



The Role of the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) in Child Abuse Investigations – Freehand Drawings ©

Presented by

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– Freehand Drawings –

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**Commanding Officer
(Retired)
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Identification of Terms



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Traditional Multi-Disciplinary Child Abuse Team

MDT Core members

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

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– Investigation Issue – Victim Outcry or Disclosure

- Defined – The child's ability and willingness to clearly self report their victimization**
- The outcry was made prior to the initiation of a child abuse investigation or –
 - The disclosure was made as part of a child abuse investigation

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– The Investigation – CPS LAW ENFORCEMENT

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– Investigation Issue – MDT Interviewing Protocol

- In most areas of the United States the alleged victim is brought to a Child Advocacy center for a forensic interview
- Alternatively the alleged victim is forensically interviewed in a child friendly room

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Networking with the Child Advocacy Center CAC

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Child Advocacy Center Role

- Provides a safe, neutral and child friendly environment
- Provides a child friendly interview room
- Provides a Forensic Interviewer
- Victim support and case tracking
- Advocacy services between agencies
- Alternatively, the creation of a child friendly interview room

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Types of Child Interviews

Child abuse investigations....

- Therapeutic / Clinical
- Medical
- Interrogation – Criminal
- Witness
- Forensic – Fact finding or Investigative....

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What is a Forensic Interview?

- A forensic interview is a child friendly and neutral discussion about an event that is in question. The child sits down with a forensic interviewer in a one-on-one setting that provides the child a reasonable, non-leading opportunity to present his or her information

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Child Friendly Interview Room

- Child friendly furniture – small table and chairs
- Sit on the floor !!
- Paper, pencils and crayons
- Communication between the interview room and observation room....

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Forensic Interview Protocol

CAC or in the Field

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

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Types of Questions

- Good touch / Bad touch ??
- SECRET TOUCH
- Describe penetration by naming the object
- Anatomical Inventory.....

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Traditional Multi-Disciplinary Team

MDT Core members who utilize drawings during child interviews

- Law Enforcement
- Child Protective Services (CPS)
- Mental Health – Therapy
- Child Advocacy Center (CAC)



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Drawings

Child Abuse Investigations....

- Therapeutic and clinical interpretation by a Mental Health Professional....

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Anatomical Drawings

Child Abuse Investigations....

- Nicholas Groth “Anatomical Drawings”
- Therapeutic and clinical interpretation by a Mental Health Professional....
- Anatomical drawings used as part of a forensic interview....

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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.)

- Freehand drawings help build rapport and encourage narrative accounts
- Drawings work well with children who are quiet, shy, from another culture or have speech or language difficulties

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Freehand Drawing Interview Process (cont.)

- By utilizing drawings a child can safely “project” what one thinks about himself, herself or others onto the drawn image, separating the emotional reactions from the image(s)

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Freehand Drawing Interview Process (cont.)

- The interviewer should examine the drawing, looking for things that are unusual, missing, exaggerated, heavily shaded or overemphasized through enlargement.... The interviewer should then ask the child to explain that portion of the drawing
- Question – “What type of face is that?”
- Anatomical inventory

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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
- Last...take the pencil / crayons away when each 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



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Draw a Picture of What Happened

“Can you show me what happened?”



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Closing the Interview

- “You are not to blame and you did nothing wrong”
- Do you want to ask me anything?
- Tell the victim what will happened next

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Thank you !

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