did you say and/or do at this time?

How did this work out?

Was this your usual approach when you need (child) to work with you or have you found other ways of helping?

How did (the child's) behaviour at this time make you feel?

Part 2

The following set of questions is about how (child) manages to co-operate and work together with adults.

Can you think of a particular time when you asked (child) to co-operate, compromise/work together with you? (for example, to get ready to go out, to finish a game and put toys away etc)

What did (child) do when asked to do this – just before, during and afterwards?

Why do you think he/she behaved in this particular way?

What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling?

What did you say and/or do at this time?

How did this work out?

Was this your usual approach when you need (child) to work with you or have you found other ways of helping?

How did (the child's) behaviour at this time make *you* feel?



Recording



Section 6 FAMILY MEMBERSHIP/Helping the child to belong

The following questions are about how (child) feels about belonging to this family or group.

Can you think of a particular time when you have been aware of how (child) feels about being part of this family or group (for example, things that he or she has said or done which have shown they feel part of things or do not feel part of things).

What did (child) say and/or do?

Why do you think he/she spoke or behaved in this particular way?

What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling?

What did you say and/or do at this time?

How did this work out?

Was this your usual approach when this comes up you or have you found other ways of responding?

How did (the child's) behaviour/what the child said at this time make you feel?

For children who are members of more than one family, think of the main other (birth, adoptive, foster) family that they relate to:

Can you think of a particular time when you have been aware of how (child) feels about being part of this other family (for example, things that he or she has said or done which have shown they feel part of not part of the family).

What did (child) say and/or do?

Why do you think he/she spoke or behaved in this particular way?

What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling?

What did you say and/or do at this time?

How did this work out?

Was this your usual approach when this comes up you or have you found other ways of responding?

How did (the child's) behaviour /what the child said at this time make you feel?



Recording



Section 7 Caregiving and support

What aspects of caring for this child give you the greatest **sense of pride or achievement**? What has been or is *the most difficult*? What are the major sources of help and support for you as a caregiver for this child? Can you think of any particular help that you would like with any of the things that we have discussed? Recording