

Forensic Interview

What to Know



CHILDREN'S JUSTICE center

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE CHILDREN'S JUSTICE CENTER (CJC)?

The CJC is a homelike environment. When you (parent) arrive you will be greeted by one of our volunteers. You will meet with DCFS, law enforcement, and CJC staff before the interview begins to discuss the case and address any questions.

WHAT IS A FORENSIC INTERVIEW?

A trained interviewer works with your child. The interview is structured with open ended questions. The purpose is to create an environment where your child can talk freely.

A forensic interview does not determine whether abuse has occurred. It is to help us understand what has happened in your child's words.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Let your child know prior to the appointment that they are going to a safe place to talk to someone about what has happened.
 - Do not coach or ask further questions
- If your child wants to talk:
 - Listen and offer support, but do not ask questions.
 - Let your child tell you in their own words.
 - Thank your child for telling you, and let them know that they will be coming to a safe place to tell someone everything that happened.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Interviews vary in length. Plan on 2 hours if you have one child being interviewed and more time if multiple children are being interviewed.
- While your child is being interviewed you will meet with CJC staff to go over resources that are available to you and your family.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Interviews can be emotionally difficult and taxing. Support and comfort your child afterwards in the way that works best for them. Do not ask them questions; instead allow them share with you as they feel ready.
- Your primary focus should be on the well-being of your child. Leave the investigation aspect to law enforcement and DCFS.
- The CJC will follow up with you at 2 weeks, 2 months, and 4 months to remind you of resources and to check in with how you and your child are doing.