**Pre-Interview Protocol and Child Assessment**

Complete the following introduction and pre-interview assessment with every child below 12 years old (and older kids when appropriate).

***Rapport building:***

* “What games do you like to play?”
* “What are the names of your playmates? Siblings?”
* “What do you like to eat?”

***Developmental assessment:***

* “Can you touch your head? Point to your nose? Knees? Shoulders?” *[Ask child to do quickly, as a game]*
* “Can you count to 10? Can you count backwards from 10?”
* “Can you name 3 types of work done by people in this community?”
* “Do you go to religious services? [If yes] on what day?”
* “On what day of the week were you born? What day of the week comes before that?”
* “Can you name the days of the week, starting with Sunday? Can you name the days of the week backwards?”
* “What days of the week do you usually attend school?”
* “Can you name the months of the year, starting with January? Can you name the months of the year backwards, starting with December?”
* “How many hours are in a day? How many minutes are in an hour?”
* “Is it light or dark outside at 11:00 PM? 1:00 PM? 6:00 AM? 7:00 PM?”

***Ground Rules:***

*Taking breaks:*

* “You are free to take a break at any time. If you need a drink or to go to the bathroom, you do not need to wait until the end of the interview”

*Difference between truth and a lie:*

* “Can you tell me the difference between truth and a lie?”
* “If I said that house was blue, would that be true or untrue?”
* “If I said your name was X, would that be true or untrue?”
* “Today I only want to talk about things that are true”

*Difference between guessing and knowing:*

* “Can you tell me the difference between guessing and knowing?”
* “Let us practice…”
  + “What did you do after school yesterday?” *[knowing]*
  + “What will your teacher do after school tomorrow?” *[guessing]*
* “Today I want us to only talk about things that you know”
* “If you do not know something, do not guess. Tell me that you don’t know. Saying ‘I don’t know’ is an acceptable answer”

*Asking the same question more than once:*

* “I may ask the same question in a different way or more than once because I want to be sure you understand”
* “You do not need to change your answer when this happens, but just tell me what you remember as best as you can”
* “Let us practice….”
  + “What did you eat for your last meal?”
  + “Did you eat X for your last meal?” *[If child contradicts earlier response, discuss inconsistency and reinforce rules on truth/lie and not needing to change answer if asked the same thing twice]*

***Practice Exercise:***

* “Think back to the last time you visited a friend (or relative)’s house. I want you to tell me everything that you did during the visit”
* “Start with when you first arrived at the house and tell me everything you can remember”
* *[Once child stops giving account]* “Can you tell me anything else about that visit? For example, what was the weather like? Who was there?”

Once child has finished account follow-up with some questions, including:

* “Was I at your friend (or relative)’s house that day?” *[If child says yes, reinforce rule to only talk about true things]*
* “What did your friend’s mother/father do after you left that day?” *[If child gives answer, reinforce rule about guessing and knowing. Remind him/her that it is ok to say “I don’t know”]*

**Proceeding with the interview…**

If child shows clear understanding of the ground rules and most concepts in the developmental assessment, you should proceed to interview him/her privately using the wording of the questionnaire as much as possible. You may call the parent to assist in cases where the child does not understand a question or is not able to recall the answer.

If the child shows basic understanding of the ground rules and the simpler concepts in the developmental assessment, you should proceed to interview him/her privately, however you should take care to adjust your wording to his/her level. You may call the parent to assist in cases where the child does not understand a question or is not able to recall the answer.

If child is not able to grasp any of the concepts in the ground rules (e.g., still engages in confabulation despite your instructions) and struggles with the simpler developmental assessment tasks, you should consider inviting the parent to join the interview from the very beginning.

