

CHILD  
PSYCHOTHERAPY Q-SET

CODING MANUAL

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The 100 items of the Child Psychotherapy Process Q-set (CPQ) provide a basic language for the description and classification of therapy process in child treatments. The CPQ is intended to be pantheoretical with respect to any particular theory, and should permit the portrayal of a wide range of events, interventions, and process in therapy. It is hoped that the use of a standard language and rating procedure will provide the means for systematically characterizing child-therapist interactions. Raters Q-sort entire therapy sessions, rather than small segments of child or therapist communication. The general purpose of the instrument is to provide a meaningful index of the therapeutic process, which may be used in comparative analyses or studied in relation to pre-and post-therapy assessments.

The procedure is relatively simple. After studying a therapeutic session and arriving at some formulation of the material, sort the cards into a row of nine categories. At one end of the row, place those cards you believe to be the most characteristic with respect to your understanding of the material. At the other end, place those cards you believe to be most uncharacteristic with reference to your description.

A convenient method of sorting is to first form three stacks of cards -- those items deemed characteristic being placed on one side, those items deemed uncharacteristic being placed on the other side, and those cards remaining falling in between. When the three piles of cards have been assembled, they can be further divided into the proportions indicated for each descriptive category. The number of cards to be placed in each category are:

Category	No. of Cards	Label of Category
9	5	Extremely characteristic or salient
8	8	Quite characteristic or salient
7	12	Fairly characteristic or salient
6	16	Somewhat characteristic or salient
5	18	Relatively neutral or unimportant
4	16	Somewhat uncharacteristic or negatively salient
3	12	Fairly uncharacteristic or negatively salient
2	8	Quite uncharacteristic or negatively salient
1	5	Extremely uncharacteristic or negatively salient

Raters may occasionally feel that there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement with confidence or may feel some discomfort at the constraints imposed by the sorting procedure. The Q-items themselves represent a good deal of reflection and advice, however, as is true of other systems of content analysis, the Q-sort is designed to reduce complex interaction to manageable proportions, and to achieve research economy. No instrument of this kind perfectly fits or captures all the possible events in a therapy session. It should also be noted that assignment of a fixed number of cards to

each category has been shown empirically to be a more valuable procedure than the situation in which a clinician can assign any number of cards to a category.

The Q-sort is composed of three types of items: (1) items describing child emotion states and behavior or experience; (2) items reflecting the therapist actions and attitudes; and (3) items attempting to capture the nature of the interaction of the dyad, the climate or atmosphere of the encounter. The manual should be carefully studied, as the descriptions, and examples of the items are intended to minimize potentially varying interpretations. Raters are asked to take the position of a "generalized other", i.e. an observer who stands mid-way between child and therapist and who views the interaction from the outside. In placing each item ask yourself: Is this attitude, behavior, or experience clearly present (or absent)? If the evidence is not compelling, ask yourself: To what extent is it present or absent? Try to be as open-minded and objective as possible, focusing on the behavioral and linguistic cues presented in the clinical material. Search for specific evidence. Try not to be influenced by your personal reactions to either therapist or child. Avoid, for example, judgments of whether a particular therapist activity is effective or ineffective, or desirable or undesirable from a particular theoretical point of view.

Raters are sometimes uncertain as to whether a particular item should be placed in the relatively neutral or unimportant category, or in one of the categories reflecting that it is uncharacteristic of the hour. An item should be placed in the neutral category when it is a relatively irrelevant or inconsequential aspect of a particular therapy session. Place an item in the uncharacteristic category rather than the neutral category if the absence of a particular event is important to mark in order to achieve a more complete description of the hour. A more extreme placement of the item in the uncharacteristic direction signals that the absence of a particular behavior or experience is remarkable. Many items have specific instructions about this in their definitions. Extensive research employing Q-methodology has demonstrated that with patience and care, Q-ratings capture meaningful descriptions of experience in the consulting room and achieve high inter-rater reliability.

## CHILD PSYCHOTHERAPY Q-SET: ITEMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Item 1: Child expresses negative feelings (e.g., criticism, hostility) toward therapist [vs. expresses approval or admiration].**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child expresses criticism of the therapist, or feelings of dislike, scorn, anger, or antagonism. For example, child attributes undesirable traits to the therapist, saying that the therapist is ugly, mean, stupid, or kicks therapist.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child expresses positive or friendly feelings toward therapist, e.g., expresses love or affection for the therapist.

**Item 2: Therapist comments on the child's nonverbal behavior (e.g., body posture, gestures).**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist draws attention to child's nonverbal behavior, such as facial expressions, blushes, or body movements. Exclude child's play. For example, therapist remarks that the child is spinning round and round in circles, therapist notes child's twiddling fingers.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if there is little or no focus on obvious, repetitive, or problematic nonverbal behavior.

**Item 3: Therapist's remarks are aimed at encouraging child's speech.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist encourages child to express herself verbally. This refers to remarks aimed at eliciting verbalizations and not simply to general exploratory comments and questions. The therapist might encourage the child to talk rather than act, or ask, "can you talk about that?" or encourage the child to describe difficult thoughts or ideas. For example, therapist encourages a child who is afraid of the dark to say to herself, "I am a brave girl, I can take care of myself in the dark."

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist does not actively encourage child's verbalizations, interrupts, or excessively reframes child's statements.

**Item 4: There is discussion of why child is in therapy.**

Place toward characteristic direction if there is talk about why the child is in therapy. For example, the therapist asks if the patient understands why he was brought to therapy, or discusses therapeutic goals.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if there is no reference or allusion to the reasons for therapy by either therapist or child. For example, child queries therapist regarding why he must continue sessions, and therapist does not respond with specific reasons as to why child is there.

**Item 5: Child has difficulty understanding the therapist's comments.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child seems confused or fails to understand therapist's comments. This may be the result of therapist's lack of clarity, or a defensive response by the child. For example, the child asks "What?" or otherwise indicates that she doesn't know what the therapist means.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child readily demonstrates comprehension of therapist's comments.

**Item 6: Therapist is sensitive to the child's feelings.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist is sensitive to the child's feelings and can communicate this understanding in a way that seems attuned to the child. For example, therapist makes a statement that indicates an understanding of how the child felt in a certain situation.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not respond to child in a way that conveys attunement. For example, child's shyness is criticized by therapist as avoidance.

**Item 7: Child is anxious and tense [vs. calm and relaxed].**

Place toward characteristic direction if child exhibits tension, anxiety, or worry. This may be demonstrated in either speech or play. For example, child appears halting and timid.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child appears calm or relaxed or conveys a sense of ease even while addressing uncomfortable topics.

**Item 8: Child is curious.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child exhibits curiosity or interest in surroundings, such as interest in toys in the room, or the thoughts, feelings, or behaviors of others, including the therapist's. For example, child asks numerous questions about other children under the therapist's care.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child does not seem curious. For example, child lacks interest in surroundings, or understanding something or someone better.

**Item 9: Therapist is nonresponsive [vs. affectively engaged].**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist's stance toward the child is cool, formal, and detached, or marked by emotional retreat or withdrawal.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist is responsive and affectively involved during interactions with the child.

**Item 10: Child seeks greater intimacy with the therapist.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child appears to wish for a more intimate relationship. For example, child expresses concern about the therapist; expresses a wish to see the therapist more often; or seeks greater physical closeness by sitting close to or hugging the therapist.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child remains distant, or avoids greater intimacy or closeness.

**Item 11: Sexual feelings or thoughts emerge.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if the child's sexual ideas, wishes, or fantasies are discussed; or expressed in play or behavior.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child does not express sexual ideas or feelings; or if sexual thoughts seem to be avoided or suppressed.

**Item 12: Therapist models unspoken or unelaborated emotions.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist uses own affect and emotional tone when addressing the child's emotional states. For example, when the child describes burying a beloved pet without feeling, the therapist says sadly, "that makes me really upset, I feel like crying."

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist responds to child's unspoken or unelaborated emotions with ideational or explanatory statements. For example, when child discusses loss of a pet without affect, therapist says I think you are sad.

**Item 13: Child is animated or excited.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child appears excited or aroused in some way. For example, child becomes animated and talkative in response to therapist's comment.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child appears bored, dull, lifeless, or subdued. For example, when therapist greets child, he shrugs his shoulders and sluggishly sits and stares.

**Item 14: Physical symptoms or health are discussed.**

Place toward characteristic direction if discussion emphasizes somatic concerns or physical symptoms. For example, child may complain of fatigue; or of having headaches, stomachaches and the like.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child exhibits somatic distress, but does not present it for discussion.

**Item 15: Child makes physical contact with the therapist.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child touches the therapist (e.g., rubs against, hugs, pushes, kicks).

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child keeps a physical distance from therapist. For example, child pulls back as therapist approaches.

**Item 16: There is discussion or evidence of bodily functions (e.g., bowel movements).**

Place toward characteristic direction if there is discussion or enactment through play of bodily functions. Bodily functions may include micturition, bowel movements, or the function of sexual organs.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if discussion of body functions is actively avoided, or not discussed when this topic emerges in play or behavior. For example, child asks to be excused to use the restroom twice during the hour, and the therapist does not address this event.

**Item 17: Therapist actively exerts control over the interaction (e.g., structuring, introducing new topics).**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist imposes structure on the direction of the interaction. For example, therapist introduces a theme for play, suggests that the child take on a specific role, or engages in the play to impose new themes, teach the child skills or alternative ways of behaving.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist intervenes relatively infrequently, or makes little effort to structure the interaction. For example, therapist tends to follow the lead of child, by allowing him to introduce main topics, or to structure his own play.

**Item 18: Therapist is judgmental and conveys lack of acceptance.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist's comments or tone of voice convey irritation, criticism, or a lack of acceptance. For example, therapist communicates that child's behavior is somehow displeasing, objectionable, or disturbing.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist refrains from overt or subtle negative judgments of the child. For example, problematic behavior of the child is explored while still conveying to the child that she is worthy.

**Item 19: Child asks for advice or information.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child asks therapist for advice or information to help him understand or perform a task. For example, child asks therapist how to resolve a conflict with his peers.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child avoids asking for advice or information. For example, child refuses or rejects therapist's offered suggestions, advice, or information after having presented a problematic situation.



**Item 20: Child is provocative; challenges the therapist or rules and boundaries of the therapy hour.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child seems to behave or speak in a manner aimed at provoking the therapist or challenging the apparent rules and boundaries of the therapy hour. For example, after therapist points out that a pen may mark the desk if not careful, child continues to "toy" with the pen, appearing to have the intention of provoking limit-setting, disapproval, irritation, or rejection.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child appears not to engage the therapist in an emotionally provocative way, or does not challenge the bounds of the therapy.

**Item 21: Therapist self-discloses.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist reveals personal information, or personal reactions to the child. For example, therapist tells child where she grew up, or tells child, "I have a son about your age."

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist refrains from such self-disclosure even when child exerts pressure for therapist to do so. For example, therapist does not answer question directly when child asks if the therapist is married.

**Item 22: Child expresses fears of being punished or threatened.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child expresses verbally, or in play, fears that he will be punished, or that someone or something is a potential source of pain, injury, danger, harm, or evil.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child expresses expectation of being praised or protected.

**Item 23: Therapy session has a specific focus or theme.**

Place toward characteristic direction if interaction is kept to a single or a few primary foci. For example, child plays out or conveys repetitively his desire to be the sole object of another's attention.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if multiple topics are discussed, or if interaction seems to lack direction or focus, or seems somewhat diffuse.

**Item 24: Therapist's emotional conflicts intrude into the relationship.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist's responses convey the therapist's own emotional or psychological experience or conflicts. For example, when child laughs at something disturbing, therapist replies, "we don't joke about things like that."

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist restrains from responding personally to provocation and disturbing material. For example, if child directs sarcasm at therapist's appearance, therapist is quiet or says, "I am bothering you today."

**Item 25: Child has difficulty leaving the session.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child manifests discomfort or awkwardness at the conclusion of the session. For example, child prolongs discussion or play once the end of the hour is announced; child refuses to leave.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child ends the hour with considerable ease. For example, child dashes for the door when therapist announces the end of the hour.

**Item 26: Child is socially misattuned or inappropriate.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child misses or misreads social cues or gestures of the therapist or exhibits awkward social exchanges with others. For example, when the therapist greets child with a friendly hello, child is unresponsive or moves ahead to an idiosyncratic or inappropriate subject.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child is attentive about social interactions. For example, when therapist shifts in chair toward the end of the session, child asks, "is the time up?"

**Item 27: There is a focus on helping the child plan behavior outside the session.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist offers explicit guidance or suggests how the child behave with others. For example, therapist encourages child to put homework in knapsack by the front door every evening so he will not forget to take it to school; therapist asks child what he thinks might happen if he were to directly tell a parent how he feels when that parent nags him.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist refrains from guiding child in the planning of his behavior despite requests or pull from the child to do so.

**Item 28: Therapist accurately perceives the therapeutic process.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if the therapist conveys an accurate assessment of the child's experience of the therapy relationship. For example, when the child states he wishes to leave, but physically lingers in the session, the therapist finds a way to respond to the child's mixed feelings.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if the therapist appears to misperceive the child's emotional state, the intent of his speech, the nature of the interaction between them, or to misperceive the problem.

**Item 29: The quality of child's play is fluid, absorbed [vs. fragmented, sporadic].**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child is engaged in activities, or shows sustained focus.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child shifts from one activity to the next without a sustained focus in such a manner that no activity develops into something that can be understood or followed. For example, child spends a few moments with building blocks, then moves to the playing with puppets, and on to leafing through books with no apparent narrative informing the play.

**Item 30: Child's aspirations or ambitions are themes.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child discusses life goals or future. For example, child talks about her hopes of becoming a doctor, mommy, or firefighter.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child shows or talks about a constriction of future expectations, whether in the form of realistic planning or wishful thinking.

**Item 31: Therapist asks for more information or elaboration.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if the therapist asks questions designed to elicit information, or presses the child for a more detailed description of an occurrence. For example, therapist asks about the child's personal history, or queries what thoughts went through her mind on the first day of school.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist does not actively elicit information from the child, or fails to follow up on vague or uncertain communication.

**Item 32: Child achieves a new understanding or insight.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if a new perspective, attitude, or warded-off content emerges during the course of the hour. For example, following the therapist's remark, the child acknowledges his role in difficulties with his siblings.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child resists looking at issues from a new perspective, or different vantage point.

**Item 33: Child expresses feelings about needing someone or being close to someone.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child expresses wishes about being close or intimate with someone (excluding therapist). For example, child indicates he is lonely, wants a best friend.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child makes statements or expresses feelings about wanting to be distant, separate, or not needing someone.

**Item 34: Child blames others, or external forces, for difficulties.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child tends to externalize or blame others or uncontrollable influences for difficulties. For example, child breaks a toy and blames the therapist for buying flimsy toys.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child takes appropriate responsibility for own actions or position. For example, child says he did poorly on a test because he failed to study, or takes responsibility for breaking the therapist's vase.

**Item 35: Child's self-image is a theme.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child's feelings, attitudes, and perceptions of self are a theme (whether positive or negative). For example, child claims that she is really good at sports, but not very smart when it comes to schoolwork; or discusses themes relating to gender identity.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if the child's self-image is avoided or has little or no part in dialogue or play when expected.

**Item 36: Therapist points out child's use of defences.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist identifies the way the child wards off awareness of threatening information or feelings. For example, when child quits game as she is losing, therapist points out that she is quitting because she is trying to move away from the feelings coming up in the game; as therapist is talking to the child, child covers ears and makes noises drowning out the therapist's voice, and therapist points out that the child is trying to block out something uncomfortable.

Place toward uncharacteristic if interpretation of defences plays little or no role during the hour.

**Item 37: Therapist behaves in a didactic manner.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist's attitude or stance toward child is like that of a teacher to a student. For example, therapist models being at-ease in anxiety provoking situations, or educates the child about his symptoms.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist avoids explicit instruction or education in favor of more exploratory or metaphoric statements. For example, therapist uses imagery or a story instead of explanation.

**Item 38: Therapist and child demonstrate a shared vocabulary or understanding when referring to events or feelings.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child and therapist use idiosyncratic or unique words in a similar manner. For example, child say's "I am having those tippy feelings again", and later the therapist refers to how bothersome tippy feelings feel to the child.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child and therapist struggle to understand one another's language and meanings. For example, child describes feelings of being in a tunnel when scared, and therapist speaks in terms of anxieties and negative thoughts, leaving out the child's words.

**Item 39: Child is competitive, rivalrous with the therapist.**

Place toward characteristic direction if the child seems competitive with the therapist. For example, the child insists on winning, or brags that she is smarter than the therapist.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child avoids or does not seem able to imagine competing with the therapist. For example, child wishes to halt a game the moment before she wins to let the therapist catch up with her.

**Item 40: Child communicates without affect.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child speaks or presents information in a monotone or affectless manner.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child's communications are affect-laden. For example, child expresses different affects through a varied voice range, make-believe characters, or postures.

**Item 41: Child does not feel understood by the therapist.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child conveys the feeling of being misunderstood, or assumes that the therapist cannot understand him. For example, child doubts that the therapist can understand his position because he is an adult and not a child.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child conveys the sense that the therapist understands his experience or feelings. For example, in response to therapist's remark, child queries "how did you know?", and elaborates feelings.

**Item 42: Child ignores or rejects therapist's comments and observations.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child typically disagrees with, ignores, or rejects therapist's suggestions, observations, or interpretations. For example, after the therapist makes an interpretation, the child remarks in response to therapist's remarks, "just forget about it", covers ears, or talks over the therapist.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if the child responds with more elaborated play, comments, or associations to therapist's remarks.

**Item 43: Therapist suggests the meaning of the behavior of others.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist attempts to interpret the meaning of the behavior of people in the child's life. For example, the therapist suggests reasons for a parent's behavior or the meaning of the behavior of a character in a story.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not make comments about the meaning of the behavior of others when the child queries the therapist.

**Item 44: Child feels wary or suspicious [vs. trusting and secure].**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child appears wary, distrustful, or suspicious of others, including the therapist. For example, child claims that the therapist doesn't really care about her, and is spending time with her because her parents are making him do so.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child seems to be trusting, unsuspecting, and secure in her relationship with others, including the therapist.

**Item 45: Therapist tolerates child's strong affect or impulses.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist allows expression of strong affect without modification either verbally or through action.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist disapproves, or attempts to manage, re-direct, or inhibit child's strong impulses expressed verbally or behaviorally.

**Item 46: Therapist interprets the meaning of child's play.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist clarifies, explains the meaning, or conveys the significance of the child's play. For example, therapist points out that the child's act of banging to force puzzle pieces together may have something to do with his frustration that he cannot make his parents reunite.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist avoids interpreting the meaning of the child's play, even when the play is clearly linked to a meaningful event or feeling.

**Item 47: When the interaction with the child is difficult, the therapist accommodates the child.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist appears open to compromise and accommodation when disagreement occurs, or when conflicts arise in the dyad. For example, when the child becomes annoyed with the therapist, he makes some effort to understand or align with the child. For example, when the child is upset with therapist, therapist states, "I can see I have done something to upset you."

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist does not exert an effort to improve matters, or to soothe the child when the interaction becomes difficult. For example, therapist does not alter his stance even when child becomes increasingly distressed.

**Item 48: Therapist sets limits.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist defines parameters regarding the behavior or actions of the child. For example, therapist encourages the child to hit a doll instead of her, or outlines the rules of conduct for the session.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist appears uncomfortable with child's behavior and refrains from intervening or responding.

**Item 49: Child conveys or expresses mixed or conflicted feelings about the therapist.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child expresses mixed feelings about the therapist, or if the child's overt verbalizations about the therapist are incongruent with the tone of his behavior or general manner, or displays rapid shifts in sentiment. For example, the child says he hates the therapist but offers affectionate gestures.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child expresses consistent sentiments towards therapist during the hour. Feelings may be positive or negative.

**Item 50: Therapist draws attention to feelings regarded by the child as unacceptable (e.g., anger, envy, or excitement).**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist comments upon or emphasizes child's feelings that are considered inappropriate, wrong, or dangerous by the child. For example, therapist remarks that child sometimes feels jealousy toward her more successful brother.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist avoids focus on feelings or reactions that the child finds difficult to recognize or accept.

**Item 51: Child attributes own characteristics or feelings to the therapist.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child attributes desirable or undesirable characteristics or feelings to the therapist that appear to be reflective of the child's sense of self or state. For example, child loses game of cards and calls therapist stupid.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child acknowledges her own characteristics or feelings.



**Item 52: Therapist makes explicit statements about the end of the hour, upcoming weekend, or holiday.**

Place toward characteristic direction if the therapist alerts or prepares child for approaching separation. For example, therapist lets child know it is time to clean up because their time together is about to end.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if there is mention of an impending separation without discussion or avoidance of elaboration by the therapist.

**Item 53: Child conveys awareness of own internal difficulties.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child verbalizes or expresses through play, awareness of his difficulties or conflicts. For example, child acknowledges acting mean when sad or angry.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child seems to be unaware or lacking in knowledge of his internal difficulties.

**Item 54: Child is clear and organized in verbal expression.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child expresses herself in a manner that is easily understandable and relatively clear and fluent.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child rambles, frequently digresses, or is vague.

**Item 55: Therapist directly rewards desirable behaviors.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist verbally praises or rewards child for desirable behaviors. For example, therapist gives a sticker to child when she achieves a goal.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not attempt to shape or reward behavioral changes.

**Item 56: Child is distant from his or her feelings.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child displays little concern or feeling, and is generally flat, impersonal, or half-heartedly indifferent.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if affect and import are apparent, but well modulated and balanced by cooler material, or if child expresses sharp affect, or outbursts of emotion, and deeply felt concern.

**Item 57: Therapist attempts to modify distortions in child's beliefs.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist encourages child to alter maladaptive thoughts or beliefs. For example, when the child states that all the kids in his class hate him, the therapist encourages the child to talk back to that hurtful thought.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist accepts child's distortions without comment or challenges to child's stated view when thoughts or ideas are incomplete or implausible.

**Item 58: Child appears unwilling to examine thoughts, reactions, or motivations related to problems.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child is reluctant or resists examining her own role in perpetuating problems. For example, child balks, avoids, blocks, or repeatedly changes the subject whenever a particular topic is introduced.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child actively contemplates, or is able to pursue trains of thought that might be emotionally stressful or unsettling. For example, the child explores inner thoughts and feelings with ease.

**Item 59: Child feels inadequate and inferior [vs. effective and superior].**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child expresses feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, or ineffectiveness. For example, child states that nothing he attempts really turns out the way he hopes it will.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child expresses a sense of effectiveness, superiority, or triumph. For example, child recounts personal achievements, or claims attention for a personal attribute or skill.

**Item 60: Therapist is protective of the child.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if the therapist protects the child from harm or negative consequences. For example, therapist encourages the child to think of other ways to behave in certain situations in order to avoid physical or psychic pain.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist does not intervene around child's unsafe or risk-taking behavior. For example, therapist does nothing when child climbs on to a wobbly table.

**Item 61: Child feels shy and embarrassed [vs. un-self-conscious and assured].**

Place toward characteristic direction if child appears timid, self-conscious, ill at ease, embarrassed.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child appears un-self-conscious, assured, at ease, or certain of himself, even when faced with a situation that could elicit self doubt.

**Item 62: Therapist points out a recurrent theme in the child's experience or conduct.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist points out a recurrent pattern in the child's life experience or behavior. For example, therapist points out child's repeated forgetfulness around taking homework to school, or recurrent themes of anger, violence, and sadness in artwork or play.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not identify an existing or evident theme or recurrent pattern.

**Item 63: Child explores relationships with significant others.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child explores or is curious about experiences of relating to significant others. For example, child inquires, I wonder if my rudeness is making my mother sad as well as angry.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if talk of relationships is avoided or reported without elaboration or curiosity.

**Item 64: Child draws therapist into play.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child actively includes the therapist in play. For example, child ascribes roles for the therapist to play.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child does not include the therapist in play, or organizes play in such away that excludes the therapist.

**Item 65: Therapist clarifies, restates, or rephrases child's communication.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist restates or rephrases the child's affective tone, statements, ideas, or non-verbal behavior in order to render their meaning more evident. For example, therapist remarks, "What you seem to be saying is that you're worried about what therapy will be like."

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not clarify or restate child's communication when unclear or incoherent.

**Item 66: Therapist is directly reassuring.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist attempts to allay child's anxieties, and instill the hope that matters will improve. For example, therapist tells child there is no reason for worry.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist tends to refrain from providing direct reassurance when child is evidently anxious or upset. For example, child describes feeling worried about the first day of school, and the therapist refrains from telling the child, "it will be fine."

**Item 67: Therapist interprets warded-off or unconscious wishes, feelings, or ideas.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist draws the child's attention to feelings, thoughts, or impulses that may not have been clearly in her awareness. For example, child's expression saddens when discussing mother, and therapist wonders with her about her feelings.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not attend to underlying wishes, feelings or ideas child may have, but rather emphasizes more conscious material. For example, when child brings therapist a handmade card with a heart on it, the therapist draws attention to the handiwork of the child rather than any underlying intention.

**Item 68: Real rather than fantasized meanings of experience are actively differentiated.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist or child notes differences between child's fantasies and objective reality. For example, therapist points out that child did not cause his parents' divorce; or when child plays dead and reassures the therapist "just in the game."

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if neither therapist or child focus attention distinguishing between fantasy and reality when such distinction is unclear. For example, child tells the therapist he is an only child and therapist, knowing of siblings, does not question this assertion.

**Item 69: Child's current or recent life situation is emphasized.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child or therapist emphasizes very recent or current life events. For example, child talks about being sad about the recent move of a friend.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if discussion of current life is actively avoided in discussion or play.

**Item 70: Child struggles to control feelings or impulses.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child attempts to manage or control strong emotions or impulses. For example, child fights to hold back tears while obviously distressed.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child does not appear to make an effort to restrain or regulate feelings he is experiencing, or has little or no difficulty achieving control over them.

**Item 71: Child engages in make-believe play.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child plays imaginatively or symbolically. For example, child treats a pencil as if it were a magic wand.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if play is concrete or rule bound. For example, when playing a board game, child refuses any imaginary dialogue with the pieces of a game.

**Item 72: Child is active.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child is quite talkative and mobile.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child is inactive, sluggish or reticent. For example, child consistently waits for therapist to initiate discussion or play.

**Item 73: Child expresses fears or displays phobic behavior.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child discusses or evidences fear or timorousness during the hour without apparent reason, or discusses being generally afraid of something quite specific. For example, child pulls sleeve over hand in order to turn doorknob on the way out of the office.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child appears calm, brave, and at ease even when experiencing something worrisome.

**Item 74: Humor is used.**

Place toward characteristic direction if the child or therapist displays humor during the course of the hour.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if the interaction between therapist and child and therapist appear serious and matter-of-fact when there are playful or humorous potentials. For example, a slip of the tongue that might seem funny is not talked about as such.

**Item 75: Interruptions, breaks in the treatment, or termination of therapy are discussed.**

Place toward characteristic direction if either the child or therapist talks of interruptions or breaks in the treatment, for example, vacation, illness, or ending of therapy.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if discussion of interruptions in the treatment or termination seems to be avoided. For example, a lengthy break in treatment due to summer vacation is mentioned in passing, but neither child nor therapist pursues the topic further.

**Item 76: Therapist makes links between child's feelings and experience.**

Place toward characteristic direction if the therapist points out how the child's affects are related to her experience. For example, therapist notes that child seems quite sad in therapy on the day before the therapist leaves for vacation.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if the therapist does not make links between child's feelings and her experience when she appears overwhelmed, or overtly distances self from affects.

**Item 77: Therapist's interaction with child is sensitive to the child's level of development.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist responds to child in a manner consistent with the developmental level of the child.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist's comments or behaviors are above or below the child's apparent level of development. For example, therapist talks to a nine-year-old as if he were a teenager, or in a baby voice.

**Item 78: Child is compliant.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child is particularly deferential, compliant, or appears to go out of their way to please the therapist. For example, child undertakes any hint or suggestion of the therapist. When therapist says that there are some new crayons, child immediately asks "what would you like me to draw?"

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child does not seem to play an overly pleasing role, or exhibit deferential or compliant responses or behaviors.

**Item 79: Therapist comments on changes in child's mood or affect.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist makes frequent or salient comments about shifts in the child's mood or quality of experience. For example, therapist notes that in response to her comments, child has shifted from angrily throwing toys to letting himself feel his sadness.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not comment on marked changes in child's states of mind during the hour.

**Item 80: Child behaves in a dependent fashion  
[vs. insists on independence].**

Place toward characteristic direction if child dependently solicits the therapist's comfort, aid, or support. For example, child is clingy and needy.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child behaves in an independent or counter dependent fashion. For example, child insists, "I can put my shoes back on myself!" when therapist gestures to help.

**Item 81: Therapist emphasizes feelings to help child experience them more deeply.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist stresses the emotional content of what the child has described in order to encourage the experience of affect. For example, therapist exaggerates feelings that the child describes in a matter-of-fact manner.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist under-emphasizes the experience of affect, or appears only interested in child's objectified descriptions.

**Item 82: Therapist helps child manage feelings.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist helps child manage overwhelming or difficult feelings or states. For example, therapist encourages the child to count to ten before acting or speaking when angered, or to reflect on anxious or sad feeling connected to an angry outburst.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not intervene or offer opportunity for reflection or naming when child is overwhelmed by feeling.

**Item 83: Child is demanding.**

Place toward characteristic direction if child makes numerous demands/requests of the therapist or pressures therapist to meet a request. For example, child continually asks therapist to get him a drink or a desired item.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child is reluctant or hesitant to make appropriate requests of the therapist. For example, child squirms because he needs to go to the bathroom, yet does not excuse himself, or is reluctant to ask the therapist to take him to the bathroom.



**Item 84: Child expresses anger or aggressive feelings.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child expresses resentment, anger, bitterness, hatred or aggression (this excludes such feelings directed at therapist).

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if consequent feelings of anger or aggressive feelings are deliberately avoided. For example, when child describes parent belittling her, she describes how tolerant her parents must be since she is so difficult.

**Item 85: Child's aggression is directed toward self.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child turns anger or aggressive feelings inward. For example, child claims that she is terrible and expects some sort of retribution for having a terrible thought about someone.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if child directs angry or aggressive feelings outward (excludes such feelings directed toward the therapist). For example, child kicks over the tower of blocks created during the session, or talks about wanting to hurt someone because she is so angry.

**Item 86: Therapist is confident, self-assured [vs. uncertain or unsure].**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist's demeanor is self-assured and confident.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist appears uncertain, embarrassed, apprehensive, or ineffectual.

**Item 87: Therapist informs child of the potential impact of his or her behavior on others (not including the therapist).**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist helps the child make connections between behaviors and statements, and how others might receive or interpret them.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if the therapist refrains or finds alternative ways to address the child's behaviors or feelings in relation to their impact on others. For example, when child reports excluding a friend from play, therapist focuses on the child's motivations for doing so.

**Item 88: Material of the hour is meaningful and relevant to child's conflicts.**

Place toward characteristic direction if material of the hour is importantly related to child's psychological conflicts, or are topics of real concern.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if material of the hour seems unrelated to or somehow removed from issues of central concern.

**Item 89: Therapist acts to strengthen existing defences.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist's stance is characterized by a calm, attentive compliance intended to avoid upsetting the child's emotional balance, or if she actively intervenes to help child avoid or suppress disturbing ideas or feelings.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist does not act to shore up defences or suppress troublesome thoughts or feelings.

**Item 90: Child's dreams or fantasies are discussed.**

Place toward characteristic direction if a topic of discussion is dream content, including daydreams or fantasy material. For example, child and therapist explore the fantasies of the child regarding the therapy before they met.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child's dreams or fantasies brought up during the hour are not elaborated or explored.

**Item 91: An earlier developmental phase is a topic.**

Place toward characteristic direction if there is discussion of experience of previous developmental stages. For example, a five-year-old talks about having baby feelings, or therapist likens arguments that an adolescent is having with his parents to toddler-like tantrums.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if discussion of current or future themes predominate over past memories or experiences.

**Item 92: Child's feelings or perceptions are linked to situations or behavior of the past.**

Place toward characteristic direction if several links or salient connections are made between the child's current emotional experience and perception of events with those of the past. For example, therapist points out, or child realizes that current fears of being left alone are derived from the loss of a parent.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if current and past experiences are discussed but not linked. For example, child talks about having felt left out by friends at school last year, and moves on to discuss his mother's pregnancy. Therapist does not make reference to an association between the events.

**Item 93: Therapist is neutral.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist tends to refrain from taking a particular stand in relation to child's opinion, declarations, ideas, or experience. For example, when child asks therapist if she approves of a particular behavior, the therapist responds by asking the child what position he imagines her or others taking, rather than directly responding to the question.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist expresses opinions, or takes positions either explicitly or by implication. For example, therapist tells child that his friends have a bad influence on him, and therefore, he should find new friends.

**Item 94: Child feels sad or depressed [vs. cheerful and joyous].**

Place toward characteristic direction if child's mood seems melancholy, sad, or depressed.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child appears delighted, joyful, or conveys a mood of well-being or happiness.

**Item 95: Child's play lacks spontaneity.**

Place toward characteristic direction if the play is rigid, stilted, repetitive, or appears rote.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if child's play is imaginative, lively, and child generates new ideas. For example, while stacking blocks, child creates a zoo out of the blocks, and asks therapist to come visit the animals.

**Item 96: Child's parents are a topic of discussion.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if child talks about parents (or primary caregivers) or represents them in play.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if discussion about parents (or primary caregivers) is apparently avoided.

**Item 97: Therapist emphasizes verbalization of internal states and affects.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist encourages the child to explore and verbalize thoughts and feelings. For example, therapist states, "tell me how you are feeling right now as we are discussing this."

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist avoids encouraging the child to talk about his thoughts and feelings.

**Item 98: The therapy relationship is discussed.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapy relationship is discussed. For example, therapist calls attention to features of the interaction or interpersonal process between them (not in relation to other relationships the child has); or the child makes connections between the therapy relationship and other relations.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if neither therapist nor child comments on the nature of their interactions.

**Item 99: Therapist offers help or guidance.**

Place toward *characteristic* direction if therapist offers help, guidance, or instruction. For example, when child is struggling to find the right words to express himself, therapist suggests particular words.

Place toward *uncharacteristic* direction if therapist does not offer help or instruction when asked for help by child. For example, therapist does not intervene to help when child says he cannot figure out how to set up a board game.

**Item 100: Therapist draws connections between the therapeutic relationship and other relationships.**

Place toward characteristic direction if therapist makes several salient comments linking the interpersonal aspects of therapy and feelings toward other significant individuals. For example, therapist remarks that he thinks the child is sometimes afraid he will criticize the child just as her parent does.

Place toward uncharacteristic direction if therapist's activity during the hour includes no attempts to link the interpersonal aspects of therapy with experiences in other relationships when there are opportunities to do so.