



Checking for understanding

Sometimes the parent you are working with may agree with statements or say 'yes' to questions regardless of the content. This may occur because:

- The parent does not understand the question
- The parent does not understand the type of answer that is required
- The parent may not be easily able to remember information that would help them answer the question
- The judgements the parent is being asked to make may be too difficult for them at this time
- The question may be poorly phrased, too long or too complex

If you do not check that the parent has understood your conversations and the information you are giving them, the parent may not get the most out of your time together, and you may end up with an inaccurate understanding of their needs and the supports they may require.

Tips for checking understanding:

- Use either/or questions instead of yes/no questions. An example of this is "Did that make you feel happy or sad?"
- Include an option of answering "I don't know" to questions and make sure the parent knows that it is ok to say this
- Keep questions short and simple
- Use some open-ended questions, e.g., "Tell me what you've been doing this week to practise the skills you've learnt in this program?"
- Avoid statement or questions that have too much detail or are too complex
- Ask factual questions that require immediate and concrete answers
- Ask the parent to explain a comment you have just made, or to tell you more about it, e.g., "Tell me what it may feel like when labour starts"
- Ask for examples to illustrate a comment
- Ask how the parent is going to do the task



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