

MY CHILD IS HAVING A FORENSIC INTERVIEW

1. How should I tell my child that they have to talk with a stranger about this situation - especially if they've already disclosed to me?

Tell your child that they will be meeting with someone who talks to children about very difficult things. Sometimes parents will identify this person as a friend, a counselor, a specialist, an interviewer etc. Tell your child that even though they've told things to you (or to someone else), it's important that they speak to the interviewer as well.

2. When should I tell my child this will be taking place?

Give your child enough notice so that they do not feel it is a surprise to them, but also do not give them too long a time period to worry about what they may have to do. Usually a day or two is enough time for them to feel comfortable with this appointment.

3. What if my child starts to ask me questions about what they have to say?

Tell them that you honestly do not know exactly what will be asked, but all they have to do is be honest. Reassure your child that the person they are talking to is very friendly, and wants them to feel comfortable. If at any point your child wants to stop the interview, they just have to say so. It is important to give your child permission to talk about what they have disclosed.

4. What if my child wants to know why they just can't tell me and let me tell the other people?

Tell your child that you might not know what questions to ask and how to ask them. And also tell them that because you love them so much, sometimes parents ask the kinds of questions that are about feelings instead of about the facts, which is why this special interviewer needs to do the asking. Assure them that they are not in any trouble and remind them how brave they are for letting someone know that someone else has done something wrong.

5. What if my child asks if I'll be in the room with them?

Be honest with your child; let them know that they will be in the room alone with the interviewer. You can let your child know that while they are talking, you are going to be having your own meeting with someone who works at Northern Plains Children's Advocacy Center (NPCAC) to get information on helping to keep them safe.

6. What if my child says they do not want to do this because they have already told someone once?

Tell your child that you understand their feelings of frustration, especially since it is a difficult thing to talk about. But also tell them how brave they were for telling in the first place and how proud you are of their honesty and bravery. Remind them since they were so brave, they are going to be helping keep other children safe by telling the adults who are in charge of keeping all children safe.