



### **Before arrest**

- **Family structure**
- **What happened to my parent/the person I care about?**
- **Who else helps my family?**
- **What did I see?**
- **Domestic violence—what I have I seen?**

## **Introductory activity**

### **My Family Tree:**

#### **Aim:**

to get to know the child's family structure, names, who lives with them, who is absent, any extended family, and any other family issues which may additionally contribute to the child's current emotional state such as divorce or bereavement, family disputes, people who are really strong for the child.

The colours of the leaves may also indicate how the child views that family member:

Red – security

Yellow – value/ worth/ self-respect

Green – love

Orange – belonging

Blue – communication

Purple – grief.

The child then draws all the people who are important to them in their family, placing each person on a leaf.

Look for where they place them in relation to each other. And which colours they choose to place them on. Which person do they place at the top of the tree? Which person do they place on a green leaf? Who may be some distance away from the tree? Be aware of what the child talks about as they draw, as this can often give some insight about their family dynamic.

It may help to enlarge the tree to A3 size or alternatively make your own tree together.

My family tree



## **What happened to the person I care about?**

The child may have witnessed a house search, a adult being questioned or taken away for questioning which may not have lead to arrest so there will not have been any follow up support for the family.

The child may have been traumatised by what they saw and needs to have an outlet to express this.

**“What are these people looking at?”** – the child may want to draw what they saw. The people can be interpreted as their own family, the neighbours or as an abstract group if the child finds it too difficult to deal directly with their own experience.

**“Clouds”** – again gives the child the opportunity to express their experience.

**“Telephone”** – the child may wish to “phone” someone to tell them what has happened, and this can also be used to give them a chance to discuss any other challenging situations they may have experienced in the home. Child protection procedures need to be adhered to should the child disclose anything you feel shows they are at risk.



**What are these people looking at?**



*Do you ever lie on your back and imagine you see pictures in the clouds? What can you see in these clouds, or draw your own.*



**If you could telephone anyone  
you wanted to, who would it be?**

**Draw them in the space –  
what would you say to them?**

