

## **Mathews Family Feelings Interview**

This is an interview format, to be used by an experienced clinician. It is a means for asking the child to describe what emotions he/she can observe in him/herself and other family members by their behavior. How these questions are asked varies with the language level of the child and what diagnostic conditions are being considered.

The child is first asked to describe the affect of him/herself or of a particular family member, starting with whomever is thought to be the least affect laden person. For example, “When you’re feeling happy how could someone tell just by looking at you?”; or “If someone made a video of you when you are really happy, how would you look?” The clinician starts with those feeling that are thought to be the most comfortable for the child, and then, as child’s ability allows, asks about other emotions (happy, sad, mad, scared) and other family members. In this way the clinician gets important information about

- the child’s ability to observe other’s behavior
- the child’s internal view of him/herself and significant others
- the child’s language skills in general
- the child’s ability to understand the affective world
- the child’s own self awareness
- an indication of how clearly and easily feelings are understood and talked about in the family
- those emotions that might be difficult for the child, that are occurring within them, or between them and other family members.