



Child Advocacy Center
OF AIKEN COUNTY

WHAT TO EXPECT

PARENT/CAREGIVER GUIDE TO YOUR CHILD'S FORENSIC INTERVIEW



WHAT IS A FORENSIC INTERVIEW?

We know this can be an anxious time for you and your family. In the near future, one of our staff members will be calling you to schedule your child's forensic interview appointment. You will receive text, email and/or phone call reminder ahead of time regarding your appointment.

The Forensic Interview is a vital part of the investigative process and so it is very important that you come at your scheduled time. If you cannot make it, please call us immediately to reschedule. If you have questions or are unsure, feel free to call. We would rather you call than worry.

On the day of your appointment, please arrive 15 min. early to complete your paperwork OR SCAN THE QR code below to download and print the paperwork at home. Once the paperwork is complete, one of our staff members will meet with you one-on-one to gather some additional information. Afterward your child will be brought back to a child-friendly, specially equipped room, to talk with our interviewer.



Scan this QR code or visit our website to download and complete the paperwork ahead of time!



HOW DO I PREPARE MY CHILD?

REMEMBER TO:

- Make sure they are well rested
- Continue to give them their prescription medications as prescribed
- Tell them that they will be visiting a safe place where they will speak with a person whose job it is to talk with kids and teenagers
- Explain that they are not in trouble
- Give them permission to talk with the interviewer and let them know it is OK to tell the truth and to talk about anything

PLEASE DO NOT:

- Ask them questions about the situation
- Practice with or tell them what to say
- Offer names of possible offenders or possible acts of abuse
- Promise treats or rewards for talking
- Question or ask why they didn't tell sooner

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT THE CHILD
ADVOCACY CENTER OF AIKEN COUNTY AT
ANYTIME WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

APPOINTMENT DATE: _____ APPOINTMENT TIME: _____

LAW ENFORCEMENT

INVESTIGATOR: _____ AGENCY: _____

CASE NUMBER: _____ PHONE: _____

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CASE WORKER: _____ PHONE: _____

WILL I BE ABLE TO WATCH MY CHILD'S INTERVIEW?

Only professionals directly involved in the investigation are allowed to observe the interview. We understand this may cause anxiety for you as a parent/caregiver, but this is done to reduce the possible stress that can be placed on a child and to provide a neutral setting for the child and the investigation.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER THE INTERVIEW?

You may be able to talk to members of the investigation team. They may tell you in general terms what they learned from the interview and you may have an opportunity to ask questions and voice your concerns.

- It is important to continue to support your child after the interview
- Praise them for having the courage to talk. Assure them of your love and support, no matter what.
- If they want to talk about the interview – Listen—Do not ask questions.
- Don't be concerned if your child doesn't want to talk. Many children are "tired" of talking and just want to "get on with it". They may want to talk at a later time.
- Avoid leading them to think that the interview will end the process. Some cases continue and may require extended interviews or court testimony.

A medical evaluation is the next step in the investigative process. For many children, just knowing their bodies are 'okay' or normal is a huge relief.

Often times seeing our medical provider helps make them less worried or anxious. If required, our staff will give you more information about what to expect.

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR MY FAMILY?

One of our Child Advocates will meet with you while the interview is taking place. You will be provided with support, your needs will be assessed, and you will be given information about our services, as well as other community resources that are available to you.

We will also follow up with a phone call to check on your family and assist with any needs you may have. At any time, if you have questions or concerns, feel free to call us and we will do what we can to assist you.

WILL MY CHILD NEED COUNSELING/THERAPY?

In most instances, it is important to provide your child with an opportunity to talk with a professional. Too often parents just want their child to "forget" about the abuse and "move on." That's easier said than done.

Counseling can help your child and family through this very difficult time. It's best to address issues and concerns now, rather than years later. Our Center has licensed therapists that specialize in trauma and abuse.

Therapy is available to your family at **no cost** to you. We can also provide you with referrals to therapists in the community. Just let us know.