

**CAC**



**THE CHILDREN'S  
SAFEHOUSE**

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## **WHAT AN EXAMPLE!**

MY NAME IS JOHN SMITH AND I AM A ATTORNEY WORKING WITH YOUR DAD AND WE ARE GOING TO RECORD OUR CONVERSATION BECAUSE THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE SITTING AT THE TABLE WITH US AND THEY ARE HERE TO ASK YOU QUESTIONS AND HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY AND THEIR NAMES ARE JANE SMITH AND MARY SMITH AND THEY ARE VERY NICE LADIES WHO HELP ADULTS WHEN THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A PROBLEM AND IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ME JUST TELL ME BECAUSE IT IS REALLY IMPORTANT THAT YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I AM SAYING AND THE QUESTIONS THAT I AM ASKING YOU SO THERE IS NO REASON TO BE AFRAID BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT IN TROUBLE AND WE ARE NICE PEOPLE AND WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU SO THAT WE CAN GET TO KNOW YOU AND IF YOU START TO FEEL SCARED JUST TELL ME AND YOU CAN GO SEE YOU MOM. DID YOU UNDERSTAND ME?

# WHAT OFTEN HAPPENS WHEN KIDS DISCLOSE ABUSE



## Typical Case - Maria,

Maria tells her teacher that she is being hurt at home by her dad.

hurt at home.



At school, who talks to Maria? Her teacher, principal, school counselor & school nurse. Then the school calls the **Child Abuse Hotline** and **CYFD** or **CPS** (Child Protective Services).

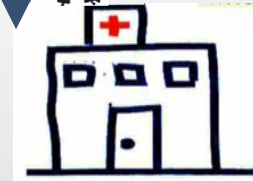
Detective & Case Worker from CYFD or CPS are assigned. Family gathers, asking Maria questions.



Ongoing, Maria's dad, brother, paternal grandma, mom & dad ask her about what happened.



Then Maria's mom takes her to the ER. A nurse talks to Maria, as well as the ER doctor, who examines her.



Then Maria's scheduled to see a **specialized doctor** (who does child abuse exams). Here another **nurse & doctor** talk to her during her examination.



A counsellor needs to talk to Maria.



A lawyer needs to talk to Maria.



**What *is* a CAC?**

***Child***

***Advocacy***

***Center***

# WHY A CAC MODEL?

## The History

- 1985: 1<sup>ST</sup> CAC in Huntsville, AL
- Former congressman, Robert “Bud” Cramer, organized a movement to bring the system to families.



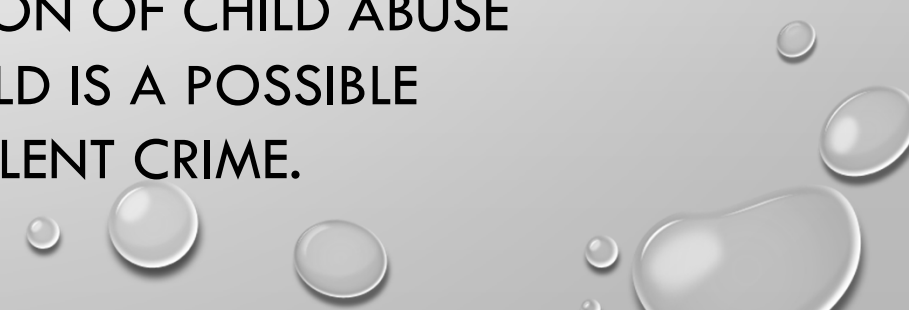
## **CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS**

We provide:

- child-friendly
- legally-defensible
- developmentally-appropriate

### **INTERVIEWS**

TO AID IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CHILD ABUSE  
CASES OR WHEN A CHILD IS A POSSIBLE  
WITNESS TO A VIOLENT CRIME.





**BASICALLY...**

**WE GET TO TALK AND PLAY WITH KIDS.**



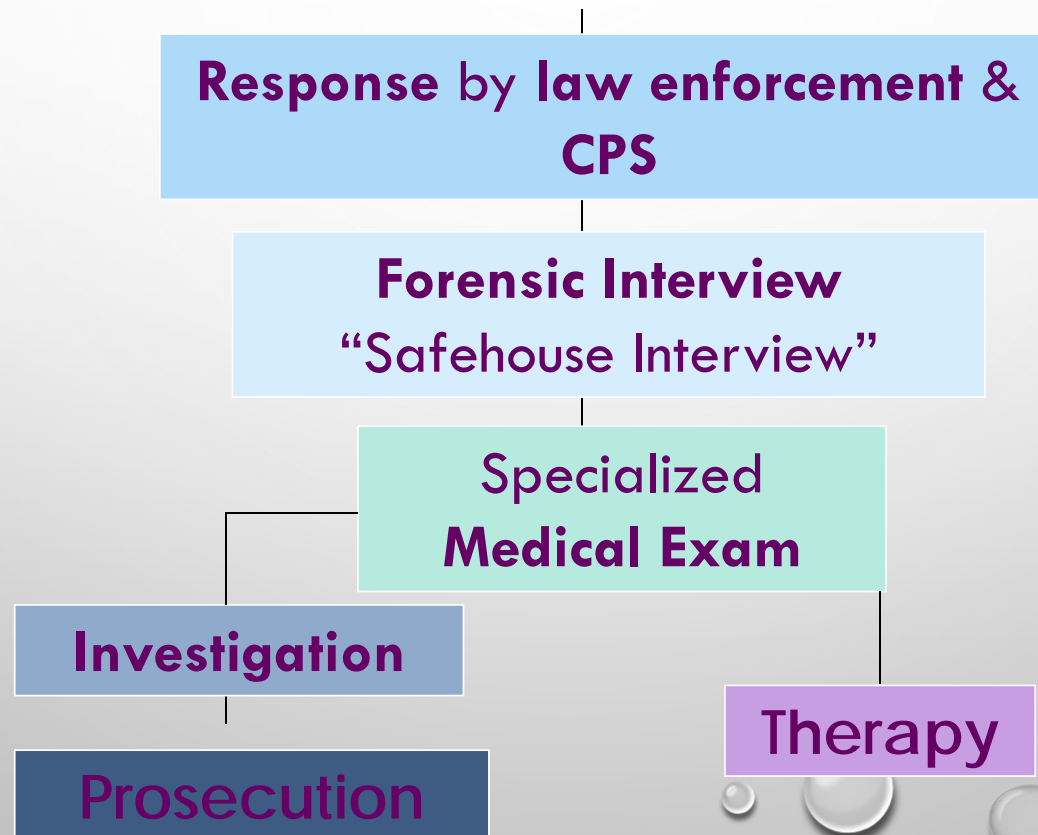
WE ALSO PROVIDE...





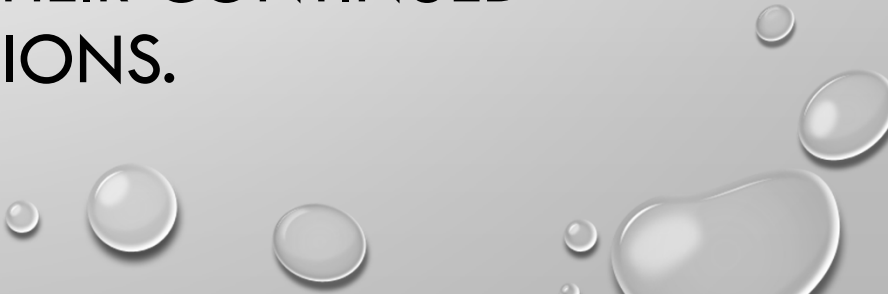
# MDT (MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM) PROTOCOL

Disclosure of sexual/physical abuse or WTC





## **PURPOSE OF THE FORENSIC INTERVIEW**

- **A LEGALLY SOUND CONVERSATION USED TO ELICIT ACCURATE ACCOUNTS OF EVENTS.**
  - **TO COLLECT INFORMATION THAT WILL EITHER CORROBORATE OR REFUTE ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE.**
  - **ASSIST INVESTIGATORS IN THEIR CONTINUED INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGATIONS.**
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## WHO DO WE TALK TO?

- A CHILD OR TEENAGER, 3-18, DISCLOSING EITHER **SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE.**
- ADULTS 18 AND UP, WITH **DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS,** DISCLOSING SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE
- ANYONE WHO FITS THIS CRITERIA WHO MAY BE A **WITNESS** TO A CRIME



# KIDS ARE CONCRETE, LITERAL

WHAT IF YOU ASK ABOUT  
TOUCHING?

- HIT
  - SPANK
  - GRAB
  - TICKLE
  - KICKED
  - LICKED
  - KISSED
  - HUGGED
  - PUNCHED
  - HOLD
  - BITE
- 



# **WHO COULD BE A CREDIBLE REPORTER?**

TEACHER

THERAPIST

DOCTOR

DAYCARE PROVIDER

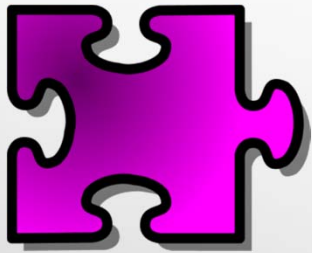
RELATIVE

FRIEND'S PARENT

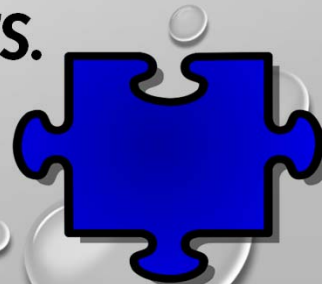
PARENT



# DISCLOSURE



- **DISCLOSURE** IS WHEN A CHILD TELLS ANOTHER PERSON THAT HE OR SHE HAS BEING ABUSED.
- THIS CAN BE A **SCARY & DIFFICULT** PROCESS.
- IT CAN TAKE **DAYS, WEEKS, MONTHS** FOR A CHILD TO TELL.
- USUALLY THE INFORMATION COMES IN **PIECES**.
- SOME PEOPLE **NEVER TELL**.

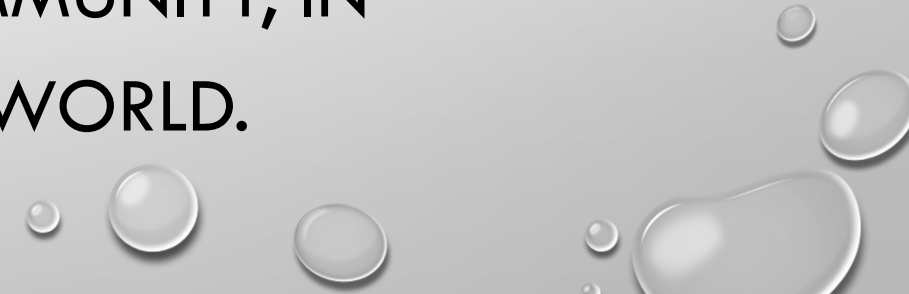


# PROCESS OF DISCLOSURE





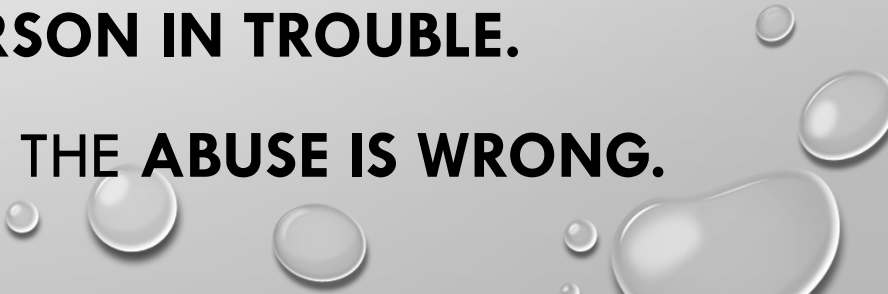
## WHO GETS SEXUALLY ABUSED?

- CHILDREN OF ALL **AGES, RACES, ETHNICITIES,** AND **ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS** ARE VULNERABLE TO SEXUAL ABUSE.
  - IT AFFECTS BOTH **GIRLS** AND **BOYS** IN ANY NEIGHBORHOOD OR COMMUNITY, IN COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD.
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## WHY CHILDREN DON'T TELL

- **THREATS OF HARM** TO THE CHILD OR THEIR FAMILY.
  - **FEAR OF BEING REMOVED FROM THEIR HOME.**
  - **FEAR OF NOT BEING BELIEVED.**
  - **SHAME OR GUILT** (THEY THINK ABUSE IS THEIR FAULT).
  - THEY DON'T WANT TO GET IN **TROUBLE.**
  - THEY **DON'T WANT TO GET THE PERSON IN TROUBLE.**
  - THEY MAY **NOT UNDERSTAND** THAT THE **ABUSE IS WRONG.**
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## WHAT IF A CHILD TELLS YOU?

- **STAY CALM.**
- **DON'T ASSUME** YOU KNOW WHAT A CHILD MEANS.
- **LISTEN** CAREFULLY.
- **NEVER BLAME** THE CHILD.
- TELL THE CHILD THAT THE ABUSE IS **NOT THEIR FAULT.**
- **THANK** THE CHILD FOR TELLING YOU.
- **BE SUPPORTIVE.**
- **CALL FOR HELP** IMMEDIATELY; ENSURE THAT THE CHILD IS SAFE.
- LET THE CHILD NARRATE, **DO NOT INTERRUPT.**
- IF YOU HAVE INFORMATION FROM A **CREDIBLE REPORTER, DO NOT QUESTION** THE CHILD.

# TALKING TIPS

- TELL ME ABOUT THAT...
- WHAT HAPPENED?
- I HEARD YOU TOLD YOUR TEACHER, MOM, FRIEND...
- HOW DID THAT MAKE YOU FEEL? HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT?
- PROMPTERS...UH HUH, OK, THEN WHAT, WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.
- TELL ME EVERYTHING ABOUT THAT.

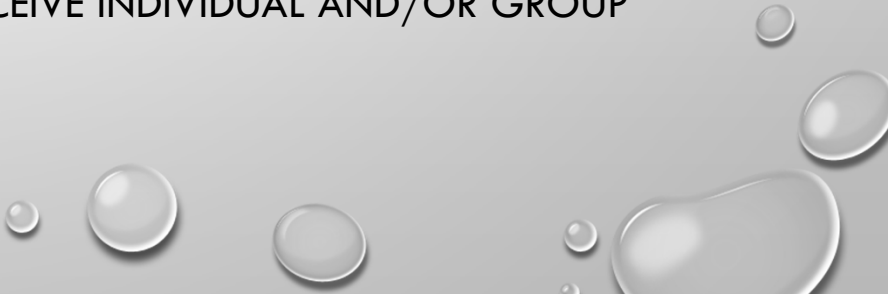
# WHAT IS TRAUMA?



TRAUMA IS THE RESULT OF AN OVERWHELMING AMOUNT OF STRESS THAT EXCEEDS ONE'S ABILITY TO COPE, OR INTEGRATE THE EMOTIONS INVOLVED WITH THAT EXPERIENCE. THE THREAT OF HARM CAN BE REAL OR PERCEIVED.



# ALL FAITHS CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

- *MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES-* THERAPY SPECIALIZED **IN INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, AND GROUP THERAPIES** FOR CHILDREN AND CAREGIVERS
  - *COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES CCSS-* COMMUNITY SUPPORT WORKERS SUPPORT CHILDREN IN BOTH **THE COMMUNITY AND THEIR HOMES** IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS ARE ADDRESSED
  - *FAMILY WELLNESS-*HELP CHILDREN HEAL FROM THEIR TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES. **CAREGIVERS** WHO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROGRAM ARE ABLE TO RECEIVE INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP COUNSELING.
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# DUTY TO TELL

- IT IS OUR **LEGAL DUTY** TO REPORT ANY SUSPICION OR DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE!

## DEFINITION OF *SUSPICION*:

A: THE ACT OR AN INSTANCE OF SUSPECTING SOMETHING IS WRONG WITHOUT PROOF OR ON SLIGHT EVIDENCE: MISTRUST

B: A STATE OF MENTAL UNEASINESS AND UNCERTAINTY: DOUBT



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