

## DECODING BEHAVIORS EXERCISE 2 WORKSHEET



Pathways to  
Permanence 2

PARTICIPANT  
RESOURCE  
NOTEBOOK

**Parenting  
Children  
Who Have  
Experienced  
Trauma  
AND LOSS**

**Session 4**

**Creating  
Positive  
Attachments  
Part 1**

**Exercise  
Worksheets**

<p><b>Behavior 1: Sneaks food</b></p>	<p><b>Behavior 2: Steals from Peers</b></p>
<p><b>Decode Behavior:</b>                  Defensive self soothing, based on physical need or previous experience of deprivation.                  Fear of rejection - "If I ask, you'll say no (even though you've said yes before)." Sensory related memory of having to do this to "survive" before.                  Mastery need - "I know that I can count on this."</p>	<p><b>Decode Behavior:</b>                  Stealing can denote a desire for connection or wanting to be like peer (perceived confidence, happiness, etc.). Sense of mastery/control, skill developed to survive. Fear of rejection, even if unfounded - "If I ask to borrow it, she'll say no" or "I know my parent(s) wouldn't get me one, because I'm so bad." Desperation to be seen in a positive light by peers, be the "hero" for finding missing item.</p>
<p><b>Empathic Response (Decrease Distress):</b>                  Be present with awareness of child's tolerance for proximity. Use a calm voice to wonder about what the child is feeling, for example, "Sometimes when I am feeling (scared, sad, small, out of control, ashamed, overwhelmed), I think I can't count on anyone to help me feel better. I think that might be how <i>you</i> feel before you take some food to eat now or hide for later."  <b>Buckets 1, 2 &amp; 3</b></p>	<p><b>Empathic Response (Decrease Distress):</b>                  Be present with awareness of child's tolerance for proximity. Use a calm voice to wonder about what child is feeling. Normalize and validate child's need to feel connected, accepted, and valued. Offer acceptance or unconditional positive regard while still being willing to notice your child's shame, as this is usually connected to lying and stealing.  <b>Buckets 1, 2, 3 &amp; 5</b></p>
<p><b>Corrective Action:</b>                  Have a "bottomless bowl" of healthy snacks. Pack "emergency need" snack bags together. Build child's empathy/mastery by having him/her help to feed the dog, make snacks together for other family members or school mates.</p>	<p><b>Corrective Action:</b>                  Help your child make amends. Create an end-of-playtime ritual in which the children swap a toy to use until the next time they get together. Role play strategies for when your child feels the overwhelming impulse to take something.</p>
<p><b>Increase Pleasure:</b></p>	<p><b>Increase Pleasure:</b></p>