

January, 2005

2. Lyon, T. D. (2005). *Ten step investigative interview*.

Thomas D. Lyon, *University of Southern California*

Ten Step Investigative Interview

Thomas D. Lyon, J.D., Ph.D. tlyon@law.usc.edu © 2005 (version 2)
(Adaptation of the NICHD Investigative Interview Protocol)

1. **DON'T KNOW** instruction

If I ask you a question and you don't know the answer, then just say, "I don't know."

So if I ask you "What is my dog's name?" what do you say?

OK, because you don't know.

But what if I ask you "Do you have a dog?"

OK, because you do know.

2. **DON'T UNDERSTAND** instruction

If I ask you a question and you don't know what I mean or what I'm saying, you can say, "I don't know what you mean." I will ask it a different way.

So if I ask you "What is your gender?" what do you say?

That's because "gender" is a hard word. So I would say, "Are you a boy or a girl?"

3. **YOU'RE WRONG** instruction

Sometimes I make mistakes or say the wrong thing. When I do, you can tell me that I am wrong.

So if I say, "You are thirty years old," what do you say?

OK, so how old are you?

4. **IGNORANT INTERVIEWER** instruction

I don't know what's happened to you.

I won't be able to tell you the answers to my questions.

5. **PROMISE TO TELL THE TRUTH**

It's really important that you tell me the truth.

Do you promise that you will tell me the truth?

Will you tell me any lies?

6. **PRACTICE NARRATIVES**

a. **LIKE TO DO/DON'T LIKE TO DO**

First, I'd like you to tell me about things you LIKE to do.

Follow up with TELL ME MORE questions.

e.g., "You said you like to play soccer. Tell me more about soccer."

Now tell me about the things you DON'T LIKE to do.

Follow up with TELL ME MORE questions.

b. **LAST BIRTHDAY**

Now tell me about your last birthday. Tell me everything that happened.

FOLLOW UP with WHAT HAPPENED NEXT questions.

e.g., "You said you played in the bouncy. What did you do next?"

Ten Step Investigative Interview (con't.)

7. ALLEGATION

(If child discloses abuse, go directly to ALLEGATION FOLLOW UP. Determine IN ADVANCE which allegation questions you will ask.)

a. **Tell me why I came to talk to you.**

Or, Tell me why you came to talk to me.

It's really important for me to know why I came to talk to you/you came to talk to me.

b. **I heard you saw**

e.g., "I heard you saw a policeman last week. Tell me what you talked about."

c. **Someone's worried**

e.g., "Is your mom worried that something may have happened to you? Tell me what she is worried about."

d. **Someone bothered you**

e.g., "I heard that someone might have bothered you. Tell me everything about that."

e. **Something wasn't right**

e.g., "I heard that someone may have done something to you that wasn't right. Tell me everything about that."

8. ALLEGATION FOLLOW UP

You said that (repeat allegation). Tell me everything that happened.

e.g., "You said that Uncle Bill hurt your pee-pee. Tell me everything that happened."

9. Follow up with TELL ME MORE and WHAT HAPPENED NEXT questions

Avoid yes/no and forced-choice questions.

10. MULTIPLE INCIDENTS

Did (repeat allegation) happen one time or more than one time?

Tell me everything that happened the time you remember the most...

Tell me everything that happened the first time...

Tell me everything that happened the last time...

Was there another time...