

2 Parents and relatives – Exploring siblings’ roles and any differential treatment of children

For social workers to explore with parents/relatives the different roles that the children might have within the family, as well as any differential treatment they may have been subject to.

Key questions to think about might include some or all of the following:

In some families, boys are treated differently to girls – what was it like in your own family when you were growing up? What is important/what is it like in your family now?

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As a mum/dad, how do you want your boys to grow up? How do you want them to be? What is important/what is valued in your family?

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As a mum/dad, how do you want your girls to grow up? How do you want them to be? What is important/what is valued in your family?

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Some people think that boys need to be tough to cope: that by the time they start school they should be able to fight back if someone hurts them. What do you think? What about girls, is it the same for them or different?

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Some people say that if you are too soft with boys it just makes life harder for them later on, like when they start school. What do you think?

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Is it good to treat boys and girls the same? Or is it better to treat them differently in some ways?

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In some families, girls might be expected to do more to help around the house. What do you think is best?

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In some families, girls help more with looking after younger ones. In other families it's more about age, the older ones help with the younger ones. What do you think is best?

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Who is most like you in your family? In what ways?

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Some children might show you that they want kisses and cuddles, for example, they might climb up on to your lap or reach out to you. Who is most likely to want cuddles from you?

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Some people think that girls are easier to parent than boys – what do you think?

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Some parents get on best with their sons/best with their daughters. What's it like in your family?

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Some parents get on best with one of their children. What about you – is there someone whom you feel really close to in your family?

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How do you know when your child, A, is upset or feeling sad? Do they show how they are feeling?

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How do you know when your child, B, is upset or feeling sad? Do they show how they are feeling?

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How do you know when your child, C, is upset or feeling sad? Do they show how they are feeling?

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How do you know when your child, D, is upset or feeling sad? Do they show how they are feeling?

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How do you know when your child, E, is upset or feeling sad? Do they show how they are feeling?

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Sometimes the eldest child is the one who likes to “boss” the younger ones around a bit. Did this happen much at home?

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Name:	
Signature:	
Role:	
Date:	