

## **The working model of the Child Interview (228)**

Docent: Prof. Diane Benoit

The Working Model of the Child Interview (WMCI) is a 30-75 minute semi-structured interview developed by Zeanah, Benoit, & Barton in 1986 to formally assess a caregiver's internal representations (perceptions and subjective experience) of their child and relationship with the child. The traditional 3-way WMCI coding scheme allows for classification of caregivers' representations of their child in one of three major classifications (balanced, disengaged, distorted). The WMCI and its two coding schemes can be used with caregivers from pregnancy to any child age (no upper limit with respect to child's age).

### **toelichting in het Nederlands**

Het tweede instrument dat Benoit ontwikkelde, het Working Model of the Child Interview (WMCI) komt ook voort uit de gehechtheidstheorie en meet het interne werkmodel dat de ouder heeft in relatie tot het kind. Vooral voor professionals die werken met ouders en (jonge) kinderen zijn de twee wetenschappelijk onderzochte instrumenten, de AMBIANCE en de WMCI, zeer waardevol en bruikbaar, zowel bij diagnostiek als behandeling.

### **research results**

Research has shown correspondence among caregiver representations on the WMCI – infant attachment classifications in the Strange Situation – and adult attachment classifications in the Adult Attachment Interview. Recently, a new WMCI scale, the WMCI-Disrupted (WMCI-D) scale, was developed and research has linked it to infant disorganized attachment on the Strange Situation and unresolved mourning/trauma on the Adult Attachment Interview. The new WMCI-D scale is particularly helpful and relevant when dealing with high-risk groups (e.g., unresolved mourning-trauma in the caregiver, disorganized child-caregiver attachment, post-traumatic stress disorder in the caregiver or child, traumatized adolescent caregivers, exposure to violence, abuse and neglect).

### **trainer**

Diane Benoit, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto, Project Investigator in the Research Institute at the Hospital for Sick Children, and Staff Psychiatrist at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Ontario. Her research, educational and clinical activities focus on:

child-caregiver attachment relationship;

impact of violence / abuse / neglect on children;

trauma-focused and attachment-focused assessments and interventions;

caregivers' perceptions and subjective experience of their children and relationship with them;

Benoit has published in peer-reviewed, scientific publications and other publications, and has made numerous presentations related to these various topics across North America.

**By the end of the training, participants should be able to:**

Use the WMCI and apply its two coding schemes in clinical settings.

Describe the various scales (5 qualitative, 2 content, 8 affective tone) of the 3-way WMCI coding scheme.

Describe patterns of responses on the scales that lead to each of the three major classifications in the 3-way WMCI coding scheme (balanced, disengaged, distorted).

Describe the five dimensions of the new WMCI-D scale.

Describe characteristics of caregivers' narratives associated with a Disrupted classification on the new WMCI-D scale.

Discuss how the traditional 3-way and new WMCI-D classification systems differ.

**who should attend**

Experienced child psychologists, child psychotherapists, child psychiatrists, IMH-specialists and other clinicians.

**program**

The purpose of the three-day workshop is to expose clinicians to the WMCI and its two coding schemes (traditional 3-way coding and WMCI-Disrupted). Video-recordings of actual WMCI interviews with caregivers (and corresponding child-caregiver interactions) are used extensively throughout the training to illustrate the concepts discussed and allow participants to 'practice' their observation and coding skills.

**note**

Diane Benoit will also provide the two-day course The Ambiance and the one-day workshop Modified Interaction Guidanc.