PROFILE

Dr Ben Grey

Principal Lecturer (Research), Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, University of Hertfordshire · Chartered Psychologist · Registered Social Worker · Co-director, Cambridge Centre for Attachment

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I am a social worker and chartered psychologist working where attachment research meets child welfare practice. I developed the Meaning of the Child Interview, a method of analysing parenting interviews to understand the parent–child relationship, and I teach it internationally alongside research and doctoral supervision at the University of Hertfordshire.

What I offer

- **Training.** The Meaning of the Child Interview, taught in standalone blocks from an introductory course through to coding and accreditation, and attachment and caregiving-based practice. Courses run live online, in house for organisations, and as self-taught online courses. I also teach more widely on applying attachment theory in social work, therapeutic and educational settings.
- **Clinical supervision and consultancy.** To local authorities, NHS and CAMHS services, occupational therapy practices, voluntary organisations and individual practitioners, on assessing and intervening in parent–child relationships.
- **Analysis and classification of attachment material.** I no longer conduct direct family court assessments, but I classify attachment interviews and videos for practitioners who use these procedures.
- **Research supervision and collaboration.** Doctoral supervision in clinical, counselling and educational psychology, and collaboration on studies using attachment-informed interview analysis.

The Meaning of the Child Interview

The MotC analyses an interview with a parent to understand what their child means to them, and what that implies for the relationship between them. It evaluates the relationship rather than the parent, reading so-called insensitive patterns as strategies for managing adverse circumstances rather than as deficits, and placing the caregiving relationship in its systemic context: partner, family, social network, culture.

I developed and validated the method through doctoral research (Grey, 2014; Grey & Farnfield, 2017a, 2017b), and edited and largely wrote the handbook, *The Meaning of the Child Interview: Making Sense of Parent-Child Relationships* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2026). The method has since been researched in normative and forensic settings and is used in social work, occupational therapy, CAMHS and therapeutic services in the UK, Ireland, Iceland and beyond. It forms part of the SAFE systemic intervention for families where a child has an autism diagnosis, of Sensory Attachment Intervention, and of the Knowing Me Knowing You programme for adoptive parents.

Background in brief

Principal Lecturer (Research), Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, University of Hertfordshire — current

Co-director, Cambridge Centre for Attachment	2012–
Senior Lecturer and Programme Convenor, Attachment Studies, University of Roehampton	2018–2023
Expert witness in family court proceedings	2002–2019
Children's guardian, and children and families social worker	1997–2008
PhD in Psychology, University of Roehampton	2014
MA in Social Work with Distinction, University of Warwick	1997

Chartered Psychologist (BPS) · Registered Social Worker (Social Work England) · Fellow of the Higher Education Academy

Chair, Trial Steering Committee, NIHR-funded trial of SAFE (Systemic Autism-related Family Enabling) 2026–

Advisory Editorial Board, *Human Systems: Therapy, Culture and Attachments*

I am trained and reliable in the Adult Attachment Interview (DMM), the CARE-Index, the Parent Development Interview with the Reflective Functioning Scale, the School Age Assessment of Attachment and the Berkeley 6-year-old Reunion Procedure, and am licensed to teach the Child Attachment and Play Assessment. I was a founder member of the International Association for the Study of Attachment.

Organisations I have worked with

- Milton Keynes Children's Services
- CAFCASS
- NAGALRO
- BAAF and CoramBAAF
- Action for Children
- TUSLA, Ireland
- TIGALA, Ireland
- Treehouse Practice, Ireland
- Key Assets Consulting, Ireland
- Tengslamat Family Clinic, Iceland
- Northern Health and Social Care Trust
- London Borough of Wandsworth
- Willows School Academy Trust
- Norfolk and Suffolk CAMHS
- Sofia University, Bulgaria
- Universities of Hertfordshire, Roehampton, Cambridge and Plymouth

Selected publications

Grey, B. (Ed.) (2026). *The Meaning of the Child Interview: Making Sense of Parent-Child Relationships*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Grey, B., & Farnfield, S. (2017b). The Meaning of the Child Interview (MotC): The initial validation of a new procedure for assessing and understanding the parent-child relationships of "at risk" families. *Journal of Children's Services*, *12*(1), 16–31.

Grey, B. (2023). "Beyond sensitivity": Understanding caregiving compromises in adverse contexts using the Meaning of the Child Interview. In S. Chrząstowski & A. Vetere (Eds.), *Safety, Danger and Protection in the Family and Community: A Systemic and Attachment-Informed Approach*. Routledge.

Dallos, R., Grey, B., & Stancer, R. (2026). Exploring attachment as a triadic process: The family attachment interview. *Human Systems: Therapy, Culture and Attachments*, *6*(2), 112–131.

Crittenden, P. M., Farnfield, S., Landini, A., & Grey, B. (2013). Assessing attachment for family court decision making. *Journal of Forensic Practice*, *15*(4), 237–248.

A full publication list, with open access and pre-publication downloads, is at attachment.services/publications and meaningofthechild.org/publications. A full curriculum vitae is available on request.