



**SIHR** Infant Mental Health Project  
The Scottish Government's National Programme for Improving  
Mental Health and Well-being has assisted in the funding of this  
work.

# SIHR

## SCOTTISH INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RELATIONS

172 Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH6 5EA - [www.sihar.org.uk](http://www.sihar.org.uk)

### INFANT MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

**Theme: Infant Mental Health “Observing Infants”**

Observation and Assessment Skills:

Working with parents and very young children

How you can supervise practitioners using observation in  
childcare assessments

Dates: #####, 3 day programme

Venue: #####

Content: **Theory**  
**Using video reference to draw out theoretical concepts**  
**Observational Practice**  
**Analysing, supervising observational practice**  
**Using observation in the assessment of parenting**  
**Evidence based practice and reports**

***Who is this for.....Supervisors/Child protection Advisors/Team leaders***



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**SIHR Infant Mental Health Project: “Observing Infants”**  
**Observation and Assessment Skills:**  
**Working with parents and very young children**

Evidenced based approaches for assessing and supervising practitioners using observation in childcare assessments

## **1) Rationale**

The importance of early years, and the quality of the relationship between young children and their caregivers for infant mental health and child development, is widely documented. However, the ability to observe and assess this relationship has been identified as a key learning need by the Infant Mental Health Project. (National Programme for Improving Mental Health and Wellbeing 2007)

Agencies seek to ensure that their staff/practitioners are effectively and relevantly supported and supervised in their work

This module was designed in response to an identified need for effective supervision and case management around observation and assessment skills; this is what the practitioner will be bringing to you (Supervisor). The complexities of issues we work with within families and communities is a very emotive subject evoking a variety of feelings, which can influence professional decision making. Supervision should allow the practitioner to examine these issues.

## **2) Aim**

- To contribute to the continued profession development of front line staff working with children and families.
- To increase skills in the assessment of parenting, with particular reference to the emotional quality of the parent-infant interaction.
- To increase observational skills and enable a more informed assessment of parent and young child relationships, linking observation with child development theory and research.

## **3) Practitioner/Supervisor will develop skills in -**

- The use of detailed observation as a tool for understanding infants and young childrens' behaviour.
- The application of therapeutic ideas, early intervention strategies and relevant research findings to your current work context.
- The integration of theoretical concepts, infant observation and child development research to enhance your therapeutic skills.
- More effective communication with colleagues, clarify roles and responsibilities
- Facilitate reflective practice within a supportive environment

**Enquiries to:** Julie Watson, Infant Mental Health Development Manager  
t: 0131 454 3240, m: 07738818173, j.watson@sihr.org.uk

Course facilitator / designer: Julie Watson et al

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