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Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in the Berkeley Puppet Interview (BPI). This letter is intended to familiarize you with the method, measurement domains, and training procedures.

Overview to the BPI

The Berkeley Puppet Interview (BPI), building on a rich tradition of using puppets in clinical and research applications, was developed (Ablow & Measelle, 1993) to address the absence of standardized methodologies appropriate for measuring young children's perceptions of themselves and their environments. Using an interactive technique for interviewing children, the BPI blends structured and clinical interviewing methods. During the actual BPI interview, two identical hand puppets (tan-colored puppy dogs named "Iggy" and "Ziggy") make opposing statements about themselves and then ask children to describe themselves. For example,

Iggy: I have lots of friends.

Zggy: I don't have lots of friends

OR

Iggy: How about you?

Ziggy: My parents' fights are about me

Iggy: My parents' fights are not about me

Ziggy: How about your parents?

Rather than use a forced-choice or recognition-task response format, the BPI allows children to respond in ways that are most natural and comfortable to them, with the goal of promoting a fluid and unselfconscious dialogue between a child and the puppets.

The majority of young children interviewed with the BPI respond verbally, either by describing themselves or by indicating which puppet is most like them. Other children use limited verbal responses, such as naming one of the two puppets, or by responding in non-verbal ways, such as pointing to a puppet. To capture the range of individual differences in young children's responses, the BPI uses an extensive, rule-based coding system. Regardless of whether children's responses are verbal, non-verbal, elaborated, or limited, the BPI's coding system provides coders with the parameters needed to make sense of the varied ways that 4- to 8-year-old children respond to interview items. Specifically, guidelines have been developed to help coders decipher figures of speech, reasoning processes, and conditional responses that reflect ambivalent self-perceptions or uncertainty due to a lack of experience with a particular issue.

Published results demonstrate that the BPI is a reliable and valid measure of children's perceptions. Children understand the questions and become unselfconsciously engaged in dialogue with the puppets, giving differentiated and coherent responses in the process. One of the key findings in these studies has been that the agreement between young children and adult informants tends to be as strong if not stronger than the level of agreement between pairs of adult informants. For example, agreement between children's reports of their depressed feelings and teachers' ratings of children's internalizing behavior exceeded the level of agreement between teachers and mothers at 3 points in time (preschool, kindergarten, and first grade). Similarly, clinical observers' ratings of marital conflict between parents were more highly correlated with 5- to 6-year-olds' perceptions of their parents' conflict than with parents' own reports of their marital conflict. These data are important in light of the field's tendency to

(1) view young children's perceptions as less valid and (2) rely on adult informants when attempting to understand young children's subjective experiences or to identify emotional and behavioral problems in children younger than eight years of age.

At present, the BPI consists of several different interview protocols, each with multiple sub-scales. Thus far, the BPI's utility has been tested on socioeconomically, culturally, and clinically diverse samples. Through collaborations with research laboratories in the United States and abroad, efforts to replicate and extend the BPI are underway. For example, a Spanish language version of the *BPI Family Scales* has been tested on a sample of low-income Chilean children and families. As of 2006, multiple domains of the BPI have been translated and used with Japanese, Chinese, Korean, German, Swiss, Israel, British, Chilean, and American samples. Accordingly, we believe that both the BPI method and item content can be translated successfully for a diversity of cultural contexts.

BPI Domains and Scales

The BPI currently consists of a number of separate interviews domains and scales: (1) the BPI Family Environment Scales assess children's appraisals of central family relationships (parent-child, marital, sibling) and family processes (e.g., marital conflict, self-blame for conflict, shared-nonshared environment, perceived parental rejection); (2) the BPI Academic (BPI-A) and Social scales (BPI-Soc) tap children's perceptions of teacher, school, and peers; (3) the BPI Symptomatology Scales (BPI-S) assess children's perceived symptomatology in clinically relevant domains; and (4) BPI Reactivity and Regulation Scales. Finally, Jeff Measelle and Oliver John (UC Berkeley) have re-classified the BPI's self-perception items (from across multiple scales) and have extracted a fairly robust representation of the Big 5 personality factors, should this be of interest. A complete listing of the BPI domains and scales follows below.

Although we do not ask that an entire interview domain be used, at this stage in the BPI's development, we do ask that a BPI scale be used in its entirety.

The first formal psychometric paper on the BPI appeared in the December 1998 issue of *Child Development* (Measelle, Ablow, Cowan, & Cowan, 1998). More recent articles on the psychometric properties of the BPI have been published by our own and other labs (Ablow et al., 1999; Arseneault et al., 2005; Cowan et al., 2005; Luby et al., 2005; Pike et al., 2005). As of the Fall of 2008; there are over 83 studies in the literature using the BPI. As well, numerous conference papers are also available. Some combination of these should give you a fairly good idea of the method's psychometric and substantive properties, should you want to review any of these.

BPI Training Procedures and Certification

We ask that all research labs or clinical treatment centers interested in using the BPI undergo training in the method and receive certification. BPI workshops are typically 2 days in length, with follow-up practice interviews required for BPI certification. Typically, we conduct BPI workshops at a researcher's home institution. However, we also conduct 2-3 workshops per year here at the University of Oregon as well. In the case of international laboratories, we have found it most beneficial to train staff in the specific countries as this affords more time to refine translations of the BPI and to work collaboratively with principal investigators on substantive issues.

Although we do not charge labs to use the BPI, we do charge for training and certification. A cost sheet is attached for your consideration.

As with all calendar matters, scheduling a BPI workshop is not always an easy thing. We typically need a 2-3 months of advance notice to schedule the 2-day BPI training workshop and to budget the follow-up time needed to assist labs to achieve certification (following workshops, trainees complete 7-9 pilot BPI interviews, the videotapes of which are then sent to us for review and detailed feedback). We recommend that researchers *not* schedule or attend a BPI training workshop until (1) they have identified their staff and (2) will be ready to commence data collection soon after certification process is complete. The whole training and certification process is much quicker if you have children ready to interview immediately following the workshop.

Follow-up Questions

Should you have follow-up questions about this letter, or if you would like to receive copies of papers that have used the BPI, please feel free to contact us. Again, thank you for your interest in the BPI.

Sincerely,

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**Costs Associated with Training a Research Lab to
Administer and Code The Berkeley Puppet Interview (BPI)**

	<u>Cost (\$)</u>
BPI Interviewing Workshop and Certification	\$650 (<i>per trainee</i>)

Includes:

- 2-day on-site workshop
- Review of and feedback on at least 5 practice interviews for BPI certification
- Quality control: Follow-up reliability checks and feedback
- BPI Administration and Scoring System Manuals & VHS Tape

BPI Coding Reliability Check	\$250 (<i>per trainee</i>)
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Includes

- 1 day on-site workshop **OR** training via long-distance
- Review and feedback on coding of reliability set (10 interviews)
- BPI Administration and Scoring System Manual
- Use of reliability videotapes for practice coding (set of 10 practice interviews)

Travel Expenses Related to BPI activities

- Laboratories to pay transportation, room, board and miscellaneous expenses incurred in conjunction with BPI training activities.

**Published Work On or Utilizing the Berkeley Puppet Interview
(as of 1/2008)**

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