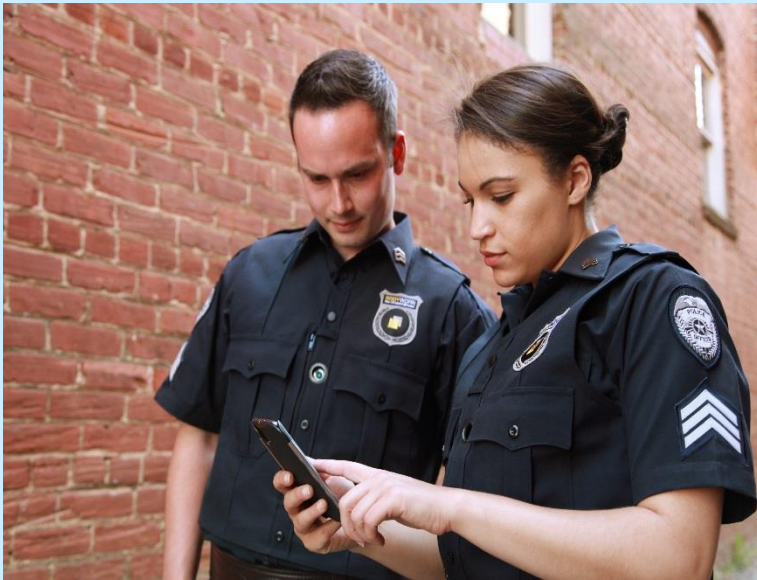


MINIMAL FACTS INTERVIEWS

For Child Abuse
Investigations

PURPOSE OF
TODAY'S TRAINING



- Focuses on first responder contact
- What to consider before conducting minimal facts interview
- Minimal facts interview
- Next Steps

PURPOSE OF FIRST RESPONDER CONTACT

Coordinate	Coordinate LE and CYF response
Establish	Establish contact with child
Collect	Collect minimal facts information
Assess	Assess child safety and well-being
Assess	Assess risk of immediate danger
Assess	Assess need for immediate medical care
Next steps	CAC forensic interview and family advocacy

MINIMAL FACTS – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



- Identification of the suspect/alleged perpetrator
- Jurisdiction
- Time frame of last incident

DANGER OF MULTIPLE INTERVIEWS/INTERVIEWERS

Inconsistencies

Suggestibility

Recantation

Child feeling he/she is not believed

Possible increase in trauma



CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE THE MINIMAL FACTS INTERVIEW

- Can the information be obtained from the parent/caregiver
- Parent/caregiver can also provide:
 - How the information came to them
 - Exact words or phrases of the child
 - Other possible victims or witnesses

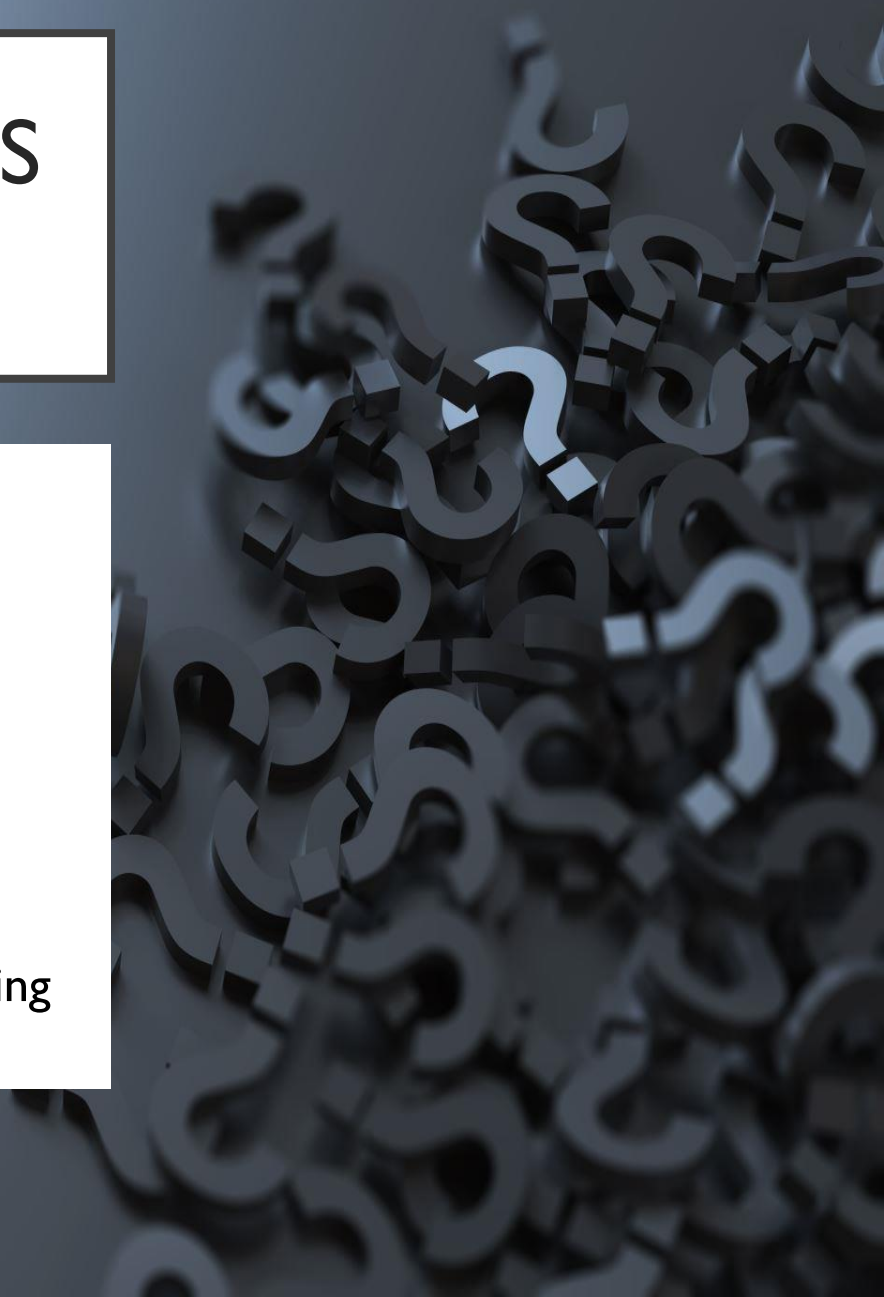
INFORMATION NEEDS BEFORE MINIMAL FACTS INTERVIEW



- Emotional status of the child
- Developmental competence
- What the child was told prior to your arrival
- Disclosure information

WHAT QUESTIONS ARE NECESSARY?

- **Minimal Facts**
 - What happened?
 - Who did it?
 - Where?
 - Last time?
- Any other questions involves risk of contaminating investigation and creating taint



CHILD INTERVIEW

Child should be interviewed outside of the presence of the parent/caregiver

No distractions

Consider seat placement

Child won't leave parent/caregiver

STAGES OF THE MINIMAL FACTS INTERVIEW

Introduction

Rapport building

Transition

Nature of the allegation

Identity of suspect/alleged perpetrator

Jurisdiction

Timeframe

Preparation and next steps

Follow up with parent/caregiver

INTRODUCTION

- Tell the child your name
- Describe your job in basic terms
 - “I talk to kids about things that have happened to them.”
 - “I talk to kids to find out how they are doing/ if things are OK/if they are safe.”



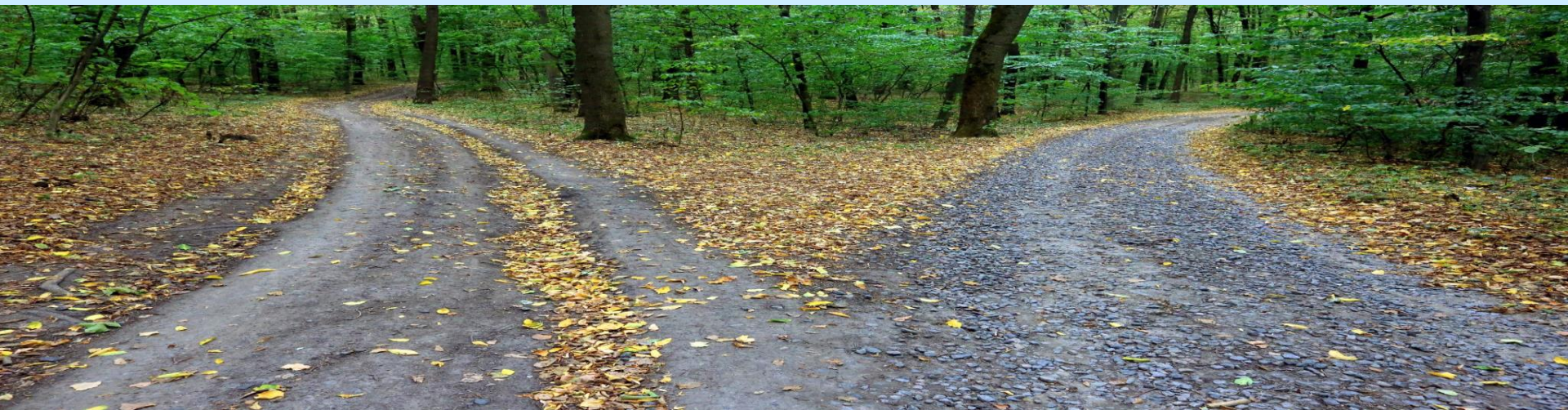
RAPPORT BUILDING

- **Talk about interests of the child (hobbies, school, sports, pets, etc.)**
 - “Tell me about yourself.”
 - “Tell me some things you like to do.”
 - “Tell me about your favorite toy.”
- **Show genuine interest in the child**



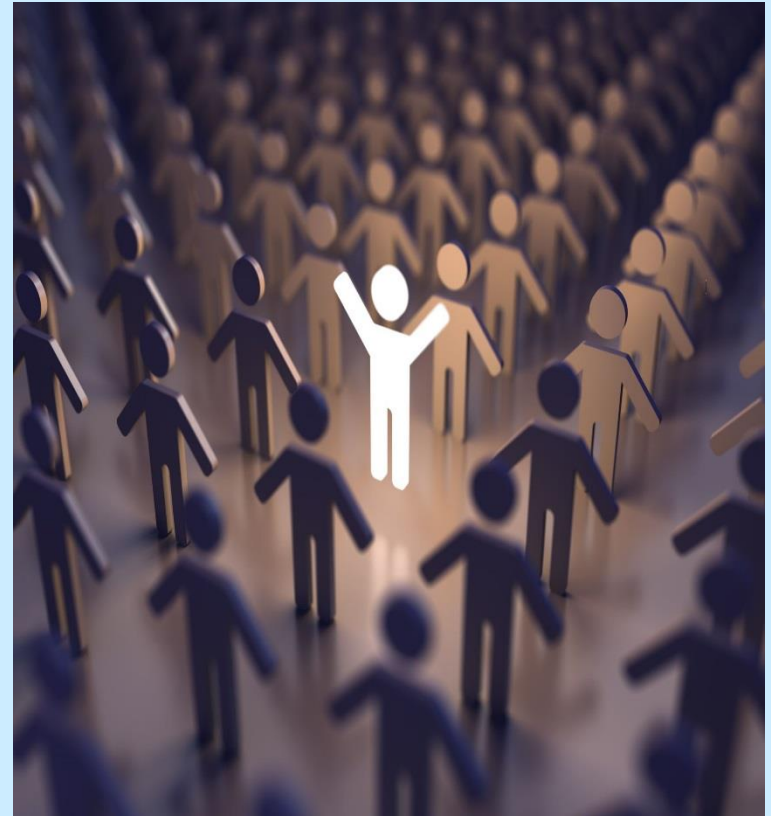
TRANSITION

- “Tell me about coming here today.”
- “Do you know why I am here today.”
- “Did you talk to _____ about something today?”
- “Has something happened to you?”
- “Tell me about your bruise.”



GATHERING THE MINIMAL FACTS

- “What happened?”
- “Who did _____?”
- “Where did _____ happen?”
 - If it did not occur in your jurisdiction, continue to gather minimal facts and hand off to the other department.



THE IMPORTANCE OF TIMEFRAME

- “When was the last time this happened?”
- If the last sexual incident was within the last 5 days – send for a medical exam
- Other things to consider:
 - Age
 - Trauma
 - Sometimes the who and what will tell you the when



GATHERING THE MINIMAL FACTS



- When in doubt, the **BEST** statement to start with is “Tell me all about _____.”
- Only use open-ended questions.
- Avoid leading or coercive questions/statements
- Remember – minimal facts not in-depth questions
- Document, document, document

CLOSURE AND NEXT STEPS

- Answer any questions/ concerns from the child
- Describe the CAC in general/ age appropriate terms
- Thank the child for talking to you

CLOSURE AND NEXT STEPS

- CYF develops safety plan
 - Depends on who the suspect/ AP is and location
- Advise the parent/caregiver to refrain from questioning the child - but to document the child's statements & notify you.
- Explain the CAC

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