

DECODING BEHAVIORS EXERCISE 2 WORKSHEET: FACILITATOR'S COPY



Pathways to
Permanence 2

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

Session 4

**Creating
Positive
Attachments
Part 1**

Exercises

Behavior 1: Sneaks food	Behavior 2: Steals from Peers
<p>Decode Behavior: 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>Decode Behavior: 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>Empathic Response (Decrease Distress): 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." Buckets 1, 2 & 3</p>	<p>Empathic Response (Decrease Distress): 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. Buckets 1, 2, 3 & 5</p>
<p>Corrective Action: 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>Corrective Action: 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>Increase Pleasure: Surprise your child by adding something to the place he/she hides food. Cooking or baking with your child provides a sensory-rich experience that will increase pleasure, while also providing time with you.</p>	<p>Increase Pleasure: Host play dates in your home or at the park to provide support and supervision and limit both the temptation and opportunity for your child to steal from peers. Pro-actively surprise your child with notes and gifts <i>which are not related to behavior</i>. Be the one to provide yummy classroom treats, so your child can experience positive social attention.</p>