

What is a Forensic Interview?



Forensic services are provided to children who may have experienced abuse or who have witnessed a crime or other violent act. The primary aim of forensic services is to aid in ensuring the safety of the individual child as well as other children in the community. Forensic services are provided in a safe and child-friendly environment.

Forensic Interview

A forensic interview is a single session, recorded interview designed to elicit a child's unique information when there are concerns of possible abuse or when the child has witnessed violence against another person. The forensic interview is conducted in a supportive and non-leading manner by a professional trained in the NCAC Forensic Interview model. Interviews are remotely observed by representatives of the agencies involved in the investigation (such as law enforcement and child protective services).



Extended Forensic Interview

An extended forensic interview is a multi-session interview conducted by professionals trained in the NCAC Extended Forensic Interview model. Extended forensic interviews are conducted with children currently involved in a criminal or child protection investigation who may experience difficulty relaying their information during a single interview session.

How To Prepare For the Forensic Interview

- *It is important that you do not coach or rehearse* what to say or do before or during the interview. Nor should you question them.
- The forensic interviewer is a trained professional who will ask non-leading questions to determine what happened to your child. They will not pressure your child. They will not rush your child.
- It may take about an hour or several hours depending on your child's response.

To help put them at ease before speaking to the forensic interviewer, show them what to expect by visiting the CAC's website. Tell them,

"We are going to the CAC. It's a special place where kids go to talk about important stuff. The person talking with you will be very nice and will ask you about what happened recently. It's okay to tell them everything. You are not in any trouble."

Adapted from the National Children's Advocacy Center www.nationalcac.org