

# WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? DEVELOPING FORENSIC INTERVIEWING SKILLS AFTER ATTENDING FOUNDATIONAL TRAINING (PT. 1 & 2)

## Foundational Training

Forensic interviewing training programs provide an excellent foundation for professionals new to child forensic interviewing. Such programs, usually a week in length, familiarize trainees with basic memory recall principles, optimal questioning strategies for eliciting accurate and reliable information, children's developmental capabilities, and recommended techniques for transitioning children to the allegation-focused portion of the interview.



Research consistently demonstrates that attending a foundational training alone is not adequate for developing the sophisticated skill set necessary for eliciting the ideal quality and quantity of information from children.

## Building Skills Beyond Foundational Training

Participating in regularly scheduled training on focused topics specific to forensic interviewing, studying current research and literature related to the field of forensic interviewing, reviewing one's own work, and participating in mentoring or supervision by an experienced and skilled child forensic interviewer increases the likelihood that new interviewers will put their newly acquired skills into practice, and will ensure that more tenured interviewers continue to engage in best practice. Quality supervision can provide a structured plan for specialized skill development, additional training, and ongoing reflection and feedback. Peer review, while not expressively researched, is another opportunity for interviewers to receive feedback on their interviewing practice but should happen on a consistent and timely basis.



## What Interviewers Need

An unfortunate reality for many dedicated forensic interviewers, as well as child protective staff and law enforcement tasked with conducting forensic interviews, is the lack of access to regular, ongoing trainings; a lack of mentoring or supervision which can provide the opportunity to receive structured, personalized feedback; a lack of support and oversight needed to integrate new learning which advances their skills in interviewing children; and the time necessary to engage in further developing interviewing skills.



To strengthen and optimize their skills, interviewers should:

- Engage in regular, focused continuing education on topics specific to forensic interviewing
- Participate in individualized mentoring or supervision sessions
- Evaluate their own work by examining questions asked, information obtained, whether sufficient rapport was developed, whether socially supportive statements were utilized appropriately, and whether best practices were followed
- Participate in peer review (where your interview is evaluated) as often as possible
- Stay updated on new research and literature regarding forensic interviewing

## References

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