

Observation Guide
(behavioural event)

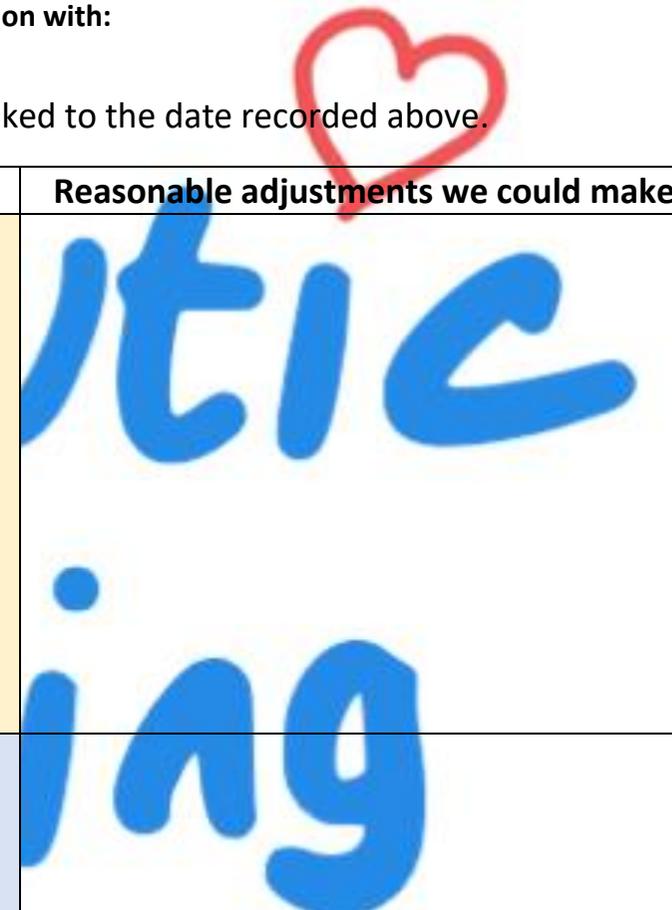
Dates:

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Child: _____

Discussion with: _____

Do 3 separate observations. With each observation event record notes *in a different pen* linked to the date recorded above.

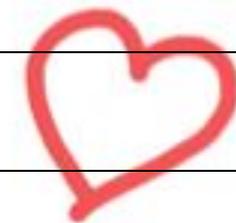
The child's internal visceral state Presenting behaviour in the child. Circle any that apply.	Reasonable adjustments we could make																									
<p>Signs of Sympathetic (Mobilised Fight Flight)?</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 16.6%;">Agitated, repetitive movements</td> <td style="width: 16.6%;">Fidgety, restless, struggles to settle</td> <td style="width: 16.6%;">Fast breathing</td> <td style="width: 16.6%;">Fleeting eye contact</td> <td style="width: 16.6%;">Tight brow/frown</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rigid posture (Tense muscles)</td> <td>Scanning (hypervigilant)</td> <td>Whimpers</td> <td>Growling/ Roaring</td> <td>Shouting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Refusal (cautious/anxious)</td> <td>Hurting (biting, hitting) things/people</td> <td>Reacts to touch/comfort</td> <td>Unresponsive (tuning out adult voice)</td> <td>Distressed by slight/unexpected noise</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Very energetic, boisterous</td> <td>Struggling to wait</td> <td>Unfocussed inattentive</td> <td>Controlling adults</td> <td>Controlling peers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Impulsive actions</td> <td>Disproportionate reactions</td> <td>Over - enthusiastic</td> <td>Pushing/pulling things/ people</td> <td>Insistent responses</td> </tr> </table>	Agitated, repetitive movements	Fidgety, restless, struggles to settle	Fast breathing	Fleeting eye contact	Tight brow/frown	Rigid posture (Tense muscles)	Scanning (hypervigilant)	Whimpers	Growling/ Roaring	Shouting	Refusal (cautious/anxious)	Hurting (biting, hitting) things/people	Reacts to touch/comfort	Unresponsive (tuning out adult voice)	Distressed by slight/unexpected noise	Very energetic, boisterous	Struggling to wait	Unfocussed inattentive	Controlling adults	Controlling peers	Impulsive actions	Disproportionate reactions	Over - enthusiastic	Pushing/pulling things/ people	Insistent responses	
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The adult's nervous system state How were you feeling in your body leading up to the event?	What could have contributed (helpful/unhelpful)?				What I can do to be more anchored in Ventral (Social Engagement):																				
Any signs of stress in Sympathetic (heart rate, breathing rate, voice volume/tone activity level)? Had you been especially busy, activated? Think about how the child's response felt to your nervous system at the time. How did you feel (internally)? Circle those that apply: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Agitated, fidgety</td> <td>Irritable, tetchy</td> <td>Fast breathing</td> <td>Unsettled stomach</td> <td>Exasperated</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tense muscles</td> <td>Less responsive</td> <td>Impulsive</td> <td>Feeling need to control</td> <td>Over-enthusiastic</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cautious</td> <td>Insistent</td> <td>Unfocussed</td> <td>Anxious/panicky</td> <td>Annoyed/anger</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More energetic</td> <td>Impatient</td> <td>Worried</td> <td>Hot / sweaty</td> <td>Disproportionate reactions</td> </tr> </table>					Agitated, fidgety	Irritable, tetchy	Fast breathing	Unsettled stomach	Exasperated	Tense muscles	Less responsive	Impulsive	Feeling need to control	Over-enthusiastic	Cautious	Insistent	Unfocussed	Anxious/panicky	Annoyed/anger	More energetic	Impatient	Worried	Hot / sweaty	Disproportionate reactions	
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Any signs of stress in Dorsal (slower heart rate, shallow breathing rate, voice volume/tone activity level)? Had you been less energetic, weary, lower mood than usual, worried, pre-occupied? Think about how the child's response felt to your nervous system at the time. How did you feel (internally)? Circle those that apply: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Low mood</td> <td>Less responsive /alert, 'zoning out' brain fog</td> <td>Slower breathing</td> <td>Feel like giving up/ go home</td> <td>Unsettled stomach, nauseous</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Heaviness in body, sluggish</td> <td>Tense muscles</td> <td>Hard to find the words</td> <td>Feeling need to control</td> <td>Low enthusiasm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cautious</td> <td>Hesitant/resistant</td> <td>Unfocussed</td> <td>Worried, nervous</td> <td>Hard to get going</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low energy</td> <td>Overwhelmed</td> <td>Sad, upset</td> <td>Cold / clammy</td> <td>Disproportionate reactions</td> </tr> </table>					Low mood	Less responsive /alert, 'zoning out' brain fog	Slower breathing	Feel like giving up/ go home	Unsettled stomach, nauseous	Heaviness in body, sluggish	Tense muscles	Hard to find the words	Feeling need to control	Low enthusiasm	Cautious	Hesitant/resistant	Unfocussed	Worried, nervous	Hard to get going	Low energy	Overwhelmed	Sad, upset	Cold / clammy	Disproportionate reactions	
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How the child is interacted with	What did you do/say? How did you act?	What I can do differently?
<p>With you: What was your face communicating? Smiling? Neutral/blank? Worry/frown? Laughter (joy/nervous)? Cross?</p> <p>Tone of voice like? Speed and volume of speech?</p> <p>Was your nervous system congruent with your words? <i>'Bodies speak louder than words'</i> Was your body saying 'I am safe and can help you to feel calm again' ? How was your body language? Hand gestures? Height/level in relation to the child? Posture?</p>		
	<p>What did they do/say? How did they act?</p>	<p>What can they do differently?</p>
<p>With anyone else involved: What was their face communicating? Smiling? Neutral/blank? Worry/frown? Laughter (joy/nervous)? Cross?</p> <p>Tone of voice like? Speed and volume of speech?</p> <p>Was their nervous system congruent with their words? <i>'Bodies speak louder than words'</i> Was their body saying 'I am safe and can help you to feel calm again' ? How was their body language? Hand gestures? Height/level in relation to the child? Posture?</p>		

Parental interaction. Does the parent... (highlight questions for inquiry)	How can we support the parent/carer?
<p>Seem responsive and reciprocal in partnership with setting staff?</p> <p>Seem self-contained and self-sufficient in partnership?</p> <p>Seem to need reassurance from setting staff in supporting their child's needs?</p> <p>Volunteer relevant information about their child?</p> <p>Volunteer information about their child (in child's presence) that could be upsetting to the child?</p> <p>Seem consistently able to cope with the emotional needs of the child?</p> <p>Seem inconsistent in responses to the child, available one moment and withdrawn another?</p> <p>Generally, appear socially engaged and relaxed with their child?</p> <p>Contain and soothe the child with even minor hurts?</p> <p>Respond to requests from the setting in a timely way? (or forgets easily)?</p> <p>Seek advice and guidance from setting staff about their child's needs?</p> <p>Seem open and interested in their child's feelings? Or seems anxious or irritated by their child's feelings?</p> <p>Explain influences from their own/family experiences that impact on the child and how they try to support the child (e.g. through a family bereavement)?</p> <p>Seem to have a less coherent narrative when they tell you about their child? sentences may be jumbled, lots of detail but little self-reflection.</p> <p>Have rapid changes in mood and responsiveness to their child?</p> <p>Respond to their child's sensory seeking appropriately?</p> <p>Respond to their child's sensory defensiveness appropriately?</p> <p>Recognise their child's strengths?</p> <p>Supports their child's interests and aspirations?</p>	 <p>Therapeutic Teaching</p> <p>Unique solutions for unique people</p>

Events in the environment	What could have contributed?	Reasonable adjustments we could make
Sight, noise, smell, touch/proximity, taste?		
Movement in the space? (how busy was it?)		
Weather conditions, external noise, light etc.		
Any changes to routine?		
Parent/carer's nervous system state upon arrival? (calm, relaxed, flustered, upset, passive, low)		
How did the child separate on arrival? (clingy, readily but no goodbye, readily with goodbye, distressed)		
What has the child's stress map been like leading up to the events of concern?		



Now use the information recorded above with reference to **Interpreting the Observation Guide**.

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Disclaimer: using the document is entirely at the expense and risk of the user. The author does not accept any liability for the consequences of improper, unethical or incompetent use. **This is an example for introductory purpose and its use competently requires knowledge of the nervous system and provision through the accompanied training: Me, You and Us. See <https://therapeuticteaching.uk/training/> for information.**

References/acknowledgements:

Claire Wilson- CHEW Initiatives. Wilson, C. (2018) *Grounded : Discovering the Missing Piece in the Puzzle of Children's Behaviour*

Golding, K.S., Fain, J., Frost, A. and Templeton, S. (2013) *Observing Children with Attachment Difficulties in Preschool Settings: A tool for identifying and supporting emotional and social difficulties* London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.