Module 1 – Interview schedule for **mapping the current identified problem(s), concerns and difficulties**

Potential questions

These are useful questions and examples if a child has the presenting problem – but the questions may need adapting if a parent's behaviour is the problem which the family meeting is addressing

The nature of the problems or concerns bringing the family to the assessment

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Introduction
Can you tell me what you as a family would like this assessment to address?
Just to get to know you better to start with, what do you think you are good at as a family?
What are your strengths?
What are the things you like about being in this family?
What do you see as your current main difficulties?

The nature of the problem
So there are worries about both (name problems or children)
Who noticed it first
Which did people get worried about first?
(To child who is focus of concern) If I asked (referral source) what do you think they would say the main problem was?
(To parents) How long ago about, did people first realise this was happening?
(To child) Do you think if I had asked (referral source/teacher etc.) they would have said this is a guy/girl who is good at (the problem behaviour) or would they say, no, s/he always used to be you used to be good at (non problematic behaviour) and then things changed?
What do *you* think about that?
(Or refer to parent, if parent in some way if parent's behaviour is the concern)
Shall we ask your parents how they see it? Do you know what they will say?
(To one of parents) What's your view? Are things going reasonably well now or are they still difficult?
(To other child if there is more than one who is focus of concern) I understand there are some worries about you too. What's come up?
If I asked Mum/Dad do you thing s/he would say they would prefer (problem behaviour) or (non-problem behaviour) ?
(To each parent) What's your opinion.
To parents (about any problem of theirs that comes up at this point) I know you have had to deal with (illness/loss/separation etc.) and we may need a separate discussion to talk more about that, but can I ask what the children understand about (the problem)?
If I asked the family, who would have the best idea about it ?

How the problem shows up in the family and how it gets triggered
So when it gets really difficult at home, how does that usually begin?
What does (name) actually do which gets things started?
Then what happens?
(To anyone on the receiving end of triggering behaviour) And how do you respond?
And then what happens (etc.)

Example of problem and surrounding pattern of family interaction
If the family enact the problem in the interview
So what happened just then was that when I asked (question), (name) answered (answer) and then (name) came in and tried to (behaviour) (describe the sequence getting children's help if necessary). Is that what usually happened at home? (Check out the similarities and differences)
So how does it usually start at home? If I were there with you, what would I see?

Example of problem and surrounding pattern of family interaction
What is the last time there was any trouble with this?
What happened exactly? And then what? And then what?
And where was (each member of the family?
What were they doing?
And how did they react to what was going on?
(aim to produce a re-enactment. If a re-enactment, then track sequence with the family then it is useful to point it out)
What happened just then I think was that I asked ... and then (name responded by ...etc
Is that what everyone here noticed happening?
So actually the problem arose right here
Is that what happens at home? How is it similar and how is it different?

Impact of identified problems or concerns

What is the impact of the problem on the child identified as having the problem eg school, friends, social life?
What is the impact on the other children?
What is the impact on the parents?
What is the impact on other relationships?
Has anyone else had a similar problem?
What if it went away, who'd be most affected?
And who'd be most pleased?
Is there anyone benefiting now who could lose out?
Are there times when (child) is stronger and can throw off his difficulties?

Responses to difficulties and attempted solutions

Inside the family
Who noticed the problem first?
How did you react – at first?
Was that helpful?
What else have you tried to try to solve it?
What has helped and what has not worked?
What happens if you ignore it?
How far have you got so far? What are you pleased with and what are you disappointed with?
How would you know the problem was conquered?
Have you seen any signs yet?

Outside family
How did other people respond?
Did they or you find that helpful?
How did other people outside react – school, family, neighbours. Was that helpful?
Has anyone professional helped so far? What did they do?
What else might help from other people – members of the family, extended family, school, Social Services?
Who's most worried, upset, worn out or irritated?

Other current problems and concerns identified by family members

Now what about for the rest of the family? In most families, each person has their own different concerns and worries.
What are the other main concerns or problems within the family would you say?
(To each partner)
What about you .... are there other things which don't help to make life easy at the moment?
What's the most difficult thing about that?
(To each child)
It's often other things which worry or bother children – different things from grown ups
What are the things that you find bother or annoy you at the moment ? In the family? At school? etc.
What's the most difficult thing about that for you at the moment?
If I ask (sister or brother) what's the main thing that bothers them just now what do you think they'd say?
(Check it out) Is that right?
So what would you say bothers most at the minute?