

Multi-Disciplinary “Team” Child Abuse Investigative Techniques

Presented by

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MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM CHILD ABUSE INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES

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Module Focus

TEAM MEMBERS - WORKING TOGETHER

The Child Sexual Abuse Investigation

- ***Extremely specific, i.e. has a crime been committed?***
- ***Identifying and protecting the victim(s)***
- ***We will work to identify potential EVIDENCE***
- ***We will work to target a suspect***

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Child Abuse

- ***Dr. C. Henry Kempe – “Battered Child Syndrome”***
- ***Child Abuse ... is something more than a one time event. It repeats itself over and over again***
- ***Child Abuse - progression of events that escalate***

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Child Sexual Abuse Crimes

Child Sexual Abuse

- ***Within the family***

Child Sexual Exploitation

- ***Outside the family***
- ***Multiple victims***
- ***Child pornography***

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Child Sexual Abuse Crimes

- ***Opportunity***
- ***Desire***
- ***Children are perfect victims***

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Some of the Investigative Problems in Sexual Abuse Cases

- ***Almost always occurs in private***
- ***In the majority of the sexual abuse cases there is no medical evidence***
- ***Crime scene may be in the residence***
- ***In some situations the victim may not want the offender punished***
- ***BUT, evidence can be used as corroboration of a crime***

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Child Sexual Abuse Victims

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Sexual Abuse Indicators

- *Fear of being alone with an adult*
- *Extreme repulsion or fear when being touched*
- *Inappropriate knowledge of sexual matters*
- *Overt sexual acting out with an adult*

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Sexual Abuse Indicators (cont.)

- *Simulation of sophisticated sexual activity*
- *Bruises or hickeys: face, neck groin, buttocks*
- *Public masturbation*
- *Self mutilation*

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Sexual Abuse Indicators (cont.)

- *Fear of a bathroom or shower*
- *Violence directed toward younger children*
- *Some children will exhibit NO indicators*

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Child Molester Seduction Sexual Abuse Activity

Grooming – lowering inhibitions

- *Fondling the “erogenous zones”*
- *Mutual masturbation*
- *Oral - genital relationships*
- *Intercourse - sodomy*

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What Does the Term “Compliant Victim” Mean ???

Children or teens who cooperate and / or participate in their own victimization

- *Legally unable to give consent*
- *Sexual abuse / acts*
- *Child pornography*

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What Does the Term “Compliant Victim” Mean ??? (cont.)

Issues

- *Difficult for the Judge / Jury to understand or be sympathetic to the victim (s)*
- *Important for the prosecutor to clarify the grooming of the victim in order to explain the complicity*

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Multi-Disciplinary Team

Purpose

- *The “MDT” creates a system of investigation and prosecution that causes the least possible trauma to children and families*
- *The MDT ensures coordinated action between agencies*

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Multi-Disciplinary Team

Purpose (cont)

- *The MDT reduces the number of interviews a victim undergoes*
- *Less “system inflicted trauma” to children*
- *The heart of the MDT often is the Child Advocacy Center (CAC)*

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Traditional Multi-Disciplinary Team

MDT Core members

- *Law Enforcement*
- *Child Protective Services*
- *Medical Community*
- *Prosecutor*
- *Child Advocacy Center (CAC)*
- *Mental Health -Therapy*

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Extended Multi-Disciplinary Team

If a computer is involved:

- *Child Exploitation Unit*
- *ICAC or other Task Force*
- *Local FBI Office vs. Innocent Images*
- *U.S. Postal Inspectors*
- *Computer forensic review.....*
- *NCMEC – CyberTipline, NVIP*

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Networking with Child Protective Services - CPS

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Child Protective Services

Federal Law

- *Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)*
- *Every state must have a CPS agency*
- *Every state must have statutes that define child maltreatment*
- *Every state must articulate how CPS will respond to child maltreatment*

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Child Protective Services (CPS) Goals

- *Protect*
- *Safety - well being*
- *Best interest*
- *Permanency*

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Child Protective Services Role within the MDT

Social worker (socius – friend)

- *Intake – “Hotline”*
- *Screen reports of abuse, neglect and dependency*
- *Identify families in need of services*
- *Investigation – Assess risk*
- *Case planning – Offer services*
- *Case closure – Permanency*

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Child Abuse Allegation WHAT DO YOU NEED TO IDENTIFY?

- *Did something “bad” occur?*
- *What happened?*
- *How?*
- *Who is the offender (s)?*
- *Where did it happen?*
- *When and how many times did it occur?*
- *Was there a witness (s)?*
- *Is there EVIDENCE?*

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Sexual Abuse Evidence Recovered from the Scene or the Offender

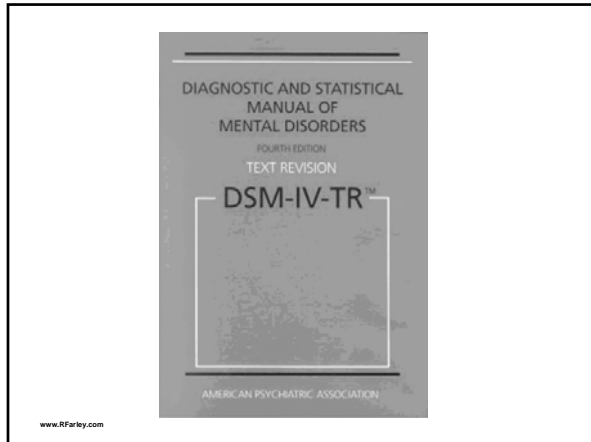
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Child Molester

- *DSM IV-TR*
- *Pedophile*



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FBI Profile for the Child Molester

- **Situational Molester**
Not a true sexual preference for a child
- **Preferential Molester**
True sexual preference for a child
- **ONLINE CHILD MOLESTER**

www.missingkids.com



Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis

For
Law Enforcement
Officers
Investigating
Cases of
Child
Sexual
Exploitation

In cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation

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Situational Child Molester

*Not a true sexual preference
for a child*

- **Regressed**
- **Morally Indiscriminate**
- **Sexually Indiscriminate**
- **Inadequate**

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Preferential Child Molester

True sexual preference for a child

- **Seducer**
- **Introverted**
- **Sadistic**

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Preferential Child Molester Characteristics

- **Children are preferred sexual objects**
- **Life centers around this sexual preference**
- **Sexual interest in children is rationalized**
- **Sexual fantasies focus on kids**

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Child Molester Collections

- *Very important*
- *Organized*
- *Permanent*
- *Concealed but not always*
- *Will share with others while looking for more*
- *The molester will never destroy the collection*

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Motivation for the Molester Collection

- *Molesters are compulsive*
- *Never has enough*
- *Need for validation*
- *Sexual gratification*
- *Seduction tool*
- *Blackmail*
- *Medium of exchange*

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Elements of the Molester Collection

- *Child erotica*
- *Child pornography*
- *Trophies*

Euphoric recall – remembering how good it felt

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Child Erotica

Defined - Any image, material or object relating to children that provides a sexual purpose for a given individual

- *Pre-Online type of collection*
- *Online type of collection*
- *Gender specific?*
- *Homemade vs. Commercial ?*

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Pre-Online Cut and Paste Illustrations

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Child Pornography

Defined – Visual depiction of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct or the lewd exhibition of the genitals

- *Pre-Online type of collection*
- *Online type of collection*
- *Gender specific?*
- *Homemade vs. Commercial ?*

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MDT – Online Illustration

- *Complaint from furnace repair company about observing child pornography*
- *Interview complainant*
- *Background check on suspect / address*
- *“Registered Sex Offender”*
- *Type complaint for a Search Warrant*
- *A Judge reviews and then signs the Search Warrant*
- *Execute the Search Warrant*
- *Identify potential victims and notify CAC*

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CHILD EROTICA

David Hamilton, Jock Sturges, Sally Mann

www.RFarley.com

Secure and Search the Crime Scene

See the attached
Consent to Search Forms
and the Seizure Lists

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Child Pornography Defenses

Are they real children?

- *Morphing*
- *Photo shopping*
- *Pseudo Photo*

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Child Victim
Identification Program

1.800.THE.LOST -- www.cybertipline.com

Charles B. Wang International
Children's Building
699 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3175
1.877.446.2632 ext. 6705
FAX 703.274.2121
cvip@ncmec.org

www.RFarley.com

Trophies

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Physical Evidence

- *Must be properly identified and evaluated*
- *Must be properly gathered then labeled*
- *Chain of custody must be proved*
- *Preservation or storage must be shown*
- *Competency must be proved, i.e., is it material and relevant*
- *Proof of identity must be shown, i.e., the person that located the evidence must be able to testify that the evidence offered in court is the same as was collected*

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Networking with the Medical Community, Physician or SANE Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner

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Networking with the Medical Community

- *Brief the physician or SANE about the circumstances of the allegation*
- *Ask that a sexual specific physical examination be conducted in order to inspect and evaluate the victim's body?*
- *Did the victim make any statements during the examination?*

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Networking with the Medical Community (cont.)

- *The physician or SANE must document in the chart any excited utterances....*
- *Any statements in the chart must not be sanitized or over medicalized, i.e. The patient states he was kicked in the scrotum by "Jim" vs. The patient states he was kicked in the balls by "Jim"*
- *Evidence from hospital – Document chain of custody*

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Networking with the Medical Community (cont.)

The Examination

- *Treat any injuries*
- *Conduct and document the forensic sexual specific examination - genital and anus*
- *Collect and preserve all potential evidence*
- *Collect urine and blood samples*
- *Treat the victim for possible pregnancy or STDs*
- *Provide the victim with referrals*

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Networking with the Medical Community (cont.)

The Examination

- *Colposcopy*
- *Colposcope*

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Networking with the Medical Community (cont.)

Potential Evidence

- Semen
- Saliva
- STD - Pregnancy
- DNA
- Pubic hair
- Bite marks

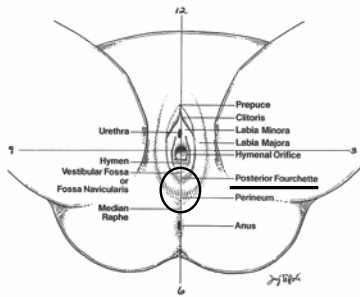
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Networking with the Medical Community (cont.)

- Ask the examiner for an opinion
- Does the medical opinion make sense?
- Do you need a second opinion?
- Please see the female genitalia drawing

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Networking with the Medical Community (cont.)



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Networking with the Child Advocacy Center CAC

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Multi-Disciplinary Team

Investigative Team - Decisions

- Location of Interview(s)
- Order of Interviews(s)
- Interview victim
- Interview siblings, witnesses, etc.
- Interview non-offending parent
- Interview offender
- Locate evidence

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Multi-Disciplinary Team

Substantiation Decision Making

- Victim statement
- All other statements
- Physical evidence
- Medical evidence
- Offender statement
- Any history or background?

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Traditional Sexual Abuse Victim Reactions

- *Fear of not being believed*
- *Fear of threats by one or both parents*
- *Fear of rejection by the family or being blamed*
- *"It was my fault"*

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Disclosure Process

- Traditional Child Sexual Abuse*
- *As the result of friends, TV or a school program*

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Disclosure Types

INDIRECT HINTS

- *"My babysitter keeps bothering me"*
- *"Mr. Cavins wears funny underwear"*
- *"I don't like my mom's boyfriend"*
- *"Mr. Malinowski plays with funny toys"*

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DISCLOSURE TYPES (cont.)

DISGUISED

- *"What would happen if someone told her mother she was being molested but her mom didn't believe her?"*
- *"I know someone who is being touched in a bad way"*

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Disclosure Types (cont.)

DISCLOSURE WITH STRINGS ATTACHED

- *"I have a problem but if I tell you, then you can't tell my mom"*
- *"My friend has a problem but you can't tell anyone about it"*

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Disclosure Process

- Traditional Child Sexual Abuse*
- *As the result of friends, TV or a school program*

- "Compliant" Child Sexual Abuse*
- *Accident*

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Typical “Compliant” Child Abuse Victim

- *Naturally curious and trusting*
 - *Easily led by adults*
 - *Need for love, attention and affection*
 - *Often from a single parent family*
 - *Doesn’t consider consequences of words and acts*
 - *May deny involvement with offender and minimize sexual acts*
- *“Nothing is wrong, I’m not a victim”*

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Webcam and Real-time Problems for the “Compliant Victim”

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Talking with the Suspect Child Abuse Victim

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Forensic Interview Protocol

Similar Characteristics & Research RATAC Protocol – CornerHouse

- *Rapport, Anatomy Identification, Touch Inquiry, Abuse Scenario, and Closure.*

NICHD – Protocol

- *Eunice Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development*

Step Wise Protocol

- *John Yuille – British Columbia*

APSAC – Protocol

- *Poole & Lamb “flexible protocol”*

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Forensic Interview Protocol (cont.)

CAC vs. the Field – Documentation

- *Introduction / Rapport Building*
- *Legal Competency*
- *Establishing ground rules*
- *Introducing the Subject Matter*
- *Questioning and Clarification*
- *Closure*

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Crawford v. Washington (2004)

Hearsay exceptions

- *MDT-Forensic interviews are not primarily for the purpose of criminal litigation*
- *Assist a therapist in treating the child*
- *Assist CPS in preventing further abuse or preserving the family*
- *“The child is our first priority”*

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Cross - "Children lie, don't they?"

"Yes, in my experience all human beings are capable of lying"

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Introduction

- *"Hi, my name is Bob and I'm a Juvenile Officer."*
- *"Do you know what a Juvenile Officer is?"*
- *"I help kids" or "My job is to help kids."*

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Rapport Building

- *What is your name ?*
- *Your mom tells me your name is Courtney but your friends call you Missy, what do you want me to call you ?*
- *Tell me about yourself ?*
- *What do you like to do ?*
- *NEVER say "Your so pretty"*

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Assessment of the Child's Legal Competency as a Witness

- *Ability to verbalize - Description of activities not normal for a child*
- *Ability to remember what occurred*
- *Can distinguish truth vs. fantasy*
- *Knows that telling a falsehood is wrong*

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Establishing the Ground Rules

Elicit an agreement from the victim:

- *Only tell the truth*
- *Only talk about things that really happened*
- *Will ask if they don't understand*
- *Its OK if they don't know or remember*

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"Children will provide responses to almost any adult question even if they don't understand the meaning"

Warren @ McCloskey (1993)

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Introduction and Icebreaking Questions

- *Why are you here ?*
- *Why am I here ?*
- *Did anyone tell you what we were going to talk about today ?*
- *What are we supposed to talk about while you're here ?*
- **FEAR OF THREATS**

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Types of Questions

- *Good touch / Bad touch ??*
- **SECRET TOUCH**
- *Anatomical Inventory*

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Types of Questions

- *General ... Open ended*
- *No simple YES or NO answers*
- *“Did someone tell you to say that?”
..... Follow with free recall “Tell me about it”*
- *Leading ... “He stuck his finger in your vagina, didn't he?” or “How much did it hurt?”*

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“A question is defined as leading that instructs the witness how to answer or puts into his mouth words to be echoed back or suggests the answer”

Black's Law Dictionary 2004

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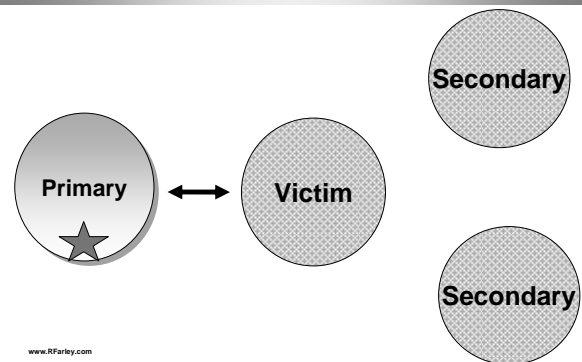
Interview Team

IDENTIFY THE TEAM MEMBER WHO WILL CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW ?

- *The Farley technique....*
- *Primary interviewer*
- *Secondary interviewer*

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Interview Seating



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Interview Team

- *Documentation*
- *Don't hurry, based on each child that is being interviewed set your own time limit for the interview*

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Corroboration of Specific Details

- *Heard sounds or words*
- *Smells on offender's breath, etc.*
- *Taste of the "white stuff"*
- *Penis erect / penetration / ejaculation*
- *Location of tattoos, marks, etc.*
- *Special clothing*

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Typical "Compliant" Child Abuse Victim Questions

- *Has XXX sent you any photos?*
- *Has XXX sent you a photo of himself?*
- *Where are the photos now?*
- *Did you forward them to more than.... (FIVE) friends?*
- *Have you sent any photos to the suspect?*
- *Have any of your friends?*
- *Did you or XXX use a webcam?*

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Typical "Compliant" Child Abuse Victim Questions (cont.)

- *Do you have a private e-mail account?*
- *Do you have more than... (FIVE)?*

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Typical "Compliant" Child Abuse Victim Questions (cont.)

- *Where did you meet him? Where else did you go?*
- *How did you get there?*
- *Were you with a friend?*
- *Did you have sex? (Technical Sex)*
- *How does the suspect know your age?*
- *How many times have you told XXX your age?*

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Typical "Compliant" Child Abuse Victim Questions (cont.)

- *Do you have an online profile ?*
- *Do you have more than... (FIVE)?*
- *Where are they posted ?*

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Typical “Compliant” Child Abuse Victim Questions (cont.)

- *Can you identify XXX?*
- *How?*

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Clarification Utilizing the Freehand Drawings Interview Process

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Freehand Drawing Interview Process

- *Write your name?*
- *Draw yourself?*
- *Draw your family?*
- *Draw what happened?*

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Freehand Drawing Interview Process (cont.)

- *Drawings help build rapport and encourage narrative accounts*
- *Please see the article in the Appendix*

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Drawing Process Interview Rules

- *Don't play amateur psychologist or art therapist*
- *Allow the child to interpret the drawings for you – NEVER interpret the drawings yourself*
- *Don't ask questions about the drawing until the drawing is completed*

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**WRITE YOUR
NAME**

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***DRAW A PICTURE
OF YOURSELF***

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***ANATOMICAL
INVENTORY***

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***DRAW A PICTURE
OF YOUR FAMILY***

www.RFarley.com

***DRAW A PICTURE OF
WHAT HAPPENED***

“Can you show me what happened?”

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***Jasmine “JJ” Ferguson
Case Illustration***

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Closing the Interview

- ***“You are not to blame and you did nothing wrong”***
- ***Do you want to ask me anything?***
- ***Take a “facial” and a “full body” photo of the victim – children will change or mature***
- ***Tell the victim what will happened next***

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Talking with the Suspect

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Talking with the Suspect

- *Will they talk?*
- *Good guy vs. bad guy*
- *You must befriend the suspect*
- *Victim may warn suspect*
- *Invite the suspect to come down to your office "to talk"*

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Beginning

- *State the allegation of crime*
- *Constitutional rights*
- *Determine the level of suspect's level of understanding*
- *Let the offender sit for a while.....*
- *THEN ...Are you a pedophile?*
- *You seem like a good person*

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The Famous Innocent Touch

- *Wrestling*
- *Toilet wiping*
- *Bathtub scrubbing or drying*
- *Application of medicine*
- *Some other medical purpose*
- *Checking for child abuse*
- *Checking for virginity*
- *Going hunting in Wisconsin*

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Admission

- *Allow offender to tell their story*
- *Identify the victim(s) and the age(s)*
- *Reverse photo ID of the victim*
- *Identify special names for the abuse*
- *Identify physical evidence and locations*
- *Statement - One chance to tell your version of what took place*

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Closing

- *Review the statement with the suspect*
- *Write an apology letter to the victim?*
- *Are there other victims?*
- *Don't condemn the offender*
- *Don't make any promises*
- *Shake hands*
- *Take a "relaxed" photo of the suspect*

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Thank you !

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CONSENT TO SEARCH

I, _____ have been informed of my constitutional right not to have a search made of the premises and/or automobile owned by me and/or under my care identified below without a search warrant. However, knowing my rights to refuse consent to such a search, I hereby authorize _____ and _____ of the Cook County Sheriff's Police Dept. Child Exploitation Unit or their agents to conduct a complete search of the premises, garage, storage shed or any structure at the property commonly known as _____
_____ and/or _____ automobile, license _____.
Year and Type of automobile

These officers are authorized by me to take from my premises and/or property and review any computer system (s), computer discs, videos, photos, magazines or any materials for evidence in the nature of child abuse or child erotica. This written permission is given by me to the above named persons voluntarily and without any threats or promises of any kind, at _____
_____ M on this _____ day of _____, 20 _____. I fully understand that I will be given a receipt for property taken.

Signed _____
Name _____
Printed

WITNESSES:

Signed _____
Name _____
Printed Printed

CONSENT TO SEARCH

I, _____ have been informed of my constitutional right not to have a search made of the premises and/or automobile owned by me and/or under my care identified below without a search warrant. However, knowing my rights to refuse consent to such a search, I hereby authorize _____ and _____ of the Cook County Sheriff's Police Dept. Child Exploitation Unit or their agents to conduct a complete search of my computer system:

Brand of Computer	Model
Serial Number	Other

These officers are authorized by me to take from my premises and/or property and review this computer system (s) for any evidence in the nature of child abuse or child erotica. This written permission is given by me to the above named persons voluntarily and without any threats or promises of any kind, at _____ M on this _____ day of _____, 20 _____. I fully understand that I will be given a receipt for property taken.

Signed _____

Name _____

Printed

WITNESSES:

Signed _____

Name _____

Printed

Printed

CONSENT TO SEARCH

I, _____ have been informed of my constitutional right not to have a search made of online accounts owned by me and/or under my care identified below without a search warrant. However, knowing my rights to refuse consent to such a search, I hereby authorize _____ and _____ of the Cook County Sheriff's Police, Child Exploitation Unit or their agents to conduct a complete search and review of my online accounts for which I provided the following: Account name (ACCT) , Screen Name (SN) and Password (PW):

ACCT _____ SN _____ PW _____

ACCT _____ SN _____ PW _____

ACCT _____ SN _____ PW _____

These officers are authorized by me to review my accounts online looking for any evidence in the nature of child abuse, child exploitation or child erotica. This written permission is given by me to the above named persons voluntarily and without any threats or promises of any kind, at _____ M on this _____ day of _____, 20 _____.

Signed _____

Name _____
Printed

WITNESSES:

Signed _____

Name _____
Printed

Printed

ITEMS TO BE SEARCHED FOR AND SEIZED

If a computer is involved

1. Any computer equipment (both hardware and software), including computers systems, servers, computer disks, cd-roms, scanners, printers, digital cameras, memory sticks or any equipment that could be used in the production, reproduction, display or distribution of images of a minor being sexually exploited.
2. Any computer passwords, documentation or information on any data security device that could be utilized to hide or encrypt the computer system. (Before computer equipment is seized, all connections should be noted and marked. The suspect should be prevented from touching the computer. Technical resources for avoiding accidental erasures and retrieving all available information should be identified and used in the investigation)
3. Any and all tapes, cassettes, cartridges, streaming tape, commercial software and hardware, computer disks, disk drives, monitors, computer printers, modems, tape drives, disk application programs, data disks, system disk operating systems, magnetic media floppy disks, tape systems and hard drive, terminals (keyboards and display screens) and other computer related operation equipment, in addition to computer photographs, digital graphic file formats and/or photographs, slides or other visual depictions of such digital graphic file format equipment that may be, or are used to visually depict child pornography, child erotica, information pertaining to the sexual interest in child pornography, sexual activity with children or the distribution, possession, or receipt of child pornography, child erotica or information pertaining to an interest in child pornography or child erotica.
4. Any and all computer software, including programs to run operating systems, applications (like word processing, graphics, or spreadsheet programs), utilities, compilers, interpreters, and communications programs.
5. Any computer-related documentation, which consists of written, recorded, printed or electronically stored material that explains or illustrates how to configure or use computer hardware, software or other related items.
6. Any and all records and materials, in any format and media (including, but not limited to, envelopes, letters, papers, e-mail, chat logs and electronic messages), pertaining to the possession, receipt or distribution of visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, as defined in your Criminal Code or Laws.
7. In any format and media, all originals, copies and negatives of visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, as defined in your Criminal Code or Laws.

8. Any and all records and materials, in any format and media (including, but not limited to, envelopes, letters, papers, e-mail, chat logs and electronic messages) identifying persons transmitting through interstate or foreign commerce, including via computer, any visual depiction of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, as defined in your Criminal Code or Laws.

9. Any and all records and materials, in any format and media (including, but not limited to, envelopes, letters, papers, e-mail, chat logs, electronic messages, other digital data files and web cache information), bearing on the receipt, shipment or possession of visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, as defined in your Criminal Code or Laws.

8. Records of communication (as might be found, for example, in digital data files) between individuals concerning the topic of child pornography, the existence of sites on the Internet that contain child pornography or who cater to those with an interest in child pornography, as well as evidence of membership in online clubs, groups, services, or other Internet sites that provide or make accessible child pornography to its members and constituents.

9. Evidence of association, by use, subscription or free membership, with online clubs, groups, services or other Internet sites that provide or otherwise make accessible child pornography.

10. Evidence of any online storage, e-mail or other remote computer storage subscription to include unique software of such subscription, user logs or archived data that show connection to such service, and user login and passwords for such service.

11. Records evidencing occupancy or ownership of the premises described above, including, but not limited to, utility and telephone bills, mail envelopes, or addressed correspondence.

12. Records, in any format or media, evidencing ownership or use of computer equipment and paraphernalia found in the residence to be searched, including, but not limited to, sales receipts, registration records, records of payment for Internet access, records of payment for access to newsgroups or other online subscription services, handwritten notes and handwritten notes in computer manuals.

A Suspected Preferential Child Molester may also possess evidence of child pornography, child erotica or child sexual abuse which will include:

- Any videotapes, 8mm movies, photographs, negatives, magazines, pictures, books or any materials depicting a person under the age of 18 years engaged in sexual intercourse, sexually explicit conduct, or lewd exhibition of the genitals.
- Any undeveloped rolls of film or commercial and noncommercial videocassettes.
- Any video equipment, television equipment, photography equipment, darkroom equipment or any equipment used in the production, reproduction, display, or distribution of images of a minor being sexually exploited.
- Any and all documents, correspondence, calendars, telephone or address books, diaries, computer disks, or any other written or tape-recorded materials that identify or will lead to identification of persons under the age of 18 years.
- Any nonsexual photographs of a minor with whom the suspect may have had any contact.
- Any and all documents, correspondence, financial records, and other materials on paper, computer disk, computer hard drive or any media relating to the purchase, sale, ordering, receipt, or payment for any materials involving the exploitation of children.
- Any photographs, albums, posters, paintings, books, manuals, nudist magazines, advertisements, or any type of clothing material that could be used for training or instructing a minor in posing, modeling, or performing either clothed or unclothed.
- Any keys to safe deposit or post office boxes, bank statements, invoices, or canceled checks that would indicate the use, rental, or ownership of any storage facility, post office box, or safety deposit box.
- Any and all documents, correspondence, financial records, and other materials on paper, computer disk, or computer hard drive relating to the purchase, sale, transfer, ordering, or receipt of any materials involving the sexual exploitation of children.

What is Done, and What Should I Do? (Part 3)

Editor's Note: In this third part of our ongoing series on the child abuse interview process, we take a look at one of the proven techniques that professionals use to interview a child who is the victim of sexual abuse. While the article focuses on the “drawing” exercise as a method for getting the child to provide details about the abuse, we want to strongly remind our readers that the actual interviewing of victims should be left to child protection authorities and specially trained law enforcement officers. Improper interviewing techniques can bring further damage to an already wounded victim and can complicate suspicions or allegations—sometimes to the point of giving the abuser an easy way out. However, a drawing can also be helpful to the mandated reporter (a teacher, for example) to help encourage a child to talk about a problem the child isn't eager to discuss. A mandated reporter who suspects a child is being abused should consider using this technique to help the child disclose what is bothering him or her. However, for the mandated reporter, once the child discloses the problem, the reporter should cease the process and contact the appropriate authorities—to ensure timely professional intervention and the safety of the child.



(Featured November 15, 2004)

By Robert Hugh Farley, M.S.
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In [Part 2](#) of this series, we discussed preferential child molesters and some of the complexities involved in properly interviewing *their* victims. In this article, we explore a specific interview technique designed to help a trained investigator get the most detailed information possible from the sex abuse victim without further traumatizing the child victim.

An excellent technique to help an interviewer obtain crucial information is to have a child suspected of being abused draw one or several freehand pictures during the course of the investigation interview. A drawing can also be helpful to the mandated reporter (a teacher, for example) to help encourage a child to talk about a problem the child isn't eager to discuss. A mandated reporter who suspects a child is being abused should consider using this technique to help the child disclose what is bothering him or her. However, for the mandated reporter, once the child discloses the problem, the reporter should cease the process and contact the appropriate authorities—to ensure timely professional intervention and the safety of the child.

In my experience, some children I interviewed were initially frightened not only because I'm a police officer, but also because they knew that I can arrest the abuser. In order to soften this perception, I have utilized a technique, with hundreds of children, that I call the "Drawing Interview Process." This interview technique allows me to talk with a child in such a relaxed manner that in some cases the child may not even realize that they have been interviewed.

Write Your Name

The first step of the "Drawing Interview Process" begins with the interviewer furnishing the child with a sheet of blank white paper and a pencil. The child is then asked to write his or her name on the paper. This simple non-threatening activity can often counteract some of the warnings and threats that have been made by the molester. Remember, the child has been told by the molester not to talk to anyone about the abuse. The child has never been told to not to draw or write a name. In addition to calming the child, this first step can be used as an instrument that will provide the interviewer with a sense of the child's developmental stage and education level.

Once the child has finished writing his or her name, the interviewer should ask the child, "Do you want me to call you by the name you have written or is there another name that you want me to use?" By asking the child this question you are providing the child with a sensation of control over an adult, maybe for the first time in the child's life. The child will feel empowered when making this decision by forcing the adult interviewer to comply with his or her decision.

Draw a picture of Yourself

The next step in the "Drawing Interview Process" is to furnish the child with another sheet of blank white paper and to ask the child, "Can you please do me a favor and draw a picture of yourself?" In the hundreds of interviews where I have asked a child this question I have never adamantly been told "NO" by anyone. Some older children will slightly resist and tell me that they haven't drawn in years. With those children I will say, "Well I'm going to draw a picture of me, so why don't you draw a picture of you." At that point I take another blank sheet of paper and begin drawing a picture of myself. Within a minute or two the child will begin drawing. This step of the process has been successfully utilized with children from the age of 3 to 19 years depending on the child's developmental level.

To keep the child relaxed and focused, it is very important to never ask the child any questions about the drawing until the drawing is fully completed. Once the child finishes the drawing, the interviewer can utilize the drawing to get the child to talk more about himself, herself, or the abuse. This can easily be done once the interviewer first examines the drawing, and then asks the child questions about the drawing. If the interviewer observes some part of the drawing that is unusual, missing, exaggerated or overemphasized, as in Fig. 1 (at right), the interviewer should ask the child to explain that part of the drawing.

The interviewer must never make any assumptions or interpret any part of the child's drawing. The child should be allowed to interpret or explain the drawing to the interviewer. After the interviewer examines the drawing, one of the first questions that could be asked is, "What type of face do you have in the drawing?" If the child answers, "It's a sad face," the interviewer should ask, "What does that mean?" or "Can you tell me what is wrong?" or "What is bothering you?"

Other questions that can be asked are:

- Do you like the person in the drawing?
- Tell me all about the "kid" in drawing?
- Is the person in the drawing scared of anyone?

If parts of the body in the drawing are obviously missing, the interviewer should ask, for example:

- Where are your hands in the drawing?
- What happened to your feet in the drawing?

This drawing can also be utilized to complete what is known as the "Anatomical Inventory." During or immediately following a disclosure of abuse, the interviewer will conduct an "Anatomical Inventory." The inventory allows the interviewer to identify the exact names that the child uses for his or her body parts. In order to carry out the "Anatomical Inventory" the interviewer should point at various parts of the figure in the drawing and ask the child the name for each specific body part. In some cases the drawing helps when a child is reluctant to say the name of a specific body part. With some older children I have the child write the name of the body part and draw an arrow to that specific spot on the drawing. This is an important step in the interview process because, with the "Anatomical Inventory," the interviewer knows exactly—in the child's own words—what is being said.



Draw a Picture of Yourself (Fig. 1)

A 14-year-old boy who was a ward of the state drew this image. The boy was living with other state wards in a foster home. My investigation determined that the boy had been orally and anally sodomized—not only by the foster father, but also by all of the male state wards in the foster home. During this interview, I asked the boy to draw a picture of himself. That picture is displayed above. Important to note is the object in the mouth and the lack of a torso.

– Robert Hugh Farley

Draw a Picture of your Family

In some situations it is important to identify all of the people who make up the victim's family or to identify all of the people who are living in the victim's house or apartment. In order to do this, I provide the child with another sheet of blank white paper and ask the child to draw a picture of his or her family.

When the drawing has been completed, the child should be asked to identify all of the depicted family members including any pets. Once the members of the family or key individuals in the child's life have been identified, the interviewer can then ask the child to describe his or her relationship with each of the family members.

In some of my interviews I have had children draw the layout of their house or their apartment. I have used these drawings to identify the sleeping arrangements within the family unit or the visitors who come in and out of the family unit.

Draw a Picture of What Happened

In situations where a child has made a disclosure of abuse, I have provided the child with another sheet of blank white paper and have asked the child to draw a picture of what happened. This drawing can be used to clarify the verbal disclosure made by the child.

In many of these cases, I have found that talking about the abuse—as the child looks at the completed drawing—makes the child somewhat more relaxed. The drawing also allows the child to explain the abuse in greater detail, to identify the crime scene, and to actually label the offender. In other cases, this drawing has identified the exact location of specific child sexual abuse evidence such as condoms, lingerie-type clothing, child pornography, and child erotica.

Conclusion

If you choose to use the "Drawing Interview Process" the interviewer must remember to never play amateur psychologist or art therapist. The unqualified interviewer must never attempt to analyze or to interpret a child's drawings—keeping in mind that many children are not artistically inclined. The rule of thumb is that art interpretation should be left only to a trained professional.

Drawings can be utilized by an interviewer as a segue between the various phases of the interview and as a way to put a child—a child you suspect has been abused—at ease. In addition to being a motor activity, drawings allow an abused child to express graphically what he or she may be afraid to express verbally. In some cases, drawings reduce intensity and allow the resurfacing of repressed feelings or facts that otherwise would never come out during questioning. Drawings can also provide the legal system with hard evidence of the disclosure of abuse to an interviewer. Lastly, the "Drawing Interview Process" can be conducted in such a way that it is not only non-threatening, but also non-harmful to an already damaged child.

Remember: unless you have received specialized training in the interviewing of victims of sexual abuse and unless you are appropriately authorized to participate in the interview process, your first and primary attention should focus on immediately shielding the victim from further abuse and reporting suspicions or allegations to the appropriate child protection agency or law enforcement authorities.