

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention



Criminal Investigation of Child Sexual Abuse

162426

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*Portable Guides to
Investigating Child Abuse*

Foreword

The criminal investigation of charges of child sexual abuse—a felony in every State—is one of the most difficult challenges facing law enforcement professionals.

The heinous nature of the alleged act underscores law enforcement's responsibility to conduct a thorough and objective investigation of suspected cases of child sexual abuse to determine whether they can be substantiated and to facilitate successful prosecution of perpetrators.

The information furnished in *Criminal Investigation of Child Sexual Abuse* is intended to serve as a useful tool in achieving these objectives. Barriers to successfully investigating child sexual abuse allegations are noted, and investigatory techniques designed to overcome them are suggested.

Interviews often play a key role in child sexual abuse investigations, and this guide offers helpful hints for interviewing the child and other possible victims, relatives, friends, nonoffending caregivers, and any suspects. Specific questions, including questions about the child, the suspect, and their relationship, are provided. Other techniques, including searches and medical examinations, are also covered.

As noted above, the challenges facing law enforcement in investigating purported child sexual abuse are indeed considerable. The stakes are high: The innocent—whether victims of child sexual abuse or victims of false accusations—must be protected. Your efforts to protect children and serve justice are appreciated.

Shay Bilchik

Administrator

Office of Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention

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In general, child sexual abuse may be defined as any sexual activity that is inappropriate for the child's age and level of maturity. Legally, however, each State defines child sexual abuse somewhat differently, so you must be familiar with the statutes governing your particular jurisdiction.

Your primary responsibility as a law enforcement agent is to protect the child and then to validate or invalidate the specific allegations the child or reporter has made. To be an effective investigator of child sexual abuse cases, you must be able to:

- Understand the developmental abilities of children at different ages and communicate with all ages effectively.
- Believe that child sexual abuse really exists and understand its dynamics.
- Distinguish among truthful, confused, or false statements by conducting a thorough investigation.
- Empathize with both the victim and the offender, putting aside feelings of anger and disgust in the interest of obtaining as much information as possible.
- Maintain your objectivity throughout emotional investigations, remaining openminded and nonjudgmental.

Barriers to the Investigation of Child Sexual Abuse Allegations

Some barriers are inherent to investigations of crimes involving child abuse. For example, child victims generally do not realize that a crime has been committed and therefore do not report the abuse to police or social services directly; instead, they confide in a parent or trusted friend.

Child victims are often sworn to keep the sexual behavior a secret and are afraid to report the abuse. They may have been warned, "If you tell, Mommy won't love us anymore," or "If you tell, Daddy will be sent to jail and you will never see me again." Occasionally, victims are threatened with bodily harm.

At the same time, many child victims genuinely care for the offender. They do not wish to see harm come to him and do

Child sexual abuse is a felony offense in all 50 States, but in many areas of the country limited resources are devoted to its response. A sexual abuse case might involve a child who has been victimized by a father, stepfather, uncle, or family friend for an extended period, sometimes involving 30, 50, 100, or even more incidents, each one a felony. Yet preliminary investigations are frequently carried out by the social service agency and only later, in the most serious cases, does law enforcement get involved.



For even the most experienced police officer, investigating child sexual abuse cases is a difficult and challenging task. The process is often long and tedious, and the toll on an officer's emotions at times can seem overwhelming. Careful investigative interviewing, comprehensive and complete documentation of facts, and painstaking collection and preservation of physical evidence are essential. Often the lack of physical or medical evidence only compounds the difficulty. Despite these obstacles, police must maintain their commitment to conduct a thorough investigation, one that will support or disprove an accusation of child sexual abuse beyond a reasonable doubt within a court of law.

not want to testify in court against him.* The result is that as an investigator you are faced with a victim of a crime who does not wish to report or discuss the crime.

Other barriers are presented by investigators themselves. For example:

- ✱ Some investigators may not believe a child's statement when it conflicts with that given by an adult. They may be unwilling to make an arrest based on the word of a child.
- ✱ Others may suffer from overwork and burnout, or they may be unable to piece together the inconsistencies in a report or see beyond the barriers presented by the child.
- ✱ Often investigators lack knowledge about how to talk to children or interview them effectively.

Without an understanding of the expected barriers or an ability to sort and integrate the information given by all those who are interviewed, even a seasoned investigator may have difficulty organizing evidence in a case of child sexual abuse. Armed with an awareness that these barriers exist and are to be expected, however, the skilled investigator will not hesitate to pursue the allegations objectively.

The Investigation

From the moment of disclosure of a child sexual abuse complaint, your first responsibility is to protect the child. You must gather information regarding the accusation immediately, for the child's safety may be at stake and removal of the child from the home may be necessary.

It is also the responsibility of law enforcement and child protective services to conduct a thorough and objective investigation, including the gathering of physical evidence related to the alleged abuse (which may include search and seizure) and the procurement of arrest warrants.

The investigation may be divided into two broad categories:

- ✱ Interviewing of the child victim, the victim's parents or caregivers, siblings and other possible victims, other relatives and friends of the victim, and the suspect.

* Both men and women have sexually abused children. However, in this guide, for simplicity's sake, the male pronoun will be used and should be interpreted to include women offenders as well.

- Gathering of evidence, through the search and seizure process and through the medical examination.

The investigation, and its followup, will benefit from a multidisciplinary team approach incorporating not only law enforcement and child protective services but other community agencies as well. These can contribute information, expertise, and other resources to ensure the best interests of the child are met.

The team approach has been adopted in many jurisdictions and can include the participation of schools, community agencies, courts, and healthcare providers. Members of the team achieve consensus on common goals, mutual responsibilities, and a process for ensuring good communication and feedback.

Who Should Be Interviewed

Conduct interviews with the child, the nonoffending parent (in intrafamilial cases, i.e., when the suspect is a family member), other individuals (siblings, other relatives, the child's friends), and the suspect. If the abuse occurred within the family, it is better for you to interview the suspect after you have interviewed the victim and the nonoffending parent(s), for these interviews will provide a framework for questioning the alleged offender. In extrafamilial cases, when the suspect is not a family member, the preferred sequence is to interview the victim, other potential victims, or others having corroborative information before interviewing the suspect.

Interviewing the Child

The focal point of the investigation is the child, and the interview with the child is likely to be the single most important part of the investigation. In most sexual abuse cases, there is little or no medical or physical evidence. Consequently, validation of the allegations and proof of the child's need for protection will often rely heavily on the interview with the child. This interview should be conducted directly after the complainant's report has been received, in private, and in a neutral setting. It is important to gather as much specific

Begin by informing the nonoffending parent of the allegations, as follows:

- Provide a basic account of the child's version of the incident, without giving all of the details.
- If evidence supports the allegations, let the parent know that you believe the child.
- Explain all of the steps to be taken in the investigation and discuss the possibility that the child may recant because of pressure or threats.
- Explain the importance of gathering potential physical evidence.

You should find out if the parent believes the child was sexually abused and realizes the seriousness of the allegations. For whom does this person express concern—the child? the perpetrator? himself or herself? Is the person able and willing to follow a plan that will protect the child from further access by the suspect?

If the nonoffending parent is financially or emotionally dependent on the suspect, this dependence has an influence on the information gathered and on the safety plan. Assess the situation and be prepared to take legal steps, if necessary, to ensure the protection of the child.

You can ask the nonoffending parent a number of specific questions to obtain information important to the investigation:

Questions About the Child

- What, if anything, did the child say about the abuse, and does he or she talk about it?
- Did the child exhibit any unusual behavior before or after disclosure?
- Has the child been abused before or made previous allegations of abuse?
- What else is going on in the child's life? For example, have there been changes in the child's relationships with family members or friends? In the level of involvement in hobbies or outside activities? In physical, mental, or learning abilities? Has the child had any involvement with the juvenile court system?
- How much exposure has the child had to sexual matters through contact with others, television, movies or videos, magazines, observation of adults, or sex education?

information as possible before interviewing the child, and the interview should be fully and accurately documented.

The purpose of the interview with the child is to establish the child's version of what, if anything, happened. If an allegation of abuse is made, you should determine the following:

- How and where the child was touched.
- If threats, promises, or requests were made.
- If other victims or offenders were involved.
- When the abuse occurred and how often it happened.
- Where the abuse occurred.

Begin by introducing yourself, establishing your credibility, and clarifying the purpose of the interview. A sense of trust must be established with the child in order to have an effective interview.

The child will need reassurance, support, and encouragement to tell the truth. Easy, general questions allow you to establish rapport and assess the development of the child. Associating incidents with important events, such as birthdays, holidays, or vacations, or with grade level in school can help to spur a child's memory.

Leading questions should be avoided; simple, direct, open-ended questions asked one at a time are best. The child needs to be given adequate time to respond to each question. The language and terminology used should be appropriate for the child's level of development.

Interviewing the Nonoffending Parent or Caregiver

In cases of intrafamilial abuse, and particularly when the suspected abuser is the father or any other close relative, the child's nonoffending parent or caregiver (whether or not that person is also the complainant) is an important source of information. This delicate interview with the nonoffending parent is thus very important and should take place as quickly as possible, before that person's statement can be tainted through contact with the offending parent.

- What is the child's medical history? Has there been any drug or alcohol abuse?

Questions About the Suspect

- What was the suspect's reaction to the allegation? Did he make any other pertinent statements?
- Has the suspect possessed clothing, weapons, or other items described by the child?
- Does the suspect have a history of drug or alcohol abuse?
- Does the suspect have any scars, tatoos, or birthmarks? Unusual features on or near the genitals?
- Has the suspect ever had a venereal disease? What treatment was sought? Have you ever contracted such a disease from the suspect? Has the child ever had a sexually transmittable disease?
- Please provide any other pertinent medical information about the suspect. For instance (if the suspect is a man) has he obtained a vasectomy?
- Does the suspect use pornography, sexual aids or implements, or birth control devices? Does the suspect indulge in any strange or distinctive sexual practices?
- Have prior accusations been made against the suspect? Have there been any previous arrests or crime convictions?

Questions About the Relationship Between the Child and the Suspect

- If the suspect is outside the family (extrafamilial abuse), does he have a previous relationship with the child? What is that relationship and how would you describe it? Are there any problems between them?
- Does the child have a reason to lie about the suspect?
- How much time, if any, has the suspect spent alone with the child? When? Who else can verify this information?
- What is the suspect's responsibility for the child's care? For example, has the suspect ever bathed the child?
- What are the sleeping arrangements in the home?

Finally, ask if there have been any previous occurrences that seemed unusual or suspicious, even if nothing was done about them at the time. Explain the importance of gathering potential physical evidence and leave your name and telephone number so the parent can provide additional information or ask followup questions. You should also provide the nonoffending parent with information about available services (such as

alternative shelter and sources for food, clothing, financial aid, and support groups) and how to access them.

Interviewing Siblings and Other Possible Victims

Interview siblings and other possible victims after the victim and before or after the interview with the nonoffending parent, depending on situational circumstances and availability. Use the same techniques and sensitivity in interviewing siblings and other possible victims that you used to interview the child victim.

The purpose is to determine if other children have been victimized and to corroborate the child victim's statement. Look for information that may either verify or refute the child's statement. It is also important to assess the objectivity of the witness.

Interviewing Other Relatives and Friends of the Victim

Interview all members of the family and household for information concerning the victim, the suspect, and the abusive incident. The type of case will dictate whom you should interview. You should determine:

- Whether the child told anyone about the abuse.
- If the child or suspect asked anyone to conceal information.
- If anyone can verify details given by the child.
- If anyone was prevented from witnessing the abuse. For example, was a potential witness ever locked out of the house, locked out of a room, or asked to leave?

Interviewing the Suspect

The principal psychological factor contributing to a successful interview with the suspect is privacy. Thus, whenever possible, the interview should be conducted in private by a single interviewer. If the interview is considered an in-custody interview, the suspect should be informed of his legal rights as prescribed by the Miranda ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court.

The purpose of the interview is to gather as much detailed information as possible that either verifies or refutes the alleged abuse. When the accused cannot present credible information to refute the allegation, the ultimate goal is to obtain a confession. For many offenders, the knowledge that police are gathering material evidence can provoke overwhelming anxiety and may lead to a confession of guilt.

Timing of the Interviews

The timing of the interview must be chosen carefully and depends on whether the case is extrafamilial or intrafamilial. In *extrafamilial cases*, you should interview the suspect after you have gathered as much information as possible about the reported incident, the child, the family situation, and the suspect's background. You should perform a background check and also check the suspect's alibi, if one has been given, before the interview.

In *intrafamilial cases*, it is critical that you interview the suspect as soon as possible after your interview with the victim and the nonoffending parent. A useful approach is to ascertain from the spouse the time that the suspect will be home and attempt to approach him there for the interview (preferably when the spouse and other family members are away). This gives you the opportunity to be the first to tell the suspect of the disclosure and to note his reaction to the accusation. This approach also minimizes the opportunity for him to destroy or remove physical evidence in the home.

Another approach is to call the suspect at his place of employment, tell him there has been a problem of a sensitive nature involving his child, and ask him to come to the police station. It is not wise to give specific details over the telephone. Another option is to offer to meet the alleged offender at his place of employment. Few offenders choose this option, however, because it may create an embarrassing situation with employers. Regardless of location, it is important not to delay the interview.

Importance of Objectivity

During this type of interview, objectivity is paramount. Treat the suspect with respect, patience, and sensitivity, regardless

of the nature of the offense. Use language that is nonjudgmental and is familiar to the suspect. The atmosphere must be one in which the offender can tell you about this most difficult set of circumstances in his life. If you can create such an atmosphere, the likelihood that an intrafamilial abuser will confess to the crime is substantially increased.

During questioning, you should:

- Present the accused with the nature of the accusation.
- Establish the suspect's view of family dynamics.
- Confront the suspect with specific information revealed in the interviews of the victim, nonoffending parent, and others.
- Appeal to the suspect's love, emotional attachment, and concern for the child, spouse, and family.

Gather information from the suspect that will corroborate anything at all the child may have stated. The suspect may deny the abuse, may deny responsibility for the abuse, may offer reasons or excuses for the abuse, may ascribe a motive to the child, may minimize the seriousness of the abuse, or may downplay the number of occurrences.

If the suspect chooses to make a confession, you should take proper action according to your department's policy regarding Miranda warning, warrant application, and arrest. If the suspect denies the charges, you may offer him the opportunity to take a polygraph examination. Throughout, be aware of the policies and procedures of your jurisdiction, your State, and your department.

At the conclusion of the interview, inform the suspect that the investigation will be ongoing and that the services of police and protective services are available if he needs assistance.

Gathering Physical Evidence

A thorough child abuse investigation includes gathering any physical evidence that exists, because such evidence is extremely critical. Make every attempt to secure any evidence that corroborates statements made by the victim or by any witnesses (see table 1, pages 12 and 13).

You will be more likely to obtain the evidence if you do it early in the investigation. During interviews with the victim,

Table 1

Types of Evidence

Evidence of violence: This type of evidence might include such things as broken lamps and holes in walls or furnishings.

Stain evidence: Semen will become fluorescent when subjected to black light.

Minute and latent evidence: Seminal fluid, sperm, hair, and fibers may be found in the child's bedsheets, pillowcases, and pajamas. The acid phosphatase enzyme test can locate seminal fluid many weeks, months, and sometimes years later. Like blood, sperm and seminal fluid can seldom, if ever, be washed completely from fabric.

Souvenirs: Small items, such as locks of hair, barrettes, panties, or pubic hairs may have been taken by the suspect to remember the sexual activity, or the child may have left pictures, drawings, letters, clothing, or toys with the suspect.

Lures: The suspect may have used toys, games, or stuffed animals to entice the child into the situation or to try to maintain the child's interest in the perpetrator.

Sexual aids or devices: The suspect may have used petroleum jelly and other lubricants, condoms, dildos, vibrators, or contraceptive foam or jelly with the child.

Drugs or alcohol: Evidence of the use of such substances by the suspect may be in a corroborating statement.

Child erotica: Child erotica is any material relating to children that a person may find sexually arousing; some of the more common types are child sketches, fantasy writings, diaries, and sexual aids.

Child pornography: Articles depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child can be in any visual or print medium. Such articles are, in effect, a crime scene photograph of actual child abuse. Like souvenirs or trophies of sexual relationships, these photographs are important for establishing a relationship between the victim and suspect and for identifying other possible victims.

Obtaining Other Physical Evidence

Physical evidence is an important part of a thorough investigation. When collecting physical evidence, follow basic rules of evidence collection by carefully recording and preserving the evidence and by maintaining the chain

witnesses, and the suspect, pay particular attention to statements indicating the presence of physical evidence (see table 2, pages 14 and 15).

Searches of the Crime Scene

You should observe normal investigative crime scene procedures:

- Identify each piece of evidence. Indicate its position and condition, the date and time it was collected, the name of the person who found it, its relation to other evidence, and how it is marked.
- Preserve the crime scene. Using proper collection techniques, place the piece of evidence in an appropriate container and label it accurately.
- Store the evidence appropriately. List everyone who handles it.

Crime scene searches are often overlooked in child abuse cases, particularly in intrafamilial cases. But as in other types of crimes, the crime scene search can be extremely helpful in uncovering evidence of the crime and in supporting aspects of the child's statement.

Even if the child has not mentioned any specific items that might be seized, it is to your advantage to document the scene the child describes as soon after the interview as possible. The greater the delay, the greater the likelihood that the suspect or others could destroy or alter the scene to diminish the credibility of the child or to cover up indicators of abuse that the child may not have shared.

Preliminary steps in documenting the crime scene include:

- Identifying the person who first notified the authorities.
- Determining the perpetrator, either by direct inquiry or observation.
- Detaining or identifying all persons at the scene.
- Safeguarding and physically isolating the area.
- Separating the witnesses.
- Protecting the evidence from being handled or removed.

The following items should be readily available for use during any search:

- Camera (video or 35mm), tape recorder, and tape.
- Notebook, labels, paper bags, and cardboard boxes.
- Protective gloves.

Table 1 *continued*

Types of Evidence

Adult pornography: Adult pornography can be used in several ways in child sexual abuse. The material may be used to sexually arouse the perpetrator or the child or may be shown to the child to lessen his or her inhibitions and to give the child an idea about sexual activities in which to engage.

Cameras (still or video) and film processing equipment: The suspect may have taken pictures of the child and then developed and printed the film using his own processing equipment. Undeveloped film and videotapes should be seized and viewed for content, no matter what the outside label says.

Home computers and software, personal letters, journals, diaries, or calendars: The suspect may have lists of other victims or offenders, or he may have correspondence from others who share a sexual interest in children.

Address book: The suspect's address book may have special notes near the victim's address or phone number, showing when the child gave the phone number or address to the suspect or when he called or visited the victim at home.

Bills, bank records, and receipts: These items may allow investigators to find items that were purchased for the victim by the suspect.

Phone bills and records: These items may allow investigators to find phone calls made to the victim.

Work records or timesheets: These items may allow investigators to demonstrate that the suspect had the time and opportunity to be with the child.

Weapons: A weapon may have been used during the abusive incident.

Other items: These can include any unique item described in the child's statement about the suspect or about the location.

of custody. The chance of finding physical evidence is greater at the beginning of an investigation, before the suspect has had an opportunity to destroy or hide evidence. Search for semen where the assault occurred. Also search the bathroom where the suspect has cleaned. (Table 1 lists other evidence that should be looked for.)

Table 2

Interview Information Provides Leads to Evidence

Child's Statement	Item Seized as Evidence
"Daddy used a green towel to wipe the yucky off."	The investigator confiscated a semen-stained green towel.
"Grandpa got my pajamas wet. It was sticky."	The female child's pajamas were seized and examined in the laboratory; semen stains were identified on the pajamas.
"Sometimes it would be wet on my legs, so I used my shirt to wipe it off."	The child's shirt was analyzed in the laboratory; semen stains were found on the shirt.
"Uncle Bill would stand next to my bed and rub his penis until white came out. It went on my rug."	The rug in the child's room was examined and found to have semen stains on it; pubic hair was found mixed with the carpet fibers.
"He tried to put a stick in my thing."	The child had a urethral injury documented by medical examination; in a search of the house, the stick used to inflict the injury was found and confiscated.
"Once he tore my underwear off."	The child's panties, which were torn by the abuser, were confiscated.

Interviews with the victim, witnesses, and the suspect will supply clues as to what physical evidence may be available. Taking pictures or videotapes can be helpful later in court to document where the items were found and under what circumstances.

Ask the child and/or the nonoffending parent to provide any items that could be physical evidence. In intrafamilial cases,

Table 2 *continued*

**Interview Information
Provides Leads to Evidence**

Child's Statement	Item Seized as Evidence
"He showed me a magazine and said we should do this."	The magazine was confiscated.
"He took pictures of me with my clothes off."	Photographs were found and confiscated.
"He read me a book about sex."	A search of the alleged offender's room revealed the book described by the child.
"He made me dress up like Mommy and took my picture."	Photographs of the child dressed in her mother's clothes were seized as evidence.
"He made me put his thing in my mouth."	Laboratory cultures obtained from the child's throat revealed that the child had an asymptomatic gonorrhea infection of the pharynx.
"He always wears blue sweatpants."	A pair of blue sweatpants was confiscated and analyzed; semen stains were found on the clothing.
"He has a list of other boys on his computer disk; I saw it once."	A search revealed computer equipment and computer software that contained the incriminating list.

if the nonoffending parent is cooperative, you may be able to obtain additional physical evidence over which the nonoffending parent has joint control with the suspect by asking him or her to sign a consent for the search. However, be aware of your legal limitations. If you come to an area that is off limits to the spouse, such as a locked container or another area to which the spouse does not have access, it would be wise to consult with the prosecutor or obtain a search warrant.

Search Warrants

You should be thoroughly familiar with all procedures concerning search warrants. As a law enforcement official, you are required to produce a warrant to conduct a search. You may not use social service personnel, who do not have this restriction, to circumvent legal protections against unreasonable searches.

A search warrant can be issued only on probable cause, supported by an affidavit naming or describing the person, and particularly describing the property to be searched. Probable cause is a reasonable ground for suspicion, supported by circumstances sufficiently strong to permit a cautious person to believe that the accused is guilty of the offense charged. Most State laws specify what is necessary to obtain a warrant.

You should complete a detailed list of the items you are searching for, the possible location of those items, and your reasons for believing the items exist and can be found in those locations.

The affidavit, an attachment to the warrant, needs to spell out the training and experience that enables you to recognize the significance of items that might be found at the scene of the search but are not enumerated in the warrant. The warrant needs to be drafted as broadly as possible to allow you to seize everything you find that is pertinent to the case, to the motivation of the offender, to the level of interest in children, and to the identities of other victims.

When serving the warrant, you should first attempt to obtain consent from the suspect to conduct the search. Valid consent given by the suspect can prevent suppression of the seized evidence if the warrant is later invalidated.

Medical Examination

Medical evidence can provide powerful and convincing corroboration to an allegation of sexual abuse. Medical examinations should always be conducted by physicians and other healthcare workers who have received training in the area of sexual abuse and who can be sensitive to the needs of the child. You should be familiar with the normal tests

that accompany a rape case and make sure that the physician carries out these tests.

The medical examination team performs several functions critical to child abuse investigations:

- Documentation of any medical evidence that exists.
- Diagnosis and treatment of conditions, such as sexually transmitted diseases, that require medical treatment.
- Reassurance to the child that despite fears to the contrary, children are not permanently damaged as a result of sexual abuse.

The absence of medical evidence does not rule out the possibility that sexual abuse occurred. Sometimes the lack of medical evidence can be caused by a lengthy delay between an incident and the filing of a report. Moreover, some abusive acts, such as fondling, by their very nature cause no physical injuries.

Conclusion

When the investigative process is carried out carefully and conscientiously, answers to questions of guilt or innocence begin to emerge. When an abuser confesses to committing a crime, the child victim is spared the burden of testifying in court and living through a lengthy trial, and that is the very best protection law enforcement can provide.

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Supplemental Reading

Besharov DJ. *Combating Child Abuse: Guidelines for Cooperation Between Law Enforcement and Child Protective Agencies*. Washington, DC: AEI Press, 1990.

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Wycoff MA, Kealoha M. *Creating the Multidisciplinary Response to Child Sex Abuse: An Implementation Guide*. Washington, DC: Police Foundation, 1987.

Organizations

Many organizations sponsor annual conferences that would interest law enforcement officials. Information on upcoming conferences can be obtained from OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, 800-638-8736, and the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, 800-FYI-3366.

National Center for the Prosecution of Child Abuse
American Prosecutors Research Institute (APRI)
99 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 510
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-739-0321
703-549-6259 (fax)

The National Center for the Prosecution of Child Abuse is a nonprofit and technical assistance affiliate of APRI. In addition to research and technical assistance, the Center provides extensive training on the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and child deaths. The national trainings include timely information presented by a variety of professionals experienced in the medical, legal, and investigative aspects of child abuse.

Child Welfare League of America
440 First Street NW., Suite 310
Washington, DC 20001-2085
800-407-6273
908-225-1900
908-417-0482 (fax)

Fox Valley Technical College
Criminal Justice Department
Law Enforcement Training Programs
P.O. Box 2277
1825 North Bluemound Drive
Appleton, WI 54913-2277
800-648-4966
414-735-4757 (fax)

Participants are trained in child abuse and exploitation investigative techniques, covering the following areas:

- Recognition of signs of abuse.
- Collection and preservation of evidence.
- Preparation of cases for prosecution.
- Techniques for interviewing victims and offenders.
- Liability issues.

Fox Valley also offers intensive special training for local child investigative teams. Teams must include representatives from law enforcement, prosecution, social services, and (optionally) the medical field. Participants take part in hands-on team activity involving:

- Development of interagency processes and protocols for enhanced enforcement, prevention, and intervention in child abuse cases.
- Case preparation and prosecution.
- Development of the team's own interagency implementation plan for improved investigation of child abuse.

Other Titles in This Series

Currently there are 10 other Portable Guides to Investigating Child Abuse. Additional guides in this series may be developed at a later date. To obtain a copy of any of the guides listed below, contact the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse by telephone at 800-638-8736 or e-mail at askncjrs@ncjrs.org.

Recognizing When a Child's Injury or Illness Is Caused by Abuse, NCJ 160938

Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Child Sexual Abuse, NCJ 160940

Photodocumentation in the Investigation of Child Abuse, NCJ 160939

Diagnostic Imaging of Child Abuse, NCJ 161235

Battered Child Syndrome: Investigating Physical Abuse and Homicide, NCJ 161406

Interviewing Child Witnesses and Victims of Sexual Abuse, NCJ 161623

Child Neglect and Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, NCJ 161841

Burn Injuries in Child Abuse, NCJ 162424

Law Enforcement Response to Child Abuse, NCJ 162425

Understanding and Investigating Child Sexual Exploitation, NCJ 162427

Additional Resources

American Bar Association
(ABA)

Center on Children and the
Law

Washington, D.C.

202-662-1720

• 202-662-1755 (fax)

American Humane Association
Englewood, Colorado

800-227-4645

303-792-9900

303-792-5333 (fax)

American Medical Association
(AMA)

Department of Mental Health
Chicago, Illinois

312-464-5066

312-464-5000

(AMA main number)

American Professional Society
on the Abuse of Children
(APSAC)

Chicago, Illinois

312-554-0166

312-554-0919 (fax)

C. Henry Kempe National
Center for the Prevention
and Treatment of Child
Abuse and Neglect

Denver, Colorado

303-321-3963

• 303-329-3523 (fax)

• Federal Bureau of Investigation
(FBI)

Child Abduction and Serial
Killer Unit and Morgan P.
Hardiman Task Force on
Missing and Exploited
Children

Quantico, Virginia

800-634-4097

540-720-4700

Fox Valley Technical College
Criminal Justice Department
Appleton, Wisconsin

800-648-4966

414-735-4757 (fax)

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse
(JJC)

Rockville, Maryland

800-638-8736

301-251-5212 (fax)

National Association of Medical
Examiners

St. Louis, Missouri

314-577-8298

314-268-5124 (fax)

National Center for Missing
and Exploited Children
(NCMEC)

Arlington, Virginia

703-235-3900

703-235-4067 (fax)

National Center for the
Prosecution of Child Abuse
Alexandria, Virginia

703-739-0321

703-549-6259 (fax)

National Clearinghouse on
Child Abuse and Neglect
Information

Washington, D.C.

800-FYI-3366

703-385-7565

703-385-3206 (fax)

National Committee to Prevent
Child Abuse (NCPCA)

Chicago, Illinois

800-CHILDREN

312-663-3520

312-939-8962 (fax)

National Resource Center on
Child Sexual Abuse
(NRCCSA)

Huntsville, Alabama

800-239-9939

205-534-6868

205-534-6883 (fax)

National SIDS Resource
Center

Vienna, Virginia

703-821-8955, ext. 249

703-821-2098 (fax)

U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Washington, D.C. 20531

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