The GOLD Standard for Forensic Interviewing:
*Tell Me Everything About That*

Structured Protocol Developed by the
*National Institute of Child Health & Human Development*

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A New Way to Think About Talking to People

- What are "open-ended" questions?
  - 1. Not restrained by definie limits, restrictions, or structure
  - 2. Will by their nature solicit additional information
  - 3. Broad; and require more than one- or two-word responses
  - 4. Allow for a spontaneous, unstructured response
  - 5. Characterized by the condition that respondents are free to reply in their own words rather than being limited to choosing from among a set of alternatives

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Pros and Cons

- **Open-ended Questions**
  - Pros
    - Develop trust
    - Perceived as less threatening
    - Allow for an unstructured or free response
  - Cons
    - Can be time-consuming
    - May result in unnecessary information
    - May require more effort on the part of the interviewer

- **Closed-ended Questions**
  - Pros
    - Quick and require little time investment, just the answer
  - Cons
    - Incomplete responses
    - Require more time with individual subjects
    - Can be leading, intimidating or even threatening
    - Can result in misleading
      - Interpretation
      - Conclusion
      - About the interviewer's information need
    - Discourage disclosure

Source: Adapted from Richardson, John B. Professor of
Research Methods, UConn
http://www.uconn.edu/john.robins/CSSE/CSSE3025/ }
The Answer You Get is Shaped by the Question You Ask

• "Is it raining outside?"
  • Yes/No

• "What did you do at work today?"
  • Nothing. Same as always.

What if You Ask it This Way?

• "Tell me about the weather"
  • It's nice, not too hot, just a few clouds.

• "Tell me what you did at work today"
  • We did a search warrant on that sex case and found exactly what we were looking for.

Watch Your Adult-Speak: What are You Really Asking?

• "Hey, do you have your driver's license on you?"
• "Do you know where you live?"
• "Can I get your telephone number?"
• "Do you remember how fast you were going?"
Summary

- What is the NICHID Structured Investigative Interview Protocol?
- Investigative tool developed after 25 years of research
- Step-by-step method for interviewing children about suspected abuse
- Designed with structured, open-ended questions that access children's free recall memory
- Allows children to disclose any abuse while giving forensically significant detail
- When used properly, eliminates use of suggestive questioning
- Stands up to defense attacks

NICHID Structured Investigative Interview Protocol

- The NICHID Structured Investigative Interview Protocol's basic components:
  - Introduction
  - Ground Rules
  - Examples of agreement to tell the truth
  - Rapport Building
    - Training in Episodic Recall
    - Substantive Phase
    - Structured Break
  - Clarification of Disclosure
  - Investigating the Disclosure
  - Closing

Memory Retrieval: Why Structured Protocol is Better

- Recall Prompts
  - Open ended prompts: "Tell me more about that"
  - Person provides what they remember
  - Greater accuracy
  - Skeletal sketch of event
  - More errors of omission
- Recognition Prompts
  - Direct questions: "What color was the car?"
  - Provide "cut" as to what you want person to tell about
  - Less accuracy
  - More specific details
  - More errors of commission
Demonstration of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Interview Guidelines

Interview Outline

- Introduction/Ground Rules
- Rapport Building

Interview Outline

- Training in Episodic Recall
  - Neutral Event
  - Today
Interview Outline

• Transition to Disclosure

Interview Outline

• Disclosure
• Investigating the Incidents
  • Open-Ended Questions
  • Separation of incidents
  • Time Segmentation
  • Cued Recall
  • Focused Questions
  • Specific, Directive Questions
    (ONLY if necessary for child protection)

Interview Outline

• Structured Break
Interview Outline

- Clarification of Disclosure

Interview Outline

Investigating the Disclosure

Interview Outline

- Closing
NICHD Structured Investigative Interview Protocol Training

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