

MINIMAL FACTS CHILD WELFARE FIELD GUIDE



Produced by the Initial Child Interview Training Project (iCiT).

To conclude the interview:

1. Take a moment to ensure that you have all of the Minimal Facts before you conclude (Who, What, Where, How, Protective Custody).
2. Close out statement: "Thank you for talking with me today" and provide next steps.
3. If you conclude that child abuse or neglect is likely to have occurred, always create a safety plan and consult with law enforcement as needed.

Contact your local CAC or MDT or SART EXAM

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Helpful Tips

1. Get as much information as you can from the informed adult. If you do have to speak with the parent, do it away from the child.
2. Open ended questions are the most preferred types of questions, such as:
 - You said _____, Tell me more about _____.
 - You said _____, What happened next?
3. These, along with WH Questions, - Who, What, Where and How - help to get at Minimal Facts without being leading or unnecessarily direct.
4. Ask follow up questions using the TELL ME MORE prompt. Use prompt a few times to get more details about the child.
5. Avoid:
 - Yes/no questions and Multiple-Choice questions.
 - Never assert information into the interview the child has not mentioned.
 - Time and number questions should not be asked of young children.
6. When speaking with the child, always use their words.

Script, Prompts, and Phrases

1. Have an intro script ready when rapport building with the child:
My name is _____, I am _____ and my job is to talk with kids.
2. Transition phrases:
"Tell me why you came to talk to me today" or "Tell me why I came to talk to you today."
3. To obtain context of WHEN, consider getting the information from an informed adult. Suggestions to ask a child, if needed, are:
"Was it before or after Christmas?"
"Was it near your birthday?"
"What grade were you in when that happened?"
4. Take a moment to ensure that you have all of the Minimal Facts before you conclude the interview.

Produced by the ICT project with funding from the Children's Justice Act VQ21 018567, through the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES).

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