

First Responder Child Sexual/Physical Assault Minimal Facts Interview

1. Interview of the non-offending caregiver

- Prior to interviewing the child the first responder should interview the non-offending caregiver separate from the child.
- Get as much information from the non-offending caregiver as possible regarding how this situation came to their attention.
- If the child made statements to them, record the exact words that the child said when making the statement.
- Determine if the child is in need of immediate medical attention. If the child does require immediate medical attention, secure the medical attention before proceeding with the minimal facts interview.
- Determine if the non-offending caregiver has concerns for the safety of any other children (such as siblings of the victim) or has knowledge of any other victims.
- Determine if the non-offending caregiver has knowledge of the whereabouts of the suspect/alleged perpetrator.

2. Minimal facts interview of the child

- The child should be interviewed outside of the presence of the non-offending caregiver.
- The following format should be used to conduct the minimal facts interview of the child

3. Introduction

- Tell the child your name
- Describe your job in terms the child understands:
 - “I talk to kids about things that have happened to them.”
 - “I talk to kids to find out how they are doing/if things are okay/if they are safe.”

4. Rapport building

- Talk about everyday interests of the child (hobbies, school, sports, pets, etc.)
- Show genuine interest in what the child has to say

5. Transition

- “Tell me about coming here today.”
- “Do you know why I am here today?”
- “Did you talk to _____ about something today?”

- “Has something happened to you?”

6. Nature of the allegation

- “What happened?”
- “Tell me about that?”

7. Identify the suspect/alleged perpetrator

- “Who did this?”

8. Establish jurisdiction

- “Where did it happen?”
- If the incident(s) **DID NOT** occur in your police jurisdiction, **CONTINUE** to gather the minimal facts. This information will be turned over to the appropriate police jurisdiction

9. Establish a timeframe

- “When did it happen last?”
- If the last incident occurred within the past 5 days, seek medical treatment for the child

10. Information and preparation

- Age appropriate description of the CAC
- Answer any questions that the child might have
- Address any concerns that the child might have
- Thank the child

11. Conduct a victim safety assessment with the non-offending caregiver

- Based on who the suspect is and where the suspect is currently located, establish a safety plan for the child with the non-offending caregiver. This may include the child remaining with the non-offending caregiver, going to stay with a friend or family, or the child going into protective custody. FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT - CONTACT CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES IF THEY HAVE NOT BEEN NOTIFIED (717-846-8496 or 1-800-729-9227).

12. Next steps

- Explain to the non-offending caregiver that it is important to refrain from asking the child additional questions about the alleged incident(s).
- Explain to the non-offending caregiver that a referral may be made to CAC for child and the siblings as well.