WHAT TO SAY TO YOUR CHILD AFTER THE INTERVIEW

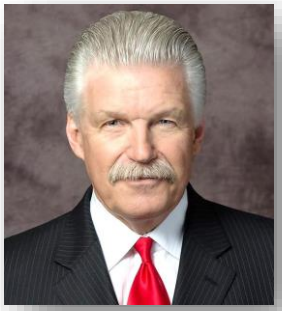
LISTEN. If your child wants to talk about the investigation, listen. Do not ask questions. Do not be concerned if your child does not want to talk about the visit. Many children are "tired" of talking and just want to "get on with it."

THANK your child for talking, and acknowledge his or her courage. Assure your child of your love and support, no matter what was disclosed or determined during the evaluation.

AVOID leading your child to think that the interview will end the process. Some cases continue into the legal system.



Our therapy dogs are available to greet you & your child, upon prior request.



JAMES W. GLASGOW
Will County State's Attorney

The Will County Children's Advocacy Center was established by Will County State's Attorney James W. Glasgow in 1995 to provide hope, healing and justice for abused children.

The staff performs child-sensitive interviews when there are allegations of sexual or severe physical abuse. These interviews are conducted by trained and caring professionals in a non-suggestive, child-friendly environment. The children's recorded statements have been used in the successful prosecution of hundreds of child predators.

When there is an allegation of abuse, children encounter complex law enforcement, medical and child welfare systems that can be frightening and bewildering. The Will County Children's Advocacy Center guides children and families through the interview process and provides critical follow up assistance after a family leaves.

WILL COUNTY
Children's
ADVOCACY CENTER

HOPE, HEALING, AND JUSTICE FOR ABUSED CHILDREN.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

A Guide For Parents, Guardians, & Caregivers



1206 Cedarwood Drive
Crest Hill, Illinois 60403
(815) 774-4565

www.WillCountyCAC.org

LIVE UNITED
United Way
United Way of Will County



What To Expect Before The Interview…

The Will County Children's Advocacy Center utilizes a multidisciplinary team consisting of representatives from the Will County State's Attorney's Office, local law enforcement, and the Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) to coordinate services for you and your family while your child's allegation of abuse is under investigation. This process reduces the number of times your child will need to talk with different professionals, and it helps us respond to you during the investigation.

All of these professionals are sensitive to the difficult and confusing time that you and your child may be experiencing. It is their goal to complete the investigation in a child-friendly, timely, and professional manner.

Children are more at ease when they know what to expect. It is helpful to inform your child that someone will talk with him or her about what was reported. It is important to reassure your child and give him or her permission to talk freely with our interviewer. It is equally important NOT to rehearse with your child or tell your child what to say.

The interviewer will talk with your child alone. If something abusive has happened to your child, it might be difficult for your child to talk about in front of you. If your child discloses abusive incidents, it might be upsetting to you and your reaction might interfere with the interview.

The multidisciplinary team members have the responsibility of observing, assessing, and investigating the allegations. Their focus must be on the child. Therefore, you are <u>not</u> permitted to observe the interview. Your family advocate will meet with you and provide support during the interview.

Q & A

What can I expect immediately following the interview?
After the interview, the DCFS investigator and/or law enforcement professional will inform you about what may happen next. The multidisciplinary team will meet and develop a plan. Law enforcement and/or the DCFS investigator may contact you later with more detailed information.

What support is available for family members?
You will receive follow up calls from the family advocate to discuss your needs and available services.

Why is counseling important?
Abused children often do not feel as good about themselves as non-victimized children. Your child may also feel frustrated, anger, guilt, fear, and helplessness. Parents & other family members also need support and understanding. Remember that bad things happen to good people. Professional, evidence-based counseling can help you and your child through this stressful time. If interested, please contact your CAC family advocate or therapist.

Do you work for DCFS?
We are a separate agency that assists in their child abuse investigations. Decisions regarding safety plans, protective custody, visitation, or the outcome of their investigation are decided only by DCFS.

Do you work for law enforcement?
We assist law enforcement by conducting forensic interviews for their investigations. Any investigative work, or decisions on criminal charges, are decided only by law enforcement and the Will County State's Attorney's Office.