Mother-child questions

Researchers who are interested in child-related research might benefit from the following SOEP mother-child questions:\footnote{These questions cover general information provided by the mother about her child.}:

Sex of the child
male ☐
female ☐

Birth year and birth month ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
of the child Year ☐ Month ☐

In which week of the pregnancy was your child born?
In the ☐ ☐ week.

Irrespective of the age of the child, child health-related information can be covered by the following questions:

What is the current height and weight of your child?
Weight in kilograms ☐ ☐

Height in centimeters.
☐ ☐

Has your child been diagnosed by a doctor as having one of the following health condition or impairments?
Respiratory problems (asthma, bronchitis, etc.) ☐
Middle-ear inflammation ☐
Neurodermatitis ☐
Vision impairment (e.g., crossed eyes) ☐
Nutritional disorder ☐
Motor impairment (impairments of the locomotor apparatus) ☐
Other impairment or disorder ☐
No, none of those ☐

\footnote{1 These questions cover general information provided by the mother about her child.}
The *care situation* can be described as follows:

If you think about a normal week, are there any other people than you who take care of your child? If so, who are they, and how many hours per week are they responsible for children?

- spouse/partner
- the child’s father (if not a resident in your household)
- the child’s grandparents
- older brother/sister of the child
- other relatives
- family day care provider (outside the home)
- paid care giver comes into your home
- day care centre
- others (friends, neighbors, etc.)
- no, nobody

The questionnaires for mothers with children five to six years old include an instrument to measure the personality of a child. For this age group, personality measures could be used similarly to the “Big Five Measure” for adults (see Weinert et al. 2007: chapter 4).

**How do you rank your child in comparison to other children of the same age?**

The further to the left you place your checkmark, the more the left-hand statement applies to your child.

- quiet
- talkative
- messy
- orderly
- sweet-tempered
- touchy
- disinterested
- hungry for knowledge
- self-confident
- lacks self-confidence
- solitary
- outgoing
- concentrated
- easy distracted
- defiant
- obedient
- quick learner
- needs more time
- anxious
- calm

Often child related research questions refer to some kind of *child outcome*. However, outcome measures in early childhood are very age-sensitive. Thus potential outcome measures in the SOEP mother-child-questionnaires vary by age as well. For children two to three years of age, a measure of the child’s adaptive behavior is used, covering four skill dimensions: social skills, language skills, motor skills, and everyday life skills (for a more detailed description of this instrument, see Schmiade et al. 2008).

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2 At younger ages, the personality is not yet developed enough to measure it with exactly this scale; thus a shorter scale with only four items is used.
For parents, it is always a big event when their child learns something new. Please tell us what those new things are in the case of your child.

**Talking:**
- Understands brief instructions such as “go get your shoes”
- Forms sentences with at least two words
- Speaks in full sentences (with four or more words)
- Listens attentively to a story for five minutes or longer
- Passes on simple message such as “dinner is ready”

**Yes** | **To some extent** | **No**
---|---|---
☐ | ☐ | ☐
☐ | ☐ | ☐
☐ | ☐ | ☐
☐ | ☐ | ☐
☐ | ☐ | ☐

**Everyday skills:**
- Uses a spoon to eat, without assistance and without dripping
- Blows his/her nose without assistance
- Uses the toilet to do “number two”
- Puts on pants and underpants the right way around
- Brushes his/her teeth without assistance

**Yes** | **To some extent** | **No**
---|---|---
☐ | ☐ | ☐
☐ | ☐ | ☐
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**Movement:**
- Walks forwards down the stairs
- Opens doors with the door handle
- Climbs up playground climbing equipment and other high playground structures
- Cuts paper with scissors
- Paints/draws recognizable shapes on paper

**Yes** | **To some extent** | **No**
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☐ | ☐ | ☐
☐ | ☐ | ☐
☐ | ☐ | ☐
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**Social relationships:**
- Calls familiar people by name; for example, says “mommy” and “daddy” or uses the father’s first name
- Participates in games with other children
- Gets involved in role-playing games (“playing pretend”) 
- Shows a special liking for particular playmates or friends
- Calls his/her own feelings by name, e.g. “sad”, “happy”, “scared”

**Yes** | **To some extent** | **No**
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☐ | ☐ | ☐
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Another child outcome measure for older children, aged five to six, is a modified scale of the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire - SDQ Scale to measure the socio-emotional skills of a child (see Goodman 1997 for the original scale).
How do the following statements apply to your child? (Please give the answers on the basis of the child’s behavior over the last six months)

My child…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not true at all</th>
<th>Not true</th>
<th>Not true</th>
<th>True</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>is considerate of other people’s feelings</td>
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<td>shares readily with other children, for example toys, treats, pencils</td>
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<td>often loses his/her temper</td>
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<td>is rather solitary, prefers to play alone</td>
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<td>is helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill</td>
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<td>is constantly fidgeting or squirming</td>
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<td>often fights with other children or bullies them</td>
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<td>is often unhappy, depressed, or fearful</td>
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<td>is generally liked by others</td>
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<td>is easily distracted, concentration wanders</td>
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<td>is nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence</td>
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<td>is picked on or bullied by other children</td>
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<td>often offers to help others (parents, teachers, other children)</td>
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<td>gets along better with adults than with other children</td>
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<td>has many fears, easily scared</td>
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<td>good attention span, finishes what he/she starts</td>
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