

Interpreting Child Sexual Abuse





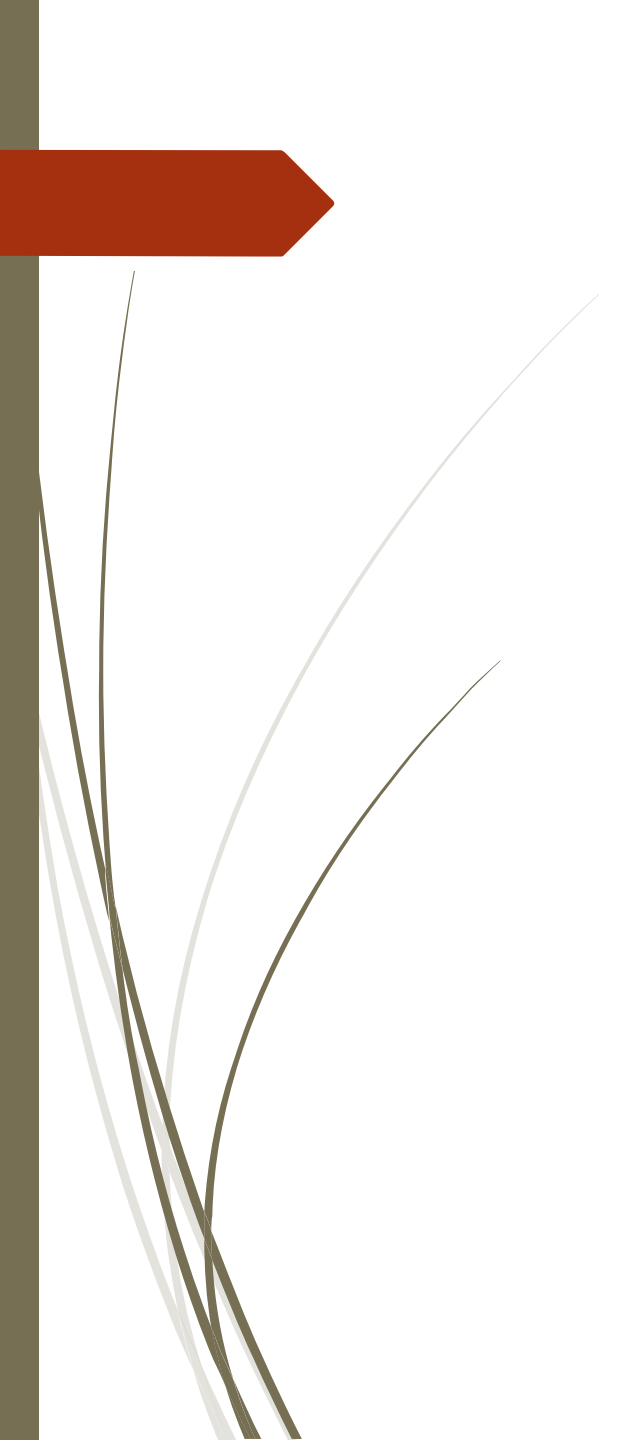
What is child sexual abuse?

- ▶ Sexual abuse is the forcing of sexual contact on a child. It may include: handling a child's genitals, an older child/adult requesting a child to handle their genitals; showing a child pornography; taking pornographic pictures/film of a child; having sex in front of a child; oral sex with a child; attempted penetration of the vagina or anus; or actual penetration.



Facts & statistics

- 1 in 3 girls are sexually abused before the age of 18.
- 1 in 5 boys are sexually abused before the age of 18.
- 1 in 5 children are solicited sexually while on the Internet before the age of 18.
- 30% of sexual abuse is never reported.
- Nearly 70% of all reported sexual assaults (including assaults on adults) occur to children age 17 and under.
- 90% of child sexual abuse victims know the perpetrator in some way.
- Approximately 20% of the victims of sexual abuse are under age eight.

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- 38% of the sexual abusers of boys are female.
 - There is worse lasting emotional damage when a child's sexual abuse started before the age of six and lasted for several years.
 - Among child and teen victims of sexual abuse there is a 42 percent increased chance of suicidal thoughts during adolescence.
 - "More than 90% of individuals with a developmental delay or disability will be sexually assaulted at least once in their lifetime."


Child abuse occurs at every socioeconomic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and at all levels of education, but 95% of abuse is preventable through education and awareness.



The Investigation

- **Multidisciplinary Approach**
 - Child Protective Services
 - Law Enforcement
 - Mental Health
 - Medical Health
 - Child Advocacy Center
 - Prosecution

CAC (Child Advocacy Center)




- ➔ Organizations that provide child-friendly, safe neutral location used for forensic interviews as part of law enforcement and CPS investigations. It's also a place where the child and non-offending family members receive support, crisis intervention and referrals for mental health and medical treatment, as well as community resources if needed.

Forensic Interview



- It's a child friendly way to interview children to aid in the investigation of an allegation of child abuse. One goal is to inflict less trauma on a child by performing fewer interviews.

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- ▶ Recorded
 - ▶ Observed
 - ▶ May be used in Court
 - ▶ Questions phrase in a specific way
 - ▶ Goal is to let the children do their own narrative

What to expect



➤ From interviewer:

- Asks questions carefully, repeats them, and asks for details.
- Moves slowly
- Uses child's words
- Ask questions with sexual details and words (once child has used them)
- May use drawings, games, etc.
- Warm and friendly
- Doesn't show emotion even to awful abuse stories

What to expect



➤ From the children:

- Different behaviors
- Range of emotional responses
- No disclosure because abuse did not happen.
- Confusing information
- Things that could seem unbelievable
- Clearly state what happened
- Contradictory statements
- Baby talk
- Sound old for their age
- Mix languages
- Make sexual sounds
- Use “dirty” words

Some of the things you can hear



- There is no abuse
- Getting abused sexually
- Being beaten, physically attacked, tortured
- Being tied up, held down, locked up
- Forced to witness sexual acts
- Forced to perform sexual acts
- Forced to witness violent or cruel acts
- Forced to do violent or cruel acts
- Variety of feelings (love, pain, pleasure, shame, terror, or confusion during sexual abuse).

The Interview

- Introduction
- Documentation
- Ground Rules
- Rapport Building & Narrative
- Transition to substantive issues
- Investigation of incident
- Use of interview rules
- Break
- Eliciting additional information
- Closing



Challenges

► Linguistic

- Terms not common in target language (you're not in trouble)
- Names of body parts (home names)
- Mixing of languages (i.e. English and Spanish)
- Use of a language you don't know
- Sex related terminology
- Language variations, cultural backgrounds


► Emotional

- Hearing horrific details of abuse
- Triggering own trauma or abuse
- Knowing someone implicated
- Shock, disbelief
- Anger
- Pity for the child
- Disgust
- Wanting interview to be over



The Role of the Interpreter

- Work with team
- Be aware of dynamics of child abuse
- Accuracy
- Confidentiality
- Impartiality
- Professional boundaries



Handling strong feelings during interpretation

- Take a deep breath
- Change your physical position
- Take a sip of water
- Remember why you are there
- Ask for a break



Questions ???