

Why You're Important to Me: Quality Contact and
Relationships with Children and Young People in Care

By

Struck Productions

Struck Productions:
Transcript (13/12/2010)

Ph: 0423639769

1. PARK PLAYGROUND. EXT. DAY

It is a calm spring day. The sky is blue, the sun is shining and birds are chirping.

CLINTON (11) is standing in front of a slide. His friends, LINDA (7) and JODI (11) are sitting at a park bench. JODI is brushing LINDA's hair.

CLINTON
Hey guys.

JODI
Hey!

LINDA
Hi.

CLINTON
You guys seen Tom?

LINDA
I thought he was with you.

CLINTON
Nah. Guess I'll just keep looking for him. He'll be 'round here somewhere.

JODI
We'll come with you.

CLINTON (10), JODI, and LINDA walk off to the right.

2. PARK. EXT. DAY

TOM is sitting quietly under a tree playing softly and sullenly with a BROKEN TRUCK.

CLINTON, JODI, and LINDA enter from the left.

CLINTON
What ya doin' Tom? Did ya wanna play a game?

JODI
Yeah, let's play chasy.

CLINTON
Nah, dodge ball.

(CONTINUED)

JODI

Chasy.

CLINTON

Dodge-

LINDA

(to TOM)

-Is it your truck?

JODI

(quickly)

You know this one time when I was younger my doll's head fell off and I used chewing gum to stick it back on.

All the KIDS are quiet and straight-faced, somewhat perplexed by JODI's comment. JODI smiles. Crickets can be heard chirping.

TOM

(looking at the ground his emotions finally spill out)
I'm meeting my new worker today. What if he wants to move me again like the last one? What if he's like all the others? What if-

CLINTON

(trying to be the more mature one and show empathy)
Aww, I'm sure you'll be right.

JODI

I used to feel like that too with my workers but now I've got Mandy and she's heaps nice.

TOM

But aren't they from the gumervent? My foster dad says the the gumervent can't do any'fing right.

LINDA

I interviewed my social worker the other day for a school project. Maybe if I tell you some of the things I learnt it'll make you feel better.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

3.

TOM
(more sprightly now than
before)
Sure.

3. OFFICE. INT. DAY "SOCIAL WORKER 1" INTERVIEW

LINDA
Hi Amy.

AMY (SOCIAL WORKER)
Hi Linda.

LINDA
Can you please tell me about the
roles and responsibilities of
social workers?

AMY (SOCIAL WORKER)
Wo, that's a pretty big question.

LINDA smiles.

AMY (SOCIAL WORKER) (CONT)
Well, I think that a social worker
is there to help make the lives of
young people happy. They can talk
on the phone. They take kids out on
special outings. They can take them
to special meetings at schools, to
the doctor, to see their families.
But most of all, it's to have
someone listen to what they want in
their lives.

LINDA
(to screen)
What about you? What do you think
social workers do?

4. PARK. EXT. DAY

The four KIDS are still in the same places as they were at
the end of Scene 2.

CLINTON
They're there if you're too scared
to tell anyone what's wrong.*

CLINTON reaches out to TOM. TOM grabs CLINTON's hand and
CLINTON pulls TOM up.

(CONTINUED)

JODI

My social worker, Mandy, keeps me safe. She's really pretty. She's got these big glasses though and it reminds me of Ms. Janice, my library teacher. She told me about her job the first time I met her. I liked that.*

JODI

(inner voice; thinking)
Hmm, I wonder if any other kids ever felt way too?

5. OFFICE 2. INT. DAY "YOUTH ADVISOR" INTERVIEW

News music introduction plays.

NEWS NARRATOR

Jodi Gordan Investigates!

TEXT: JODI GORDAN INVESTIGATES

JODI

(to screen; in pretend news manner)

Hi, this is Jodi Gordan and you're watching "Jodi Gordan Investigates." I'm here with Sara. She grew up in care, just like me. Did you know what your case worker did when you were younger? (Q2)

SARA (YOUTH ADVISOR 1)

So, when I was younger, I think my social worker was really clear with me about who she was and what her role was. I think because it was in that crisis kind of setting - she explained her job really well. I think I've had social workers that they probably could have explained what their role was a little bit better. There were some times where things happened and I didn't know my social worker could help me with those things. But generally, it was really clear to me what their role was and what they could help with.

(CONTINUED)

JODI

Was it easy for you to contact your case worker when you needed to?

DAVID (YOUTH ADVISOR 2)

I had such great and loving carers to begin with, I didn't really need a social worker. But certainly, anytime I've ever needed it throughout my period I've always been able to contact them, walk into their office, and they've always been able to give me what it is I need.

6. NEWS SCENE CONT.

JODI

(to LINDA; holding a mic?)
What about you? Can you contact your case worker?

LINDA

My mum wrote my case workers name and number down...

7. LINDA'S KITCHEN. DAY. INT.

LINDA'S MUM is seen putting a note saying "Emma Matthews 8226 8571" on the wall next to the phone. LINDA is standing there watching.

LINDA (LILY)

(voice over)
...and put it next to the phone in case I ever wanted to call them.

8. PARK. EXT. DAY

JODI

(to LINDA; holding a mic)
What happens if they're not there?

LINDA

She says I can call her mobile if I really need to talk to her. My first worker would never answer her phone and never call me back. I didn't like her very much.

(CONTINUED)

JODI (CHARLOTTE)
(to CLINTON; holding a mic)
How about you?

9. SCHOOL OVAL. EXT. DAY

CLINTON is running with his hands in the air as if about to catch a footy. He falls down as he is running.

CLINTON (DOMINIC)
(voice over)
I stacked it at school once and had
to go to the doctors.

10. DOCTOR'S SURGERY. INT. DAY

CLINTON is sitting on the edge of a surgery bed with one band-aid over his right knee and one band-aid over his left elbow.

CLINTON (DOMINIC)
(voice over)
I called my worker and he came and
made sure I was alright.

11. PARK. EXT. DAY

JODI (CHARLOTTE)
And there you have it. This is Jodi
Gordan signing off another
thrilling "Jodi Gordan
Investigates." Until next time.

JODI is then blurred out (like at the end of the news) and a set of fake credits rolls as the narrator speaks.

NARRATOR
(pretentious British accent)
Join Jodi next time when she
investigates just where in world
all the unicorns have gone.

JODI (CHARLOTTE)
(voice over; excited!)
Unicorns!

12. PARK. EXT. DAY "RELIABILITY"/"FREQUENCY"

JODI and LINDA are sitting on a see-saw in the foreground.
CLINTON and TOM are on a see-saw in the background.

TOM

No fair. My last worker sucked. I hardly ever heard from him.

JODI

My social worker calls sometimes and it's good to be able to talk to her but I wish I saw her more than that.*

LINDA

Sarah took me to the museum last week. She likes reading, just like me.

CLINTON

Doug is pretty good too. He comes to heaps of my footy games. I wonder what its like for other kids.

CLINTON (CONT)

Hmmm... (drawn out, like Jodi at the end of scene 4)

13. GARDEN. EXT. DAY

CLINTON

How often are social workers meant to contact their kids?

JUSTIN (CASE WORKER 2)

Clinton, social workers are meant to be in contact with their kids regularly. They are supposed to see their young people once a month. But if they're having a bit of a rough time, I would hope their social worker would see their kid more often than that.

CLINTON

How can social workers and kids get in contact with each other?

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN (CASE WORKER 2)
Children can get in contact with me
by phoning me up and I'd hope you'd
have my phone number, emailing me.
You can drop into my office and say
G'day. If you phone me and I'm not
available, I'll try and get back to
you as soon as I can.

14. PARK. DAY. EXT. "INFORMALITY"

The four KIDS are now playing around the playground set.
CLINTON is at the top of the slide. And the three others are
scattered around.

TOM
Your case workers sound kinda cool.

CLINTON
Yeah. Mine is for sure. (Beat.) Oh
and I almost forgot to tell you
guys. I've got a footy game this
weekend. You guys wanna come?

JODI
Footy ew.

LINDA
(almost in a maternal tone)
Jodi.

JODI
Just kidding.

TOM
I'll be there if my mum says it's
ok.

LINDA
Me too.

Everyone looks at JODI. Beat.

JODI
(laughing)
I'll be there too.

CLINTON (DOMINIC)
Awesome. My case worker comes and
watches my footy games sometimes
too. I'll introduce you guys to
him.*

(CONTINUED)

JODI

You know this one time my worker gave me this birthday present and it was this barbie doll that I'd been waiting for, for ages, and ages. And it was really pretty and really cool. And it had like these bright blue eyes and - EEW a BUG!

A thought bubble appears above JODI's head as she speaks.

Overlay (in thought bubble) of a present being unwrapped. A Barbie doll is revealed. Then the bubble pops on "EEW a bug" as a bee flies through it.

All the KIDS laugh.

TOM (WILBUR)

Hope my mum lets me go to your game though. That'd be cool.

A car horn BEEPS. TOM's excitement quickly fades. Beat. It BEEPS again.

CLINTON

I think that's your mum dude.

TOM looks sullen.

LINDA

It'll be ok.

JODI

They might even take you for ice cream or something.

Beat.

TOM

Guess I better go.

TOM picks up his TOY TRUCK and begins to exit.

CLINTON

(yelling)

Don't forget to ask your mum bout the footy game.

The three remaining KIDS continue to play.

15. CAR. INT. DAY (OPTIONAL SCENE)

TOM sits in the back seat of his FOSTER MUM's car. There is an OOG toy next to him in the backseat. He reaches over to grab it. He then pulls it to his chest and gives it a hug.

Fade out. (F/O).

16. TOM'S FRONT YARD. EXT. DAY

TOM is playing with his BROKEN TRUCK.

TOM (WILBUR)
Brrm...brrm. Beep beep.

Car is heard pulling up (whilst TOM is talking to himself). A car door can be heard closing.

DYLAN walks in. He can only be seen from the waist down. He has his hands behind his back.

DYLAN
Hi. I'm Dylan. You must be Tom.

TOM nods.

DYLAN
I'm your new social worker. But I'd like to think that I can be your friend too.

DYLAN reveals that he has been hiding a NEW TOY TRUCK behind his back.

TOM (WILBUR)
(almost surprised by his own excitement)
Wow, that's a cool truck.

TOM looks a little taken aback (in a good way). Beat.

DYLAN
Look, I know that you have had a quite a few social workers recently and I'm sorry that has happened. I really hope to be able to get to know you better though and help you out in any way I can.

TOM smiles. A sense of relief has now replaced his worries and concerns about his new social worker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

11.

DYLAN

Why don't we start off by asking
your mum if we can go and get some
ice creams? How does that sound?

TOM nods and smiles.

OUTRO

Photo Montage: TOM and DYLAN hanging out at the zoo, at a
diner, at the beach, etc.