

APPENDIX 3

Interview Guide for Youthful Suspects

[Please, make sure to record the following information, before you start the interview]

**My name is _____ . The date is _____ . The time is _____ .
I am interviewing _____ at _____ .**

A. INTRODUCING SELF

Hello, my name is _____ . I am a social worker/policeman and part of my job is to talk to children/adolescents about things that have happened to them.

As you can see, I have a tape recorder/video recorder here. I will record our conversation because it is important that I remember everything you tell me. Sometimes I forget things and the recorder allows me to listen to you without having to write everything down.

It was reported to the police that you have [summary of the allegation; e.g., “you have done something to a child named Mary”], and I have been asked to talk to you about that event.

[If suspect is under age 12, go to section C or D. If suspect is above age 12, proceed to section B].

B. WARNING SUSPECTS OVER 12 YEARS OF AGE

You do not have to tell me anything. If you choose to talk to me, I will give this information to the police for further investigation. If a decision is made to press charges, whatever you tell me today can be used as evidence against you. In my experience, it is easier to help those adolescents who tell us exactly what happened so we can offer them therapy to help them stop committing such acts.

Do you understand everything I have told you?

[Please wait for the child's response. If the child says that s/he did not understand something you said, you should repeat the previous warning, sentence by sentence, checking the child's understanding of every sentence.]

Will you tell me what happened?

[Please wait for the child's response]

[If the child interrupts you to begin saying what happened, proceed to section F. If the child says s/he is willing to tell you what happened, proceed to section D. If the child says s/he is not ready to tell you what happened, go to section C.]

C. RELUCTANT CHILDREN

- 1. As I told you, you have the right to remain silent, but I want you to listen to me carefully because I have something very important to tell you. Children who perform sexual acts with other children need help and treatment. Children who refuse to say what happened are likely to continue performing such acts, and this will complicate matters for them. If you have done such things, it is important that you tell me everything, so that we can try to help you. OK?**

[Wait for the child's response. If the child is not willing to talk, say the following:]

- 2. [The victim] said many things about you. This is an opportunity for you to say what happened. Do you want to tell me?**

[Wait for the child's response. If the child is not willing to talk, say the following:]

- 3. I want you to take a few minutes to think because this is a very important matter. If you prefer to write things down instead of talking to me, you can have a pen and paper.**

[Wait briefly.]

Are you willing to share with me what you have thought/written?

[Wait for the child's answer. If the child refuses to talk, say:]

- 4. If you don't want to talk now, we will stop now. If you change your mind and decide to talk to me at another time, you can call me at [phone number] or you can come to my office again.**

D. RAPPORT BUILDING

Before we talk about the reason why you are here, I would like to get to know you better. Tell me about yourself and about your family.

[Wait for the child's response.]

[If the child does not respond, gives a short response, or gets stuck, you can ask:]

- 1. I really want to know you better. What else can you tell me about yourself?**

[Wait for the child's response.]

- 2. What else can you tell me about your family?**

[Wait for the child's response.]

You've told me about yourself and about your family. Now, I want to hear about your school. Tell me some of the things you like to do at school.

[Wait for the child's response.]

[If the child does not respond, gives a short answer, or gets stuck, you can ask:]

What else can you tell me about your school?

[Wait for the child's response.]

Tell me about your teacher.

[Wait for the child's response.]

Tell me about the kids in your class.

[Wait for the child's response.]

E. EPISODIC MEMORY PRACTICE

Now, I want you to tell me, in as much detail as possible and in the correct sequence, about something that has happened to you. Tell me how you celebrated [Rosh Hashana, Sukkot, Chanukah, or a Birthday].

[Wait for the child's response.]

Tell me exactly what you did.

[Wait for child's response.]

Now, I would like you to tell me everything about [Rosh Hashana dinner, constructing a Sukkah, Chanukah party, Birthday party, etc.].

Think about [Rosh Hashana dinner, Chanukah party, constructing a Sukkah, etc.].

Tell me in detail what happened from the time it started until it ended.

[Wait for the child's response. If the child does not give details, say:]

It is important that you tell me about an event that happened to you in as much detail as possible. Try to remember and describe for me again [the party, dinner, event] **I asked you about.**

F. SUBSTANTIVE PART

Now that I know you a little better, I want to talk about why you are here today. You said before, that you were willing to talk about what happened with [the alleged victim]. **It is important that you tell me the truth so I will know exactly what happened. I want you to tell me, exactly and in detail, what happened to** [the alleged victim], **from the beginning to the end.**

[Wait for the child's description. Continue your investigation using sections J and K.]

Did you do something with [the victim] one time or more than one time?

[If the child agrees with the victim that there was only one incident, proceed with investigation of this one incident using sections L and M, as necessary.]

[If the child says that there was more than one incident, or the victim has reported more than one incident, check by asking specifically whether events described by the victim happened, starting with the best-supported details. For example, ask:]

Did anything happen to [the victim] at [a specific time and/or place]?

[If the child confirms, proceed:]

I want you to tell me, exactly and in detail, what happened to [the victim] at [a specific time and place], from the beginning to the end.

[Wait for the child's response. If the child gives a description, continue the investigation using Sections J and K.]

[In this fashion, investigate each event that the victim described.]

[Only after describing all the times (events), proceed to Sections L and M, as necessary.]

G. COPING WITH DENIALS

[If the child denies part or all of the allegation, use questions 1–7, as relevant. If the child responds to one of the interviewer utterances, encourage free recall using Sections J and K.]

1. Tell me what happened.

[If the child denies, bring up what the victim said on that topic, and encourage the child to respond using open questions. For example, if the suspect denies that he knows the alleged victim, ask:]

2. [The victim] reported that you know each other. Tell me about that.

[If the child describes one aspect of the event, while denying other central details, confront him/her with the victim's contrasting claims, but be sure to include an open question. For example:]

[The victim] **reported that you** [took off her/his clothes]. **Tell me what happened from the beginning to the end.**

[If the suspect still denies the central details, bring up relevant contrasting evidence, and continue with an open question. For example:]

3. [A witness] **has reported that s/he saw you playing with** [the victim].

Tell me about that. OR

The physician who examined [the alleged victim] **found** [evidence of assault].

Tell me about that.

[If the child continues to deny the alleged incident, say:]

4. **Now, I want you to listen carefully. I have something important to tell you. Children who perform sexual acts with other children need help and need treatment. They can get this treatment only if they say what happened. Children who refuse to talk may continue to behave in the same way and they may mess up their lives. If you have done such things, it is important that you tell me now so that we can try to help you.**

[If the child still denies the allegations say:]

5. **I must say I am confused. On the one hand** [the victim] **says that** [the allegation] **or** [the witness] **says that** [details reported by witness] **or the physician says that** [the examination results], **and on the other hand, you say this isn't so. How can you explain what they say?**

[Wait for the child's response. If the child continues to deny, add:]

6. **I want you to think for a few minutes about this. It is very important. In a few minutes we will talk again. If you prefer to write things down, you can use this pen and paper.**

[Wait for the child's response.]

Can you share with me your thoughts or what you wrote?

[If child still refuses, end this interview as follows:]

7. **I have explained to you how important it is that you tell me if something has happened. If you want to talk to me later at any time, please call me at** [phone number] **or come to my office.**

H. COPING WITH SUSPECT MINIMISATION

1. [If the suspect tried to minimise the severity of the alleged incident reported by the victim, say:]

I am still confused about some of the facts. Think carefully, again, about what happened with [the victim] . You said that you [the suspect's version of the events], but the information we have indicates that [the allegation version] . Is it possible that you did that? Tell me about it.

[Wait for the child's response.]

2. [If the suspect does not describe any physical violence described by the victim add:]

You said that [the victim] [cooperated/refused to cooperate] but the information we have indicates that [the use of physical violence]. Is it possible that you really [specific violent or coercive acts] ? Tell me everything about that.

[Wait for the child's response.]

3. [If the suspect minimises the number of incidents reported by the alleged victim, say:]

You said that it only happened [number of times], but according to the information we have, it happened more often. Is it possible that it really happened more often? Tell me everything about that.

I. CLOSING

[After the child has described an incident]

1. **I really appreciate everything you have told me. Now, I would like you to help me understand how you came to do such things.**

[Wait for the child's response.]

2. **Has someone ever done similar things to you?**

[Wait for the child's response. If the child says that he was a victim of abuse, investigate according to the guidelines for investigating victims of sexual abuse. If the child denies being victimised, continue with the questions:]

3. Is there anything else I should know?

[Wait for the child's response.]

4. Do you have any questions that you want to ask me?

[Wait for the child's response.]

5. Is there anything else you want to tell me?

[Wait for the child's response.]

If you want to talk to me at any time, you can call me at [phone number] or come to my office.

We have now finished the interview. I hope that we will be able to help you, so that you will not get involved in such crimes.

End of recording. The time is _____.

J. ADDING FREE INFORMATION

I would like to understand what happened from the beginning to the end.

Tell me everything you can remember, as best you can.

[Wait for the child's response.]

[If the child does not respond or gives a brief description, add:]

I would like to know everything that happened that time. I want to understand what happened from the beginning to the end. Tell me everything you remember, as best you can.

[Wait for the child's response.]

[After the child has given free description, ask for more information using open questions like: "And then what happened?" or "What else can you tell me?"]

[Proceed to Section K]

K. EXPANDING ACCOUNTS OF EVENTS MENTIONED BY THE SUSPECT

[Continue to ask the child about the event by drawing his/her attention to important details mentioned in his/her account [location, aspects of abuse, clothing] but not yet described in sufficient detail.]

You have mentioned [cream, stick . . .] . **Tell me all about that.**

[Ask in the same way, as many times as necessary, about or details that need clarification or elaboration.]

[Only after all events have been described, proceed, if necessary, to Section L]

L. EXPLORING IMPORTANT DETAILS THAT THE SUSPECT DID NOT MENTION

[If significant details (such as the locations) are not provided about an event that the suspect has mentioned, ask about them at this stage using the direct question technique. To get more details, when it is possible, proceed with an open question. For example:

Did you [have clothes on or not] ?

[Wait for the child's response and then add:]

Tell me exactly what happened?

[Proceed to Section M, if necessary.]

M. RELIABILITY OF THE SUSPECT'S VERSION

1. [If some details reported by the victim were not mentioned by the suspect, or were described differently, provide the victim's account as part of an invitation to describe what happened. For example:]

[The victim] **mentioned** [cream/stick . . .] . **Could you tell me everything about that? OR You said that it happened a long time ago, but** [the victim] **said it happened three days ago. What can you tell me about that?**

[Repeat this as many times as necessary to verify such details. If several events were mentioned, make reference to all disputed details about all the events mentioned.]

2. [If there is other information that contradicts the suspect's account, use these details as part of additional invitations. For example: "Your shirt was found in the basement, can you tell me everything about that?"]

