



Denver Children's  
Advocacy Center

## **FORENSIC INTERVIEWS AT THE DENVER CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER**

Forensic interviews are of vital importance in the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault and other crimes against children. When an allegation of child abuse is made, a forensic interview is the best way to gather information about the allegation.

The Denver Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC) is at the heart of the multidisciplinary team that responds to allegations of child abuse and cases where children have witnessed homicide or other crimes. The program operates under an agreement with Denver Police Department, Denver District Attorney's Office, Denver Department of Human Services and Denver Health.

### **What is a forensic interview?**

A forensic interview is a semi - structure conversation with a child, intended to elicit detail information about an event that the child may have experienced and or witnessed. It is neutral, fact finding and developmentally appropriate to the child's needs.

### **What is the purpose of a forensic interview?**

- To obtain information from the child that may be helpful in a criminal investigation.
- To assess the safety of the child and his or her living arrangements.
- To obtain information that will either corroborate or refute the allegations or suspicions of abuse.

### **How should I prepare my child for a forensic interview?**

Caretakers are encouraged to talk to the child about their visit to the center by explaining that this is a safe, friendly, and welcoming place where children come and talk about anything they want. Please do not question the child about the allegations.

### **How long will a forensic interview take?**

Forensic interviews vary in length, depending on the child's age.

### **Who will conduct the interview?**

Your child will be interviewed by a trained interviewer who is neutral and objective and is cognizant of child development. A forensic interviewer utilizes a nationally recognized forensic interviewing protocol that is research and practice informed.

### **Can I watch my child's interview?**

Only the child and the interviewer are allowed in the room. Only the assigned investigators are allowed to observe from a separate room.