

The Use of Forensic Interviewing with Child Victims and Witnesses

14th National Indian Nations Conference:
Justice for Victims of Crime

Who are we?

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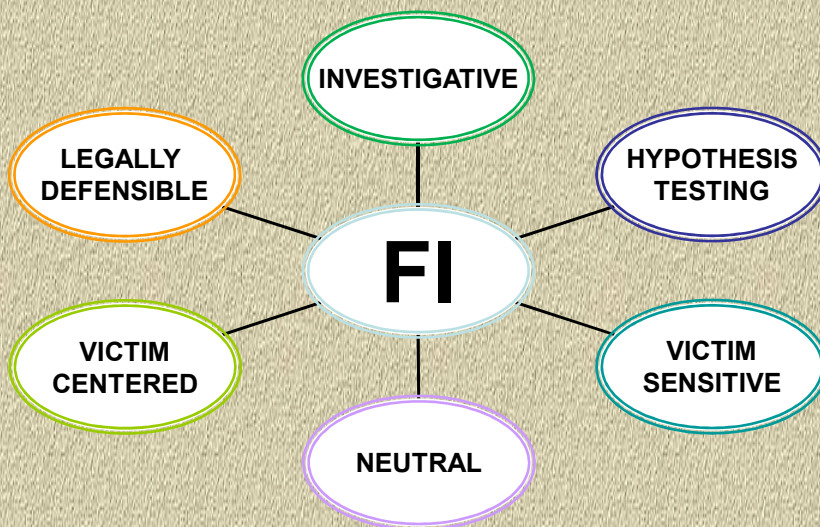
Who are you?

- Name, Tribal affiliation
- Position and organization
- Part of a MDT or CPT?
- What are you hoping to take away from today's session?

Today we will discuss...

- Basic overview of forensic interviewing
- Selecting an appropriate interviewer
- Standard practices in interviewing
- Current approaches to working with Tribal victims

What is a forensic interview?



Types of Interviews

	Clinical	Forensic	Suspect Interview
Goal	Therapy / Assessment	Obtain most accurate statement	Gathering of intelligence
Role	Advocate	Fact finder	Fact finder
Position	Pro Child / Diagnostic & supportive	Neutral & Hypothesis tester	Confrontational & Hypothesis confirming
Approach	Treatment focused	Funnel / open ended	Leading & Probing

A forensic interview...

Minimizes the trauma of the investigation for the victim

Minimizes contamination of the victim's memory of the event(s)



Maximizes the accurate information obtained from the victim about the alleged events

Maintains the integrity of the investigative process

When should a FI be used?

- When the victim is:
 - A child or adolescent;
 - An adult with developmental disabilities or other barriers to communication.
- The direct victim of a crime– e.g., sexual abuse, exploitation, assault
- A witness to a crime– e.g., murder, domestic violence, abuse of another child
- When in doubt, ask if you can get a FI.

Selecting the Forensic Interviewer

Avoid:



www.pixgood.com

Selecting the Forensic Interviewer

Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) are community-based, child-friendly, multidisciplinary services for children and families affected by sexual or physical abuse.



Selecting the Forensic Interviewer

- Forensic Interviewer
- SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner)
- Pediatrician
- Pediatric Counselor
- Law Enforcement/Child Protection Officer
- Prosecutor



Selecting the Forensic Interviewer



Legacy of Healing:
the Tulalip Children's
Advocacy Center



"Nitaput" Child
Advocacy Center



Listening to the Voices of Children,
Families, and Tribal Communities

Selecting the Forensic Interviewer

Tribal outreach –

- Collaborate Tribal MDT with CAC
- Offer tribal/cultural awareness training



Standards for FI

Numerous evidence-supported models exist:

- NICHD, CornerHouse, Stepwise, Finding Words, NCAC, APSAC, others.

While there are differences in emphasis and structure, all have common underlying principles and core elements.

- It is helpful to know more than one model—more tools in your toolkit.
- Some jurisdictions emphasize the use of one particular model.
- No research indicates a clear preference for one evidence-supported model over other evidence-supported models.

Peer review-

- The practice of trained forensic interviewers routinely reviewing each other's interviews and offering feedback;
- Essential to good forensic interviewing practice.

Maintaining Standards for FI

- Ongoing training
- National professional membership organizations—
APSAC
- Professional journals
- Peer review with other FI

Current Approaches

Current Approaches

The Tribal and Federal MDT
MUST be on the same page



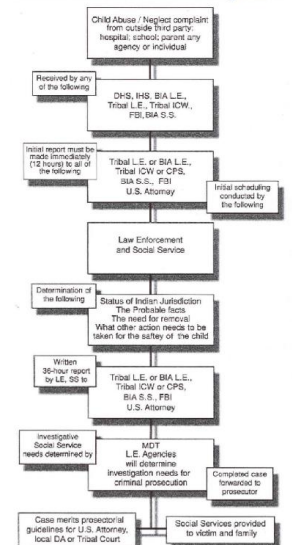
National Coordination Committee on the American Indian/Alaskan Native SANE-SART Initiative

Current Approaches

- Explore the benefits of an MOU between the CAC, the Federal and Tribal MDTs and SARTs
- Collaborative training for legal and technical updates
- Ongoing communication within the MJMDT (Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Disciplinary Team)

Current Approaches

Flow Chart for Reporting and Investigating Child Abuse / Neglect Involving Indian Children or an Indian Perpetrator



United States Attorney's Office

Federal Districts of Oklahoma



Memorandum of Understanding for Reporting and Investigating Child Abuse Criminal Offenses In Indian Country

These guidelines should be used any time an Indian child in Indian country appears to be the victim of physical or sexual abuse or if the suspected perpetrator appears to be Indian, regardless of the race of the child victim.

"Indian country" under 18 U.S.C. § 1151 includes tribal trust lands/reservations, dependent Indian communities, and Indian allotments held in trust status.

Questions?

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